Teacher perceptions and ideologies of multilingualism in the South African Montessori Preschool Environment

by
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ABSTRACT

The linguistic environment of preschools in South Africa is considerably under-researched. In this study, research was undertaken to discover how South African Montessori preschool teachers approach the issue of multilingualism in their classrooms and their perceptions of the value of speaking multiple languages. Teachers working in Montessori schools in Cape Town were interviewed about their experiences and ideologies of multilingualism in the classroom.

Data was analysed through a Bakhtinian lens to uncover the tensions surrounding these beliefs and experiences of South African multilingualism. It was found that although many teachers supported the idea of multilingualism, they faced significant practical and administrative barriers to its implementation in the classroom. Furthermore, it was notable that much of the work to teach or introduce additional language in the preschool space was performed by underpaid, undertrained, and under-valued non-teaching staff, such as cleaning staff and classroom assistants.

OPSOMMING

Daar is n gebrek aan navorsing oor die linguistiese omgewing van voorskoolse-opvoeding in Suid-Afrika. In hierdie studie is navorsing onderneem om te ontdek hoe Suid-Afrikaanse Montessori-voorskoolse onderwysers die kwessie van veeltaligheid in hul klaskamers benader en hul persepsies van die waarde daarvan om meer as een taal te praat. Onderhoude is gevoer met onderwysers wat in Montessori-skole in Kaapstad werk, oor hul ervarings en ideologieë van veeltaligheid in die klaskamer.

Data is deur 'n Bakhtiniaanse lens ontleed om die spanning rondom hierdie oortuigings en ervarings van Suid-Afrikaanse veeltaligheid te ontbloot. Daar is gevind dat alhoewel baie onderwysers die idee van veeltaligheid ondersteun het, hulle beduidende praktiese en administratiewe struikelblokke tot die implementering daarvan in die klaskamer in die gesig gestaar het. Verder was dit opmerklik dat baie van die werk om addisionele taal in die voorskoolse ruimte te onderrig of in te voer, uitgevoer is deur onderbetaalde, onderopgeleide en ondergewaardeerde nie-onderwyspersoneel, soos skoonmaakpersoneel en klaskamerassistente.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1   <u>Background to the research problem</u>

South Africa is a multilingual country, and official government policy recognizes the importance of multilingualism to learners, but there is not sufficient encouragement of this in the preschool years (Desai, 2001). While South Africa officially recognizes 12 languages and encourages their equal use in all public domains, the realities of this ambitious language policy fall far short of the mark (Dhunpath, 2018). Despite the efforts toward creating a multilingual school system, many South African private schools continue to give English higher status than our 11 other recognized languages. One would assume that pre-schools that embrace alternative teaching pedagogies might be more open to multilingual teaching and learning methods.

The Montessori approach to education focuses heavily on the potential of the individual child and providing them with as many learning opportunities as developmentally appropriate (Montessori, 1949). In the Absorbent Mind, Montessori herself states that the child "can speak any number of languages perfectly if they are in his environment" (Montessori, 1949, p. 162). Despite this, there has been sparse research done into the different strategies for cultivating a bilingual Montessori preschool environment, particularly in the South African context. For the purpose of this study, the term preschool environment will refer to classrooms which cater to children between two and six years of age before Grade 1.

My research interest in this topic is theoretical, practical, and personal. I want to understand more about how multilingualism in the preschool environment can be encouraged and which theoretical concepts gives us the tools to conceptualise it. I want to also understand what kinds of pedagogical interventions teachers report as useful, and what they think could potentially be used. I also have a personal interest as a Montessori teacher myself. I have observed both during my training and now as a fully qualified Montessori teacher that primary school language policies often require the child to learn at least one other officially recognized language.

