Humanizing Teaching Pedagogy: An Evaluation of Disciplinary Literacy in Higher Education

[1] Khetoa Soyiso Godsave, [2]Mokala Ntsoaki Teresa and [3]Matee Lihotetso Gloria
[1]Department of African Languages, Wits School of Literature, Language and Media
[2]Department of Languages, Literacies and Literatures, Wits School of Education
[3]Department of Languages and Social Education, National University of Lesotho
Corresponding author: soyiso.khetoa@wits.ac.za

ABSTRACT

Studies have suggested that there is a discerning literacy challenge in South Africa. The literacy crisis in South Africa is not unique to higher education institutions. The current study focuses on humanising teaching pedagogy at institutions of higher education. In this study, more focus is placed on the evaluation of disciplinary literacy in higher education. This is a mixed method research premised on an interpretivist paradigm. The study uses secondary data from one of the authors' Phd study conducted in one institution of higher learning in South Africa. Data was collected through questionnaires and interviews. The study purposely selected second- and third-year students enrolled in Sesotho module, either as a major or as an elective in one university in South Africa. Ethical clearance was obtained from the university where data was collected. Findings of the study point to students believing that the incorporation of their primary languages can have benefits towards their education. Students also indicated that most of them struggle to participate fully in lectures due to their limitations in English command. Our recommendation is that diverse repertoires must be viewed as resources upon which students can rely on to empower themselves in humanising education provision. The study further recommends that multilingual pedagogies such as translanguaging can be useful to advance the project of teaching and learning in higher education and provide opportunities for self-reflections.

Keywords: decolonization, academic literacy, translanguaging, transformation, home language teaching.

INTRODUCTION

In South Africa literacy challenges are exacerbated by promotion policies within the basic education department, which are not centralised on learners' cognitive development. Studies conducted in South African schools by Pistorious & Lephalala (2011), and Howie et al. (2017) cited in Anker (2020) have concluded that learners in South Africa fail to demonstrate adequate capability of understanding field-specific knowledge of subjects which they are enrolled in. This challenge is not specific to basic education schools alone. It is also prevalent in higher education institutions in the country. Linder et al. (2014) highlight that there is a necessity for transformation in teaching physics due to representational competency challenges encountered within a teaching and learning environment. Within the South African context, government school alumni have emerged from an epistemologically unjust teaching practices where teaching was not offered in their languages in content subjects. For every content subject, they encountered a

different world and they had to function in that world in the assimilated foreign language. Consequently, students fail to effectively function within the required proficiencies of content subject due to unmatched requirements of each subject.

South African schools are plagued with several socio-economic and socio-political challenges that affected the teaching and learning programme, which in turn, affects student's literacy skills. In analysing the challenges that face South African schools, Mouton et al. (2013) indicate that factors that face schooling system include poorly performing teachers, poor ethics, lack of community and parental support and poor support for teachers. Mokala (2017) takes this argument further by indicating that parents are not fully involved in their children's education. Some of the reasons for this lack of parental involvement include illiteracy, children who stay with grandparents as well as lack of recognition of parents in schools (Mokala, 2017). These factors affect learners' performance and literacy. Lack of parental involvement herein includes behavioural componence that is associated with active monitoring of students' academic progress. The lack of parental involvement in schools is likely to increase factors such as achievement gap, inequality and discriminating experiences in a quest for education (Mokala, 2017). It is also quite difficult to determine unambiguously what parental involvement entails for young adults entering university due to knowledge gaps that might exist between students and their parents. Furthermore, this support might be hindered by competency challenges, as learners are required to use English at a high level of competency (Thobejane, 2018). In South African universities, students are expected to meet linguistic requirements of content courses despite their immersion of an education system where they needed to

acquire English as an additional language. This linguistic pedagogic hegemony is further encouraged by entrenched ideologies of world citizenship, globalisation and upward mobility since English is regarded as a language that has economic value in South Africa.

Linguistic practices in higher education are yet to be transformative in South Africa. The teaching and learning environments have diversified such that lecturers ought to develop appropriate advocacy and compensatory skills to effectively facilitate successful teaching and learning. Despite this notable change in education, the teaching practice continues to observe monolithic language pedagogies which alienate students who have limited linguistic competency and performance in the language of teaching and learning (Makalela, 2015, Charamba & Zano, 2019; Childs, 2016). Institutions of higher education in South Africa upheld an exoglossic type of teaching methodology post-apartheid, particularly in the teaching of content subjects. Within the context of South Africa, many black students are taught English either as a second or third language. Students' true potential is sometimes hindered by their limited proficiency in English. Moreover, content subjects due to field specific terminology impose an additional challenge to students who are required to alternate between variants of English. This status quo remains the same because teacher-preparation programs in universities have yet to identify the value of pluralistic teaching methodologies. Notwithstanding this, Makalela (2015) asserts that learners in classrooms resist monolingual policy prescriptions in favour of a more inclusive teaching and learning approach. Monolithic teaching pedagogies may undervalue students' socio-emotional difficulties under the assumption that due to English hegemony, students must strive to acquire

mastery of the language despite experiencing the language at an additive level.

