

**NARRATIVE ESSAY WRITING IN XITSONGA HOME LANGUAGE: A CASE OF  
GRADE 10 LEARNERS IN MOPANI DISTRICT, LIMPOPO PROVINCE, SOUTH  
AFRICA**

**By**

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**Dissertation submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree**

**Master of Education**

**in**

**(Language Education)**

**in the**

**Faculty of Humanities**

**(School of Education)**

**at the**

**University of Limpopo**

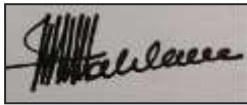
**South Africa**

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**2024**

## Declaration

I, Mahlaule Predict Kxanimamba declare that the dissertation entitled: **Narrative Essay Writing in Xitsonga Home Language: A Case of Grade 10 Learners in Mopani District, Limpopo Province** hereby submitted to the University of Limpopo, for the degree Master of Education in the Department of Language Education, has not previously been submitted by me for a degree at this or any other university; that it is my work in design and in execution, and that all material contained herein has been duly acknowledged.



Signature

05 April 2024

Date

## **Dedication**

This dissertation is dedicated to my late mother, Tintswalo Florence (Machiweni) Mahlaule and my late first-born son Khancu Risimu Adroit (The Father) Mahlaule. My mother valued education and she really loved to see me graduating. It is with great sadness and sorrow that you left so early. Since you have always encouraged me to further my studies, here is a complete dissertation. This dissertation is dedicated to you and your grandson.

May your precious souls continue to rest in eternal peace!

## Acknowledgements

My heartfelt gratitudes are directed to the following contributors:

1. Dr. ET Chauke-Hlaiseka for the warm academic relationship we have shared. The constructive criticism you provided helped me to stay focused and shaped this study.
2. The Almighty God for granting me wisdom and faith in completion of this dissertation. For further protecting me during some moments of weakness when I seriously considered quitting my studies half way. Thank you Lord!
3. My Wife, Marindzi N.D for academic and emotional support and also taking care of my daughter Shivulwa Risima Adrian Mahlaule when this project needed my full and undivided attention.
4. All the other lecturers within the School of Education for the valuable contributions to my academic path. You were all great in shaping my life as a scholar.
5. The teachers who agreed to serve as participants in this research project and learners whose portfolios I used to complete this project. I am humbled by your cooperation.
6. Special thanks to my classmate Hlungwane H for a profound academic relationship we shared. *"Together we make education fashionable"*.
7. A special thanks to my friends; Baloyi Twanano, Hlungwani Happy, Michavi Honours, and Baloyi Rivalani for your enduring support and believing in me when writing this dissertation. Your contribution will never go unnoticed, *"Mi hundzukile nhlalala eka vutomi bya mina"*.
8. The whole family of **BEREA SCHOOL OF EDUCATION**, led by a lovely and capable leader Mrs. Maeko Rirhandzu Susan Nkuzana (Mother Teresa). Your support will never go unnoticed.
9. A prestigious salutation to my daughter Mahlaule Shivulwa Risima Adrian, for the hope that she gave me when struggling to complete this work. It is through the hope obtained from her that triggered my eagerness of completing this work. My appreciation to you girlfriend.
10. Lastly, the entire Khongoloti family for the support displayed during the conduction of this study. It would have been impossible to complete without you by my side. I thank you all for the love, dedication, and support towards my studies.

## **Abstract**

This research reveals that learners encounter difficulties when writing essays. The purpose of this study is to investigate Grade 10 learners' inability to write narrative essays at Sekgosese East Circuit, Mopani District in the Limpopo Province. The research methodology utilized in carrying out this study is qualitative approach, an interpretive case study, wherein purposive and non-probability sampling method are applied in the sampling of the two Xitsonga home language teachers together with the six learners' narrative essays. Furthermore, the semi-structured interview and documents analysis are used to collect data and through didactic analysis approach, the collected data is analyzed. The findings of this study indicate the common errors committed by learners in writing essays, which compromise their abilities to write narrative essays and recommend essay writing strategies that can be used to improve learners' essay writing abilities. The researcher applied for ethical clearance from the University of Limpopo's Research and Ethics Committee (TREC) to conduct the study, through the submission and approval of a research proposal. The researcher further requested permission to conduct the study from the Limpopo Provincial District Director of Education and the selected school principals by sending letters to them. Since most learners are minors, for them to take part, permission was sought from their parents. The researcher also sent consent forms to be signed by parents and teachers indicating that they allow their children to take part in the study.

**Keywords:** narrative essays, writing skills, coherence, cohesion and writing process.

## List of acronyms

<b>CAPS</b>	Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement
<b>CAs</b>	Curriculum Advisors
<b>DoE</b>	Department of Education
<b>FAL</b>	First Additional Language
<b>HL</b>	Home Language
<b>LDoE</b>	Limpopo Department of Education
<b>NCS</b>	National Curriculum Statement
<b>NSC</b>	National Senior Certificate
<b>OBE</b>	Outcomes-Based Statement
<b>SALB</b>	South African Language Board
<b>SBA</b>	School Based Assessment
<b>TREC</b>	Turfloop Research Ethics Committee

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## **CHAPTER 1: ORIENTATION OF THE STUDY**

### **1.1. Introduction**

Writing is considered as the most important language skill of communicating which allows learners to convey meaning and to express themselves in a good way. Continuous engagement in language writing permits learners to write in a creative way and produce well-constructed, structured and coherent text. Alison (2019: 3) alludes that writing is one of the most critical tools for communication to learn and develop language skills required by the curriculum and to be used and developed continuously. This motivates learners to embrace the correct use of language in writing, and to expand their language vocabulary. This chapter presents the background of the study, statement of the problem, purpose of the study and the significance of the study is highlighted as well.

### **1.2. Background of the study**

Learning a language needs and requires a learner to acquire some language skills as presented by the curriculum throughout a learner's school voyage. The Curriculum Assessment and Policy Statement (CAPS) (2015) outlines the language skills learners should acquire on their learning journey which are: listening and speaking, reading and viewing, writing and presenting and lastly, language structure and convention. Writing is one the most challenging skills from all the language skills outlined by the curriculum, of which a learner should acquire through the journey of learning. There are different approaches of teaching how to perfectly write a language, like; the product approach, genre approach and the process approach which are used to help learners improve their language writing and language skills acquisition. The writing of essays is one of the issues that stakeholders within the Department of Education (DoE) at the national level are debating about. This is due to a sudden drop of Grade 12 pass rate in Limpopo, whereby the province managed to accumulate 68.2% in the academic year 2020. A sudden drop has been seen after the province had obtained 7.65% in 2019, which means a 7.6% drop have been identified. Xitsonga home language (HL) is divided into four parts whereby paper one is language in context,

paper two is literature, paper three which is writing and lastly, paper four which is orals. Essay writing forms part of paper three whereby learners are required to write meaningful essays. Alison (2019: 10) provides a detailed explanation of an essay where he states that:

*An essay is a formal, structured piece of writing which makes a statement on a topic or question and which supports this statement throughout with information and ideas.*

Any writing has its own unique structure which distinguishes itself from other forms of writing, and it must be followed when administering that particular writing. Pertaining to this, Alison (2019: 10) asserts that an essay should follow a certain structure as it is not written haphazardly. An essay should flow and be coherent in a way that it must have one main idea or topic, followed by its subtopics and ideas which logically support the main idea. In depth and critical research about essays indicates that there are different types or kinds of essays that need to be taught and administered by learners from Grade 10 - 12. These types of essays are namely: narrative, descriptive, analysis, argumentative, discursive, and reflective essays. Validating from the essay writing statistics at South African schools is of a view that narrative and descriptive essays are the most administered essays, given the fact that the other essays are less taught by teachers (Warburton, 2020: 56).

Narrative essay is a writing in which the narrator tells a story that happened in the past. The narrator should present a wide understanding of a particular phenomenon explained, and the story should display reality and be believable, even though the story is about something that does not exist but visualized by the narrator. On the other hand, there is descriptive essay in which the Department of Education Guidelines for teaching and writing essays and transactional texts (2019: 6) state that descriptive essays allow the reader to experience the topic being described as vividly as possible. This kind of an essay uses figures of speech like imagery, metaphor, and simile since they are the best constituency. The expository essay is a genre of essay that requires the student to investigate an idea, evaluate evidence, expound on the idea, and set forth an argument concerning the idea in a clear and concise manner. Furthermore,

this is an argumentative essay which emphasizes that on this kind of an essay, the writer has specific opinion or point of view and argues to defend or motivate his or her side. Another type of essay is discursive where it is pointed out that it has to be objective and aims to give a balanced view of both sides of the arguments. This kind of an essay should be well formulated and supported through facts and not opinions. Lastly, it is an analytical essay which states that the writer must use the skill to break the topic into parts or components to examine and comprehend this writing in a good and academic manner.

Writing is seen and considered as one of the important tools that is used by people to communicate and pass message from one individual to another, and to be able to teach and expand skills that people use on daily bases. People write with different reasons and purposes; hence it is indicated that writers do not just write without a specific purpose or message they want to share with other people. Writers write to share their personal experiences, to educate and learn, for entertainment, and many more. Warburton (2022: 8) believes that in writing, writers write to learn, to describe and see, to speak and therefore hear, to entertain, to inform, to persuade, to celebrate, to attack, to call attention to, to think, to make money, to promote, to advocate, to connect, to relate, to make and to share. This implies that the purpose of writing a text is for people to see the message written, to inform them about something important, to make money and to teach people about something important in life. The lesson given through writing might be academic or social depending on the situation. Writing of useful information is important to the writer and readers as it motivates and shapes the lives of community members on their daily lives. Writing also takes a crucial part in the teaching and learning activities at school, as it gives learners the opportunity to develop and practice their socializing skills. Bello (2019) further points out that writing is one of the skills that helps and motivates learners to acquire the language and provide them with the opportunity to learn the rules and good language use. Bello (2019: 2) validates this when he indicates that:

*Writing enhances language acquisition as learners experiment with words, sentences and larger chunks of writing to communicate their ideas effectively and to reinforce the grammar and vocabulary they are learning in class.*

Writing helps learners to know the language, rules, its principles, and language usage. It further improves learners' communication skills since it allows them to always use standardized language. Writing fosters language creativity in learners, as learners are required to use parts of where sentences need to be written literally, some metaphorical. All the text written must be coherent as they should have one idea with the other ideas connecting to the main idea. As part of writing, Brayon (2019) emphasizes an important issue when saying that any kind of writing or text should be coherent, and this should be emphasized to the learners by the teacher. Brayon (2019: 68) further believes that coherence must always be emphasized at school essay writing environment, and the essay produced by learners must be logically organized to flow smoothly and stick together. It is important that an essay or a written text should be coherent in a way that its information and ideas are arranged and organized in a logical manner. There must be a logical link between ideas presented in a text or essay and the information shared must flow and stick together to deliver the message intended to be delivered by the text or essay.

### **1.3. Statement of the problem**

The common problem that learners face in Xitsonga home language is that they cannot properly write Xitsonga home language (Nxina, 2019: 2). Therefore, this affects their writing skills, in terms of texts and essays writing at school. The motive behind this research arose from a noticeable poor writing of Xitsonga narrative essays by learners. In this study, the problem is that Grade 10 learners fail to correctly comprehend and administer Xitsonga narrative essays. Coherence and cohesion remain a greater challenge in learners' narrative essay writing, as they cannot correctly write Xitsonga narrative essays. An introduction of an essay should grab the attention of the reader and make the reader want to read more (Pemberton, 2021: 16). Failing to write an introduction that grabs the attention of the audience by Grade 10 learners in their essays is also another challenge that suppresses their ability to write Xitsonga narrative essays. Conclusion of an essay is like an introduction as it should remain on the reader's mind and not be easily forgotten. In this regard, correct writing of conclusion also adds to the challenges of learners in Xitsonga narrative essay writing. This happens because learners write a conclusion that is weak and can be forgotten

easily by the audience after reading it. Essay paragraph structuring is another concern on learners' essay writing, as learners write long paragraphs while other paragraphs are too short without topic sentences.

The learners' inability to write narrative essays and the lack of coherence and cohesion on learners' essays is what prompted the researcher to conduct a study of this nature. Delu and Rusha (2021: 117) support the idea of coherence and cohesion in learners' narrative essays as one of the factors that contribute to learners writing meaningless essays. In support of this, he alludes that taking into consideration the importance of coherence and cohesion in essay writing creates incompetency in learners' essay writing skills, which at the end proves the learners' inability to administer essays. In addition to the contribution provided by Delu and Rusha (2021), they are of the view that coherence and cohesion in essay go hand in glove with the learners' background knowledge about a particular essay topic. The background knowledge that learners might have with relation to the topic helps learners to be able to write a perfect, coherent, and cohesive essay. This view is corroborated by Murphy (2019: 84) as he asserts that the learners' background knowledge plays a significant role, and it is influential on the general quality and local coherence of students' writing. The learners' background knowledge in relation to semantics, morphology, phonology, and syntax plays a significant role in the construction of meaningful sentences, the choice of words on learners' essays, and the writing of meaningful and coherent essays. The learners' reading and writing skills is an issue that concerns the whole Department of Education (2020), as these are the skills that are required by the curriculum to be taught and adopted by learners for their academic progress. Looking at the challenges outlined, which is the gap in literature, it is relevant and needed to conduct a study of this nature as this study investigates Grade 10 learners' inability to write Xitsonga narrative essays at Sekgosese East Circuit.

#### **1.4. Rationale of the study**

Looking at the recent pass rate statistics of Grade 10 Xitsonga home language pass rate at the chosen school, it is realized that the pass rate has dropped from 78% in 2019 to 48% in the academic year 2020 as outlined during the 2020 yearly analysis of

result. After doing a preliminary research about this problem, it was found that Grade 10 learners do not have adequate writing skills as required by the language curriculum. This implies that Grade 10 learners repeatedly fail to write essays during the year. This prompted the researcher to conduct a study pertaining Grade 10 learners' inability to write narrative essays, with the aim of presenting the errors committed by learners when writing these essays as it compromises their language writing skills at large. The researcher also wanted to provide a solution on how learners working with teachers avoid the errors on learners' essays.

### **1.5. Significance of the study**

The CAPS curriculum outlines different skills which are the building blocks for language, and it is essential for learners to acquire these language skills, in order to grow academically and in social life. All the learners should acquire the skills outlined by the curriculum at school, and teachers are requested to teach learners those skills. This is so that they could become competent individuals and for them to be able to communicate and share their thoughts with others. The skills outlined by the curriculum are: writing and presenting, listening and speaking, reading and viewing and language structure and convection. These skills help learners to understand the way in which the language is organized together with the principles of writing a language. This study is significant in helping learners to identify their weaknesses in essay writing and to improve their language writing ability following the challenges they encountered in language writing. It further helps teachers to understand the types and number of essays that need to be taught to their learners at school. It also helps to improve learners' pass rate at the concerned circuit, as it will be able to give a direction and effective guidelines about the writing of essays. Moreover, this study further highlights and provides teachers with effective methods of teaching the writing of essays to different learners according to their Grade. Lastly, it gives direction to other researchers to research about this problem, and this research serves as an additional source to future Xitsonga researchers.



## **1.6. Aim and Objectives of the study**

### **1.6.1. Aim of the study**

The aim of this study is to outline the errors committed by Grade 10 learners when writing Xitsonga narrative essays at Sekgosese East Circuit, Mopani District in Limpopo Province. The aim of this research is to achieve the following research objectives:

### **1.6.2. Objectives of the study**

- To outline errors that Grade 10 learners commit in Xitsonga narrative essay writing.
- To identify the causes that compromise learners' ability to write Xitsonga narrative essays.
- To provide possible solutions on the improvement of Xitsonga learners' narrative essay writing skills.

## **1.7. Research questions**

- What are the errors that Grade 10 learners commit in narrative essays writing?
- What constitute/causes Grade 10 learners' narrative essay writing inabilities?
- What can be done to improve learners' ability to write Xitsonga narrative essays?

## **1.8. Definition of key concepts**

This section explains the main concepts used in this study, as it simplifies the understanding of the study and helps the reader to understand these concepts in relation to the study.

### **1.8.1. Writing skills**

Writing is a strong tool that is used by people to communicate and share ideas, which also allow them to present their thoughts and feelings about something in a clear and

understandable way. This is validated by Lindsay and Wren (2019: 98) when they allude that:

*Writing skills are specific abilities which help writers put their thoughts into words in a meaningful form and to mentally interact with the message*

Writing is a unique and important skill that helps people to share and exchange ideas with the use of written words. Harmer (2019: 21) concurs with this as he asserts that:

*Writing skills refers to the ability to convey one's thoughts, feelings, information, ideas, or any message through a well-constructed text.*

With the above statement, Harmer implies that the skill of writing is just the ability to give out the meaning of one's thinking and how the concerned person feels in a formal written word. Moreover, it is understood that skill of writing is the expression of a person's thoughts and feelings with the use of written words.

### **1.8.2. Narrative essay**

Narrative essay is an essay whereby the writer tells a story of something that happened way back. It is an essay that focuses on one main idea, with the other relevant information supporting it. Fletcher (2019: 27) shares his knowledge of narrative essay as he outlines it thus:

*Narrative essay is a type of essay that has a single motif, or a central point, around which the whole narrative revolves. All incidents, happenings, and characters revolve around a single motif presented in the narrative.*

From the above quotation, it is stated that a narrative essay is that essay which revolves around one main idea with other ideas supporting the main one. All the other

activities and events taking place as the writer narrates the story should be supporting the main idea. This type of an essay tells or narrates a story that took place some time ago, which is mostly written in an academic setting. Hausen (2022: 13) defines a narrative essay as:

*... a form of academic writing that aims to tell a story. As the author, your goal is to create the right atmosphere and a lifelike experience for your readers.*

Hausen points out that a narrative essay is an essay that is mostly written in academic situations, with the aim of telling a story that shares the author's experiences and thoughts. He further elaborates that as an author of a narrative essay, one must create an image of reality in the minds of one's audience.

### **1.8.3. The writing process**

Writing is a process and not an event. Hence, high quality writing takes time, and it is often difficult. Myles (2022: 3) acknowledges it when he states that the importance of writing lies in the fact that it is not easy, and it should not be. Trask (2019: 34) confirms this when he outlines that:

*Process writing is the approach to teaching writing that allows the teacher and the students to go through the process of producing a text together. This allows the teacher and the students to produce a meaningful writing through step by step following this writing approach.*

Trask implies that the writing process is an approach used when writing a particular text, and it allows the learners to produce a meaningful text under the guidance and supervision of the teacher. Through this process, the teacher only offers support to the learners where necessary. This is confirmed by Bereiter (2019: 174) when he maintains that:

*Process writing describes a series of physical and mental actions that people takes as they produce any kind of text*

It is believed that by producing a text through this process, one needs to follow a logical step. These logical steps are like stars since one cannot skip or jump one then move to the other states.

#### **1.8.4. Cohesion**

Any written text should follow a certain structure and the ideas in this text should logically flow. The activities explained should logically follow and have a link between the ideas explained. Michael (2019: 137) argues that cohesion is:

*The underlying logical relationship which links ideas together and gives a passage or paragraph. It may also imply adequate grammar to convey the meaning or orderly sentence structure. Chaotic grammar may make a statement incoherent.*

It is pointed out that cohesion is simply the logical flow of a text. It shows the relationship and the link between the ideas presented in a passage or text. It also includes the correct grammatical flow between words and sentences which result in a clear articulated message. Graves (2019: 59) arguably agrees with Michael (2019) as she outlines that:

*Cohesion refers to the flow of sentences and paragraphs from one to another. It involves the tying together of old information and the new information to produce a complete meaning.*

Graves indicates that cohesion is the logic found between words and sentences, which presents the written ideas in sequential and logical flow in a particular text. Cohesion

expresses that words and sentences should be joined using correct conjunctions, which help formulate quality and logical meaning for a text.

### **1.8.5. Coherence**

A strong relationship exists between cohesion and coherence, a flow of ideas in a paragraph of a particular text is important in producing one meaning of a text. Coherence is the act of maintaining one idea of a text from the first paragraph to the end, with the other paragraph supporting the main idea. Michael (2019: 137) concurs with this as he states that:

*The linking of sentences or paragraphs by means of logical connectors such as conjunctions, pronouns, or repetition.*

A long text like an essay has many paragraphs which explain different ideas, while coherence comes in between to merge these paragraphs and align them with the main idea to produce one meaning. Graves (2019: 61) further explains that coherence are those elements that are added into our sentences and paragraphs to formulate a link between these paragraphs to give out one meaning.

*Coherence simply describes the way that the elements in our sentences and paragraphs hang together to produce meaning.*

It is believed that those paragraph connections and links between paragraph and sentences are of much importance in producing a common meaningful message. A text should have a link between its paragraphs to help and support the production of one meaning.

## **1.9. Outline of chapters**

**Chapter 1:** Gives the background information of the study, statement of the problem, research objectives and aim of the study.

**Chapter 2:** Presents a selective review of the literature related to this study.

**Chapter 3:** Provides the research methods used in the study for the collection of data.

**Chapter 4:** Presents the analysis of data and interpretation of the data collected in chapter 3.

**Chapter 5:** Concludes the study by spelling out the findings of the study and recommendations and suggestions are made for further research.

### **1.. Chapter summary**

This chapter outlined the background of the study where it was indicated that writing is the most challenging, but neglected skill when it comes to teaching it at secondary school level. This was after the validation that the matter of writing is a case that has been discussed and debated upon the education sector. Statement of the problem is clearly presented, where it has been acknowledged through researchers that indeed writing is a challenging skill to most learners. The significance of the study aims and objectives of the study, and lastly definition of key concepts are drawn on this chapter.

## CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1. Introduction

The previous chapter presented the background of the study, statement of the problem, rationale of the study, significance, aims and objectives and the research questions. This chapter presents an in-depth review of the literature conducted in relation to the errors committed by Grade 10 learners in narrative essay writing and lack of adequate skills in writing language essays. The importance of writing a language, skills to write different types of essays, global and local studies conducted in relation to the study topic, the level of home language in the South African curriculum, characteristics and elements of narrative essays, the writing process, and the approached in teaching the writing of a language have review on this chapter.

### 2.2. Characteristics of a narrative essay

A narrative essay is an essay that is primarily written differently from the other types of essays. There are certain characteristics that distinguish this essay from the rest of the essays, such as descriptive, expository, discursive essay, and so on. Jack (2020) conducted research focusing on the characteristics of a narrative essay where he stated that a narrative essay is one in which a story is told in such a way that the author writes using long sentences to create paragraphs. It should also repeat the words to reinforce and create an image of a particular phenomenon in the mind of the reader. Jack (2020: 23) confirms this point when he explains that:

*Narrative essay comprises of 'story telling' the ability to write long sentences, the skill to repeat words which displays movement and to present facts logically.*

The researcher further noted that a narrative essay distinguishes itself from other essays in that the text is in the past tense as it tells and explains the story that happened. The writer of a paragraph must be able to create a mental image for the reader of his or her essay or listener. This is achieved through the choice of words,

where the writer must use special words of language that will be able to create an image in the mind of his/her reader. Jack (2020: 24) further indicates that the narrator must have the ability to create images in the mind of the reader or the audience. This is enabled by the correct choice and usage of words. For example, by simply stating that 'yesterday Peter was happy' (if he was very happy), the aim to awaken the sense will be missed. However, should it be said that 'yesterday Peter was over the moon', the phrase 'over the moon' would help the audience to have an imagery of the type of happiness he/she experienced. The Department of Basic Education Guidelines for teaching and writing essays and transactional text (2019: 5) concurs with Jack (2020) as it imparts that a good narrative essay is the one that can display and demonstrate the use of senses.

