

**THE PERCEPTIONS OF PARENTS AND TEACHERS ABOUT THE
LEARNING AND TEACHING OF SETSWANA AS A FIRST LANGUAGE IN
HIGH SCHOOLS**

by

MOFOKENG SHARLOTTE THATO



RESEARCH MINI-DESSERTATION

Submitted in fulfillment of the requirement for the degree of

MASTERS OF ARTS

in

TRANSLATIONS STUDIES AND LINGUISTICS

in the

FACULTY OF HUMANITIES

(School of Languages and Communication)

at the

UNIVERSITY OF LIMPOPO

SUPERVISOR: DR JR Rammala

DECLARATION

I, the undersigned, SHARLOTTE THATO MOFOKENG declare that the dissertation THE TEACHER'S AND PARENTS' PERCEPTION ON THE LEARNING AND TEACHING OF SETSWANA AS A FIRST LANGUAGE IN HIGH SCHOOLS, has not been previously submitted by me for any degree at this or any other institution, that this is my own work in design and that all material contained therein are acknowledged.

Date:

S.T.MOFOKENG (MS.)



DEDICATION

I dedicate this to my lovely son Kopano Prince Mofokeng and my beloved mother Anna Matshidiso Mofokeng.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Firstly I have to thank God for all the strength he provided to me and for making me the person I am today. I had to strength to carry on because you were the pillar at all times and guidance you provided is highly appreciated.

Special thanks also goes to my supervisor, DR Rammala for his efforts, guidance, and words of encouragement. Thank you for all the work you have done in making sure that this dissertation is a success. For being ready all the time and patient at all times even when it did not feel like there was a way forward. Thanks a million for guiding me and for not giving up on me until I completed this assignment.

Many thanks to my mother Anna Mofokeng for being there when I had no strength to carry and not letting me quit my studies under any circumstances and for all the support. My son Kopano Mofokeng for putting a smile on my face every single day even when it was hard for me to smile and to easing the pressure by just being there for me. To rest of my family, my six brothers and sister for all the support and guidance and for also showing me your unconditional love and your words of wisdom and encourage through my junior degree and to this Master's degree. Most of all thank you for not giving up and letting me give up. You people are the best.

To the language editor of this dissertation, thank you for taking your time to read through my work and the patience you had while doing it.

To my friends who have been there for me through the writing of this dissertation, your encouragement and support did not go unnoticed.

KE A LEBOHA

ABSTRACT

This research looks at the perceptions of parents and teachers about the learning and teaching of Setswana. It looks at Setswana not only as a subject but also as a first language that learners speak at home. It is said that learners have a negative attitude about learning their mother tongue, so this study aims at looking whether parents and teachers are indeed aware of this attitude or if there is an attitude at all. It also intends to indicate whether parents and teachers have a way of discouraging these learners about learning their mother tongues.

Since English is seen as the most prestigious language parents may feel that their learners have to be competent in English or they will not achieve much or anything. As teachers teach the language that learners do not appreciate, how do they deal with discouraged learners? Most of all it plans to demonstrate and/or advise learners, parents and teachers about the importance of learning mother tongue in school especially now that they are in high school where by they are capable of making decision about what future path do they want to take.

The research tools that are used are questionnaires and interviews. There is a selected number of parents and teachers that will participate. The teachers will answer questionnaires while parents will be interviewed. The data will be analyzed textually also with the help of the SPSS software. The data will be analyzed and interpreted as what they mean for the research and how they have helped that study as a whole and also how they can help further studies if there are any.

This study aims to reach the department of education so that maybe they can be able to revise the curriculum of Setswana or maybe change the content. Most importantly it intends to show learners that mother tongue is not a dead end as they make it out to be. They may be as successful with language as they can be with other professions.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION AND ORIENTATION

1.1 Introduction	1
1.2 Background of the study	1
1.3 Research problems	2
1.4 Literature review	4
1.5 Purpose of the study	7
1.5.1 Aim of the study	7
1.5.2 Objectives of the study	7
1.6. Scope and limitations	8
1.7 Research method	8
1.7.1 Research design	9
1.7. 2 Sampling	9
1.7.3 Data collection	9
1.7.4 Data analysis	10
1.7.5 Reliability, validity, objectivity and bias	10
1.7. 6 Ethical considerations	10
1.8 The significance of the research	11
1.9 Chapter outline	11
1.10 Conclusion	12

CHAPTER TWO

THEORETICAL AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Introduction	13
2.2 The Setswana language	13
2.3 The importance of grammar and literature in language learning	15
2.4 Mother tongue in education	16
2.5 Language learning and teaching	17
2.6 The position of African languages in South Africa	18
2.7 Language treatment in South Africa	19
2.8 The impact of first language on second language learning	21
2.9 The Constitutional and Legislative imperatives	24
2.10 Conclusion	26

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction	27
3.2 Research method	27
3.3 Research design	28
3.4 Target group	28
3.5 Sampling	29

3.6 research techniques	29
3.6.1 Interviews	30
3.6.2 Questionnaires	31
3.6.3 Table summary of data gathering instruments	32
3.7 Conclusion	32

CHAPTER FOUR

INTERPRETATION OF DATA

4.1 Introduction	33
4.2 Data collected through questionnaires	33
4.2.1 Analysis of background information	34
4.2.2 Analysis of questions	35
4.3 Data collected through interviews	47
4.3.1 Analysis of background information	47
4.3.2 Analysis of questions	48
4.4 Conclusion	57

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

5.1 Introduction	58
5.2 Summary and interpretation of research findings	58

5.3 Recommendations	65
5.4 Concluding remarks	68
Reference	70
Appendix A consent form	74
Appendix B questionnaire	75
Appendix C Interview questions	78
Appendix D Permission letter for research	79
Appendix E Permission letter for conducting research	80

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION AND ORIENTATION

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The present study looks at the perceptions of parents and teachers towards the learning and teaching of Setswana as a subject in high schools. Setswana is used as a first language subject in most African Schools in the North West Province. The focus of the study will be on how do teachers and parents take the use of this language in schools with specific reference to high schools only.

1.2 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

This research will be based on teachers and parents' perceptions of teaching and learning of Setswana as a first language in high schools. Perception is regarded as a way of regarding, understanding, or interpreting something, intuitive understanding and insights (Oxford Concise Dictionary, 2011:873). In this case the researcher will look at the insights of the teachers who are the ones responsible for teaching this language. As well as the parents who make decisions about what their children should be taught in schools today.

Teacher is described as someone who teaches in school by (Oxford Concise Dictionary, 2011:1216). They will be giving out their intuitions about the importance or otherwise of Setswana as a first language to be taught in high schools today.

The term 'mother-tongue', although widely used, may refer to several different situations. Definitions often include the following elements: the language(s) that one has learnt first; the language(s) one identifies with, or is identified as a native speaker of by others; the language(s) one knows best and the language(s) one uses most. 'Mother tongue' may also be referred to as 'primary' or 'first language' UNESCO (2008:4). The Language in Education Policy of 1997 (LEDP) states other on the second language level. At least one of these languages has to be an official language. However it does not state that

the other language should be the mother tongue, which means that mother tongue in high school is not compulsory, it can be changed if needed.

This study will be conducted in the two villages of North West which are Letlhabile and Maboloka. North West Province is one of the nine provinces in South Africa; it has two major cities which are Rustenburg and Mmabatho. Mmabatho is a capital city. Its villages have 90% speakers of Setswana, 5% of Sesotho speakers and the other 5% of it is a mix of other languages. Maboloka village is situated near a small town called Brits. It has an estimated 70% of Sesotho speakers, 20% of Setswana and 10% of other languages. It has 6 primary schools, 2 middle schools and 2 high schools of which all of them have Setswana as a first language with English as a medium of instruction.

1.3 RESEARCH PROBLEMS

This research will be based on the problems as identified by other researchers but some problems are personal observations by the researcher. Parents tend to make uninformed decisions regarding the learning of mother tongue in school, this happens because they have negative self-esteem towards their own languages. Parents feel that if their children are not sufficiently competent in English, this will hinder their opportunities for upward social and economic mobility. As stated in an article by Zanele Buthelezi (lecturer at UKZN) the majority of African parents and children won't accept a mother tongue in schools, despite its benefits, unless perceptions about English supremacy change (2013/03/19:2).

English over dominates the social functions of language in the country and in education specifically. The World Education Forum (2012) states that language choices are made by governments for both practical and political reasons and not necessarily based solely on concerns for the education. However, the implications for quality and access of these language choices are central for the education system (2012/11/01:1).

The official African languages are not regarded as equal in status with English. Herman Visagie (PGCE student in Stellenbosch University 2010) states that English, in becoming South Africa's lingua franca, poses the same threats as English becoming a

world-wide common language, since our country's rich diversity could be damaged by neglecting our ten official languages. It is because of this negative consequence that all ten official languages in South Africa are regarded as equal in status to English. This however is only true in theory. Although all of the other ten languages might be considered, according to the law, as being equal, the dominant language still remains English although it is only the home language of a small portion of South Africa. (Cape Times, 2012/11/28:1)

Some learners show negative attitudes towards mother tongue learning. By observation the other contributing reason for this negative attitude is that, even though they have been learning this language from primary school, they still cannot claim to master it and they are required to pass it to get to the next grade. Passing a first language is the number one requirement for the next grade; if it is failed a learner cannot proceed regardless of passing all other subjects. The National Language Policy-in-Education (1997) recommends that from Grade 10 to grade 12 two languages must be passed, one on the first language level, and the other on at least second level. At least one of these languages must be an official language. Subject to national norms and standards as determined by the Minister of Education, the level of achievement required for promotion shall be determined by the provincial education departments. The researcher believes that this rule was made because the first language is usually the mother tongue and learners are expected to pass it.

By observation, teachers have a way of discouraging learners when it comes to learning their first languages. Even though they have been learning this language, they still fail it. Teachers use this as an opportunity to put pressure on learners, making them feel like they are weak because they even fail their mother tongue of all subjects. When they fail other subjects, learners are told that it is not a surprise that they fail content subjects, how can they pass while they also fail their first languages. Learners get discouraged because this language is difficult when it comes to school whereas it is much easier outside school. They end up saying that their first languages have no value and they will not benefit them in their future because job interviews are conducted in English. In this

case they go to an extent of settling for just a pass in their first languages and strive for A's in English.

The variety of the Setswana that is taught in school is different to the one that the learners are using at home. Barkhuizen (2001) supports this in his study of IsiXhosa by saying that the way IsiXhosa is taught as a subject differs from the varieties spoken at home. The difference between varieties studied in school ('deep' IsiXhosa) and the one students speak makes the problem even greater. At home learners speak dialects. These dialects affect the use of standard languages at school, because learners speak the non-standard varieties of Setswana, which is different from the standard one they learn at school. The standard one may appear as deep because the one they speak is somehow simplified.

1.4 LITERATURE REVIEW

1.4.1 Madadzhe and Sepota (2007)

The problem of not taking African languages seriously will continue, especially in the institutions of higher learning if students are not encouraged or made to see the importance of using these languages. This is where various departments and language boards involved in promoting languages should come in instead of promoting languages theoretically; some practical input should be evident. Just like other departments which are providing students with bursaries at tertiary levels, the language departments should make it a point that they provide bursaries for African languages as well. This might assist and one would see students enrolling for African languages. African languages are mainly associated with backwardness, poverty and inferiority.

This article states the importance of learning mother tongue. It also states that mother tongue should also be taught in higher institutions. Therefore, they encourage the learning of mother tongue throughout school to prepare learners to study them at tertiary level. This is mentioned as they realised a gradual drop in the enrolment of first language students at universities. Their recommendation helped this research because it is aimed at indicating the importance of studying their mother tongue in schools.

1.4.2 Webb (1992)

African readers read publications in English rather than Afrikaans publications, but mainly listens to radio stations broadcasting in African languages. He also shows that a little has changed in the language behavior of South African communities, and argues that in its public life, South Africa is becoming monolingual.

Webb (1992) demonstrate that speakers of African languages claim that their languages are not taking them anywhere, they even go to an extent of saying that learning them in schools is not important. When it comes to radio they do not listen to English and Afrikaans stations, they prefer the stations wherein they will fully understand everything. They also argue that their languages have no value in public life especially the fact that they will not help them get the jobs they want and it is a waste of time. This assisted the study achieve its goal of making learners realise that their language can be as useful as all other languages because they can perform all social functions that a language is meant to perform.

1.4.3 Gumede (1996)

Should the negative attitudes towards African languages continue, we might end up having a society which lacks sense of belonging, and identify. The only way for a person to identify who they are by the languages that they speak.

Gumede (1996) states that negative attitudes surrounding the African languages are doing more harm than good to our languages. The research will align itself with the sentiments echoed by Gumede here and try to address language attitudes that the informants might have. If learners do not want to learn their languages, the next generation will have no culture to identify themselves with. This helped the study to emphasize the importance of language as the source of identity.

1.4.4. Phaswana (1994)

Indigenous African languages should be promoted as official languages of the government, economy and education in the true sense of the word “without such affirmative action, the new language policy will fail to achieve its goal of ensuring the

equality and democratization of all languages”. She continues to say that it is not a matter of promoting languages; it also has to do with encouraging people to speak them and see the significance of using them in all aspects of life.

Languages should be equitably treated and have equal use according to the South African Constitution. By observation African languages are inferior to English. Even the government does not use these languages as effectively as they should. The economic and educational worlds do not see the need to support the African languages while the government itself does not. For people to gain confidence in their languages they need intervention from the language boards. This helped this study because it can encourage learners to start having interest and see the value of their languages.

1.4.5 Makamu (2009)

The majority of students have negative attitudes towards their first language. For these negative attitudes to be done away with, students should start taking their first languages seriously and start using them wherever they are.

Makamu states that students do not take their languages seriously; they prefer the use of English more often. If their negative attitudes are not changed, there could do some serious damage to their sense of identity. This is relevant because teachers of the African languages face the challenges of failure in their subjects because learners do not take the subject as seriously as the other subjects. The research uses this argument to strengthen the importance of using mother tongue at all times where applicable.

1.4.6 Yeung, Mashi and Sulliman (2000)

The child who is competent in a home language and regularly uses that language other than English may over time reap some important educational advantages. The child who does not have proficiency in a home language, however, is in a precarious position. Yeung, Mashi, Sulliman (2000) acknowledged that if a learner’s first language is not established, there will not be positive effects of home language on second language acquisition.

This study postulates that whether the first language of the learner is important or not, learners should learn it in order to base the foundation of the second language acquisition. However, it does not state that it should be learnt as a first language, it can also be a compulsory additional language to the learner's subjects. If the first language is not mastered, there is little chance of mastering the second languages. This research used this study to strengthen the idea of a first language as the base so that second language would prosper.

1.4.7 Cook (2001)

The purpose of language teaching in a sense is to provide optimal samples of language for the learner to profit from – the best 'input' to the process of language learning. The uniqueness of the L2 teaching classroom is that language is involved in two different ways. First of all, the organization and the control of the classroom takes place through language; second, language is the actual subject matter that is being taught. A school subject like physics does not turn the academic subjects back on itself. Physics is not taught through physics in the same way language is taught through language. This twofold involvement of language creates a unique problem for L2 teaching. The student and teachers are interacting through language in the classroom, using the strategies and moves that form part of their normal classroom behavior. The teacher has to be able to manage the class through one type of a language at the same time as getting the student to acquire another type. Language has to fulfill its normal classroom role as well as be the content of the class.

The research partly supports this study because it is not only a mode of communication, it is also a way in which one identifies with and it is not only used in schools because it has to fulfill normal classroom roles and to make the teachers to be able to control their class. In every subject that is taught in school there has to be language involved. The content subjects are taught through language. This aided the study by proving that without the knowledge of their languages other content subjects would be very difficult for learners to understand.

1.5 PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

1.5.1 Aim of the study

To examine teachers and parents' perceptions about the teaching and learning of Setswana as a subject in high school.

1.5.2 Objectives of the study

-To investigate the parent's perceptions about the first language teaching and learning in high schools.

-To highlight the significance of mother tongue learning as subjects in high schools.

-To outline the influences that parents and teachers have on learners' attitudes towards the learning of first language.

Investigate the influence of parents' and teachers' perception on the learner's performance.

1.6 SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS

The study was conducted in the two villages which are Maboloka and Letlhabile where the language Setswana is used as a first language. Maboloka has two high schools which are Thuto-Pele high School and Motshwane high school. Letlhabile has three which are Eletsa secondary school, Ikatisong secondary school and Tshepagalang secondary school.