Language is an integral part in facilitating successful acquisition of knowledge, therefore, in a teaching and learning circumstance, participants ought to find innovative ways to maximize the learning experience for students. It is important for students and lecturers to share a common experience to understand one other, since context is essential for making sense of the information shared between students and lecturers. Deep understanding of literary challenges demands that lecturers must possess adequate knowledge of language situation in South Africa. When lecturers possess adequate knowledge about linguistic practices within the education sector, they may be able to facilitate strategies to scaffold the 'below' students' source. Institutions of higher education in South Africa, through their language policies, use English as the language of instruction across a few disciplines. Most students enter universities with a wide range of English language proficiencies based on their school experiences. In higher education, students are instructed and assessed in English. At times, the linguistic competency that is required at university is unmatched with government schools' alumni. Against this background, this study focuses on the description of linguistic practices that can be used to facilitate cohesion and unity in a classroom situation.

The primary objective of teaching is to impart knowledge to students. Language should not be an impediment to successful acquisition of knowledge, and or knowledge transfer between lecturers and students. Language is an important tool that facilitates the project of teaching and learning. To date, linguistic diversity in lecture halls or lecture rooms have not been embraced. This affects students' interaction with the curriculum,

thereby alienating students with limited command of English. Consequently, optimal learning is negatively affected. This contention is emphasised by Suryanto's (2018) observation that optimal learning is hampered when relationships (between students and lecturers, and students and other students) are disconnected due to the state of students' alienation in the teaching and learning process. In Suryanto (2018) four aspects that manifest students' alienation include powerlessness, meaninglessness, isolation, and self-estrangement. Individually, these aspects are discussed to situate them within the context of this study. To place these aspects within the context of the current study, it is imperative to discuss them individually and marry them to the context of higher education in South Africa.

Within a learning context, students make decisions about how well they can engage subject matters in classrooms. In the case of experiencing impediments to learning, students signal their challenges to lecturers. When lecturers are ineffective towards providing workable solutions to students' problems, students get devastated. Suryanto (2018) indicates that students are powerless when they protest to the teacher, yet their protest is ignored. Ignoring students' 'protest' is a recipe for anxiety. Students that experience limited command of English in lectures are aware of their limitation, therefore, when their pleas are ignored, they cave in. Thus, as Kajee (2021, p. 138-139) puts it "the importance of teachers creating opportunities for students to be involved in learning through problematizing knowledge and contributing to a better world cannot be sufficiently emphasised." Therefore, to minimise this feeling of being powerless, lecturers need to help students to solve problems by humanising teaching pedagogy among others.

It is not unusual that students who seem to have limited competence of the language of teaching and learning may struggle to make sense of academic activities and their requirements in class. Lecturers that are not prepared to deal with diverse linguistic competencies may also be frustrated by students that struggle in this regard. Situations like this might render the teaching and learning process meaningless, thereby collapsing the learning process. Due to language barriers, students may struggle to communicate or express themselves adequately to make sense of the material discussed in class. When students lack cultural equivalents of the concepts expressed in their lectures, they may fail to make sense of the material discussed in class for their individual benefit. Therefore, communication barriers dictate the quantity of information that students who appear to have linguistic limitations enjoy in lectures. It is imperative for lecturers to have a sense of accountability by making use of teaching methodologies that address the diverse nature of student population. Mokala (2022, p. 29) postulates that "The South African education system is underpinned by the need to address the inequalities of the past". Language inequalities also play a role in disempowering the 'below' students, therefore, acknowledging the linguistic diversity is the first step to addressing the linguistic needs of the students. "The promotion of indigenous languages as official languages was meant to recognise and celebrate the diversity of cultures in South Africa. Non-indigenous languages were the only languages used in respected avenues of society" (Khetoa, 2019, p. 1). However, to date research indicates that in South Africa, institutions of higher education were mandated to develop language policies that are multilingual in nature, with the aim to advance equity and access in higher education (Madiba, 2010; Mokala et al.,

2022). However, there is a need for language policies that are multilingual in nature to be implemented in institutions of higher learning for diverse students to benefit from teaching and learning and not find their learning to be meaningless.