*A good narrative essay is one that is able to convey information that affects the senses of sight, sound, taste, smell and touch.*

There is a close relationship between the texts and the statement made by Jack (2020) regarding the characteristics of a narrative text, where he explains that a narrative text should reflect sensory details such as the direction of the event, taste, smell and so on. For example, it should describe the smell that was heard at the scene of the accident (it was clean and clear, with snow when I left early to ride a bus to an educational trip to *Manyeleti*). Furthermore, Vogler (2020: 63) highlights the fact that in a narrative essay, it is where the author writes and tells the story from himself/herself, which simply means that the narrative essay is written from the first person, as well as the writer's experience is described and all the details are revealed, so that the reader understands what happened and how it happened. Vogler (2020: 63) sums up the argument about narrative essay as he states that a narrative essay is one in which you tell a story from your point of view or personal experience, providing specific and sensory details to get readers involved and understand your point. This explains that the narrative essay is unique in that it describes and conveys information from the first person, which means that it uses ownership. It is written in words such as: "I" or "me" to indicate the first person.



### 2.3. The elements of narrative essay

A narrative essay has its own unique elements which differentiate them from the other essays. Since a narrative essay is an essay that reveals informal information about one's personal experience of his or her life. Vogler (2020) conducted a study on the components of a narrative essay in English where he revealed that a narrative essay consists of five parts. This point is deep-rooted by Vogler (2020: 82) as he states that:

*Every narrative essay should have five elements to become a story: setting, character, plot, conflict and theme. This implies that when a learner writes a narrative essay, he/she must be able to indicate where the events are taking place, including the time in which the events were taking place. Characters must also be mentioned as the learner writes an essay; the people who were involved in the incidents that took place.*

From the above quotation, it is explained that a complete narrative essay should contain the background, characters, plot, conflict, and context or what the essay is about, which is the theme. This ensures that when writing a summary essay, the learner should indicate where the event or story takes place, including the time when the events take place. The characters should also be portrayed as if the events were happening to them. He continues this point by stating that a summary essay should have a plot, where they should be presented in a natural way and written in a very accurate and convincing manner. Also, he argues that a tragic essay, as an example, should be one that is able to engage its readers deeply from beginning to end and provide an ending that remains in the reader's mind and is easily forgotten. Vogler (2020: 82) confirms this point as follows:

*Narrative essay should be written in a chronological order through a narrative arc. The narrative arc refers to the structure and shape of a story. A good arc is vital if you want to engage your readers from start to finish and deliver a satisfying conclusion. Narrative arc is a term that describes*

*a story's full progression. It visually evokes the idea that every story has relatively the beginning, the middle where tension, character conflict, and narrative momentum builds to a peak, and an end where the conflict is resolved.*

Vogler emphasizes that a narrative essay should be written using a chronological and sequential approach. The sequence of events in a narrative essay refers only to the structure and the way in which the story unfolds. Sequential order is very important when comprehending a narrative essay, as it places the reader on the position of the author since it is written in the first person. This type of essay keeps readers actively involved from beginning to end of the essay when reading or listening. It can create and give the reader a mental image of how the events took place. The reader should be given a mental picture of how the events unfolded from the beginning, including what the characters were doing, the thrust (whether internal or external), the flow of the story to a climax and a solution to the issue that arose. The five components of an essay should be seen, as the writer indicates the place in which the events took place. It should further indicate the people concerned about those events.

#### **2.4. The importance of writing in a language**

According to Isleem (2019: 56), writing is so important due to various reasons: (i) it is the primary basis upon which one's work, learning, intellect will be judged whether in school, college, workplace in the community. (ii) It expresses one's personality. (iii) It is portable and permanent which makes one's thinking visible. (iv) It helps one move easily among facts, inferences, and opinions without getting confused and without confusing one's reader. (v) It also stimulates one to extend a line of thought beyond one's first impressions or responses. (vi) Lastly, it equips one with the communication and thinking skills that are needed to participate in social and academic events.

About the importance of writing, it is argued by Isleem (2019: 63) that writing in one's native language is necessary. Native language writing is important as it helps students to communicate, learn and express creativity. Furthermore, helping students to become writers that are more skilful remains a vital educational task since writing plays

a significant role in learner's conceptual and linguistic development. Pornpan (2020: 23) states that writing helps learners to learn as writing firstly enhances the grammar, structural idioms and vocabulary that instructors have been teaching their students. Secondly, it also gives learners an opportunity to be adventurous with the language, to go beyond what they have just to say and to feel. Moreover, it is stated that there is a close relationship between thinking and writing, whereby a writer should think of what needs to be written. Mohamed (2022: 143) outlines that:

*The relationship between writing and thinking makes writing an invaluable part of any language course.*

Writing is a vital part of thinking and learning in a school setting or contexts, particularly in the light of twenty-first century demands, and writing tasks are a critical tool for intellectual and social development. Academic writing serves a variety of educational goals such as assessing knowledge, promoting critical thinking, stimulating creativity, and encouraging discussion between people. Since learners are required to present information in a logical manner, it is using language writing that can assist them to achieve the activity.

## **2.5. Different types of essay writing in Xitsonga home language**

The Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (2015: 33) emphasizes that learners in a normal stream school should be taught all the six types of essays before they complete Grade 12. The essays pointed out by this curriculum include narrative, discursive, analytical, argumentative, expository, and descriptive.

### **2.5.1. Narrative essays**

The Department of Basic Education Guidelines for teaching and writing essays and transactional text (2019: 5) advocates that a narrative essay tells a story or event that happened in the past. A story should have a solid convincing point even if it is a very imaginary one. A narrative story is often written in the past tense. This statement is reinforced by Smith (2019: 32) who states that:

*The characteristics of narrative essay comprises of “storytelling”, the ability to write long sentences, the skill to repeat words which display movement and to present facts logically.*

In a narrative essay, the introduction should grab the attention of its reader, and the story narrated must be able to place the reader at the perspective of the writer. Furthermore, a story told should be able to display an ending that is memorable and forever remains in the mind of the reader. The story should be appealing to the recipient until it reaches the end. Style, plot materials and actions should make the subjects interesting to the recipient. A good narrative essay is one that can convey information that affects the senses of sight, sound, taste, smell, and touch. The learner should consider that a narrative essay is often very inclusive and very descriptive.

### **2.5.2. The descriptive essays**

In a descriptive essay, the author describes the subject in such a way that the recipient of the information understands the subject as the author understands it. Here a person or a subject can be described. The author uses words to convey a picture of something (The Department of Basic Education Guidelines for teaching and writing essays and transactional texts, 2019: 5). Smith (2019: 34) supports this point when he states:

*The writer describes something to allow the reader to experience the topic being described as vividly as possible. In this case, figure of speech like imagery, metaphor and simile are the best constituents in the descriptive essay to portray pictures in the minds of the reader.*

The writer chooses words and phrases carefully to achieve the intended effect. To make the subject or object clear, metaphors can be used that will appeal to the senses of sight, sound, taste, hearing, smell, and touch, while grammar should be used appropriately. Learners need to have experience about the topic. This is because it is difficult to explain something that you do not know well.

### **2.5.3. The expository essays**

The Department of Basic Education Guideline for Teaching and Writing Essays and Transactional Texts (2019: 6) specifies that an explanatory essay describes information in a very coherent manner. This is an essay that requires the author to explain a point or give evidence in a coherent manner. In an explanatory essay, the issues raised are researched and the issues are supported by providing supporting evidence or examples. The writer must understand the subject well. Jenicek (2019: 19) summarizes the exposure essay by giving the following information:

*The expository essay is genre of essay that are acquires the student to investigate and idea, evaluate evidence, expound on the idea, and set forth an argument concerning that idea in a clear and concise manner.*

This essay requires the learner to do more mature research as the facts must be supported by evidence. Since the recipient of this learners' essay will be anyone, including those who have no knowledge of the subject, the author should explain the unknown subjects clearly. The subjects should be arranged in a coherent manner involving the reader's thoughts from the subjects he knows and expanded to those he does not know. The explanatory text should be written in the present tense.

### **2.5.4. Argumentative essays**

In this type of writing, the author takes a particular side or viewpoint on a subject and argues to represent or support his or her understanding. The author's position should always be clear. The essay is full of one-sidedness in which the author tries to convince the recipient to understand the issues as he or she understands them. This argument is validated in the following way:

*The writer must have the ability to take side when arguing and be able to support one's point view with valid facts and opinions (Jenicek, 2019: 21).*

In this essay, the introduction should reflect the author's views, or the side chosen. The author must support his or her views in a variety of ways. The author must deal with providing arguments for or against a particular point. An opinion piece can be one-sided, and the author gives his or her real opinion. A variety of presentation and persuasion methods should be used. The language used can be emotionally charged or expressive, but it should be acceptable. The conclusion should be cogent, clear, and convincing and reflect the author's point of view.

### **2.5.5. Analytical essays**

The Department of Basic Education Guidelines for teaching and writing essays and transactional texts (2019: 7) defines analytical essays as a writing that describes issues without taking sides but discusses all sides of the issue equally. The author considers the various aspects of the topic under discussion and presents the conflicting issues equally without bias. When the author concludes, he/she may conclude his/her argument in some way, but the argument for or against the argument should be adequate and clearly argued in the body of the essay. Jenicek (2019: 28) stands by the following:

*The writer must use skill to break the topic into parts or components in order to examine and comprehend it more fully.*

This implies that the writer must understand and be able to present all aspects of the discussion without bias and must demonstrate knowledge of what he or she is saying. The essay should have a mature outline and look at all aspects of the issue. Ideas should be unbiased, sober, and properly supported. The tone should not be dominated by emotion but should be convincing without expressing disagreement.

### **2.5.6. The discursive essays**

The Department of Basic Education Guidelines for teaching and writing essays and transactional texts (2019: 7) defines discursive essay as follows:

*The discursive essay has to be objective and aims to give a balanced view of both sides and argument. The essay must be well-structured and well-supported with facts and opinions.*

This implies that the descriptions in this kind of essay should be clear and show the recipient how the writer remembers and feels about certain matters. The author's stories, thoughts, or feelings should reflect the sincerity and personal experience of the author.

## **2.7. A process writing approach to essay writing**

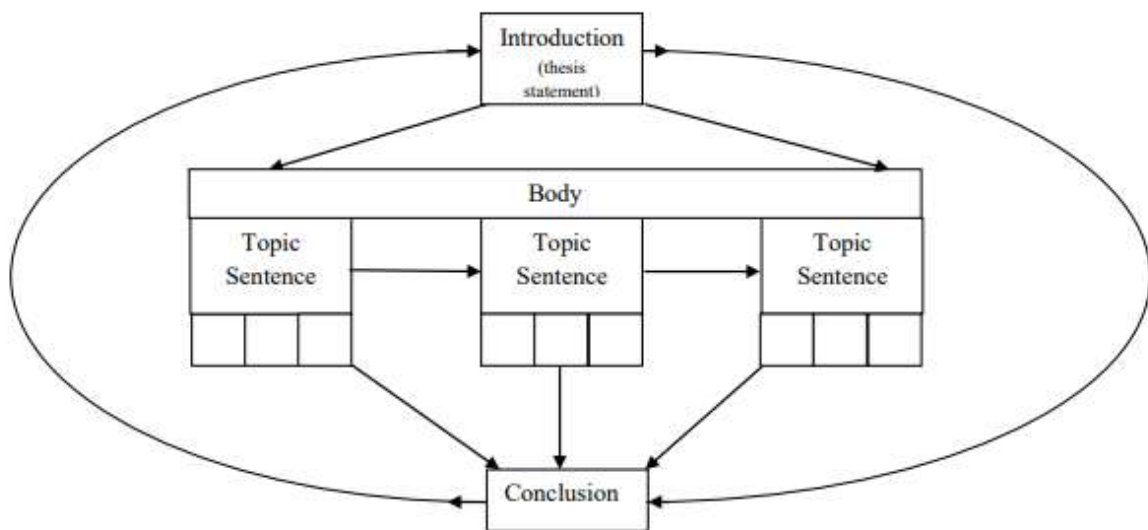
The writing process plays a vital role in creating a good quality essay which is error free or a text in a specific language. The writing and presenting of a particular text should be the one completed through the process. It is therefore important that learners take time when writing to be able to develop their text through process writing, as it encourages teacher learners' participation. Sundem (2020: 17) explains that process writing is a method that should be always followed when a learner writes. This helps the learner to produce a complete and error free essay. He states that it should be borne in mind that the steps of writing include planning/pre-writing, drafting, revising, editing/proofreading and presenting.

### **2.7.1. Planning/Pre-writing**

The basic principles and foundation of a complete text start from the stage of planning, as it lays a foundation on how the whole text or essay will be structured or unfold. According to Zemach and Rumisek (2019: 35), it is revealed that planning is the first writing stage that occurs before the learner starts with the factual writing. It is at this stage that the learner develops ideas about the topic he or she wants to write about, and also decides how the essay will be written and structured. In the planning process the learner must consider three factors namely: the purpose of writing the essay, the audience or readers of the essay and the content or information of the essay (Harmer, 2019: 92). Since the learner is expected to brainstorm in this step, it is recommended

that all ideas that the learner thinks should be written down regardless of whether they are good or relevant to the topic. Sarasdy, Bencze, Poor and Vadnay (2021: 135) explain that at this stage the responsibility of the teacher is to explain and guide learners to understand the topic, either by using a picture related to the topic or asking them questions that will help them to understand and relate to the topic perfectly. It is at this stage where learners are expected to brainstorm with ideas they want to write about the topic of the essay. An effective plan of essay is the one that uses a spider web or mind map. The following is an example of a spider web or mind map.

**Figure 1. Example of a mind map in essay writing.**



### 2.7.2. Drafting

Drafting is the second stage of the writing process in which the writer commences with the actual writing of an essay. The learners start to use the main and supporting ideas brainstormed in the first stage of planning effectively to structure an essay or text. At this stage, the writer produces the first draft which considers purpose, audience, topic and genre in which the essay focuses on. It is at this stage where the author determines the word choice by using appropriate, descriptive, and evocative words, phrases and expressions to make the writing clear and vivid. Additionally, a point of view should be shown by explaining values, beliefs, and experiences. It is stated by Hatcher and Goddard (2020: 126) that drafting is an important stage which most



learners find it difficult to perform. This incident takes place since learners do not pay much attention to this stage, whereas they focus more on the end product of the essay which will be submitted to the teacher. A link between the mind map and the essays drafted should be identified through this stage. In addition, it is pointed that:

*This step is unique in that it requires the learner to write a summary revealing important information that is closely related to the topic of their essay (Reets, 2020: 61).*

At this stage of writing the learner is expected to form and create sentences that capture the meanings of these concepts that are clear to the readers. This simply means that the written information should be confidential to the readers of the learners' essay. He goes on to say that when learners are writing their essay, support should be provided by their teacher. This means that the teacher should help and ensure that the learners are writing their essay correctly.

### **2.7.3. Reviewing**

Review is the third writing strategy in which learners are expected to read or review what they have written. In this strategy learners read with the intention of correcting errors. Harmer (2019: 13) explains that in this strategy, the teacher must reassure and encourage learners to correct their mistakes as they revise their essay. In this strategy, it is believed that the learner should consider two factors namely: the readers and the purpose of the essay. This message simply means that the learner should when writing his/her essay, write it making sure that it is very relevant to his/her readers while not forgetting the purpose of the essay. Nazario, Borchers and Lewis (2019: 135) further alluded by indicating that the learner should confirm the relationships in the paragraphs of his/her essay and see that there is a gap in his/her essay. The learner should create topics that will interest the readers so that they want to read the essay further. In this strategy, the learner should pay close attention to the structure of the text, as well as the information.

#### **2.7.4. Editing**

Zemach and Rumisek (2019) suggest that learners should re-read and review the comments they have written or choose the ones that are most important and most relevant to the topic of their essay. Learners are then allowed to add more information to what they already have. Learners are required to edit their own work or essay, or they can then hand it over to a classmate to look at the essay. This will help to identify and remove errors in the learners' essay. Furthermore, it is explained that in this step learners should be aware of their difficulties in writing language in terms of grammar, spelling of words, and punctuation. This stage requires learners to identify and correct different errors they may have committed in their writing. The identification of grammatical and spelling errors committed in essay is validated when stated that:

*... in this phase, students should be aware of their writing problems regarding grammar, spelling as well as punctuation (Gehbard, 2019: 123).*

After identifying their difficulties with writing the language, learners should read their essay silently or remove unacceptable information and insert acceptable information. Editing focuses more on changing details than wrapping details. When editing the writing, learners are advised to exchange their essay as they might not be able to find out all the errors.

#### **2.7.5. Presenting**

This is the last stage of the writing process wherein fully comprehended error free essays are presented to the teacher. In this regard, the learner is expected to present a fully corrected essay. It is indicated that at this stage additions and subtraction identified during the editing are amended. In this step, the learner must make sure that there is no ambiguity, unbalanced language or hurting others. These statements are supported by Yeung (2022: 31) when he states:

*Writers should make it a point to eliminate ambiguity, verbosity, redundancy, slang and offensive language in their writing at this stage.*

It should also be ensured that the essay uses balanced language, good writing, and that the essay is relevant to the topic. These correct uses of punctuation and spelling must be clean, or the learners' essay will be accurate and valuable.

## **2.8. The level and status of home language in South Africa**

Language learning in Grades 10-12 includes all the official languages in South Africa, namely, Afrikaans, English, isiNdebele, isiXhosa, isiZulu, Sepedi (Sesotho sa Leboa), Sesotho, Setswana, SiSwati, Tshivenda, Xitsonga, as well as Non-official Languages. These languages can be offered at different language levels. Home language should provide learners with the basic communication skills needed in social settings and the academic language skills that are essential for learning all curriculum subjects. In this language context the emphasis is on listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills. This position also provides learners with literary, visual, and imaginative skills so that they can create, think, and expand their understanding of the world in which they live. The validation is made by CAPS (2015: 9) as it imparts that:

*This level also provides learners with a literary, aesthetic and imaginative ability that will provide them with the ability to recreate, imagine, and empower their understandings of the world they live in.*

Moreover, the language level also provides learners with the ability to understand texts, see aesthetics and think so that they can create, think, and enrich their understanding of the world in which they live. However, the emphasis and importance of listening and speaking skills from Grade 7 onwards is less compared to reading and writing skills. This implies that after completion of grade 7, learners are believed that they should have acquired adequate skills for reading and writing.

## **2.9. Studies conducted in relation to the study topic**

To understand and unpack the lack of essay writing skills, there are several scholars who investigated this topic. The study examined research conducted in South Africa, as well as those conducted abroad. A survey of research conducted abroad is as follows along with the information obtained from their research:

### **2.9.1. Global studies conducted**

#### **2.9.1.1. The learners' essay writing difficulties**

Bulgiyah, Mahbub and Nugraheni (2021) conducted their research in Indonesia titled "Investigating writing difficulties in essay writing: Tertiary students' perspectives." Here it is expressed that one of the most important skills is writing. Writing is an important skill for EFL (English as a Foreign Language) learners especially for tertiary or university students. They further this argument by revealing that in the learning environment, improving and developing learners' writing skills is the primary achievement that the education department wants to achieve. Bulgiyah et al., (2021: 61) reinforce this point by saying:

*In an academic setting, enhancing writing skills for the students is the primary objective in education. For students to develop their writing competence, they are expected to produce a well-structured piece of writing.*

This information reveals that for a learner to improve his or her writing, he or she is expected to write an essay that is fully structured and follows the language writing principles. Ginting (2019) mentions that this has happened in other parts of the world, where graduate students have encountered problems such as: structure, language use and vocabulary. In some studies essay writing problems are created by language learning and teaching, as well as students' writing practices (Khazraji, 2019). Khazraji (2019: 83) argues that through these methods, students can express their views by writing a complete paragraph or essay. Khazraji (2019: 83) further elaborates by

revealing that acquiring essay writing skills may be one of the great beneficial things to do as it can improve day-to-day communication, obtain good grades, and be a better professional. This clarifies that since learners are required to acquire essay writing skills at school, it will improve and benefit them in terms of communicating and interacting with others in everyday life, getting marks and passing with higher grades in schools. In this study, Bulgayah et al., (2021: 63)'s findings indicate that one of the challenges or difficulties that learners encounter in essay writing at school are grammar and spelling of words when writing. Bulgayah et al., (2021: 64) describe this concept in the following terms:

*...the major difficulties found in students' writing are mostly in the areas of vocabulary and grammar.*

When writing any essay, language usage, word spelling and grammatical structure are very much important as they help to shape the meaning of that essay or text. This indicates that a teacher should have a deep understanding and knowledge about words spelling and language grammar to write a fully fleshed essay. The findings of the study reveal that students come across challenges of wrong language use in essay writing. Here students choose and use wrong words as they write their essay, which ends up making them write the language in an incorrect way. Language is an important weapon that students should use to write complete and error free essays.

Linguistic problems experienced by tertiary students are the linguistic competencies (such as grammar, morphology, syntax, and semantics) and it is the most difficult part that most of the research participants face as detailed by Bulgayah et al., (2021: 65). It is further said that the challenges that students face regarding language development are linguistics, vocabulary, syntax, and semantics. These are the challenges that many students face in writing an essay. The study conducted by Bulgayah et al., (2021) which investigated writing difficulties in essay writing, is relevant and like this study as it entirely investigates students' difficulties in essay writing. It is also different in that Bulgayah et al.,'s research focuses on university students and does not focus on the type of essay, but on the essay.

### 2.9.1.2. The effective essay writing strategies

Dhani Oktaviant (2021) conducted a research study in Canada, under the title “The students’ strategies in developing their ideas in writing essays.” The researcher aimed at identifying students’ practices in creating and improving essay writing skills. Dhani (2021: 389) indicates the following to support his argument:

*This research aimed to find out the student’s strategies in developing their ideas in writing essay in at fourth semester in IAIN Curup who have best score in writing essay.*

It is further explained that when writing an essay, there are aspects that need to be taken into consideration as they are more crucial and deserve more attention. One of these characteristics is the content of the essay. The content is important because it reveals the author’s thoughts and opinions. The student should consider the content of the essay and it should be closely related to the topic of the essay. Another aspect is the choice of words in writing an essay, where it is stated that the choice of words plays a role in creating a complete essay because it makes it easier to read and better understood. The formation of sentences in paragraphs is another important part of writing an essay. This helps the student to organize his/her sentences correctly to form coherent paragraphs that have direct meaning and are easily understood.

The last category is the type of writing by the student. These include punctuation and capitalization where appropriate and potential grammar errors in the text occur. Dhani (2021: 391) further implies that in the essay, there are some aspects that need to be paid attention to. Those aspects, namely the first aspect is content. Content is the core aspect in writing essays because content is the author’s thoughts and ideas. Without it, the writing essay becomes gibberish with no purpose. The second one is the words of choice. Using varied vocabularies will make a piece of writing to be more interesting and not monotonous to read.

