

**THE CHOICE OF ENGLISH AS A LANGUAGE OF LEARNING AND TEACHING
(LOLT) IN SELECTED PUBLIC PRIMARY SCHOOLS OF VHEMBE DISTRICT**

BY

ANGELINE THIKHATHALI MUDAU

STUDENT NO: 8300521

A dissertation submitted in fulfilment for the degree of Master of Arts in Linguistics

DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNICATION AND APPLIED LANGUAGE STUDIES

SCHOOL OF HUMAN AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

UNIVERSITY OF VENDA

SUPERVISOR: DR. B. DUBE

CO-SUPERVISOR: MR. S.E. MADIMA

May 2019

DEDICATION

I dedicate this study to my parents, my late father, Nyelisani Elias Mudau, who worked tirelessly as a labourer to pay for my education, and always encouraged me to put education first and my mother, Sello Elizabeth Mudau, who taught me that it is never too late to go back to school.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I convey my sincere gratitude to the following people who contributed tremendously towards the success of this study:

- My supervisor, Dr B. Dube, who played a major role in the development of this study. She worked tirelessly with me to produce a dissertation that is credible. She inspired and assisted me in formulating ideas in a scholarly manner. She opened my eyes to research in ways immeasurable. I am greatly indebted to her.
- My co-supervisor, Mr Madima S.E, who assisted me with ideas of formulating the research topic and doing a thorough and credible research. He pushed me to work hard even when I was tempted to give up.
- The late Dr Paswana, who assisted me in formulating the topic for my research. May his soul rest in peace.
- My colleagues, Mr. P.K. Maringa, Mr. G. Sambo and Ms. G.T. Mthombeni, and my sister, Mudau Connie, who assisted me by translating the research questions into different African languages.
- Nelushi Irish, Magoloi Hulisani and Magoloi Mufhatu who would work with me late into the night, assisting with the technological aspects of the writing of the document.
- The School Governing Body members who afforded me the time to do the study.
- Lastly, my children for their support and encouragement during the study.

DECLARATION

I, **Angeline Thikhathali Mudau**, hereby declare that this research proposal, “The Choice of English as a Language of Learning and Teaching (LOLT) in selected Public Primary Schools of Vhembe District”, for the degree of Master of Arts in Linguistics at the University of Venda has not previously been submitted for any degree at this or any other university. It is my original work in its entirety and that all reference materials contained therein have been duly acknowledged.

Signatures:

Student	Date.....
Supervisor.....	Date
Co-Supervisor.....	Date.....

ABSTRACT

The study investigates why English is chosen as a language of learning and teaching by School Governing Bodies in selected public primary schools in Vhembe District. Historically, only English and Afrikaans were regarded as official languages that could be used as media of instruction in schools. The advent of democracy in 1994 saw nine most spoken languages in South Africa, besides English and Afrikaans, being elevated to the level of official languages. These languages included Tshivenda, Sepedi, Xitsonga, Sesotho, Seswati, isiZulu, isiXhosa, Setswana and isiNdebele. Since the South African constitution guarantees equal status to all the eleven major languages that are spoken in South Africa, one would expect to find schools choosing other languages, besides English, as a language of learning and teaching. The Language-in-Education Policy Act of 1997 stipulates that, for the first three years of schooling, learners should be taught in home language. The South African Schools Act number 84 of 1996, gives the mandate to determine the language of learning and teaching to School Governing Bodies (SGB). Amidst this freedom of choice, English remains the language of choice in public primary schools of Vhembe District. Studies have indicated that learners cannot cope with the sudden switch from home language to English, and that they end up failing or even dropping out of school. This study aimed to find out why English remains the language of choice for learning and teaching despite the fact that SGBs have the power to choose indigenous languages. The study was undertaken in the following municipalities: Collins Chabane and Makhado. A collective case study was used as a research design. Twelve respondents, from six selected schools, namely; six SGB chairpersons and six school Principals participated in the study. Respondents were purposively selected because they were the ones responsible for school governance matters. Three data collection methods were used, namely; observations, interviews and document analysis. Data were analysed using thematic analysis. Findings revealed that SGBs lack capacity to execute their duties as school governors, and that English remains the language of choice because of the status it has in the economic and academic world. The study also found that SGBs cannot choose African languages because they are not developed as languages of science and technology. Conclusions drawn from this study are that SGBs do not participate in the

drafting of the language policy because most members are illiterate and are not aware of the power vested in them by SASA to determine the language policy of their schools. The study also concluded that home languages are not chosen as media of instruction because there are no learning and teaching materials in those languages, and also that home languages are not used as media of instruction in secondary schools and tertiary institutions that admit learners from these primary schools. A major recommendation of the study is that indigenous languages should be developed into languages of science and technology if they are to be used as languages of teaching and learning, and that there should be a programme designed to assist grade 4 learners with the transition from using home language as medium of instruction, to using English as medium of instruction.

Key words: *Language of Learning and Teaching, Language Policy, Public Primary School, School Governing Body*

ACRONYMS

DBE	:	Department of Basic Education
FAL	:	First Additional Language
HL	:	Home Language
LOLT	:	Language of Learning and Teaching
MTE	:	Mother Tongue Education
Mol	:	Medium of Instruction
NEPA	:	National Education Policy Act
RSA	:	Republic of South Africa
SASA	:	South African Schools Act
SGB	:	School Governing Body
PanSALB	:	Pan South African Language Board
UNESCO	:	United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organisation

TABLE OF CONTENTS

DEDICATION	ii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	iii
DECLARATION	iv
ABSTRACT	iv
ACRONYMS	vii
CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY	1
1.1 INTRODUCTION	1
1.2 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY	1
1.3 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM	3
1.4 AIM OF THE STUDY	4
1.5 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY	4
1.6 RESEARCH QUESTIONS	5
1.7 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY	5
1.8 DELIMITATION OF THE STUDY	6
1.9 DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS	6
1.9.1 Language of learning and teaching	6
1.9.2 Public Primary Schools	7
1.9.3 Language policy	8
1.9.4 School Governing Body	8
1.9.5 Decentralisation	9
1.10 ORGANISATION OF THE STUDY	9
1.11 CONCLUSION	10
CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW	11
2.1 INTRODUCTION	11
2.2 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK	11
2.3 LANGUAGE PLANNING AND LANGUAGE POLICY	13
2.4 MEDIUM OF INSTRUCTION (MOI) CHALLENGES	15

2.5	LANGUAGE AND COGNITIVE DEVELOPMENT	22
2.6	LANGUAGE AND EDUCATION	24
2.7	MOTHER-TONGUE EDUCATION (MTE)	25
2.7.1	Mother-tongue education in Namibia	28
2.7.2	Mother-tongue education in Zimbabwe	29
2.7.3	Mother-tongue education in Nigeria	30
2.7.4	Mother-tongue education in Ghana	30
2.7.5	Mother-tongue education in Hong-Kong	32
2.8	MULTILINGUAL AND BILINGUAL APPROACHES IN EDUCATION	32
2.8.1	Bilingual education in Mexico	34
2.8.2	Bilingual Education in Guatemala	35
2.8.3	Bilingual Education in Peru	36
2.8.4	Advantages of bilingualism	37
2.9	LANGUAGE POLICY IN BASIC EDUCATION	38
2.10	SCHOOL GOVERNING BODY	43
2.11	IMPACTS OF USING SECOND LANGUAGE AS MEDIUM OF INSTRUCTION	47
2.12	CONCLUSION	48
<u>CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY</u>		49
3.1	<u>INTRODUCTION</u>	49
3.2	RESEARCH DESIGN	49
3.3	POPULATION	50
3.4	SAMPLE SIZE	51
3.5	DATA COLLECTION METHODS	52
3.6	DATA ANALYSIS	54
3.7	LIMITATIONS	56
3.8	ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS	57
3.8.1	Informed consent	56
3.8.2	Voluntary participation	58
3.8.3	Right for protection of subjects	58

3.8.4 Confidentiality and privacy	58
3.9 VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY	58
3.10 CONCLUSION	59
CHAPTER 4: DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS	60
4.1 INTRODUCTION	60
4.2 THEMES EMERGED FROM THE RESEARCH STUDY	60
4.2.1 Themes emerged from observation data	60
4.2.2 Themes emerged from interview data	63
4.2.3 Themes emerged from document analysis	67
4.3 CONCLUSION	68
CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION	69
5.1 INTRODUCTION	69
5.2 DISCUSSION ON FINDINGS	70
5.2.1 Why English is the preferred language of learning and teaching? ...	70
5.2.2 Language of choice in the classroom	72
5.2.3 Process of determining language policy	75
5.2.4 Marginalisation of African Languages in schools	80
5.3 CONCLUSION	84
<u>CHAPTER 6: FINDINGS, SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS</u>	85
6.1 <u>INTRODUCTION</u>	85
6.2 <u>FINDINGS</u>	85
6.3 <u>CONCLUSIONS</u>	87
6.4 <u>RECOMMENDATIONS</u>	88
6.5 CONCLUSION	91
REFERENCES	92
<u>APPENDIX A: UHDC PROPOSAL APPROVAL</u>	103
<u>APPENDIX B: ETHICAL CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE</u>	104
<u>APPENDIX C: REQUEST TO CONDUCT RESEARCH</u>	105

<u>APPENDIX D: PERMISSION FROM DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION VHEMBE DISTRICT</u>	106
<u>APPENDIX E: PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM</u>	107
<u>APPENDIX F: CLASS OBSERVATION DATA</u>	108
<u>APPENDIX G: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS ASKED SGB CHAIRPERSONS</u>	109
<u>APPENDIX H: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS ASKED PRINCIPALS</u>	112
<u>APPENDIX I: DATA COLLECTED FROM DOCUMENTS</u>	113
<u>APPENDIX J: VISITED SCHOOL – MAVHINA PRIMARY</u>	114
<u>APPENDIX K: VISITED SCHOOL – MASUNGI PRIMARY</u>	115
<u>APPENDIX L: VISITED SCHOOL – MASEDI PRIMARY</u>	116

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

1.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides the introduction and background to the study. The background to the study deals with the origin of the problem and its current status. The chapter also deals with the statement of the problem, aim and objectives of the study, research questions, significance, and delimitations of the study. It also gives definitions of key operational terms used in this study. Lastly, it presents the organisation of the study.

1.2 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

After the first democratic elections of 1994 in South Africa, the old education departments fell away, and public schools became the responsibility of provincial departments. According to legislation put in place to rectify the wrongs that were caused by the apartheid government, School Governing Bodies (SGBs) were mandated to be key partners in pursuit of the goal of multilingualism. The South African Schools Act No 84 of 1996 requires that SGBs announce the school's language policy, and that they also state how multilingualism would be promoted. The policy opens doors for multilingual approaches, but the choice of language of teaching and learning and direction lies with parents and schools (Mesthrie, 2002).

The South African Schools Act (SASA) of 1996 mandates the establishment of SGBs consisting of parents, educators and non-educator staff members. Where the school has Grade 8 learners onwards, they too are expected to be part of the SGB. The SGBs' functions are outlined in the SASA document. One of the functions is to determine the admission and language policy of the school within the framework laid down in the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, Act 108 of 1996.

Section 29(2) of the Constitution points out that education is a human right and that in public institutions, everyone has a right to receive education in the official language(s) of their choice, where that education is reasonably practicable. In determining the schools' language policy, SASSA Section 6(1) indicate the following:

- To redress the neglect of the historically disadvantaged languages in school education.
- The protection, promotion, fulfillment and extension of the individual languages rights and means of communication in education;
- The facilitation of national and international communication through promotion of bi-or multilingualism through cost-efficient and effective mechanisms.

SASSA has mandated SGBs, through decentralisation of power, to determine the language of learning and teaching in schools. The idea of decentralisation came from an understanding that the state, on its own, cannot control schools, and that, this power should be shared with stakeholders, particularly those who are closer to the school, for example, parents who are members of the SGB (Marishane,1999). It is argued that this devolution of power would lead to a healthier and stronger relationship between schools and communities, as well as provide alternative forms of accountability to bureaucratic surveillance (Gamage,1994). When parents have cordial relations with educators, the education system is likely to improve and offer room for educational alternatives and mutual responsibility is likely to grow.

The current Language-in-Education Policy (2012) stipulates that, for the first three years of schooling, learners should be taught in their Home Language (HL). Where the three-year policy is in fact being implemented, the quality of teaching is in most cases badly compromised by lack of learning materials in HL, and weak teaching methods (Owen-Smith, 2002). When learners get to Grade four, the language of learning and teaching switches to English. English, thus, becomes the medium of instruction across curricula

until Grade 12. A task team commissioned by the Minister of Basic Education in July 2009, highlighted this transition as a critical problem area in education (Owen-Smith, 2002). She further explained that the country cannot expect to have equity if it still has a system that favours some groups and disadvantages others because of the language challenge in the classroom.

Interestingly, now that SGBs are mandated to choose the language of learning and teaching in their respective schools, many public schools are still preferring English as a medium of instruction. Only schools with Afrikaans speakers use Afrikaans as the medium of instruction. Schools with learners who mostly speak African languages prefer English while neglecting their languages. Even though the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa of 1996 recognises eleven official languages, it is interesting to note that English is still the only preferred language in many public schools in the rural areas of Vhembe District, Limpopo Province. The researcher, therefore, sought to find out why English is still the preferred language of learning and teaching in most schools in Vhembe District when most of the learners in these schools speak African languages as a mother tongue.

1.3 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The use of English as a language of learning and teaching is a serious barrier to education for the South African population whose mother tongue is one of the country's nine indigenous languages (Owen-Smith, 2002). Most black African learners drop out of school before obtaining the National Senior Certificate (NSC). Among reasons cited for the massive drop-outs, language of learning and teaching comes second after poverty (Education Statistics, 2016). The result is that many black people in the country are not contributing economically and politically to the development of the country as highlighted by Tollefson (1991). According to Tollefson (1991), there is a close association between education and economic class, and he further indicated that language plays a crucial role in determining which people would complete which level of education, thereby determining the kind of jobs and salaries they will get. In that way, schools are serving as gatekeepers for the labour force.

The South African Schools Act 84 of 1996 provides for the governing body of a public school to determine the language policy of the school within the parameters of the Constitution of the Republic. As such, SGBs are mandated by this Act to choose the language of learning and teaching in their respective schools. In the implementation of this language policy, most schools are, however, still choosing English as a language of learning and teaching. This means that African languages are still being pushed to the periphery. Studies have proven that mother tongue education impacts positively on cognitive development of the learners (UNESCO, 1953; Heugh, 2002; & Cummings, 2001), yet these languages are not chosen as languages of learning and teaching in Vhembe District public primary schools. The Language-in-Education Policy of 1997 tries to address the imbalances created by apartheid policies. Hence, the choice of English (L2) as LOLT by SGBs raises many questions.

1.4 AIM OF THE STUDY

The aim of this study was to interrogate the choice of English as a language of learning and teaching by School Governing Bodies in selected public primary schools in Vhembe District.

1.5 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

For this study to achieve its aim, the following objectives were identified:

- To investigate why English is the preferred medium of instruction in public primary schools of Vhembe District;
- To determine whether English is the language of choice in the classroom setting?
- To determine how SGBs execute the process of drafting the language policy of the school; and

- To establish why African languages are marginalised as languages of learning and teaching across the curricula in public primary schools of Vhembe District.

1.6 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The following are the research questions of the study:

- Why is English the preferred language of learning and teaching across the curriculum in selected public schools in Vhembe District?
- To what extent is English the language of choice in the classroom setting?
- How do School Governing Bodies execute the process of determining the language policy of selected public schools in Vhembe District?
- Why are African languages marginalised as languages of learning and teaching in selected public schools in Vhembe District?

1.7 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The significance of this study is to make SGBs aware of their mandate to choose an official language that is best suited for their environment, to use as a language of learning and teaching, and to explore why English remains the language of choice in public primary schools of Vhembe district. This study will encourage members of the SGB to participate actively and cautiously in their responsibility to determine the languages of learning and teaching in their respective schools. The recommendations of this study might urge some SGBs to revisit their language in education policy. Parents, educators and learners are likely to benefit from this study as they become aware of the importance of mother-tongue education. The study will make recommendations which might help the Department of Basic Education to assess why SGBs sideline African languages in favour of English as language of learning and teaching in their respective schools. The study will also

recommend ways of supporting Grade 4 learners to transit more easily from home language to English as a medium of instruction.

1.8 DELIMITATION OF THE STUDY

This is a sociolinguistic study that focuses on the choice of language of learning and teaching in selected schools in Vhembe District. The study concentrated only on selected public primary schools in Vhembe District, in particular those which fall under the following local municipalities: Makhado and Collins Chabane. Given the aim of the study, the South African language policy as enshrined in the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa of 1996, was dealt with extensively. The SASA of 1996 was drawn from the Constitution. The South African school's language policy is dealt with in this Act (Act no 84 of 1996)

1.9 DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS

1.9.1 Language of learning and teaching

The Oxford Dictionary of English describes language as a method of communication used by humans. Language can either be spoken or written and it consists of words which are structured in a conventional way. Hence, language is at the core of all factors, such as cognitive and social, and all affective aspects that shape learning. Language, according to Mackey (1979), pervades all human activity, so much so that its use remains largely unconscious and unnoticed. In countries where only one language is used, language is taken for granted because it is part and parcel of everyday activity for everyone. In areas where there is more than one language, the necessity of choice creates problems. There is a question of which language will be spoken with whom, and which language will be used for which purposes.

Inglis, Thomson and Macdonald (2000) describe learning as making sense and making connections between things that are understood and new things that are experienced. New experiences only become meaningful when they are linked up with what is already known. Teaching, according to Inglis, Thompson & Macdonald (2000), refers to the role

of the teacher in guiding the learners into understanding of concepts, through direct teaching, interaction of learners among themselves and with the teacher in the shared construction of knowledge. In this view, the classroom is the central place for learning and teaching.

In the provision of formal teaching to the learner, language plays a crucial role. The language used to make sense of things becomes an essential part of how that concept is understood (Inglis et al, 2000). The language used as a medium of instruction for learning and teaching is used across curricula. The only subject that is taught in a language other than the medium of instruction is a Home language, that is, if it is not the one used for learning and teaching.

1.9.2 Public primary schools

According to New World Encyclopedia (2019), public schools refer to those schools that are funded from tax revenue and are commonly administered by local or national government agencies as part of public education. These schools primarily exist because of compulsory education laws. The term public school has two distinct meanings depending on the location. In the United Kingdom, public schools refer to privately operated schools where fees are paid. In the United States and many other countries, including South Africa, public school refers to a school funded from tax revenue and which is administered by government agencies, be it local or national. In South Africa, all public schools are state-owned. These public schools are either elementary, which refers to primary schools, or high schools. The primary school is divided into three phases, that is, Foundation Phase, which refers to Grade one to three, intermediate phase, which refers to Grade four to six, and, lastly, the senior phase, which starts in primary school at Grade seven and the first two grades of secondary school, which are eight and nine. According to SASA, every public school is regarded as a juristic person and has legal capacity to perform its functions, which include, among others, admissions, employment of educators, determining the language policy of the school, and executing curriculum and assessment.

1.9.3 Language policy

Language policy refers to the formulated decisions taken by those in authority concerning how language should be used in learning and teaching and how it would be used. Donna Kerr cited in Mesthrie (2002), suggested four tests that a good public policy must pass; namely:

- The desirability test: Is the goal of the policy desirable to the community as a whole?
- The justness test: Is the policy just and fair? That is, does it treat all people in an equitable and appropriate manner?
- The effectiveness test: Is the policy effective? Does it achieve its objectives?
- The tolerability test: Is the policy resource-sensitive? Is it viable in the context in which it is to be effected?

1.9.4 School Governing Body

A School Governing Body is a legally elected committee of the school that is responsible for governance. It is composed of the principal as an ex-officio member, parents of learners at that school or guardians, teachers, non-teaching staff members and learners in case those learners are in Grade 8 and above. The South African Schools Act no 84 of 1996 (SASA) mandates all public schools to establish a School Governing Body. The SGBs are school governors while the Schools Management Committee deals with curriculum matters. The idea of decentralisation of power came from the understanding that the state on its own cannot control schools, and therefore, this power should be shared with stakeholders, in particular, those who are closer to the school, who are parents of learners in the schools. According to SASA, the governance of every public school is vested in its governing body.

1.9.5 Decentralisation

Decentralisation involves the shifting of educational resources and decision-making responsibility for the use of such resources to schools and their communities. Gamage (2009) states that decentralisation in education is the process of devolving or delegating authority and responsibility for the distribution and use of resources, that is, financial, human and physical, to local schools by the central government. The White Paper on Education and Training, Government Notice (1995) endorses parental rights and declares that parents or guardians have the primary responsibility for the education of their children. The decentralisation of school management is described as the devolution of the decision-making authority from the higher central level, which is the Department of Basic Education, to lower local level, which is the SGB.

1.10 ORGANISATION OF THE STUDY

Chapter 1

This chapter presents the introduction and background to the study. The chapter outlines the problem statement, aim of the study, objectives, research questions, methodology, limitations and definitions of the terms.

Chapter 2

In this chapter, various literatures that relate to this study are presented. The literatures include language planning and language policy, medium of instruction challenges, language and cognitive development of learners, language and education, mother-tongue education, multilingual education, school governing body issues and lastly, impacts of using second language as medium of instruction.

Chapter 3

This chapter presents the research design and methodology. The chapter outlines the population and sampling procedures, data collection methods, ethical considerations, and validity and reliability of the study.