This is a sociolinguistics study that is concerned with investigating the relationships between languages and society. It is related because this study aims at finding the relation between negative self-esteem that learners have towards their first language and the perceptions of parents and teachers. This first language is referred to as home language by the department of education. The study focuses on the learning of mother tongue as a subject; it is also in the acquisition planning which is concerned with language teaching and this study focuses specifically on Setswana as a subject in high school.

1.7 RESEARCH METHOD

This research is qualitative. Qualitative research is characterized by its aims, which relate to understanding some aspects of social life, and its methods which (in general) generate words, rather than numbers, as data for analysis.(Patton and Cochran, 2002:2). Qualitative method generally aims to understand the experiences and attitudes of patients, the community or health care worker. These methods aim to answer the questions about the 'what', 'how', or 'why' of a phenomenon rather than 'how many' or 'how much' which are answered by quantitative methods (p3).

1.7.1 Research Design

This research is descriptive. It answers the questions who, what, when and how. It describes the perceptions of the teachers and those of the parents towards the first languages of the learners.

1.7.2 Sampling

The study was conducted in the two villages which are Maboloka and Letlhabile. The schools selected were used because they are the only available high schools in the two places. There are two high schools in Maboloka which are Motshwane and Thuto-pele and Letlhabile has three high schools which are Eletsa, Tshepagalang and Ikatisong. There were five teachers representing each school from the five selected schools. The teachers included those who teach Setswana. The selection of teachers of Setswana and schools was done through non- probability procedure of availability and probability procedure of random sampling of other teachers. There were also five parents representing each school. Parents that were selected are parents who have learners in those particular schools. These parents will be accessed through their children.

Summary of sample:

All five High Schools from the two villages

Five teachers from each of the five high schools=25 teachers

Five parents from each of the five high schools=25 parents

Total sample: 50.

1.7.3 Data collection

The data was collected through interviews, questionnaires and personal observations by the researcher. A questionnaire is "a document containing questions and other types of items designed to solicit information appropriate to analysis".(Babbie, et al.2010:646).Questionnaires were used to collect data in the research because this method makes it possible to compare views from participants as they would provide different views based on the knowledge they have about their variety. Open and close-ended questionnaires were used. Interview is "a data-collection encounter in which one person (an interviewer) asks questions of another (a respondent)" (Babbie, et al.2010:643). Face to face interview will be used.

The interviews looked at the importance or otherwise of Setswana in high schools. The questionnaires looked at the attitudes that the teachers and parents have towards first language learning and teaching. The questionnaires were available in Setswana and English.

1.7.4 Data analysis

Data was analysed using textual analysis as well as SPSS. SPSS helped with the analysis for the questionnaires while textual analysis was used for interviews and personal observations.

1.7.5 Reliability, Validity, Objectivity and Bias

Reliability is described as the extent to which research findings are repeatable while validity in research refers to the accuracy or soundness of research findings, Van der Riet and Durrheim (2006).

This study is reliable because of the two methods that were used. If one method fails to reveal something the other one might pick it. The informants were also told not to reveal their names. This would hopefully make their answers honest and not polished because they will be used for specific purpose. Anonymity may validate their answers. The researcher was not biased while asking questions and she will not make the participants give her what she is expecting to find.

To ensure validity, data was collected using different tools i.e. observation, interviews and questionnaires

1.7.6 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

To maintain the principles of research, potential participants were informed of the purpose of the study and be made aware of their rights not to answer questions they consider personal.

They were also being informed that their participation in the study is voluntary and that they may withdraw at any point without explanation. The potential participants were assured that confidentiality and anonymity will be maintained at all times and that their answers cannot be traced to them

Since the study involved parents and teachers, the researcher was granted the permission to do so. The permission was asked from the principal and the circuit office for the schools to be used and only when she has been granted the permission, the study began.

1.8 THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE RESEARCH

The significance of this study is that it can be useful for the educational field. It can be useful to teachers, learners and parents. It can help parents make informed decisions about which languages should their children learn in schools and up to which level. Teachers will gain the knowledge that will help them realise that teaching a language is as important as teaching other content subjects. It can also be helpful to learners by

showing the significance of their first language and know that not only second language (English) can also open doors for them but their first languages can do so too.

1.9 CHAPTER OUTLINE

Chapter one: this chapter serves as an introductory to the study; the researcher has to give clear reasons why she wants to conduct the research. The aim, the purpose and the significance of the study were clearly outlined.

Chapter two: it focuses on the literature reviewed prior to conducting the study. In this chapter relevant theories and arguments by different authors are explored.

Chapter three: The chapter presents step by step information about how the data was collected and full description of the participants.

Chapter four: data is fully interpreted in this chapter

Chapter five: it provides a summary of findings; recommendations of how to pursue further studies and make conclusions about the study.

1.10 CONCLUSION

This chapter was about the background and introduction of the study. The intentions of the researcher about the research are clearly stated in the aim and the objectives. There are also research problems included that the research hopes to overcome. It also includes the research method and design and the research tools and lastly it also has the chapter outline.

CHAPTER TWO

THEORETICAL AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter there will be studies from other scholars and newspaper articles which strengthen the research aims and objectives. The is presented in a form of topics which are as follows: the Setswana language, the importance of literature and grammar in language learning, mother tongue education, language learning and teaching, the position of African languages in South Africa, the problem of language in South Africa,

the language policy framework and the constitutional stipulation on languages in education.

2.2 THE SETSWANA LANGUAGE

Setswana is one of the indigenous languages of South Africa with seven dialects. Setswana is neither a Creole nor a Pidgin language. However, due to contact with English and Afrikaans, Setswana has a number of loan words that have been assimilated. Its varieties are Sekgalagadi in Botswana and Shilozi in Namibia and Zambia have many similarities and a high vocabulary of Setswana.

Setswana was first written in 1806 when Heinrich Lichtenstein wrote Upon the Language of the Beetjuana. In 1815, John Cambell wrote Bootchuana words and was immediately followed by Burchell who wrote about Botswana in 1824. Dr Robert Moffat from the London Missionary Society arrived among the Batlhaping in Kudumane in 1818, and he built the first school for Botswana. In 1825, he realised that he must use and write Setswana in his teachings. He finished translating The Gospel according to Luke in 1830, The New Testament in 1840 and the Old Testament in 1857.

George Lowe in 1916 helped in the translation of the Epistles and the Book of Acts. The first Motswana who contributed to the history of written Setswana is Sol D T. Plaatje, who, with the help of Professor Jones wrote Tones of Secwana Nouns in 1929. The New Testament and the Psalms were translated in 1963 in the 1910 orthography and the whole Bible was translated into Setswana in 1970. In 1947 John Appleyard published in the Christian Watchman (Modisa wa Mokeresete). Although Setswana was the first language among the Sotho group to be written, publications of literary works started only in 1940, when D P Moloto published his first novel called Mokwena (Bona Press Ltd.), in 1944, it was followed by Motimedi (Bona Press Ltd.).

It is spoken in South Africa, but more specifically in the provinces, Setswana speakers are concentrated in the North West (67, 8%), but with the speakers also in Gauteng (17,

4%), Free State (5, 2%), Limpopo (2, 0%), Mpumalanga (2, 3%), Northern Cape (5, 0%) and Western Cape (0, 1%).

Setswana is passed from generation to generation from home and in school. It is used as a medium of instruction from Grade 0-3. English is busy replacing Setswana because it is viewed as a language of the educated and it is associated with economic growth and a passport out of poverty, low status to national and international recognition. With the acceptance of Black learners into (the then Model C schools) today called multiracial schools, many middle class parents send their children to these schools and these children avoid speaking African languages at home. The parents are also encouraged by the teachers to communicate only in English. Unfortunately; some of them cannot communicate in any African languages.

Currently it has a joint official status according to the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa. It is used as a medium of instruction from Grade 0-3 and as a subject in other Grades. Other universities like the University of North West, the University of Pretoria are using Setswana as a medium of instruction. However, at the University of Pretoria, second and third language speakers are taught Setswana in English and Afrikaans while the University of South Africa uses Setswana as a medium of instruction in literature only and grammar is taught through the medium of English. Setswana is also used on radio and television and it has a multilingual newspaper called Seipone/Mirror with more articles in English than in Setswana. Before the new government there were also magazines like Morongwa and Tswelopele. Radio stations like Motsweding Radio Station and Radio Mmabatho promote the use of Setswana (Peters and Matthew: 1982)

Setswana is a dominating language in the North West province and it is also dominating in the entire Sotho language group. It has a very high prestige and its speakers are very proud to an extent that it is almost impossible for a Tswana speaking person to learn other African languages. Their population is huge and is growing every day simply because it is more developed and its speakers will do anything to get a person to learn it. However, as a first language in schools and medium of instructions it is still

respected and its grammar and literature that is studied in schools as part of its curriculum.

2.3 THE IMPORTANCE OF GRAMMAR AND LITERATURE IN LANGUAGE LEARNING

Grammar is so relevant to the sequence in which elements of language are taught. Of necessity, language teaching has to present the various aspects of language in order rather than introducing them all simultaneously. The conventional solution used to be a sequence of increasing grammatical complexity, teaching the present simple first, and the past perfect continuous passive last, because the former is much 'simpler' than the latter. When language use became more important to teaching, the choice of a teaching sequence was no longer straightforward since it was aspects of communication that now had to be sequenced (Cook, 2001:34).

Language teachers have often justified the use of literature as 'the best that has been thought and said' in a language, some kind of linguistic and/or ethical model, or (apparently contradicting such more Universalist claims) as offering privileged access to the culture of a specific speech community. Alternatively, literature is said to promote intercultural understanding and mutual respect, though how exactly it might do this is left implicit, and there can in any case be no guarantees with literary texts, which have sometimes been found to confirm stereotypes as much as they break them down. (Hall, 2005:73-74)

Grammar and literature are what is taught in school as part of the curriculum. In grammar they are taught how language works and the rules of language. In literature learners are taught how to read and analyse novels, drama book and poems. This is useful in language learning because learners learn how to write properly and they know which words should be used and how. They also learn how to use language while writing an essay or answering a comprehension. In grammar learners learn the rules of using language for academic or social purposes. This leads to the importance of learning mother tongue in schools because learners have to learn to separate between academic language and languages they speak at home.

2.4 MOTHER TONGUE IN EDUCATION

A remark often heard about the teaching of indigenous African languages as first languages is that there is no need to study them, as pupils 'already know them'. This is, of course, a serious misconception, as can be seen from absence of similar views about the study of English, French and Portuguese as first languages in communities where they are the mother tongues. This misconception is based on a number of factors that include the low status of the African languages as instruments of educational and economic activity; the high value is placed on the ex-colonial languages, and uncertainty about the content of study programs in these languages as subjects of study (p.290).

Despite the government's commitment for multilingualism and the promotion of language rights in all spheres of public life, the education sector does not totally reflect the multilingual nature of South Africa. More can definitely be done towards the promotion of mainly the African languages in South African schools. In terms of learning areas (subjects) all eleven official languages can be taken as a 'home language', 'first additional language' and 'second additional language' [with the initial school curriculum, called Curriculum 2005, the learning area was called *Language, Literacy and Communication*]. Despite the names for the learning areas very often learners take languages on a 'home language' level whilst the specific language might only be their second or third language. This is especially true in multilingual communities and in former white schools (sometimes called *former model C schools*) that have taken in a number of African language speaking pupils. This is quite a contentious issue as parents want their children to rather study in English than in their own home languages (Oliver 2009:4).

Mother tongue in education is like a foundation of any content subjects and second or third language learning. Learners are supposed to learn their mother tongue throughout basic education. This is to learn more about how to speak and write in different languages because mother tongue helps them absorb other languages faster and understand content subjects easier.

2.5 LANGUAGE LEARNING AND TEACHING

Studies in language learning show the learning, and language learning in particular, is not a cognitive activity only, but also a social activity (Maybin, 1994). Research confirms that, in language learning, affective factors (those related to emotions) influence performance more than was previously believed (Goleman 1996; Reid 1995). The implications of this are as relevant to teachers of subjects other than languages as they are to language teachers. The student's attitude to the language of learning is a factor in his or her ability to learn the subject content (Gardner 1985; Skehan 1989). The lecturer's attitude to the students, reflected in the spoken and written interaction (encoded in language) between the lecturer and student, is obviously also an important determination of student performance (Gravett & Geysler, 2004:71-72)

The quality of the language environment is of paramount importance to success in learning a new language. If students are exposed to a list of words and their translations, together with a few simple readings in the new language, they will perhaps be able to attain some reading skill language, but listening and speaking skills will remain to follow (Dulay et al, 1982:13)

The aim of transitional L2 teaching is to allow people to function in the majority language of the country, without necessarily losing or devaluing their first language. While resembling assimilationist teaching, the motivation is different. To use Lambert's terms assimilation teaching is 'subtractive' in that learners feel their first language is being taken away from them; transitional teaching is 'additive' in that it adds the ability to function in the majority language without displacing the first language. With transitional language teaching minority language speaker still has the right to function in his or her own language except when communicating with the majority groups. (Cook, 2001:142)

One could say that it's a little unfair that language learning and teaching is taken for granted as if it's not as important as all other subjects. Language learning and teaching is no different from learning other subject. Language teachers and learners may not know anything about the chemicals of science but even scientists do not know anything about noun classes. It is the same thing just in different fields of study. The undermining

of language studies and learning can also be justified or be caused by the position of African languages in South Africa.

2.6 THE POSITION OF AFRICAN LANGUAGES IN SOUTH AFRICA

Languages of the world are disappearing at an alarming rate, reducing the rich tapestry of cultural diversity. Researchers have shown that one's mother language, also known as one's mother tongue, is the key to attaining quality education, preserving cultural heritage and indigenous knowledge and developing self-identity and awareness. Indigenous languages, however, remain an endangered species. It is the right of every individual to use and maintain his language. This is echoed in the South African Constitution, which ensures the official use status of all indigenous languages. The Department of Higher Education initiated a project in all universities across the country. This project is compiling materials to deal with the teaching of mother tongues, especially African languages at teacher education level. These materials which will include electronic media will be available by 2014 (Sowetan, 26 February 2013:11).

In the light of nature, African languages are apparently useless to its speakers. It happens in all generations from old to young people. Unfortunately it is discrediting for a child to not have any knowledge of their mother tongue whatsoever. Although learners feel that they do not need to learn them because some do not even use them in their households. Children who start school by going to English medium schools look down upon their mother tongue because they think they are useless. Those who learn it from grade 1 view mother tongue as a waste of their precious time. The government on the other hand is not making things easier because they claim to have equal use of all their official languages meanwhile they are not and this is one of the causes of the problem of language in South Africa.

Gravett and Geyser (2004) states that for students for whom the LOLT is a first language, it is usually easier to understand a spoken text, for example a formally delivered lecture, than a written text: speaking and listening are more "natural" than reading and writing, as spoken interaction does not require technology of a symbol system, such as the alphabet, in which the written language is encoded. All students find it difficult to concentrate for longer periods of time, but for English second Language

students, because of the additional demand of having to construct their knowledge in a language other than their mother tongue, listening to long unbroken stretches of academic discourse is exceptionally demanding' (page no?)

This theory declares that learners who have enough knowledge of their first language usually find it easy to understand spoken text than written texts. They may have difficulty understanding what is written because they have to get the meaning themselves. However, it is also demanding to listen to long lectures which are not in their first language. In high school situations it is rather impossible for a content subject teacher to teach in English without code switching to the learners' first language'. This helped the study emphasize that, although first language learning may seem unnecessary, it plays a role in understanding of content subjects especially with code switching involved.

2.7 LANGUAGE TREATMENT IN SOUTH AFRICA

According to investigation by Madadzhe and Sepota (2007) the problem of not taking African languages seriously will continue, especially in the institutions of higher learning if students are not encouraged or made to see the importance of using these languages. This is where various departments and language boards involved in promoting languages should come in instead of promoting languages theoretically; some practical input should be evident. Just like other departments which are providing students with bursaries at tertiary levels, the language departments should make it a point that they provide bursaries for African languages as well. This might assist and one would see students enrolling for African languages. African languages are mainly associated with backwardness, poverty and inferiority.