Translanguaging is essential in such situations. Translanguaging is normally associated with education circumstances where more than one language is used. Translanguaging "…opens and expands opportunities for engagement in meaningful language and literary practices, thus ensuring more equitable earning environments." (Parra & Proctor, 2022, p.2). In other words, translanguaging in classrooms appears to be of essence since it provides students the opportunity to understand what is being taught in the class using their primary languages.

Makoni (2017) postulates that "by focusing on the quality of their notetaking in and out of class, researchers from the University of the Witwatersrand or Wits, South Africa, have established that poor English language competence is hindering the academic performance of a significant number of undergraduate students for whom the language is not their mother tongue". In advocating for a decolonised curriculum, Dukhan cited by Makoni (2017) indicates that the issue of language barriers should be at the centre of debates about an inclusive curriculum given that many students face language barriers when they move into universities. In higher education, students are expected to comprehend varying texts that they are exposed so that they can analyse, critique, evaluate and synthesize information from various sources Bharuthram (2012). According to Bharuthram (2012) many students entering higher education are not adequately prepared to meet these challenges that include linguistic challenges. Without significant interventions monolithic practices

isolate the students that Makoni (2017) is referring to in his statement. This may also lead to students finding what they are learning to be meaningless to them and that could end up pushing them to end up feeling self-estrangement. Premised on this background, the current study embarks on humanising teaching pedagogy at institutions of higher education. More focus is placed on the evaluation of disciplinary literacy in higher education.

Multilingualism in higher education

South African languages are frequently in contact with each other, thereby leading to multilingual citizenry. In Banta's (2018) view, "at a time when in Africa people necessarily speak at least two languages (an African language and a colonial language) as a necessity; arguments for a singular 'mother tongue' education are out of place". Hlatshwayo and Siziba (2013) opine that tertiary institutions in South Africa have been reluctant to implement multilingual education due to the fallacy that English is the only language that can be used adequately for skills development and training. This has also been exacerbated by higher education aspirations of competitiveness in the global stage. Within the current study then, the researchers explore the evaluation of humanising teaching pedagogy at institutions of higher education.

Humanizing teaching pedagogy and multilingualism

Tapping into students' complete language repertoires as resources for learning – is a humanising act that can change the narrative about multilingual learners and counter dehumanising language policies (Huckle, 2022). Multilingualism inspires new ways of doing things in support of students in a learning environment. This new way of students' support may elucidate a more humane approach to teaching and learning. High linguistic performance that is required of government schools' alumni may alienate students with limited command in the language of teaching and learning. Humanising pedagogy intentionally plans and enacts pedagogical practices that are aligned with students' experiences and perspectives, validate and honour their culture, home languages, and lived experiences with the larger goal of advancing equity and social justice through day-to-day classroom interactions (Fredricks, 2020). Students come to university with all their treasure that includes their primary languages. Expecting students to abandon their treasure is an agonizing experience. To alleviate students' agony, pedagogical approaches such as translanguaging can make a meaningful contribution towards the education of multilingual students. Kajee (2021) expounds that a prerequisite for teaching and learning for humanisation is the acknowledgement of our situated selves. In this view, students' education in South Africa must be informed by commonly observed linguistic realities.

Humanising students' learning experiences is important in the South African context, especially when we consider the country's history and diversity. Countries such as South Africa, whose tragic past created massive social divide ought to rely on humanising approaches. Kajee (2019) alludes that the linguistically and culturally diverse nature of South Africa, it is inevitable that teaching and learning from a social justice perspective be prioritized to address injustices and inequities. This view is supported Zinn & Rodgers' (2012) sentiments that South Africa's legacy of disempowerment and dehumanisation in education needs repair.

Review of literacy studies in South Africa

Studies conducted in South African schools (Pistorious & Lephalala, 2011; Howie et al, 2017 cited in Anker, 2020) concluded that learners in South Africa fail to demonstrate adequate capability of understanding field-specific knowledge of subjects which they are enrolled in. This challenge is not specific to basic education schools alone. Bharuthram (2012) alludes that a common problem that South African higher education institutions are currently experiencing is that many students enter higher education unable to read and write at the level expected of them. Bharuthram (2012) further indicates that in recent years, many articles have reported on poor literary levels of students who are about to enter tertiary education. This status quo is exacerbated by promotion policies in the basic education. In what follows, we explain the theoretical framework guiding the study.