From my own observations it seems as if many Montessori preschools opt to create monolingual (English) learning spaces despite the fact that 49.6 percent of residents in the Western Cape recognize Afrikaans as their first language, 24.7 percent recognize isiXhosa as their first language, and only 20.4 percent identify English as their first language (Statistics South Africa, 2014). This study aims to investigate which strategies Montessori preschool educators in Cape Town believe they use in their classroom, and what their perceptions of multilingualism in the preschool setting are to gauge to what extent teachers imagine/construct themselves to cultivate multilingualism. In the next section I will give an in-depth discussion on Montessori schooling to give the reader an introduction to the teaching philosophy and how it could be suited to a multilingual teaching pedagogy.

1.2 <u>Montessori education</u>

Montessori education has become a popular option for parents in Cape Town and the rest of South Africa. However, as the use of the term 'Montessori education' is largely unregulated, there is an issue with consistency across different Montessori schools (Soundy, 2003: 131). A selection of the key qualities of an authentic Montessori school will be introduced below.

1.2.1 Vertical age-grouping

In her quest to establish a 'scientific pedagogy' for preschool-aged children, Maria Montessori explored the idea of a system of vertical age grouping in the classroom (Montessori, 1912). Within this system, children between the ages of 2.5 years and 6 years should all share the same classroom, materials, and teacher (Montessori, 1912). The intention of this system is to prepare the younger children for some of the more complex activities in the classroom, through the observation of their older peers (Montessori, 1946). Additionally, these younger children are expected to better adapt to the behavioral standards expected of them, as they are able to watch the older children in the environment follow these expectations every day (Montessori, 1949). These ideas were largely based on Maria Montessori's belief that "the child that has to adapt himself to his environment can only adapt to it by copying others" (Montessori, 1946: 147).

1.2.2 The prepared environment

Much of Montessori philosophy is based around the idea of the teacher as a guide who has the responsibility to avoid interfering with the children's day-to-day lives and take on the role of an observer in the classroom, allowing the children to direct their own learning and social interactions (Montessori, 1912).

> "The environment itself will teach the child, if every error he makes is manifest to him, without the intervention of a parent or teacher, who should remain a quiet observer of all that happens." (Montessori, 1949: 278)

In order to achieve this objective, Montessori teachers are expected to prepare and act upon the children's environment, rather than addressing challenges directly with the children (Montessori, 1912). This is in stark contrast with the approach in many mainstream schools, where the teacher is expected to manage and regulate all aspects of the students' work.

1.2.3 Language as a curriculum area

The Montessori curriculum is split into various learning areas, each with a shelf in the classroom that contains a selection of activities of varying difficulty levels for the children to choose from (Montessori, 1912). Most of these classrooms offer only one language as a curriculum area, with bilingual classrooms growing in popularity internationally in recent years. Many Montessori schools in Cape Town are still catching up to this change. In an ideal Montessori environment, the language shelves are filled with a wide range of rich, interesting materials that are frequently refreshed and presented by the teacher (Soundy, 2003: 129). Clear, neat, written labels are placed on many of the items children can see in the classroom to introduce the youngest children to the idea of writing (Soundy, 2003: 129). Teachers make every effort to embed the child in a rich language context, role-modelling ways of speaking and using materials such as books and card sets to introduce an extensive range of new vocabulary words each day (Soundy, 2003: 129).

"The child is, by nature, hungry for words; he loves strange, long words like the names of dinosaurs and constellations. He takes in all these words without understanding their meaning, as his mind is still taking language in by a process of unconscious absorption." (Montessori, 1946: 148)

Moreover, Montessori's (1949) belief in the 'Absorbent Mind' and sensitive periods for language and the social aspects of culture draw many parallels on prevailing ideas on the critical period for language acquisition (Else-Quest & Lillard, 2006: 1893).