This article states the importance of learning mother tongue. It also states that mother tongue should also be taught in higher institutions. Therefore, they encourage the learning of mother tongue throughout school to prepare learners to study them at tertiary level. This is mentioned as they realised a gradual drop in the enrolment of first

language students at universities. Their recommendation helped this research because it is aimed at indicating the importance of studying their mother tongue in schools.

The problem of politicized languages (and unequal or asymmetric power relations, mentioned above) in South Africa manifests itself in many ways. These include the unevenness in the knowledge of the country's languages; the strong ethnic nationalism associated with Afrikaans in particular, and the negative socio-political connotations of Afrikaans for many communities; the generally extremely socio-political status of the English; the generally very low socio-educational status of the Bantu languages; and the strong drive towards linguistic 'purism' (in Afrikaans, English and isiZulu, as well as some of the other languages) (Webb, 2000:15).

The two most important language problems common to almost all African states are (a) the role of the languages of power in Africa (generally English, French, and Portuguese) and the lack of proficiency of the majority of African people in these languages; and (b) the low esteem in which speakers of the African languages generally hold their own languages. It is generally true that less than 25 per cent of the African people know the ex-colonial languages enough to be able to develop educationally, economically, socially, and politically (Webb, 2000:x).

The problem of language in South Africa is a broad aspect. It exists in education, workplaces, social clubs or any other place where there are people with different languages. People tend to think that as long as there is no communication breakdown, then all is well. The problem is when people with different languages meet there will always be a dominant language. This language can be English or any African language depending on the area. It is not arguable that English dominates in the workplaces and educational institutions; this may make it difficult for employees who are not familiar with it to make claims to the employers simply because they do not know the communicating language. While in education it is associated with being educated, people who are not able to speak English are not free to speak to those who are fluent in it. What makes it worse is that Africans are afraid to use their languages in public or anywhere because they do not want to be looked down upon. As long as there is low self-esteem on

African language and high prestige on ex-colonial languages then the problem of language is far from over. Although things are like that people need 'to know that knowing and being proud of their first language is the base of second language acquisition.

Gumede (1996) warns that should the negative attitudes towards African languages continue, we might end up having a society which lacks sense of belonging, and identity. The only way for a people to identify who they are is by the languages that they speak.

The research will align itself with the sentiments echoed by Gumede here and try to address language attitudes that the informants might have. If learners do not want to learn their languages, the next generation will have no culture to identify themselves with. This helped the study to emphasise the importance of language as the source of identity.

The majority of students have negative attitudes towards their first languages. For these negative attitudes to be done away with, students should start taking their first language languages seriously and start using them wherever they are. (Makamu: 2009)

Makamu states that students do not take their languages seriously; they prefer the use of English more often. If their negative attitudes are not changed, there could do some serious damage to their sense of identity. This will be relevant because teachers of the African languages face the challenges of failure in their subjects because learners do not take the subject as seriously as the other subjects. The research will use this argument to strengthen the importance of using mother tongue at all times where applicable.

2.8 THE IMPACT OF FIRST LANGAUGE ON SECOND LANGUAGE LEARNING

According to Cook (2001) the purpose of language teaching in a sense is to provide optimal samples of language for the learner to profit from – the best 'input' to the

process of language learning. The uniqueness of the L2 teaching classroom is that language is involved in two different ways. First of all, the organization and the control of the classroom takes place through language; second, language is the actual subject matter that is being taught. A school subject like physics does not turn the academic subjects back on itself. Physics is not taught through physics in the same way language is taught through language. This twofold involvement of language creates a unique problem for L2 teaching. The student and teachers are interacting through language in the classroom, using the strategies and moves that form part of their normal classroom behaviour. The teacher has to be able to manage the class through one type of a language at the same time as getting the student to acquire another type. Language has to fulfill its normal classroom role as well as be the content of the class.

A first language has long been considered the villain in the second language learning, the major cause of a learner's problems with the new language. In recent years, however, data have accumulated that place L2 learner's first language in a more respectable, sometimes even valuable, place in the scheme of things. The first language is no longer considered an annoying "interface" in a learner's efforts to acquire a second language, and when an individual finally becomes bilingual, the availability of both the first and second languages is recognized as an enrichment of the individual's communicative repertoire. Even though it is currently giving way to more positive view the role of the first language in second language acquisition, it is useful to understand the theories which shaped so much early linguistic research and which therefore underlie much current L2 teaching methodology and materials.(Dulay et al, 1982:96)

While the use of indigenous languages in schools and the upgrading of first language study are vital for educational development in Africa, the levels of proficiency in languages such as English, French, and Portuguese must also be addressed. When a speaker of an indigenous African language learns other languages, different processes of acquisition are involved. Second-languages learning and foreign-languages learning

obviously have the same goal: to enable learners to gain competence in the target language that is as close to mother-tongue use as possible (Webb, 2000:291).

Yeung, Mashi and Sulliman (2000) explain that the child who is competent in a home language and regularly uses that language other than English may over time reap some important educational advantages. The child who does not have proficiency in a home language however, is in a precarious position. Yeung, Mashi, Sulliman (2000) acknowledged that if a learner's first language is not established, there will not be positive effects of home language on second language acquisition.

This study postulates that whether the first language of the learner is important or not, learners should learn it in order to base the foundation of the second language acquisition. However, it does not state that it should be learnt as a first language, it can also be a compulsory additional language to the learner's subjects. If the first language is not mastered, there is a little chance of mastering the second languages. This study used this findings to strengthen that first language as the base so that second language would prosper.

A person's first language is almost like an identity that one identifies with or a second skin and culture. Truth as this may be, people still have negative attitudes towards it especially when it comes to learning. African languages have a low status in education mainly because it is said to serve no purpose in the economic and political sector. However, learning a first language may also be viewed as paving a way for the second language to flourish simply because what is learned in first language can be transformed into the second language, especially for learners who use the languages in their households. Those who have grown up not using their first languages and learning second language as a first language may beg to differ. They have no knowledge of their native languages, which is an advantage in certain aspects of life but most importantly the aspects of culture, norms and other family related rituals cannot be performed using a second language, this is where they are disadvantaged. This means that even if a person is not learning his or her first language at school it is still necessary to have

knowledge of it for purposes that may arise. This raises the need to view the national language policy framework on language and education.

Uys, van der Walt, van der Berg and Botha (2007) state that the majority of learners in Southern Africa receive their education through the medium of a second language, English. Although teachers of English play a crucial role in helping learners to acquire language skills in the medium of instruction, we might argue that subject content teachers' lack of attention to the teaching of the four language skills may be a *raison d'être* for learners' lack of academic achievement. A situation analysis conducted among three study populations examined the extent that subject content teachers took responsibility for the teaching of language skills in the content classroom, as well as possible reasons for not doing so. It also shed some light on the amount of language teaching that actually took place in the content classroom.

This study states the importance of language in the learning of other content subjects. Mother tongue learning and English in this case assist each other in the understanding of the content subject because the content subjects are taught through the medium of English. This study would help this research because it will promote multilingualism in schools to help learners to understand content subjects

2.8. THE CONSTITUTIONAL AND LEGISLATIVE IMPERATIVES

A person's language is in many ways a "second skin": a natural possession of every normal human being, with which we use to express our hopes and ideals, articulate our thoughts and values, explore our experience and customs, and construct our society and the laws that govern it. It is through language that we function as human beings in an ever-changing world. The right to use the official languages of our choice has therefore been recognized in our Bill of Rights, and our Constitution acknowledges that the languages of our people are a resource that should be harnessed (p3).

This Policy Framework also takes cognizance of the fact that the value of our languages is largely determined by their economic, social and political usage. When a language

loses its value in these spheres the status of the language diminishes. This Policy Framework also takes into account that we are faced with the challenge of globalization and that our indigenous languages should be part of the rapidly expanding technological environment. Hence, it intends to reaffirm the status and use of the indigenous languages of South Africa (p3)

Phaswana (1994) advises that indigenous African languages should be promoted as official languages of the government, economy and education in the true sense of the word “without such affirmative action, the new language policy will fail to achieve its goal of ensuring the equality and democratization of all languages”. She continues to say that it is not a matter of promoting languages; it also has to do with encouraging people to speak them and see the significance of using them in all aspects of life.

Languages should be equitably treated and have equal use according to the South African Constitution. By observation African languages are inferior to English. Even the government does not use these languages as effectively as they should. The economic and educational worlds do not see the need to support the African languages while the government itself does not. For people to gain confidence in their languages they need intervention from the language boards. This helps this study because it can encourage learners to start having interest and see the value of their languages

There is currently a strong awareness of the need to intensify efforts to develop the previously marginalized indigenous languages and to promote multilingualism if South Africans are to be liberated from undue reliance on the utilization of non-indigenous languages as the dominant, official languages of the state. The Policy Framework not only initiates a fresh approach to multilingualism in South Africa, but strongly encourages the utilization of the indigenous languages as official languages in order to foster and promote national unity. It takes into account the broad acceptance of linguistic diversity, social justice, the principle of equal access to public services and programs, and respect for language rights. The Constitution emphasizes that all official languages must “enjoy parity of esteem” and be treated equitably, thereby enhancing the status and use of indigenous languages, with government taking “legislative and

other measures" to regulate and monitor the use of disadvantaged indigenous languages (p5-7).

The language policy framework acknowledges multilingualism in South Africa; however it also explains that it should not be done at the expense of the indigenous languages of which in most cases are mother tongues. It also states that these indigenous languages are undermined and they should be developed to fit the technological, economic and political usage of the country. It also states that the constitution emphasizes that all official languages should enjoy parity of esteem and be treated equitably and this should enhance their status. However, in practical especially in a country like South Africa where there are many official languages, that statement may not be fully practiced in all aspects that are supposed to practice it.

The objective of the *South African Schools Act* (Act 84 of 1996) is to provide a strong foundation for the protection and advancement of the country's diverse cultures and languages. Section 6 of this act empowers school governing bodies to determine the language policy of schools within guidelines set nationally and on provincial level.

According to the Department of Education's language policy school pupils have a right to be taught in a language of their choice and they should inform the school which language they wish to be taught in when applying for admission. Schools should take these preferences into account and work towards multilingualism.

2.10 CONCLUSION

What have been discussed in this literature review are opinions which are indicators to problems that exist with regard to language issues in South Africa and Africa as a whole. This research focuses on the perceptions about the teaching and learning of Setswana from parents and teachers. First language learning and problem of languages in South Africa are problems that are somehow never ending problems.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The analysis of data is based on the results of the qualitative study which was done through questionnaires and interviews. The study was conducted in five high schools in Maboloka and Letlhabile which use Setswana as a first language.

Data collection involve setting the boundaries for the study, collection of information through observation, interviews, documents, visual materials and establishing protocol for recording information (Creswell, 1994:148)

Miles and Huberman (1984) as quoted by Creswell (1994:148) suggest four parameters to be considered by the investigator when collecting data. Those parameters are the setting where the research will take place, the actors, people who will be interviewed or

observed. The third parameter is events. Events are what actors would be observed doing or interviewed about. The last parameter is a process. A process has something to do with involving the nature of events undertaken by the actors within the research setting.

3.2 RESEARCH METHOD

This research was qualitative. Qualitative research is characterized by its aims, which relate to understanding some aspects of social life, and its methods which (in general) generate words, rather than numbers, as data for analysis.(Patton and Cochran 2002:2). Qualitative method generally aims to understand the experiences and attitudes of patients, the community or health care worker. These methods aim to answer the questions about the 'what', 'how', or 'why' of a phenomenon rather than 'how many' or 'how much' which are answered by quantitative methods (p3)

3.3 RESEARCH DESIGN

The study is descriptive in nature. It answers the questions who, what, when and how. Descriptive research is the type of research method that is used when one wants to get information on the current status of a person or an object. It is used to describe what is in existence in respect to conditions or variables that are found in a given situation. It is usually the best method for collecting information that will demonstrate relationships and describe the world as it exists. Bickman and Rog (1998) suggest that descriptive studies can answer what is or what was.

A descriptive study is one in which information is collected without changing the environment (i.e., nothing is manipulated). Sometimes these are referred to as "correlation" or "observational" studies. It is a study that is not truly experimental. Descriptive studies can involve a one-time interaction with groups of people, this is called a cross-sectional study and the present research is such. Since the researcher

interacts with the participant, this study involved surveys and interviews to collect the necessary information.

It describes the perceptions of the teachers and those of the parents towards the first languages of the learners.

3.4 TARGET GROUP

The research targeted teachers of Setswana in the identified high schools as well as parents of learners who are in grades 10-12. The sample of the population was selected as suggested in chapter 1 even though adjustments had to be made in specific incidences. It was difficult to get parents who have children in the selected participating grades in schools, so the researcher opted for available and accessible parents who have children in those schools even though they may not be in the selected grades. Unlike with teachers, the parents' participation was not based on their educational qualification even though they had to state their occupation. This included parents who were professionals and those who did not have any education at all. They were all selected based on their availability and they were asked the same questions and there was no time limit of answering questions. Respondents were given the option of choosing to speak in any language with which they were comfortable. The majority of them used the mother-tongue and some preferred English.

3.5 SAMPLING

The study was conducted in the five high schools in Maboloka and Letlhabile. There are two high schools in Maboloka which are Motshwane and Thuto-pele and Letlhabile has three high schools which are Eletsa, Tshepagalang and Ikatisong. It was a qualitative study because the researcher was aimed at finding out what is the status of language teaching and learning as subjects particularly Setswana because it is the language that is taught as a home language in schools.

The selection of parents and teachers of Setswana and schools were done through non- probability procedure of availability. There were fifteen teachers from Letlhabile

area and ten teachers from Maboloka area. The parents were twenty from Maboloka and five from Lethabile. The total number of informants is fifty.

3.6 RESEARCH TECHNIQUES

The researcher used the qualitative methodology because she wanted to understand the perspectives of participants and explore the meaning they give to the phenomena of language learning and teaching. The data was collected through interviews and questionnaires. A questionnaire is "a document containing questions and other types of items designed to solicit information appropriate to analyses" (Babbie, et al .2010:646). Questionnaires were used to collect data in the research because this method makes it possible to compare views from participants as they will provide different views based on the knowledge they have about their variety. Open and close-ended questions were used.

Interview is "a data-collection encounter in which one person (an interviewer) asks questions to another (a respondent)" (Babbie, et al.2010:643). Face to face interviews were used for parents because interviews are more relevant to surveys and exploratory studies. They help to clarify concepts and problems and they allow for the establishment of a list of possible answers or solutions. They also allow for the discovery of new aspects of the problem by investigating in detail some explanations given by respondents.

3.6.1 Interviews

The interviews were conducted with individual parents. The questions were prepared beforehand, even so, there were questions that brought up other questions, and this was both from the researcher and the parents. Depending on the parents' level of education or literacy, the language in which the interview was English and Setswana. There were some questions that the parents could not understand properly because some of them did not make it to high school. Before the interview the parents also had to provide their age group and occupation. Some parents were somehow uncomfortable

because they did not trust the researchers' intentions. There were some who had questions for the researcher before they could start with interviews.

There was a point whereby the researcher had to explain some questions over and over again because the parent couldn't understand the question or maybe he or she would answer the question in an irrelevant way. Although the interruptions were avoided there were some points whereby parents felt like they were being expected to answer impossible questions. There was one question in particular which gave almost every parent a problem because according to them the question was supposed to be directed to the teachers not them. In this case the researcher had to explain the question in detail so that parents can understand and try to answer to their best.

The parents had to agree to sign the consent forms (appendix A) and they also had to agree to be interviewed on recorded because the researcher was using a tape recorder to capture the interviews. The researcher had to explain the aims and objectives of the research to each parent interviewed in order for them to understand what it was about. The interviews were not long; each of the interviews was less than ten minutes long but more than five minutes. Some of the interviews were conducted in the parents' homes while some were conducted in convenient places where the interview couldn't have interruptions of noise or any other sound that may occur during the interview.

Parents that have participated were from Maboloka, Letlhabile and Hebron. Those parents, who were not from Maboloka, were contacted before the interview to arrange the time of the interview. The researcher preferred to use the parents' home because she wanted the parents to be comfortable enough to talk. The parents were both males and females, and different age groups i.e. young and old. The interviews were recorded on the tape recorder. Those interviews that were conducted in the L1 were transcribed first before they could be translated into English. Those that were conducted in English are transcribed so that they can be interpreted in the next chapter.

3.6.2 Questionnaires

When it comes to questionnaires, it was only ethical that the researcher be granted the permission by the area office to visit the premises. Basically permission should be granted by the provincial education department for anyone to conduct research in the schools. But because this did not include human experiments, permission could only be granted by the local area.