The study identified ways to improve and establish good essay writing skills in students. Ways of improving learners' essay writing skills were outlined by the findings of the study, as it is stated that the first method is the method of using a mind map before writing begins. A mind map is the most important element in producing a

complete essay. This approach to using a mind map helps the learner to highlight important topics and helps to form relationships between these topics. Dhani (2021: 393) validates the above information as he indicates that:

*Mapping is a way of visually analysing the parts of a subject. Mapping is one of the most important preparations for producing quality writing. This technique could help to generate ideas and connect them together. Place individual ideas and connect together in lines.*

Dhani (2021) goes further by giving an example of a mind map and says that in the middle should be written the title of the learner's essay, or a circle should be drawn on it. The other subheadings should then be written in the margins and linked to the theme using an ear to show the relationship between them and the theme. It is further indicated by Dhani (2021: 398) that the writer of an essay might start with writing the topic in the middle of the page and draw a circle around it. Ideas that are related to your main topic and connect the centre circle with the line. Third, make a list that is to write single words, phrases, or sentences that are connected to your topic. It is further stated that learners should write their essay following the writing steps. This will help students to create a complete, easy-to-read essay and get more marks. Step-by-step writing is one of the ways to facilitate the writing task, where it allows the student to write a text in sections and in order. He confirms the message when he says:

*Process writing is a way of breaking down the task of writing into its smaller component parts. By completing each step sequentially, writing becomes a less threatening and less daunting task.*

In addition, it is specified that when learners write essays, it is a norm and a requirement by the curriculum that they follow the writing steps. The process of writing steps and stages include brainstorming, planning, sketching, organizing, and presenting. The reviewed research differs from the researchers in that the analysis focuses on the techniques of writing good essays, while the researcher's focuses on the lack of sufficient skills in writing a narrative essay. Both studies seek to achieve

improvement and establish essay writing skills. In turn, these studies are distinguished in that the one analyzed focus on university students whereas the one focuses on selected secondary school learners.

## **2.9.2. Local studies conducted**

### **2.9.2.1. Process writing implementation in learners' essay writing**

Ngokoana (2019) undertook a study under the title “The implementation of the process approach to the writing of English essays in rural grade 12 classes in the Moroke Circuit.” Ngokoana (2019: 1) points out that writing has always been considered as one of the most important learning tools, and in the past writing was a language skill that was not given much attention, but the views of teachers in language teaching have changed in recent times. This statement is maintained when Ngokoana (2019: 3) indicates that writing was the most ignored of the language skills in the recent past, but many changes in attitude have occurred about teaching writing. She further states that writing is no longer the last skill taught. It has now become much more important especially in the second–language curriculum. This information goes on to show that since before the development of the NCS curriculum, there was interaction between learner and teacher in essay writing activities which ultimately resulted in learners getting results or low marks. Ngokoana (2019: 5) supports this statement when she states:

*Before the NCS was introduced, there was minimal interaction between the teacher and the learner during essay writing activities that often resulted in poor performance among the English learners especially in rural schools – such as essays of the participants in the current study.*

The study findings show that teachers do not ensure and follow up those learners according to the steps when writing their essays. The evidence obtained by the researcher indicates that within the students' files, there are no copies of the students'



essays. Ngokoana (2019: 62) states that concerned teachers maintain that they apply the process writing approach in their Grade 12 classes, but learners' portfolios reveal that only the final product was submitted. There is no evidence of the implementation of the 5 stages of process writing, namely, brainstorming, research, first draft, review of first draft and second draft. Furthermore, it was also found that several teachers started instilling step-by-step essay writing in students in 2008. This information is well expressed by Ngokoana (2019: 63) who avers that:

*...69% of the teachers in the Moroke Circuit were exposed to the process writing approach for the first time in 2008.*

This information highlights the fact that these teachers did not gain enough experience to measure that they could teach learners with these writings, whereas other teachers were introduced to these approaches in academic knowledge training. She also alludes that the reason why teachers are unable to teach students in step-by-step writing is the overcrowding in the classroom. If there are too many students in the classroom, it makes it difficult for the teacher to reach out and help all the students. Too many learners in the same classroom result in dysfunctional classrooms. A learning environment must be conducive in a way that it benefits all learners at the same time. Teaching a large class is exhausting but having to deal with individual learners in a class of 81 learners as an example, is a bigger challenge. While many teachers may embrace the new curriculum, they may be discouraged by the overcrowded classes (Ngokoana, 2019: 76). The study reviewed is relevant to the researcher's because both investigate the writing of essays in language. It also differs in that the one analyzed investigates the writing of essays in English while the current study investigates the writing of essays in Xitsonga home language.

Greetham (2019) conducted his research under the title "How to write better essays." Here he points out that every good essay should be written following five specific steps. These steps include translating and understanding a question or topic, researching the topic, making a proposal, writing and editing. He goes on to mention that if the learner skips one of these steps, some errors in the learner's essay are expected to occur. These errors include the essay being unrelated to the topic, having a low format, having evidence and examples to support the information being stated.

*If you omit any of these or just rush them, certain familiar problems will emerge in your writing: irrelevance, weak structure, insufficient evidence and examples to support your argument, lack of fluency between paragraphs, inconsistent arguments, and many others Greetham (2019: 18)*

Other inadequacies may be the lack of flow between paragraphs, the essay not having a strong argument and being supported by compelling and convincing evidence. Greetham (2019: 35) found that learners fail to follow these five steps when writing their essays. He argues that learners should first do research about the topic they are writing about. This will help them to support and apply factual examples as they write their essays. The study reviewed differs from this research in that it focuses on helping learners write better essays by looking at the errors they encounter in writing, whereas this one focuses on identifying the challenges learners encounter in writing the narrative essays. This study focuses only on one type of essay which is the narrative, but the one under discussion focuses on writing all types of essays. It also relates these two studies because they both investigate the writing of texts in language.

Moreover, Mose (2019) conducted a study titled “*Process writing approach as intervention to first-year students’ essay writing challenges at North-West University*”. Mose in his research argues that essay writing is a skill that should be encouraged and taught to learners especially in learning environments, as it is an important tool to express the learners’ views and feelings in a particular language. This information is clearly articulated in the following way:

*Writing of essays is one of the skills that should be fully developed in academic settings particularly, since it is an expressive tool that demonstrates both communicative competence and evidence of critical thinking in the target language (Mose, 2019: 01).*

Mose further clarifies that the students were taught in the steps of writing. This was there to remind them and enable them to write complete essays and follow the steps

in their writing. Mose (2019: 42) stresses that students were introduced to the elements of the process writing approach (PWA) to elicit their views on the effectiveness of various phases of the essay writing activity. The class presentation began with a brief introduction of the process writing approach (PWA) and its different stages. In this session, students showed interest and actively participated in writing essays. This is because the review of the writing steps stimulated their knowledge of the subject, which can motivate the students to write. This statement is supported by Mose (2019: 42) when he says:

*The participants were attentive and actively participated because their prior knowledge from AGLE 111 (first semester course) about writing was triggered.*

The study reveals that students' background knowledge is very important because it helps them to create an essay that has convincing evidence for the reader. It also revives the excitement of wanting to get actively involved in essay writing by students. The findings of this study prove that students at North-West University were not skilled enough to write essays. This shows that the lack of essay writing skills is a major challenge for learners including university students. This is reinforced when Mose (2019: 61) presents that Process Writing Approach as intervention to first-year students' essay writing challenges at North-West University. The quality of first-year students' writing at the North-West University, Mafikeng Campus has been identified as inadequate and often incoherent. Process Writing Approach as intervention to first-year students' essay writing challenges at North-West University, differs from the conducted study about lack of Grade 10 students' essay writing skills in that it is focused for North-West University students. Also, Mose's research focuses on using writing steps as a tool to provide a spark for writing an essay. On the other hand, these studies are related because they all focus on essay writing, although Mose's research does not focus on a particular type of essay.

A study titled "*Cross boundaries in L2 writing development: A case of first year academic writing student*" was conducted by Warburton (2019). It is stated here that learning at higher levels of learning requires the learner to imitate new ways of understanding things, to give meaning and to integrate learning knowledge effectively.

In writing an essay it is important that the learner uses this correct writing. The study argued here that good writing used in districts or schools is one of the most important skills at the university because many assessment activities require the learner to demonstrate their learning through formal writing. It is indicated that academic writing is one of the most critical skills at university because most assessment tasks require demonstration of learning through writing (Warburton, 2019: 1). Learners should display a variety of techniques when writing. This will demonstrate a sense of good academic writing. In writing perfectly, learners are expected to break down and write essays with a strong focus on meaning or content, essay type, and language use. With reference to language, it is said that attention should be paid to sentence structure, language use and punctuation. This statement is strongly validated when Warburton (2019: 1) states that:

*Students are required to produce essays, written examinations, or laboratory reports focusing on both the content and the form of the writing that is the language used, the text structure, the construction of argument, grammar and punctuation.*

In this study, it was assumed that students when writing a descriptive essay can write paragraphs with complete details and start the paragraph with a topic sentence. It is further stated that in this instance, L2 writers were able to write topic sentences with logical sequences of supporting sentences across languages. Warburton's (2019) study differs from this in that it investigates the influence of home language on the writing of English descriptive essays while the current study focuses on the writing of translation essays in Xitsonga. However, these studies differ in that Warburton's research investigates university students while this one looks at high school students. These studies are also closely related because they all investigate the writing of essays.

## **2.10. Approaches for teaching writing skills in language**

There are various approaches that are used in teaching learners how to write in a language, since outlined by the curriculum that writing is a skill that a learner should be taught and develop through the voyage of schooling. For these approaches to work effectively and produce desirable outcomes, the teacher should first understand what is required in each of the language teaching approaches. In the process of using these approaches properly, they provide learners with complete information about the writing of essays in a particular language in all grades. These approaches include the following:

### **2.10.1. Product approach**

Any given text should be written following the stages of the writing process. However, the product approach places its focus mainly on the learners' final essay. This is motivated by the fact that this approach aims to enhance fluency and concentration in essay writing by learners. Language teachers are expected to provide learners with reading activities about writing to improve their language writing skills. This point is alluded by Tribble (2019: 135) when he states:

*Based on the given texts by teacher, students are required to realize their merits and rewrite them in their own writing.*

Tribble is of the view that in-line with the activities given by the educator, learners are requested to use the knowledge and experiences they gained to observe and edit their essays to be able to produce a final product. The activities given to learners should be the ones that help and give learners knowledge of producing a meaningful product of an essay. This approach allows learners to be given a text by the teacher and their duty is to produce another text like the one given to them. According to Jordan (2021: 37), this approach is not effective since it does not encourage teacher-learner participation. It further indicates that:

*In a similar vein, Jordan emphasized on the fact that students need to produce a similar text to the one that was given to them.*

As the teacher is expected to give the learners a text, the learners are expected to use the text given to them to create a text that is similar or closely related to it. Myles (2020: 96) adds to this point by pointing out that the text is given to the learners' guide and instructs the learners to discover how the rhythm and flow of language is created in the writing of the essay. It will also help learners to avoid the mistakes they make in writing their own language or characters. In addition, it will also help learners to become familiar with the structure of the essay. Badger and White (2021: 17) summarize this point by saying that to produce and improve written language skills, the learner must be able to copy and follow the text given by the teacher.

### **2.10.2. Genre approach**

This is the approach that focuses more on the reader than the writer of the essay. Psoinos (2021: 43) explains that these teachings focus more on the context or the message of the essay, because in the essay, there must be a message that the author wants to convey. Learners need to find a purpose for writing. In the child's own words, writing should give meaning. Psoinos (2021: 43) supports this information with the following statement:

*The focal concern of this approach is that students need to overtake the phase of writing randomly. That is, without specific purposes. Instead, students are expected to obtain certain purposes. In other words, writing should have a meaning to convey.*

The way for learners to use these methods is to consider language and its use. Among these approaches, the teacher's job is to let learners read more texts. This will enable them to absorb the language and to understand its use when writing an essay.

Through these methods, learners are expected to create and write essays, projects, experiments, research, etc.

### **2.10.3. Process approach**

It is revealed by Jordan (2021: 84) that the process approach is the improvement of all the other approaches since they did not focus and encourage the production of a text through steps. To produce a final essay, the learner is expected to follow steps such as: planning, drafting, editing, revising, proofreading, and presenting the final product. The process approach focuses on expressing meaning and encouraging learners to learn for themselves by revising, planning, and correcting errors in their writings. This is confirmed by Jordan (2021: 84) who says:

*Unlike the product approach, which is interested in the form, the process approach is interested also in the meaning and in making students able to learn in their own by the way of revision, drafting, feedback, tasks and so on*

Psoinos (2021: 36) reveals that initially, learners should be told to collaborate on their own and discuss all the details about the given topic to write their essay. After making their drawing, they should show their drawings to one another. The main purpose of having learners exchange their essays is to check and ensure that there are no errors in their essays. Myles (2020: 93) makes the following statement about the step-by-step process:

*Process approach is helpful in developing students' writing skills, because it enables them to recognize the steps involved in the writing process.*

This implies that for learners to acquire adequate writing skills as prescribed by the curriculum, the use of this “process approach” should be adopted and implemented by the teachers and learners whenever they write essays. It is this approach that can help learners to develop and improve their writing skills ability as the teacher will be helping

learners to produce their essays through stages. This approach highlights that teachers only offer support to learners as the learners write.

### **2.11. Theoretical framework**

Theoretical framework is a foundational review of existing theories that serve as a roadmap for developing the arguments that the researcher uses in his/her own study (Grant, 2022: 43). The theoretical framework also helps to support expectations and opinions one has about a research topic. This study is anchored on the Theory of Scaffolding by Vygotsky, as well as cognitive theory of writing. As cited by Evans (2023: 16), Vygotsky's Scaffolding Theory puts its emphasis on learners to be given support, assistance, and tools by the teacher to help them learn new skills, and eventually removing the support until learners can learn on their own.

*Vygotsky scaffolding refers to providing support and resources to help a child learn new skills, and the gradually removing the support as the child improves (Evans, 2019: 18).*

Evans outlines that Vygotsky's theory affirms that teachers should help learners become learners by working with them or selecting the most able learners to help the less able learners to reach their learning outcomes. This theory also explains that learners learn best when they work with and are assisted by others who have increased skills and experience in a particular subject. Evans goes further to say that the key to the Theory of Scaffolding in teaching is that it provides insights to teachers about writing text fluently and giving a single meaning in the way they are required to register it in language. Evans (2023: 19) confirms this point as he asserts that:

*A key aspect of the Scaffolding in teaching writing to learners' is to raise awareness of the conventions within which they are expected to write and helping them to add these conventions to their linguistic and linguistic collections.*



This theory also assists learners to top-up the language knowledge, with the ones they have already gained on the previous grades. Moreover, they can use their first language to write comprehensive and language-rich essays for their higher education. This theory also encourages teachers to be appreciative, to show value and to enhance the knowledge that learners bring with them from home to influence their writing. Teachers should provide support and guidance to their learners in writing a summary essay, as it is believed that learners learn best by interacting with people who have increased experience and skills in the topic they are studying. These strategies encourage a learning relationship between the teacher and his or her learners. D'Angelo (2019: 7) explains the following about the teaching of a narrative essay with the help of Scaffolding Theory:

*... is of the idea that, learners benefit from this type of teaching of narrative essay writing because they are given a chance of making decision as part of their writing with the assistance of their teacher.*

Learners are found to benefit greatly from these methods or teachings. This is so because they are given the opportunity to decide what they want to write about under the guidance of their teacher. Learners are given the opportunity to think about the topic, to plan their essay using the knowledge and experience they have about the topic they have chosen to write about.

The link to this study is that if teachers serve as mediators in the writing of learners' essays, it is guaranteed that learners can easily develop and improve their writing skills. Learners can learn best and easily from their peers and people they look up to. In this instance, teachers should offer learners support and resources and gradually remove the assistance for learners to learn themselves. The learners' writing should take a step-by-step approach, where the teacher assists and delivers support to each step as the learners write. The theory encourages learners and teachers to help each other at every step as they write. The relevance of this theory in the current study is that it maintains that support should be given to learners by the teacher or parents to help the former improves their language acquisition. As cited by Bitzer (2021: 84), a Cognitive Process Theory by Piaget (1965) states that learners learn language skills

because they are helped by a teacher or their parents. Piaget's theory emphasizes that essay writing should focus on building and developing learners' writing skills, so that they can become self-reliant after school. Bitzer (2021: 84) alludes that:

*Cognitive Process Theory of writing focuses on the learner's development of critical writing skills for participating in a global and text-based society. The theory also emphasises that cognitive and social factors play a significant role in the writing and the way writing is taught.*

The mental state of the learners, as well as the behavioural state play a very important role in the writing and learning of the students in school. In this theory, we view writing as a step-by-step process, where the effects of each step are considered during writing. This also encourages engagement between the learner and the teacher. This is because the teacher gives the learner the results of each step while writing the essay. This is important because in the end, the final essay is complete and error-free. This is so because the teacher has given the learners feedback on all the writing steps.

Bitzer (2021: 89) indicates that Jean Piaget's Cognitive Process Theory is also linked to this current study, as the theory emphasizes that learners should develop the critical thinking skills which assist them to critically argue when writing their essays. Learners' mental and behavioural states should be fully prepared for them to write ideas that are critically argumentative. The relevance of Cognitive Process Theory and this study is that the theory maintains that learning is based on real life adaptive problem solving that needs to be critically solved. Writing skill is a real-life problem, and it influences learners' future if solutions are not critically established.

## **2.12. Conclusion**

This chapter outlined the literature and research conducted by various researchers on the topic of writing essays in language. Scholars demonstrated the types of essays in language, methods of teaching essay writing, and step-by-step writing. Also, the

characteristics and components of the narrative essay were revealed, as well as strategies for learning and teaching essay writing skills in the language.

## CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

### 3.1. Introduction

This chapter presents the designed methods used to conduct the study, the theory that is used to guide the study, sampling and data collection methods used in collecting the research data. The chapter further described research design, data collection, data organization and codes of conduct during the research. A research methodology is the specific procedures or techniques used to identify, select, process, and analyse information about a topic. In research, the methodology section allows the reader to critically evaluate a study's overall validity and reliability (McCombes, 2023).

### 3.2. Research paradigm

According to Stephen (2023: 14) a research paradigm is the framework into which the theories and practices a discipline fit to create the research plan. The foundation created guides all areas of a research study, including the aim of the study, research question to be formulated, the data collection instruments and data analysis methods. The research paradigm that has been adopted to guide this study is interpretivism paradigm. Interpretivism takes a phenomenon or our perception of a phenomenon as a starting point (Coe, 2019: 91). It further seeks to present, describe, and understand a particular view of the educational world. Michel (2022: 163) defines interpretivism paradigm as:

*An interpretivism is a methodology of sociological research. It states that the best way to study an action or event is to analyse it through the perspective of the values of its culture.*

This means that for the researcher to understand the phenomenon of the errors that Grade 10 learners commit in Xitsonga narrative essay writing, one need to study the learners writing process on a close situation as this will help to understand it from their own experiences. The interpretivism research paradigm have been found suitable for

this study simply because its aim is to understand a social phenomenon from the perspective of those involved, not to predict or control it. Interpretivism assumes that reality is subjective, multiple, and socially constructed. This means that we can only understand the errors and challenges that Grade 10 learners come across in Xitsonga narrative essay writing through their experience of Xitsonga home language narrative essay writing reality. The paradigm selected best suit the study because the study data collection methods are interviews, observation, and document collection/analysis. This is due to a fact that Dellon (2023: 175) states that interpretivism approach is based on naturalistic approach of data collection such as interview and observation, and this made the paradigm to be correct and more relevant to this study.

### **3.3. Research design**

A research design is the framework of research methods and techniques chosen by the researcher, which allows the researcher to home in on research methods that are suitable for the subject matter and set up their research study for success (Jakoet-Sallie, 2021: 69). This implies that a research design is the overall plan or blueprint that the researcher selects to carry out their research study. Singh (2023: 9) asserts that a research design refers to the strategies and methods researchers employ to carry out their study and reach valid and reliable results. On this study, a descriptive research design has been adopted to guide the study. Siedlecki (2020: 86) outlines the following in relation to descriptive research design:

*Descriptive research involves collecting data to provide an accurate portrayal or detailed account of phenomenon without influencing it in any way. Its aim is to observe, document, and create a thorough profile of the subject under study, often exploring patterns, behaviour or attributes.*

This means that the purpose of descriptive study is to describe individuals, events, or condition by studying them as they are in natural setting. Here the researcher does not manipulate any of the variables but rather only describe the sample and the

variable of the study. The above selected research design (descriptive) is much suitable for the study because its purpose is to describe a particular situation or behaviour of a group or individual. This makes it very relevant to the study as the study aim at outlining through describing and detailing the errors that Grade 10 learners commit in Xitsonga narrative essay writing. Aggarwal (2019: 16) point out that descriptive research is used to try determining the characteristics of a population which in this instance population refers to the Grade 10 Xitsonga home language learners. This design answers questions of *What, Why* and *How*. This makes it suitable as the research intends to answer those types of the questions.

### **3.4. Research method**

The methodology adopted in this study is a qualitative approach. A qualitative approach is an approach that focuses on a person's perceptions, as well as the motivation that led them to see things the way they do. In this case, the choice of this design was tied to the fact that the study seeks to analyse Grade 10 learners' inability to write Xitsonga narrative essays, and the qualitative approach enables the researcher to describe and understand this phenomenon from the participants' point of view. In relation to qualitative research design, Webster (2022:08) outlines it thus:

*Qualitative approach is subjective in nature and is concerned with understanding the lives, behaviour and experiences of people.*

Qualitative research deals with understanding people's lives, behaviours, and experiences about something. Furthermore, core methods are used mainly by the researcher to obtain information from the people the research is investigating. It is further stated by Dane (2019: 16) that:

*Qualitative research relies on data obtained by the researcher from first-hand observation, interviews, questionnaires, focus groups, and participant's*

*observation, recordings made in natural settings, documents and artefacts.*

Qualitative is an approach that focuses on obtaining information and research information through observation, questioning, and verbal presentation. These methods focus on obtaining research information from the information owners and they should be in their natural state when providing research information. This becomes relevant to the study since the study focus on attaining information from Grade 10 learners themselves. This approach will help the researcher to interview verbally and observe Grade 10 learners when writing Xitsonga narrative essay in the classroom.

### **3.5. Data collection**

Data collection, also known as data gathering, is the process of gathering and measuring information on targeted variables in an established system, which then enables one to answer relevant questions and evaluate outcomes. Accurate data collection is necessary to make informed research decisions, ensure quality assurance, and keep research integrity. Simplilearn (2023: 163) describes data collection as:

*... the process of collecting and evaluating information or data from multiple sources to find answers to research problems, answer questions, evaluate outcomes, and forecast trends and probabilities.*

This implies that data collection are methods in which the researcher uses to gather the research data which helps and assist to answer research questions and to answer the research aims and objectives. The data collection discussion is broadened by Samson (2021: 16) as he states that:

*The data collection is a process of gathering and measuring information on variables of interest, in an established*

*systematic fashion that enables one to answer stated research questions, test hypotheses, and evaluate outcomes.*

Samson strongly agrees with Simplilearn, as they both state that data collection is a way in which a researcher collects information or data for research purposes. The collected data is used to create a systematic analysis or outline the behaviour of a particular phenomenon to evaluate the outcomes. In data collection, the researcher must identify the data type, the sources of data, and what methods are being used. In conducting research there are two types of data to be collected: primary and secondary data.

This study collected data through primary and secondary sources. Primary sources of information include interviews, observation, experiments, and others. Katz (2019: 86) states that “primary data is data that has been generated by the researcher himself/herself, specially designed for understanding and solving research problems at hand.” Furthermore, Katz (2019) imparts that primary data is information gathered by the researcher himself or herself, primarily for the purpose of solving research problems. Secondary information providers include observation, inquiry and so on. Dunleavy (2020) supports this idea when he makes the following statement: “using existing data generated by large government institutions”, conducted studies were used to look at what other researchers researched and found in relation to this topic.