Theoretical framework

Dual theoretical lenses: systemic-functional linguistics and translanguaging underpin this study. This dual process enhances the image that researchers are painting about monolithic pedagogies. The researchers in this study propose that Systemic Functional Linguistics (otherwise SFL) offers higher education institutions an applicative method to mitigate students' self-estrangement or lecturers' isolation within a teaching and learning environment. SFL's focal point is on creating meaningful discourse, not simply viewing language and language learning and teaching in isolated areas such as content or organization. In Fontaine's (2013) view, anyone who has tried to communicate with someone in an unfamiliar language or with a two-year old will know that being grammatically correct is almost irrelevant. In a communicative circumstance in education, there are aspects

that might impede students' literary in varying disciplines. Endarto (2017) expounds that within the scope of SFL, there are three contextual variables that meaning making is dependent on; field (the topic being talked about), tenor (the relationship of participants) and mode (the channel of communication). Therefore, failure to facilitate meaning making impedes adequate learning. We find this framework worth underpinning the study as our conviction is that teaching pedagogies must address students' needs in such a way that they respect their life experiences and "maintain their cultural roots" (del Carmen Salazar, 2013, p.121)

To mitigate the situation of exclusive teaching pedagogies where education is isolated from students' native language and culture, translanguaging can be looked upon as an assertive strategy to facilitate learning. Translanguaging is normally associated with education circumstances where more than one language is used to address students' diverse linguistic need and is used as a vehicle for epistemic access (Makalela, 2015). According to Parra and Proctor (2022, p. 1) "translanguaging pedagogy opens and expands opportunities for engagement in meaningful language and literacy practices, thus ensuring more equitable earning environments". Translanguaging is also considered a "pedagogy or a teaching strategy and is utilised as the overarching term for a modern, multilingual theoretical concept befitting teaching and learning in an increasingly global society of today" (Conteh, 2018). Presently, the country is struggling to provide an effective and equitable education for students, with many debates and a wide variety of practices related to policies, programs, and language(s) of instruction (Charamba & Zano, 2019). Despite this, Banda (2018) indicates that within a multilingual classroom setting, learners use their multilingual repertoire to achieve power, agency, and voice. Within

this purposive linguistic practice, learners, and teachers can use their extended linguistic repertoires as normal classroom practice free of retribution, Banda (2018). Students' reliance on their extended repertoires therefore maximises their opportunity to learn and accelerates their participation in lecture theatres. Translanguaging therefore informs this study on the teaching pedagogies that are humanistic and humane as they are critical for the academic and social resiliency of students (del Carmen Salazar, 2013). The section that follows discusses the research problem.

Research problem

Language is an attribute that binds humans together especially in an academic endeavour such as undertaking an undergraduate course. Within a learning discourse, language can inspire an individual to learn or sink a student to despair. Language is important in education primarily because it is a tool to imparting discipline specific knowledge to students. Nath (2010) clarifies that language helps in the formation of concepts, analysis of complex ideas, and to focus attention on ideas which could otherwise be difficult to comprehend. Within the scheme of language learning, we rely on Richard Skemp's view on language. Skemp as cited in Nath (2010) points out that language is a necessary condition for understanding and that language is also a pre-requisite for thought. This connotes that students rely on their primary languages to inform meaning in a learning environment and that this reliance on their primary languages is necessary for processing learned information. Failure to recognise student's diversity within in a learning environment can bring challenges that are unavoidable.

Latest research suggests that there are benefits in relying on multilanguage pedagogies in education (Charamba, 2020; 2022; Mokala et al, 2022). According to Mokala et al (2022), monolingual teaching practices are continually observed in South Africa despite the multiplicity of languages in a classroom. Mokala et al. (2022) recommended that teachers should consider the use of multilingual pedagogic teaching practices to address language diversity in their home language classrooms. Increased mobility after the collapse of apartheid has increased the likelihood of finding many languages within one classroom. On the other hand, colonial policies in South Africa made it possible that many African languages speakers have assimilated at least one language of the colonisers under colonial rule. On this background, there is a heavy presence of other repertoires in university classrooms or lecture halls, even though only a few have been used as mediums of instruction. Most scientific text are readily available in English and this influences lecturers' choice of remaining with English in their teaching sessions and not using any of the African languages in their sessions, probably due to lack or limited competency in these languages. However, the presence of primary speakers in their sessions encourages that these languages must somehow make inroads into the teaching project.

Ngcobo et al. (2016) posit, "Literacy challenges among the majority of African language speaking students learning through the medium of English impact on unequal throughput in South African higher education". Ngcobo et al. (2016) further argue that this situation can be remedied by revising the curriculum in such a way that classroom activities and assessments give recognition to students' African languages. Against this background, the current study investigates evaluation of humanising teaching pedagogy at institutions of higher education. The aim of the study is explained in the following section.