There had to be a letter for Lethabile Area Office (see appendix D) from the university. The Area Office had to give the researcher the letter to give to the principals (appendix E), so that they can allow the researcher to go through to the teachers. From the principals the researcher was led to the HOD's of languages. The researcher had to explain the research to the HODs. The HODs, selected the teachers who can participate. The HODs did not feel the need for the researcher to explain the research to the teachers as well. They felt that teachers will not have any problem with the questions and there will be no need to explain further or elaborate some questions.

In four of the schools the researcher left the questionnaires and the consent forms with HODs to give to the selected teachers and discussed the return date to collect the questionnaires and the consent forms. In one school the HOD called the selected teachers and explained the purpose of the researcher's visit and handed them the questionnaires to fill and agreed on the date of their collection. Their consent forms were filled instantly.

There were some problems when it comes to collecting the questionnaires because at some point three teachers who had them were not available and some had misplaced them. The researcher believes that this was maybe because the teachers did not meet with her face to face so they did not take it that seriously. However, there were two schools which did not have any problem when it came to collection. The researcher had to schedule other appointments for collection of questionnaires.

3.6.3 Summary of data gathering instruments

Research instrument	Description	Number of respondents
---------------------	-------------	-----------------------

Interviews	Parents were interviewed	25
Questionnaires	Teachers filled in	25

3.7 CONCLUSION

In this chapter the researcher outlined the facts on how the research was conducted in the field. The information about how the data was collected is included, the reaction of the informants with the consent form and about the recording of interviews and teachers having to provide information about their line of work. This chapter includes all the information about the gathering of the data and the importance of the tools that were used. It also includes the reasons of the selected sample and how helpful they had been to the research.

CHAPTER FOUR

INTERPRETATION OF DATA

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter stated on research methodology how the data was collected; in this chapter the data is interpreted. It demonstrates how the participants demonstrated their different views through questionnaires and interviews. The data is interpreted using textual analysis and the SPSS software. The research findings may somehow be related to the similar or different findings reported in the literature review.

Interpretation of data is about giving exclusive results of the data that was collected. This chapter only shows the results of field research but it also shows that the hypotheses that were made at the initial stage of the study are proven correct or otherwise.

It also indicates whether parents and teachers have the same common ground when it comes to the decisions on the languages that are taught at schools. The questions in both, the interviews and questionnaires were created to prove certain hypotheses that the researcher had, and they did not favor any of the participants. The teachers and parents have given their perceptions to the best of their abilities and this appears clearly, in this chapter.

4.2 DATA COLLECTED THROUGH QUESTIONNAIRES

This section shows all the results of the data that was collected through the questionnaires. These questionnaires were distributed to 25 teachers in five schools in two villages. The questionnaires required teachers who teach Setswana. This was decided upon because the researcher believed that they can offer valid and relevant information because the study revolves around Setswana as a subject. In these questionnaires, the teachers had to first fill in their background information like, age, gender and years of experience before they could answer section two of the questionnaires.

The interpretation of this data includes tables of percentages and charts that shows in different colors which number is greater than the other. Firstly there is a demonstration of background information in the form of tables. After their analysis there is the analysis of each question in the form of pie charts and textual narrations of those results.

4.2.1 Analysis of background information

Regarding the background information of respondents, the 25 teachers are first discussed in this section before we discuss the parents in section 4.3 below.

Table 4.2.1.1: Gender division of teachers in the sample

Gender	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid male	12	48.0	48.0	48.0
Valid female	13	52.0	52.0	100.0
Total	25	100.0	100.0	

The table above indicates how many participants are male and how many of them are female. It shows that out of the 25 teachers required thirteen of them were females and twelve were males. This means that female participants exceeded male participants by one member.

Table 4.1.2.2: Age distribution among teachers

Years	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 30-39	4	16.0	16.0	16.0
Valid 40-49	13	52.0	52.0	68.0
Valid 50 and above	8	32.0	32.0	100.0
Total	25	100.0	100.0	

The second table shows age differences between participants. As teachers were required to state their age group, the category of age had three age groups. According to the table, in the first age group 30-39, there were four teachers. In the second age

group 40-49, it had thirteen teachers and the third age group of 50 and above had eight teachers. In this case the second age group has more participants.

Table 4.2.1.3: Teaching experience in years

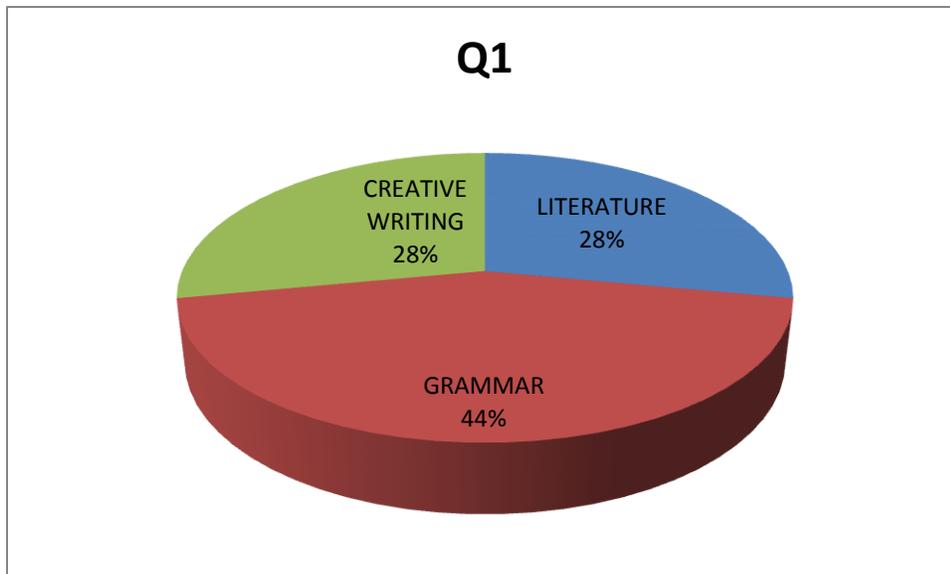
Years	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
1-10	6	24.0	24.0	24.0
11-20	12	48.0	48.0	72.0
Valid 21-30	4	16.0	16.0	88.0
31 and above	3	12.0	12.0	100.0
Total	25	100.0	100.0	

The category of experience was included so that the researcher can have a light on the how much experience do the teachers have. However, it does not mean that their answers in the questionnaires are determined or rated by their level of experience. This category had four categories, in the first group of 1-10 years' experience, it had six teachers. The second group of 11-20 years had a total of 12 teachers which is higher than the rest. The third group of 21-30 had four teachers and the fourth group of 31 and above had three teachers.

4.2.2 Analysis of questions

The questions in the questionnaires were created to answer some of the problems and questions that were stated in chapter one. Those problems were also partly analyzed and discussed in the second chapter while doing literature review. The literature review consisted of the studies that were conducted prior to the current one. There were ten questions in the second section of the questionnaires.

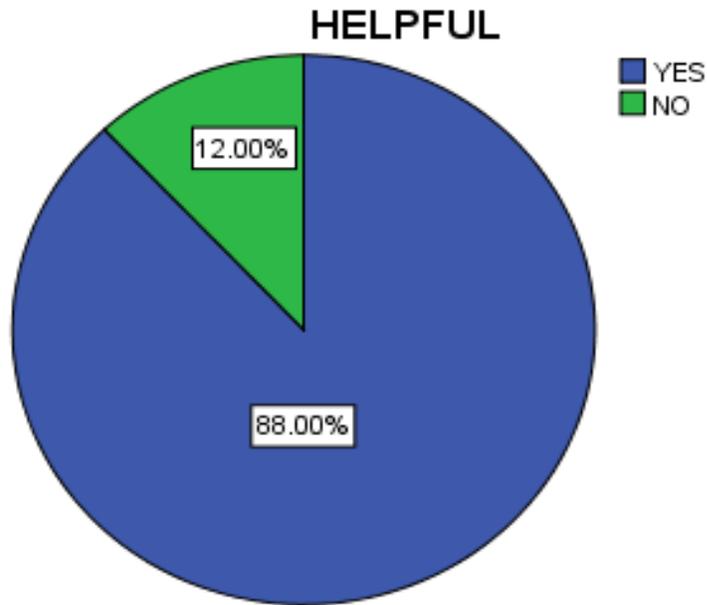
Chart 4.2.2.1: Content of Setswana Home language in Grade 12



The first question was about the content of Setswana in Grade 12. The teachers were required to provide what precisely is being taught in Setswana home language in grade twelve. The study indicates that, the learners are taught literature which includes reading and analyzing of novels, drama books and poetry. Secondly they are taught grammar which includes language use, idioms, and fixed expressions. Lastly they are taught what is called creative writing. Creative writing teaches learners how to write academically in their essays, letters and analyses. In this section they also include oral language usage. They perform prepared and unprepared speeches on any topic selected by the teacher or analyses of any book that they are currently reading or even a book chosen by a learner in the case of prepared speech.

In the second chapter, the importance of grammar and literature was indicated in this manner: Grammar is so relevant to the sequence in which elements of language are taught. Of necessity, language teaching has to present the various aspects of language in order rather than introducing them all simultaneously. Meanwhile literature is said to promote intercultural understanding and mutual respect, though how exactly it might do this is left implicit, and there can in any case be no guarantees with literary texts, which have sometimes been found to confirm stereotypes as much as they break them down.

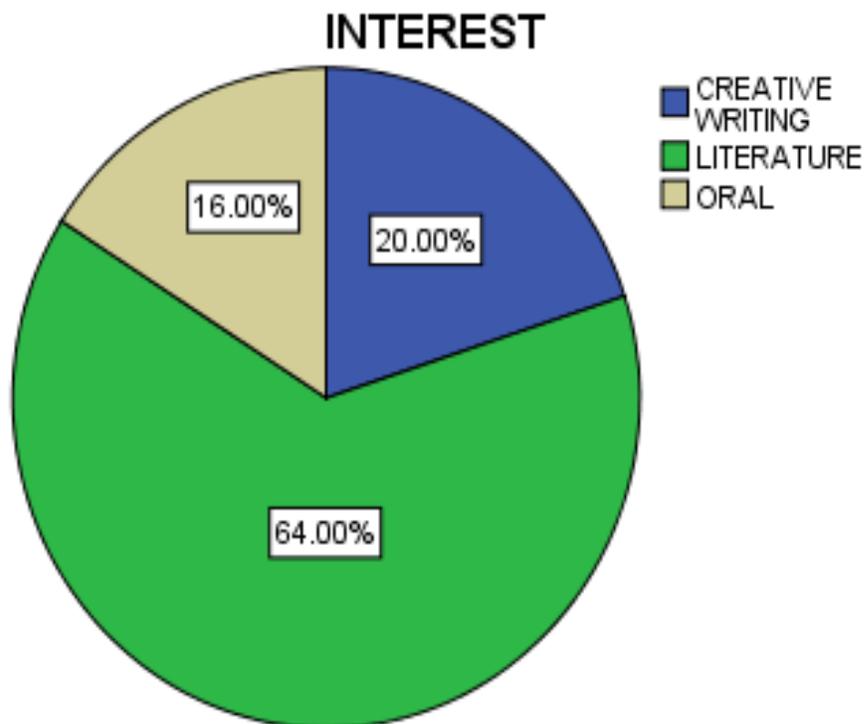
Chart 4.2.2.2: The usefulness of Setswana after matric



The second question was still on content, but in this case the researcher wanted to know how helpful grade twelve content is when children have finished matric. As tricky as this question was, 22 of the teachers felt that the content is really helpful after matric because learners can continue and study further in the career path that requires Setswana. However, they also stated that career path is not the only thing that it can be useful with. They indicated that knowing their language should be important as knowing other languages because that restores your dignity and self-respect for traditional values as a person. They can even choose to further their studies with the degrees that have mother tongues and make a career out of it.

However three of the teachers felt that the content has no value after matric because learners pass this language in order to boost their average mark that is needed as a university entrance. They also stated that learners have shown no interest of doing anything that includes their home language after matric. They also stated that it is difficult to find a job which requires mother tongue even with a university qualification

4.2.2.3: Learners' preference of subject content

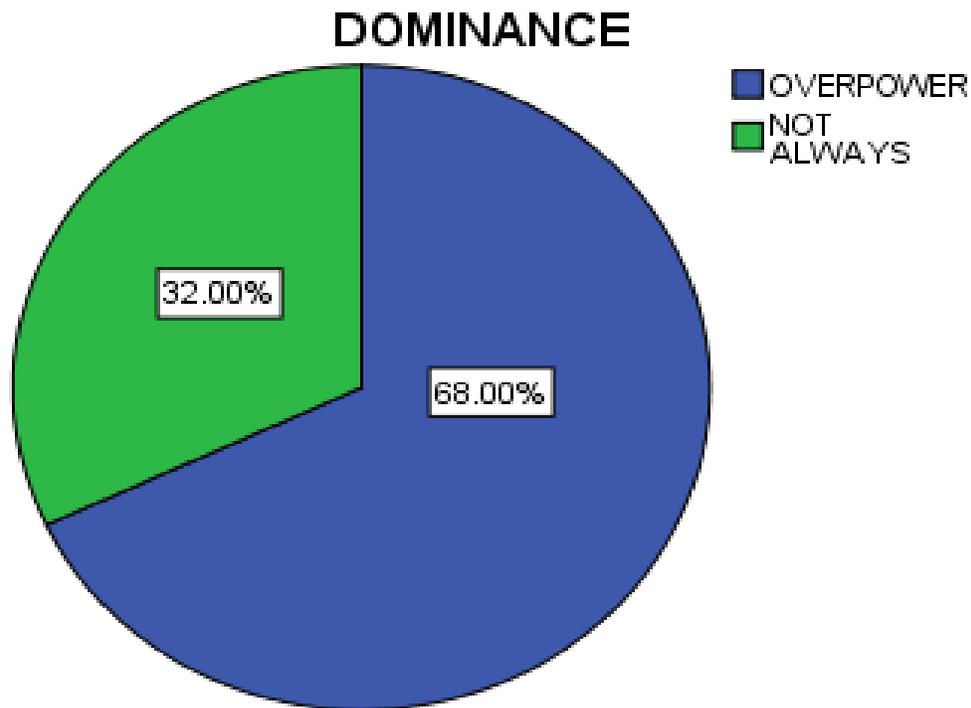


The third question was also on content. In this question the researcher needed to know which part of the content are the learners more interested in. The teachers were supposed to give their observation of which content interests the learners more.

They have stated that out of all the content, learners are mostly interested in literature. They said learners find it easy to participate in literature because they find it uncomplicated. Teachers think that learners enjoy literature because even if it may be hard to find answers, they are given in a case of a comprehension test or writing about the novel they are currently reading. Learners are more interested because they enjoy reading the books in class and also discussing them as a class. This makes it easier for them to pass its paper because they easily remember doing it in class.

They are also showing some interest on creative writing especially during orals. They think that this is because they get to speak in front of the class and see their mistakes and while looking at others and looking for ways to improve themselves. This has also proven to boost their confidence to participate more in class.

4.2.2.4: The effect of English over Setswana

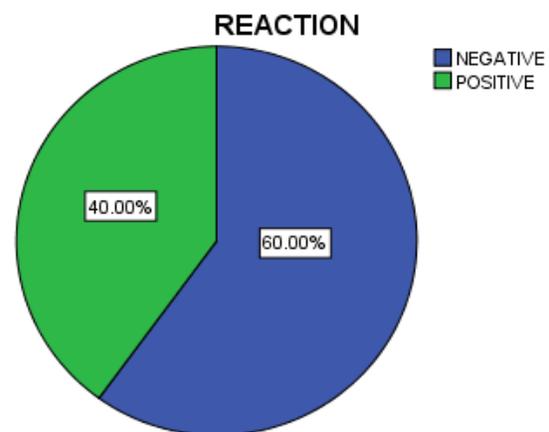


This was followed by the question about the over dominance of English as it was stated in one of the research problems that “English over dominates the social functions of language in the country and in education specifically”. The official African languages are not regarded as equal in status with English (chapter 1:p2). It was also stated in the literature review that “the majority of learners in Southern Africa receive their education through the medium of a second language, English” (ibid.p11).