Chapter 4

This chapter presents and analyses data from observations, interviews and language policy documents of the schools. Thematic analysis was used to make sense of collected data.

Chapter 5

In this chapter, the discussion of the topics that emerged from data analysis is dealt with. The topics answer the research questions of the study.

Chapter 6

This chapter presents the findings of the study, summary and recommendations.

1.11 CONCLUSION

This chapter introduced the problem and background to the study in detail. It also gave a detailed a historical background of the language-in-education policy in South Africa and also discussed the current situation. In addition, the aim and objectives of the study were stated in this chapter. Research questions, significance of the study, delimitations of the study, definitions of key terms in this study as well as the organisation of the study were also discussed. The next chapter reviews related literature.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter reviews related literature. The literature review focuses on the medium of instruction issues, mother tongue education and the Language in Education policy in South Africa. Language policy, according to Tollefson (1991:2), is a conscious effort to affect the function of language varieties. These efforts may involve standardization, modernization and orthographies of programmes to particular languages in multilingual societies. After the 1994 democratic elections, a new constitution was adopted in South Africa, which ushered in the enactment of new laws within the education sector in line with the democratic dispensation policies of non-discrimination, equality and betterment of lives for all citizens (Squelch, 2000). Tollefson (1991) argues that education is very closely associated with economic class because those who get secondary and university education are likely to get better jobs like being technicians and managers. He further explains that the modern hierarchical division of labour requires a small number of high-ranking jobs and large number of unskilled and semi-skilled workers. Schools serve as gatekeepers for labour force, determining which people will have which specific jobs, and language plays a very crucial role in determining people or different groups chance of completing different levels of education. As such, language is regarded as a means for regulating access to jobs with high salaries. Those who have to learn a new language to access education or to understand classroom instruction, are often starting from a position of weakness and disadvantage.

2.2 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The study is informed by Tollefson (1991) who discusses language planning and language policy as embedded in the rise of the state. Tollefson argues that language planning and language policy should be evaluated with reference to their role in the state power exercise, and how they affect the lives of individuals. According to Tollefson (1991),

language planning involves public decisions about language, how it is used, its status and development, and decisions that have overwhelming significance socially, educationally, politically and economically for society and for individuals. Language planning entails two related but distinct types of activities; which are status planning and corpus planning. Status planning in the South African context would include the selection of official languages and their use for official and semi-official settings, for example; as media of instruction in schools, by broadcasting corporations, in the courts of law and other important spheres of government. Corpus planning, on the other hand, focuses on the lexical development and expansion of African languages. Specific examples of corpus planning would include the creation of new terminology and production of textbooks and dictionaries in those languages.

McCarty (2011) defines language policy and language planning as a process that should seek to determine how policy processes marginalize other languages while at the same time normalizing others. McCarty (2011) further states that they is need to understand how policies define communities and people whose interest they are serving, and how can ethnography can be used to create a more socially justifiable world.

When the South African government declared that nine major African languages are officially recognized, these languages immediately gained status that was previously given to English and Afrikaans only. It is within this framework that the study is established as it seeks to do an investigation into the implementation of the South African language policy in public primary schools. According to Tollefson (1991), when individuals have the right to speak in their native language in government, education, media and other important spheres, it is an effective strategy to resist being dominated by more powerful groups. In the Australia situation, Tollefson (1991) found out that the official policy of mother-tongue education has reduced drop-out rates, unemployment and lack of political participation.

2.3 LANGUAGE PLANNING AND LANGUAGE POLICY

McKay and Honberger (1996) argue that discussions of language planning often minimise or entirely overlook the point that such an activity is profoundly political in nature. Language planning involves public decisions about language, how it is used, status and development, it also involves making decisions about language that have overwhelming significance socially, economically, educationally and politically for individuals and society. Eastman (1992) defines language planning as a developing field that sees language as a social resource. Language planning consists of two distinct types of activities: status planning and corpus planning. In South African context, status planning would mean the selection of languages considered 'official', and the use of different languages in official and semi-official settings, that is; media of instruction in law courts, in schools and by the state broadcasting corporation. Corpus planning on the other hand focuses primarily on the lexical development and expansion of African languages of South Africa and Afrikaans. That would also include the production of dictionaries, textbooks and creation of new terminology (Eastman, 1992).

Language planning can serve as a tool for empowering individuals and communities. It can also maximise educational and economic development. Successful examples of language planning include the cases of Swahili (Polome & Hill, 1980 cited in (Mesthrie, 2002), and Turkish Dogancau-Aktuna cited in (Mesthrie, 2002). Language planning can, however, also be used to maintain and perpetuate oppression, social- class discrimination and educational and social inequity.

The ruling African National Congress (ANC) through its Education Department, set out proposals on things to consider during language planning in order to break the cycle of language oppression in South African society in general, and particularly in education. The factors to consider are the following:

- Language policy in education should be the subject of a nation-wide consultative process to ensure that proposed changes in policy have the broad consent of the language communities that will be directly affected by them.

- No person or language community should be compelled to receive education through a language of learning they do not want.
- No language community should have reason to fear that the education system will be used to suppress its mother tongue.
- Language restrictions should not be used to exclude citizens from educational opportunities. (African National Congress, 1995:62).

In order to ensure that the lessons indicated above are reflected in any language policy that would be developed in South Africa, the ANC discussion document identified three general principles upon which educational language policy should be based; the principles are:

- The right of the individual to choose which language or languages to study and to use as languages of learning and teaching.
- The right of the individual to develop the linguistic skills in the language of learning and teaching of his or her choice which are necessary for full participation in national, provincial and local life.
- The necessity to promote and develop South African languages that were previously disadvantaged and neglected (African National Congress, 1995: 63).

Mesthrie (2002) maintains that language planning should not be a top-down activity removed from the people whose lives it affects most closely. This would render the whole process ineffective. What is needed are language policies devised in consultation with, and with the support and involvement of the people they are intended to serve.

2.4 MEDIUM OF INSTRUCTION (MOI) CHALLENGES

Prah (cited in Owino, 2002), during the First International Conference on African Languages, pointed out that language issues were central to the whole discussion of development in Africa. He indicated that delegates to the conference had learnt that Africa needs its languages both for primary education and also for the general development of the African society. According to Prah (2000), Africa will only achieve its developmental goals better if all educational structures are linguistically indigenised.

Wolff (cited in Owino, 2002) indicates that the African language question cannot be solved until the roles of these languages as media of instruction are addressed. He further explains that this does not mean that English, French, Portuguese and those other languages will be abolished, but that they are foreign languages and deserve to be put in their proper place in the educational systems of African communities. These foreign languages are thus, not the first choice for media of instruction in African educational systems.

The International Educational Commission to Africa (Harlech-Jones, 1990) identified the following as elements to be considered in determining language of instruction:

- That every people have an inherent right to their mother tongue.
- That the multiplicity of tongues shall not be such as to develop misunderstandings and distrust among people who should be friendly and co-operative.

- That every group shall be able to communicate directly with those to whom the government is entrusted.
- That an increasing number of native people shall know at least one industrialised nations' language.
- Researchers Aucamp and Jones (cited in Harlech-Jones, 1990) state that there is a psychological and linguistic aspect embedded in the language of instruction, and that it carries the life and world view of a particular community.

The Threshold Project which was carried out in the 1980s (MacDonald, 1990), highlighted that the situation in South Africa is such that only a minority of people, English and Afrikaans speakers, both black and white, are the only ones educated in their home languages. Whereas those who speak African languages, who are the majority, have to make an early transition to learning in another language. MacDonald (1990) also points out that the situation of an early transition to learning another language greatly disadvantages the group that speaks African languages. Many African children struggle at school, and also in terms of their cultural identity.

According to MacDonald (cited in NEPI, 1993), over 70 per cent of teachers interviewed felt that children would perform better if they were taught in their home languages. The teachers who were interviewed in the research indicated that they do code-switching (CS), which is typical in multilingual societies like South Africa, but pointed out that it becomes problematic when learners have to write an assessment.

African countries are still largely using ex-colonial languages as medium of instruction in their schools. According to The National Education Policy Investigation (1993), the researchers concede that there are sound arguments for improving the quality of basic education as the first priority in the development of education. The researchers further explain that in combating poverty, basic education contributes the most as a fundamental form for community development. This can only be attained when basic schooling delivers communication skills and cognitive competencies which are worthwhile. President Banda

in his speech on Malawi's vision 2020, in the manifesto entitled 'Eradicating Poverty: Our Goal'; he says: UDF government will continue its efforts to stabilise and restructure the economy in order to broaden the economic base. This will be achieved by liberalizing the economy through diversifying the production base and allocating resources more efficiently and effectively. We will pursue policies to enhance market pricing, to move resources from public sector to private sector and to rationalise the government budget to support the goal of eradicating poverty (UDF, 1999) cited in Owino (2002). This statement however, does not indicate how the government of Malawi will reach the masses as all policies are written in a language that is not clearly understood by the people they are intending to assist. Owino (2002) points out that there should be a clear idea of what poverty alleviation means and how it may be impacted by the handling of indigenous languages versus a foreign language like English. The mass rallies where the campaigns to eradicate poverty were launched, were addressed in English. Owino (2002) wonders how the community would participate fully when the language of participation is alien to the masses. He further reiterated that there cannot be self-confidence and pride in being a Malawian, as cited by the manifesto, when the very facets of identity, which are Malawian languages are ignored.

Harlech-Jones (1987:75) observes that good policy planning takes into account how effective implementation is possible and always includes measures for review and revision. Eastman (1983) describes language planning as a developing field that sees language as a social resource. Language planning consists of two distinct types of activities: status planning and corpus planning.

According to Education Statistics (2016), Grade 12 enrolment figures of 2016 reflected only 54.5% of the appropriate school-age population. Top education analysts had blamed the shocking dropout statistics of learners before they reach matric on their weak learning during early years of schooling. According to Stats South Africa (2014), children cited poor performance as the second most important reason for dropping out of school, following lack of money.

Bamgbose (1996) in Mesthrie (2002) points out that the number of primary schools dropouts, and the figures of those who never go to school is steadily moving to a situation where more than 50 per cent of school going age children are not at school. He attributes this situation to the fact that learners are taught in a language which is not familiar to them. Reports from Zambia, for example, have indicated that the use of English as medium of instruction has resulted in the following:

- Massive student dropouts in the first years of school.
- A widening gap between those who are proficient and those who are not.
- A decreasing level of proficiency in English since independence. (Tripathi,1990; Siachitema,1992 cited in Mesthrie, 2002).

A case study in California (Hornberger,1996) shows that when learners are taught in the language that they understand and can relate better to, they develop an interest in education, and consequently continue with their education until college. The school district in the research is on the border of Mexico, with 95% Hispanic students and 80% with limited English proficiency. The district is defying the odds of low expectations of Hispanic students in the United States of America. The district annual dropout is half the State's average for Hispanic students. The success is attributed to the district approach of using parallel curricula in Spanish and sheltered English; that is English geared to the students' level of proficiency. The language of learning and teaching accommodates the needs of the students.

A research by Wits Education Policy Unit (Owen-Smith, 2004) indicated that there is a correlation between mother tongue and scholastic achievement. However, the study found that English is preferred as a language of learning and teaching, and its dominance in the school system is a reflection of a combination of factors like parental preferences, capacity and tradition. It was found that the reasons for English to be favourable as a medium of instruction were that it is associated with economic growth, it is a global

language, it is the language used for higher education and the working environment commonly uses English. Research carried out for the Threshold Project (Macdonald, cited in NEPI, 1993) indicated that neither African children nor their teachers could cope with a transition to English as the language of learning and teaching in the fifth Grade of their schooling. Many African children are said to be struggling in school, and Lockett cited in NEPI (1993) argues that the struggle is brought about by the switch from mother-tongue to a second language. She also points out that this is done at the expense of the first language which is gradually replaced.

The findings in the study by Cummings (2001) indicate that bilingual children perform better in school when the school teaches the Home Language effectively, and there is appropriate development in literacy in that language. Cenoz (2013) contends that multilingualism is the way to go because globalization has made the value of multilingualism to increase. Cenoz (2013) explains that there is need for other languages as there are almost 7000 languages in a world of 200 independent countries.

Multilingualism has benefits, as stated by Diamond (2010) that recent studies suggest that multilingual people have an advantage over monolingual ones. Multilingualism gives them constant practice of the brain because they have to decide at all times in which language they should be thinking, speaking or interpreting information, and which language rules to apply. As a result, multilingualism gives people an advantage of being active and fast thinkers.

Education theory relating to South African minority groups advocates additive bilingualism as the only feasible model of language to be applied in education (Heugh & Siegruhn, 1995). These researchers argue that an African language should be used together with English as medium of instruction if empowerment is the primary goal in the country, and that the African language used should enjoy equal status with English.

According to The World Conference on Education (1990) article (1) cited in the White Paper on Education and Training (1995), these are the core needs on basic education

Every person; child, youth, and adult shall be able to benefit from educational opportunities designed to meet their basic learning needs. These needs comprise both essential learning tools such as literacy, oral expression, numeracy and problem solving, and the basic learning content such as knowledge, skills, values and attitudes required by human beings to be able to survive, to develop their full capacities, to live and work in dignity, to participate fully in development, to improve the quality of their lives, to make informed decisions and to continue learning.

Heugh cited in Posel and Casale (2011) report that the use of English as a language of learning and teaching has had adverse consequences for learners' general academic success and cognitive development, which in turn makes what is declared by The World Conference on Education for All, difficult to achieve. Posel and Casale (2011) also report that only 27 percent of school entrants are expected to leave the school system with a matric qualification, mainly because of the language barrier. A number of small-scale studies conducted in schools of low levels of language competency and poor classroom performance also indicate high failure rate of these learners at tertiary level as they are unable to cope with the demands of a more advanced English-taught curriculum Heugh and Probyn (cited in Posel and Casale, 2011).

Cummings (cited in Inglis et al., 2000) argues that if Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP) has not been fully developed in the learners' first language, learners are likely to experience extreme difficulty with CALP related tasks in the second language. This, according to Cummings, implies that a second language should only be introduced as a language of learning and teaching when the learner is twelve or thirteen years old. A study done in isiZulu speaking schools in KwaZulu Natal have this case study:

Nathi is a ten-year old isiZulu speaking child. He attends a small rural primary school of 200 learners in which the majority speak isiZulu as their mother tongue. Until the end of Grade 4 he was taught all his subjects in isiZulu with the exception of English which was introduced as a subject when he was in Grade 2. At the end of Grade 4 his teacher was satisfied that he had made good academic progress and that he had also developed the social skills necessary to interact well with his teachers and his peers. At the beginning of Grade 5, the language of learning and teaching switched from isiZulu to English and at the same

time the children were encouraged to use only English in the playground. Although Nathi has a highly motivated and competent teacher and is happy to communicate with her and his peers in English, he now appears to be having some serious academic difficulties. His marks have dropped significantly in all subjects except isiZulu, which he is now taught as a subject and he often seems unmotivated and rather withdrawn. His parents, who have been looking forward to him being taught in English and repeatedly emphasised how important this is for his future, are disappointed; his teacher is frustrated and uncertain about what to do and is beginning to wonder whether his academic abilities have been overestimated and he is, after all, a weak student.”

Cummings (cited in Inglis et al., 2000) indicates that the situation of Nathi is commonly experienced by young learners in South Africa who begin their schooling in mother tongue and switch to English as their LOLT in Grade 5. Many teachers do not know how to assist these learners and usually come to the conclusion that the problem lies within the learners who they define as academically incompetent. Another principle on which Cummings' (1984) arguments are based is that any bilingual education needs to be additive in nature. When the second language is introduced, it should never be at the expense of mother tongue. The mother tongue should be developed and valued alongside the new introduced language.

Mother-tongue based education is the best for basic education because children learn better if they are instructed in their mother-tongue (Fasold,1984). However, political, economic, socio-cultural and technical factors are often considered and used as reasons for not using mother-tongue instruction for children in multilingual contexts. Owen-Smith (2002) explains that the state of indigenous languages should not be an issue in allowing African languages to play their part in the medium of instruction issues as terminology development in these languages can be dealt with by subject experts and teachers and be backed up by professional linguists and translators. For example, at the University of Limpopo, material was developed in English and Sesotho sa Leboa (Sepedi) for the first Bilingual Degree course.

2.5 LANGUAGE AND COGNITIVE DEVELOPMENT

Studies that were conducted in relation to language and cognitive development, for example, the 'Ife Experimental Project' in Nigeria in the 1970s, the Experimental School Project in Mali in, and the Threshold Project in South Africa (cited in NEPI, 1993) all produced results that support the following conclusions:

- There are cognitive benefits to be derived when the child's home language is used as the language of instruction in early education. Research carried out for the Ife Project in the 1970s highlighted the fact that the gains to be accrued by children instructed in their mother tongue are many, falling under various categories like cultural, affective, cognitive, socio-psychological and pedagogic (Fafunwa, 1986).
- Where the home language is different from the language of instruction used in the classroom, pedagogical and cognitive problems can be attributed to the choice of language of instruction used in the classroom.
- In direct comparison, children receiving mother-tongue education generally perform better than their counterparts receiving a foreign language education. This is also true for core subjects such as mathematics and science.
- Repeating classes occurs far less in mother-tongue schools as compared to foreign language schools. In the Mali project, 48 per cent reached Grade 6 without repetitions in mother-tongue schools, compared to only 7 per cent in French-medium schools.

Webb and Kembo-Sure (2000) highlight the impact of using second language medium of instruction in primary schools by indicating that language-based problems are in the domain of education. Statistics South Africa (2014) gave a gloomy picture of how South African learners perform in the category of Mathematics, Home Languages and English Additional Language.

The Annual National Assessment of 2014 report given by Statistics South Africa, indicated what is happening in the public primary schools of the country. Three subjects were assessed in three different grades, which are Grade 3, 6 and 9. In Grade 3, home language is used as the language of learning and teaching. In Grades 6 and 9, English is used as a language of learning and teaching. The subjects assessed were; Mathematics, Home Language and English First Additional Language. A research done by the University of Witwatersrand Policy Unit on the performance of learners in public schools when using English as a language of learning and teaching revealed shocking statistics which are indicated below (Statistics, 2016).

From the analysis of learners' responses in 2012-2014, the following areas were identified as challenges in Grade 6:

MATHEMATICS

- Learners are unfamiliar with Mathematics terminology and properties.
- Basic algebraic skills have not been mastered.
- Learners do not know how to solve applications in problems involving spatial manipulations.

LANGUAGES

- Learners struggle to respond to questions that require the use of their own words, therefore, summarizing a text using own words becomes extremely difficult.
- Learners are unable to interpret a sentence or give an opinion when required.
- Learners lack the required editing skills when writing letters.

Webb and Kembo-Sure (2000) attribute the low performance of South African learners in Mathematics and Sciences to the use of English as medium of instruction. He further explains that these learners are restricted from accessing knowledge, which results in low productivity and ineffective performance. This has a negative impact also in the workplace, political participation and it brings about linguistic and cultural alienation.

2.6 LANGUAGE AND EDUCATION

McCarty (2011) points out the dangers of undermining indigenous languages of young learners. Hymes (cited in McCarty, 2011) argues that when schools use the learners second language as a LOLT, they are defining a certain proportion of people as inferior, even convincing them to see themselves as such, doing so on the seemingly neutral ground of language. In a study conducted by McCarty (2011) among Navajo speaking learners in the United States of America, one educator summed up Navajo students' language proficiencies this way:

I would say one-third have a hard time understanding English, then one-third will understand and speak some, and one third are fluent. So, they are all divided and the whole school is so divided that there is no unity.

The most devastating part of the study was finding that the students are neither fluent in Navajo nor English. The lack of development in their home language made it very difficult for the learners to acquire skills in learning the second language, which is English. Some non-native educators suggested that parents were not speaking to their children at home and this led to what they called "Language Delayed", or lacking ability in either Navajo or English. McCarty (2011) also points out that there is growing evidence from linguistic scholars that heritage language education strengthens children's acquisition of the indigenous language while it also promotes healthy ethnic identities and improving academic achievement.

In their study on language and culture, Mahadi and Jafari (2012) assert that memory and perception are affected by words and expressions which are available in one's language and that people tend to notice things that are codable in their own language. Things that fall within the scope of words and expressions that are readily available would be easy to understand. Redding-Jones (cited in Mahadi and Jafari, 2012) avers that curricula should be linguistically and culturally relevant. No language or group should be accorded more value or recognition than others, and that the classroom environment should showcase

linguistic materials from diverse backgrounds to indicate that everyone is recognized and appreciated.

Fillerup (cited in McCarty, 2011) in a study at another part of Navajo speaking people in the South Western part of the United States of America, found a school that has set out to teach their learners that all languages are important, and it is fine to be different. Fillerup (cited in McCarty, 2011) searched for innovative ways that would bridge the gap between the academic achievement of language minority and language majority children. In the school where the study was done, Fillerup found that two parallel bilingual programmes were implemented. One Navajo teacher in the school explained that the mission of the school is to fight for the children to have the right to learn their heritage language and culture. He further explained that the vision of the school was to create an environment where each child's language and culture is regarded as an indispensable resource, and not as a problem to be solved. In so doing, the school has uplifted the status of Navajo and made every Navajo child to be proud of speaking his own language at school. The school founder, Michael Fillerup, named the school "Puente de Hozho", which literally means "Bridge of Beauty". The school principal explained that the name of the school mirrors the vision of the school, which is to build bridges between rich cultures of the American South West people, who are Navajo and Latino. Children in this school know that when they go out into the world, they will find people who speak Navajo, those who speak Latino and those who speak English. That is how the world is and that is how they are taught in their school.