Research aim

The main aim that guides this study is evaluating disciplinary literacy in institutions of higher education.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research methods represent the tools of the trade, and they provide the researcher with ways to elicit, organize and analyse information so that the researcher can come to certain conclusions and come to some generalisations about patterns observed in the reasoning contained in data collection tools (Walliman, 2011). In this study, the researchers reviewed Khetoa's (2019) doctoral dissertation data, which was presented to the University of the Free State. The researchers used this data because it asked questions that are valuable for this research undertaking. Khetoa (2019) elicited his data through a multipronged research approach. This scholar relied on methodological triangulation in that he collected data by employing mixed method research methodology. In mixed method approach qualitative and quantitative elements are combined, and this combination is characterized by – qualitative – soft, flexible, subjective, political, speculative, case study – quantitative – hard, structured, objective, non-evaluative, surveys, hypothesis-testing and abstract (Dźwigoł & Dźwigoł-Barosz 2020). There are researchers that believe that within qualitative research, the researcher can influence the respondent's responses, while other are convinced that quantitative research provides statistical representation of the problem without providing details about why the problem prevails. Therefore, the use of mixed method in this study seeks to maximize the correctness of the researchers' account about the research question. This approach is fit for this inquiry based on the following reasons:

- For verification
- To provide basis for early detection possible errors which may emanate.
- To facilitate the monitoring of collected data.
- To probe the data set to determine its meaning.

This type of an approach minimizes bias. According to Khetoa (2019) "this particular study stands resolute of providing findings that are unquestionable in character and ascertaining unambiguous results. Choosing to employ mixed methods may prove as a necessary step to minimize errors and ambiguity while increasing validation and honesty".

Data collection

In Khetoa's (2019) study, data was collected using interviews and questionnaires. For the current study, the focus is to select the data that handles aspects that are fit for our focus. The sample in Khetoa's (2019) study comprised students who studied Sesotho at the mother tongue stream and the non-mother tongue stream. The study purposely sampled second and third year students on the assumption that this cohort of students would provide meaningful and informed responses. Fundamentally, the criteria for participation in the study was that students needed to be enrolled for Sesotho modules. Khetoa's sample comprised mainly of speakers of African languages. The study sought to engage about forty students. Only thirty-three students availed themselves to Khetoa's enquiry. Of the number, twenty-two identified themselves as females while eleven were males. Forty-five percent of the sample were in their second year of study and fifty-five percent were in the third year of study. The students were registered for the following bachelors programmes: Education, Language Practice, Divinity, Drama and Theatre, and Art History. This sample was

not drawn from all faculties. It represented the faculty of education and the faculty of humanities. Therefore, the conclusions of this study cannot be generalised.

Research paradigm

The current study employs an interpretivist epistemology for its data. Qualitative research is often associated with interpretivism (Goldkuhl, 2012). Interpretivism epistemology is subjective and is based on real world phenomena. Non-English-speaking students in higher education in South Africa experience authentic literacy challenges with linguistic competencies required in each of their chosen disciplines. Interpretive approach in this study assisted researchers to produce rich insights and trustworthy account of students' challenges which require pedagogical interventions. Within the interpretivist paradigm, the researcher is part of what is being observed and engages with the research (Cornelius, 2017). This paradigm is relevant to this research as it assisted researchers to examine black students' experiences in monolithic teaching pedagogies. As Sefotho (2013, p. 21) postulates " research, paradigms play the critical role of guiding the research process and protocols to be used by those who choose to follow a particular research paradigm route." Therefore, the choice of an interpretivist paradigm in this study was guided by the research strategies as well as the aim of the study.

Data presentation

The superordinate study relied on multipronged methods. Khetoa (2019) used quantitative research tools such as questionnaires to measure the phenomenon that his study was interested in, and relied on interviews for qualitative data. Khetoa (2019)

had directly interacted with the participants of his study through interviews and questionnaires. Guided by the aims of the study, we used existing data. Khetoa (2019) had already interpreted his data for the purpose of his study. In this enquiry, we have interpreted his data consistently with the aim of this study, and within the perimeters of the research design that is used in this study. In this section we adopt an interpretivist paradigm to interpret the data on the assumption that students might present a subjective or socially constructed view on how teaching pedagogies affect them or their learning.