The documented essay collection technique where learners’ narrative essays were collected is used as a data collection tool, classroom observations, as well as semi-structured interviews have been used. The purpose of using classroom observation, semi-structured interview and learners’ narrative essays was to provide information from researchers about a particular issue. It also brings the researcher closer to the subjects and makes the researcher understand what happens when learners write Xitsonga narrative essays.



### 3.5.1. Documented essay collection

A critical review of learners' essays was used with the aim of gaining a clearer and deeper understanding of the learners' inability to write Xitsonga narrative essays. The learners' written essays were an important tool in this study as a collector of research data and information. Tayler (2022: 63) is of the view that:

*A documented essay is a piece of academic writing that aims to consider a particular topic relying on a number of most trusted secondary sources.*

Tayler corroborates that documented essays are a piece of work written by a learner or student in an academic setting, whereby its ideas should be supported by secondary sources. Herein the author develops an opinion relying on secondary resources. Jack (2023: 91) states that:

*The documented essays is a piece of writing in which you incorporates information, facts, arguments and opinions or ideas taken from writings of authorities in a particular field.*

The statement above indicates that a documented essay is a writing that is formally written in an academic setting with the aim of exploring ideas, thoughts, and facts in an arguable manner. In this regard, the 6 learners' narrative essays were collected, whereby they were critically analysed, reviewed, and marked by the researcher to identify the themes in relation to the research topic. The errors committed by the learners when writing Xitsonga narrative essays were exposed and written on learners' essay scripts. To ensure confidentiality of learners, the real names of the learners were kept confidential throughout this study. The learners' essay scripts were named as follows: learner's essay 1, learner's essay 2, learner's essay 3, learner's essay 4, learner's essay 5, and learner's essay 6.

### 3.5.2. Semi-structured interview

An interview in research is a conversation between two or more people with the purpose of gathering important information about a particular research concept or for the purpose of the research. This is defined by Yin (2018: 23) as he outlines that:

*Interview is a verbal conversation between two people with the objectives of collecting relevant information for the purpose of research.*

This implies that an interview is a conversation between two or more people with the aim of reaching out to obtain research information. Taylor (2020: 134) agrees with Yin (2018: 23) as he argues that:

*An interview is a qualitative research technique which involves conducting intensive individual interviews with a small number of respondents to explore their perspective on a particular idea, problem or situation.*

Interview is one of the data collection tools used to gather information in research, through which researchers can express their views on specific researched problems. There are 3 teachers who teach Xitsonga HL in Grade 10 which were selected to take part in the research interview. The teachers were asked questions in relation to the research problem, with the aim of gathering more information and to accomplish the research findings.

After obtaining consent from the participants, the interview was then recorded for the teacher to deeply understand the research problem. Also, it was recorded for the researcher to not miss any information given and the researcher will again listen to the recording if he has forgotten something. It was recorded for maintain the originality of the data collected. This presentation gave a full speech and was listened to by the researcher repeatedly. This gave the researcher full feedback to also have facts from the teachers. When presenting the data collected through an interview, teachers vowed to make sure that the originality of the data is maintained. For teachers to give

honest information, it was promised that their real names could not be used as they were named teacher 1, teacher 2 and teacher 3. The educators' interview took approximately 15 minutes per educator, which took 45 minutes to interview all the sampled educators.

### **3.5.3. Classroom observation**

The research data was also collected through learners' observation where learners were observed in their natural setting. The learners were observed by the researcher when the teaching and learning of narrative essay writing occurred. The purpose of performing observations was to explore the methods and strategies that teachers use when teaching learners the narrative essay writing skills, and to explore the processes that learners use when writing narrative essays. Moreover, to observe other aspects such as language, register and context that teachers use to make learners understand content as far as teaching and learning essay writing skills are concerned. It is clarified by Russell (2022: 13) that:

*Observation method is described as a method to observe and describe the behaviour of a subject and it involves the basic techniques of simply watching the phenomena until some hunch or insight is gained.*

Through this explanation, Russell implies that observation is a method that is used in qualitative research by researchers with the view of gathering more information about a particular phenomenon. This method also helps researchers to observe a phenomenon in its natural setting, and to gain more understanding related to the behaviour of the phenomenon researched in a direct setting. Furthermore, Kawulich (2023:36) entails that in observation:

*The observation method provides high accuracy since the observer directly interacts with the observed. It is also a universal and standard method that is used all over the world,*

*since it describes the phenomenon exactly as it occurs in the natural research environment.*

It is asserted by Kawulich that observation happens in a natural research setting, which means that learners are observed as they learn and write their narrative essays in a classroom setting. In observation, one or more trained observers record the target behaviour(s) using a predefined coding system to minimize bias.

Through observation, the researcher collected data by grouping all the three Grade 10 classes to become one class and learners were given a topic to write a narrative essay through the help and assistance of their teachers. The three Grade 10 classes were combined due to time constraints, and to allow all the learners to learn and write at the same time. The observations enabled the researcher to gain more knowledge in relation to the challenges that ascended during lessons, especially those that related to learners writing errors when writing narrative essays.

The researcher used an observation schedule that indicated what to observe during the teaching and writing of Xitsonga narrative essays. The observation schedule places more focus on the strategies teachers' use when teaching Xitsonga narrative essays and learners' participation during the teaching of Xitsonga narrative essay writing. Moreover, the process learners used when writing narrative essays, the teacher classroom management during the lesson, as well as conducive learning environment foster good learning.

### **3.6. Sampling procedures**

In the conduct of research, information should be collected to understand a particular phenomenon in detail. To collect research data, a specific group of research participants should be selected from the overall population. When selecting research participants, there are two methods used to select the research participants namely, probability and non-probability sampling procedures.

### **3.6.1. Population of the study**

The research study took place in the selected school at the Sekgosese East Circuit of Mopani District, Limpopo Province. The selected school is located around an area called Rotterdam village, about 60 kilometres from Giyani town. Sekgosese East Circuit comprises 12 sparsely distributed secondary schools located in different villages. The target population for this study was Grade 10 Xitsonga Home Language learners at the selected school.

The school selected comprises of 667 learners in total, where-in Grade 10 learners are 92, which the class is divided into 3 classes, namely: Grade 10 A with 32 learners, followed by Grade 10 B which has 29, lastly Grade 10 C with 31 learners. The purpose of using the selected school is tied to the fact that this school is the only secondary school that offers Xitsonga Home Language at Sekgosese East Circuit. The other secondary schools at the circuit offer Northern Sotho as a home language. Another reason is that the researcher is based at Rotterdam, where these learners' inabilities to write narrative essays have been observed.

### **3.6.2. Sampling**

A convenient sampling has been used in this study, with the purpose of gathering in-depth information in relation to the study topic. A convenient sampling has been selected to be used in sampling of research participants because it best suits the study. Convenient sampling is non-probability sampling methods where units are selected for inclusion in the sample because they are the easiest for the researcher to access. This implies that the research participants were much easier to be found and they were closer to the researcher hence this method of sample have been adopted and seen to be suitable for this study.

As this study was aimed at exposing learners' narrative essays writing inabilities, only 3 teachers who are teaching Xitsonga HL in Grade 10 were selected for interviews in relation to learners' essays writing inabilities. The teachers answered the research questions in a way that satisfies the researcher and answers the research aims and

objectives of the study. Moreover, Grade 10 learners were observed while writing the narrative essay with the assistance of their educators. This was done because the research focuses on Grade 10 Xitsonga learners only. After the writing of the narrative essay by all the Grade 10 learners, 6 learners who performed poorly on their term one mark were sampled to write a narrative essay. The strategy of using term 1 essay writing task marks was used to get the 6 learners who performed poorly. Since learners were sampled to write narrative essays, their scripts were taken for analysis where the researcher analyzed these learners' narrative essays.

The principle of sampling only low-mark narrative essays was introduced, as it is believed that learners who obtain low marks are the ones with inadequate skills to write a meaningful essay. The learners' narrative essay was critically analyzed in line with the study topic. This sampling was implemented since the study sought to understand the reasons in relation to learners' inability to write narrative essays.

As the study adopted a non-probability sampling, participants were selected purposively. The purposive sampling focuses on how the researcher identifies only the important issues that are relevant to his or her research. The process of intentional cleaning is described by Nicholas (2019: 102) when he necessitates that:

*The main goal of purposive sampling is to focus on particular characteristics of a population that of interest, which will best enable you to answer your research question.*

This clarifies that the main purpose of the purposive sampling is to be more focused on the specific characteristics in the researchers that are necessary for the research. These characteristics of the researchers are what help the researcher to answer the research questions. To answer the research questions, the purposive selection method was found to be the most appropriate to be used to select the research participants in this study. In addition, the purposive selection process is redefined by Ashley (2020: 36) as follows:

*A purposive sample is a non-probability sample that is selected based on characteristics of a population and the objective of the study.*

This is a type of selection process where it is said that learners are selected according to certain characteristics majority of learners possess and considered whether the selected learners are able to produce research findings.

### **3.7. Data analysis**

After the research data is collected, it must be organized and analyzed carefully in order to select only the most important and useful information. Bingham and Witkowsky (2021: 15) explain that the way a researcher organizes his or her data is strongly influenced by the research methodology, as well as the data obtained from the research. Data sorting is separating important information (data) from unimportant information (data). The researcher takes only the information that helps to produce his research. This is supported by Yin, (2018: 54) when he outlines that:

*Data analysis is the process of systematically applying statistical and/or logical techniques to describe and illustrate condense and recap and evaluate data.*

In these terms, it is revealed that information processing is a method of classifying information or information gathered into different categories (Bell, 2019: 81). Information organizing is the process of selecting important information from a large amount of information to produce a meaning. Furthermore, Calzon (2022: 4) argues that:

*Data analysis is the process of cleaning, transforming, and modelling data to discover useful information for research decision-making.*

Data organization is essential to be able to produce an interpretation of the data collected by the various categories. The editing of information in research should be done after obtaining the information through the first instrument in the research. This is done to see whether important information was obtained, or nothing can be found about the topic of the research. The study data was analyzed in the following ways:

### **3.7.1. Document analysis**

The document analysis is another method used in the analysis of the research data collected through learners' narrative essay writing. After the narrative essay writing by the Grade 10 learners, the researcher used the document analysis method to analyse the errors committed by Grade 10 learners when writing narrative essays. The documents analysis method is further defined as:

*A systematic analysis of content rather than the structure of communication, such as a written work, speech, or film, including the study of thematic and symbolic elements to determine the objective or meaning of the communication (Frey, 2019: 236).*

This above quote explains that this is an analysis or classification of texts and not a structure, but rather a focus on the content of the essay. Thomson and Kamler (2019: 63) confirm this point by providing the following information to allude that:

*A document analysis is a form of qualitative research on which documents are interpreted by the researcher to give voice and meaning around an assessed topic.*

The selected learners' essays were analyzed, edited, and reviewed again from beginning to end by the researcher for the study purpose. Here the researcher singled out the errors committed by learners on their essays. The focus of the analysis and editing of the learners' essays was set on the errors that the learners commit when writing Xitsonga narrative essays. This enables the researcher to expose and outline



the lack of sufficient skills in writing Xitsonga essays at school. The researcher took notes on how the learners wrote their Xitsonga narrative essays when analyzing and editing the text they wrote. The data obtained were interpreted in a relevant research manner to achieve the objectives of this study.

### **3.7.2. Thematic Content Analysis**

A method of Thematic Content Analysis was another approach adopted when analyzing the collected research data, where an inductive approach was used to allow the collected data to determine the themes. Inductive approach helped the research to identify the themes when analyzing the collected research data, which in this regard are the learners' narrative essays. According to Bunmi and David (2023: 3):

*Thematic Content Analysis is an approach of analysing qualitative data. It is usually applied to a set of texts, such as interview or transcripts.*

This approach places its emphasis on identifying, analyzing and interpreting patterns of meaning or themes within the qualitative data. This approach played a vital role in helping the researcher to organize the collected research data into themes that places its focus on answering the research objectives, through finding more about the learners' inability to write narrative essays. Moreover, Caulfield (2023: 23) is of the view that Thematic Content Analysis:

*Thematic Content Analysis is a method of analysing qualitative data. It is usually applied to a set of text, such as an interview or transcripts. The researcher closely examines the data to identify common themes, topics, ideas, and patterns of meaning that comes up repeatedly.*

Thematic Contents Analysis places its emphasis on developing themes that help ease the analysis of the collected data. This method analysed the collected data through allowing the data to develop the themes in relation to the errors that Grade 10 learners

commit when writing Xitsonga narrative essays. Through this approach, themes have been developed that helped the researcher to easily outline the errors that Grade 10 learners commit in Xitsonga narrative essay writing. The developed themes help the researcher to outline and identify the errors that appeared on the learners' narrative essays. The learners' essays were analyzed, and themes were identified through the analyzed essays where errors committed by Grade 10 learners when writing Xitsonga narrative essays were outlined and presented through the identified themes.

### **3.7.3. Transcription**

An initial analysis of the research data and information obtained from the structured interview with the teachers was conducted after each interview with the teachers to check and ensure that nothing important about the research was left out or forgotten. After the data collection course is completed, the information is then transferred from speech to writing or text. This process is called transcription as outlined by Schumacher and McMillan (2021: 15) when they impart that:

*Transcription is the process of transforming interview notes and audio recording into texts. This involves changing data from an analogue source, such as paper documents or audio, into digital format such as text or a spreadsheet.*

It is a norm of the research that information collected through interviews, audios, videos, and observation should be transcribed into text for the purpose of developing themes which are aligned to the provided data. This implies that the data collected through spoken words should be changed into text or writing. Tylor (2019: 189) agrees with Schumacher and McMillan (2023:147) when he reveals that:

*Transcription refers to the transformation of recorded audio (usually spoken word) into a written form that can be used to analyse a particular phenomenon or event.*

Teachers were asked questions formulated through the guidance of the study objectives, where they offered truthful responses based on their knowledge and experience in relation to learners' narrative essays writing. To maintain the originality of the data gathered, the use of direct quotations of teachers was adopted. The direct quoting of teachers helped to present accurate information.

### **3.8. Quality criteria**

As this research study adopted a qualitative study, issues such as research credibility, transferability, dependability, and research conformability were considered to ensure the validity of the data and information obtained from the participants.

#### **3.8.1. Credibility**

Research credibility refers to the fact that the participants who helped to provide the research information are satisfied with the information described by the researcher, which affects how the participants feel and that the research reveals issues they know. Keith (1998: 68) describes this as:

*Credibility describes that participants or members of the community being researched feels that the findings represent their experience.*

Research credibility deals closely with the fact that the researched people are satisfied with what was found about them. Further, Calzon (2022: 93) confirms this as it is indicated that credibility establishes whether the research findings represent plausible information drawn from the participants' original data and it is a correct interpretation of the participants' original view. In ensuring the validity of the research, the participants who took part in gathering the research data were given the feedback to comment and check if it explained their experiences in relation to Xitsonga narrative essay writing at school, and to ensure that the results explained truth and they are satisfied with it.

### **3.8.2. Confirmability**

The confirmability of the research relates to the issue of whether a similar or related study can be undertaken, and similar findings can be accumulated. The findings presented can be repeatedly found by the other researcher. This is best described by Cook (2022) as he indicates that:

*... It has to deal with the issue of producing similar findings, it explains that similar results or findings can be obtained if the same study undertaken.*

This case focuses on the premise that if other researchers conduct a study under a similar concept of the research topic, their findings must be closely related to or like the findings of this research. The following evidence supports this view as it corroborates that confirmability refers to the degree to which the result could be confirmed or corroborated by others if a similar study can be undertaken by other researchers (Calzon, 2022: 126). In ensuring this fact, permission to other participants who would like to conduct a similar study and investigate on this study concept, just for the sake of seeing that the results they obtain are like those obtained in this study is offered. A permission is given, and researchers are more welcomed to conduct a study of this nature only for research finding validation.

### **3.9. Ethical consideration**

Codes of ethics are part of this research work and cannot be left out in the processes of conducting a study. According to the contributions made by Rallis (2019: 327), it is stated that “ethics” are human principles that observe and encourage good human behaviour in researchers. Following are part of ethics that were considered during the conduction of this study:

### **3.9.1. Permission to conduct the study**

At first, the approval was granted by Turfloop Research Ethics Committee (TREC) through the submission of research proposal, wherein the letter of approval in the form of a clearance certificate was issued to the researcher. Secondly, an approval was obtained from the management of the selected school, where they wrote a letter indicating that they granted the researcher a permission, after looking at the research topic and realization that the study adds a significant value in the improvement of Xitsonga and other indigenous language essay writing. Furthermore, the research permission was obtained from the Limpopo Department of Basic Education (LDoE) (see appendix 0.2) to conduct the research in the selected school within the Limpopo Department of Education.

### **3.9.2. Informed consent**

Regarding participants' consent on this study, all participants were given all full information about the research, as well as the instructions that must be followed when providing research information. Halyna and Ron (2019: 118) state that consent to participate in research is:

*Informed consent is a clear explanation of the procedures to be followed and their purposes will be provided to the participants; a description of the attendant discomforts and risks reasonably to be expected.*

The participants of this study were first informed about the study before they agreed to participate in it and were also given in-depth information about the study. It was also explained to them that they were participating voluntarily and not coerced by the researcher or anyone else, and if ever they felt uncomfortable during the proceedings of information gathering, they were allowed to pull out without any justification to the researcher. The research participants were sought and asked to first sign a consent form for participation or taking part in this study.

### **3.9.3. Confidentiality**

When following the rules of ethics in research, it should be ensured that research participants should not be mentioned in the research, as well as the name of the school in which the researcher is investigating. Further, the findings and information supplied by the research participants should be kept confidential and be used only for research purposes. This is supported as follows:

*Confidentiality refers to a condition in which the researcher knows the identity of a research subject but takes steps to protect that identity from being discovered by others (Taylor, 2019: 211).*

The researcher assured and gave confidence to the research participants that the information they handed over had been kept confidential and used only for this study. The information gathered by the researcher has not been disclosed to the public without the consent of the participants.

### **3.9.4. Respect, dignity and standard of care**

The research should consider the respect, dignity, and good behaviour of the research participants. This section is one of the most important parts of the research code of conduct. Dunleavy (2020: 193) supports this view by providing the following evidence:

*A state, quality or manner worthy of esteem or respect and self-respect. This is the kind of care, in any setting which supports and promote and does not undermine a person's self-respect regardless.*

The study ensured that the research participants' dignity was respected, and their human rights were considered at all times. The research participants' requests regarding the protection of their dignity in conducting the research were listened to and

addressed. Also, this study confirmed that the entire research activities did not improve the status of the participants, nor did they discriminate against them.

### **3.9.5. Anonymity**

Anonymity of research participants is essential in accordance with the code of ethics in research. This is to ensure that the participants of the research should not be known, as it helps the participants to give honest and accurate information without any fear. It is confirmed by Stan, Margaret, and Robin (2019: 122) when they pinpoint that:

*The essence of anonymity will be that information provided will not be revealed including their identity.*

The researcher introduced the participants and reassured them that their real names were not mentioned anyhow. In ensuring anonymity in this study, the researcher named the participants' essays as follows: learners' essay 1, learners' essay 2, learners' essay 3, learners' essay 4, learners' essay 5 and learners' essay 6. Again, to keep the concerned teachers anonymous, they were named: teacher 1, teacher 2 and teacher 3 respectively.

### **3.9.6. Protection from harm**

In connection with protection of harm in participants, the study informed the research participants that the study would not cause harm in any way to them and the school, or participants. Participants were allowed to choose where they wanted to participate and told that they could withdraw or take themselves out whenever they felt uncomfortable. A declaration was given to the participants that the study would not cause any kind of harm either be physical, emotional, or mental, and indeed there was no form of harm as the research unfolded.

### **3.10. Delimitation, limitation, and research assumptions**

#### **3.10.1. Delimitation of the study**

In a research, delimitations are characteristics that weaken the research and define the boundaries of the research. It is said that the constraints are in the hands of the researcher as they set limits on their research. This view is supported by Katz (2019: 78) when he states that:

*Delimitations are those characteristics that limit the scope and describe the boundaries of a study. The delimitations are in a researcher's control as is sets boundaries of the research.*

There are certain delimitations to the research in terms of the commitments made by the researcher as to what is included in the research. This is further argued by Harmen (2019: 136), as he asserts that delimitations are the boundaries of the research study, based on the research decision of what to include and what to exclude. They narrow the study to make it more manageable and relevant to what one is trying to prove. This research focused on Grade 10 learners in the nominated school, as they were the people who helped to provide the data of the research. This study focuses only on the nominated school as it analyses and looks at the errors of the learners' committee in Xitsonga narrative essay writing.

#### **3.10.2. The limitation of the study**

Since the study used a qualitative research approach, this kind of approach focuses on a person's perceptions, as well as the motivation that causes them to see things the way they do. These methods were used to achieve the stated objectives of the research namely, to identify, analyse and single out the errors that compromise Grade 10 learners Xitsonga essay writing skills. This research aims to achieve research objectives only. In addition, it was difficult to visit schools during working hours despite



the permission granted because the DoE's policy on contact time between teachers and learners is rigid and thus could not be compromised.

### **3.10.3. Assumptions of the study**

In this study, it was assumed that learners wrote their essay consistently and used their whole language writing skills. It is also assumed that the teachers answered the survey questions reliably and accurately without bias or moving their school pupils up or down.

### **3.11. Conclusion**

This chapter revealed the research design wherein it was mentioned that this study used a critical framework. The theories guiding this research are described and related to this study. The research methodology was explained wherein it was revealed that in this study, purposive selection method was used. The data collection is revealed in this chapter wherein data is collected through observations, interviews, as well as document analysis. Lastly, issues of ethical clearance are fully addressed and outlined in this chapter.

## CHAPTER 4: DATA PRESENTATION, DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS

### 4.1. Introduction

This chapter presents the findings of this study through discussing data and information gathered in this research. The purpose of this study was to critically outline the shortcomings and challenges that prevent Grade 10 learners from writing a Xitsonga narrative essay at school. This study achieved the following objectives:

- Outlining errors that Grade 10 learners commit in Xitsonga narrative essay writing.
- Identification of the causes that compromise learners' ability to write Xitsonga narrative essays.
- Providing possible solutions on the improvement of Xitsonga learners' narrative essay writing skills.

### 4.2. Profile of learners and educators

#### 4.2.1. Biographical information of educators

Teachers' names	Gender	Age	Qualification	Experience
Teacher 1	Female	53	College teaching diploma	21 years
Teacher 2	Female	28	Bed. SPF degree	2 years
Teacher 3	Male	36	Bed. SPF Honours	9 years

In this study, three teachers were sampled. Therefore, the study did not use their real names. These teachers were named teacher 1, teacher 2 and teacher 3. Teacher 1 is a female educator of 53 years with the highest qualification of a college diploma. She is a teacher who has been teaching Xitsonga home language for 21 years. This implies that teacher 1 is highly experienced in terms of teaching Xitsonga home language. Teacher 2 is a young teacher who recently entered the teaching fraternity. She is 28 years of age with a Bachelor of Education in Senior Phase and FET degree. She does

not have much in terms of experience since she only has 2 years in the field of teaching Xitsonga home language. Lastly, teacher 3 is a male teacher who is 36 years with the highest academic qualification of a university honours degree in Xitsonga. Teacher 3 has approximately 9 years teaching experience, but the teacher has taught Xitsonga for 3 years whereby the other 6 years he was teaching English and Geography at the school he came from to the selected school.