2.7 MOTHER-TONGUE EDUCATION (MTE)

Mother-tongue education refers to when learners' first language is used in the process of learning and teaching. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisations (2003) defines mother tongue as the language or languages that one has learnt first, the language that one identifies with.

Mother Tongue-Based Bilingual Education is a system which recognizes the learners' knowledge and experiences in mother tongue and starts by developing the learners

reading, writing and thinking skills in their mother tongue while the foreign language is only taught as a subject. Second language will be used alongside the mother-tongue based on the learners' competency for mother tongue. This is done after time has been taken to build second language skills to an extent that learners have the opportunity to achieve good grades in their mother tongue.

The South African Constitution guarantees equal status to all the eleven major languages spoken in South Africa. Satyo (cited in Phaswana, 2000) with regards to language policy state:

This apparently very generous language policy comes after many years of non-recognition of any African language as one of the official languages. In fact, to even talk about the possibility of an African language being one of the official languages sounds bizarre given the fact that Africans and other black people were not allowed to vote. The othering of all the African languages, in spite of the demographic realities, is still worth noting (p.150).

South Africa's New Language Policy, The Facts (cited in Phaswana, 2000) indicated that because the majority of South Africans use African languages as their home languages, official status was granted to all the major languages. African social scientists have been preoccupied by the theme of development of African languages for education and science for decades. Prah (cited in Owino, 2002) states that indigenous languages are the most crucial missing link in the planning and development of culture, science and technology based on the historical foundations rooted in practices of African people.

In Tanzania, mother-tongue policy proved to be successful. UNESCO (cited in Mvula 1992:42), indicates the use of mother-tongue policy as a reason for Tanzania to have achieved the highest rate of literacy in Africa, which in the year 1992, was at 77.6%. Tanzania was using Kiswahili as medium of instruction throughout primary school. However, the Daily Times (cited in Mvula, 1992:41-42), reported that students who were receiving education through Kiswahili medium, encountered problems in science as a subject and they also had admission problems at institutions of higher learning. Mvula

avers that in Malawi, the use of Chichewa as medium of instruction in adult literacy schools has increased productivity in agriculture and also improved the standard of living of the masses. Tollefson (1991) indicated that for a country to show its commitment to democracy, it is a fundamental right to use mother tongue in school and at work. Mother-tongue education, according to Benson (2005), allows children to be themselves in the classroom and to develop their personalities as well as their intellect, whereas in submersion classrooms, they are forced to sit silently or repeat mechanically, leading to frustration and ultimately repetition, failure and drop out (Skutnabb-Kangas, 2004). The six-year primary project in Nigeria, Fafunwa (cited in Benson, 2005), support the use of mother tongue education in the first six years of schooling. This project demonstrated unequivocally that a full six years primary education in mother tongue with L2 taught only as a subject was not only viable but gave better results than an all English schooling. In South Africa, the right of learners to receive education in the official language(s) of their choice as provided for in section 29 (2) of the constitution is however, of a restricted nature in that it can only be provided where it is reasonably practicable. The right to education recognizes the important right of children to be taught in their mother tongue but balances this authoritative with conditions of practicality. The HSRC has found that the quality of education in South Africa is in a bad state compared to that of poorer countries. A dismal performance was indicated in national pupil performance in mathematics, science and literacy. Skutnab-Kangas (2004) in a rhetorical question asks if politicians and lawyers are ignorant of the fact that education of a dominated minorities through the medium of a dominant foreign language may participate in committing linguistic genocide.

Mullis and Martin (2007) indicate that South Africa came last in a study of 40 countries that took part in the Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS) with an average score of 302 while the world average was 500. Mullis and Martin (2007) argue that mother tongue education seems to be much more appropriate in diverse language populations even though most parents in the country opt for English as a language of learning and teaching. This state of affairs is supported by the Government Gazette on Education and Training (1995) on a student recovery programme in Science and Mathematics, where the government identifies a dearth of black students with Science

and Mathematics who qualify for entry into higher education. The government also identified a cycle of mediocrity among educators of Mathematics and Science, who are found to have very poor knowledge in their subjects and their professional confidence is generally very low.

Tollefson (1991) explains that since education plays an important role in employment and gaining access to political power, then mother tongue education or its denial is one of the crucial issues in language policy. He further argues that when countries adopt one or more languages of instruction, learners who do not speak that language of instruction may be at a disadvantage if they have to compete with native speakers. Mother tongue education in countries that were previously colonized have been researched by many scholars in an attempt to find a balance between learners using their own indigenous language as a medium of instruction, and those using a second language as medium of instruction in their schools. The results in different countries were almost similar.

2.7.1 Mother-tongue education in Namibia

The Language Bureau of Namibia during the apartheid era, set up an inquiry to look into matters of non-white education (Administration of South West Africa, cited in Harlech-Jones, 1990). The report found that where only four years of schooling is given in the mother tongue, it will limit the development of the indigenous language of the children. The commission also found that the limited use of mother-tongue will also limit the development of literature and that the logical conclusion would be that the languages will eventually degenerate. The commission pointed out that everywhere the native languages are still so undeveloped that they cannot take their rightful place alongside other developed languages as mediums of instruction.

The commission of enquiry of 1958 in Namibia cited in Harlech-Jones (1990) recommended that materials be produced in vernacular languages so that learners could be taught in their mother tongue. The commission was able to specify mother-tongue as having an intrinsic role in the specification of culture, and that it makes one find his origin and background, and therein, one's identity is reflected. As a result of the findings of this

commission, the authorities were engaged in extensive corpus planning wherein linguists and linguistic knowledge were employed both as facilitators and as a way of providing scientific justification of using mother-tongue as medium of instruction in schools. The application of mother-tongue education in black schools and the development of teaching materials in vernacular, led Steyn cited in (Harlech-Jones, 1990) to claim that “The Afrikaner government has certainly imposed racial discrimination, but they have not been guilty of language discrimination translated from Afrikaans”.

The fact that the medium of instruction was Afrikaans in secondary schools in Namibia did not hamper learning of black children. Students adjusted easily after having acquired the most basic knowledge through their mother tongue (Harlech-Jones, 1990). Hornberger (1996) reflects that research findings suggest that the stronger the foundation in mother tongue (L1), the greater the potential of learning second language (L2), which might be the language of learning and teaching in later years of schooling. Hornberger (1996) further stated that when programme decisions are made through a process involving both teachers and the community they serve, and on the basis that both goals and programme structure are agreed on by all involved, the likelihood of achieving success in educational matters is greatly improved.

2.7.2 Mother-tongue education in Zimbabwe

The 1987 Education Act language Policy in Zimbabwe prioritized only two indigenous languages, that is, Shona and Ndebele (Unicef, 2016). The two languages are used as medium of instruction up to Grade 3, depending on which is the more dominant in the community, from Grade 4, the two languages are only taught as subjects and English becomes the medium of instruction. Makaudze (2012) cited in Unicef (2016) view the Zimbabwe Language Policy as neo-colonial, given the fact that English is still given a central position. Makaudze (2012) further indicated that this policy is just a replica of the colonial language policies that valued foreign languages more than indigenous ones. This is emphasised by the fact that an Ordinary Level Certificate is considered invalid without English but would be considered valid without an indigenous language. Learners who cannot master second language, which is English, would never qualify to get the Ordinary

Level Certificate (Shizha, cited in Unicef, 2016). The Education Amendment Bill of 2006 promoted Shona to be a medium of instruction in all subjects up to Grade 7. The bill states that “Shona may be used as medium of instruction prior to Form 1”. The use of the word “may”, gives room for schools to use English which has been proved to be favoured by many. This option compromises the whole purpose of introducing Shona in the system (Maradze, 2014). Another obstacle to using Shona as medium of instruction, as indicated by Maradze (2014) is the lack of teaching material in indigenous languages.

2.7.3 Mother-tongue education in Nigeria

There is a noticeable change on Language Policy in Nigeria. Oyo, which is one of Nigeria’s twenty-one states, has nearly 100 000 primary school students who are taught through the medium of mother-tongue, which is Yoruba. There are nine other Nigerian states, with more than two million students, who are in the various stages of adopting the mother-tongue programme (Pierce & Ridge, 1997 cited in Owino, 2002). The Federal Government of Nigeria has shown total commitment to the transformation of language policy by getting seriously involved in the intensive effort to translate textbooks which are written in English into Yoruba, Ibo, Hausa, Nupe and other Nigerian languages (Cline-Bailey, 1994 cited in Owino, 2002).

2.7.4 Mother-tongue education in Ghana

Researchers have traced the history of language-in-education policy in Ghana, from the Gold Coast period in 1925 to present day.

- The education policy of 1920 stated that while English education must be given, it must be based solidly on the vernacular for the first three years of primary school (McWilliam & Kwamena-Poh, 1975) cited in Klu and Ansre (2018).
- From 1957-1963, the decision to use a Ghanaian language as medium of instruction from P1-P3 was rescinded and English became the medium of instruction throughout primary school.

- In 1967, the National Liberation Council (NLC) was formed, another Education Review Committee was set up. The committee advocated that a Ghanaian language be used as medium of instruction in the first three years of primary school.
- In May 2002, a new language-in-education policy was promulgated. The directive from the Ministry of Education stated that English language should be used as medium of instruction from primary class one onwards.
- By 2004, the “English only” language-in-education policy was reversed. Mother-tongue was to be used as medium of instruction for the first three years of primary school.

The findings in these studies indicate the fluctuations of the language policy as presented by Bamgbose (2008) cited in Klu and Ansre (2018) who indicated the lack of political will on the part of governments and other stakeholders to prioritise education. The search for a suitable language-in-education policy is still going on in Ghana. Ghana education service is trying to find lasting solutions to the language-in-education policy, with the assistance from United State Agency for International Development (USAID) and “FHI 360”, which is an International Human Development Non-governmental Organisation (Klu & Ansre, 2018).

Ghana’s Minister of Education (Language Magazine, 2015) stated that once English is removed as the medium of instruction from public schools, the country will change. She indicated that there are over 46 languages spoken in Ghana, but English is still used as the official language and the medium of instruction in schools, which is hindering development. The Minister used the education of Korea as an example, which had rocketed in school attendance and improvement once they switched to mother-tongue education. She highlighted how the country is disadvantaging its children by teaching them in the language they cannot follow. The Minister indicated that Ghanaian children are bright but fail to progress because they are trapped in the school system where they

are taught through a wrong medium which they cannot even follow. She called on Africa to end poverty by focusing on the quality and relevance of curriculum through the right medium of instruction, which is the students' mother-tongue (Language Magazine.com).

2.7.5 Mother-tongue education in Hong-Kong

Cantonese is the main language spoken in Hong-Kong. The country was a colony of the United Kingdom and as such, English was the medium of instruction in the schools until 1997 (Ball, 2014). In her study, Ball (2014) found that the new government in Hong-Kong realized that children were not progressing in school and drop-out rates were extremely high. Cantonese, which is the indigenous language mainly spoken in Hong-Kong, was revived as a medium of instruction in schools. From the 1998 until 1999 school year, there was a directive from government to use Cantonese as medium of instruction in schools, and 75 percent of schools began using Cantonese as a medium of instruction until the end of secondary schooling. A study was carried out by the Department of Basic Education to measure the success of the programme. Students in Chinese medium schools performed better in Science, History and Geography, compared to the students in schools with English as medium of instruction. The Education Bureau Circular No 5 (2009) indicated that teaching in mother-tongue boosts motivation for learning among students as they understand concepts better than when they are taught in a foreign language. Students pay extra attention in lessons and there is improvement in performance (Ball, 2014). UNESCO has encouraged mother tongue education since 1953 (UNESCO,1953), and has always highlighted the advantages of mother-tongue education in the early years of schooling.

2.8 MULTILINGUAL AND BILINGUAL APPROACH IN EDUCATION

Multilingualism refers to the ability to use or speak different languages. Mostly, the richness of multilingualism is in speaking rather than the ability to write these various languages (Prah, 2009). South Africa, by virtue of having eleven official languages, automatically becomes a multilingual country, as it is enshrined in the constitution.

Alexander (1996) observes that South Africa is undergoing great change, mostly in areas of educational and language policy, so much so that the country is moving away from policies that emphasised strong boundaries between language and people. Alexander (1996) further argues that multilingualism, which challenges the inseparability of language, culture and identity, is the one factor that will play a large part in achieving a new identity. Multilingualism is seen as a resource to be drawn upon in this dynamic view of a new identity for South Africans. Young et al., (1995) cited in Mesthrie (2002) indicate the complexities of South Africa's language policy; outside the classroom, people use their linguistic resources in flexible ways to communicate and achieve their purposes. In the classroom however, the teacher is expected to develop linguistic abilities for learners in demonstrable ways. For example, the teacher must see to it that learners write essays in Xhosa without mixing with English and vice versa. Multilingualism for the teacher is not only a resource but also a problem.

Language Policy in Education has been largely debated by researchers. Lockett (cited in NEPI, 1993) had put the notion of bilingual education firmly on the agenda. She argued strongly for a bilingual/multilingual approach in South African public schools. This policy was supported by the National Language Project (NLP) cited in the publication "Language Projects Review", which was later renamed "Bua", which means "speak".

Teacher education has neglected the area of teaching African languages to students for a dual-medium policy so that they can be equipped to conduct lessons in multicultural classrooms (Dowling & Maseko, cited in Mesthrie, 2002). Young (1995) has proposed, that for teacher trainees, there should be a core curriculum in language education, which include language proficiency, language awareness and methodologies in this area.

Most bilingual programmes in developing countries use mother tongue as a language of learning at teaching only for the first two or three years of schooling, and an abrupt transition occurs in the fourth year to the dominant language (Baker, 2001). Benson (2002) notes that this model of switching to the dominant language after only two or three years of schooling is not effective, as children by that age have not yet learned the basic aspects of mother tongue. According to Benson (2002), this model is however supported

by parents as they believe that learning in a foreign language is key to the success of their children. Politicians support the model because it gives the appearance of teaching a prestigious language.

Benson (2002) found that mother tongue-based bilingual education is the most effective in minority education. Mother tongue-based bilingual education starts with the learners' knowledge and experiences by developing reading, writing and thinking skills in the mother tongue, while the foreign language is taught only as a subject. Cummings (2001) notes that if time is taken to build second language skills based on the competence of the mother tongue, learners have the opportunity to achieve more. Designing a schooling system that recognizes the ethnolinguistic background and competence of learners goes a long way toward improving educational opportunities for all (Benson, 2002).

Cummings and Tamayo (1994) in their study on Language and Education in Latin American countries, Mexico, Guatemala, Peru, Bolivia, Paraguay and Brazil, found that the combination of providing education to minority groups in their own language, using teachers from the same language group is highly effective. The researchers also found that the programme increases learning when the groups' history and perspective are included in the school curriculum. The study emphasises the increased and prolonged use of the native language for the success of bilingual education. Modiano (1973) cited in Cummings and Tamayo (1994), reiterate the fact that reading comprehension is greater for bilingual students who first learnt to read in their native language, and then transferred their reading skills to the second language, which is Spanish. Davis (cited in Cummings & Tamayo, 1994) found that education in vernacular languages improves and develops a student's ability to learn a second language.

2.8.1 Bilingual education in Mexico

Modiano (cited in Cummings and Tamayo, 1994) found that there are at least 56 languages with various regional dialects in Mexico, in addition to the national language, which is Spanish. The Ministry of Education formally established its first bilingual programme for monolingual indigenous people in 1951. In 1983, the Direccionm General

de Educacion Indigena (DGEI) which is a division of the secretariat of Public Education, would only hire personnel considered to be indigenous and fluent in an indigenous language as well as Spanish (Varesse,1990) as cited in Cummings and Tamayo (1994). While the programme was continuing to acquire teaching materials, linguists were also continuing to study indigenous languages in Mexico for educational material development. In a study done with 1600 children in the Chiapas area in Mexico between the years 1964 and 1965, it was found that children who attended mother tongue-based schools performed much better in reading Spanish than those attending schools using second language, which is Spanish. The children also preferred indigenous teachers and seemed to have learned much better from them than Spanish ones (Dutcher 1982) cited in Cummings and Tamayo (1994).

2.8.2 Bilingual education in Guatemala

Recent studies show that 75% of Guatemalans speak one of the four major Mayan languages; K'iche, Man, Kacqchikel, and Q'eqchi (Steel,1993 cited in Cummings and Tamayo 1994). The Ministry of Education adopted a programme called castellanisation. Only bilingual teachers with Spanish and a Mayan language were hired. The teacher also had to pass a four weeks course on teacher training methods. The programme had two main objectives; to improve teacher training and to develop educational materials of greater cultural relevancy. The programme had been seen as Guatemala's most successful functioning bilingual education programme. The model gave pre-tests and post-tests to students using the programme and to those using the indigenous schools where only Spanish is used as a language of learning and teaching. In the experimental schools, students surpassed those from traditional schools by far in their mastery of all school subjects including Spanish. Dropout rates in the experimental schools declined and there was improvement in school attendance and promotion rates (Morren,1998) cited in Cummings and Tamayo 1994).

The success of the programme in Guatemala can be understood from the indicators derived from evaluations. Attendance rates and promotions have improved, compared to a controlled group of Mayan children who were taught only in Spanish. The students in

the programme received higher scores on all subjects, including mastery of Spanish (Morren, 1988 cited in Cummings & Tamayo, 1994). The results from this study confirm the findings of other researchers Modiano, Dutcher, cited in (Cummings and Tamayo, 1994) who argue that the success of bilingual education lies in teaching students in their native language for as long as it is necessary, then introduce the second language to be used along with the native one.

2.8.3 Bilingual education in Peru

Siguan and Mackey (1987) cited in Cummings and Tamayo (1994), in their study on bilingual education in Peru, found that most Peruvian indigenous communities are extremely impoverished and are located in isolated regions. Due to geographic and cultural isolation, monolingualism is prevalent amongst indigenous communities. The Peruvian Education Act of 1972 codified bilingual education. The Política Nacional de Educación Bilingüe, defined the institution's objectives as follows:

- Ethnic consciousness raising.
- Creation of national pluralistic culture.
- The use of Spanish as the common language while maintaining respect for linguistic diversity (Minaya-Row, 1988) cited in Cummings and Tamayo (1994).

Hornberger (1989) found out that classes in this programme were taught in Spanish and Quechua or Aymara, depending on the ethnicity of the community. The programme developed teaching material from both Spanish and indigenous cultures. All classes including Mathematics, Natural Sciences and Social Sciences were taught in mother tongue. Grammar textbooks were developed which described the indigenous language structure and Spanish books containing indigenous language translations (Jung, Urban & Serrano, 1989 cited in Cummings and Tamayo, 1994).

According to Horberger (1993), in a qualitative research he did in Peru, the programme was very successful. Children participating in the programme had a greater

understanding of both written and oral tests in Spanish and Quenchua compared to children taught in Spanish only.

Similar programmes have been introduced in Bolivia, Paraguay and Brazil. Large populations of indigenous children in all the six researched countries have indicated the need of mother-tongue education in order for them to learn and progress. They indicated the need for an education system that recognises their needs (Psacharopoulos & Patrinos, 1993) cited in Cummings and Tamayo (1994). Several recent studies have indicated that poverty decreases when there is an increase in educational attainment.

2.8.4 Advantages of bilingualism

Lambert (1990) concedes that there is evidence from researchers that bilingualism has tremendous advantages in terms of language competences, cognitive and social development. It is also indicated that bilinguals score significantly higher than monolinguals on both verbal and non-verbal measures of intelligence (Lambert, 1990). In a study about Bilingual Education in California by Trujillo (2007), it was indicated that several studies have found support for bilingual education. When evaluation was done for students in bilingual classrooms against those in monolingual classrooms, in no case did the English-only programmes outperform those in bilingual classrooms. Studies done in the United States on Bilingual Programmes (Brisk & Proctor, 2017) found the following benefits for bilingual children: metalinguistic and metacognitive awareness, symbolic representation, attentional control and problem solving. Conklin and Lourie (1983) cited in Brisk and Proctor (2017) argued that children coming from different cultural backgrounds bring specific knowledge with them that serve as foundation upon which to build and encourage those learners to participate actively in Science discussions. However, there are scholars who argue that there are too many challenges in Bilingual Programming. The fact that there are no native versions of the tests given to students disadvantages learners who speak native languages. Teachers do not have training and experience in second language learning. Curriculum and Materials Development is still the biggest challenge in languages other than English (Pimentel, 2011 cited in Brisk and Proctor 2017). Brisk and Proctor (2017) maintain that bilingual education plays an

important role in the global society as it allows students to use all their language and cultural resources, and prepares individuals to function in a global society which has become the twenty-first century's education cornerstone.

2.9 LANGUAGE POLICY IN BASIC EDUCATION

The National Education Policy Act (NEPA) (1996) empowers the Minister of Basic Education to determine a national policy for language in education. As provided for in the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, the Department of Basic Education recognizes multilingualism, development and respect of all languages used in the country. The Language-in-Education Policy (1997) indicates that policy in language is meant to facilitate communication across the barriers of colour, language and religion.

The underlying principle of Language-in-Education Policy (LiEP, 1997) is to provide and maintain the use of home language as a language of learning and teaching in the early years of learning, while also providing access to additional language(s). The Language-in-Education Policy is designed to promote the use of learners' home languages in school. It is also meant to ensure that learners acquire an additional language of communication in order to encourage respect for other languages and to facilitate the bridging of the division by race, language and religion (LiEP, 1997).