Initially, Maria Montessori designed the language curriculum to teach Italian (Longchamps, 2015). The use of a phonetic approach suited this curriculum area, which was later adapted to create an English curriculum (Soundy, 2003: 129). In this curriculum, the focus centres heavily on word building (Chavarria, 2021: 64). The language area is often separated into three major sections. The pink series is designed to introduce the child to written language through the use of three-letter phonetic words (Montessori, 1912). Once the child has grasped this concept, they are introduced to longer phonetic words in the blue series (Montessori, 1912). Finally, in the green series, the child is introduced to phonemes and 'words with rules' (Montessori, 1912). The materials used in this area are highly adaptable and can be used to create a language curriculum for a second or even third language in the classroom (Chavarria, 2021: 86).

1.3 <u>Multilingualism and Montessori</u>

"The child's sensibility to absorb language is so great that he can acquire foreign languages at this age." (Montessori, 1946: 149)

In Montessori environments educators are called upon to support the development of the whole child (Montessori, 1949). It follows that these environments should have support

structures in place to scaffold[1] the child's knowledge through use of their full linguistic repertoire. Maria Montessori herself supported the idea of multilingual preschool spaces, and in many ways these spaces are perfectly aligned to support the latest strategies on multilingual early childhood education (Chavarria, 2021: 84).

Foreign Montessori preschools often have measures put in place to support multilingual children in the classroom. In an experimental study in a Mexican Montessori school, a variety of approaches to create space for multilingualism in a Montessori classroom were attempted (Chavarria, 2021: 63). In this study, the researcher found that the most effective way to run a second language programme for Montessori preschool children was to incorporate a 'second language corner' where the materials for this subject are laid out and lessons take place (Chavarria, 2021: 86). It was also found that the vertical age grouping of the classroom led to more interest and enthusiasm among the younger children (Chavarria, 2021: 85).

Montessori schools are a growing presence in South Africa. Authentic Montessori classrooms are easy to find, and there are a variety of different options for parents to choose from. One crucial aspect of Montessori education is respect for the child as an individual (Montessori, 1949). Most Montessori schools incorporate a system of individual lesson planning, allowing the teacher to follow and support the child's process as closely as possible. Respecting, valuing, and appreciating each child's unique linguistic background is thus an important feature of Montessori education (Chavarria, 2021: 63). Every child arrives in the classroom for the first time carrying with them their existing experiences, whether these are cultural, social, or linguistic (Aleksic & Garcia, 2022). The child's principal means of expressing and making sense of these experiences is to convey them through language, and it the teacher's duty to create a safe and supportive space for this in the classroom (Aleksic & Garcia, 2022).

Thus, by forcing a child to learn and communicate only in the school's official language of instruction (LOI), we rob them of the opportunity to express their whole self, as well as robbing the teacher of the opportunity to know the whole child (Longchamps, 2015). If the teacher does not know the whole child, it is impossible to follow them in the way required by

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[1] A tool outlined by Vygotsky to support new learning by building on previous learning experiences and concepts (Jacobs, 2001)

Montessori philosophy (Montessori, 1949). This puts the multilingual child at a distinct disadvantage to the monolingual child, as the multilingual child will not be able to express themselves as fully or be known and 'followed' as comprehensively as the monolingual child in an environment where the teacher does not support multilingualism (Aleksic & Garcia, 2022).

This becomes particularly problematic within the South African context, where the vast majority of children do not have English as a first language, yet for most of them their first experiences of education will be in an English medium preschool (Dhunpath, 2018: 101). A child's first impressions of formal schooling can stay with them throughout their lives, meaning that by not adequately supporting young multilinguals in the classroom, teachers may be creating a pattern of lifelong learning confidence issues (Degotardi, et al., 2021). This pattern is further problematized by the historical injustices and disadvantages many South Africans have faced, and further reinforces antiquated colonial systems (Desai, 2001: 338).

1.4   Statement of the problem

This study will address the issue of monolingual Montessori preschool spaces in Cape Town. It will assist in filling the knowledge gap around preschool multilingualism in South Africa, by addressing the ways in which preschool teachers believe they support multilingual learners. Additionally, the study will explore the language ideologies these teachers hold about multilingualism in the preschool classroom, and the tensions which arise from this.