In this question the teachers were expected to explain how does the over dominance of English affect Setswana as a subject. In this case seventeen teachers stated that English does over power other Languages as subjects. They believe that, this is caused of the fact that English is a medium of instruction and learners seem to be interested in anything that is done in English rather than their mother tongue. One teacher stated that this also occurs because “learners tend to see English as a better subject as it is

the one mostly used at tertiary institutions and other spheres of life as compared to Setswana”.

Eight other teachers also agreed that English does dominate but there are also some aspects of the learners’ program where they do not use it. They do not use it in L1 period and they are also not using it during break and after school. They may be surrounded by English but they do not even use it during their individual conversations or LRC meetings.



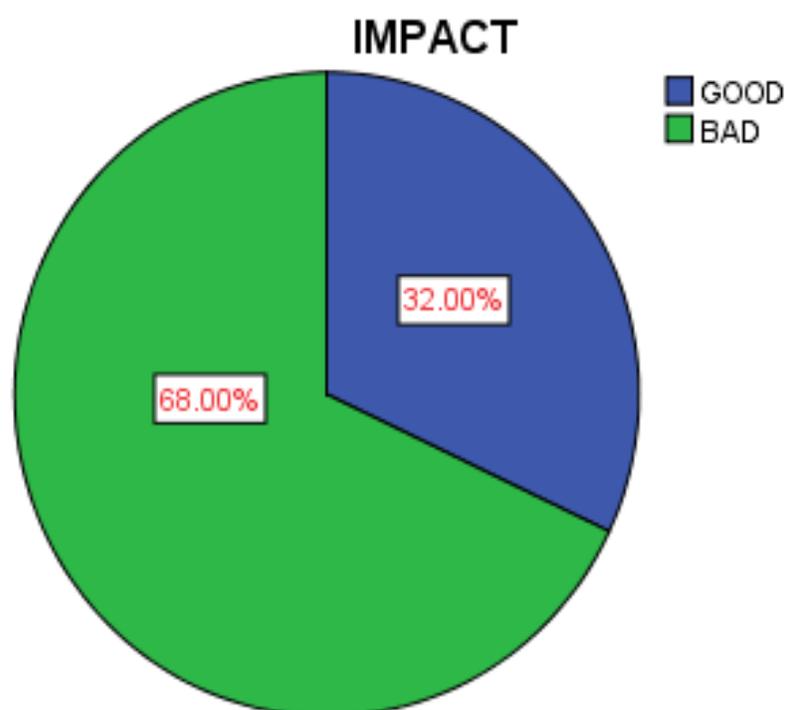
4.2.2.5: Learners’ reaction towards L1 learning

The fifth question expected the teachers to provide their own observation of how learners react towards learning their mother tongue. This was previously stated that learners have a negative attitude towards learning their mother tongue. Fifteen teachers stated that learners indeed have negative attitude towards learning their mother tongue. While ten argued otherwise, they have a belief that learners enjoy learning their mother tongue and they show a huge interest in them more than other content subjects.

Those who said they have negative attitude believe that the reason these learners react this way is because they think that their mother tongue is a waste of time and energy and it is not taking them anywhere. They see it as inferior and destructive to other languages that they should be learning. One teacher stated that “they take it for granted; they do not take it seriously because they think they know it. They do not value

it as they think it not of official use. They have negative attitudes which become a barrier”. While others argued that learners enjoy learning their mother tongue because they know it helps them to better understand other subjects “they like their home language because they are able to express themselves well than in English”.

4.2.2.6: Attitudinal impact on L1 learning

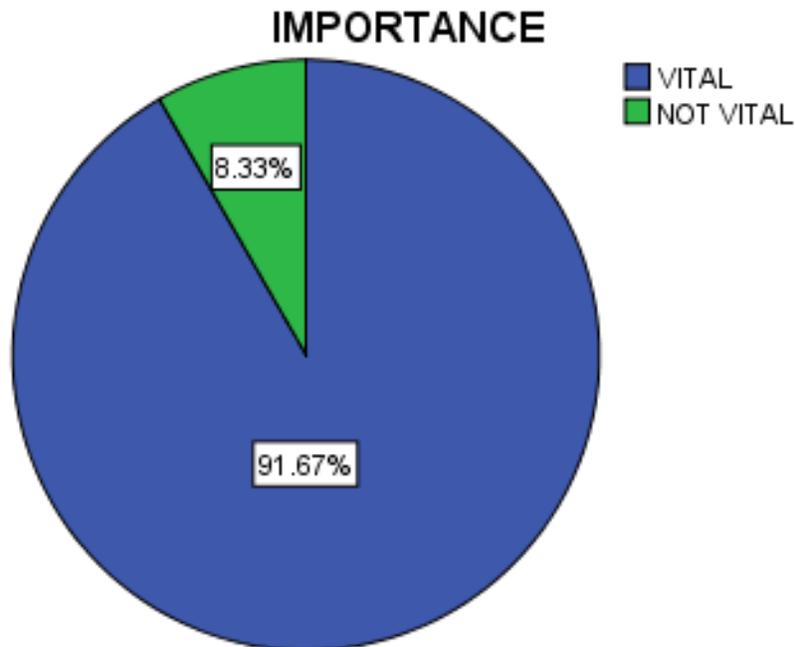


The sixth question was based on how the attitude of the learners affects their performance in Setswana. The teachers were expected to provide the overall performance of the learners who have negative or positive attitude. In the case of learners who have positive attitude the teachers stated that they perform well. One went on to say they perform well in Setswana than they do in their content subjects.

In the case of those who have negative attitude, they perform very badly. However one stated that even those with a negative attitude actually do perform well. He stated that their performance cannot always be determined by their attitude because they still pass

just because they need it to proceed to the next grade. He also stated that there are those who perform well but it is rare for learner to obtain 80%.

4.2.2.7: Importance of L1 learning in high school

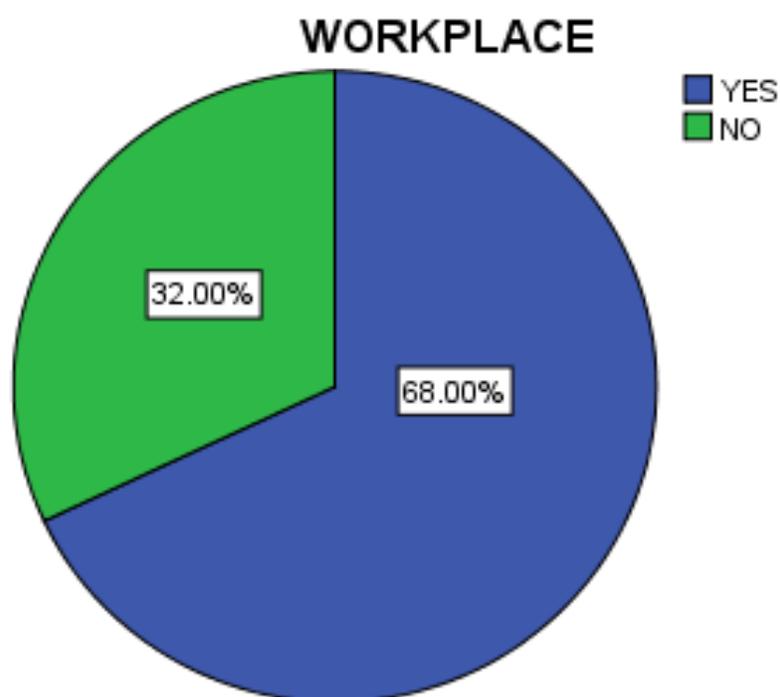


The next question was about the importance of learning Setswana in high school and whether it can be helpful or otherwise in the workplace. The first complaint that learners raise is that their mother tongue will not help them get jobs because interviews are held in English. The teachers explained that learning mother tongue in high school is important because it enables learners to communicate with their families and community at large. They said it is also important for learners to know their mother tongue so that they can teach other people who are interested in knowing their language.

Only two of them indicated that it is not all important to still be learning this language in high schools. They said that this is because the basics that they have learnt in primary and middle school are enough for them to communicate. Even so, they also stated that their remarks do not mean mother tongue should not be taught at all, it just has to be

adjusted a little from first language to additional language. “It will not look well if a learner in a black community does not do mother tongue, it would seem ignorant” one teacher said.

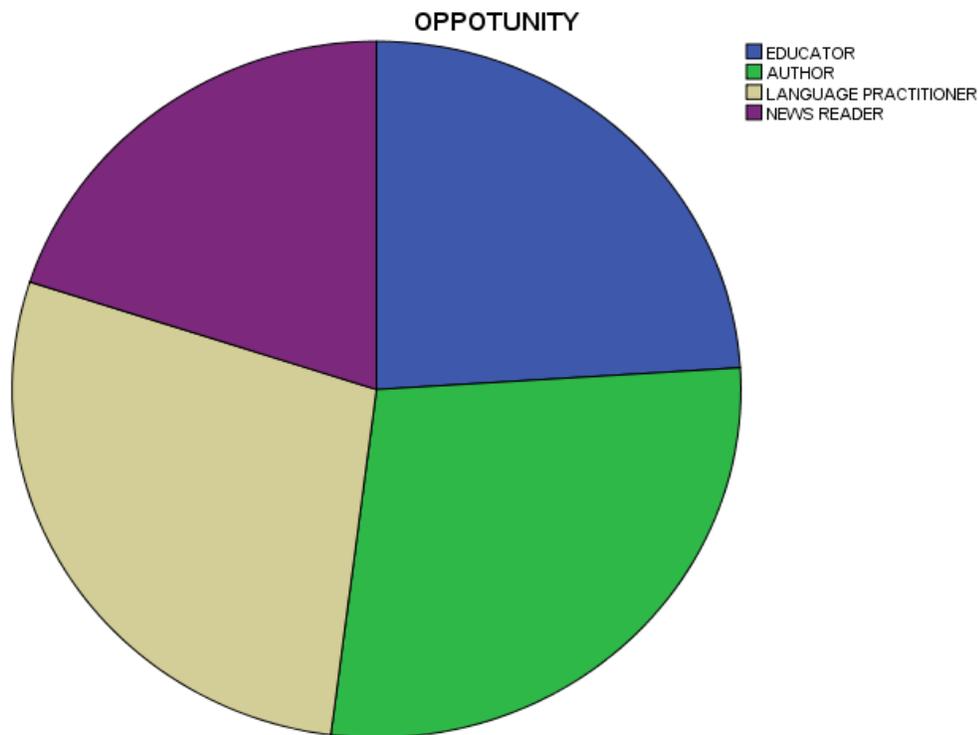
4.2.2.8: L1 usefulness in the workplace



In terms of workplace, seventeen of them said that mother tongue is helpful in the workplace because not all colleagues speak English and some people prefer using their mother tongue among colleagues of the same language. Some said that it is a disgrace if a person were to be proud of being fluent in English while they cannot hold a conversation in their home language. One teacher stated that “aspects that they learn from creative writing will help them in the business environment. Meanwhile eight teachers felt that mother tongue is not at all helpful in the workplace because in workplaces people are supposed to practice professionalism and should at all times follow the company’s policy on language.

Some teachers said that truly speaking in educational facilities like primary, middle and high schools in the villages and townships, English is only used for official uses like staff meetings with the principal and even so not all the time. Mother tongue is used mostly in such schools because teachers do not speak English to one another, they would rather code switch from mother tongue to English. This may also occur while teaching content subjects and in the English class a teacher may switch to mother tongue. They work hand in hand to achieve one goal, even in the workplace the same thing will apply.

4.2.2.9: Job opportunities linked to L1 proficiency

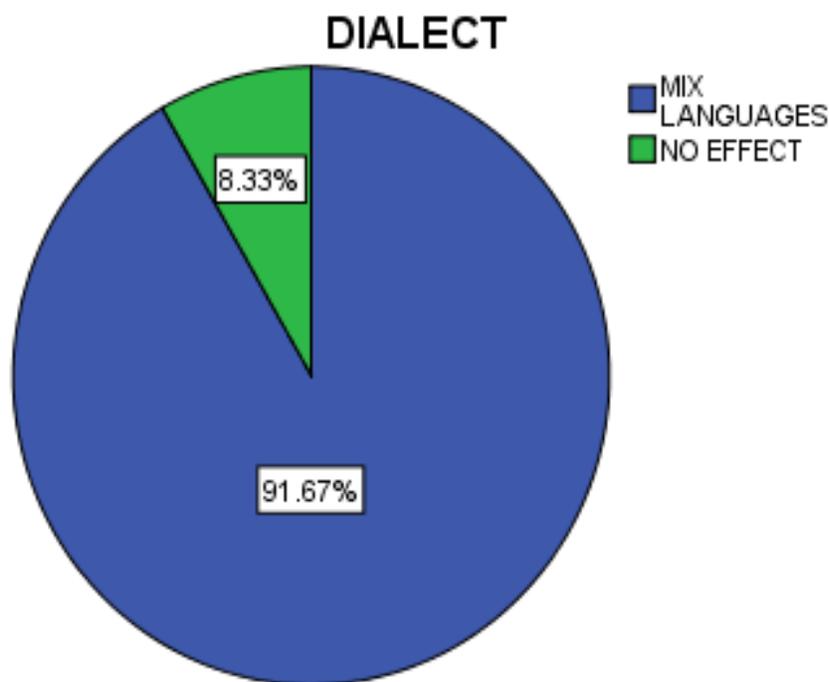


On the eighth question the teachers were asked to provide possible job opportunities that learners can be exposed to if they have Setswana in their studies. This question is aimed at showing learners that a mother tongue has many career paths. To also make

them realize that learning mother tongue has as many opportunities as any language that they wish to study of any field of career they may be willing to take on.

They provided a number of them, but to name four author, language practitioner, news reader and educator. An author is a person who writes books or the person who wrote a particular book, oxford advanced learners dictionary (83). Educator is described as a person whose job is to teach or educate people (468). News reader is a person who reads news on television or radio (993). A language practitioner is a person who is responsible for producing language policies and can also translate, interpret and editing.

4.2.2.10: Dialectal influence on the Standard language

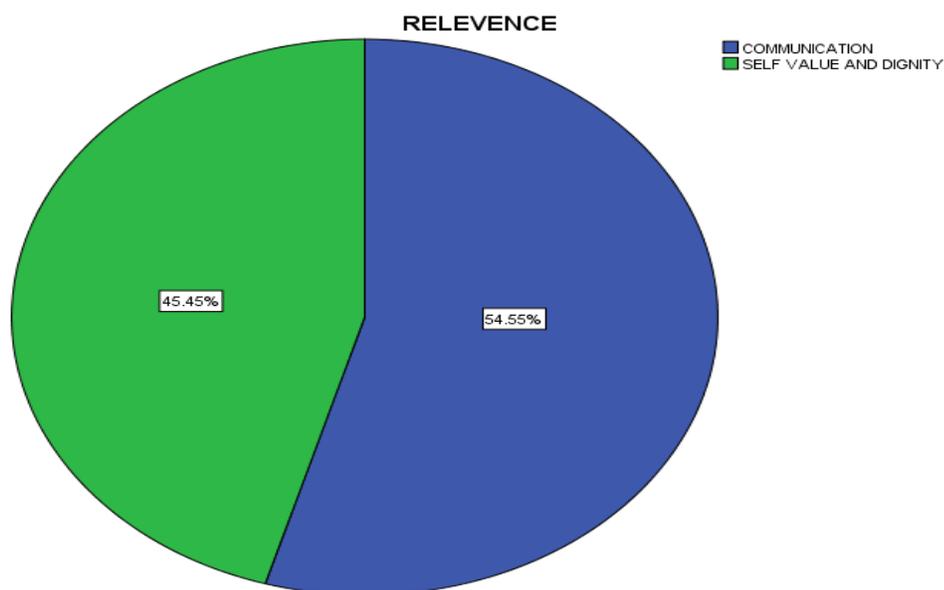


Question number nine was on dialect and standard language. People speak non-standard varieties of standard languages. This was indicated in the research problems in the study of Barkhuizen (2001) by saying that the way IsiXhosa is taught as a subject differs from the varieties spoken at home. The difference between varieties studied in school ('deep' IsiXhosa) and the ones student speak makes the problem even greater. These dialects affect the use of standard languages at school.

Most teachers admitted that learners mix languages when writing, they write the language that they speak without realizing the difference between the two. They also indicated the fact that they take time thinking about the right words to use, and this makes them take time while writing. Two teachers said they saw no effect of the two varieties, according to them, learners write what they speak because they are not aware of the difference between the two.

They are assessed on their knowledge of the answers not their knowledge of language. If that were the case most learners would fail the language. One teacher also said these learners are not to be blamed for not knowing the difference and it will be unfair to punish the learners for something they do not even understand.