In the spirit of the new democratic and inclusive government of post-apartheid South Africa, 11 languages were declared to be official at national level by the constitution of South Africa, 1996. These were Afrikaans and English, the home languages of most Whites, Coloured and Indian South Africans, as well as nine African languages spoken by almost 98 percent of the black African population (Probyn, et al., in Posale and Casale 2011).

Phaswana (1998) indicates that the South African government did not ignore and sacrifice the multilingual and multicultural nature of the society for a Eurocentric monolithic approach to language and culture, as was done by most post-colonial governments in Africa. Post-Apartheid South Africa embraces both multiculturalism and multilingualism.

As a government's commitment to the implementation of the constitutional mandate to ensure equal status of all major languages spoken in the country, the Language Plan Task Group (LANGTAG) was established to eradicate the notion of "multilingualism-is-a-problem-approach", and to advise the Minister of Arts, Culture, Science and Technology about mechanisms for devising a National Language Plan for South Africa. However, Maartens (cited in Phaswana (2000)), observes that it is becoming increasingly apparent that a considerable mismatch appears to exist between emerging language policy on the one hand, and actual language practice in the spheres of government and education on the other hand. Whereas language policy expressly professes to promote multilingualism in South Africa, language practitioners in languages other than English are complaining that their languages are being marginalized to an even greater extent than in the past.

Heugh (cited in Phaswana, 2000) claims that the ANC led government has taken a laissez-faire position on the question of language, on the basis that there are no strategies for implementing the language policy formulated. Phaswana (2000) argues that South Africa is fast moving in the direction of other post-colonial African countries, that of becoming a monolingual English country. He also argues that if the government continues using ex-colonial languages as its sole language of communication, the vast African-language-speaking majority's economic disempowerment will continue as they will be denied access to education, economic resources and political power because language will serve as a barrier for them to access such. In an investigation conducted at the University of KwaZulu Natal, Durban Campus, about language of learning and teaching as a contributing factor in high matric failure, Phaswana (2000) found that all students interviewed were expressing their concern for the development of African languages to be used as languages of learning and teaching. One student said:

Although there should be some preparation for the matric examination to be written in our languages, to avoid all these problems, for the time being, the best thing to do would be to see to it that question papers are written in both English and our languages. In this way, all students will be given a fair chance to understand what the questions require, rather than one group of students being advantaged in that only their languages are used in teaching and in examinations. For now, let the

language of exam still be English while making sure that our own languages are developed for this purpose (Phaswana, 2000).

Phaswana (1998) found out that students, teachers, markers, examiners and invigilators all expressed the same sentiments that using a second language for learning and teaching is difficult for learners and make them seem incompetent and lacking willingness to learn.

In South Africa, English is regarded as a language of high status (Carey, 1993) since it is used in politics, economic interactions and as a language of academic power. Carey further identifies the problems that learners in townships and rural communities will face when using English as a language of learning and teaching, saying that receiving their entire education in English will be insufficient to develop their literacy level good enough for post-secondary schooling unless they receive further enrichment lessons. Eastman (1992:105) indicates that “even though African languages have produced many different genres of literature, Afrikaans and English are the languages of science and technology at the moment in South Africa”. Eastman (1992) regards Afrikaans as an indigenous language which has fully acquired and attained university status. Alexander (1992) believes that just like Afrikaans, African languages can also be developed to the point where they can be used as languages of learning and teaching. Alexander indicates that factors towards the promotion of a language are determined by the economy. He argues that resources have to be found to promote and encourage the development and promotion of all other languages, irrespective of how long it might take. He further states that it should come to a point where, if people so wish, some subjects at universities could be offered in African languages.

The Language-in-Education Policy, read together with the South African Schools Act, places the emphasis on choice of language of learning and teaching. The SASA confers the right to the choice of language of learning and teaching to the School Governing Body. As such, the language policy of the school is determined by the SGB as provided for by legislation. The Language-in-Education Policy has among others, the following stipulations:

- All learners shall be offered one approved language as a subject in Grade 1 and 2.
- From Grade 3 onwards, all learners shall be offered their language of learning and teaching and at least one additional approved language as a subject.
- Learners must choose their language of learning and teaching upon application for admission to a particular school. Where a school uses the language of learning and teaching chosen by the learner, and where there is space available in the relevant Grade that is using the same medium of instruction, the school must admit the learner.
- It is reasonably practical to provide education in a particular language of learning and teaching if at least 40 learners in Grades 1 to 6 or 35 learners in Grades 7 to 12 request it in a particular school.

In essence, the School Governing Body has absolute powers in determining the language policy of their school. A case in point is that of Fochville High School, an Afrikaans medium high school in Gauteng province (du Preez, 2013). The school was ordered by Gauteng Department of Basic Education to accept 37 black speaking learners. The school Governing Body immediately applied for a court interdict against the department, arguing that the school had lawfully determined the language policy of the school, which is Afrikaans, and the school capacity, and on those grounds, they could not accept the learners. The school also argued that they could have accepted those learners, if they had accepted that their language of learning and teaching would be Afrikaans. Their point of departure was section 29 (2) of the constitution, which states that everyone has the right to receive education in the language of their choice in public schools, where that education is reasonably practicable. Section 29(2) also makes provision for single medium schools, but taking into account, practicability, and the need to redress the past.

Another case in point is that of the Western Cape Department of Basic Education and others versus SGB of Mikro Primary School (du Preez, 2013). The Supreme Court of Appeal ruled that SGBs of public schools have the power to determine language policy of their schools, and that those powers were subject to the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, SASA and other applicable legislation. That decision was very important as it affirmed the right of learners to receive education in the language of their choice, and also that some schools are entitled to offer single medium instruction.

There have been more instances where SGBs took the provincial government to court. Some of these instances are: The case of PH Odendaal High School, the case of Kalahari High School, Northern Cape Agricultural High School, Wrenchville Secondary School, Seodin Primary School, Kuruman Primary School and Wrenchville Primary School (Van Wyk, 2004). In all the listed schools above, the SGBs in question won the cases on language policy against the department. The cases in point emphasise the authority vested on the SGBs to choose the language of learning and teaching that is best suited for their respective communities, and the right of schools to establish single medium schools, and in these cases, mother tongue instruction.

Even though the SASA gives the mandate of admission and language policy to the School Governing Body (SASA, 1996), this is something new to the South African democracy and is still in the stages of development, hence the many precedents of SGBs versus the State. Advocate Jacques du Preez, who is the operational officer at the centre of the Constitutional Rights at the F.W. de Klerk Foundation, responded as follows:

Why do the Education Departments, instead of fulfilling their constitutional mandate regarding education by building more and quality schools with proper infrastructure and staffing such with qualified and relevant teachers to accommodate learners with different needs, increasingly target Afrikaans-medium schools? When these schools resist language policy changes, they are blamed for trying to preserve ‘racial privileges’ and this is not the case (du Preez, 2003).

Advocate du Preeze (2003) further mentioned that the case of Fochville and other schools versus the State could have far reaching implications for the future of mother-tongue

education. Ngugi wa Thiongo (2003), in his Steve Biko's memorial lecture at the University of Cape Town, argued that language is the most crucial tool in decolonizing the curriculum. He mentioned a very important factor in language across the curriculum, that the fact that Africans were colonized by the British, the French and the Portuguese, made them to speak the language of the colonisers, and in so doing, they started undermining their own languages, as they did about other aspects like culture and religion. He also mentioned that even though Africans had their own languages, they were made to think that their languages could not store knowledge, but rather, they had to use the languages of the colonisers to store knowledge, emotions, intellect and any other thing of value. Ngugi, to emphasised his point and also quoted the words of a South African Editor (The South African Outlook, 1939) cited in Ngugi (2003), who said, in a letter to the editor:

I have an unshaken belief in the possibilities of Bantu Languages and their dramas, provided the Bantu themselves can learn to love their languages, and use them as vehicles of thought, feeling and will.

Vilakazi was writing a Letter to the Editor, in response to the poems that were written by brothers; R.R.R. Dlomo, who wrote his poetry in English, and P.P.P. Dlomo, who wrote his poetry in isiZulu, felt that the emotions, feelings and intellect displayed by poetry had the same effect, whether written in English or isiZulu, (Ngugi wa Thiongo, www.news.uct.ac.za, 2003).

2.10 SCHOOL GOVERNING BODY

The policy papers leading to the formulation of the South African Schools Act no 84 of 1996, all uniformly expressed the view that democratization through presentation and participation would provide a more effective voice for parents in their children's education, and a stronger commitment to improvement of their children's performance (The Hunter Report, 1995). In academic literature, governance is defined as the involvement of private citizens in public policy at local and regional levels, it also entails policy making, implementation and oversight in a formalized collective setting. The initiative commonly

comes from a government agency with a mandate to decentralize or devolve a function, therefore, government would tend to set rules for engagement (Ansell & Gash, 2007).

In a search for criteria that make for a successful and effective public-private governance partnership, Ansell and Gash (2007) did a meta-analysis of 137 collaborative arrangements. The observations and insights about school governance found that SGBs work differently under conditions of poverty, where there is lack of education and experience. The study found that under such circumstances, the impetus for parent involvement would come from the principal as the parent members do not have the capacity to play their part.

The White Paper on Education and Training, Government Notice (1995), endorses parental rights and declares that parents or guardians have the primary responsibility for the education of their children, and they have a right to be consulted by the authorities with respect to the form that education should take. Parents form an integral part of school governance. The White Paper on Education and Training, Government Notice (1995), also clarifies what is meant by the right to choose the kind of education they want for their children, which include among others, the choice of language, cultural or religious basis of the child's education, with due consideration for the rights of others. As such, the law considers the parent as the primary educator of the child, and thus, emphasises the importance of the parents' role in school governance. Botha (2012) defines decentralization of school management as the devolution of the decision-making authority from the higher central level to the lower local level.

According to Marishane and Botha (2011), decentralisation involves many different stakeholders that include central and local governments, citizens, non-governmental organisations, and the private sector. Squelch (1999) argues that the theory of decentralisation is not unique to South Africa but it is a global phenomenon. In his study, he found that the movement towards decentralisation and participative governance in schools was an effort to address education systems that were rigid, ineffective, conflict-laden and unresponsive to the local needs of their schools, the Education Reform Act of 1988 in England, the Kentucky Education Reform Act of 1990 in the United States of

America and the Chicago School Reform Act of 1998 in the US, were all aimed at decentralisation of education with a view to strengthening the decision-making authority of individual schools by transferring it to school level. Key to these mentioned acts is the point that there should be well-established school councils to manage their resources. With a few exceptions, school councils are the same with school governing bodies in South Africa.

Bush and Gamage (2001) found out that there is greater autonomy in Australia and the United Kingdom which leads to greater effectiveness in schools through flexibility in management. Kathyola and Job (2011) found that in sub-Saharan countries like Cameroon, Ghana, Botswana, Tanzania and Mozambique, context has played an important part in terms of the quality and type of approach and progress of decentralisation. This is indicated by the fact that Botswana and Cameroon adopted devolution as a method of decentralisation, whereas Ghana adopted a strategy of a mixture of political devolution and sectoral deconcentration (Kathyola & Job, 2011). However, a study conducted in Indonesia by Amirrachman, Syafil and Welch as cited in Kathyola and Job (2011) revealed that where experience of local democracy is limited, legislative guidelines are unclear and there is lack of capacity building, this kind of devolution of power does not produce the expected outcomes Heytek (2004) has raised the issue of whether the department officials responsible for training the SGB are adhering to the requirements laid down by SASA section 19 which requires that SGB training should be continuous even though initial training happened immediately after election of SGB members. This will capacitate the SGB to enable it to execute its duties as provided for by SASA.

Van Wyk (2007) describes co-operative governance as an interactive approach to education where all stakeholders are represented and take co-responsibility for the effective and efficient operations of their schools. The introduction of SGBs brought about a major makeover in the school governance structure of South Africa (Hursch, 2005). Prinsloo (2006) suggests that the rights of parents as provided for in the SASA to have a say in the education of their children in public schools' governance are being violated

through interference of the state and/or through officials who jeopardise the smooth functioning of schools by failing to carry out their duties. Prinsloo further states that SASA recognizes the need to protect the diversity of language, culture and religion in education, thus, giving the SGBs absolute powers to determine the language policy of their schools.

Section 29(2) of the Constitution of South Africa states that every child has the right to receive education in the official language(s) of their choice. Sayed (2002) points out that there is a discrepancy between policy intention and practice and that the obligation to promote democracy requires that the Education Department have a hands-on policy in order to support SGBs' exercise of power.

Mullis and Martin (2007) attribute this low performance to using L2 as medium of instruction instead of using mother-tongue based schooling for educational quality. Skutnabb-Kangas (2004) regards mother-tongue education as the most appropriate in a diverse language population. Writing for the United Nations Development Report, Skutnabb-Kangas (2004) indicates that using a language that is not the child's mother-tongue at school is to violate the child's right to education. In her report for Global Monitoring (UNESCO, 2005) she speaks of Linguistic Genocide in education. When children are made to believe that their languages are inferior and cannot store knowledge of Mathematics and Science, they end up despising their native languages and consequently stop using those languages altogether, and with time, those languages will be completely forgotten, and may even die.

The Language-in-Education Policy (1997) promotes respect for all languages and it is regarded as an integral and necessary aspect of government strategy to build a non-racial nation in South Africa. The underlying principle of this policy is to maintain home language(s) while also providing access to and effective acquisition of additional language(s) by all learners. The School Governing Bodies, as mandated by the South African Schools Act, are at the core of pursuing the language policy that is most supportive of the general conceptual growth of learners. A language of learning and teaching should, not stunt their educational growth and violate their right to education as mentioned by Skutnabb-Kangas (2004). Govender (2008) as cited in Lafon (2008),

argues that bringing African languages into the education framework would be an acknowledgement of the linguistic capital of black learners who would then be seen as commanding a valuable expertise. Govender (2008) further explains that the recognition of black languages would enhance the status of township and rural schools in society at large and will also trigger a gain in self-confidence among black learners and black teachers and it will reverse the negative attitude of many towards their own languages. Govendor (2008), as cited in Lafon (2008), explains the situation in South African education this way:

All stipulations upholding racial segregation with regards to access to education were scrapped by 1992. In an 'upward' move, learners from all formerly disadvantaged racial categories, that is, non-whites, were able to register in schools where they had been prevented from doing so before; black learners moved into Indian, coloured and white schools, coloured learners into Indian and white schools, and Indians into white schools. After a somewhat protracted process it can probably be safely stated that hardly any school in the country, among public or state-aided schools at least, is now purely white in terms of its learner component, even if the number of black learners may remain low. However, this has been a one-way process. White learners have not moved to township schools. The taxis that ferry black children from the townships to city schools return empty to fetch a new load.

Batsis and Cronje (2007), cited in Lafon (2008), explain that the situation in South African Public Schools reflects somberly the enduring duality of the education system so many years after its legal and regulatory unification. Schools are still largely divided according to resources and operationality, their perceived quality and efficiency, which still reflect to a large extent, the former separate education departments.

2.11 IMPACTS OF USING SECOND LANGUAGE AS MEDIUM OF INSTRUCTION

In a report by the University of Witwatersrand on language policy, millions of South Africans are reported to have failed to complete their schooling, and one of the contributing factors mentioned was that they were taught and assessed through the medium of English or Afrikaans, and they had no access to concepts in a language that they fully understand (Witwatersrand, 2003). Despite these findings, SGBs in public

schools are still choosing English as medium of instruction without any consideration as to whether their learners will be able to learn effectively through the medium of English.

In South Africa, most public schools have chosen English as a language of learning and teaching despite the fact that 80% of teachers were found to be not competent in that language (EMIS & Research Strategy Policy Development, 2005). Din Yan (2003) reported that English medium Chinese students were weak in understanding abstract concepts.

2.12 CONCLUSION

This chapter reviewed literature about the choice of language of learning and teaching in public schools. There is a great impact on the academic performance of learners brought about by the choice of learning and teaching. The chapter also reviewed literature on the role of SGBs as school governors.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter discusses the research methodology used to address the research questions. Qualitative methods used in the study are explained. The chapter also discusses the sampling and sample size, data collection strategies used, and techniques used for data analysis. The last part of the chapter describes how the researcher ensured that research ethics were followed throughout the study.

3.2 RESEARCH DESIGN

Research design explains the way in which information is gathered. De Vos et al., (2011) states that the purpose of a study determines the design used by the researcher to investigate the phenomenon. Research design refers to the strategy chosen by the researcher to integrate different components of the study logically and in a coherent way, thereby ensuring that the research problem is addressed effectively (Cresswell, 1998).

In this study, the researcher used a case study. A case study is a research methodology that is used to do an empirical inquiry that investigates a phenomenon within its real-life context (Baxter & Jack, 2008). A case study is descriptive and exploratory in nature and it analyses a person, group or event (Baxter & Jack, 2008). Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2000) define a case study as a study of an instance in action. Cohen et al. (2000) further indicate that a case study focuses strongly on reality by looking at the truths that may represent discrepancies between the viewpoints held by the participants.

In using a case study, the researcher was able to study the participants, and to investigate some of the language related issues through observations, interviews and documents analysis. Case studies can be illustrative, where events are described, it can be exploratory making it investigative in nature (Merriam, 2009). A case study is used to gain

an understanding of the phenomenon in a real life setting and seeks to answer the questions why and how things are done in a particular manner. Merriam (2009) also encourages the use of multiple methods to collect data so that the different methods can provide a more synergistic and comprehensive view of the issue being studied. In this study, the researcher used three different methods to collect data, which are: observations, interviews and documents analysis.

In this study, the researcher used a collective case study to collect and compare information on the decision-making processes of SGBs in selected public primary schools when they chose English as a language of learning and teaching. The collective case study was made up of six public primary schools in Vhembe District. The researcher collected data from several different sources, such as observations, interviews and document analysis.

3.3 POPULATION

The population of this study comprised 658 public primary schools in Vhembe District. Population refers to a pool of targeted respondents from which the researcher draws a sample and to which the findings will be generalized (Terreblanch, Durreim & Pointer, 2006). Mungenda and Mungenda (2003) define sampling as a process where several individuals are selected for a study in such a way that the individuals selected represent a larger group. This enables the researcher to obtain information about the population.

The Vhembe District of Education has 658 public primary schools and out of all those public primary schools, six were selected within two municipalities in the district. The two municipalities are Makhado and Collins Chabane. The two municipalities were selected based on the main languages spoken there, namely Tshivenda and Sepedi (Makhado), and Xitsonga (Collins Chabane). The schools were also chosen based on the fact that they were known to the researcher to be using English as medium of instruction from Grade four to six, and they are nearer to the researcher's place of work making them easily accessible to her. The study used purposive sampling, to sample 12 participants and these were made up of six principals, and six SGB chairpersons. The interviewees

were sampled on the basis of their knowledge of school policies. The principal is the manager of the school and he/she is expected to have knowledge of language policies of the Department of Basic Education, whereas the chairperson of the SGB is the one who calls meetings, prepares the agendas and presides over all the meetings that take place in the school. As such, the SGB chairperson is expected to know what transpires in those meetings.

Two of the selected schools are situated in a rural area where parents are mostly illiterate and work in the farms as labourers. They leave very early for work and the grandparents have the responsibility of preparing children for school. Three of the schools are also situated in the rural areas, but the parents do not work on farms but sell food and snacks at the school gates. The last school selected is the only one situated in a semi-urban environment. The parents of learners in this school work mostly in town. They work as domestic helpers and shop assistants. Parents from this school do understand English compared to those of the other five schools already mentioned. Parents from the semi-urban school have a better understanding about school governance.

3.4 SAMPLE SIZE

Mungenda and Mungenda (2003) categorise sampling into two sections, namely probability and non-probability. Non-probability sampling, in particular its sub-type purposive sampling, was used to select participants for this study. Six schools representing the three main languages spoken in the district, namely Tshivenda, Xitsonga and Sepedi, were selected for the study. Initially, the researcher planned to choose two schools per language group, but due to challenges encountered during the research process, she ended up using only one school for Sepedi speaking learners, two for Tshivenda speaking learners, and three for Xitsonga speaking learners. The language groups were selected based on the home languages of the learners in the district. The three languages mentioned above are the most spoken in the communities where the schools sampled are situated.

The schools were also sampled based on the location of the researcher. The sample was purposefully selected to include people who were knowledgeable about the study topic. From each school, two members of the SGB were selected, that is, the principal and the SGB chairperson. Principals were selected because they are the managers of the schools and should know all the policies pertaining to school management and governance. Principals are expected to inform and advise the SGB on all matters pertaining to school governance. The SGB chairpersons were selected because they represent the parents, and according to SASA, they are responsible for determining the language policy of the school. They are informed about everything that take place in the day to day running of the school and they authenticate every document that has to do with school governance. The sampling of observation classes was done on the basis of the language of learning and teaching used in different grades. Two lessons were observed in classes where the language of learning and teaching is mother-tongue, and the other two observations were done in classes where language of learning and teaching is English. The researcher wanted to observe how learners interact with the lessons when the medium of instruction is home language, and also when the medium of instruction is English.

3.5 DATA COLLECTION METHODS

According to Williams (2011), research methodology refers to the way in which the researcher investigates a problem on a specific matter. Kumar (2014) describes methodology as the way in which data is collected. Several methods or approaches are used to find answers to a given problem. In this study, qualitative methods were used to collect data. Gay, Mills and Airasian (cited in Murray, Bagby & Sulak, 2010) describe qualitative research as research which involves the collection, analysis and interpretation of narrative and visual data through methods that include a case study, in-depth interviews or focus groups.