While significant research on these issues has been conducted in international contexts, there has been markedly little work done on the South African preschool context (Aleksic & Garcia, 2022; Busch, 2014; Chavarria, 2021; Cohen, 2009; Degotardi, et al., 2021; Longchamps, 2015; Mary & Young, 2018; Stuart, 2017). The vast majority of similar local studies have looked at the primary school years, where education begins to become more formalized, and government regulated (Desai, 2001; Guzula, 2021; Dhunpath, 2018; Fourie & Hooijer, 2009; Jordaan, 2011; Krause & Prinsloo, 2016; Makoe & McKinney, 2009; Mathole, 2016; Parusnath, 2016). Through the lens of Bakhtin's ideas of heteroglossia, dialogism, and polyphony, it is expected that my study will provide unique insights into the issues and conflicts faced by Montessori preschool teachers in the Cape Town area.

1.5   Specific research questions

The specific research questions that will be explored in this study are:

a. What self-reported strategies do teachers use to cultivate a multilingual preschool environment?

b. What language ideologies do Montessori preschool teachers draw on when discussing multilingual Montessori preschool environments?

1.6   Research aims

The principal aim of this research is to gather more information about the linguistic environment in South African Montessori preschools. The data collection tools, and analysis process were intended to expand on the existing knowledge base of how multiple languages can be taught to young children, and teachers' perceptions and experiences of this process.

Furthermore, insight was hoped to be gained into the tensions which exist between the language ideologies of different stakeholders, including teachers, children, parents, administrative staff, and government curriculum expectations.

1.7   Theoretical point of departure

This study is embedded within recent applied linguistics research that focus on heteroglossia (Bakhtin 1981), meaning that ways in which linguistic diversity can be cultivated is investigated. Various frameworks have been proposed to conceptualise such studies but also as practical pedagogical strategies- such as translanguaging, heteroglossia and a repertoire approach (Aleksic & Garcia, 2022; Barwell, 2012; Garcia & Lin, 2017; Busch, 2010; Thomas, 2005).

Although bilingual education is well-studied, there is a lack of studies focused on bilingual preschool education, particularly within the South African context. Research into the linguistic landscape of educational settings in South Africa generally focus on the experiences of older children, leaving a gap for research into the preschool setting. Parusnath (2016)

provided some insight into the various tools and methods used to create supportive communicative environments in rural Grade R preschools in the Western Cape. This project highlights the need for more research to be done on the different linguistic landscapes of preschool environments in South Africa.

Many of the features of a child's linguistic repertoire are associated with different social aspects of language, resulting in each child has a unique and complex approach to communicating (Aleksic & Garcia, 2022). While teachers may see the importance of multilingual preschool education, particularly within the South African context, many find themselves overwhelmed by the pressure to 'perfect' the English of the children in their classrooms before they move on to primary school (du Plessis & Louw, 2008: 60).

Studies which have drawn on the heteroglossic approach in education are varied and explored in more detail in Chapter 3. I will provide a brief overview here, to give the reader of the various ways in which Bakhtin's ideas have been incorporated.

Heteroglossia is often investigated through the paradigm of translanguaging, an approach to language that requires teachers to use creative strategies to help children who are not home language speakers of the classroom's primary language to make meaning in the space (Faulstich Orellana & Garcia, 2014: 386). In a case study of a multilingual afterschool literacy club for South African children, Guzula (2021) found that in order for the space to be successful there was a need to use resources from the students' full linguistic repertoires, with teachers relying heavily on translanguaging[2] pedagogy and spontaneous translanguaging to make meaning.

Similar findings have been published by Mary and Young who have done extensive research into the success of bilingual preschools in Europe, specifically in France (Mary & Young 2017; Mary & Young 2018). Through a longitudinal study of the different strategies employed by a teacher to improve the educational experience of the children in her care, their work shone a light on the importance of establishing trusting parent-teacher relationships to improve the academic achievements of the children (Mary & Young, 2017). In addition to these findings, earlier work by Mary and Young also found that the teacher was still able to

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[2] The fluid and complex language practices of bilinguals (Garcia & Lin, 2017).

support the needs of bilingual learners through various translanguaging strategies despite not necessary being fluent in their other languages (Mary & Young, 2018).