4.2.2.11: Relevance of L1 content in life after school



The last question was also on content. This one needed the teachers to say whether the content of Setswana is relevant or not when learners are out of school. Twelve teachers indicated that the content will always be relevant because the main purpose of language learning is communication. Ten others said that the content help learners retain their self- value, pride and dignity for having knowledge of their language. It also shows that they are proud of learning their mother tongues at school because they apply what they are taught in schools in their everyday life.

Three teachers provided a complete different answer. Besides the fact that they said that the question was the same as the second question, they also said content only applies in school yards. For instance for someone who has left school, there is a good chance they do not remember what they did in class or even worse apply it anywhere in their daily activities.

4.3 DATA COLLECTED THROUGH INTERVIEWS

This section shows the interpretation of the data collected through interviews. The interviews were done with parents from Maboloka and Lethabile. It had been difficult to get parents who have children in the selected participating grades in schools, so the researcher opted for available and accessible parents who have children in those schools even though they may not be in the selected grades.

Even though the participation of the parents was not based on their educational qualification, they did however have to state their occupation, age and gender. The next analysis will be in a form of tables that will state the age of parents who have participated, their occupation and their gender.

4.3.1 Analysis of background information

Table 4.3.1 Age of the parents

Years	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 30-39	9	36.0	36.0	36.0
40-49	8	32.0	32.0	68.0
50 AND ABOVE	8	32.0	32.0	100.0
Total	25	100.0	100.0	

The table above shows the ages of the parents. They did not have to state have their exact ages; they had to choose between the age groups that were provided. There provided 3 groups 30-39, 40-49 and 50 and above. The first group of 30- 39 had nine parents, the second group of 40-49 also had nine parents and the last group of 50 and above had eight parents.

Table 4.3.1.2 Gender distribution

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid FEMALE	18	72.0	72.0	72.0
MALE	7	28.0	28.0	100.0
Total	25	100.0	100.0	

The table above is showing the number of parents with regard to their gender. It shows here that there were seven males and eighteen females and their total was 25.

4.3.1.3 Occupations of the parents

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid UNEMPLOYED	5	20.0	20.0	20.0
DOMESTIC WORKER	4	16.0	16.0	36.0
COMMUNITY WORKER	6	24.0	24.0	60.0
PROFESSIONALS	10	40.0	40.0	100.0

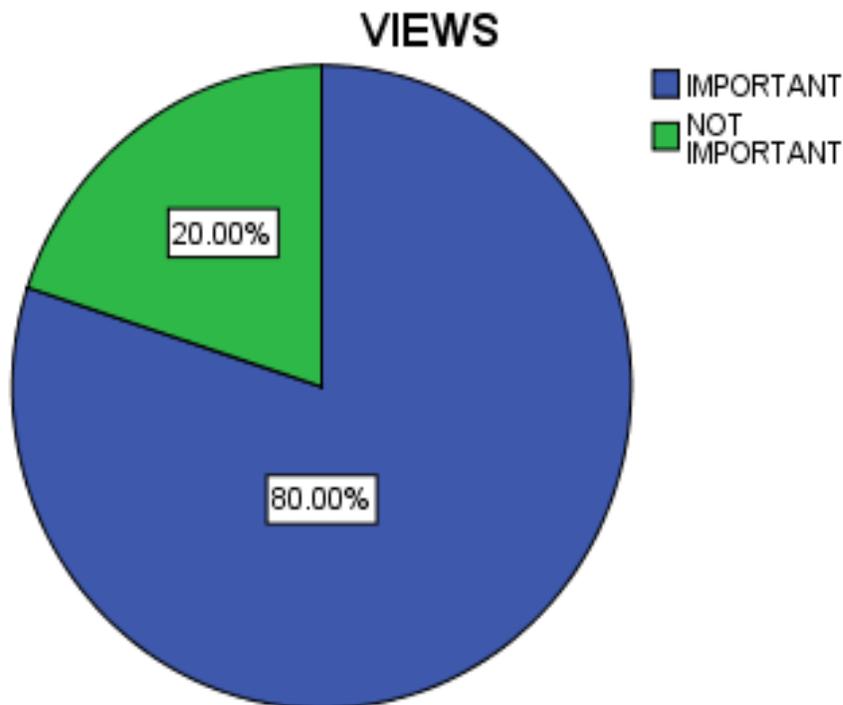
Total	25	100.0	100.0
-------	----	-------	-------

The last table demonstrates the different occupations of the parents. There were five parents who were unemployed; four of them were domestic workers. Six of them were community workers. These community workers are grouped together but they hold different positions in the community. The group of professionals had ten parents and it also included different professions.

4.3.2 Analysis of questions

In this next section there will be an analysis of the seven interview questions. The interview questions were also created to answer some problems that have been emerging in the education field and the researcher wanted to find out if parents are aware of them. Those problems were stated in the research problems and were also restated and strengthened in the second chapter while doing literature review. The literature review consisted of the studies that were conducted prior to the current one.

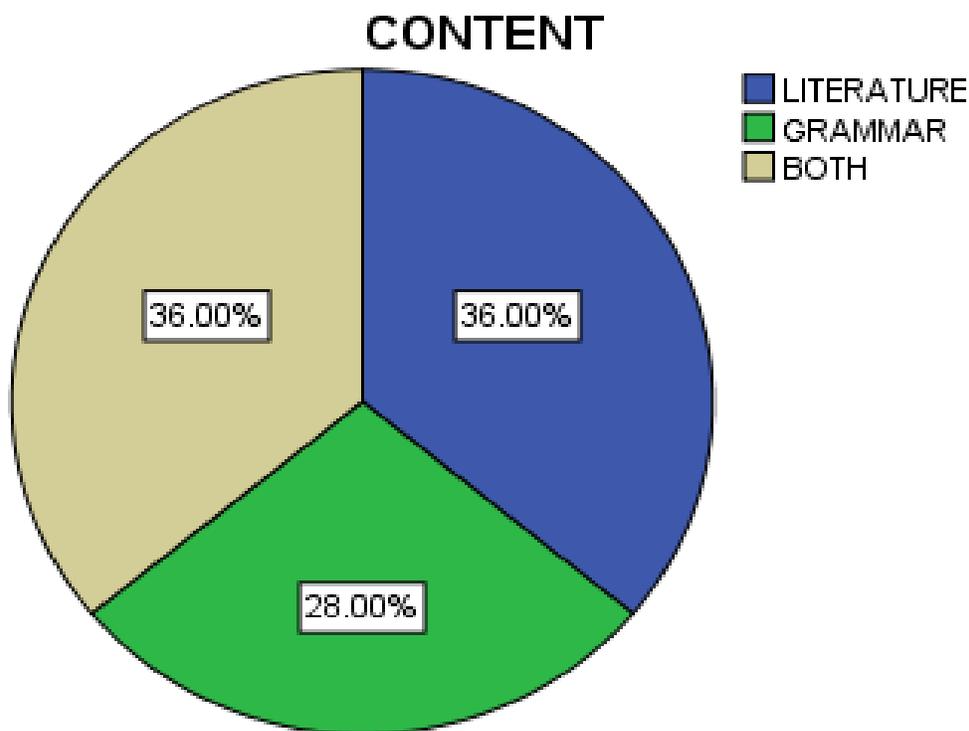
4.3.2.1 Views on whether it is still important to learn mother tongue in high school.



The first question needed to know whether parents feel that it is still important to learn Setswana/mother tongue in high schools. Twenty parents felt that it is still important for their children to still learn their mother tongue because it is important for them to keep their culture intact. One parent did state “I think it is very important for them to know their language because it helps them know more about their culture, but I they should have a choice of having a mother tongue as a first language and second language”.

The five that said that they do not see it as important to learn mother tongue especially in schools reasoned by saying that the language is inferior and is not going to help their children anywhere or with anything. The other parent said “I do not see its importance because it is not working on most things like filing forms”.

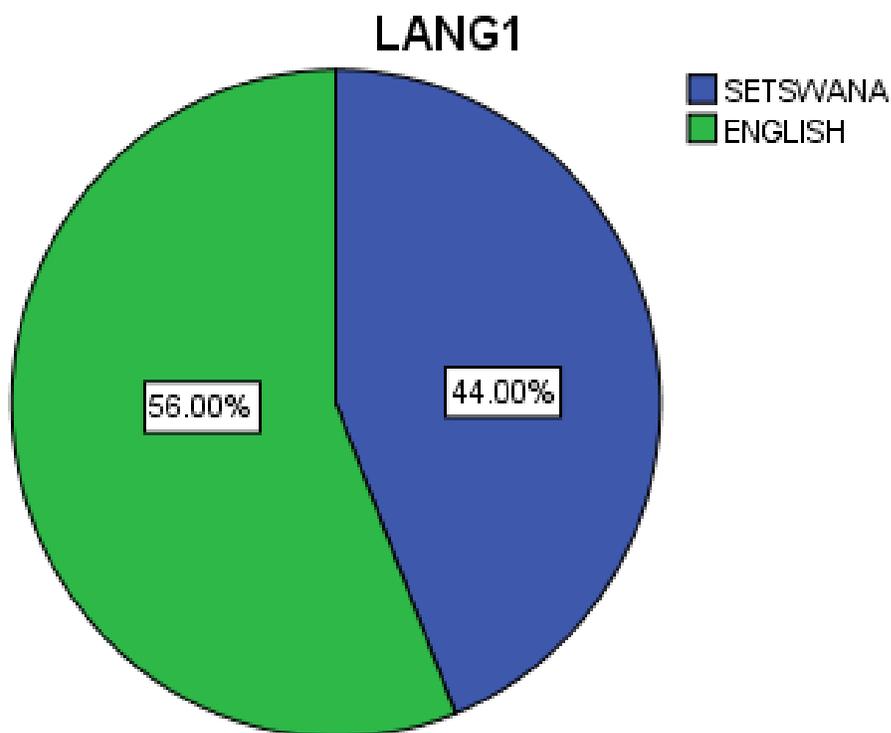
4.3.2.2 What they would like the content of Setswana to be.



The second question was on content. This was not based on whether the parents know what their children are taught in schools. It was purely based on what the parents think their children should be taught in high schools when learning their mother tongue.

Seven parents said that grammar should be stressed more because it teaches learners to write the language properly. The other nine felt that literature can be stressed more because some of the books that they are reading have culture in them and their children should learn more about culture. The last nine said that both of them should still be taught because even though literature leans on culture, there are some idioms and fixed expressions that can be analyzed in grammar. So they think both of them are important because they cover the important aspects of language which is everything.

4.3.2.3 Which language should be the first language?

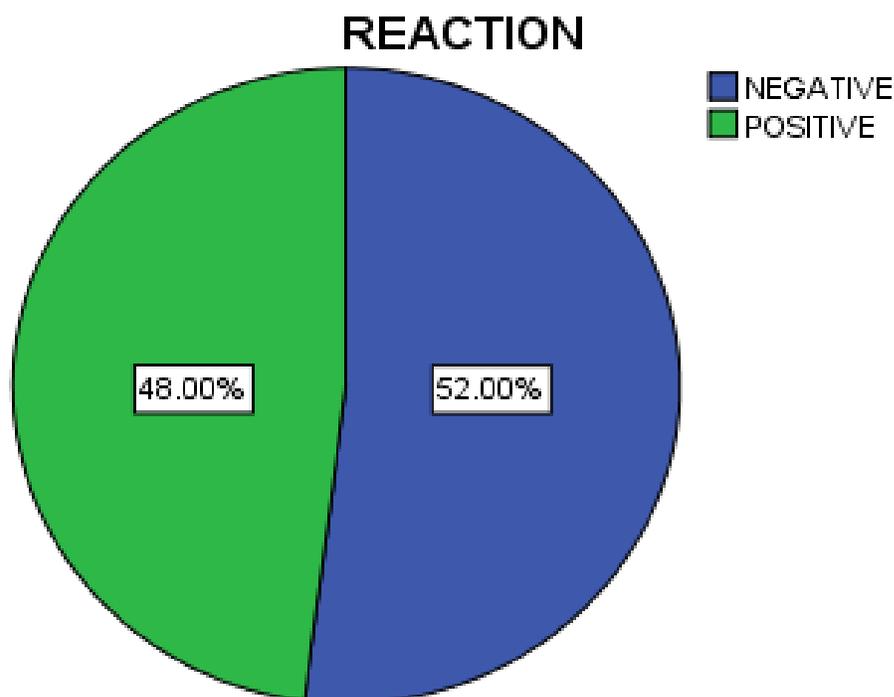


The third question needed the parents to state which language they think should be learnt as the first language in high school. This question wanted to highlight the significance of mother tongue as a subject. Eleven parents believed that Setswana should continue as a first language because it is the language that they interact more with other people. One parent stated that “mother tongue plays a very important role because initially the cognitive skill of a child starts with the mother tongue. Mother tongue should be used as a first language because it helps them understand content subject and eventually the performance of a learner will increase”.

Fourteen parents stated that English should be the first language because it is a worldwide communicating language it will open many doors of opportunities for their children if they are fluent in it. They believe that it also gives their children confidence while they meet with other children from other schools on occasions like debates or at the camps for science and math for matriculates. While on these camps they should feel free to communicate with everyone not embarrassed to engage in a conversation.

Learners should also learn English so that they can even participate well in content subject classes.

4.3.2.4 Reaction towards learning L1

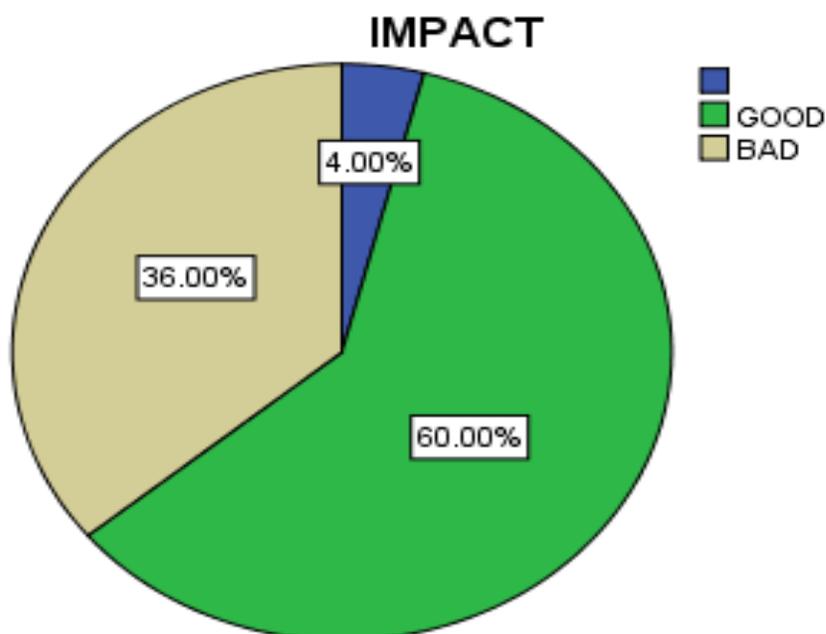


The fourth question needed the parents to tell if they know how learners react towards learning their first language. This question wanted to know if parents are actually aware whether their children have an attitude towards learning their mother tongue. Thirteen parents said that they do realize that their children have a negative attitude towards learning their mother tongue because they think it's not taking them anywhere. They also stated that they would like to do something for their children so that they can realize how important mother tongue is and how it should also matter to them.

Twelve parents felt that they have not seen any sign of a bad attitude from their children. They think children love their mother tongue because that is the language they speak at home and they are also learning it at school. They said that if children hated the language they would have said something a long time ago. They have been doing it since primary and there is no reason for them to start hating the language right now.