#### 4.2.2. Biographical information of learners

Learners' names	Gender	Age	No. of years in Grade
Learner 1 [L1]	Male	19	3
Learner 2 [L2]	Male	18	1
Learner 3 [L3]	Female	19	2
Learner 4 [L4]	Male	21	3
Learner 5 [L5]	Female	17	1
Learner 6 [L6]	Female	17	1

Learner 1 is a male learner who is 19 years old, and he has failed Grade 10 three times. Learner 2 is also a male learner who is 18 years and doing Grade 10 for the first time. Learner 3 is a female learner who failed Grade 10 and she is doing Grade 10 for the second time. Learner 4 is a male learner who is repeating Grade 10 for the third time, and he is 21 years old. Lastly, are the two female learners named learner 5 and 6, whereby they are both 17 years old and they are doing Grade 10 for the first time.

#### 4.3. Data presentation

The researcher's analysis of learners' essays was based on these themes: conjunctive writing and disjunctive writing, coherence and cohesion, spelling mistakes, errors of punctuations and lastly, informal language use. The Grade 10 learners were given a narrative essay to write under one topic titled: "*Siku ndzi nga tshama ndzi tsaka ku tlula mpimo*", when translated to English the title is "*A Day that I was extremely happy*". Here the learner was expected to narrate a story of the day s/he was extremely happy

and detail every aspect as to what happened on that day. During the interviews with the educators, it have been stated by the educators that the major errors that learners make when it comes to essay writing are: the wrongly connecting and separation of words, errors of grammar, spelling, the use of unstandardized language and wring of sentence that lacks logic. The researcher then formulated the themes via consideration of the major errors in Xitsonga essay writing as outlined by the educators in the interview. The following are themes formulated to help ease and direct the analysis to answer the objectives of this study: (i) conjunctive and disjunctive writing, (ii) coherence and cohesion, (iii) the grammatical errors, (iv) the spelling mistakes and (v), the informal language use.

#### **4.3.1. Conjunctive and disjunctive writing**

##### **4.3.1.1. Findings from educators**

In line with the below question answered by teacher 1, the answer covered was falling under the conjunctive and disjunctive writing theme where the teacher indicated that learners wrongly connect and separate words when writing. Furthermore, because of conjunctive and disjunctive writing, learners become poor in terms of vocabulary and language usage in writing essays. This implies that three themes were covered by the first teacher's responses.

***Question 1: What are the errors committed by learners when writing their narrative essay?***

This question was responded by teacher 1 when he outlined the errors committed by learners when writing narrative essays where she responded in the following manner:

Teacher 1:

*With regards to the errors that are commonly committed by learners when writing essays, is that most learners join and separate words when writing. They tend to incorrectly*

*separate and connect words when writing which ultimately makes the statement to be meaningless...*

Here the teacher implies that the most common errors that tend to be committed by learners when writing narrative essays is the error of words connecting and separating. This error is very common in learners' essay writing. This was elaborated by the teacher where she indicated that ever since she started teaching Xitsonga, learners are found to be committing this kind of an error.

#### **4.3.1.2. Findings from learners' narrative essays**

Meng and Fan (2022: 16) allude that most learners combine and separate words unnecessarily, which result in meaningless essays. Grade 10 learners commit more errors of combining words and sometimes separating them when writing. Through the analysis, approximately all the learners combined and separated words when writing their narrative essays, as this was found when analyzing their essay. The incorrect connecting and separating of words make the essay to lose its original and intended meaning by the writer. On the learners' essay 1, the learners wrongly connected and separated the following words, of which the learners' essay script is attached on appendix 1.

<b>Conjunctive and disjunctive written words</b>	<b>correct form of the words</b>
"Ndzinga"	"ndzi nga"
"Akuri"	"a ku ri"
"Nimpundzu"	"ni mpundzu"
"Hingayi"	"hi nga yi"
"Hidya"	"hi dya"
"Vata"	"va ta"
"Haha"	"ha ha"
"Hiya"	"hi ya"

Furthermore, under disjunctive and conjunctive writing, it was found that the learners mistakenly connected and separated words. This brings the researcher to the

conclusion that the learners wrongly implemented the process writing. Here are the words that are further combined by the learners on their essay:

<b>Conjunctive and disjunctive written words</b>	<b>correct form of the words</b>
“Ndzinga”	“ndzi nga”
“Akuri”	“a ku ri”
“Raku”	“ra ku”
“Hiya”	“hi ya”
“Nampundzu”	“na mpundzu”
“Hinga”	“hi nga”
“Aku”	“a ku”
“Ngari”	“nga ri”
“Vandzi”	“va ndzi”

On the other hand, learners’ essay 2 reveals that the learner also combines words when writing. This was seen through the analysis where errors of connecting words were identified from this narrative essay. The following words were combined by the learner on learners’ essay 2 which is attached on appendix 2.

<b>Conjunctive and disjunctive written words</b>	<b>correct form of the words</b>
“Ndzinga”	“ndzi nga”
“Swinga”	“swi nga”
“Swivona”	“swi vona”
“Anga”	“a nga”
“Ndziku”	“ndzi ku”

More errors were also found to have been committed on the learners’ essays. This reveals that the process of writing is incorrectly implemented by learners when writing essays at school. The words that are connected by the learners which were supposed to be separated are presented below:

<b>Conjunctive and disjunctive written words</b>	<b>correct form of the words</b>
--------------------------------------------------	----------------------------------

“Ndzinga”	“ndzi nga”
“Swinga”	“swi nga”
“Swivona”	“swi vona”
“Anga”	“a nga”
“Ndziku”	“ndzi ku”
“Yanga”	“ya nga”
“Anaha”	“a na ha”
“Vandzi”	“va ndzi”
“Ndzilo”	“ndzi lo”
“Vanga”	“va nga”

Attached on appendix 3 is learners' essay 3. It was found that the learner committed errors of connecting and separating words wrongfully, which made the essay to lose its meaning. In this essay, more errors of words connecting were found, and below are the words wrongly connected and separated by the learners when writing:

<b>Conjunctive and disjunctive written words</b>	<b>correct form of the words</b>
--------------------------------------------------	----------------------------------

“akuri”	“a ku ri”
“vaku”	“va ku”
“vahava”	“va ha va”
“ninge”	“ndzi nge”
“aniti”	“a ndzi ti”
“andzingaha”	“a ndzi nga ha”
“andzaha”	“a ndza ha”
“navatswari”	“na vatswari”

A repetition of connecting and separating of words was found through the essay paragraphs which became evidence that learners failed to detect their own writing errors and mistakes. This implies that after writing an essay, they see it as a perfect while it has so many errors. This is evidence that the learner did not edit the essay, which outlines one stage of the writing process that was omitted in the writing of this

essay. Presented below are other words found to be connected and separated, which were supposed to be correctly written after the stage of editing when writing the essay:

<b>Conjunctive and disjunctive written words</b>	<b>correct form of the word</b>
“akuri”	“a ku ri”
“raku”	“ra ku”
“yoti”	“yo ti”
“vaku”	“va ku”
“vahava”	“va hava”
”yivava”	“yi vava”
“ninge”	“ni nge”
“andzingaha”	“a ndzi nga ha”
“navatswari”	“na vatswari”
“vataza”	“va ta za”
“avani”	“a va ndzi”
“ti phina”	“tiphina”

Through the analysis of learners’ essay 4, as attached in appendix 4, errors of words connecting and separating were identified by the researcher. The learners’ essay 4 consists of many errors of connecting words, and the errors identified are listed as follows:

<b>Conjunctive and disjunctive written words</b>	<b>correct form of the word</b>
“kutilula”	“ku tlula”
“swinga”	“swi nga”
“akuri”	“a kuri”
“wavuntlhanu”	“wa vuntlhanu”
“lani”	“la ni”
“avangani”	“a va nga ndzi”
“vaku”	“va ku”
“vani”	“va ndzi”
“swina”	“swi na”
“iswitsongo”	“i swintsongo”



“kuni”

“valava”

“hikongomile”

“nikhensa”

“ku ndzi”

“va lava”

“hi kongomile”

“ndzi khensa”

Moreover, on learners’ essay 4, there are further errors found which compromise the learners’ ability to write narrative essays. Through the analysis, it was found that the implementation of process writing is a factor challenging the learners’ essay writing ability in this Grade. Below are more errors of words connecting and separating found on learners’ essay 4:

**Conjunctive and disjunctive written words**

**correct form of the words**

“kutlula”

“ku tlula”

“swinga”

“swi nga”

“akuri”

“a ku ri”

“vangani”

“va nga ndzi”

“raku”

“ra ku”

“avangani”

“a va nga ndzi”

“vaendlela”

“va endlela”

“ani”

“a ndzi”

“vari”

“va ri”

“kuri”

“ku ri”

“valeku”

“va le ku”

“nakuma”

“na kuma”

“niya”

“ndzi ya”

“niveka”

“ndzi veka”

“vamina”

“va mina”

“hokhandiya”

“ho khandziya”

“niti”

“ndzi ti”

“nitsakini”

“ndzi tsakile”

“ninga”

“ndzi nga”

The learners' essay 5, as attached in appendix 5, gives evidence of conjunctive and disjunctive writing as the learner connects words which were supposed to be separated when writing them. The conjunctive and disjunctive writing is very common to the learners when writing a text. This became evident after finding out that approximately all the learners committed such errors. Here is the evidence of the words that were connected, wherein they were supposed to be separated on the learners' narrative essay:

<b>Conjunctive and disjunctive written words</b>	<b>correct form of the word</b>
"swinga"	"swi nga"
"akuri"	"a kuri"
"aku"	"a ku"
"nimixo"	"ni mixo"
"hifike"	"hi fike"
"avani"	"a va ndzi"
"avari"	"a va ri"
"swanwa"	"swo nwa"
"kuyaba"	"ku ya ba"
"aswiti"	"a swi ti"
"hilaha"	"hi laha"
"avahi"	"a va hi"
"ndziti"	"ndzi ti"

Furthermore, the conjunctive and disjunctive writing errors have been found on these learners' narrative essay, where the learners committed more errors in relation to the connecting words which are supposed to be separated. This became evidence of the lack or wrong implementation of process writing on these learners' essays. Other conjunctive writing errors written by the learners on the essay are as follows:

<b>Conjunctive and disjunctive written words</b>	<b>correct form of the words</b>
"swinga"	"swi nga"
"akuri"	"a ku ri"
"ati"	"a ti"

“axina”	“a xi na”
“avani”	“a va ndzi”
“tivona”	“ti vona”
“hikha”	“hi karhi”
“aswiti”	“a swi ti”
“hiloko”	“hi loko”
“yoba”	“yo ba”
“vati”	“va ti”
“swanwa”	“swo nwa”
“hinkwaswo”	“hinkwaswo”
“avari”	“a va ri”
“andziti”	“a ndzi ti”
“ndziri”	“ndzi ri”
“ava”	“a va”
“hambana hambana”	“hambanahambana”

From the learners’ essay 6 which is attached on appendix 6, the learners also committed the error of conjunctive writing as the evidence was found during the essay analysis. In this essay, it was found that the learners connected most of the words which were supposed to be separated, which resulted in the words having wrong meaning to the context in which they were used. Here are some of the conjunctive writing evidence found on the learners’ narrative essay:

<b>Conjunctive and disjunctive written words</b>	<b>correct form of the words</b>
“ndzinga”	“ndzi nga”
“leswinga”	“leswi nga”
“akuri”	“a ku ri”
“waku”	“wa ku”
“aswini”	“a swi ndzi”
“nifikile”	“ndzi fikile”
“avangandzi”	“a va nga ndzi”
“kuni”	“ku ndzi”
“aswini”	“a swi ndzi”

“vapfuka”	“va pfuka”
“kuhlamba”	“ku hlamba”
“ndzaha”	“ndza ha”
“xi pandza mananga”	“xipandzamananga”
“hlanga ni sa”	“hlanganisa”

More errors related to conjunctive and disjunctive writing were further found on the learners’ narrative essay. It was found that the learners further committed errors of connecting words which were supposed to be separated, and the following are the words connected on the learners’ narrative essay 6:

<b>Conjunctive and disjunctive written words</b>	<b>correct form of the words</b>
“avatwananile”	“a va twananile”
“kuhlamba”	“ku hlamba”
“ndzaha”	“ndza ha”
“xi pandza mananga”	“xipandzamananga”
“hlanga ni sa”	“hlanganisa”
“avangandzi”	“a va nga ndzi”
“kuni”	“ku ndzi”
“aswini”	“a swi ndzi”
“vapfuka”	“va pfuka”
“ndzinga”	“ndzi nga”
“leswinga”	“leswi nga”
“akuri”	“a ku ri”
“waku”	“wa ku”
“aswini”	“a swi ndzi”
“nifikile”	“ndzi fikile”

Through learners’ narrative essays analysis, the study found that almost all learners combine words which were supposed to be separated when writing them, and vice versa. This implies that learners implement process writing in the wrong way since it is the only approach that should be adopted when writing a text that is error free.

### 4.3.2. Coherence and cohesion

As part of planning, non-spontaneous texts including written discourse and speeches, the way the texts are put together can be explained by the elements of coherence and cohesion. Hence Phillips (2023: 16) indicates that coherence and cohesion are an important feature of academic writing. It is of a view by James (2022: 36) that coherence is about the unity of the ideas while cohesion can be seen as the unity of the structural elements.

#### 4.3.2.1. Findings from educators

Teacher 2 talked about the issue or errors of coherence and cohesion as one of the errors that compromised the learners' ability to write narrative essays. The following question was asked teacher 2 by the researcher and underneath it is the response from the teacher.

***Question 1: What are the errors committed by learners when writing their narrative essay?***

This question was responded by teacher 2. The teacher responded to this question in the manner that follows pertaining the errors committed by learners when writing narrative essays:

Teacher 2

*... Lack of coherence and cohesion is one of the errors that learners commit when writing their Xitsonga narrative essays. Most learners tend to write statements, phrases, paragraphs and sentences that do have a correct meaning or the intended meaningful meaning.*

#### 4.3.2.2. Findings from learners' narrative essays

Rabit (2023: 32) outlines that it is vital in language writing to present ideas in a logical and coherent manner. This makes an essay to be user friendly and more relevant to the reader. Lack of coherence and cohesion is found on Grade 10 learners' essays while the researcher was analyzing the learners' essays. For instance, on learners' essay 1 as attached on appendix 1, the first paragraph in an essay should always be an introduction. According to the Guidelines for teaching and writing essays and transactional text (2019: 5), it is stated that "the introduction should attract the attention of the recipient or the reader". The introduction on the analyzed learners' essay does not have the qualities of grabbing the attention of the reader. The heading written is not in line with the ideas presented in the introductory paragraph. The heading is "**Siku na nkarhi**", but in the paragraph the learner wrote about how the money was raised to spend with friends.

It is stated that a narrative essay tells a story about something that took place sometime ago. This implies that it should be written in the past tense (Guidelines for teaching and writing of essays and transactional text, 2019: 5). On the third line of the fifth paragraph of learners' essay 1, the learner states that "**hi famba hi muka ekaya**" which indicates the present tense, when in fact he should have used the word "**hi fambile hi muka ekaya**", which indicates the past tense. There is a lack of coherence and cohesion in the words and sentences in the essay. The fifth paragraph provides evidence of these errors as the learner explains that "**hi vuya hi famba hiya xava swo dya, hi ya handle hi ya xava swa ku dya hi khata swinepe hi munhu wa khamera**". The conclusion of an essay should be the one that remains in the mind of the reader. It should be captured and well written (Guidelines for teaching and writing of essays and transactional text, 2019: 6). The writing of this conclusion is another error found through the analysis since it is weakly written and cannot remain in the mind and be remembered by the reader. For example, in paragraph one of learners' essays, the learner wrote a sentence that is meaningless, wherein the sentence was highlighted with a red ink on the learner's essay.

The introduction of this essay is not correctly written since it does not hold or appeal to the attention of the message recipient as highlighted on the Guidelines for teaching

and writing of essay and transactional text (2019: 5). The learner uses a capital letter in the middle of a sentence, as in the second paragraph first line, the learner wrote **“Four”** using the letter **“F”** where he should use the lower case **“f”**. This learner’s essay lacks coherence and cohesion of events and ideas, as it was validated through the third paragraph that outlines that **“they wore clothes”** and then the learner further utters that they bought clothes thereafter. This entails that they wore the clothes before the actual buying of these clothes.

Presentation of ideas in a logical and coherent way is very important in essay writing, which is still a major challenge in learners when it comes to essay writing. The presentation of ideas on learners’ essays is found to be a major problem, wherein learners’ views and ideas are not well presented in this essay. This was evident on paragraph 2 of learner’s essay 2 as attached in appendix 2, given that the learner wrote this statement **“Makume Gezani va yimisa movha tlhelo va ni vutisa ku wa swolava ku dyondza movha?”**. From the quoted sentence, the study reveals that the learner does not clearly state where his uncle stopped the car. The learner just states that on the side, but not giving a clear information of this side.

The ideas presented do not relate to the context of the essay. The learner wrote this statement **“Ni lo endla leswi va nga ndzi komba swona movha yo tlakuka yi famba”**, which means, **“I just did what he showed me, then the car raised up and moved”**. In paragraph 3 of the learners’ essay, the learner outlines that his uncle told him not to show him. This indicates that there is no consistency in the learner’s presentation of his ideas. In the true instance, the car does not rise and move, but it starts to move. Here the learner further mentions that the car just raised up, which indicates that the learner did not use a formal and sophisticated language. Moreover, on learners’ essay 3 as attached in appendix 3, lack of coherent errors was found to be committed as the learner does not state the facts clearly when writing, where in paragraph 1 the learner wrote the following phrase **“ni pfuka na mpundu ni hlamba ni ri hava mali yo xava swo tsakisa mbilu ya mina.”** With this statement, the learner did not explain the things that the learner wanted to buy which pleases his/her heart. Still on learner’s essay 3, a lot of meaningless sentences were used which compromise the logical flow of ideas as it is stated in paragraph 1, that **“mali ya mina**

**yi vave ngopfu**”, which means **“my money was so painful”**. When reading this phrase, it is found that there is lack of coherence and cohesion.

According to the DBE-Guidelines for teaching and writing of essays and transactional text (2019: 8), a complete essay is one that states the facts clearly so that readers can understand the message through the author. On learners’ essay 3 as attached, the learner continued to present ideas in an incoherent manner. On paragraph 2, the learner wrote these words, **“ndzi va byele leswaku mina ninge tirhi minga ni nyikani yo xava swilo swoni tsakisa nyana.”**, meaning that **“I told them I will not work if you don’t give me money to buy something fun”**. Here the learner did not specify what items he wanted to buy which please him, and the construction of this sentence is incorrect as it does not have logic. The following sentence is written by the learner, and it is evidence of lack of coherence and cohesion on the essay: **“...nite ni loko ni hlanganisa hi swilo swa kahle na foyini yo teka kahle”** and when translated to English means. **“I said and come across good things and a cellphone that is normal”**. Lack of coherence was identified as the learner indicates that he told his parents, and before explaining what he told them, he then outlines that he came across good things and a cell phone that is normal.

Again, on learners’ essay 4 as attached in appendix 4, there is no relationship between the sub-headings on the planning and the content written on each paragraph, where the topics on the mind map indicate what is discussed, but the paragraph presents a different information. A topic sentence is also missing in the paragraphs, where it is necessary to guide the reader as to what to expect from the paragraph and what the paragraph is all about. Furthermore, the introduction and conclusion of an essay does not align with the regulation of writing a narrative essay, as the Guideline for teaching and writing of essays and transactional texts (2019: 10) recommends that an essay should have an introduction that captures the reader's attention, so that he or she wants to read further. The conclusion should be one that is not easily forgettable in the reader's mind, but in this essay, the introduction and conclusion do not match the standards of the guidelines of writing narrative essays.

Through the analysis of learner’s essay 5, it was found that the learner used a present tense in writing a narrative essay, whereas the guidelines for writing narrative essays



disclose that this kind of essay should be written in the past tense. Another error found in the essay is that the learner used the plural forms; in other words, referring to a single person or things, and the learner should have used a singular form of words. In the second paragraph, the learner states that “...**ni vuyile niya khandiya mabazi...**” which is incorrect, and the learner should have written “...**ndzi vuyile ndzi ya khandziya bazi...**”, since it is only one bus that the learner is going to travel with. Lastly, coherence was found to be lacking on learners’ essay 6 as attached in appendix 6. Lack of consistency was found on the learner’s work, and this was evident through the following phrase from paragraph 3 of learner’s essay draft, as it is written that “...**hi loko manana va pfuka va ni byela leswaku ni fanele kuya e Holofani ni ya khela kokwani timangu.**” The learner further asserted the statement that says “**loko naha tselekile manana vandzi vitanile leswaku vakota kuni rhuma ekava kokwani vale ka Magorho.**” The two statements made by the learner resulted in lack of consistency as at first, the learner states that he was sent to go and deliver ground nuts for his grandmother at *Holofani* village, but later said that he was sent to go and deliver water for his grandmother at *Magorho* village. NB. It is not stated in the quotation you provided.

#### **4.3.3. Grammatical errors**

Grammatical errors are an instance of faulty or controversial language use in a sentence or paragraph. Errors of grammar makes it very difficult for the reader to read and understand the message intended to be delivered by the writer. Helzen (2019: 36) outlines that grammatical errors occurs when an individual breaks normative writing rules of constructing sentences. Grammatical errors are simply a term used in prescriptive grammar to describe an instance of faulty, unconventional, or controversial language usage.

##### **4.3.3.1. Findings from educators**

Teacher 3 was asked the same question with the other educators. The teacher outlined the grammatical errors as common errors that learners commit when writing Xitsonga narrative essays. The teacher responded to the question in the following way:

**Question 1: What are the errors committed by learners when writing their narrative essay?**

Teacher 3:

*The common errors that learners tend to commit when writing narrative essays are punctuation, incorrect spelling, incorrect capitalisation, comma splice, incorrect usage or omission ...*

The findings indicate that learners commit errors of grammar such as incorrect punctuations, misspelling of words, incorrect use of tenses, etc. as they write their essays. This implies that learners commit mistakes of punctuation (incorrect capitalization), wherein they use capital letters in the middle of the word or sentences. Sometimes they start a sentence using a small letter. Bulgiyah et al., (2021: 164) stresses the fact that when writing a language, grammatical rules are very important and need to be adhered to. They further indicate that learners misspell words and incorrectly punctuate words, sentences, and paragraphs. In the case of punctuation, learners start sentences with a small letter instead of a capital letter. They sometimes commit an error when they fail to place a full stop when ending a sentence or a paragraph. Moreover, an error of using informal (spoken) language in formal writing by learners is found to be committed, which is mostly influenced by the social media language and dialect. The logical flow of events is another error committed by learners as they write their essay according to the teacher. Lastly, misspelling, or incorrect spelling of words is also another error usually found to be committed by learners when writing their essays.

The findings also show that learners commit errors of punctuation in essay writing. They tend to incorrectly punctuate their writing which leads their essay to have improper meaning. The joining and separation of words is another error that tends to be committed by learners in writing essays. The use of coherent sentences which do not end is another error learners commit. Mose (2019: 101) indicates that learners write incoherent paragraphs and sentences in their essays, which as a result, the essay becomes meaningless. Lastly, learners tend to write paragraphs which have

their own message not relating to the topic. This makes the essay to have different ideas which are not in line with the essay topic. The responses simply indicate that learners commit errors of punctuation, misspelling of words, and the use of informal language when writing, which leads to meaningless essay writing. It is also mentioned that coherence and cohesion are lacking in the learners' essay, which leads learners to write long paragraphs which are not relevant to the topic.