Within a linguistic repertoire approach, Busch (2014) focused on the experiences of children in a multilingual, multi-age primary school classroom in Vienna. This system of vertical age grouping drew inspiration from the classrooms established by Maria Montessori (Busch, 2014). Busch's (2014) research examined the stories and booklets created by children in the classroom to learn more about their experiences of multilingualism in the classroom and found that the heteroglossic approach taken by the school offered children a rich and dynamic learning environment.

Cohen's (2009) research on the pretend play of preschool-aged children in the USA used video recordings and Bakhtin's theories of heteroglossia to discover how children make meaning and develop an understanding of social norms and rules through play. Meanwhile, Stuart's (2017) study on the approaches used in schools in New Zealand argues that Bakhtin's work provides teachers with a framework to better support bilingual and bicultural preschool children in all areas of learning.

Studies undertaken in bilingual preschool classrooms in the United States have found indications of significant parallel growth in the language development of both the languages used in the space (Winsler, et al., 1999). Gobbo et al, (2014) also speak of the importance of providing young children access to multiple languages as early as possible in order to help them adapt to an ever more globalized world.

1.8   **Methodology**

This study is qualitative in nature and data was gathered through semi-structured interviews with Montessori-qualified teachers currently working in Cape Town and the Southern Suburbs. The interviews were guided by a list of set questions[3]. These questions explored the self-reported strategies teachers use to support multilingualism in their classrooms, and their perception of bilingualism in the Montessori preschool system. The participants in this study

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[3] See Appendix 2

were recruited through the researcher's personal and professional networks and via emails sent to the various Montessori preschools in the area.

The data collected through the interviews were analysed through thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2012). The analysis will be done from a theoretical position embedded in Bakhtin's notion of heteroglossia, examining the tension that exists between the natural state of bilingualism and the societal pressure towards monolingualism (Bakhtin, 1981).

1.9 Ethical considerations

Prior to the collection of data for this study, ethical clearance was sought from the REC: Social Behavioural and Educational Research at Stellenbosch University. To protect the privacy of participants, pseudonyms we used to protect their identities.

1.10 Structure of thesis

After a brief introduction, the existing research on multilingual preschool environments will be explored in the overview of Literature in Chapter 2.

In Chapter 3, the theoretical framework of heteroglossia Bakhtin's (1981) will be discussed. Close attention will be paid to pedagogical strategies that have proven effective in following a heteroglossia approach.

Chapter 4 will discuss the methodology and will elaborate on how teachers were recruited, the characteristics of the participants and the method used for data collection. In addition, the specific form of thematic analysis used to analyse the data will also be discussed.

The results and analysis chapter will be presented in Chapter 5, focussing on the main themes, and interpreting it against the theoretical framework.

Finally, in Chapter 6, the limitations, conclusions, and ideas for further research will be described.

Chapter 2: Language in preschool settings

2.1 <u>Introduction</u>

Many studies on language in preschool settings are focussed on children's language development with a particular interest in the kinds of developmental difficulties or speech impediments that can be encountered (Plante & Vance, 1994) (Conti-Ramsden & Durkin, 2012). This is also generally the case in South Africa in research on language in preschool settings (Southwood, 2006; Pascoe, et al., 2019; Mazibuko & Chimbari, 2020). The current thesis is however not interested in language development but more so in how multilingualism is fostered and used as a pedagogical resource in pre-school environments.

To address the research problem, the review below explores and addresses the existing literature around multilingualism in the preschool space. The first part of this literature review will focus on research about children in the preschool setting who are multilingual, or whose L1 is not the language of schooling and their strategies, practices and experiences. The second part will focus on teacher practices, perceptions and strategies in multilingual preschool contexts (including children who are multilingual or who are taught in a language that is not their L1).