Data was collected through observations to establish the language of learning and teaching used in a real classroom setting. According to Merriam (2009), observation can be used in qualitative research but relies heavily on the skills of the researcher to understand and interpret what they are seeing without being biased. In this method, the

researcher observes what is happening and makes field notes. In this study, the researcher observed what was actually taking place in the class vis a vis what is reflected in school language policies. Observation is described as a systematic data collection approach (Crabtree & Miller, 1999). Observational data collection method can be used when it is important to study a phenomenon in its natural setting, and when self-report data is likely to be different from actual behavior (Crabtree & Miller, 1999). This observation data was supplemented with brief interviews of the teachers who were observed teaching to establish why they chose the language they used in the classroom. The observations were intended to determine whether teachers strictly stuck to English in their teaching since it was the official language of teaching and learning in the school and if not, to interrogate why that was the case.

Observations were done in three of the six sampled schools. Both the learners and the teachers were observed inside the classroom during lesson time to establish the language they used. Four lessons were observed in three different schools. In one of the schools, two lessons were observed for different subjects. Grade two learners were observed during the Mathematics lesson, Grade three learners were observed during the Life Skills lesson, a Grade four class was observed during a Mathematics lesson, and Grade six learners during a Life Skills lesson. The Life Skills lesson took place outside as they were doing a team-building exercise that required the learners to pass the ball to one another. The researcher drew up an observation schedule (see Appendix F) which allowed her to indicate with a 'No' or a 'Yes', in categories that would assist in focusing on what language was used as a medium of instruction for the different primary school phases.

Semi-structured interviews were also used to collect data. In qualitative research, the predominant mode of information and data collection is through interviews (de Vos, Fouche & Delpont, 2011). According to Miller and Brewer (2003:80), qualitative interviews deal with a small number of respondents with the intent of gathering more in-depth information about the issue being studied. Maree (2007) argues that the aim of a qualitative interview is to see things through the eyes of the participant, and that such

interviews are open-ended (Miller & Brewer, 2003). All the interviews were semi-structured to provide a basis for comparison and to provide insight into the perspective of the School Governing Body members. A semi-structured interview is where questions are designed to elicit the required information from respondents, but the researcher can probe for more information (Miller & Brewer, 2003).

In this study, the researcher asked questions in the same way and following the same sequence, but also probed for more information (Appendix G & H). In one-to-one interviews, the researcher had the opportunity to be flexible in the way she structures the interactions with the respondents in order to elicit richer information about their behavior and attitudes towards the broader questions of the researcher (Miller & Brewer, 2000). SGB chairpersons and principals of the six primary schools were interviewed to find out what informed their choice of English as a language of teaching and learning in their schools. The researcher conducted one on one interviews with the participants. The interviews were recorded and transcribed. The researcher had sought prior permission from the respondents to record their responses (Appendix E).

Document analysis was also done to collect data. The SASA mandates that every public school should draw up its own language policy within the prescripts of the constitution and the LiEP. The SASA and LiEP therefore serve as guidelines to help schools draw their language policies. It is, therefore, a requirement that all public schools in South Africa should have in their possession SASA and LiEP documents. These documents should help them when determining the language policy of the school. A framework was designed to analyse the language policy documents (Appendix H). The SASA and LiEP are supposed to be used as a basis on which the school's language policy is determined. A schedule with 'No' or 'Yes' options was drawn to analyse the schools' SGB minutes and the language policy only.

3.6 DATA ANALYSIS

Data were analysed using thematic content analysis (TCA). TCA is heavily dependent on the researcher's analytic and integrative skills and personal knowledge of the social

context where the data is collected. Thematic analysis, according to Braun and Clarke (2006) is a foundational method that allows for flexibility in the researcher's choice of theoretical framework. Through this flexibility, thematic analysis allows for detailed, complex and rich description of data. Braun and Clarke (2006) further explain thematic analysis as a method where data is analysed by identifying patterns or themes within qualitative data with the aim of identifying themes that are important or interesting, and thereafter, use these themes to address the research. Thematic analysis interprets and makes sense of the collected data (Clerke & Braun, 2013).

Braun and Clarke cited in Maguire and Delahunt (2017) provide a six-phase guide which serves as a framework for thematic analysis:

Step1: Become familiar with the data

The researcher has transcribed the data and read through it several times, noting down initial ideas. Templates were designed to categorise data from observation and documents. The interview session of each participant was recorded, and the researcher transcribed them, and they were read several times until she familiarized herself with the data.

Step2: Generate initial codes

This step focused on reducing data and producing codes (Braun & Clarke, cited in Maguire and Delahunt (2017)). Data was coded into meaningful text like passages, quotations, and single words. This phase focused on developing themes. This is the first and most basic level of analysis that is used as an organizational tool.

Step 3: Search for themes

In this phase, the themes were checked to see if there is a pattern that captures something significant about the data and the research questions. In this study, the themes

were descriptive, that is, they described patterns in the data that were relevant to the research question (Maguire & Delahunt, 2017).

Step 4: Reviewing themes

The fourth phase dealt with reviewing of themes, where themes are modified to check if they make sense, and if those themes are supported by data. In this phase, the researcher also checked if there is coherence and if the themes were not overlapping.

Step 5: Defining and naming themes

In this phase, themes were defined and given headings in correlation with the information gathered from data. The study identified three themes from observation, four themes from interviews and two themes from documents.

Step 6: Producing the report

In this phase, the report of the study was produced. The report drew up conclusions and came up with recommendations based on the findings of the study.

3.7 LIMITATIONS

The researcher intended to use two schools per each language group. The sample should have included a second school of Sepedi speaking learners from Musina Municipality. This did not happen as planned as the school kept on postponing appointments and it was very costly for the researcher as the municipality is 150 km away from where the researcher resides. The researcher went to the same school twice and on both occasions was told to come back another time as they were going to attend some other important matters after school. The second school of Sepedi speaking learners was in Makhado. In the end, only one school with learners whose mother-tongue was Sepedi, was included in the study and not two as were previously planned. The researcher included one more school of Xitsonga speaking learners. The sample ended up with three schools where

learners' mother-tongue is predominantly Xitsonga, two schools where learners' mother-tongue is predominantly Tshivenda, and one school where learners' mother-tongue is predominantly Sepedi. All the six schools are from two municipalities and were not three as originally planned. The municipalities are Makhado and Collins Chabane. The researcher requested letters of confirmation that the research was conducted in the mentioned schools. Only three schools provided the letters, the other three were skeptical about writing a letter and promised to send them by email but the letters were never sent. Respondents were skeptical about where the information would be taken. Although they had been assured that the information would be confidential, they were afraid it might cause a rift between the school and the department of education.

3.8 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Middleton, Parker and Piper-Gale (2011) argue that there is a clear requirement for researchers to be aware of all ethical issues that may arise during the research, and that they should have clear strategies of addressing those issues. Prior to the commencement of the study, the research proposal was submitted to the Higher Degrees Committee of the University of Venda for approval. Approval to conduct research in schools was sought from the Department of Basic Education in Vhembe District. Furthermore, the following ethical issues were considered:

3.8.1 Informed consent

The respondents were informed about the purpose of the research and informed consent was obtained before conducting interviews. Kumar (2014) states that it is considered unethical to collect information without the knowledge of the participants. In this study, letters of consent were given to the participants and their signatures were requested as evidence that they knew and understood what they were requested to do, and that they had also given their consent to participate in the study (Appendix E).

3.8.2 Voluntary participation

There should be no coercion by the researcher for respondents to participate (Silverman, 2013). Respondents were informed of their rights to refuse to participate or to withdraw from the investigation whenever they chose to do so.

3.8.3 Right for protection of subjects

Kurmar (2014) indicates that when the researcher collects data from respondents, there is need to examine carefully whether their involvement is likely to harm them in any way, or if there is the possibility of them feeling discomfort or anxiety, then the researcher should make the risk very minimal. In the letter of consent, it was indicated that the respondents can withdraw from the interview anytime they felt like. It was also indicated that neither their names nor their schools' names would be mentioned anywhere in the study.

3.8.4 Confidentiality and privacy

The researcher should protect and respect the confidentiality and anonymity of respondents unless the respondents themselves have given consent to their disclosure (Silverman, 2013). In this study, the researcher did not disclose the names of participants and their schools, codes have been used to identify schools in order to protect the identities of participants. Schools were given the codes; R, S, V, W, X and Y for identification. Participants were requested to sign letters of consent. The letters were read out and it was explained to the participants that confidentiality would be maintained throughout the study. The sample letter of consent is in Appendix E.

3.9 VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY

Validity, according to Silverman (2014), refers to interpretation credibility. Meltzer (2014) describes validity as the instrument's ability to measure what it is designed to measure. In this case, the researcher did observations during lessons to identify whether the

language of learning and teaching used in the classroom was as specified by the school language policy and the LiEP. The interviewees responded to questions seeking information that would be included in the language policy of the school and the SASA. All three instruments were used to gather data to ensure its reliability and validity. The research questions that were used to gather data were structured in a way that would elicit data that would correspond with information in the language documents. The first five questions were the same for both principals and SGB chairpersons. The questions were asked in the same way as they were intended to measure the extent to which both groups were involved in the determination of the language policy of their schools. Bhattacharjee (2012) describes reliability as the degree of consistency to the measure of a construct; that is, to measure if the results would be the same if the measured phenomenon is not changing. He further indicates that reliable measures can be solicited by avoiding ambiguous items in the researcher's measurement. The researcher had all the questions translated to the home languages of the respondents. This was especially important for SGB members so that they would have the same understanding of what was being asked.

3.10 CONCLUSION

This chapter discussed the research design and methodology, as well as the research procedures, area of study, population and sampling techniques, data collection instruments and data analysis. Lastly, it discussed the research ethics such as informed consent, voluntary participation, right for protection of objects, confidentiality and privacy, as well as validity and reliability. The next chapter presents and analyses data.

CHAPTER 4

DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents and analyses data collected to answer the research questions. Data were collected through observations, interviews and document analysis. The data collected sought answers to the main research question which wanted to find out why English was chosen as the language of learning and teaching in selected public primary schools in Vhembe District. Observations were carried out in three schools, while interviews and document analysis were done in all six schools selected for the study. Data were analysed using thematic analysis.

First to be presented were data obtained through observations, followed by data obtained through semi-structured interviews, and, lastly, data from document analysis. All data were presented thematically. For purposes of confidentiality, codes have been used and not real names of the schools and participants.

4.2 THEMES EMERGING FROM DATA

4.2.1 Themes emerging from observation

During the observations, the researcher sought to establish whether the language of learning and teaching in the real classroom setting was as indicated in the language policy of the school. Observations also sought to determine which language was used during assessment. Three themes emerged from data observation and these were language of learning and teaching in the classroom, code-switching during the lesson; and English as a language of assessment. Data revealed which language was used by teachers to deliver their lessons and why. The themes are presented below.

4.2.1.1 Language of learning and teaching in the classroom

The researcher observed a Grade 3 teacher teaching Life Skills. The teacher used English most of the time in a Grade where only mother-tongue is supposed to be used as medium of instruction (LiEP). The teacher only code-switched when she was explaining terms that were difficult for learners to understand. The teacher assessed learners towards the end of the lesson. The learners were silent until the teacher code-switched to home language; only then did the learners respond to the questions asked. When the researcher asked the teacher after the lesson why she had not used mother-tongue as a medium of instruction, she responded that she did not have the appropriate vocabulary in the learners' home language for the terms she was teaching as there were no teaching materials to assist her. The learners participated actively only when the teacher switched to mother-tongue, which was on few occasions during the lesson.

The second class observed was a Grade 4 where the learners were being taught Mathematics. The medium of instruction was supposed to be English, since, according to LiEP (1997), from Grade 4, the language of learning and teaching in the classroom should be English. The teacher, however, conducted the whole lesson using mother-tongue. The learners actively participated throughout the lesson. However, at the end of the lesson, the teacher did an oral assessment and all the questions were asked in English. Only two learners in a class of 38 participated in the oral assessment, a marked contrast to the active participation during the lesson. When the researcher asked why he had used mother-tongue in a class that was supposed to be taught in the English, he said that he was afraid that if he were to use English, the learners would not understand. The researcher concluded that English as medium of instruction is a serious barrier to learning for learners. These learners were very active in class when the teacher used mother-tongue during the lesson. However, when the teacher switched to English, they became withdrawn and no longer participated in the lesson.

The researcher also observed a Life Skills lesson in a Grade 6 class. The lesson was about teamwork where learners were supposed to pass the ball to one another without dropping it until they finished a circle of 15 people. The teacher gave instructions in

Xitsonga throughout the lesson. Learners enjoyed the lesson and there was full participation from all of them. At the end of the lesson, the researcher asked the teacher why she had not used English. The teacher said learners would not understand the instructions if these were given in English.

4.2.1.2 Code-switching from English to mother-tongue

The researcher observed that teachers code-switched from one language to the other during the lessons. The researcher observed that learners' participation increased when the teachers code-switched to mother-tongue. When the Grade 6 teacher switched to English towards the end of the lesson to do assessment, very few learners participated, where else they had been actively participating during the lesson when home language was used.

The researcher observed that when teachers used English, learners kept quiet and no longer concentrated on the lesson. Some learners started making noise, while others were busy searching inside their school bags. Only a few learners remained attentive and raised up their hands to respond to the teachers' questions. All principals and SGB chairpersons agreed that learners had to use mother-tongue instruction from Grade one to Grade three and switch to English in Grade four. However, the researcher observed that learning and teaching was seriously hampered when the language of instruction changed from mother-tongue to English. Both teachers and learners got frustrated as a result of the new language of instruction. One teacher, from school Y, when asked why she was teaching in mother-tongue in a class which was supposed to be using English as medium of instruction, responded thus:

I personally think that there should be teachers in schools who are specially trained to deal with learners who are finding it difficult to switch from mother-tongue to English as a language of learning and teaching.

The researcher noted that there are no mechanisms in place to assist learners to make a smooth transition from home language to English as a language of learning and teaching.

4.2.1.3 English as a language of assessment

The researcher observed that learners who were participating when the teacher had code-switched to mother-tongue did not respond to questions well during the oral assessment sessions when the teacher switched back to English. In both the Life Skills and Mathematics lessons that the researcher observed, she noted that code-switching was used during teaching. When learners did not respond, the educator code-switched to mother-tongue so that they could follow the lesson. However, assessment was always done in English as it is the language of learning and teaching. The researcher observed that the teachers in all lessons always switched back to English when it was time for assessment. It was also observed that during the lesson, the teachers allowed learners to ask questions for clarity in home languages, but during assessment, the teachers would only use English. During assessment, both learners and teachers were frustrated because even though the lesson went smoothly when the teacher code-switched to the mother-tongue, it was a different matter when it came to assessment.

4.2.2 Themes emerging from interviews

Data from interviews were analysed using thematic analysis. Four themes emerged from interview data and these are presented next.

4.2.2.1 Factors underlying the choice of English as a language of learning and teaching

Data collected revealed that, for all the schools, English was the language of choice for learning and teaching. All SGB chairpersons and principals in the six selected schools confirmed that English was chosen for learning and teaching purposes. They all agreed that English disadvantages learners but that they had no other choice as English is an important language for the future livelihoods of their learners. They argued that English

is a language of commerce and that learners should master it to find employment. In their view, without English they will only find menial jobs where they will earn very little money.

Participants also stated that learning and teaching support materials for African languages are not available. African languages, as media of instruction, in their view, would not be viable as there are no resources to support the learning and teaching process. Principals also argued that important public debates are carried out only in English and that those who cannot speak the language cannot participate in these debates.

All SGB chairpersons and principals were in agreement that English is the language of commerce and that learners will be disadvantaged in the global economy if they are not taught in English. Besides, they noted that all neighbouring secondary schools which admit their learners use English as a medium of instruction, and, as such, parents want their children to be taught in English in preparation for further education. Government departments also use English for communication and, therefore, all SGB chairpersons and principals were of the view that African languages had no place even in their home country.

4.2.2.2 English as a barrier to learning

Participants pointed out that the switch from home-language to English as a medium of instruction in Grade 4 is problematic to both educators and learners. They observed that learners fail to cope with more complicated English terms and that they start to lose interest in school, resulting in some eventually dropping out of school. The few learners who manage to go through primary and secondary school find it difficult to cope at tertiary level when the language becomes more complicated. Asked why they chose English as a language of learning and teaching knowing fully well that English is disadvantaging to learners, some SGB persons claimed that the choice was not made by them but by the principal and that they merely supported the decisions of the principal. One SGB chairperson from school S, explained his frustrations about using English as a medium of instruction as follows:

It is the Principal who chooses the language of learning and teaching. We are just given the documents to sign so that the school should do their business without any hindrance. However, I think that our learners would perform better if they were using mother-tongue as medium of instruction. Every person is able to express himself and excel when he is using his home language. I have a child who repeats every class, but he used to pass when he was still in the lower Grades. We can't even ask questions in the meetings we attend because they conduct them in English. We cannot even ask how we can assist our children so that they progress. My brother sent a child to a university far from home, but the child came back with nothing. The boy dropped out of university because he was not passing his courses. He was even afraid to come back home realizing how much money was spent on him. We were informed by our neighbours' children that he was no longer attending school. The parents went to fetch him. He explained that he was failing because his lecturers use English only and they don't explain in mother-tongue when lecturing, and do not care whether students understand or not.

Principals also showed an awareness of the struggles that learners experienced in the learning process and yet they still chose English as a medium of instruction. Some sampled principals indicated the frustration they face when the medium of instruction switches from mother-tongue to English in Grade 4. They mentioned that learners who perform very well in Grade 3, where mother-tongue is used as language of instruction, eventually become very quiet and their performance drops drastically when they get to Grade 4. They lose interest in school and only become active during periods when mother-tongue was being taught or used. Apparently, mother-tongue is the only subject where they do well. The researcher noted this tendency when she observed one of the classes during this study. Learners who were active during a Mathematics lesson taught in mother-tongue suddenly went quiet when, at the end of the lesson, the teacher was assessing them orally in English to determine if they had grasped the concepts. Principals indicated that teachers usually resort to mother-tongue when learners are passive during the lesson. They mentioned that some learners would become active when the teacher had switched to mother-tongue, but when the teacher assessed them on the same matter in English, they performed very poorly. Principals indicated that this problem frustrates teachers and that they do not know how to assist such learners.

4.2.2.3 SGBs lack of awareness of the constitutional provisions regarding language, and their role in determining the school's language policy

SGB chairpersons who participated in the study had a misconception that the language of learning and teaching should be determined by the Department of Basic Education. Most were not aware that they can choose any of the official languages other than English as a language of learning and teaching. They felt that if they object to anything said by the SMT, they would disrupt the smooth running of the school. SGB chairperson from school X, revealed this sentiment in the following manner:

We cannot deviate from the policy of the Department of Basic Education. The Department has taken a decision for us, ours is just to comply. We don't have a say in this matter. The Department brings everything that we need to use at school. We are just trained on how to use the documents.

This clearly shows a lack of understanding of the role that SGBs must play in determining the language of instruction in the school.

4.2.2.4 High level of illiteracy among SGB members

The researcher found out that most parents in the SGB are unable to read and understand educational policies because of their low level of education. The Department of Basic Education officials who are supposed to train and capacitate members of the SGBs are failing to do their duty. Findings show that most training workshops aimed at helping the SGB members are conducted in English and because most parents do not understand English, these workshops are useless to them. Only the principal and a few literate members of the SGB benefit from these workshops. Most parents who are in the SGBs are unemployed and this has also contributed to the low morale of the SGBs. SGB chairperson from school S, indicated his frustrations in meetings when he could not

understand what is being said as the meetings are mainly conducted in English. This is what he said:

I do not understand what goes on during the SGB training sessions because they use English. I feel useless and stupid because I cannot contribute anything to these meetings.

4.2.3 Themes emerging from document analysis

The researcher requested the following documents from the schools as sources of data: the language policy of the school and minutes of SGB where language policy was discussed. Two themes emerged from the schools' language documents. The themes are discussed next.

4.2.3.1 Rubberstamping decisions already made by the principal or SMT

All schools selected for the study had SASA and language policies for their schools. This was encouraging because every public school in South Africa must have these documents. SASA, however, indicates that for any school policy to be authentic, signatures of the relevant people should be appended to the documents. An analysis of the documents shows that the language policy and minutes of SGB meetings were signed by relevant persons showing that the documents analysed in the study were authentic. The implication is that parents participated in the matters of language policy in their schools. However, as interview data revealed, parents merely signed the school language policy without understanding what it is they were signing. Most parents believed that the choice of language of instruction was the purview of the Department of Basic Education and the principal and that theirs was to merely rubber stamp decisions already made.

An analysis of the language policy of the schools showed that these were mere replicas of SASA. There was no indication that the SGBs and the schools under study attempted to craft a policy that would suit the needs of their schools and learners. There was no mention of alternative languages which would be more appropriate for their particular communities.

4.2.3.2 Non-availability of invitations and agenda of SGB meetings on language policy

Documents availed to the researcher revealed that at no time was an invitation issued to parents to gather to discuss the language policy of the schools. SASA stipulates that an invitation should be issued to parents seven days before the meeting, and that an agenda should be attached so that members should come prepared for the items to be discussed. There was no evidence in the documents except in one of schools sampled for the study that this was done. This suggests that the language policies of these schools were never discussed by the parents. In one school, the minutes revealed that there was a deliberation on the languages spoken in the community, which were Tshivenda, Xitsonga and Sepedi. However, prescripts for Norms and Funding in SASA, stipulate that for a language to be regarded as a medium of instruction, the ratio should be 40 learners to one teacher. Xitsonga learners were found to be fewer than the required number. However, even though the other languages, Tshivenda and Sepedi fulfilled the requirements of SASA to be chosen as media of instruction, the school did not choose them. Instead, they chose English. In another school where an item on language policy was found in the minutes, very little was discussed on the issue of language. Even though the matter was on the agenda for the SGB to take a decision on, parents agreed that this was the job of the principal and that their contribution was to merely support what the school wanted.