#### 4.3.3.2. Findings from learners' narrative essays

Sülükçü and Kırboğa (2020: 13) allude that punctuation is one of the most important aspects of writing language and yet, it is one that is taken lightly the most. In fact, this feature of writing gives meaning to the written words much like pauses and changes in tones of the voice when speaking. The evidence of punctuation errors was found on this learner's essay 1, as attached in appendix 1. Incorrect punctuation of words results in the essay having a wrong meaning and produce incorrect messages using meaningless sentences. According to Beard and Bured (2022: 19), punctuation errors always affect the quality of the essay or learners' essay, even though they appear to be harmless. Starting a sentence with a small letter rather than using a capital letter is one of the errors that were identified in the learners' essay, wherein the following examples were outlined:

Words with punctuation errors	correct words
"leswi"	"Leswi"
"loko"	"Loko"
"mihloti"	"Mihloti"

Furthermore, the incorrect capitalization of a noun in the essay is another error that was found, where the learners wrote the noun "**giyani**" starting with a small letter while it was supposed to be written like "**Giyani**", since it is the name of the town. Other errors found to be committed by the learner on learners' essay 1 are punctuation errors particularly the capitalization of words, wherein it was found that the learner incorrectly capitalized some of the words used on the essay. In the writing of essays, learners mostly start their sentences with small letters, and include capital letters in

the middle of some sentences. This problem results in learners obtaining lower marks (Meng & Fan, 2022: 21). The learner used small letters at the beginning of sentences, where the learner was supposed to use capital letters. Below are the examples:

<b>Words incorrectly capitalised</b>	<b>correct capitalised words</b>
“leswi	“Leswi”
“siku	“Siku”
“etikweni	“Etikweni”
“kuvheta	“Ku vheta”
“nyenyenyani	“Nyenyenyani”

In this essay, the punctuation marks are not correctly used, where in the third paragraph the learner is asked by the uncle to say “**xana na wena wa swi lava ku ti kuma u ri karhi u dyondza ku dirayivha movha mzaya**”, which means, “**do you want to find yourself learning to drive a car too my nephew**” without placing a question mark punctuation “?” to demonstrate that this is a question. Moreover, errors of punctuations were committed on learners’ essay 2 attached on appendix 2, wherein the learner used a lower case in starting a sentence. The rules of writing a language indicate that when starting a sentence, a capital letter should be used to indicate that you are beginning a sentence. The learner started a sentence on paragraph one with a lower case, as the sentence starts with “**siku**”, the learner used a small letter “**s**” where it was supposed to be a capital letter “**S**”, so that the words should be “**Siku**”. The word “**leswi**” on paragraph 2 is written starting with a small letter “**l**” where it was supposed to be “**Leswi**” starting with a capital letter since it is starting a sentence. Furthermore, on paragraph three the lower case “**l**” for the word “**leswi**” is also used by the learner and it was supposed to be a capital letter “**L**” so that the word can read “**Leswi**”. Again, the word “**nyenyenyani**” a small letter “**n**” is used to start this word instead of capital letter “**N**” since it is a noun.

On learners’ essay 4 which is attached in appendix 4, errors of punctuations were also identified by the researcher when doing the analysis, where it was found that the learner started some of the sentences using a small letter. The learner was supposed to start with a capital letter. For example, in paragraph 3, in the second sentence the

learner used the word “**nite**” with a small letter instead of using the word “**Ndzi te**” starting with a capital letter. The learner also incorrectly punctuated a proper noun, where a proper noun “**giyani**” is written with a small letter “g” while it was supposed to be written as “**eGiyani**” with a capital letter “**G**”. In paragraph number one, a small letter “**s**” in the word “**sunguti**” is used, whereby it was supposed to be written in a capital letter since it is a proper noun.

The punctuation errors were further identified on the analyzed learners’ essay 5 as attached in appendix 5, wherein the learner failed to write a proper noun “**sunguti**” starting with a capital letter “**S**” in paragraph 1. In paragraph 3, the learner also wrote the noun “**nhlanhla**” with a small letter instead of “**Nhlahla**” with a capital letter at the beginning to indicate that it is a name of a person. Furthermore, errors of using a capital letter in the middle of sentences was found on this essay, where the learner wrote “**Ndzi**” on the topic which was supposed to be written as “**ndzi**” without capital letter “**N**”, since the word is placed in the middle of the sentence. Moreover, in paragraph 2 the learner wrote the word “**Naswona**” with a capital letter “**N**” which is incorrect. The learner was supposed to write this letter as “**naswona**” with a small letter. In paragraph 3 the word “**Navelela**” with a capital letter “**N**” is used while it was supposed to be written with a small letter for the word to be like “**navelela**”.

Lastly, in paragraph 2 and 3 the word “**Tinamuneti**” with a capital letter is used by the learner instead of using the word “**tinamuneti**” with a small letter in the beginning. In accordance with punctuation errors, the researcher also found that the learner wrote so many long sentences and paragraphs without using a punctuation mark comma (,) not even in a single sentence. The learner wrote so many complex sentences joining them with conjunctions, but the learner never used a comma. Through the rules of language writing, it is found that when joining two main clauses with a conjunction, one should place a comma before the conjunction. In this regard, the learner committed an error of not including even a single comma on the essay.

The study further reveals that errors of punctuations were identified on learners’ essay 6, where the learner mistakenly started sentences with small letters rather than capital letters. For instance, on the topic the learners started the sentence with a lower case rather than using a capital letter. Same as on paragraph 2, the learner started the

sentence with “lexi” with a small letter “l” which was supposed to be a capital letter “L”. Moreover, the learner writes the noun in the essay starting with a lowercase, whereas according to the ethics of language writing, a noun should start with an uppercase. In this essay, the learner wrote the name of the person where he wrote “mash”, where he should have started the noun “Mash” with a capital letter. In addition, the name “peter mokaba stadium” is written using the lowercases at the beginning, whereas the letter “P” on peter, “M” on the word “mokaba” and letter “S” on the word “stadium” were supposed to be written with capital letters. Also, this word was supposed to be written in italics or placed in inverted commas to indicate that it is not a word of the language of writing the essay.

#### **4.3.4. The spelling mistakes**

Words that are commonly not found in the published dictionaries are flagged as spelling mistakes. Smith (2019: 28) argues that in most cases spelling mistakes happens most when a person is dealing with homophones. This means that spelling mistakes are simply the errors committed by learners or writers in a piece of writing which is commonly related to grammatical errors.

##### **4.3.4.1. Findings from educators**

From the interview with teacher 3, it was found that spelling errors are another contributing factor of learners' inability when it comes to essay writing at school. The educator was asked the question below and the response from the educator is under the question.

***Question 1: What are the errors committed by learners when writing their narrative essay?***

Teacher 3:

*...misspelling of words in narrative essays writing is a common error that is mostly committed by learners. Most of*

*the learners incorrectly spell words when writing in an academic or formal setting, which makes their essay not to be reader friendly and obtain low grades. This is most common to all the learners' irrespective of their class or Grade at school.*

#### **4.3.4.2. Findings from learners' narrative essays**

A correct spelling of words on the writing of essays or any text in a language plays a vital role in producing a meaningful text (Mustadi, 2023: 68). The misspelling of words is another error found by the researcher on learners' essay 1 as attached in appendix 1, where the learners misspelled some of the words when writing. A spelling is very important when writing since it changes the whole intended meaning when it is not correctly captured. The following are the examples of the words misspelled by the learner on the narrative essay analyzed:

<b>Misspelled words</b>	<b>correct spelling</b>
"thlela"	"tlhela"
"hlambine"	"hlambile"
"hlanganiswa"	"hlanganisiwa"
"mbuyakwani"	"mbuyangwani"
"thlelo"	"tlhelo"

Another error of misspelling words was also found on learner's essay 2, attached in appendix 2, where the learner wrote a lot of misspelled words. In most cases essays that are awarded lower marks happen to have a lot of spelling errors (Kaljanov, 2023: 27). The misspelling of words is a major contributing factor to learners' meaningless essay writing. The examples of incorrect spelling errors committed are as follows:

<b>Misspelled words</b>	<b>correct spelling</b>
"vahetile"	"va hetile"
"xitlangwani"	"xintlangwani"
"hikwavo"	"hinkwavo"

“nahena”  
“endlini”  
“tsako”  
“nnga”

“nanghena”  
“endlwini”  
“ntsako”  
“nga”

On the learner’s essay 3 as attached in appendix 3, the essay is further found to have spelling errors. The misspelling of words on this essay contributed to the essay being awarded lower marks since it made the essay to use unbalanced language and lack logical presentation of ideas. The following are words misspelled by the learner on this essay:

<b>Misspelled words</b>	<b>correct spelling</b>
“vahetile”	“va hetile”
“xitlangwani”	“xintlangwani”
“hikwavo”	“hinkwavo”
“nahena”	“nanghena”
“endlini”	“endlwini”
“tsako”	“ntsako”
“nnga”	“nga”
“timangu”	“timangwa”

Once more, through the analysis of learner’s essay 5, as attached in appendix 5, the misspelling of words is found. The misspelling of words has become the major contributing factor in writing of meaningless essays by learners at schools. The following are some of the examples of words misspelled by the learners on their learners’ essay 5:

<b>Misspelled words</b>	<b>correct spelling</b>
“thlela”	“tlhela”
“hlanganiswa”	“hlanganisiwa”
“mbuyakwane”	“mbuyangwani”
“hlambine”	“hlambile”
“lawuneki”	“lawuleki”



“ymbeleriwa”  
“sakile”

“ymbeleriwa”  
“ndzi cinile”

Another example on the issue of spelling errors is on learners’ essay 6 attached in appendix 6. From this example a lot of misspelling of words is another error found to be committed. In essay writing, misspelling of words is a major challenge since it makes the essay to lose its original and intended meaning. In this essay, there are a lot of misspelled words that were used by the learner, and they have compromised the intended message to be delivered. The following are the misspelled words used by the learner when writing this essay:

<b>Misspelled words</b>	<b>correct spelling</b>
“lumelela”	“humelela”
“lambana”	“hambana”
“fani”	“tani”
“endawini”	“endhawini”
“lungisela”	“lunghisela”
“liunga”	“ku nga”
“switsahisa”	“swi tsakisa”
“hinlweni”	“hinkwenu”
“mafahuxa”	“matakuxa”
“khalelani”	“kholelangi”

In relation to the misspelling of words committed on learners’ essay 6, the researcher realized that the learner confuses letters where the learner writes “l” where it was supposed to be “k”. The learner further confuses the letters “f” and “t” wherein the learner sometimes writes “t” where it was supposed to be “f”.

#### **4.3.5. The Informal language use**

An informal language is a style of speech and writing used when addressing someone we know or someone we would like to get to know. This kind of a language is only used in an informal setting and not for academic purposes. According to Melrose

(2022: 86) informal language is a common, everyday language which might include slang words. It is casual and continually changing, and it cannot be used in a formal situation like academic. The informal language is used in a situation that are more relaxed and involves people we know well.

#### **4.3.5.1. Findings from educators**

All the three educators who participated in this study were asked a question about the factors that compromises the learners' ability to write narrative essays. This question was asked to get the root cause of the learners' inability to write narrative essays. The educator's responses were satisfactory in answering the research aims and objectives as they answered the question as follows:

#### **Question 2: What are the factors that contribute to the learners' inability to write narrative essays?**

In this question the teachers responded as follows:

Teacher 1:

*The influence of social media language constitutes to the learners committing more errors to their essays. Lack of commitment to essay writing activities by learners is one of the reasons for the lack of writing skills. Learners are found to be unenthusiastic to actively engage in learning and writing of essays ...*

Teacher 2:

*The influence of dialect does contribute to learner errors, since learners spend much time communicating with their friends and relatives wherein the dialect language used compromises their formal language proficiency ...*

Teacher 3:

*Unstandardized language usage is one of the factors that contribute to a learner's inability to comprehend a good narrative essay. Learners tend to use the spoken language rather than the academic writing language. The influence of the fourth industrial revolution plays a significant role in the academic use of unstandardized language to learners, since learners are used to cell phone Apps that help them with spelling which compromise their language vocabulary.*

The above findings indicate that as we are living in the fourth industrial revolution (digital world), social media has become part of our everyday life. Herein the teachers entail that social media language is the major contributing factor of errors committed by Grade 10 learners when writing narrative essays. It is supported by Ngokoana (2019: 83) that social media is another leading cause of learners committing errors such as informal language use, shortening words when writing among others. Another factor that causes learners to commit more errors in their essays is lack of learners' commitment to engage themselves in essay writing activities. They tend to have bad attitudes towards creative writing activities, which at the end makes them not to actively participate to the best of their abilities in writing.

Furthermore, the findings show that dialect is also a factor that contributes to the errors committed by learners when they write essays. A dialect "is a variety of language that signals where a particular person comes from" (Paul, 2020: 73). It is further indicated by Khazraji (2019: 92) that dialect influences and affects one's vocabulary proficiency. It also influences the way the learner writes the language. The use of dialect results in lot of errors. For example, in *Malamulele* when they pronounce six (6) as a number they say "**Tsevu**", but in formal Xitsonga language it is "**Ntsevu**". Then learners commit an error of sometimes using this dialect language and as a result, the essay loses its meaning and format. Also, learners commit an error of choosing a topic that they usually do not fully understand. This ultimately makes them fail to present their ideas in a more coherent and logical way.

The above presented findings are much related and relevant to errors committed by learners in essay writing. They indicate the impact of the fourth industrial revolution that learners spend much time interacting on social media platforms which compromise the language vocabulary proficiency, thereby leading to the incorrect writing of essays.

Furthermore, teacher 3 affirms that the fourth industrial revolution also plays a vital role in the errors committed by learners when writing essays. Since learners are getting used to cell phone applications and computer software that helps them in spelling words, this compromises their language vocabulary resulting in them using unstandardized language in their academic writing of essays. This issue of using more digital platforms makes learners to use the language of social media where they shorten words and use emoji's to convey meaning or thoughts. Most of the learners spend much of their time on social media platforms which result in them getting used to informal language, wherein they are no longer familiar with the formal academic language writing. As a result, it makes them to use the informal language instead of writing formally.

#### **4.3.5.2. Findings from learners' narrative essays**

Academic writing should not include conjunctions, idiomatic expressions, incomplete sentences, or informal slang. Lorraine (2023: 135) outlines that students should always bear in mind that when one writes one's extended essay, one should use language that is formal and academic in tone. The learners also committed errors of using informal and social media language in academic writing. An example of the learner's essay 1 which is attached in appendix 1 used inappropriate words in formal writing of Xitsonga language. The fourth industrial revolution has created a digital platform which requires people to communicate, interact and do things digitally, wherein learners spend much time on social media which anticipates the influence of their language writing (Ahmodovich et al., 2023: 215). This means that the learner used informal language when writing this essay. The following are the informal words used in this essay and how they are written in a standardized Xitsonga language,

which are influenced by the digital world of learners' day to day communications and interactions:

<b>Informal words used</b>	<b>the formal words to be used</b>
"Selebireyita"	"Ku tlangela"
"emashopeni"	"eMavhengeleni"
"eshopeni"	"eVhengeleni"

The learner on learners' essay 2 essay, that is attached in appendix 2 used some English words when writing a Xitsonga narrative essay, such as the word "**celebrate**" in paragraph 1, wherein the learner was supposed to use Xitsonga accurate words like "**ku tlangela**". Once again, in paragraph 3 the learner used the word "**shuta**" which is the learner's coined words, as we do not have the word that means what the learner is referring to. The learners were supposed to use a Xitsonga accurate word like "**foda**" or "**khata**". In paragraph 4, on the second line the learner wrote the word "**Wimpy**" but did not put quotation marks or write it in italics to illustrate that this word is not a Xitsonga word, but an English word on Xitsonga sentence.

According to the rules of the South African Language Board (SALB) on language writing, it stipulates that a formal writing should be made using formal and academic language. In the essay of learners' essay 3, as attached on appendix 3, the learner uses informal language or words. The following are the informal words used in the essay by the learner:

<b>Informal words used</b>	<b>the formal words to be used</b>
"dirayivha movha"	"chayela xipandzamananga"
"tlukuka"	"tlakuka"
"nilo"	"ndzi lo"
"ni"	"ndzi"

Looking at the examples above, it was found on learner's essay 3 that the learner used informal language again as used on the draft essay. It was also established that these are errors originating from the drafted learner's essay, as they appear to be similar.

The learner used informal language rather than the academic language of writing, and the following examples of informal words were identified:

<b>Informal words used</b>	<b>the formal words to be used</b>
"dirayivha"	"chayela"
"tlukuka"	"tlakuka"
"nilo"	"ndzi lo"
"ni"	"ndzi"

The similar errors of using informal language in academic writing of essays were also found on learner's essay 4 as attached in appendix 4. The learner used every day spoken language, which is not the standardized language, of which should be used in formal writing. The following informal words were used on this essay.

<b>Informal words used</b>	<b>the formal words to be used</b>
"niri"	"ndzi ri"
"ni"	"ndzi"
"akaya"	"ekaya"
"tibege"	"tibeke"
"pahla"	"mpahla"
"foyini"	"riqhingho"
"chomi"	"munghana"
"party"	"nkhuvo"ntlangu?"

The learners' narrative essay 4 which is attached in appendix 4, was found to be having more errors of informal language use than the draft. This implies that the learner wrongly implemented the process writing, and this was evident after finding more errors on the learner's essay which was claimed to have been edited. Informal language errors were found on the essay, where the learner used more of the spoken language when writing in a formal essay. The informal language used in formal writing makes the writing lose its intended message or meaning. The learner used some of the following informal words on this essay:

Informal words used	the formal words to be used
“tichomi	“vanghana”
“tibege	“tibeke”
“phati	“nkhuvo wa siku ro velekiwa”
“byela	“byerile”
“nilo”	“ndzi lo”
“sasekani”	“sasekile”
“pfuke”	“pfukile”
“nyiketani”	“nyiketangi”
“ninge”	“ndzi nge”
“foyini”	“riqhingho”
“foyini yo teka kahle”	“riqhingho ra xiyimo xa le henhla”
“pundu”	“mpundzu”
“hiku”	“hikuva”
“avani”	“a va ndzi”

On learners’ essay 5 as attached in appendix 5, informal language use errors were found, where the learner used spoken language in a context where academic language of writing was supposed to be used. The learner tends to use more of the language of speaking when writing this essay. The following are some of the examples extracted from the essay:

Informal words used	the formal words of the used
“ni”	“ndzi”
“vo hayi”	“va ku hayi”
“mata”	“mativa”
“tamba”	“famba”
“ize”	“ku kondza”

Furthermore, on this essay the use of English words on the writing of Xitsonga without correctly punctuating them is another error found committed. It was found on the essay that the learner used the English words “**happy birth day**” where the learner also separated “**birth**” and “**day**”, where the word was supposed to be joined

together. The learner was supposed to use the Xitsonga word for “**happy birthday**” which is “**ku tlangela siku ro velekiwa**”. Also, the learner wrote the word “**2 case**” instead of saying “**magasi mambirhi**” which is a Xitsonga formal word. The word “**Taxi**” in paragraph 2 and 3 is used instead of “**xibazana**”. Also, the word “**busy**” is used where the Xitsonga formal word “**ku gingirika**” **should have been used**. The learner used an English word “**Airtime**”. Since there is no proper word meaning for airtime in Xitsonga, the learner was supposed to indicate by writing the word with quotation marks or writing this word in italics, to indicate that this is an English word. Informal language use is another error found to be committed by the learner on learners’ essay 5 as attached in appendix 5. The learner used more of the informal (spoken) language, which is because of dialect language. Here on this essay, the learner committed more errors of informal language than on the draft essay. The following are the informal words used:

<b>Informal words used</b>	<b>the formal words of be used</b>
“kuri”	“leswaku”
“vangani”	“va nga ndzi”
“mpundu”	“mpundzu”
“nangutisa”	“langutisa”
“ni”	“ndzi”
“nhotwa”	“ndzi twile”
“dankie”	“ndza khensa”
“no”	“ndzo”
“noti”	“ndzo ti”
“mata”	“mativa”
“Taxi”	“xibazana”
“case”	“gasi”
“busy”	“ku gingirika”
“coldrink”	“namuneti”

It was further found on learners’ essay 6 which is attached in appendix 6, that informal (spoken) language was used when responding to formal writing. Herein the learner used more of the informal language that people used when speaking, which is not a



standardized language, which as a result compromises the quality of the essay and drives its meaning away from the topic. The following are examples of informal (spoken) words used on this essay by the learner:

<b>Informal words used</b>	<b>the formal word to be used</b>
“laha kuri”	“laha a ku ri”
“ghighi”	“ntlangu”
“25”	“makumembirhintlhanu”
“lunghisela”	“lulamisela”
“lexi axini”	“lexi a xi ndzi”
“ni”	“ndzi”
“avani”	“a va ndzi”
“a swini”	“a swi ndzi”

It could be further pointed out that the use of informal language in academic writing was found on learner’s essay 6 as attached in appendix 6, which is an error when writing a formal essay to use the language of speaking rather than the standardized language. According to Johannesson (2021: 29), informal language is regularly used in our everyday life, whether on Facebook, WhatsApp, text messages, Twitter, etc. The informal words used by the learner in this essay are words that are only used in speaking which are dialects. The following are the informal words used by the learner when writing this essay:

<b>Informal words used</b>	<b>the formal words of be used</b>
“nipfukile”	“ndzi pfukile ”
“aninga”	“a ndzi nga”
“ni vtheta”	“ndzi vtheta ”
“nita”	“ndzi ta”
“vani”	“va ndzi”
“kuni”	“ku ndzi”
“aswini”	“a swi ndzi”
“ni vuyile ni”	“ndzi vuyile ndzi”

The study further reveals that shortening of words when writing is another error mostly committed by the learners on their essays. On this aspect, the learners tend to use social media language when formally writing their essays. The shortening of words or the use of social media language has become a major issue when it comes to learners' formal writing. The following are shortened words used on the essay, where the learner wrote the word “**tol-**” instead of “**tolo**”. Other shortened words are:

<b>Shortened words</b>	<b>the correct words in full</b>
“kaya”	“ekaya”
“gy”	“Giyani”
“byeril”	“byerile”
“bbe”	“babe”
“ndi”	“ndzi”
“hiku”	“hikuva”

The presence of too many errors on learners' essays led the researcher to conclude that learners' essays are not edited, which is evidence that process writing is incorrectly implemented by Grade 10 learners when writing essays. Dawson (2023: 16) emphasizes the idea that writing loses its intended meaning when it is not properly edited. This is because the essay will have too many errors which derive the meaning of the essay.

#### **4.3.6. The classroom observation findings**

The research data were also collected through observing Grade 10 teachers and learners' teaching and writing Xitsonga narrative essay in the classroom from the selected school. The researcher observed the strategies used by educators when teaching Grade 10 learners how to inscribe Xitsonga narrative essays. Also, the writing process implementation by Grade 10 learner when writing essays have been observed.

#### **4.3.6.1. The educator's strategies for teaching essay writing**

The skills of writing and presenting are viewed to be combining three elements which are; (i) using of the writing process, (ii) teaching and applying the knowledge of the structure and features of Xitsonga narrative essay, (iii) lastly, learning and applying the gained knowledge of paragraphs and sentence structure and punctuations (Kim, 2022: 17-18). The teacher applied all the three strategies outlined in teaching and learning of essays, but it was observed and found that the educator has slightly emphasised the writing process application when writing the essays. The teacher emphases were centred on learner's knowledge solicitation when writing essays together with the issue of paragraphs and sentence structuring. It was also observed that learners don't pay much attention when learning in the classroom. This was evident when the teacher constantly tells learners to keep quiet as the teaching and learning process was taking place.