Even if they did hate the language it will not do them any good because they will have done it anyway

4.3.2.5 Attitudinal impact on L1 learning

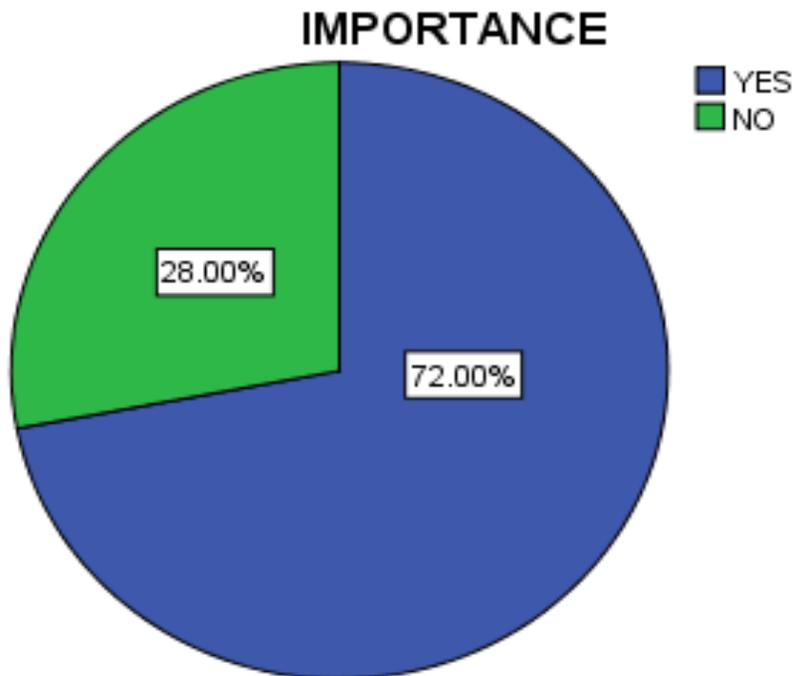


The fifth question was about the effect that the learners' attitude has on their performance in terms of passing and failing the language. In this question one parent stated the performance of learners cannot be measured by their reaction because they can pass or fail either way. She also stated that if a learner chooses to perform badly in a subject because they hate it, they are fooling themselves as they will fail the subject and they will repeat the grade. According to her, if a child fails is not because of an attitude is because they either did not study, they are being lazy or they take it for granted.

Fifteen said that children can pass even if they do not like the language, from their point of view children perform well because it is their mother tongue. In this case they mean that there is no slight possibility that children can fail because this subject. They also

mentioned that doing mother tongue at school is only formality because learners know the language from birth. Nine parents felt that children perform badly because they think they know the language and they take it for granted because even if they pass they do not achieve high marks. They settle for average pass because they know that without they cannot proceed to the next grade.

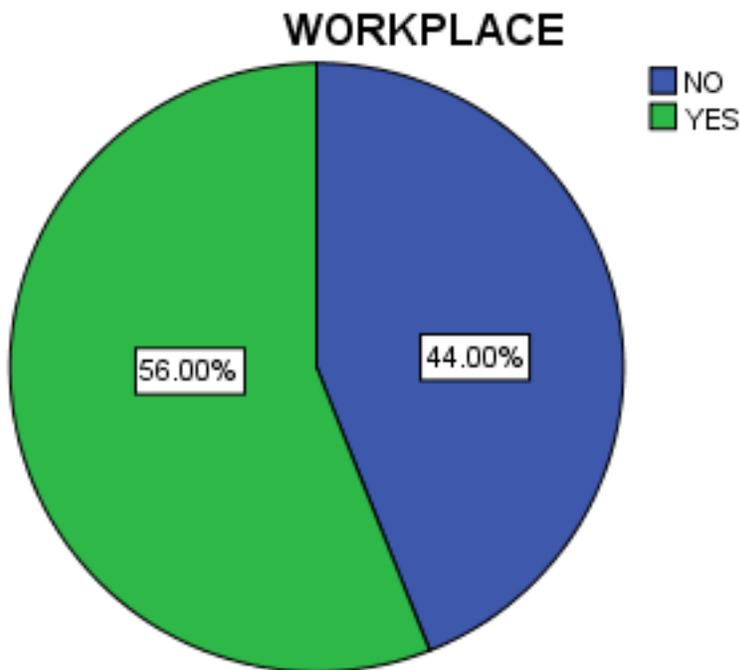
4.3.2.6 Importance of L1 learning in high school.



Question number six needed two answers; firstly it was whether there is an importance of learning Setswana in high school. Eighteen parents felt that there is still an importance of learning it in high school because that is where they are learning to make decisions about their future education. Also they have to always have their mother tongue in their blood and because they are not going to learn it after matric, that is where they should strengthen the base that they've had since primary school. They also said that learners should learn mother tongue because at some point their plans of becoming mathematicians can fail, then they will to choose something else that will require mother tongue and it will come in handy.

Seven felt that there is really no need that learner should still be learning this language as it will only end in high school. They feel that the communication skills and knowledge they learnt in primary and middle school should be enough to last the life time and it should be left there. They also stated that learners should have a choice of whether they want to do it or not because some learners do not like it and they would love to stop doing it.

4.3.2.7 L1 usefulness in the workplace

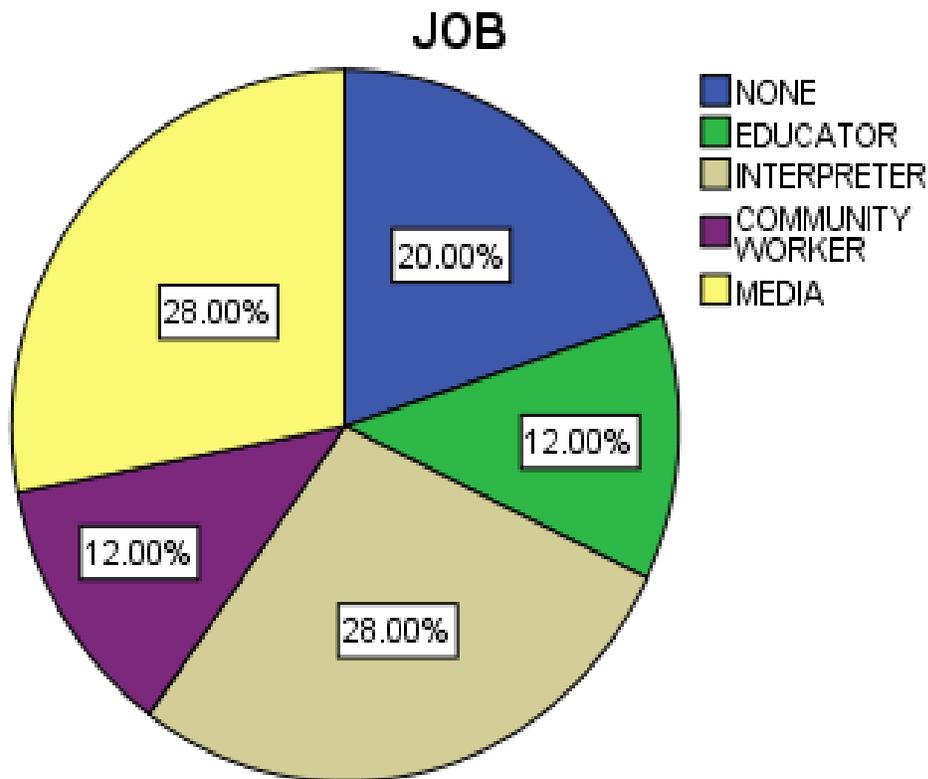


The other question needed to know if Setswana will help the learners when they are in the workplace. Eleven parents said that it will not help them because at work English is required because you met people of different languages and you cannot speak your language. One said that English is so important for people to master it and it should be respected instead of leaning on mother tongue which is a language that only exist in South African. He also detailed that in his workplace no mother tongue is not used at all,

they are all required to always express themselves in English at all times and as an auditor he enjoys working in a place like that.

Fourteen parents said that mother tongue will always be required whether a person works in an office or at street. Although they did state that there are very few workplaces where mother tongue can be a medium of communication but that apply mostly in education facilities and village clinics. There is however places where English is medium of communication but there can be instances whereby people have to help people without education and they have to speak the language that the person can understand better.

4.3.2.8 Job opportunities linked to L1 proficiency



The last question required parents to provide possible job opportunities that learners can have if they studied Setswana. They did provide a few but there were parents who said there is no job. Five parents said there is no job that a person can have while they are learning Setswana. They believe that no one can be hired while speaking mother tongue because people giving you a job will be white people and one cannot speak mother tongue with a white person.

Three parents said that one can be a teacher. These three parents said teaching is the only job one can get because there is always shortage of teachers in schools, so learners should finish matric and study to be teachers. The other three said a community worker as they were community workers themselves. They reckon it is good job to do because they are always helping people in the clinics that need immediate help. Their job entails a lot of communication with people in the village and they will not do it well without knowing mother tongue. Seven parents said one several positions like one can be an interpreter in court, in the media like radio/TV presenter, news reader and actor/actress.

4.5 CONCLUSION

This chapter was about the analysis of the data that was gathered. It analyzed every question in the interview and questionnaire section. The sections are neatly separated so that they are clearly visible that two methods were used to collect data.

It is clear that parents and teachers do have different intuitions about the teaching and learning of mother tongue. What the researcher has realized is that most parents undermine this language because they do not have information about where can mother tongue learning takes their children. Teachers on the other hand, do have the information but still it is as if they do not want learners to end up teaching mother tongue. They seem to still feel undermined by content teachers or they do the undermining themselves. It is clear parents want what they think is best for their children and they think mother tongue is not going to give it to them

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

5.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter summarizes the research findings as discussed in chapter four. Findings are also interpreted against research problems in chapter one. Recommendations are provided. A conclusion is made to the study as a whole.

5.2 SUMMARY AND INTERPRETATION OF RESEARCH FINDINGS

In here the questions are discussed and analysed as to what they mean to the research and how they have helped to solve the problems stated earlier in the first chapter. The research tools that were used, questionnaires had ten questions and interviews had seven questions. The questions were created as to find out the importance or otherwise of Setswana as a subject but most importantly as a first language. Although learners were not actual part of the sampling, the research was however conducted for their benefit. However there were indirectly involved because parents and teachers were discussing about them.

On the questions of content, the researcher wanted to know the content of Setswana in grade 12, out of all the content which one are the learners most interested in, how relevant or helpful it is after matric or out of school and what part of the content should the learners learn.

In terms of content, most parents indicated that they do not know enough about it or maybe they do not care what they are taught as long as they are taught mother tongue. Those who knew about it certainly rose that the literature should be stressed more because it is easier and learners will pass. Parents believe that if their children read more, they increase their ability to be competent in their language because they state that they have realised that children pass because they write but most of them cannot read especially in class in front of their classmates. The problem is that even though literature is easier and learners enjoy it, there are not many people who want or even end up as authors or being in literature itself.

The value of literature was also indicated in chapter two to show that it is important for it to be included in the curriculum of language teaching. It stated that, literature is said to promote intercultural understanding and mutual respect, though how exactly it might do this is left implicit, and there can in any case be no guarantees with literary texts, which have sometimes been found to confirm stereotypes as much as they break them down. This could mean that if learners are more interested in reading they stand a better chance of being good at it and they can also develop a love for writing themselves. If they develop the love for writing especially their mother tongue, then South Africa will produce more indigenous African authors who grew with the passion for reading. Their writing can include either novels, short stories, drama or poetry or even play books for lower grades.

From the teacher's perspective, they have indicated that all the content that is taught is important because each subject content fulfills a different purpose. If learners can learn to concentrate on each of the contents equally they can realise that each content helps. However because learners are more interested in literature, when they are writing its paper, they pass it better than paper 1 which is grammar. They are believed to fail grammar because when writing they are in a hurry to finish, they do not have time to think through the questions and find answers. The most important aspect of grammar is hard-core thinking and learners are lazy to think.

Grammar on the hand is something that people live with on a daily basis. In grammar learners are taught how to write and this helps a lot because the same rules they use in

writing, they can apply them while writing any language. They learn how to place verbs, how to construct sentences and differentiate clause from a phrase from a sentences and they learn something new every day. One does not stop learning grammar. They also have orals which help them to speak publicly and it is good for their confidence. If one can be confident expressing themselves in their mother tongue then they can easily gather enough courage to express themselves in a second language.

Grammar and literature are what is taught in school as part of the curriculum of any language. In grammar they are taught how language work and the rules of language. In literature learners are taught how to read and analyse novels, drama book and poems. This is useful in language learning because learners learn how to write properly and they know which words should be used and how.

Apart from communication with the community and retaining of one's dignity, this content can help those who want a career path in the language field. A career in a field of language particularly in one's mother tongue is good because no one is expecting you to speak English all the time, even in a professional environment.

One of the research problems was that parents tend to make uninformed decisions regarding the learning of mother tongue in school, this happens because they have negative self-esteem towards their own languages. Parents feel that if their children are not sufficiently competent in English, this will hinder their opportunities for upward social and economic mobility. This was proved in the research findings when parents were giving their views on the learning of mother tongue.

This was also indicated in chapter two in mother tongue in education, that a remark often heard about the teaching of indigenous African languages as first languages is that there is no need to study them, as pupils 'already know them'. This misconception is based on a number of factors that include the low status of the African languages as instruments of educational and economic activity; the high value is placed on the ex-colonial languages, and uncertainty about the content of study programs in these languages as subjects of study. This causes uncertainty for parents to the extent that they feel their children will not prosper if they are fed with mother tongue and not colonial languages.

It is important for parents to want what is best for their children and there is nothing wrong with that, but it does not mean that they are always right. It seems as if according to them their children would not learn it because not only is it useless but it is also their mother tongue and there is no way they can lose its vocabulary thus they will always be able to communicate. One parent even stated that she would rather have her children learn English and Afrikaans instead of mother tongue. What they do not realise is that their children do not fail because they are wasting time with Setswana class, children fail because they are lazy to study. They have time for everything except books, this is why they are expected to at least pass their first language.

It is clear that most parents felt that mother tongue is useless and it should not be taught, especially as a first language. They believe it should not be given too much attention because learners are not going to do anything with it after they finish school. This is where parents needed a light from teachers that their language is helpful even after matric or outside school. Those that said it is still important also stated that, it should not be a priority because even if they will use it after school they will not use it on important things and it is vital for them to learn another language that they will communicate with in the corporate world. From their responses it is clear that they do not know much about how mother tongue can benefit their children.

One can also see that there is no relation between parents and teachers or any communication because they do not know what the other feels about things. It seems like they do not discuss anything together as people who are working hand in hand to build these learners. The only time they seem to communicate is during parents meetings, but even then they do not interact one on one or even as class teacher and parents. During the meetings they generalised the problems and forget to discuss the little ones.

There other two research problems that were mentioned in chapter one were about over dominance of English and the fact that African languages are not regarded as equal with English. In chapter two this was indicated in the position of African languages in South Africa. It stated that "Languages of the world are disappearing at an alarming rate, reducing the rich tapestry of cultural diversity. It is the right of every individual to

use and maintain his language. This is echoed in the South African Constitution, which ensures the official use status of all indigenous languages.

Despite the government's commitment for multilingualism and the promotion of language rights in all spheres of public life, the education sector does not totally reflect the multilingual nature of South Africa. More can definitely be done towards the promotion of mainly the African languages in South African schools. This was stated in the second chapter to show the importance of mother tongue in education.

Educational facilities are seen as stepping stone for fluency in English, this is because English to other people is still equals being educated and successful. The teachers did affirm that English does over dominate. In school situations, subjects are taught in English, school meetings, assembly and announcements or notices are done in English. They use mother tongue in home language class and sometimes when they have deep conversation with a learner like disciplinary hearing. They also use it when they have called the parents to school for something except general parents meeting. They said that they do so because they think that is what the learners prefer and they want to practice the fact that learners should learn how to communicate in English. They also acknowledged that they are aware that learners do not use English outside classroom, it is rare.

This is shown when they have to express something in English it shows that they are immature when it comes to self-expression. However they did say despite the importance of mother tongue, they also do thrive for learners to learn how to speak, read and write English because in reality they will need it more than they will need mother tongue and one skill cannot survive without the other.

In the interviews there was a question on first language. The parents were asked which language learners should learn as a first language. Very few parents said mother tongue while most said English. Parents who believe that mother tongue should continue being a first language; they feel that if they stop learning home language as a priority they will not want to learn it at all. It seems they fear about the next generation who will not have source of identity because they will not be learning their mother

tongue. If home language becomes a choice it will quickly fade because no learner will choose home language first language over English first language.

Some said the first language should depend on the village. This means in a case of Maboloka and Letlhabile it should be Setswana. This can also work because some schools are in places where people speak different languages. There are also schools in North West that have different mother tongues as subjects and learners choose their first language. They do similar content subjects but they have different first language classes.