4.3 CONCLUSION

The chapter presented and analysed data thematically. First to be presented was observation data followed by interview data. Data from document analysis was presented last. Findings show that the background of the respondents play an important role in the way they execute their roles. The language chosen as a medium of instruction in the schools is used minimally as most of the time teachers use home language to teach. The researcher also found that principals and SGB chairpersons of selected schools do not comply with the stipulations of the South African Schools Act number 84 of 1996 and as a result do not play their roles regarding the choice of language. In the next chapter, findings of the study are discussed.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, the researcher discusses the findings of the study. The purpose of this study was to interrogate the choice of English as a language of learning and teaching in selected public primary schools in Vhembe District. The study focused on the reasons why English is the preferred medium of instruction, whereas the LiEP and SASA mandate SGBs to choose any of the 11 official languages in the country. Conversely, the study also sought to find out why indigenous languages are not chosen as media of instruction even though the choice of English as a language of learning and teaching has detrimental effects on the academic performance of learners. To realise this goal, the study was guided by the following research questions:

- Why is English the preferred language of learning and teaching?
- To what extent is English the language of choice in the classroom setting?
- How did members of the School Governing Bodies execute the process of determining the language policy of public schools in Vhembe District?
- Why are African languages marginalized as languages of learning and teaching in public schools of Vhembe District?

To answer these questions, the researcher observed three lessons in selected schools to determine the choice of language in the classroom, as well as how learners respond to the language used. The researcher also interviewed SGB chairpersons and Principals of selected schools to ascertain how they chose the language of instruction in their schools and what informed their choices. Finally, the researcher analysed the language policies of those schools as well as minutes of where these policies were discussed. The analysis and discussion of the findings are thus organised in the order of the questions stated above.

5.2 DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The findings of the study were discussed under the following research questions:

5.2.1 Why English is the preferred language of learning and teaching?

The first question sought to find out why all six schools chose English rather than learners' home languages as a medium of instruction. The responses revealed that the SGBs' choice of English as a language of learning and teaching was strongly influenced by society's high regard for English. This is supported by Carey (1993) who indicates that, in South Africa, English is regarded as a language of high status as it is used in politics, economy and as a language of academic power. This attitude towards English dates back to the apartheid era where English was seen as a language of power and freedom to defeat the Afrikaner people who were the oppressors at the time (Cluver, 1992). Unfortunately, this resulted in an aversion to mother-tongue instruction as it was associated with Bantu Education. Cluver (1992) further argues that the use of African languages as media of instruction was perceived by blacks as an attempt by the apartheid government to further promote ethnicity and prevent unity among different language speakers in the country.

In the recent Afrikaans Must Fall protests, for example, it is illuminating to note that students insisted that English be used as a medium of instruction in universities where Afrikaans was being used. None of the protesting students even hinted at using home languages in the lecture room indicating that in the psyche of most South Africans, English is an important language which should be elevated above all others, including home languages, in academia (Dube, 2017). The protesting students indicated that Afrikaans was a major barrier to the students' learning at tertiary institutions. However, it has also been proven that English is equally a barrier to learning for the majority of South African students even though they have been learning through the same language for 12 years in their basic schooling (Dube, 2017). The students struggle with their learning because they lack proficiency in the English language even after so many years of using the

language as medium of instruction. Dube (2017) further highlights the fact that, for English to take the place of Afrikaans, it would not solve the problem, as the solution does not lie in getting rid of one language per se, but in getting rid of the logic of monolingualism which promotes the interest of one group at the expense of so many others. Therefore, the researcher concedes that the development of other South African official languages as languages of science and technology is the most logical way to ensure access to education for all (Dube, 2017). Studies have proven that allowing African languages to play their part as media of instruction is possible and can be dealt with by professional linguists and translators, as it was done at the University of Limpopo, for example, where material was developed in English and Sesotho sa Leboa (Sepedi), for the Bilingual Degree course (Owen-Smith, 2002). The example of the Japanese, Germans and Afrikaners who developed their languages into languages of science and technology should serve as a motivating factor that it is possible to develop indigenous languages to the same level so that they can be used as languages of learning and teaching in South African schools.

Findings of the study show that the choice of English, however, is detrimental to the academic performance of learners in the selected schools. Participants all agreed that most learners struggled in their studies because they are not proficient in English. The researcher can testify to this because when she observed the three lessons during this study, she noted that students who were taught or assessed in English did not participate actively in the learning process. They struggled to understand concepts forcing the teachers to code switch to a home language. The responses of interviewees indicated that the performance of learners who were active during home language instruction suddenly became passive when the teacher switched over to English. However, studies have shown that mother-tongue use has achieved the highest rate of literacy in Tanzania, and improved agricultural productivity in Malawi (UNESCO, 1985; Mvula, 1992). The six years primary project in Nigeria has proven unequivocally that a primary education in mother-tongue was not only viable but gave better results than an English only schooling.

Whilst code-switching to home language could be helpful in explaining difficult concepts to learners, research has shown that it can affect the academic performance of learners. For example, a study carried out by Ridge, Jordaan and Nangu (1996) in some Western Cape public schools in South Africa, where learners' mother tongue is isiXhosa revealed that the limited cognitive academic language proficiency skills of students resulting from a transition from isiXhosa to English, could be a major factor in limiting the academic performance of learners. The researcher similarly observed that when the teacher code switched back to English, the students became passive and unresponsive because they could not understand English. Yet, prior to that, when they were being taught in their home language, they participated actively in the learning process. Ridge, Jordaan and Nangu (1996) further argue that the transition should be done gradually and that there should be a readiness to provide explanations in isiXhosa at any stage in the interest of a high level of understanding.

Skutnabb-Kangas (2004) highlights the frustration faced by learners who have to be taught in a second language, as they sit silently in a class or repeat mechanically, leading to failure, repetition and even dropping out of school. The researcher is of the view that the use of English as medium of instruction in public primary schools of Vhembe district is contributing to the ineffectiveness and poor performance in those schools. The research by the Wits Education Policy Unit showed that there is a huge correlation between mother-tongue and scholastic achievement. They indicated that where mother-tongue is used, learners achieve highly (Owen-Smith). Myburgh et al., (2004) argue that where learners do not speak the language of instruction, productive learning and teaching cannot take place.

5.2.2 Language of choice in the classroom

The study also investigated the extent to which English is a language of choice in the classroom setting. The researcher wanted to ascertain whether the school's choice of English as a language of instruction automatically meant that teachers would use it in the classroom. Observations revealed that most teachers prefer to teach in the mother-tongue even those subjects which are meant to be taught in English. Teachers constantly

codeswitched to explain concepts to learners though assessment is always done in English. This finding is similar to the findings of a study by Nomvete (cited in Mesthrie, 2002) which concluded that code-switching is typical in a multilingual society like South Africa but that it becomes problematic when learners have to write an assessment. The researcher is of the view that learners keep quiet when the teacher is using English as medium of instruction because they are afraid of embarrassing themselves in front of their peers.

Therefore, teachers are compelled to keep on switching back and forth from English to home language and from home language to English so that learning and teaching could take place. This view is supported by Lazurus (cited in Park et al., 2001) who argues that it is very frustrating and stressful for everyone to study in a foreign language, and that it causes physical discomfort and cripples learners' efforts to study. It was further indicated that this creates a language barrier which makes learners keep quiet out of fear of giving the wrong answers, consequently, learners get distracted when they do not understand what is being taught, and their attention shifts from learning to something else (Stadler, 1995). The loss of focus is seen as the most serious threat to learning as there cannot be any progress to learning when learners are not focused.

The researcher found that SGBs are aware that English as a language of learning and teaching impacts negatively on the academic performance of the learners. The switch from mother-tongue instruction in Grade 3 to English as a medium of instruction in Grade 4 is impacting negatively on the academic performance of learners. The Framework Report (NEPI, 1993) observes that the sudden switch from home language to English as a language of learning and teaching is problematic to both learners and teachers. It results in poor performance and loss of interest in learning. Learners who make it through primary and secondary school, according to Framework Report (1993), usually get frustrated when they get to higher institutions of learning. In higher education, students from disadvantaged schools cannot cope with more complicated terms and this results in loss of interest in school matters and high drop-out rate. MacDonald (1990) also points out that early transition to learning another language and using that language as a medium

of instruction, greatly disadvantages the group that speaks African languages, whereas a minority of people who speak Afrikaans and English are at an advantage of being educated in their own languages. Over seventy percent of teachers interviewed by MacDonald (1990) felt that children would perform better if they were to be taught in their home languages.

Education Statistics (2016) indicate that Grade 12 enrolment of that year reflected only 54.5% of the appropriate school going population. Mesthrie (2002) cites Bamgbose who argues that the number of primary school dropouts, and those who never go to school is moving towards a situation where more than 50 percent of school going age children are not at school. He attributes this situation to English being a barrier because learners struggle through the medium of a foreign language. Those who manage to go through primary and secondary school get frustrated at tertiary institutions where they realise they cannot cope with more complicated English terms. As a result, some of them eventually drop out.

The researcher also found out that the language of choice in the classroom is determined by the availability of learning and teaching materials. Some teachers who were observed teaching during the study claimed that they used English because they did not have home language learning and teaching materials in subjects such as Mathematics and Life Skills in learners' mother-tongues. Clearly, when it comes to the choice of language of learning and teaching, there are many factors acting as determinants. It is not just the incapacity of the SGB that causes problems. Teachers' responses indicated that there is a need to develop home languages learning and teaching materials. Some scholars argue that developing an indigenous language is feasible as it was the case for Afrikaans (Honberger, 1990; Prah, 2009; Dube, 2017). The village project in Namibia also supports the view that material development from scratch is possible (Owino, 2002). In the village project, the main idea was that learners of a particular community should receive education in its native language and not Afrikaans as was the case (Owino, 2002). The teachers who were interviewed in the Threshold Project (Macdonald, 1990) also indicated

that they felt learners were going to perform better if learning and teaching was done in their home languages. A participant said:

My learners are mainly Zulu, Ndebele and North Sotho speaking. At school the policy is that they learn all subjects in English with the exception of isiZulu and Northern Sotho as subjects. These children speak three languages most of the time and yet they are expected to learn in English to be successful in their lives. There are those teachers who sometimes use isiZulu to teach. Even if a teacher can teach something in isiZulu, and the children understand him very well, he is going to test them in English since it is not allowed to test in isiZulu. So those poor children are now going to find it difficult to answer those questions even if they have understood their work (Mesthrie, 2002).

Dube (2017) also argues that indigenous languages could serve the same instrumental value as English if they are developed into languages of science and technology. Noting the examples of Bahasa Malaya and Afrikaans, Prah cited in Dube (2017) concedes that it is possible to develop indigenous languages into media of instruction.

5.2.3 Process of determining language policy

The study also sought to find out how members of the SGB execute the process of determining the language policy of public schools in Vhembe District. Findings revealed that SGB members did not actively participate in decision making regarding the choice of language in the school. Instead most of them left that choice to the Department of Basic Education and the Principals. Some argued that their job is to merely support what the principal wanted and that they did not want to interfere in the running of the school. This attitude stems from the fact that most of the parents in the SGB are not educated and therefore do not know the rights given to them by SASA. The study found that the schools' locations and the socio-economic conditions of the parents played a major role in how SGBs execute their duties as school governors. The principals read out the documents for them and they just appended their signatures. This is confirmed by Ansell and Gash (2007) and Christie (2010) who highlight the fact that SGBs under impoverished conditions work differently than those in former Model C schools, which are mostly White and Indian schools. The SGBs in former Model C schools know their responsibilities as

governors and they work closely with the SMT for the development of the school and learner attainment. Those in rural schools leave all important decision making to the SMT.

The researcher found that the responses of SGB chairpersons indicate a lack of knowledge in language policy matters. It also appears as if SGBs are just elected for compliance in public primary schools and not governance as mandated by SASA. This situation is as a result of the composition of SGBs as indicated in SASA. One of the biggest decisions is that of electing the chairperson of the governing body. A parent from the elected parents, who should not be a teacher at that particular school, must fill this office (Graaf, 2016). This stipulation prohibits a parent who is a teacher at the school to play that important role. The chairperson is the most important person among parent governors; he is the one who works closely with the principal. The composition of SGB means that even if there is a parent who is willing to assist the school with governance matters, the parent cannot be allowed to take important positions in the SGB.

A survey by the Education Department done in 500 schools, indicated that the principal remained the central decision maker on governance matters (DBE School Monitoring Report, 2013). Graaf (2016) contends that there seem to be a collusion between principals and bureaucrats that governance remains in the hands of the principal, with no indication by the Department of Basic Education trying to capacitate the parent governors so that they can take their place as school governors. Communities have skilled people who can assist as governors in schools in the meantime. However, departmental policy does not allow any person who is not a parent or guardian of a child in a particular school to take any important position in the SGB. In the sampled schools for this study, most parents are semi-literate as indicated in the introduction of chapter four. This means that SGBs in these schools are composed of unskilled people who would be unable to contribute meaningfully to their schools, unless they are thoroughly trained.

Ansell and Gash (2007) mention four broad factors that should be taken into consideration for SGBs to collaborate with relevant stakeholders for the effectiveness of school governance. These are; favourable starting conditions, sympathetic institutional design, inclusive leadership style, and an internal collaborative process that instills trust and

confidence. Ansell and Gash (2007) further indicate that in such internal processes, stakeholders must meet face-to-face, build confidence and understanding and deal constructively with issues of trust between SGBs and SMTs.

The SGBs in public primary schools are not involved in the drafting of language policies. Five of the sampled schools seem to have just done a cut and paste from the SASA. There is no indication of any language meeting held on matters of language policy, but there is a school language policy which is signed by the SGB of the school. On observations and insights about school governing body Ansell and Gash (2007) found that SGBs work differently under conditions of poverty, where there is lack of education and experience. The study found that under such conditions, the impetus for parent involvement would come from the principals because parent members lack the capacity to play active part in the governance of the school.

The Bill of Rights, Section 29(2) states that education is a human right, and that everyone, in public institutions, has a right to receive education in the language of their choice, where that education is reasonably practicable. SASA has mandated parents to have a voice in the kind of education they want their children to receive, and to choose the language of learning and teaching in their schools. It is in these meetings where such decisions are taken, and the necessary procedures should be followed so that the education of the children in the particular community is not compromised. However, because of lack of knowledge on the SGBs constitution as indicated, failure by departmental officials to train SGBs on language policy matters, and the unavailability of learning and teaching materials in home languages, SGBs still choose mostly English as medium of instruction in their schools.

SASA mandates SGBs of public schools to determine the language of learning and teaching in their schools. All the six schools sampled for the study have chosen English as a language of learning and teaching from Grade 4 onwards. The International Education Commission to Africa (Harlech-Jones, 1990), identified elements to be considered when determining the language of instruction. These are: that all people have an inherent right to their mother-tongue, and that native people shall know at least one

civilized nation's language. However, the study found out that SGBs do not know that they have a right to their home-language and they do not participate in the drafting of the schools' language policies due to the fact that they are illiterate and they do not know about SASA and the SGBs constitution. SGBs do not have the capacity to carry out their mandate as stipulated by SASA. Therefore, they just carry on with English as a language of learning and teaching because they do not know any better. Mncube (2009) indicated that parents who are not able to read and write are unable to keep abreast of the new challenges in education and as such, they become passive and do not participate in governance processes in their schools. Bush and Heysteck (2003) also confirm that the abilities required by governors to utilise their mandate are determined by, among others, their educational background, and especially their literacy level, and that their lack of skills result in failure to govern effectively because they struggle to understand the contents of SASA.

However, a study by Graaf (2016) highlighted the fact that there is power play by the schools' SMTs, where SGBs feel undermined and ignored. Taylor, Mabogoane and van der Berg (2013) revealed that principals view parental involvement as interference in the running of the school, and therefore, there is resistance to the mandated shift in power relationships. As such, the well-intentioned and volunteer efforts made by the parent governor are undermined, making them lose interest in taking part in important decision-making processes of the school.

SGBs need training to understand that they can choose African languages as media of instruction in their schools. However, there is still the challenge that African languages are not developed to serve alongside English and Afrikaans as media of instruction. Prah (cited in Owino, 2002) indicates that if Africa is to move forward educationally and developmentally, education and mass media should reach the people in rural areas in ways that speak to them culturally, in ways that they already know, which include their historical and cultural heritage, both of which are embedded in the language they speak. Ghana's Minister of Education (quoted in Klu, 2018), highlighted that once English is removed as the language of learning and teaching, the country will change. The Minister

indicated that the use of English is hindering development and she gave an example of Korea, where school attendance dramatically increased once English was removed as a language of learning and teaching. The Minister's call to Africa was to end poverty through the use of the correct medium of instruction in schools.

Only one school from the sample of six, had followed due processes in determining the language of learning and teaching (Department of Education, 2012). The schools' SGB played their role in deciding the language of learning and teaching in the school. They had a meeting where the language of learning and teaching was determined. However, even if the school did follow proper processes in choosing the language of learning and teaching, they too, chose English as medium of instruction from Grade 4 onwards.

According to Christie (2010), the SGBs of high performing schools, which mostly comprise of former model C schools and Indian schools, have been able to utilise their resources to the benefit of their schools. The schools have chosen the medium of instruction which is the learners' home language, and achievement in those schools is high. The SGBs in those school understand their roles as school governors. Examples are Afrikaans schools that took the Department of Basic Education to court when they were challenged for choosing Afrikaans as medium of instruction, and the SGBs won those cases. Some of schools are: Ordendaal High School and Rivonia High School, to mention just a few. However, this is not the case in rural and township schools where SGBs lack skills or even resources to travel to meetings. The implementation of educational policies which would improve performance and day to day running of these schools remain a challenge. One school had a meeting in which language policy and the language of learning and teaching were determined, but invitation letters do not indicate what the agenda of the day was so that members would have come prepared for the topic of the day. The researcher is of the opinion that the meeting was called just for compliance as policy requires that it should be done in that manner.

Lack of knowledge on language policy matters by SGBs violate their right to play an active role in the determination of the language of learning and teaching in their schools. SGBs do not receive adequate training from the departmental officials who are responsible for

training, thereby, they do not exercise their powers as school governors. Ansell and Gash (2007) indicated that SGBs under impoverished communities lack the education and experience to execute their duties as governors, and under such conditions, the impetus for parent involvement would come from the principal, as the parent members have no capacity to play their part in the governance of the school.

School principals represent the Department of Basic Education in the schools. One would expect them to have vast knowledge of the policies pertaining to all matters in relation to the day to day running of the school. Respondents from five schools out of six, are of the idea that English was chosen for them as a language of learning and teaching by the Department of Basic Education and that language policy is a matter of the department and that they simply have to comply. However, all schools have language policies which are signed by SGB chairpersons.

All the five principals indicated that policy dictates that learners should be taught in mother-tongue from Grade one to three, and switch to English from Grade four to seven. The situation in South African public primary schools is not going to be resolved any time soon. Since the principal, who is an ex-officio member of SGB, and in most cases the most educated one, is ignorant of government policies, the SGB which in many schools consist of uneducated members of the community is left with no one to assist them. Sayed (2002) states that the Department of Basic Education should have a more persistent hands-on policy in order to support SGBs in exercising their powers. In that way, the department would be able to identify the needs in school governance and give the necessary support.

5.2.4 Marginalisation of African languages in the schools

The study also investigated why African languages are marginalised as languages of learning and teaching in the selected public primary schools. Studies indicate that the aversion of mother-tongue instruction in South African's public schools date back to the apartheid era where it was regarded as a way of isolating blacks from the rest of the world and perpetuating Bantu Education (Harlech-Jones, 1990). Educational policies have

changed many times, and even after democracy, there was never a time when systems were put in place to decolonize the minds of Africans from undermining their own languages and developing them as languages of science and technology. In response to the last question, which asked SGB chairpersons why they were not choosing their home languages as media of studies in their schools, they indicated that they cannot choose their African languages for purposes of learning and teaching as they have no mandate to do so.

The SGBs went further to indicate that using African languages would disadvantage their learners when they become adults as they would not get employment. The researcher found that SGBs are aware that their learners would not do well academically if they use English as medium of instruction, yet they still chose English. Studies in Zambia found that the number of dropouts in primary schools is steadily moving to a situation where more than 50% of school going age children are not at school. This was attributed to the use of a foreign language (Mesthrie, 2002).

The SGBs can change the status of the struggling schools by choosing an African language as a medium of instruction. Parents indicated their frustrations when their children who used to perform well in Grade 1-3 start failing their tests and are not promoted to the next class at the end of the year. Posel and Casale (2011) also confirmed, in their studies, that the challenge of using a second language as a medium of instruction is a barrier to learners even if they manage to get to higher institutions of learning. In their studies, Posel and Casale (2011) found that learners were unable to cope with the demands of a more advanced English-taught curriculum, and that they eventually drop out. Wolfaardt (2001) revealed that where cognitive language skills of learners in school were low, and were not well developed, they encountered problems later in life.