When observing the strategies of teaching learners how to write essays, it is of a view that writing should be a process rather than a product (Jack, 2023: 16). It was found that learners do not correctly implement the process writing. This was valid when observing learners narrative essay writing, where the learners failed to effectively plan their work and further failed to edit their own work. When moving around the classroom as learners were writing their narrative essay, the researcher then realised that learners are planning their writing in an inconvenient way. The researcher further wanted to genuinely understand the status quo and further asked the learners, where learners explained that after writing their essays, they do check for errors committed but they can't find errors on their own. This implies that learners found their essays having no errors when they must edit simply because they are the once who wrote the essays.

#### **4.3.6.2. Teaching and narrative essay knowledge application**

In essays writing teaching one should place a focus on creating a link to the lesson and the learners existing knowledge. Hugeot (2023: 17) indicate that the existing or prior knowledge of learners plays a major role and help learner to write a good quality

essay and further helps them to present their views, ideas, and thoughts in a clear and understandable manner. The learner's prior knowledge allows learners write about something that is personally attached to them, which in tend makes it easier for to link the writing to their emotions. Jacson (2023: 157) states that a good writer is the one that strongly attach emotions when writing, as this brings the originality and the true flection of the real-life events. This makes it simple for learners to present their ideas in a clear and articulated manner. The educator introduced the lesson in a very interesting way, trying to link the prior or existing knowledge of the learners in essay writing.

The starting point of the lesson was through the writing of the plan on a chalk board where the educator clearly presented all the information in a visible and understandable way. The educator used slightly highlighted the writing process steps but did not stress them much to the learners. Further, all the planning methods where the educator demonstrated to the learners were very much simple and understandable and looking quite convincing to the learners and they seemed to be understanding. The educator's chart with an example of a mind map helped the learners to understand the concept better where and the learners were able to use and link their existing knowledge to the activity of planning a Xitsonga narrative essay.

Furthermore, based on classroom observations the educators looked prepared when teaching the writing of Xitsonga narrative essays, although some learners appeared to be a little bit confused and not understanding what the teacher is presenting at the beginning of the lessons. The educator worked hard to divulge the process writing steps in essay writing following the topic prepared to the learners to use when writing essays.

Smith (2022: 29) imparts that teaching approaches that uses aids as they validate that using different strategies helps learners to understand faster and easier. This implies that teachers should integrate the strategies as they teach learners to write essays. Considering the Blooms taxonomy as cited by Kingston (2022) the teachers should always make the lesson easier for learners when learning. This implies that when teaching the educators should start from simple to complex, meaning that learners will find the lesson very much interest from the beginning. This will make the learners to

develop the interest of learning that particular lesson. Lastly, it will help learners to decrease in committing lot of errors when writing Xitsonga narrative essays or any other text.

#### **4.3.6.3. Paragraphs, punctuation, and sentence knowledge application**

Writing in a language is considered as a process rather than a product, this means that when writing a text, the stages of the process writing should correctly implement to produce a meaningful and correct text. Different text requires different approaches when writing them, this is because they differ when it comes to structure and the way in which ideas and thoughts should be presented depending on the text to be written. In every academic writing text, a structure plays a vital role as it also conveys the meaning and carry out marks when marking (Solomon 2019: 82). A correct text structure, the construction of sentences which are much effective, and the correct use of punctuation marks makes a writing to be more formal and error free, also to be reader friendly to the readers or views.

Through the observation it was found that learners use the correct structure of writing an essay but fail to implement the correct structure of planning an essay. This was seen from the first stage of their writing where they had to plan their writing, thus the incorrect structure was used to plan their writing. Dewry (2021: 76) emphasizes that the effective planning of an essay is the one that uses a mind map, since it clearly presents the way in which an essay will unfold from the introductions to the conclusion.

Moreover, the learners further constructed a long paragraph, wherein a normal paragraph should consist of five to eight lines. It was found that learners constructed paragraphs which consist of eleven lines to fourteen lines, which is not a correct structuring of paragraphs in essay writing. Again, learners use punctuation marks incorrectly. This was evident when observed by the teacher as learners write their essays on classroom, where they failed to correctly capitalised letters when starting a sentence, constructing a paragraph that doesn't not end with a full stop and writing incoherence paragraph and sentences.

Lastly, learners construct sentences meaningless sentences whereby they lack coherence. They tend to write a paragraph that has more than five sentences and each sentence does not support the other. In tend this makes the paragraph to have five ideas which does not correlate at all.

#### **4.3.7. Precautionary measures against narrative essay writing inabilities**

During the interview schedule, the educators were asked about what can be done to improve learners' essay writing abilities. They responded well where they sufficient and deep information about the way in which educators, learners, Education Department and other stakeholders can improve learners' essay writing ability. (Please revisit this sentence) The questions below were asked to educators and their responses were also presented.

#### ***Question 3: What can be done to improve learners' ability to write Xitsonga narrative essays?***

In this question the teachers responded in the following way:

Teacher 1:

*To improve the learner's ability to write essays to avoid committing a lot of mistakes on essays by learner's, teachers should actively engage learners in creative writing tasks particularly the essay writing. For learners to minimise the conjunctive and disjunctive writing, syntax should be taught by the teacher. This will help learners to familiarize themselves with the way in which words and sentences are arranged to form meaningful sentences and words. A token of appreciation should be given to learners who get high marks in essays, this can help to motivate learners to actively take part in essay writing.*

Teacher 2:

*The Department should plan workshops and knowledge training sessions which mainly focuses on creative writing, particularly essay writing, since the workshops they conduct are more about the yearly SBA. Parents should also take part in learner's schoolwork where they should help and do follow up so that learners are active and involved in writing activities at home and at school.*

Teacher 3:

*In improving learners' essay writing skills, teachers should give learners more work to write in relation to essays as this will enable them to get used to using the more formal language rather than the dialect. Teachers can also engage learners in essay writing by initiating school-based essay writing competitions where best essay writing learners will be given prizes and like what the Department of Basic Education implemented the Spelling B competitions. Since learners spend much time chatting on social media, they should be advised to use formal language without shortening their words, as this will help them to get used to the correct writing of language.*

The above findings show that to improve learner's ability to actively write narrative essays, teachers should encourage learners to actively engage in creative writing activities. This can only be done if teachers can create a profound teaching and learning environment which will motivate and encourage learners to creatively write essays. Dhani (2021: 237) highlights that a good teaching and learning environment helps learners to actively engage in the reading and writing of language in the classroom. Furthermore, teachers can also implement creative writing competitions where prizes will be won. This can also create focus and make learners develop interest in creative writing and particularly essays.

The findings also show that since the Department of Basic Education plans workshops which are related to SBA (What is the meaning of this abbreviation?) particularly at the beginning of the year, a practical solution is that they should also create a teacher workshop plan, wherein teachers will engage about creative writing only and what they encounter in the classroom situation when teaching writing creatively. Dhani (2021: 398) further posits that assistance to teachers should be offered by the curriculum advisors in a form of quarterly workshop, school, and classroom visits. Lastly, parents should also take part in ensuring that their children write when they are at home. This will help them to increase their vocabulary when they write essays. Garcia and Thornton (2014) as cited by Ntekane (2019: 1) allude that parental involvement in learning helps to improve learners' performance, reduce absenteeism, and restore parents' confidence in their children's education. This means that learners' language acquisition requires both parents and teachers.

The above narration implies that more essay activities should be given to learners and teachers should monitor learners not to use dialect in formal essay writing. The more learners are given the task of creative writing, the better their language use and proficiency in essay writing improves. Since the Department of Basic Education introduced the spelling competitions, teachers with the help of the Department can also initiate a competition of formal language creative writing which can help learners to actively participate and improve their essay writing skills.

#### **4.4. The interpretation of the collected data**

After the collection of research data, the data should be interpreted by the researcher to give and outline the meaning of the message of the data. Kotch (2020: 19) states that data interpretation refers to the process of examining and reviewing data for the purpose of describing the aspects of a particular phenomenon or a concept of a research. In other words, this is the reviewing of the collected and analysed data to draw a meaningful conclusion.



#### **4.4.1. Interpretation of data collected through teachers' interview**

The analysis of learners' essays reveals evidence of what was outlined by teacher 1 that learners do not follow process writing when they write essays. This came after finding errors in the learners' essays, wherein essays are not correctly planned and structured. This study established that learners are unable to brainstorm effective ideas when planning to write. This is evident from the fact that the plan has three sub-headings, whereas the essay is found to have eight paragraphs. The learners' essays were found to lack a logical link between the planning and the writing itself. The discussion of the essays also reveals that coherence and cohesion are lacking, since there is no logical link between the ideas presented.

On a contrary view with the above findings, the information provided by teacher 2 and 3 delineating that learners do follow process writing contradicts with what happens in the real situation when learners write their essays. This was guaranteed after the essay analysis, where it was found that the essays are not well planned, not edited and they contain a lot of errors. Also, it was validated after failing to obtain tangible evidence about where learners had brainstormed, analyzed, edited and corrected errors. This indicates that learners do not follow the writing process as prescribed by the curriculum.

#### **4.4.2. Interpretation of data collected through learners' essays**

The analysis of essays reveals that the learner does not have sufficient essay writing skills required by the curriculum, particularly at the mainstream schools. Through the essay analysis, many errors were found, and they vary according to the learners' writing and their knowledge of academic writing. The errors found to be committed on the essays are arranged according to the following themes:

##### **a) Grammatical errors**

The analysis of the essays reveals several grammatical errors which include misspelling of words, incorrect use of verbs and wrong use of some part of speeches

by the learners. It was further found that conjunctive and disjunctive writing approaches were applied by learners when writing. It was also found that learners failed to write topic sentences and statements or ideas to support their arguments on their essay. The use of capital letters in the middle of a sentence was also found in approximately all the essays analyzed.

#### **b) Punctuations errors**

Punctuation is one of the barriers to learners writing Xitsonga narrative essays. This study found that the learners were unable to punctuate their essays effectively. Approximately all learners are unable to use a comma effectively when writing their sentences. This was validated after finding out that learners wrote a paragraph of about eight lines without using a comma. It is further revealed that most learners do not understand how to use a full stop. This was evident where the learner wrote a paragraph with several sentences, but without a full stop to indicate the end of the sentence. Again, this study further reveals that learners fail to correctly punctuate the noun which occurs after the essay gave evidence, where the learner wrote the person's name starting with a lowercase and wrote the name of the place beginning with a lowercase while it was supposed to be in capital form.

#### **c) Informal language use**

From the data presented, it could be argued that any text at a formal setting should always be written in an academic language of writing. Through the analysis, it was found that most learners use informal language when they are given tasks of essay writing. The discussion shows that learners use more of informal language when they write their essay. This is due to the influence of the dialect commonly used at their respective places of residences. Furthermore, it was revealed that the use of informal language in academic writing of essays is because of social media such as WhatsApp, Facebook, Twitter, and many more. The presence of the fourth industrial revolution had a greater influence on the academic writing language. This was evident through the learners' essays since they might be spending more time on the digital world. This

influences their language acquisition, as they tend to use the social media language which is an informal language.

#### **d) Coherence and cohesion**

On coherence and cohesion, the study reveals that there is a lack of logical and sequential flow of events and ideas as prescribed by the guidelines of writing essays. It was established that learners failed to organize the facts correctly in their essay, where the learner describes the information of what happened, but does not describe the date, time and place where it happened. When following a logical sequence, the learner should start with the place, date and time where things happened and then follow with what happened and how it happened. Through these essays, we realize that the learner starts to explain what happened and how it happened, then later at the end, that is when the learner reveals the date and time together with the place the event took place. Furthermore, this study found that learners failed to write fluent information according to the structured discussion of the essays, where learners included different issues in the same paragraph which ends up causing confusion in the learners' essay and lacks understandable meaning.

#### **4.4.3. Interpretation of data collected through classroom observation**

Through the classroom observation it has been found that learners wrongly implement processes writing when writing Xitsonga narrative essay in classroom. It was observed as learners were planning their writing that they incorrectly planning their essays. Further it was found that they don't edit their works, as when asked they indicated that they don't find any errors in their writings thus the reason when they don't edit this essay. It was also observed that the learners use bullets when planning their essay as opposed to what is required by the curriculum. The CAPS curriculum entails that the most effective way of planning text is the use of a mind map and it clearly outlines what the essay or text is all about in clear and presentable way.

It was further found that educators strongly put emphases on the knowledge application when writing essays and lesser emphases the issue of process writing as the curriculum requires one to apply it when writing a text. The incorrect punctuation

by learners when writing essay together with the paragraph structuring problem was also identified when observing learners writing the Xitsonga narrative essay in class. Lastly, the findings reveals that learners strongly applies their knowledge based but yet the challenge is that they have low language vocabulary whereby they fail to present ideas in a clear and presentable manner to the reader. This tend to compromise their writing hence they get low marks on their essays.

#### **4.5. Conclusion**

This chapter reveals the presentation and analysis of learners' narrative essays together with the teachers' interview questions and responses in relation to the challenges learners encounter in writing narrative essays at school. It is through this chapter that it was validated that learners lack sufficient knowledge and skills concerning the writing of narrative essays, as there are many errors that were found and outlined in their essay which limits them to fully comprehend good quality essays.

## **CHAPTER 5: FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **5.1. Introduction**

The purpose of this chapter is to present the summary of this study, conclusion and recommendations. This chapter concludes the study by summarizing the investigation and establishing whether the objectives of the study were met or not. Conclusions regarding the findings are drawn and recommendations are made thereof.

### **5.2. Findings of the study**

The aim and objectives of the study are of paramount importance in guiding this study titled: Narrative Essay Writing in Xitsonga Home Language: A Case of Grade 10 Learners in Limpopo Province. At the end, this study was able to accomplish the following research objectives, which are:

- To outline errors that Grade 10 learners commit in Xitsonga narrative essay Writing.
- To identify the causes that compromise learners' ability to write Xitsonga narrative essays.
- To provide possible solutions on the improvement of Xitsonga learners' narrative essay writing skills.

The study investigated Grade 10 learner's inability to write Xitsonga narrative essay. The writing of incoherent essays, wrong paragraph structure, conjunctive and disjunctive writing have found to be the major errors committed by learners when writing their narrative essays. The continuing Xitsonga home language (HL) low pass rate at the circuit of Sekgosese East is what prompted this study. In addition, the absence of coherence and cohesion in the learners' narrative essay also led to this kind of investigation. Through this study, causes of the learners' inability to write Xitsonga narrative essays were presented. It was also important to understand as to whether the learners' inability is due to the educators' negligence in teaching learners

essay writing and wrong choosing of essay writing teaching strategies or is the learners themselves who do not take essay writing seriously.

The research findings of this study have proven and confirms that learners do not have adequate essay writing skills as required by the CAPS curriculum. This was validated when analyzing learner's essay, and it was discovered that learners did not follow the writing process. Inappropriate planning of essays is also another mistake that was found during the analysis, where according to DoE, it asserts that the use of a mind map is essential and important when planning any kind of essays. Following the learners' essay analysis, a conclusion can be drawn to say educators are the ones who do not teach learners how to structure or properly plan their essays. This is due to the fact that approximately all the learners have written a wrong essay planning structure, and the teacher did not indicate on the learners' scripts that the planning is not correct. In addition, one learner wrote the mind map planning, and the teacher confirmed it to be incorrect using a line crush on the learners' mind map planning. The researcher established that learners did not edit their work, which as a result indicate that they did not implement the process writing.

The use of incorrect spelling, the use of English words in Xitsonga essay writing, and the tendency of speaking colloquial (informal) language when writing in a formal essay are other mistakes that were discovered during the essay analysis. Through essay analysis, it was found that there is no relationship between the planning and the writing itself. This was identified when the planning showed four essay subtopics, but the writing is composed of five paragraphs. Moreover, the analysis showed that teachers do not use rubric when marking learners' essays, which should be a norm since the rubric guides educators to locate whether the learner does have sufficient essay writing skills or not. As part of learners' feedback, it was also discovered that teachers do not indicate the mistakes committed by learners in their essays, and this helps learners to master the language use through the mistakes they committed and get corrected by their teacher.

Lastly, through the responses of the teachers, it was made known that lack of good quality resources/aids to help and enhance the teaching of essay writing skills is another contributing factor of these mistakes committed by learners when writing

essays. Another factor contributing to this problem is the progression of learners by the DoE, which leads them to reach Grade 10 without adequate essay writing skills. The wrong implementation of process writing approach by learners when writing essays also contributes to the inability to correctly write Xitsonga narrative essays. At the end, recommendations are made, to allude that the DoE should avoid progressing learners due to age. The DoE officials, particularly the Curriculum Advisors (CA) should foster the implementation of the process of essay writing. Moreover, they should also monitor this implementation time to time by creating quarterly workshops and SBA file moderations together with school classroom visits.

### **5.3. Summary of the study**

The study investigated errors that are committed by Grade 10 learners when writing Xitsonga narrative essays. The writing of incoherent essays, wrong paragraph structure, conjunctive and disjunctive writing, and continuing Xitsonga home language (HL) low pass rate at the circuit of Sekgosese East is what prompted this study. Deon (2022: 16) outline that creative writing tends to compromise the learner performance as it consists of more marks throughout the year. In addition, the absence of coherence and cohesion in the learners' narrative essay also led to this kind of investigation. Through this study, the causes of the learners' inability to write Xitsonga narrative essays were presented. It was also important to understand as to whether the learners' inability is due to the educators' negligence in teaching their learners essays writing and wrong choosing of essay writing teaching strategies or is the learners themselves who do not take essays writing very seriously.

The aim of this study was to outline the errors committed by Grade 10 learners in Xitsonga narrative essays writing at Sekgosese East Circuit, Mopani District of Limpopo Province. The errors committed by Grade 10 learners in narrative essay writing highly compromises their abilities of essay writing. This happens simply because learners write a non-complete essay with lot of errors which disadvantages them in scoring high marks. This becomes a hindering factor to Grade 10 learners pass rate of the school which will then affect Grade 12 pass rate in the coming two years. According to the NCS, teachers are expected to implement the process writing

approach in teaching and writing of a text, but this study focuses on Xitsonga narrative essay writing.

The following research questions were formulated:

- What are the errors that Grade 10 learners commit in narrative essays writing?
- What constitute/causes Grade 10 learners' narrative essay writing inabilities?
- What can be done to improve learners' ability to write Xitsonga narrative essays?

This study reviewed literature in relation to the errors committed by learners when writing essays in general and in particular as prescribed by the policy. Literature related to the prescribe approaches to essay writing, the different types of essays as outlined by the NCS curriculum have been reviewed in this research sty. Furthermore, the methodology chosen to guide the conduction of this study have been clearly presented, where in the study is a qualitative in nature. The theory that under pinned the study have been presented in relation to this study. The research study used a purposive sampling procedure, wherein the research participants have been selected purposively.

The research findings in this study prove and confirm that learners do not have adequate essay writing skills as required by the CAPS curriculum. This was validated when analyzing learner's essay, and it was discovered that learners did not follow the writing process. Inappropriate planning of essays is also another mistake that was found during the analysis, where according to DoE, it asserts that the use of a mind map is essential and important when planning any kind of essays.

Following the learners' essay analysis, a conclusion can be drawn to say educators are the ones who do not teach learners how to structure or properly plan their essays. This is due to the fact that approximately all the learners have written a wrong essay planning structure, and the teacher did not indicate on the learners scripts that the planning is not correct. The use of incorrect spelling, the use of English words in Xitsonga essay writing, and the tendency of speaking colloquial (informal) language



when writing in a formal essay are other mistakes that were discovered during the essay analysis. Through essay analysis, it was found that there is no relationship between the planning and the writing itself. This was identified when the planning showed four essay subtopics, but the writing is composed of five paragraphs. Moreover, the analysis showed that teachers do not use rubric when marking learners' essays, which should be a norm since the rubric guides educators to locate whether the learner does have sufficient essay writing skills or not. As part of learners' feedback, it was also discovered that teachers do not indicate the mistakes committed by learners in their essays, and this helps learners to master the language use through the mistakes they committed and get corrected by their teacher.

Lastly, strategies to encourage and improve learner's inability to write Xitsonga narrative essays have been formulated. One of them is to encourage learners and best teach them to implement the process writing approach as it encourages the production of an error free essay or text. Moreover, is to encourage learners to write every day but not all the tasks should be assessed by the educator. Writing every day by learners for academic purpose could alleviate their language vocabulary of the targeted language, which will lead them to use language in a good and understandable way.

#### **5.4. Recommendations**

The recommendations or suggestions below are directed to different stakeholders within the hierarchy of the Department of Basic Education. The DBE is grounded on the findings of this study of grade 10 learners' inability to write narrative essays: a case of Xitsonga narrative essays writing at Sekgosese East Circuit and might be of assistance in Sekgosese East Circuit and other circuits as well. The recommendations of the study are directed to the following stakeholders within the Department of Basic Education:

**a. Ministers, MEC, Provincial and District Directors**

- Essay writing competitions that encourage process writing should be organized by the Department of Basic Education and incentives such as medals, trips, etc. be awarded to learners for excellence in writing. This will motivate learners to engage and always practice the writing of essays.
- The DBE should revise the progression policies. Before progressing a learner because of age, they should first look at the behavioural aspects, attitude towards learning, and lastly, they must check whether the learner will improve in the next Grade or if the learner needs a special school.
- The DBE with the help of scholars should design and distribute effective essay writing resources (online and hard copies) to help and enhance the teaching and writing of different essays writing at schools. Also, they should do a follow up on the teaching and writing of essays through the provision of a checklist which will help teachers and learners to check if they have done what is required by the curriculum.
- The DBE should, together with the teachers make it a point that when they set a question paper of essay writing, they give learners five topics. This will help learners to choose the topic they understand the most and write what they understand, unlike when they are given only one essay topic.
- The DBE with the help of other donors and sponsors should provide functional libraries to all schools to encourage the rural learner to read books as a strategy to expose learners to the target language. This might assist learners to write coherent essays in the target language.

**b. Curriculum Advisors**

- Teachers of Xitsonga in Grade 10 classes in the Sekgosese East Circuit should be made to understand that writing is a process. Adequate training will assist them to understand the CAPS expectations before it is implemented. In particular, the teachers need extended training sessions for its sustainable implementation. Hasty implementation of curriculum changes often hinders the successful execution of good curriculum plans.

- Curriculum Advisors should regularly visit Xitsonga educators at their respective schools to monitor the teaching and learning process. Also, the implementation of process writing on essay writing should be adhered to. This implies that Curriculum Advisors should not visit a school and it ends on checking of file and learners' evidence, but they should offer effective and efficient support to teachers in a form of classroom visits to check the correct implementation of the curriculum.

**c. School Departmental Head**

- The school departmental heads should regularly do classroom visits to check and offer support to the teachers and learners with regards to the difficulties they encounter when writing essays and other language related themes.

**d. Educators**

- The use of rubric when marking and correcting learners' essays should be made a norm by educators. This happens after realizing that educators did not use the rubric when marking the learners' essay scripts, which results in giving learners more marks than what they deserve.
- Since writing is an ongoing process, educators should emphasize, foster and monitor the implementation of process writing during the writing of essays by learners in the classroom.
- Schools should, with the help of Curriculum Advisors, organize open days for exhibition of essay writing by learners and teachers. This could be done at school, circuit, and district, provincial and national levels.
- Teachers should make sure that the teaching of syntax to learners at school becomes a norm. This will help learners to understand words and sentence structures, and it will further help them to further construct sentences in an organized manner.
- Teachers should update themselves with the current orthography and spelling rules.

**e. Parents**

- The parents should involve themselves in the learners' schoolwork. This can be done by the parents by making sure that after school when learners are at home, they write the works, particularly the essays. Parents should also make it a norm to check learners' books, in particular essays after they have written them.