2.1.1 Learners in multilingual preschool settings

Most of the research on language in multilingual preschool settings have been conducted in the USA and in Europe, often with a focus on the children of migrants. Methodologies used to conduct such research has been diverse. Cohen's (2009) research on the pretend play of preschool-aged children in the USA used video recordings and Bakhtin's theories of heteroglossia to discover how children make meaning and develop an understanding of social norms and rules through play. Through this interpretive approach, researchers developed an understanding of the ways in which children use role-play games to build on their ideological sense of self and explore the societal tensions and cultural expectations of their community (Cohen, 2009: 340).

A research project by Busch (2014) focused on the experiences of children in a multilingual, multi-age primary school classroom in Vienna. This system of vertical age grouping drew inspiration from the classrooms established by Maria Montessori (Busch, 2014). Busch's (2014) research examined the stories and booklets created by children in the classroom to learn more about their experiences of multilingualism in the classroom and found that the heteroglossic approach taken by the school offered children a rich and dynamic learning environment.

In a study examining the experiences of learners in a multilingual preschool setting in the United States of America, researchers observed how with the correct training and enthusiasm, a teacher was able to create a learning program and classroom environment which encouraged connection among her students of varying linguistic backgrounds (Miller Marsh, et al., 2022: 197). This study demonstrated the positive impact a teacher's ideology can have on the learning experience, self-confidence, and academic success of young students (Miller Marsh, et al., 2022: 197).

In an investigation of the importance of young children as policymakers in Finnish and Swedish preschool spaces, Boyd and Huss (2017) found that children's language choices actively impacted the language practices and policies within their multilingual classroom space. Observations and interviews were conducted to uncover the ways in which children chose to use language and negotiate meaning with children who had different linguistic backgrounds (Boyd & Huss, 2017: 360). In this study, researchers established that a supportive and inclusive environment was an important factor in the children's ability to use their full linguistic repertoires in the classroom (Boyd & Huss, 2017: 370). In spaces where multilingualism is valued and linguistic diversity is appreciated, children had the agency to act as policymakers and use language in a way that best supported their learning and development (Boyd & Huss, 2017: 372).

There is a multitude of cultural and social benefits to supporting multilingualism in the classroom. For many young children, mastering more than one language will allow them to fully participate in the diverse practices of their communities and increase their sense of identity and belonging (Degotardi, et al., 2021). However, this multilingual education goes

beyond the idea of named languages and requires teachers to have a more nuanced approach to language in the classroom (Aleksic & Garcia, 2022).

2.1.2 Teachers in multilingual preschool settings

In this section the various ways in which teachers have integrated multilingualism in preschool settings will be discussed. As with the previous section, the research has mostly been conducted in North America or Europe.

In a scoping review undertaken to examine the methods used by teachers to support emergent bilinguals' language development, it was found that preschool classrooms are typically a child's first experience of formal learning (Degotardi, et al., 2021). In this study, researchers found that teachers frequently relied on various translanguaging strategies to help young children understand, while still emphasizing the importance of learning the target first language of the classroom (Degotardi, et al., 2021).

An exploration of the tensions which arise from attempting to translate government language policy into classroom language practice found that one common approach used by teachers is to separate multilingual and monolingual learners into different classrooms so that multilingual learners can have access to extra support in the target language (Hornberger & Vaish, 2009: 305). However, this approach presented challenges to the children as it minimized the linguistic diversity which the children who were deemed 'monolingual' were exposed to, and potentially led to multilingual students being viewed as less capable than their peers (Hornberger & Vaish, 2009: 313).