The researcher also found that teachers are unable to teach in multilingual classrooms as they lack training. Moreover, learning and teaching materials in those languages is inadequate. The situation in the observed schools was that teachers engaged in code-switching. This situation is highlighted by Lockett (cited in NEPI, 1993) who argues that bilingual education should be put firmly on the agenda as this should be the approach in

South African public schools. Bilingual or multilingual approach would equip teachers with the necessary language vocabulary for the South African public schools. A case study in one of the districts in California (Hornberger, 1996) indicated the detrimental effects of using foreign language as medium of instruction, and also how the situation can be transformed by introducing bilingual education. In the studied district, Hispanic students were given the chance of studying in their home language, which is Spanish, alongside English, and the results were a massive cut in drop-out rates. The success of the programme is attributed to the language of learning and teaching which accommodated the needs of the students.

The researcher was informed by the teachers that English is used as medium of instruction where only mother-tongue should be used because teachers lacked the necessary vocabulary to teach in learners' mother-tongues. Additionally, teaching and learning support materials are not adequate for mother-tongue based classes. Dowling and Maseko (cited in Mesthrie, 2002) highlight the fact that teacher education has neglected the area of teaching African languages to students for a dual medium policy so that they can be equipped to conduct lessons in multicultural classrooms. In this study, the researcher found that many learners struggle to master reading and writing skills because of the multilingual nature of the school. They had Sepedi learners, Tshivenda learners and Xitsonga learners. Even if Xitsonga is not one of the languages of learning and teaching in their school, they have a few learners who are Xitsonga speaking. When they are outside of the classroom, they use all three languages to interact with one another. When the learners come to class, they have to distinguish between the language used in class, and the one they use outside and at home. This situation is described by Young et al., (cited in Mesthrie 2002) who indicate the complexities of the South African situation. They observe:

Outside the classroom, people use their linguistic resources in flexible ways to communicate and achieve their purposes. In the classroom however, the teacher is expected to develop linguistic abilities for learners in demonstrable ways, for example, the teacher must see to it that learners write essays in Xhosa without mixing with English and

vice versa. Multilingualism for the teacher is not only a resource but also a problem.

SASA mandates that there be an establishment of school governing bodies. Their functions are outlined in the Act, and one of the duties is to determine the language policy of the school. From the responses given by SGB Chairpersons, the researcher found that they did not know their responsibilities as school governors with respect to language policy matters. All respondents indicated that they did not choose the language of learning and teaching as they regard it is a matter of the Department of Basic Education to determine. SGBs do not know that they have the power to choose and that African languages can also be media of instruction. SGB chairpersons are of the idea that it is the Department of Basic Education that chooses English as the language of learning and teaching in their schools, and they also think that there is nothing they can do about the matter. The researcher also established that SGBs are of the opinion that their children would be disadvantaged if they are not taught in English. This is because English language carries a high status and the language of business in South Africa. The researcher is of the view that if mother-tongue was used as a language of learning and teaching throughout primary school, learners' performance would improve and L2 acquisition would not be so difficult. This has been proven by the "Ife Experimental project" in Nigeria (Ife Project, 1970).

SGB chairpersons know the language that is used as medium of instruction at different phases of their schools. They indicated that they sign documents of how schools should be run, but they do not take part in the formulation of such policies or documents.

Van Wyk (2007) describes co-operative governance as an interactive approach to education where all stakeholders are represented and take co-responsibility for the effective and efficient operations of the schools. The researcher found out that the respondents do not know who decides on matters of language of learning and teaching in their schools. They further indicated that they do not know why English is used and not the learners' mother-tongue, but they are aware that English frustrates their children because most learners do not perform well in Grade four onwards. This is supported by

Heugh (2000) in Posel and Casale (2011) who indicated that the use of English as a language of learning and teaching has had adverse consequences for learners' general academic success and cognitive development.

5.5 CONCLUSION

This chapter discussed the findings of the study. The discussion was arranged according to the research questions spelt out in Chapter one. The next chapter provides conclusions and recommendations of the study.

CHAPTER 6

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter summarises the findings of the study, draws conclusions from the findings and then makes recommendations based on the conclusions. Therefore, the chapter is organised into three headings, namely summary of findings, conclusions of the study and recommendations.

6.2 FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

The researcher established that members of the SGBs in selected public schools of Vhembe District believe the Department of Basic Education and school principals are responsible for the language policy in the schools and that their role is to merely rubber stamp the decisions of these two. This is indicative of the fact that they were not aware of the powers vested in them by SASA to determine the languages of learning and teaching in their schools. There was a concern from the principals of schools that the parent component of the SGB did not participate fully in their activities. This was as a result of number of factors such as illiteracy, distance from the school and lack of transport, as well as general lack of interest. This resulted in the SGB members not fully understanding their roles as school governors.

Some school principals assume that it is the prerogative of the SGBs to choose the language of learning and teaching for their schools. However, they feel that it would not benefit the learners if they decide to use a language other than English as a medium of instruction due to the following factors:

- English is a language of status. An individual earns a lot of respect when she or he is able to express herself or himself fluently in English.

- All secondary schools in the area use English as a language of learning and teaching.
- Tertiary institutions in the country use English as medium of instruction with the exception of a few that use both Afrikaans and English. None of the indigenous languages are used in the country as languages of instruction.
- Government institutions use English as means of conducting business.
- English is regarded as a language power.

Both principals and SGBs have the responsibility of developing the language policy of their schools. This research noted that SGBs did not hold meetings to discuss the language policy because most parents in the SGBs are illiterate and as a result do not contribute much to such meetings. Principals bring language documents to the SGB members for them to simply append their signatures. More often, chairpersons of SGBs just sign documents without fully understanding their import. It would seem that principals only get signatures of members of the SGBs for compliance purposes. They do this so that when Department of Basic Education officials come to the school, they find all documents in order.

The SGB chairpersons were not aware that together with the principal they could determine the language of instruction for their schools. The only duty they understand to be theirs is appending signatures on school financial documents. This is because workshops that are arranged for SGBs mainly talk about how they should use school money. Most of them were under the impression that the Department of Basic Education determines which language should be used as medium of instruction in each school. The SGB chairpersons also believe that learners will not get employment if they are not taught in English. They assumed that their children will never play a significant part in the economy of the country if they did not learn in English. Moreover, English was regarded as a prestigious language. Most SGB members said they would rather have their children struggle with English as a medium of learning rather than let them learn in their mother-

tongue. This was mainly because of the real and perceived benefits of the English language in the contemporary business world.

The language policies that are in the six schools selected for this study are a replica of the SASA of 1996. The SGBs have not aligned the language policy to their own situations. They have simply pasted their school logos on the cover page and everything else remains as it was in the SASA document.

6.3 CONCLUSIONS

Even though the SGBs are mandated by legislation to choose any other language out of the South African official languages to be the medium of learning and teaching in their schools, English remains their language of choice in public primary schools in Vhembe District. This is despite the fact that English is not the mother tongue of learners in these schools. Phaswana (2000) observed that among the educated in South Africa, English functions as the lingua franca, and it is a primary language for business, commerce and government. Hence, English remains the preferred language of learning and teaching.

The researcher concludes that the choice of the language of learning and teaching in the actual classroom setting should be determined by the language competencies of the learners in the classroom. When indigenous languages are used by teachers, learners grasp concepts easily than when English is used. Teachers are expected to deliver education in the medium of instruction chosen by the SGB but the reality in the classroom forces them to frequently code-switch to mother tongue. The gains are, however, temporary as assessment is only done in English which the learners do not understand.

The researcher also concludes that even though parents and principals are aware that English presents a serious barrier to learning as both learners and teachers find it difficult, they assume that they have no choice due to the instrumental value of English. Since English is the language of commerce in South Africa, parents pragmatically choose it as a medium of learning for their children. Unfortunately, this decision largely results in failure and massive dropouts of learners before they get to Grade 12. Learners who make it

through to tertiary institutions often drop-out before completing their studies when they find that concepts become more difficult when they get higher up with their education.

The researcher concludes that learners would benefit immensely if they were taught in indigenous languages. Both parents and the principals of schools acknowledged this and the observations carried out by the researcher also confirmed this.

Another conclusion arrived at by the researcher is that SGBs did not effectively play their role because they have not been capacitated to execute their duties as school governors. Most parent governors are illiterate and are not in a position to read and understand the SASA and LiEP which are both written in English. Therefore, the SGB members remain unaware of their duties and responsibilities as school governors. The morale is low among parent governors as most of them are unemployed and do not even have the means to travel to school meetings.

Principals of schools remain the only people who have a say in school governance as they are in most cases the ones who would understand the SGB constitution. However, principals do not take the initiative to capacitate the parent governors, instead, they make them rubberstamp decisions taken by school management teams.

Clearly, the processes laid down by the SASA for determining language policy are not being followed by principals and SGBs. There are hardly any records in the schools to show that due process is followed in discussing language issues. This could be because both parents and principals see this as a fruitless exercise as they have no choice but to choose English. A nationwide mind set change towards language is required to motivate the schools to seriously look at language issues. There is no motivation to choose languages other than English when the schools that these primary schools feed use English or when there are no teaching and learning materials in indigenous languages.

6.4 RECOMMENDATIONS

Governance, in academic literature, is defined as the involvement of private citizens in public policy at local and regional levels, and it entails policymaking, implementation and oversight in a formal collective setting (Ansell & Gash, 2007). Paramount to this collective setting is the establishment of the language of learning and teaching to be used at schools for education to attain its goal of eradicating illiteracy and poverty through learning (Owino, 2002). The researcher makes the following recommendations informed by the conclusions drawn from the results of the study:

- Because of the lack of capacity to discuss language issues by SGBs, workshops that address all matters of school governance should be held on a continuous basis to bring the SGBs to a level where they can effectively perform their duties. However, such workshops should be undertaken in a free and conducive environment. The language used in these workshops should be the ones spoken in these communities. This would ensure that rural schools SGB members are capacitated and enabled to perform their duties as school governors. The training should be continuous and not only done once as an induction course after SGB members have been elected.
- The Department of Basic Education should change the composition of the School Governing Body so that it can include members of the community who are knowledgeable in educational matters. This could include retired school principals and other community members who are or were government officials in various school departments. The stipulation that only people with children in the school qualify to be members of the SGB can be detrimental to schools where the majority of the parents are illiterate.
- Provision should be made in the school funds to allow SGBs to visit former model C schools so that they can learn different ways of doing things.

- School principals need coaching on school governance matters so that they can raise the morale of parent governors by creating opportunities for parent employment in the schools. In situations where the socio-economic status is low, interest in the welfare of parents would motivate them to participate more in school activities.
- Visibility of parent governors will make them feel more relaxed at school and willing to take part in important activities of the school which include drafting of the language policy among others. The principal and SGB chairperson should take the initiative to ensure that learners and teachers get to know the parent governors. In this way, parent governors will feel more valued and be willing to know and take part in decision making processes of the school.
- Teachers' training methods should be revisited. The training should cater for multilingualism. This will equip teachers with strategies to effectively use both English and learners' home languages for teaching and assessment. Teachers' vocabulary should be enhanced in all the necessary languages to enable learning and teaching to take place without any hindrances. Several studies have proven that bilingual education yields better results than monolingual education. When evaluating results of bilingual education and its effectiveness, Trujilo (2007) noted considerable support for bilingual programmes, in no case did English-only programmes outperform bilingual programmes. He found out that students who were taught to read in both their native language and in English performed far much better on English reading tests than those who were only taught in English.
- Educational teaching material should be developed in indigenous languages as in the case of Afrikaans. Code-switching would be easily implemented because educators would have resource teaching material.
- Indigenous African languages should be developed into languages of science and technology in South African public schools.

- Mother-tongue education should be done throughout primary school as was recommended by UNESCO. It has been proved by researchers that when learners' mother-tongue has been used as a language of learning and teaching for a longer period, like throughout primary school, then it becomes easier for such learners to master a second language. However, this can only be done if indigenous languages are developed into languages of science and technology.

The South African government should prioritise the development of indigenous languages despite the high costs. This will benefit the country in the long run as more learners will remain in school and enable them to effectively contribute to the nation's economy.

6.5 CONCLUSION

The chapter provided a summary of the findings of the study and drew conclusions from them. One of the conclusions is that selected schools choose English because of its instrumental value and that indigenous languages have not been developed to carry the weight of science and technology. This makes it unavoidable and inevitable that English would be chosen over and above indigenous languages as the language of learning and teaching even though parents know that its usage in the classroom is detrimental to their children's school performance. One of the key recommendations made is that the government should invest in the development of indigenous languages so that they can be used in science and technology. Language issues should be treated in a holistic manner to encompass the whole country.

REFERENCES

- Alexander, N. (1992). *Education and the Struggle for National Liberation of South Africa*. Braamfontein: Skotaville Publishers.
- Alexander, (1996). *Mainstreaming by Confluence; the Multilingual Contest of Literature in South Africa*. *World Literature today*, 70:1, 9-11
- Baker, C. (2001). *Foundations of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism*. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.
- Ball, J. (2014). *Children Learn Better in Mother Tongue. Global Partnership for Education*. New York. Collins.
- Baxter, P. & Jack, S. (2008). *Qualitative Case Study Methodology: Study Design and Implementation for Novice Researchers*. *The Qualitative Report Volume 13 Number 4*. NSU Works.
- Benson, C. (2002). *Real and Potential Benefits of Bilingual Programmes in Developing Countries*. *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism*.5:6, 303-317.
- Benson, C. (2005). *Girls, Educational Equity and Mother Tongue-based Teaching*. Thailand: UNESCO
- Brehony, K. J & Deem, R. (1995). *School Governing Bodies: Reshaping Education in their own Image*. *Sociological Review*. The Sociological Review 1995. England: Wiley online library.
- Benson, C. & Kosonen, K. (2013). *Language Issues in Comparative Education: Inclusive Teaching and Learning in Non-Dominant Languages and Cultures*. Rotterdam: Sense Publishers.

- Braun, V. & Clarke, V. (2006). *Using Thematic Analysis in Psychology*. Qualitative Research in Psychology, Vol 3, 77-101.
- Brisk, M.E. & Proctor, C.P. (2017). *Challenges and Supports for English Language Learners in Bilingual Programs*. Understanding Language. Stanford University.
- Byrnes, R. M. (1996). *South Africa: A Country Study*. Washington: GPO for the Library of Congress.
- Carey, S. (1993). *Bilingual Education/Language Planning: Transitional and Immersion Programmes and Their Implications for a Post-Apartheid South Africa*. In Young, D. Southern African Journal of Applied Language Studies. University of Cape Town: The Language Education Centre in the School of Education.
- Cenoz, J. (2013). *Defining Multilingualism*. Annual Review of Applied Linguistics. Vol 33, 7-18. Cambridge University Press.
- Clark, N. L. & Wolger, W.H. (2004). *The Rise and Fall of Apartheid*. New York: Longman.
- Clark, N. L. (2011). *South Africa: The Rise and Fall of Apartheid*. London: Routledge.
- Cluver, A.D. (1992). *Language Planning Models for a Post-Apartheid South Africa. Language Problems and Language Planning*. Amsterdam: John Benjamin Publishing Company.
- Cockcroft, K. (2015). *The Role of Working Memory in Childhood Education: Five questions and answers*. South African Journal of Childhood Education. Volume 5 No 1, 5-8. University of Johannesburg.
- Cohen, L. Manion, L. & Morrison, K. (2011). *Research Methods in Education*. London: Routledge.

- Cohen, D. & Crabtree, B. (2006). *Qualitative Research Guidelines Project*. July 2006. <http://www.qualres.org/HomeGuid-3868.html>. [Accessed on 17 September 2017].
- Christie, P. (2010). *Landscapes of Leadership in South African Schools: Mapping the Changes*. Faculty of Education, University of Canberra. Australia: Sage.
- Cresswell, J. W. (2003). *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed methods Approaches*. Thousand Oaks: Sage
- Cummings, J. (2001). *Language, Power and Pedagogy: Bilingual Children in the Crossfire*. Clevedon: Multilingual matters.
- Cummings, J. (2001). *Empowering Minority Students*. Sacramento CA. California: Association for Bilingual Education.
- Cummings, S.M. & Tamayo, S. (1994). *Language and Education in Latin America. An Overview*. HRO Working Papers.
- Davenport, D. & Saunders, C. (2000). *South Africa. A Modern History*. London: Macmillan Press Ltd.
- Department of Basic Education. (2012). *Guidelines for Capacity Building of School Governing Body Members*. ISBN 978-1-4315-1555-4.
- Department of Basic Education. (1995). *White Paper on Education and Training G.N 196 of 1995* Published by the Department of Basic Education. Cape Town: Government Gazette.
- Department of Basic Education. (2004). *Review of School Governance in South African Schools*. Pretoria: Government Printers.

Department of Basic Education. (1996). *Admission Policy for Ordinary Public Schools*. Pretoria: Government Printers.

Department of Basic Education. (1993). *National Education Policy Investigation. The Framework Report and Final Report Summaries*. Cape Town: Oxford University Press.

Department of Basic Education. (1997). *Language-in-Education Policy of 1997*. Pretoria: Department of Basic Education.

de Vos, A.S., Strydom, H., Fouche, C.B., & Delpont, C. S. L. (2010). *Research at Grass Roots: For the Social Sciences and Service Professions*. Pretoria: Van Schaik Publishers.

Diamond, J. (2010). *The Benefits of Multilingualism*. *Science Magazine Vol 330*, 332-333. www.sciencemag.org. [Accessed on 02-10-2017]

Dube, W.M.R. (1992). *Language Attitudes in Soweto: The Place of the Indigenous Languages (Completed Research Project)*. Vista University.

Du Preez, J. (2013). *The Right of Education, School Governing Bodies and Official Languages: What is in the best interest of our children? F.W de Klerk Foundation*. www.fwdeklerk.org. [Accessed on 02-10-2017].

Eastman, C.M. (1992). *Socio-Linguistics in Africa. Language Planning*. In Herbert, R. K. *Language and Society in Africa*, 95-114. Braamfontein: Witwatersrand University Press.

Fafunwa, A. B. (1986). *Innovations in Nigerian Education. Past, Present and Future*. Faculty of Education Lecture Series Number 1. Obafemi Owolowo University LLE Ife.

- Fairclough, N. (1992). *Critical Language Awareness*. London: Harlow.
- Fasold, R. (1984). *The Sociolinguistics of Society*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Gamage, D (1994). *School Governance: Australian Perspectives*. In Thody, A. (ed.). *School Governors: Leaders or Followers?* Essex. Longman.
- Giliomee, H. (2009). *A Note of Bantu Education (1953-1970)*. South African Journal of Economics.
- Graaff, J. (2016). Governance in the Poorer Schools in South Africa from the Perspective of the Parent Governor. RESEP. Stellenbosch University. www.resep.sun.ac.za [Accessed on 16 September 2018]
- Hargrieve, D. (2004) *'Student Voice and Assessment for Learning: Personalising Learning L2*. London: SSAT.
- Harlech-Jones, B. (1987). *Implementing Language Policy Decisions in Education: What Do We Know and What Don't We know?* In Young, D. (ed) *Language: Planning and Medium in Education*. Southern African Applied Linguistic Association, 69-81. University of Cape Town. The language Education Unit and SAALA.
- Harlech-Jones, B. (1990). *"You Taught Me Language". The Implementation of English as a Medium of Instruction in Namibia*. Cape Town: Oxford University Press.
- Heugh, K. & Siegruhn, A. (1995). *Towards Implementing Multilingual Education in South Africa*. Southern African Applied Linguistic Association. University of Cape Town. Education Unit and SAALA.
- Heugh, K. (2002). The Case against Bilingual and Multilingual education in South Africa. Laying Bare the Myths. *Perspectives in Education*. Vol 20, No 1, pp171-198.

- Heystek, J. (1994). *School Governing Bodies: Making Progress? (1 October 1994)*. *School Governing Bodies in South African Schools*. <http://www.nwu.ac.za/Heystek%202011%20School%Governing%20Bodi>.
- Heystek, J. & Bush, T. (2003). *School Governance in South Africa*. Compare, 33.
- Hornberger, N.H. & McKay, S.L. (1996). *Sociolinguistics and Language Teaching*. London: Cambridge University Press.
- Hunter Report. (1995). *Report on the Committee to Review the Organization, Governance and Funding of Schools*. Pretoria: Government Printers.
- Hursh, D. (2005). *Neo-Liberalism, Markets and Accountability: Transforming Education and Undermining Democracy in the United States and England*. Policy Futures in Education, Volume 3, number1: Pages 3-15. Sage Journals. London: Sage publications.
- Inglis, M., Thomson, C. & Macdonald, A. (2000). *Language in Learning and Teaching*. Durban: University of Natal Press.
- Iwase, M. (2014). *A Violent Protest for Education*. *South African History Online*. The June 16 Soweto Youth Uprising.
- Karlson, J. (2002). *The Role of Democratic Governing Bodies in South African Schools*. Comparative Education, 38(3):327-336.
- Klu, K.E. & Ansre, M.A. (2018). *An Overview of the Language-in-Education Policy in Ghana: Emerging Issues*. Department of General Studies, Wisconsin International University College. The Social Sciences 13 (3): 596-601. Medwell Journals.