**f. Learners**

- Learners should always create time to practice their essay writing on a regular basis. Moreover, learners should read Xitsonga language books as it will help them to master how the language is correctly used.
- The learners should create reading and writing groups where they will assist one another with writing essays and other language related challenges. This can also boost their language acquisition skills as it is said that learners learn best through interaction with peers.
- It is recommended that learners take part in the spelling B competition that is initiated by the DBE. This will help them to minimize misspelling when they are writing essays and any other text.

**g. Other researchers**

- There is a need for further research regarding Xitsonga essay writing inabilities, the process writing and its implementation in rural schools in other circuits, as well as the Limpopo Province as a whole. Further research can help with the improvement of Xitsonga home language.

**5.5. Conclusions**

Approximately all the learners at the chosen school did not make use of mind maps and it is evident that there is poor and little brainstorming and planning before the writing of the essay. This gave a dim picture that there is wrong implementation of

process writing, through some learners seemed to be performing better and displayed a wide understanding of planning an essay. The single essay draft (product based) submission and the perpetual low performance in Xitsonga essay writing by Grade 10 learners at Sekgosese East Circuit prompted this study. Evidence of incoherent, inappropriate paragraphs structuring, and brainstorming of irrelevant essay headings or subtopics also led to the investigation. Also, the wrong implementation of the writing process when writing a text particularly essays is another factor that prompted the investigation of this study. Therefore, the causes for the learners' essay writing inabilities in Xitsonga narrative essay needed to be established. It was imperative to establish whether this essay writing inabilities was the result of teachers not applying the correct teaching methods as prescribed or learners' incompetence in Xitsonga home language.

The study reviewed literature on different kinds of essays to be taught in all schools. Also, the strategies adopted by the educator when teaching learners how to comprehend good quality essays were noted. The best strategy in teaching learner essay writing skills is through the process of writing (Harmer, 2019: 98), as it requires the teacher to become the support machine for learners as they write. It should be noted that the process writing approach is a relatively new phenomenon in the South African language classroom, and teachers are required to implement process writing as a matter of policy. Moreover, as part of literature review, the characteristics of narrative essays have been reviewed as learners were writing this kind of an essay. The learner should know and understand these traits before administering the essay, as it helps to write a coherent essay.

This research adopted a qualitative research design as it deals with the behaviour and experiences which influence people to see things the way they see them. Scaffolding Theory together with Cognitive Theory by Vygotsky, as cited by Evans (2023) were utilized to guide and shape this study. The theory puts its emphasis on the support given to the learners by the teacher and gradually removes the assistance for the learners to learn and acquire knowledge on their own at the end (Evans, 2023: 24). In this study, a purposive sampling was utilized to sample the research participants, where 2 educators teaching Xitsonga home language in Grade 10 were chosen to participate in the study. Furthermore, learners' narrative essays were sampled in a

way that only essays with low marks were chosen to be analyzed. This kind of low marks essay sampling was due to the realization that most learners who tend to obtain low marks are the ones with low essay writing abilities.

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APPENDIXES

Appendix 1. Essay 1

Siku ndzihqa tsaka ng kutlula mpimo.

**Mkunguhato**  
 \* Siku na ndhowu → Mkunguhato lowe a wa tshamsetanga  
 \* tsaxi nga humlala → Leswi swi fana na loto ku nga ri  
 \* leswi nga nzi tsakisa → na nzunguhato. Hi nitale ku fashwana  
 \* loko hi tika ekoya → mepa wa miehleketo.

Akuti siku rati is **Mkwandzambhala** ooal na mpundzu  
 hi siku roku vatakiwa ka mina - hi siku leri  
 ra mina na vanqhana va mina ahi hlangatani  
 ile hi hlangatani → *Letere len' a ni pletetwanga swana*  
**Mali** ya-ti hiya → *Letere len' a ni pletetwanga swana*  
 hoyozala siku ra mina - hi pfukila → *Letere len' a ni pletetwanga swana*  
 hiya xitichini hiya khandiya thekisi na vanqhana  
 va mina hiri nune. Manghenelo lowe a ya tati noko ra mahlaji  
 → *Letere len' a ni pletetwanga swana*

Hi fambila swinwa hiri **Muna** hi nkarhi lowu  
 ahi bula hi wona - hi sukile hi thesiki  
 aku tsakisa hi nkarhi hi hlekela - hi fa  
 mbila ku konda hixunila → *Letere len' a ni pletetwanga swana*  
 va pfarini hikuva **ah** vundzuka swinwa  
 → *Letere len' a ni pletetwanga swana*  
**Loko** vaha pfarita hi vuyila hi **atka** **Mla**  
 hlatato yaha vaha swimilani swo ootaka  
 → *Letere len' a ni pletetwanga swana*  
 swa rihlaza.

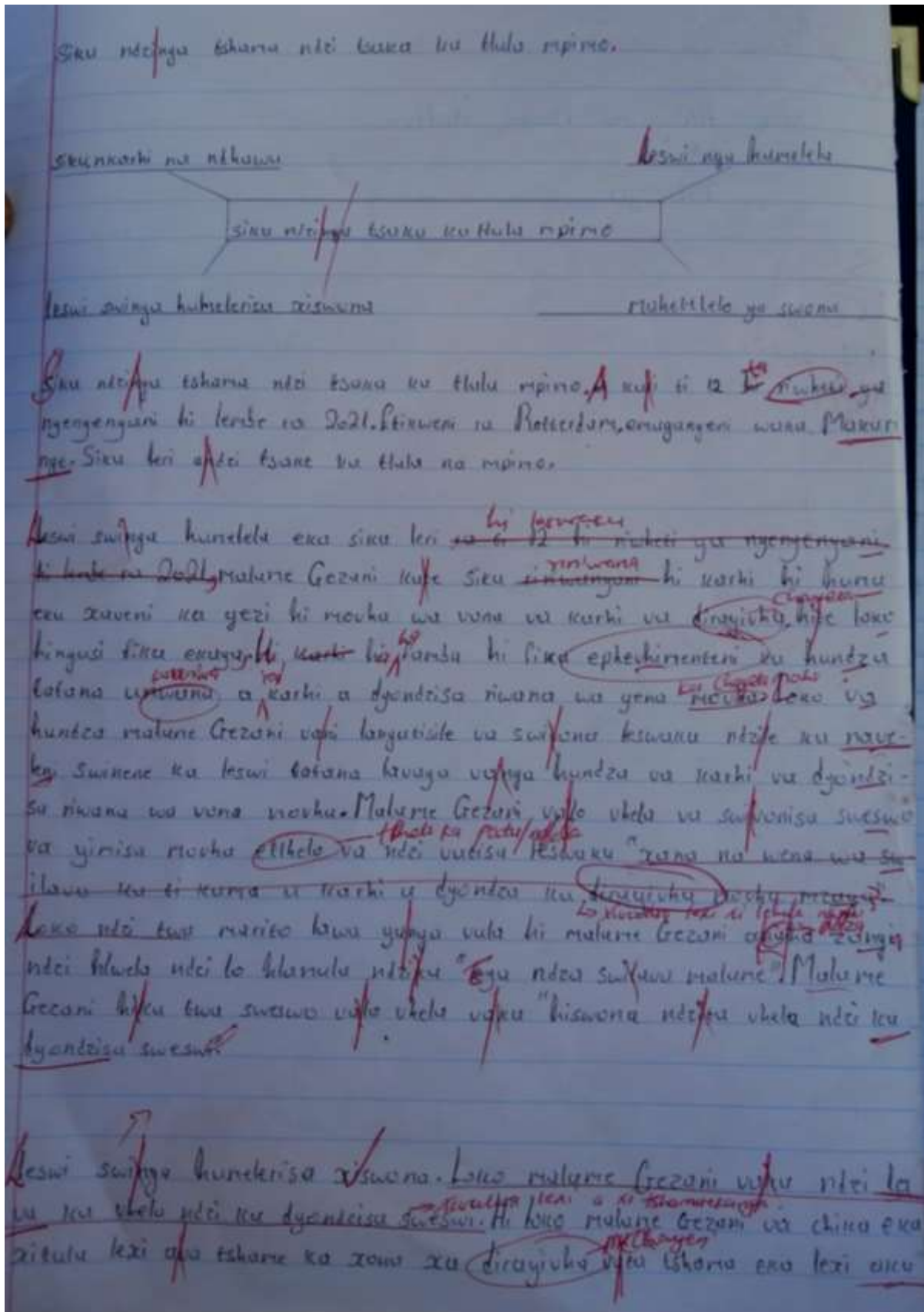
Hi tshamile lahayani ioko haba tshamile ku tse **ku tse** manana  
 unwan a zika a hi byera jesuaku va Afurite **emashopeni** → *emashopeni*  
 ha vura tano hi vuyile hi famba hi xibatha hi nghena **eshopeni** → *emashopeni*  
 ya mpahia hiya xava hiphia hi mbari/eka mpahia Teyi hiphathi  
 yi xava **ichoni** va mina, ahi ambanile mpahia yo famba A mina  
 ni ambale yo mina → *Xivutwa len' a xi hlanganile, a xivutwile.*

Loko hi mbarile mbarha hi fambile hiya ng'hera <sup>Shopeni ya ka</sup>  
 Wimby <sup>Rombus hi Swinene</sup> laha ku diywaka kara <sup>hancika a ku nta re Xisonga</sup> Swilo Swa mang'ika, hi fikile hi <sup>hi hata nta leni ya</sup> Dala  
 Swakudya <sup>Katani</sup> va <sup>va</sup> va hi nyika xilipi xa hi yima nyana <sup>Loko ha</sup>  
 ha yimile ku <sup>Wimbana</sup> fikile wanuna <sup>Wimbana</sup> unwane a ba maupko <sup>hata leni ya n' sumuili</sup> loko ni <sup>hancika</sup> kungu-  
 ta <sup>Languisi</sup> endireu ndzi tua vanhu va sungula ku yimberera. A ndzi tsa-  
 kite Swinene iko uari kari uaku "Happy birthday".

Va fikile uari khamere khekhe na <sup>hata i yini Swilo? "Swakudya"</sup> Swilo leswi a hi swi <sup>Ru leni hi hata leni ya</sup> adile vhi.  
 tahi uandzi teka Swinene <sup>Loko</sup> hi hata <sup>hata leni ya n' sumuili</sup> ku dya hi buyin hiya e-  
 handle hiya <sup>Shuta</sup> Swinene hi munhu wa <sup>hata leni ya n' sumuili</sup> khamera iko hi hata ku  
 teka hi fambile hiya khandiya thekisi ya thekisi ekaya hukuva  
 nkarhi se auu fambo. <sup>Timbimano to wena a t'ubhatawanga hi nollela beji</sup>

<sup>nene</sup>  
 Loko hi furo <sup>Xivulwa leni a si tshamireranga. Mifika yihani ekaya, va tihata va</sup> ekaya uandhama va mina va khandziyile uva  
 chira hata ka hina hikava a hi hanganisile <sup>Swilo Swilo</sup> Swilo <sup>Loko</sup> ndzi fira  
 ekaya a ku ng'eri na munhu <sup>garateni</sup> taha <sup>garateni</sup> ndzi te loko ni <sup>hata</sup> p'fura  
 ywanta <sup>ndzi</sup> ndzi hanganise hi vanhu uaku "suprice". <sup>ndzi</sup> ndzi <sup>ndzi</sup> tsaka  
 Swinene <sup>ku fonda</sup> ndzi hama <sup>hi</sup> mihosi <sup>hi</sup> ntsaka.

Appendix 2. Learner's essay 2





Esikome mina hirauba epha lava ndeyu esikoma emu zitelu zo diru  
<sup>malibayen</sup>  
yubha. Malume Gezani va ndzi hlamusela wa ebele wa ndzi kombu leswi  
ku endlisiwuku xiswona. Andi chubite swimene u chakusimise hira  
hhamuseniwa xam?

✓  
Makhetlele ya swona. Kom malume Gezani wa ndzi kombite, Afedito tihava  
<sup>chuma & mouta</sup>  
dikhiya ko nwe ndzi entle leswi vanyu ndzi hlamusela swona. Ma dhi  
leswi vanyu ebele wa ndzi kombu. Milo entle leswi vanyu ndzi kombite  
swona mouta ya <sup>Singula</sup> ~~hambu~~ ya bambu, ndzi Giragibite <sup>Clayela</sup> ku kombu ndzi  
ya hira ekaga. Andi tsurite ku elala na mpimo <sup>eka</sup> ~~in~~ siko teni.



nyana <sup>phaka wa hangata sika</sup> Phata ya wena. ndi zambile ndi ya uita  
 na tichomi <sup>Asanyan</sup> ya mina hika endia phati <sup>nkhu</sup> ya mina  
 hi fikile hi nkhena, andiwin. Li Sungua ku endia  
 phati <sup>nkhu</sup> hi <sup>chayera</sup> bisa neti nkhoma. A ku tsakisa Swinene  
 i siku leni niga tsama ndi tsaka ku tujer  
 mpimo. Ahi tsakile Swinene na <sup>hangata</sup> phata ya mina  
 na vatswari ya mina aya tsakile <sup>na vata</sup> Swinene. Hikuve  
 ahi tiphina Swinene. Vahi xaverini <sup>net</sup> na finamu  
 neti to tala nyana. Akuri kabile ~~Swinene~~ ahi ti  
 phina Swinene hi <sup>nkhu</sup> Phati ya mina

Appendix 4. Learner's essay 4

Jorisatwena

Siru ndzi nga tshana ndzi tsaka kutlala mpimo.

- Siru / Mafu / Mafu
- teswi swinga ndleka
- teswi swinga humeterisa
- matetere ka teswi nga ndleka

Ntshuniso a mu tshamisoang

Akui ti di ka Mnyangani 2021. A <sup>F</sup>ihokozwa Paik. jeni vanga  
 humesa <sup>haya</sup> tlangela sika ra mina raku velekiwa. Akui  
 ni mizwa Swirene koro va singula kuro <sup>lubomela</sup> ngisela swa  
 sika ra mina shete Avanganti byetangi chumu <sup>kompu</sup> vaendele  
 mina swilo teswi Swilo swa kom hi swilo?? bosa.

Hle Piukile na mizwa Swirene hika vana vanhu vati busy  
shete sika tere ndzi Piukile ndzi tsakini swirene hikoba  
 akui sika ra mina raku velekiwa aswona fatana  
 va Piukile vanti navelaka sika ra mina tefa vekiwa te  
awina teswi andi tsarise swira swa gita ka Ma  
Himpela nhi piukile nhi hamba miri hikoba katari ma  
ndu ix Ma humela chande vantu loro niya rangitisa  
vahleba phela va busy batoku swirani ix rozi  
vitandele ku papa vo hwananga tamba teba mali a katari  
ya mina ija swa case ya cool drine ix hphela  
na tsusuma ndija teba mali ya katari na tamba  
ndija zaka lani chiti tamba kona nhatwa kuri happy  
bolu daj ka huhuhu no tirha kuli dankie ka nwina  
no nyarja ka tsaka ka nwina.

Hle vuyite ku zaveni no kama vanhu vahetini ku



Swebela, toto <sup>notzi</sup> a-rika <sup>notzi</sup> njelwa <sup>notzi</sup> tinamaneli, #ritpa, manana <sup>va notzi</sup> uti typla  
~~ku~~ <sup>ku</sup> awu hambi ka mbanhu <sup>notzi</sup> nifu <sup>notzi</sup> hlambini ka mhanu <sup>notzi</sup> yifu hani?  
 Mbanhu hianka i base phala lura vageni <sup>notzi</sup> ka njina <sup>notzi</sup> ngamandha  
 Na nzi hlambela no mbaka <sup>notzi</sup> iye <sup>notzi</sup> va mhanu vafu <sup>notzi</sup> ubhuni  
 ka <sup>notzi</sup> mbanhu no <sup>notzi</sup> eja <sup>notzi</sup> bto ka mhanu vageni vabone avethi bto  
 Mbanho vabava <sup>notzi</sup> ka hlanganisiwa <sup>notzi</sup> hola naswane Swilava <sup>notzi</sup> (asi)?  
 Iye kuta <sup>notzi</sup> tati <sup>notzi</sup> lalani <sup>notzi</sup> kaya <sup>notzi</sup> ka chandiya <sup>notzi</sup> va hozetela ka Switadges  
 malwa ni hlambela nanga zisisi chunyu na vana seri tati yi  
 tele hi vanhu nanga vutisi chunyu nina ka <sup>notzi</sup> tamba <sup>notzi</sup> / <sup>notzi</sup> Maba  
 karini nwinga hi <sup>notzi</sup> Artime <sup>notzi</sup> ka sira zero a-4 hola ka n'wiga  
 Ho tamba <sup>notzi</sup> (asi) <sup>notzi</sup> njina <sup>notzi</sup> kunwanga <sup>notzi</sup> nku <sup>notzi</sup> hani <sup>notzi</sup> musi lani  
 hie <sup>notzi</sup> Inokosa <sup>notzi</sup> ka chiketela <sup>notzi</sup> ho kangama a <sup>notzi</sup> park: koto  
 Hi sira leni <sup>notzi</sup> nku <sup>notzi</sup> wutise <sup>notzi</sup> u <sup>notzi</sup> boko <sup>notzi</sup> hana <sup>notzi</sup> hlanguka <sup>notzi</sup> mhanu  
 ka Papa <sup>notzi</sup> natwa <sup>notzi</sup> ku surpris? <sup>notzi</sup> ka nyanja <sup>notzi</sup> ku tseka <sup>notzi</sup> natwa  
 ni vira hi mbaka <sup>notzi</sup> utseka.

Maba ku vuye ku djerwa, hi <sup>notzi</sup> khatela <sup>notzi</sup> ka switambhe  
 Eya <sup>notzi</sup> karisa <sup>notzi</sup> <sup>Swimant</sup> <sup>notzi</sup> <sup>notzi</sup> sakini <sup>notzi</sup> hinga <sup>notzi</sup> layuleki. ii  
 Mjira <sup>notzi</sup> atini <sup>notzi</sup> ii <sup>notzi</sup> njika <sup>notzi</sup> papa <sup>notzi</sup> vathela <sup>notzi</sup> vanga <sup>notzi</sup> mavela <sup>notzi</sup> na  
 Laptop <sup>notzi</sup> ka <sup>notzi</sup> tatarini <sup>notzi</sup> hi vuye <sup>notzi</sup> hiri <sup>notzi</sup> tlangela <sup>notzi</sup> ku ciniwa  
 ku yimbelerawa. <sup>notzi</sup> Mabhlele <sup>notzi</sup> nku <sup>notzi</sup> kensa <sup>notzi</sup> na <sup>notzi</sup> vatswari <sup>notzi</sup> kura  
<sup>notzi</sup> vathendlele <sup>notzi</sup> <sup>notzi</sup> <sup>notzi</sup> kesi <sup>notzi</sup> swa <sup>notzi</sup> koto. Hi vuye hi <sup>notzi</sup> tathala  
 ku chayisiwa <sup>notzi</sup> ku yiwa <sup>notzi</sup> koya <sup>notzi</sup> <sup>notzi</sup> <sup>notzi</sup> wistwa <sup>notzi</sup> naha <sup>notzi</sup> tathala  
 Surinjo.













**Appendix 7a. Application letter to the circuit**

P.O. Box 452  
Vongani  
0930  
16 April 2021

Circuit Manager  
Sekgosesese East Circuit  
House 483  
Senwamokgope  
0815

Dear Sir/Madam

**APPLICATION FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT A RESEARCH STUDY AT  
SEKGOSESE EAST CIRCUIT**

I am writing to request permission to conduct a research study project with Grade 10 Xitsonga learners & teachers on the following topic:

**GRADE 10 LEARNER'S INABILITY TO WRITE NARRATIVE ESSAYS: A CASE OF  
XITSONGA NARRATIVE ESSAYS WRITING AT SEKGOSESE EAST CIRCUIT,  
MOPANI DISTRICT LIMPOPO PROVINCE, SOUTH AFRICA.**

The interview and learners' writings will form part of my data collection. I promise to adhere to the University's ethical principles such as confidentiality, respect for human dignity and privacy.

It is hoped that the results will be of practical help to the Sekgosesese East circuit.

Yours faithfully

.....

Mahlaule P.K

## Appendix 7b. Consent form

As part of my studies for MEd at the University of Limpopo. I have to conduct interviews and analyse learners' writings of which I need your assistance. The title of my research study is:

**GRADE 10 LEARNER'S INABILITY TO WRITE NARRATIVE ESSAYS: A CASE OF XITSONGA NARRATIVE ESSAYS WRITING AT SEKGOSESE EAST CIRCUIT, MOPANI DISTRICT LIMPOPO PROVINCE, SOUTH AFRICA.**

All I am asking from you is:

**TO PARTICIPATE IN MY RESEARCH STUDY**

It is important that you also read and understand the following ethical principles:

1. Participation in this study is completely voluntary and no pressure.
2. You are free to withdraw from the study at any time, without stating reasons and you will in no way be harmed by doing so. You may also request that your data no longer be used in the research study.
3. You will be given access to your own data upon request.
4. You are requested to ask any questions you may have regarding the study and the related procedures at any stage. I will gladly answer your queries.
5. If you are a minor, the written consent of your parent or legal guardian is required before you participate in this study, as well as (in writing if possible) your voluntary assent to take part- no coercion may be placed on you.

I, the undersigned

.....

Have read the preceding premises in connection with the study. I was given the opportunity to discuss relevant aspects of the study and I hereby declare that I am taking part in the study voluntarily.

**Appendix 7c. Assent form for learners under 18 years**

As part of my studies for MEd at the University of Limpopo. I have to analyse learners' writings of which I need your assistance. The title of my research study is:

**GRADE 10 LEARNER'S INABILITY TO WRITE NARRATIVE ESSAYS: A CASE OF XITSONGA NARRATIVE ESSAYS WRITING AT SEKGOSESE EAST CIRCUIT, MOPANI DISTRICT LIMPOPO PROVINCE, SOUTH AFRICA.**

All I am asking from your son/daughter is:

**TO PARTICIPATE IN MY RESEARCH STUDY.**

Parents should read and read and understand the following ethical principles:

1. Learner's participation in this study is completely voluntary and no pressure.
2. The learner is free to withdraw from the study at any time, without stating reasons, and can also request that the data should no longer be used in the research study.
3. The learner or parent will be given access to your own data upon request.
4. The learner or parent is allowed to ask any questions you may have regarding the study and the related procedures at any stage. I will gladly answer your queries.
5. If you are a minor, the written consent of your parent or legal guardian is required before you participate in this study, as well as (in writing if possible) your voluntary assent to take part- no coercion may be placed on you.

I, the undersigned (parent of the learner)

.....

Hereby give permission for my child to take part in this study. I have read and understand the above ethical principles, and I was given the opportunity to discuss relevant aspects of the study.

## Appendix 7d. Semi-structured interview schedule

1. *Do learners have sufficient skills to write Xitsonga narrative essays at school?*

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2. *What common mistakes/errors are mostly committed by learners when writing narrative essays?*

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3. *What constitutes the learners' inability to write narrative essays?*

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4. *What can be done to improve learners' ability to write Xitsonga narrative essays?*

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## Appendix 7e. Lesson Observation schedule

**Lesson topic:** Writing and Presenting (Narrative essay writing)

Observed Themes	Yes	No	Comments
1. content, planning and format			
1.1. Do the teacher and learners understand process writing?			
1.2. Did they correctly implement process writing?			
1.3. Do teachers use effective teaching strategies for teaching writing to learners?			
1.4 Do learners show understanding of the lesson?			
1.5 Did the educator prepare the lesson accurately?			