Linguistic efficiency

One of the questions asked by Khetoa (2019) sought to establish comparatively which language between Sesotho, English and other languages do students understand better in a learning environment such as university lecture halls. The chart hereunder presents students' responses. It can be deduced from figure 2 below that there is an almost even split between students who have been studying Sesotho for two years and students who have been learning Sesotho for fifteen years. About forty-five percent of students have been learning in Sesotho for more than five years. Thirty-seven percent have been learning in Sesotho for approximately three years or less. In South Africa, students from previously disadvantage transition from learning in their primary language to learning in the lingua franca. Despite this transition, indigenous languages are continually present in English medium classes due to students' limited competency of English. To make sense of the acquired knowledge, students often alternate between varying linguistic codes
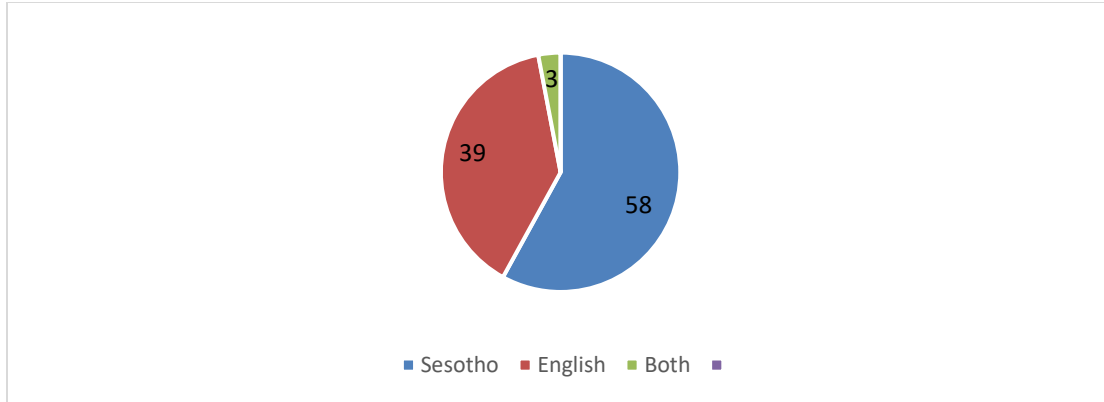
Figure 1: Linguistic efficiency in class
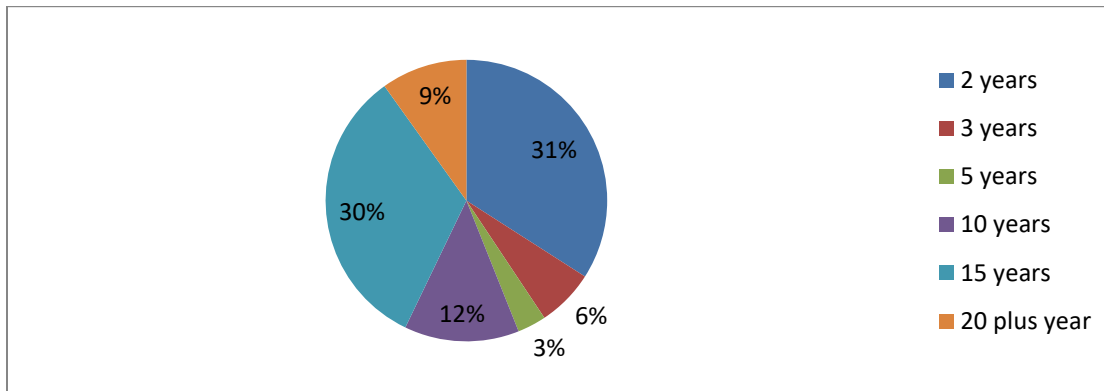
Student's formal training in indigenous language

Figure 2: Number of years of formally learning Sesotho

.

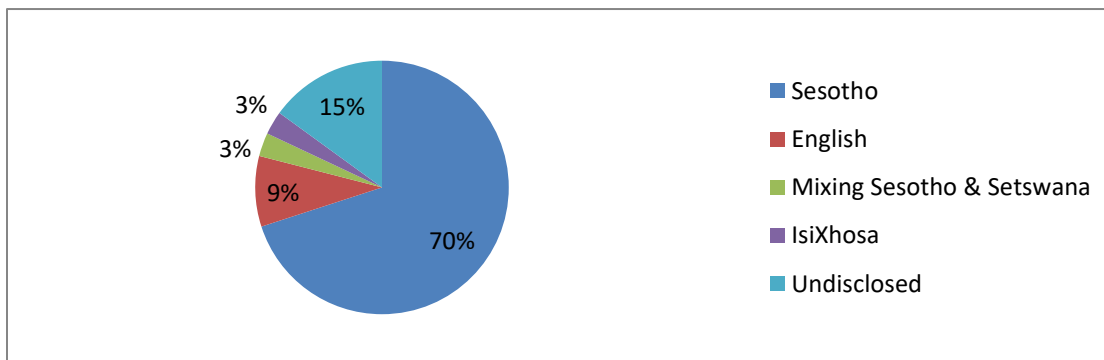Language employed by students for effective communication.

Figure 3: Language employed by students for effective communication.

Figure 1 demonstrates that students' believe that they are optimally efficient in class through the use of Sesotho. This sample comprised of students who are enrolled in Sesotho either as a major or an elective.