- Lafon, M. (2008). *Asikhulume! African Language for All, a Powerful Strategy for Spearheading Transformation and Improvement of the South African Education System*. In Lafon, M and V Webb. *Standardisation of African Languages in South Africa*. [<http://www.ifas.org.za/research/index.php>]
- Lambert, W.E. (1985). *Perspectives on Bilingualism and Bilingual Education*. Washington DC. Georgetown University Press.
- Macdonald, C. (1990). *Crossing the Threshold into Standard Three*. Main Report of the Threshold Project. Report SOLING-16. Pretoria: HSRC.
- Mackee, N. (2002). *Language in Development: Questions of Theory, questions of practice*. TESOL Quarterly. 36, 325-355.
- Mackey, W. (1979). *Journal of Communication*. Vol 29, 48-53. Wiley Online Library.
- Macmillan, J.H. & Schumacher, S. (2006). *Research in Education. Evidence Based Inquiry*. United States. Pearson.
- Mahadi, T.S.T. & Jafari, S.M. (2012). Attitudes and Motivation of Students Towards Learning ESL. *International Journal of Business and Social Science* 3(24) 230-235.
- Maradze, V. (2014). *The Use of Shona as Medium of Instruction in Zimbabwean Primary Schools: A Case Study of Buhera South District*. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, Vol.4, No,12, 2472-2476. Academy Publisher. Finland.
- Maree, K. (2007). *First Steps in Research*. Pretoria: Van Schaik.

- Marishane, R.N. (1999). *Partnership in School Governance. Foundation for Reform and Restructuring. Med Dissertation*. Pretoria: University of South Africa.
- Maxwell, J.A. (1998). *Qualitative Research Design Methods. An Interactive Approach*. London: Sage Publications.
- McCarty, T.L. (2011). *Ethnography and Language*. New York: Routledge.
- McGregor, J. (2004). *Students as Researchers*. Cranfield: NCSL.
- McKay, S. L. (1993). *Agendas for Second Language Literacy*. Cambridge. Cambridge University Press.
- McKay, S.L. & Hornberger, N. H. (1996). *Sociolinguistics and Language Teaching*. Cambridge. University Press.
- Mcmillan, J.H. & Schumacher, S. (2006). *Research in Education Evidence-Based Inquiry*. United States. Pearson.
- Merriam, S. B. (2009). *Qualitative Research and Case Study Applications in Education* (2nd ed). San Francisco, C.A: Jossey-Bass [Accessed on 15 February 2019]
- Mesthrie, R. (2002). *Language in South Africa. Cape Town*. Cambridge University Press.
- Middlewood, D., Parker, R. & Piper-Gale, J. (2011). *Learning Through Research. Flexpress. www.flexpress.co.uk*.
- Mitra, D. (2001). *Opening the Floodgates: 'Giving Students a Voice in School Reform'*. Volume 43, 91-94.
- Mugenda, O. & Mugenda, A. (2003). *Research Methods in Special Education and Field Study. African Centre for Technology Studies*. Nairobi: Acts Press.

- Mullis, V.S. & Martin, M.O. (2007). *Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study*. International Study Centre. Lynch School of Education. Boston College.
- Murray, A.K., Bagby, J.H. & Sulak, T. (2010). *Research 101: Understanding Educational Research*. Montessory Life, Vol 22(4): 34-37.
- Mvula, E.T. (1992). *Language policies in Africa. The Case for Chichewa in Malawi*, In Herbert, R.K. (ed) *Language and Society in Africa*, 37-47. Witwatersrand University: Witwatersrand University Press.
- Nadine, L.M. (2015). *In Class of their Own: Bantu Education Act (1953)*. Revisited. University of Pretoria. Faculty of Humanities.
- National Education Co-ordinating Committee. National Education Policy Investigation. The Framework Report 1993, Final Report, Oxford University Press- South Africa.*
- Ndlovu, S.M. (1998). *The Soweto Uprisings. Counter-Memories of June 1976*. Randburg: .Ravan Press.
- Ngugi wa Thiongo. (2003). *Steve Biko Memorial Lecture*. www.news.uct.ac.za[accessed [Accessed on 17 September 2017].
- Owen-Smith, M. (2002). *The Language Challenge in the Classroom. (Unpublished Findings of the Home Language Project)*. Wits Education Projects Unit.
- Owino, F.R. (2002). *Speaking African. African Languages for Education and Development*. Cape Town. Centre for Advanced Studies of African Society (CASAS).

- Phaswana, N.E. (1994). *African Language Planning Policies at the University of Venda and the Medium of Instruction Question. Dissertation for Master of Arts Degree of Philosophy.* University of Cape Town.
- Phaswana, N.E. (1998). The Elevated Status of English in the School Curriculum. African Journals Online. Accessed 20 July 2018. [<https://www.ajol.info>]
- Phaswana, N.E. (2000). *Languages of Use by the South African National Government. A Dissertation for PHD.* Michigan State University.
- Posel, D. & Casale, D. (2011). *International Journal of Educational Development Volume 31: 449-457.* Durban: University of KwaZulu Natal.
- Prah, K.K. (1993). *Mother Tongue for Scientific and Technological Development in Africa.* CASAS Book Series. Centre for Advanced Studies of African Society.
- Prah, K.K. (2009). The Challenge of African Development in the Context of Current Linguistic Realities and Dominant Knowledge in Applied Linguistics. *Languages of Africa, Studies on Language Planning and Policy in Africa,* Pages 272-273. Cape Town. CASAS.
- Prah, K. K. & Brock-Utne, B. (2009). *Multilingualism- a Paradigm Shift in African Language of Instruction Policies.* Cape Town. CASAS.
- Prah K.K. (2017). *Creating Knowledge in Africa. School of Human and Social Sciences Annual Lectures.* University of Venda and CASAS Publication.
- Prinsloo, S. (2006). *Interference by the State in the Governance of Public Schools.* S.A Journal of Education, Vol 26 no 3, 356-367.

- Rajendren, S.D. (2012) *The Impact of English as Medium of Instruction on the Academic Performance of Second Language Learners in the Further Education and Training Band at Schools in Kwazulu Natal.*
- Ridge, E., Jordaan, F and Nangu, N.C. (1997). *Language Barriers to Learning Science. Per Linguam. Perlinguam.Journals.ac.za.* [Accessed on 17 October 2017]
- Rollnick, M.S. & Rutherford, M. (1996). *The use of Mother Tongue and English in the Learning and Expression of Science Concepts. A Classroom Based Study.* <http://www.wits.ac.za>. [Accessed on 21 September 2017].
- Sayed, Y. (2002). *Democratizing Education in a Decentralized System.* South African Policy and Practice. Compare 32(1), 35-46.
- Siguan, M & Mackey, W. (1987). *Education and Bilingualism.* London: UNESCO.
- Skutnabb-Kangas T. (2004). *The Importance of Mother Tongue Based Education. United Nations Development Report. Volume 1:1-25.* <http://hdr.undp.org/reports/global/2004/> [Accessed on 19 October 2017].
- South Africa. (1996). *National Education Policy Act (No. 27 of 1996).* Pretoria: Government Printers.
- South Africa. (1997). *Language-in-Education Policy Act.* Pretoria: Government Printers.
- South Africa. (2014). *Education Statistics.* Pretoria. Government Printers: Government Printers.
- South Africa. (2016). *Education Statistics.* Pretoria: Government Printers.
- South Africa. (1993). *National Education Policy Investigation. The Framework Report & Final Report Summaries.* Cape Town: Oxford University Press.

- South Africa. (1996a). *The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa. No 108 of 1996*. Pretoria: Government Printers.
- South Africa. (1996b). *The South African Schools Act. No 84 of 1996*. Pretoria: Government Printers.
- South Africa. (1995). *The Labour Relations Act. No 66 of 1995*. Pretoria: Government Printers.
- South Africa. (2012). *Use of Official Languages, Act No 12 of 2012*. Pretoria: Government Printers.
- South Africa. (2003). *Education Labour Relations Council (ELRC). Policy Handbook for Educators. Commissioned by The Education Labour Relations Council (ELRC) Edited by Chris Brunton and Associates, Universal Print Group. <http://www.ernape.net> [Accessed 20 February 2012]*.
- Squelch J. M. (2000). "Governance in Education". *Contemporary Education: Global Issues and Trends*. Sandton: Heinemann.
- TerreBlanche, M. & Durrheim, K. (1999). *Research in Practice. Applied Methods for Social Science*. Cape Town: University of Cape Town Press.
- Tollefson, J. W. (1991). *Planning Language, Planning Inequality*. UK: Longman Group
- Trujillo, M. (2007). *Bilingual Education in California: Is it Working?* Penn McNair Research Journal. Volume1. Issue 1. Article 3. Penn Libraries: University of Pennsylvania.
- UNESCO. (1953). *The Use of Vernacular Language in Education*. Monographs on Fundamentals of Education No 8. Paris. UNESCO

UNESCO. (2003). *Education in a Multilingual World*. Paris: UNESCO

UNICEF. (2016). *Zimbabwe. The Impact of language policy and practice on children's learning*. Evidence from Eastern and Southern Africa: Country Review.

Van Wyk, N. (1999). *Schooling in Contemporary Education. Global Issues and Trends*. Lemmer, E. (ed). Sandton. Heinemann Higher and Further Education (Pty) Ltd.

Van Wyk, N. (2001). *Perceptions and Practices of Discipline and Punishment in Urban Black Schools in South Africa*. South African Journal of Education, 21:195-201.

Van Wyk, N. (2007). *The Rights and Roles of Parents on Governance in South African Schools*. International Journal about Parents in Education Vol 1 No,132-139.

Webb, V. & Kembo-Sure, (2000). *African Voices. An Introduction to the Languages and Linguistics of Africa*. Oxford University Press.

Wiley, J. (1999). *Wiley, Online Library*. John Wiley and Sons, Inc.

Wolfaardt, D. (2001). *Facilitating Learning. An Investigation of the Language Policy for Namibia's Schools*. Unpublished Doctoral Thesis. Cape Town: University of Western Cape.

Woolman, S. & Fleisch, B. (2006). *South Africa's Unintended Experiment in Schools Choice. How the National Education Policy Act create the enabling conditions for quasi-market schools*. Education and the Law. Vol.18:1,31-37. London: Routledge.

Woolman, S. & Fleisch, B. (2009). *The Constitution in the Classroom*. Law and Education in South Africa.

Young, L. (1994). *Crosstalk and Culture in Sino-American Communication*. Cambridge. Cambridge University Press.

APPENDIX A: UHDC PROPOSAL APPROVAL

UNIVERSITY OF VENDA

OFFICE OF THE DEPUTY VICE-CHANCELLOR: ACADEMIC

TO . MR/MS A.T MUDAU
SCHOOL OF HUMAN AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

FROM. SENIOR PROFESSOR L.B KHOZA
DEPUTY VICE-CHANCELLOR: ACADEMIC

DATE . 15 MAY 2018

DECISIONS TAKEN BY UHDC OF 15TH MAY 2018

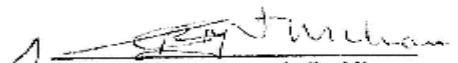
Application for approval of Master's research proposal in Human and Social Sciences: A.T Mudau (18300521)

Topic: "The Choice of Language of Learning and Teaching (LOLT) in Selected Public Primary Schools of Vhembe District."

Supervisor UNIVEN Dr. B. Dube

Co-supervisor UNIVEN Mr. S.E Madma

UHDC approved Master's proposal

 22 June
Senior Professor L.B. Khoza

ACTING DEPUTY VICE-CHANCELLOR: ACADEMIC

APPENDIX B: ETHICAL CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE

RESEARCH AND INNOVATION

OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR

NAME OF RESEARCHER/INVESTIGATOR:

Ms AT Mudau

Student No:

8300521

PROJECT TITLE: The choice of English as a language of learning and teaching (LoLT) in selected public primary schools of Vhembe.

PROJECT NO: sHSS/18/CALS/01/1211

SUPERVISORS/ CO-RESEARCHERS/ CO-INVESTIGATORS

NAME	INSTITUTION & DEPARTMENT	ROLE
Mr SE Madima	University of Venda	supervisor
Dr B Dube	University of Venda	Co — Supervisor
Ms AT Mudau	University of Venda	Investigator — Student

ISSUED BY:

UNIVERSITY OF VENDA, RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

APPENDIX C: REQUEST TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

PO BOX 193,
MASHAU
0943
23 August 2018

The District Director
Department of Education (Vhembe)
P/Bag x2250
SIBASA
0970

Dear Sir

APPLICATION FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

1. The above matter bears reference
2. I, Mudau Angeline Tshikhathali am currently a registered student at the University of Venda, Department of Communication and Applied language Studies. My supervisor is Dr Dube B and Co-Supervisor is Mr Madima S.E. My research topic is 'English as a language of learning and teaching'.
3. I would like to conduct interviews with members of School Governing Bodies from selected schools within Vhembe District. The interviews will be conducted after school so that there is no disruption of daily functioning of the school. The research project will maintain the confidentiality and anonymity of participants.

Hoping that my request will be answered favourably.

Thank you



Mudau A.T.

APPENDIX D: PERMISSION FROM DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION VHEMBE DISTRICT



DEPARTMENT OF
EDUCATION
VHEMBE DISTRICT

REF: 14/7/R

ENQ: RAVELE N.P
CONTACT: 082 084 5774

MUDAU A.T
PO BOX 193
MASHAU
0943

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
VHEMBE District
2018-08-31
PRIVATE BAG X 2250 SIBASA 0970
TEL: 015 962 1313/ 015 962 6039
LIMPOPO PROVINCE

REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

1. This serves to inform you that your request for permission to conduct research entitled "ENGLISH AS A LANGUAGE OF LEARNING AND TEACHING" has been granted.
2. We appreciate your commitment to conduct your research after school hours to avoid disrupting teaching and learning activities.
3. Kindly inform the circuit Manager and principals of the schools prior to commencing your interviews.
4. Wishing you all the best on your studies.

2018-08-31

DISTRICT DIRECTOR

DATE

Thohoyandou Government Building, Old Parliament, Block D, Private Bag X2250,
SIBASA, 0970
Tel: (015) 962 1313 or (015) 962 1331, Fax: (015) 962 6039 or (015) 962 2288

APPENDIX E: PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM

PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM

I am a **voluntary participant** in the research project conducted by **Mudau Angeline Tshikhathali** from the **University of Venda**. I understand that the project is designed to **gather information on the topic "English as a Language of learning and teaching in selected public primary schools of Vhembe District"**.

1. I understand that I will not be paid for my participation.
2. I may discontinue participation at any time without penalty.
3. The interview will be recorded on audio tape.
4. I understand that the researcher will not identify me by name in the reports.
5. Uses of records and data will follow standard data use policies
6. I have read and understand the explanation provided to me, I voluntarily agree to participate in this study.

Participants' Signature: _____ Date: _____

Researcher's Signature: _____ Date: _____

APPENDIX F: CLASS OBSERVATION

APPENDIX F: CLASS OBSERVATION DATA

Grade	LoLT to be used according to LiEP	Was the correct LoLT used during the lesson	Subject	Learner responses when code-switching is used	Language used for assesment
2	Sepedi		Mathematics		
4	English		Mathernatics		
6	English		Life Skills		

Follow up questions

1. Why is the teacher not using the chosen language of learning and teaching?
2. Are learning and teaching material available in the chosen medium of instruction?

APPENDIX G: QUESTIONS ASKED TO SGB CHAIRPERSON

QUESTIONS ASKED TO SGB CHAIRPERSONS

These questions were translated from English into Tshivenda, Xitsonga and Sepedi because it was assumed that some participants could be not fluent in English. Participants were asked the following questions:

Q1: Why was English chosen as the language of learning and teaching at your school?

Tshivenda: Ndi ngani Luisimane lwo nangiwa sa lwone luambo lwa u funzwa na u funza fhano tshikoloni tshavho?

Xitsonga: Xana hikokwaloho ka yini mi kotle ku hlawula ririmi ra Xinghezi, tani hi ririmi ro dyondza no dyondzisa eka xikolo xa nwina xana?

Sepedi: Ke ka baka la eng le kgethile leleme la Sejahtapi go ithuteng le khuetsong sekolong sa lena?

Q2: Why are African languages not chosen as languages of learning and teaching in your school?

Tshivenda: Ndi ngani vha sa nangi nyambo dza Afurika kha u guda na u gudiswa fhano tshikoloni tshavho?

Xitsonga: Hi yihi mhaka leyi yi endleke leswaku tindzimi ta vanhu va tima ti nga langhiwanga kuva ti tihisiwaka ku dyondza na ku dyondzisa eka xikolo xa nwi'na?

Sepedi: E kaba lebaka ke lefe go sa kgethwe lelemepolelo la se Afrika go ithuteng le khuetsong ya dipelo tša barutwana?

Q3: Which process was followed by the SGB when choosing the language of learning and teaching at your school?

Tshivenda: Ndi maitela a fhio e a tevhedzwa nga khombusi musi hu tshi nangiwa luambo lwa u funzwa na u funza fhano tshikoloni tshavho?

Xitsonga: Nwina tani hi huvo ya xikolo mi endla yini loku mi hahlula leswaku ku tihisiwa ririmi rihhi ro dyondisa vana exikolweni?

Sepedi: Naa le latetše mabaka afeng bjale ka sehlophapušo ge go kgokaganywa tirisho ya teleme la go rutwa le go ruta sekolong sa lena?

Q4: What factors did you take into consideration when deciding on the language of learning and teaching?

Tshivenda: Ndi zwithu zwifhio zwe zwa dzhielwa ntha musi hu tshi dzhiwa tsho ya luambo lwa u guda na u gudiswa?

Xitsonga: Hiku vona ka nwina ni kuyingisela loko van ava tolaveleke kuri tihisa, na kona nwina mi anakanya leswaku swi endliwa hi yini?

Sepedi: Ke mabaka afeng a hlokometsweng ge go tšewa sephetho sa lelemepolelo la ithuteng le khuetšong?

Q5: Why did you not choose the learners' home language as the medium of instruction at your school?

Tshivenda: Ndi ngani vha so ngo nanga luambo lwa damuni sa lwone lwa u funzwa na u funza fhano tshikoloni tshavho?

Xitsonga: Hikwalaho ka yini minga tihisi ririmi ra manana ku dyondza naku dyondzisa eka xikolo xa nwina?

Sepedi: E kaba lebaka ke lefe o sa kgethwe lelemepolelo la go tswa letsweleng go ithuteng le khuetšong sekolong sa lena?

APPENDIX H: QUESTIONS ASKED TO THE PRINCIPALS



These questions were not translated into African languages because it was assumed that principals would understand them in English and be comfortable in answering them without translations into their home languages.

- Q1: Why was English chosen as the language of learning and teaching at your school?*
- Q2: Why are African languages not chosen as languages of learning and teaching at your school?*
- Q3: Which process was followed by the SGB when choosing the language of learning and teaching at your school?*
- Q4: What factors did you take into consideration when deciding on the language of learning and teaching in your school?*
- Q5: What is the language proficiency of learners in terms of the language of learning and teaching?*
- Q6: Why did you not choose the learners' home language as medium of instruction at your school?*
- Q7: What impact do you think is made by the choice of language of learning and teaching in the academic performance of learners?*

APPENDIX I: UHDC PROPOSAL APPROVAL

Document	Are there clear objectives	Is there an indication of the process followed	Are there signatures to indicate authenticity of the document	Is there an indication of the language chosen as LoLT
School language policy	Yes	No	yes	yes
Minutes	No	No	No	Yes
SASA and LIEP	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

APPENDIX J : VISITED SCHOOL-MAVHINA PRIMARY

	MAVHINA PRIMARY SCHOOL	
PROVINCE	DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION	P. O BOX 92, MASHAU, 0943
EMIS NO: 930321325	VHEMBE WEST DISTRICT	22 October 2018
VHURONGA 2 CIRCUIT		
ENQ: MUILA B.D (ACTING PRINCIPAL)	CELL NO: 076 224 7774	

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

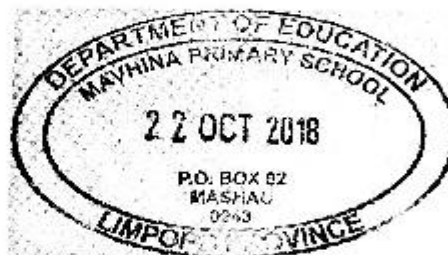
This is to confirm that Mudau A. T came to the school to conduct research.

Thank you

 2018/10/22

Principal

Date



APPENDIX K: VISITED SCHOOL-MASUNGI PRIMARY



MASUNGI PRIMARY .SC.HOOL
PRIVATE BAG X325 ELIM HOSPITAL
0960

ENQ: MAKHUBELE M.R
CELL: 082 786 7626 / OFFICE: 073 281 8506
EMIS: 912520658

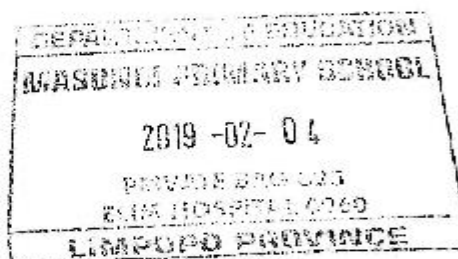
Dear Sir / Madam

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

This is to certify that Mudau A.T come to our school to conduct research. Her topic was: the choice of English as a Language of Learning and Teaching by SGB in public Primary Schools of Vhembe District.

Yours Faithfully

• School Principal (Mr Makhubela M.R)



APPENDIX L: VISITED SCHOOL-MAVHINA PRIMARY



Enq: Makhwathana AS
Principal
Cell: 079 520 9347

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

This is to confirm that Mudau A.I came to the school to conduct research.

Principal:  Date: 2018-10-16

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
MASEDI PRIMARY SCHOOL
EMIS 905331476
2018-10-16
PO Box 1764 Makhado 0920
Tel 015 151 0136
LIMPOPO PROVINCE