Those who chose English should be a first language raised their concerns saying that mother tongue is there to boost their average mark so that they get into university. Even if learners choose a career in mother tongue they will still have to do many things in English before they get the freedom to do things in mother tongue. English will help them be better in a communicating especially because they do not think that their children would want a career with language. They should learn English so that when they are in medical school they extend their vocabulary instead of starting afresh. It will also help them if ever they get a chance to go overseas. They also suggested that the schools should organise career expo as early as possible so that learners can choose early what they want to pursue, not do it for matric learners only. This will help them work hard on what they want to do and it lets them have freedom to change their minds if they wish to. When a career expo is done in matric learners make hasty choices and end up with careers they are not happy with.

Perhaps parents do not realise that learning a second language is a challenge and one cannot fully perform well in a second language unless they are fully equipped with their first language. In chapter two it was explained how can first language help acquire second language, “the aim of transitional L2 teaching is to allow people to function in the majority language of the country, without necessarily losing or devaluing their first language”. Teaching is ‘subtractive’ in that learner’s feel their first language is being taken away from them; transitional teaching is ‘additive’ in that it adds the ability to function in the majority language without displacing the first language. The only thing parents are concerned about is their children’s communication in English because they

believe that if their children can master communicating in English then they can get anywhere. However they do not realise that a person can be perfect while communicating in English but be poor in writing it and that can be a stumbling block for them.

The next question was about the learners' reaction towards learning their mother tongue and its impact. This question was posed concerning a research problem that was raised in chapter one that, some learners show negative attitudes towards mother tongue learning. By observation the other contributing reason for this negative attitude is that, even though they have been learning this language from primary school, they still cannot claim to master it and they are required to pass it to get to the next grade.

Most teachers and parents said that learners actually do have a negative attitude. This is because they are stereo typed that mother tongue is inferior and useless. Learners are discouraged either by parents, teachers, and community but most importantly by their peers and their self- undermining attitude. There are learners that are privileged and they are sent to multiracial schools. Somehow other learners are intimidated by these children and feel that they are wasting time and this changes their attitude to negative. Those children brag about not doing mother tongue and think it is pride not to do it, while these ones are complaining about failing it. They also believe that because of this attitude they fail the subject. Because they not want to put more effort into something they that is beneath them and going to fail anyway no matter how much effort one put in.

The other teachers and parents felt that children are reacting quite positively towards learning their mother tongue. They do not care how difficult it is, they strive to pass and enjoy it very much. Teachers indicated the performance of some learners speaks volumes. It shows that they study and practice hard before they come to write. They are not thinking about how this language is not going to help them get jobs or pass interviews, they are treating it like any other subject they are doing. At some point it has nothing to do with positive attitude, it is about the dedication of a learner to his or her studies. There are some learners who feel bad when they fail, and they do something

about it. Some do not even care whether they pass or fail, they simply accept it and move on but even then they do not do anything differently to change their previous results.

The other question on the questionnaires was about the effect of dialect that learners speak and the standard language they learn at school. In the research problems in chapter one it was stated that the difference between varieties studied in school ('deep' IsiXhosa) and the one student speak makes the problem even greater. At home learners speak dialects. These dialects affect the use of standard languages at school, because learners speak the non-standard varieties of Setswana, which is different from the standard one they learn at school.

The results of the research as shown in chapter four state that the biggest problem that learners have is to mix these languages. They write what they speak at home which is one of the reasons why they fail. They do not find the difference between the two and they certainly do not understand why they should be separated. The worse thing about this problem is that during orals, they do speeches and they speak dialects. However some teachers said they do not see any effect at all and even if they did they would not fail them because they know that these learners do not see the difference.

This can cause a problem for the learners in the future because when time comes for them to use the standard language only they will have problems and they will take time to adjust to the standard one since old habits die hard. It will be better if they can be shown the difference while they are in high school because at that point in their lives they can understand better.

There were two questions about the importance of learning mother tongue in high school and its helpfulness in the workplace. In chapter two the researcher indicated the importance of language learning with the help of theories from other authors. Studies in language learning show that learning, and language learning in particular, is not a cognitive activity only, but also a social activity. Both parents and teachers agreed that

it's important to still learn mother tongue in high school because it has to stay in their genes.

Some stated that mother tongue does help in the workplace when it comes to communicating with their colleagues and some people who will need help who do not know English.

Some parents did state that there is no workplace where Setswana is spoken and there is also no need to learn it in high school because they have learnt the basic communication skills in primary. This means that some parents either ignore the fact that mother tongue is used in workplaces or they simply do not acknowledge that they do use it in workplaces. It may not be used at all times or official situations but it does help them in some cases. The researcher believes that people choose to ignore the benefits of the mother tongue and class them as hobbies. This is why they cannot see or choose not to see its usefulness in the work place.

Lastly on both questionnaires and interviews parents and teachers were asked to provide professions associated with mother tongue. Even when few parents said there were none, some did indicate that they do know that there are jobs that are associated with mother tongue. However, this contradicts their overall views that mother tongue is useless and it will not help in the workplace. Their statement of job opportunities indicates that they know what mother tongue can do.

Most parents seem to think that interpreting is the only job one can do. Others think that acting and hostess is the way to go. Teachers did state their profession as the one that is easily accessible and obtainable. Although they also mentioned language practitioners and authors, they also stated that those professions are difficult to obtain and they would not recommend them to anyone. Some only stated that one would work at department of arts and culture but they did not specify the positions.

5.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

On the content the researcher recommends that maybe the department of education can do enough research and try to review the Setswana curriculum. They should find out what the learners need to learn in the language, they should know what it is in the language that makes it important for learners to learn it. Most importantly they should investigate the classroom actual situations while learning a language. This can help them get better perspectives of what the learners go through in the classroom and make informed decisions about the curriculum. In the second chapter the researcher indicated the importance of language learning and this was stated: "The quality of the language environment is of paramount importance to success in learning a new language". The department of education can also ensure that the content they put in learning the language is what can help the learners in their lives as they grow up not only while they are only in school. All content seems to be satisfactory, they can however choose things to teach in that content and maybe add editing or proofreading in grammar.

The researcher would recommend that parents need to be made aware of the profitable possibilities that mother tongue has. Something must be done to change the perceptions of the parents regarding their language. The same awareness that the learners need, the researcher believes that parents also need it so that they can help their children make better choices on what to learn. In the instances that children are in multiracial schools, parents should know that mother tongue should also be taught. Department of higher education should make it the point that they work alongside parents to assist them make better decisions for their children's education make. Parents are a big part of children's choices of education and it will be good for them to make informed decisions.

The researcher recommends that the schools should draw a language policy and its implementation plan that will state exactly how the languages will be divided in school. This policy should be made known to both teachers and learners even parents if there is a need. The policy should also not be in favor of teachers, it should cater for all parties including the SGB. It should include factors such as which language should be used at assembly or any event that includes teachers and learners. The language to be used in

teachers, parents or SGB meetings. This should also include the language that will be used on notices around the school and the letters to parents.

In this case the researcher recommends that while the department of education is remodelling the language in education policy, they should leave the mother tongue as it is. This is because even though learners hate it, they have no choice because of who they are. They have to learn it and pass it as any subject. It will also not be bad to also tighten up the ranks concerning home language; they can also be given a certain percentage that learners have to reach to pass home language. Parents should also try not to choose careers for their children, they should let them decide and also not to criticize other careers to scare off their children from choosing them.

In the case of reactions and impacts the researcher may recommend that, learners need motivational speeches from teachers and parents. Parents and teachers need to stop discouraging and support their children's decisions. Those who have negative attitude are lazy to study and this result in failure, parents should make sure that their children study and embrace their language. Teachers should do their bit by encouraging those who are lazy to work hard. There can also be language awareness by DAC, Legislature, DOJ&CD, PanSALB, this awareness should include workshops where parents, teachers and learners attend and trips to these places for learners and some may change their minds and start working hard. This awareness should include parents because they also need to be made aware of these possibilities.

Here the researcher still recommends awareness, however this one should be different from the first one recommended. This one should be done by teachers. Teachers stated that part of the content is orals where they teach learners creative writing. In this section they should show them the difference between two languages and maybe include the history of how languages came to be standardized. Hopefully this will make them see the difference and learn which to write and which one is spoken. Language teaching teachers should educate parents about how important it is to learn mother tongue and share their knowledge about how it can benefit their children. This does not have to happen in every meeting, they can do it once or twice a year.

Lastly the researcher would like to recommend that, further studies can be done to get the inputs of the department of both basic and higher education. It may be a good thing to get the perceptions of the very same people who make the policies and draft the curriculums for languages.

5.4 CONCLUDING REMARKS

This chapter was about clarifications of the research findings and the recommendation of how the education department can remodel the language policy and the curriculum. The awareness is really a necessity because parents are in the dark about the world of opportunities that mother tongue has. This awareness can also help teachers boost their confidence in what they do. It is not a shame to teach a mother tongue, because mother tongues are languages and languages need to be learnt. It will not be good for people of other languages to learn other people languages while their own speakers cannot be proud of them.

This whole study focused on showing the importance of learning mother tongues in high schools. It is discrediting when a person especially a South African citizen does not know his or her mother tongue or better yet to hold a simple conversation but is fluent in English only. Yes it is an advantage to speak, read and write English perfectly, but what does it say about a person who feels that their own language is beneath them. Any career in art is seen as a hobby or passing interest that a person can have not a long lasting career. Parents never take their children seriously while speaking of a career in arts.

Teachers and parents should work hand in hand to make the learners aware that are other careers to choose from not only engineering, medical or law fields. Learners should also play their parts in choosing what they want to do with their lives and pursue whatever career they want, and to also not choose a field because their parents have influenced and convinced them that it is a good field. Language learning is about interaction with people within and outside world of one's own. Mother tongue learning is

about embracing ones culture and source of identity and working with your mother tongue may just come as an icing on a cake.

In a nutshell, this study was about getting parents and teachers' intuitions about Setswana as a first language subject in high schools. Although this study was purely dependent on parents and teachers it is however for the benefit of the learners. It benefits learners in a way that parents will be able to make informed decisions about the mother tongue as subjects or rather in schools. Learners can also be able to choose careers in art or language itself if they want to and not do what their parents think will be an efficient career for them.

REFERENCES

- Babbie, E, Mouton, J. 2010. The practice of social research. Southern Africa: Oxford university press.
- Barkhuizen, G.P. 2001, *Learner's perceptions of the teaching and learning of Xhosa first language in the Eastern and Western Cape high schools: Summary Report. PanSALB Occasional Papers number 3.* Pretoria: PanSALB.
- Bickman, L, Rog, D.J. 1998. Handbook of applied social research methods. SAGE
- Buthelezi, Z. (2002, July). *Researchers, beware of your assumptions! The unique case of South African education. Paper presented at the Multilanguage Literacy Symposium, Scotland*
- Burt, M. Dulay, H. & Krashen S.1982. Language Two. Oxford University press. New York.
- Brinton, L.J. 2007. Structure of Modern English: A Linguistic Introduction. John Benjamins Publishing .co.
- Chambers, J.K & Trudgill, P. 1998. Dialectology Britain: Cambridge University Press.
- The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa. (act 108 of 1996)
- Creswell, J.W. 1994. Research Design: qualitative and quantitative mixed methods approach.
- Cuvelier, P. & Du Plessis, T.L. eds, 2003. Multilingualism Education and Social Integration, Pretoria; Van Schaik
- Dr Phatudi, N. Sowetan 26 February 2013, Tuesday
- Gardener, H. 1985. Social psychology and second language learning: The role of attitude and motivation. London: Edward Arnold
- Goleman, D. 1996. Orally and Literacy from "the savage mind" to "ways with words". In Maybin, J. 1994. Language and Literacy in a social context. Milton Keynes: Open University Press

Gumede, 1996, *Attitudes of high school pupils towards the use of African languages as languages of teaching and learning.*

Gravett, S. Geysler, H. 2004. *Teaching and Learning in Higher Education.* Van Schaik publishers.

Hall, G. 2005. *Literature in Language Education.* Palgrave Macmillan

Laufer, M. 2000. *The multilingual challenge.* Cape Town: Via Africa

Madadzhe, R. N. and Sepota M, M. 2007. *The status of African languages in higher education in South Africa, revitalization or Stagnation.*

Maybin, J. 1994. *Language and Literacy in a social context.* Milton Keynes: Open University Press

Miles, M.B, Huberman A.M. 1984. *Qualitative data analysis: A sourcebook of new methods, multimethods research.* Routledge

Mogapi, K. *Series of Boswa: Published matters relating to Setswana Culture-Ngwau ya Setswana.* LZ Sikwane Publishers.

National Language Policy Framework. 12 February 2003

Oliver, J. 2009. *South Africa: Language and education*

Oxford Advanced Learners dictionary. International Student's Edition. 2010. Oxford University Press.

Oxford South African Concise Dictionary, 2nd Edition. 2011. Oxford University Press. Southern Africa.

Patton Q.M and Cochran M. 2002. *A guide to using qualitative research methodology.* MEDECINS SANS FRONTIERES.

Peters, M. A. & Mathete, T. 1982. *Bibliography of Tswana Language: Compilation*

Reid, J. M. (ed). 1995. Learning Styles in the ESLEFL classroom. New York: Heinle and Heinle

RSA, 1994. *Language in Education Policy*, July 1994

Sealey, A. 1996. Learning about Language: issues for primary teachers. Open University press

South African Schools Act, November 1996

Skehan, P. 1989. Individual differences in second language learning: London: Edward Arnold

Tuckman, B.W. 1978. Conducting Educational Research. New York. Harcourt Javonich.

Umstatter, J. 2007. Got Grammar- Ready-to-use Lessons and Activities That Make Grammar Fun. Jossey Bass

Uys, M, van der Walt, J, van der Berg, R, and Botha S. 2007. English medium of instruction: a situation analysis, South African Journal of Education.

Van der Riet, M & Durrheim, K. 2006. Putting design into practice: Writing and Evaluation of Research Proposal. In: Terre Blanche., Durrheim, K. and Painter, D. (eds')Research in practice: applied methods for the social sciences 2nd edition, Cape Town, UCT Press.80 -111

Visagie H PGCE student Stellenbosch University 2010. *Letter to Cape times*. Saturday, June 5, 2010. Accessed 2012/11.28

Webb, V.N. (ed), 1992. *Afrikaans ná Apartheid*. Pretoria Van Schaik

Webb, V. & Kembo, S. 2000. African Voices: An introduction to the Languages and Linguistics of Africa. Oxford University Press

World Education Forum, 2000.*Thematic studies. Part 3/section C/4*. Accessed 2012/11/01

Yeung. Mashi and Sulliman 2000, in Robert G. Powell, Dana Caseau. 2004, *Classroom Communication and Diversity: Enhancing Instructional Practice*. Lawrence ELIBAUM Associates, publishers.

APPENDIX A

CONSENT FORM

I agree to participate in the interview/questionnaire of this study upon the following conditions, and shall freely withdraw from the participation should I feel that the conditions are not being met:

1. The researcher has explained to me in comprehensive terms the nature and purpose of the study

2. The participation is voluntary and I have the right to withdraw without risking any penalty or loss.

3. That I shall remain anonymous in the study and that the raw data from this participation or any other interactions during the study will remain confidential. The data will not be used to disadvantage me, and that no other person other than me, the researcher and the supervisor will have access to the raw data.

APPENDIX B

INTERVIEW

1. What are your views on the learning of mother tongue in high school?
2. What do you think should be taught in the content of Setswana in high school?
3. Which language do you think learners should be learning in high school as a first language?
4. How do learners react towards learning their mother tongue?
5. How does their attitude impacts on their performance
6. What is the importance of learning Setswana at high school and how will it be helpful in the workplace?
7. What are the job opportunities that are associated with Setswana that a learner can be exposed to?

APPENDIX C

QUESTIONNAIRE

SECTION 1

1. Gender: Male
Female
2. Age group: 30- 39
40- 49
50 and above
3. Years of experience in teaching: 1-10
11-20
21-30
31 and above

SECTION 2

1. What is the content of Setswana in grade 12?

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

2. How helpful is that content Setswana after matric?

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

3. Which content of Setswana are learners more interested in?

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

4. How does the over dominance of English affect Setswana as a subject?

.....
.....
.....
.....

5. How do learners react towards learning their mother tongue?

.....
.....
.....
.....

6. How does their attitude impacts on their performance

.....
.....
.....
.....

7. What is the importance of learning Setswana at high school and how will it be helpful in the workplace?

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

8. What are the job opportunities that are associated with Setswana that a learner can be exposed to?

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

9. How does the language that the learners speak at home affect the way they write the one taught in school?

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

10. How relevant is the content of Setswana when the learners are out of school?

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