It can be deduced from figure 2 hereabove that there is an almost even split between students who have been studying Sesotho for two years and students who have been learning Sesotho for fifteen years. About forty-five percent of students have been learning in Sesotho for more than five years. Thirty-seven percent have been learning in Sesotho for approximately three years or less. In South Africa, students from previously disadvantage transition from learning in their primary language to learning in the lingua franca. Despite this transition, indigenous languages are continually present in English medium class due to students limited competency of English. To make sense of the acquired knowledge, students often alternate between varying linguistic codes.

Students from previously disadvantaged schools in higher education often encounter English language competency barriers largely due to linguistic practices in the schools. Figure 3 illustrates that seventy percent of the sample have strong linguistic competence in Sesotho so much that they can effectively communicate in it. This means that students rely heavily on this language to make sense of their academic experiences.

The second part of Khetoa's (2019) data that the researchers of this study looked at was the interview's data. The data that is presented here addresses the research question of this study.

Would you appreciate being instructed in a different language in class and be able to respond in Sesotho?

The idea of being able to alternate between students' primary language and the language of teaching and learning in higher education is accommodated by students. In students' perspectives they would be able to effectively elaborate their responses and make sense of their learning experience. Students also indicated that most of them struggle to participate to fully participate in lectures due to their limitations with English command.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

In this study, it has been determined that most students experience authentic literacy challenges with linguistic competencies required in each of their chosen disciplines. The results of this study therefore advocate for the use of students' languages in classrooms as they communicate effectively in their primary language. Charamba and Zano (2019, p.) agree that permitting the use of students' languages in the classroom beyond the current state would not only preserve those languages but also the cultural banks and ideology. According to Ngcobo (2016) recognition must be given to students' African languages. To respond to linguistic competency challenges among students, students indicated that teaching pedagogies such as translanguaging, where students can alternate between their primary languages and the language of instruction, can have undeniable benefits. This resonates with Charamba and Zano's (2019) findings which revealed that students' linguistic repertoire should be a linguistic tool that enriches their learning experiences. As such language is used systematically to maximize learning opportunity among students (Makalela, 2015).

CONCLUSION

This study is not had its own challenges. At the core of our challenges in this study is that the sample is not a complete representation of the student population. Therefore, our conclusions cannot be generalized as a true reflection of the entire student population. Linguistic practices in higher education are yet to be transformative in South Africa. In the new dispensation, the

teaching and learning environment have diversified such that educators ought to develop appropriate advocacy and compensatory skills in order to effectively facilitate successful teaching and learning. In this study, researchers contend that language is an important attribute that binds humans together especially in an academic endeavour. Researchers argue that within a learning discourse, language can inspire an individual to learn or sink a student to despair. This study sought to evaluate disciplinary literacy in institutions of higher education. The results indicate that students struggle with linguistic competency and performance of disciplinary literary. Hence, students believe that the incorporation of their primary languages can have benefits towards their education. Language ought to be used systematically to support the teaching and learning experience in institutions of higher education. The incorporation of students' home languages will humanize the teaching and learning experience in that it may mitigate student's alienation, and it will recognize students' dignity.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The diverse nature of students in higher education warrants that the approach to teaching and learning must be revisited. Local languages must be developed meaningfully and be purposefully incorporated in academia to support students who fall short with linguistic competency on English. Moreover, institutions' teaching practices and linguistic practices must be informed by socio-historical perspectives especially zooming into issues of social justice.

REFERENCES

Anker, J. (2020). Disciplinary literacy and the development of reading comprehension. *Ingeslui tLitnetAkademies*. https://www.litnet.co.za/disciplinary-literacy-and-the-development-of-reading-comprehension/

Banda, F. (2018). Translanguaging and English African language mother tongues as linguistic dispensation in teaching and learning in a black township school in Cape Town.*Current Issues in Language Planning, 19 (2)*. DOI: 10.1080/14664208.2017.1353333

Bharuthram, S. (2012). Making a case for the teaching of reading across the curriculum in higher education. *South African Journal of Education, Vol. (32)*.

Childs, M. (2016). Reflecting on translanguaging in multilingual classrooms: Harnessing the power of poetry and photography. Educational Research for Social Change,5(1), 22–40. https://doi.org/10.17159/2221-4070/2016/v5i1a2.

Charamba, E., & Zano, K. (2019). Effects of translanguaging as an intervention strategy in a African chemistry classroom. *Bilingual Research Journal*. https://doi.org/10.1080/15235882.2019.1631229

Conteh, J. (2018). Translanguaging. *ELT Journal*, 72(4), 445–447. doi: https://doi.org/10.1093/elt/ccy034.