To determine how teachers' perceptions of multilingualism can impact curriculum, a study was created using Austrian schools as a focus (Corazza, et al., 2021). This study focused specifically on a new program to create special language support classrooms to give multilingual children more attention from their teachers (Corazza, et al., 2021). Not only did this study find that teachers felt these classes excluded and alienated students, ultimately hampering their academic performance, but valid concerns were also voiced that separating multilingual learners from monolingual learners could risk putting the multilingual learners at a disadvantage and lead to them feeling segregated (Corazza, et al., 2021). Separating

children into monolingual and multilingual classrooms could also damage social integration and limit the academic progress of both groups of children (Corazza, et al., 2021).

In a study examining the agency and flexibility of preschool teachers in Malta, it was found that empowering teachers to implement realistic, natural language policies in the classroom without being limited by inflexible administrative policies was crucial to the success of students (Mifsud & Vella, 2018: 286). Gobbo et al, (2014) also speak of the importance of providing young children with exposure to multiple languages as early as possible in order to help them adapt to an ever-more globalized world. This article examines the Montessori approach to multilingual education and determines that it is possible to introduce children to two different languages by having each adult in the environment speak and present lessons to the children in a different language (Longchamps, 2015; Gobbo, et al., 2014).

The ideas of Gobbo et al (2014) are mirrored in a study performed in a Swedish Montessori school (Longchamps, 2015). In this study, researchers set out to examine the way in which multilingual immersion programmes impact learners' understanding in a Montessori context (Longchamps, 2015). Using empirical analysis methods as well as interviews with teachers and a survey of students, the authors of this study found that multilingual immersion programmes not only created a more stimulating learning environment, but also led to a positive impact on academic performance in later years (Longchamps, 2015). Furthermore, this system appeared to also improve other aspects of the learning process, such as the democratization of the classroom and intercultural awareness (Longchamps, 2015).

2.1.3 Tools for evaluating multilingual classrooms

There are many tools and resources which can help educators to evaluate the linguistic landscape of their classrooms. The Communication Supporting Classroom Observation Tool (CSCOT) was developed in the United Kingdom to evaluate the linguistic environment of monolingual classroom spaces (Dockrell, et al., 2012). This tool can be used to provide teachers with a detailed assessment of all aspects of the linguistic environment in their classroom, from the tools available to the children to the décor and the way the adults communicate with the children in the classroom (Dockrell, et al., 2012).

More specific tools, such as those used to evaluate children's responsiveness to a multilingual 'story-time' can also be used to examine specific areas of the classroom and curriculum (Serry & Weadman, 2022: 577). Tools like these provide teachers with valuable ways to assess their practice and improve the experiences their learners have in the classroom.

In Putjata (2018), a study on six German preschools explored the ways in which teachers' ideologies impact the experiences of learners in their classrooms. The study found that including language awareness modules in teacher training courses can have a profound impact on the approach teachers take to linguistic diversity in their practice (Pujata, 2018: 275). In order to establish the benefits of including language awareness models in teacher training courses, Putjata (2018) collected data through questionnaires and interviews with teachers before and after training, as well as observations of their practice. These courses can empower new teachers to take a positive stance on multilingualism and establish classroom spaces which are inclusive and build children's confidence in their home language and culture (Pujata, 2018: 276)

Even after training in multilingual education, many teachers struggle to shake their misconceptions about teaching additional languages to the young child, and this can have an impact on the learning environment of their classroom (Aleksic & Garcia, 2022). In some cases, parents show a strong preference for their child to learn one language over another, adding tension to the already complicated relationship between teachers and parents (du Plessis & Louw, 2008: 61). Governments and policymakers often also show a strong preference for one language of learning over another, in order to meet institutional targets and goals (Hornberger & Vaish, 2009: 312).

In an examination of the ways in which teacher's language choices can affect the classroom, Auleear Owodally (2012) set out to uncover how languages can coexist in a multilingual preschool context. The study found that a number of factors impact the language choices made by Mauritian preschool teachers, including personal preferences and official language policies (Auleear Owodally, 2012: 256). The study also explored how these language choices can impact the language development and identity construction of preschool children (Auleear Owodally, 2012).