Cornelius, S. (2017). *A South African exploration into the impact of non-first additional English language barriers in higher education* [BA Honours thesis. The Independent Institute of

Education].
https://iiespace.iie.ac.za/bitstr
eam/handle/11622/213/Shine%20Co
rnelius%20.pdf?sequen
ce=1&isAllowed=y

del Carmen Salazar, M. (2013). A humanizing pedagogy: Reinventing the principles and practice of education as a journey toward liberation. *Review of Research in Education,* 37(1), 121-   148.

Dźwigoł, H., & Dźwigoł-Barosz, M. (2020). *Research processes and methodological triangulation*. Silesian University of Technology Publishing House. http://dx.doi.org/10.29119/16 41-3466.2020.148.12

Endarto, I. T. (2017). *Systemic Functional Linguistics: A brief introduction*. Article presented at   Forum DiskusiBasantara   Yogyakarta. https://www.researchgate.net/ publication/318700637_Systemic_Fu nctional_Linguistics_ A_Brief_Introduction/link/59 7828cd45851570a1b323a1/downloa d

Fontaine, L. (2013). *Analysing English grammar: A systemic functional introduction.   Cambridge*: Cambridge University Press.

Fredricks, D. E. 2020. Multilingual youth perspectives on humanizing core practices. In   Handbook of Research on Advancing Language Equity Practices with Migrant Communities. IGI Global Publisher of Timely Knowledge.   https://www.igi-global.com/chapter/multilingual-youth-perspectives-on-humanizing-core-practices/255821

Goldkuhl, G. (2012). Pragmatism vs interpretivism in qualitative information systems research. *European journal of information systems*, 21, 135-146.

Hlatshwayo, A., & Siziba, L. P. (2013). University students' perceptions of multilingual education: A case study of the North-West University Mafikeng campus. *Stellenbosch Papers in   Linguistics Plus,* 42, 81-92.

Huckle, J. (2022). Translanguaging as a humanizing pedagogy. *Human Restoration   Project*. https://medium.com/human-restoration-project

Khetoa, S. G. (2019). Attitudes of university students towards Sesotho: A case study of students   enrolled   in Sesotho modules [Doctoral dissertation, University of the Free State,   South Africa].https://scholar.ufs.ac. za/handle/11660/10934

Kajee, L. (2019). A (de)humanising pedagogy: Let the teachers speak. *Education and New Developments*.

Kajee, L. (2021). Teacher narratives and understanding of de(humanising) pedagogy. *South African Journal of Higher Education*, 35 (6), 138-150.

Linder, A., Airey, J., Mayaba, N.,& Webb P. (2014). Fostering disciplinary literacy? South   African physics lecturers' educational response to their students' lack of representational   competence. *African Journal of Research in Mathematics,   Science   and Technology   Education,* 18(3), 242-252.

Makalela, L. (2015). Translanguaging as a vehicle for epistemic access: Cases for reading comprehension and multilingual interactions. *Per Linguam: A Journal of Language Learning Per Linguam: Tydskrif vir Taalaanleer*, 31(1), 15-29.

Makoni, M. (2017). Addressing language barriers is key to student success. University World News. https://www.universityworldnews.com/post.php?story=20170306095908750

Mokala, N.T. (2017). *The extent to which teachers at a full service school in Soweto understand and practice the principles of a full service school*. Masters Dissertation, Wits University.

Mokala, N. T., Matee, L.G., Khetoa, S.G., &Ntseli, M.A. (2022). *The impact of multilingualism on teaching and learning: A case of Sesotho Home Language in one university in South Africa*. In Charamba, E. Teaching in multicultural and multilingual contexts.

Mouton, N., Louw, G. P., & Strydom, G. (2013). Critical challenges of the South African school system. *International Business & Economics Research Journal (IBER),* 12(1), 31-44.

Nath, B. K. (2010). Major language theorists influencing learning of mathematics. *Theories of language learning of mathematics.*https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED512896.pdf

Ngcobo, S., Ndaba, N., Nyangiwe, B., Mpungose, N., & Jamal, R. (2016). Translanguaging as an approach to address language inequality in South African higher education: Summary writing skills development. *Critical Studies in Teaching and Learning (CriSTaL)*, 4(2), 10- 27.

Parra, M. O., & Proctor, P. (2022). The Translanguaging Pedagogies Continuum. *Journal of Education*, 1–8.

Sefotho, M. M. (2013). *Narratives of differently abled persons: informing career guidance Policy.* Doctoral Thesis, University of Pretoria.

Suryanto, S. (2018). Alienation in the process of teaching and learning English in Indonesia. Asian EFL Journal. Vol. 20 (7).

Thobejane, L. F. (2018). Challenges faced by township learners in second language acquisition. Unpublished Master of Education dissertation. University of Pretoria.

Zinn, D., & Rodgers, C. (2012). A humanizing pedagogy: Getting beneath the rhetoric. *Perspectives in Education*.