Auleear Owodally (2012) used a case study approach to explore these issues, collecting data from three Mauritian preschools using classroom observations, teacher interviews, and official documents and policies provided by the school. The study found that, while English held high status as the official language of instruction in all three preschools, Creole was still the most widely used language by teachers and children in the classroom, also establishing that the children often mimicked the language use and choices of their educators (Auleear Owodally, 2012: 240). The study also uncovered the tensions between the teachers' necessary and practical use of Creole and the parents' expectations of an English-medium education and explored teachers' different approaches to navigating this tension (Auleear Owodally, 2012: 255).

In the Netherlands, Morillo Morales and Cornips (2022) found that preschool teachers' language ideologies had a notable impact on their students' use of a local minority language, Limburgish. In this study, researchers used classroom observations alongside teacher interviews from four different preschools in Dutch Limburg to establish a connection between a teacher's attitude towards Limburgish, and the way it is used by the children in their care (Morillo Morales, 2022). The research showed that although Dutch enjoyed higher status as the official, dominant language in preschool spaces, a teacher with a positive stance on the social and linguistic importance of Limburgish may be able to create a space where the language is used more freely and confidently by the children (Morillo Morales, 2022).

2.1.4 Educators' perceptions of language

The teacher's preconceived perception about multilingualism is just one of many factors that can impact the successful implementation of a classroom's language policy. Some of the literature on the details of this interaction is explored below.

In a study designed to measure teachers' understanding of multilingualism in their classrooms, researchers found that teachers often lack the skills to make full use of their students' multilingual experiences (Burner & Carlsen, 2022: 48). Additionally, the results of the study showed that the focus on developing a single, primary language prevented the children from taking advantage of their full linguistic repertoires to make meaning in the classroom (Burner & Carlsen, 2022: 48)

Mary and Young's (2017) work has shown the important role the teacher's perception of multilingualism plays in learner success. In a study designed to discover more about multilingualism in French preschools, the researchers spent time observing how teachers approached the phenomenon of multilingualism in their classrooms (Mary & Young, 2017: 318). The academic success of the children in these classrooms was then studied, to determine if any relationship could be observed between these two issues (Mary & Young, 2017: 324). Not only did the researchers observe the link between teacher's ideologies on learners' academic success, but their work also showed the importance of a positive relationship between the parents and teachers of the children, as well as the need for the teacher to treat the child's home culture with respect and enthusiasm (Mary & Young, 2018; Young, 2017).

In a study exploring how teachers' perceptions of multilingualism influenced their implementation of translanguaging strategies in the classroom, it was found that these strategies proved ineffective unless the teacher was able to shift their own ideologies towards the languages they were using in the classroom (Aleksic & Garcia, 2022).

In order for meaningful support to be provided to multilingual learners in the classroom, teachers needed to work to change their preconceived ideas and beliefs about the children's language backgrounds and how they were making meaning in the classroom (Aleksic & Garcia, 2022). This study also highlighted the importance of extensive, meaningful teacher training on the value of multilingualism, rather than just an overview of the methods which can be used to teach and support multilingual children (Aleksic & Garcia, 2022).

Ting and Jintang (2022) set out to observe how language is used by teachers and children within a multilingual preschool setting. Particular attention was paid to the teacher's use of various translanguaging strategies to make meaning and support the language development of children with varying linguistic backgrounds (Ting & Jintang, 2022: 261). Classroom observations of the spontaneous and intentional language choices of the children and teacher were used to establish the role of translanguaging strategies within the space (Ting & Jintang, 2022: 261). Thereafter, interviews were used to gain an understanding of which strategies the teacher was intentionally using to support multilingual learners, and which strategies were being used unintentionally (Ting & Jintang, 2022: 268). The study found that by using a broad range of strategies to support multilingual learners, the teacher was able to create a learning

environment in which children felt comfortable using their full linguistic repertoires to make meaning and further their learning in the classroom (Ting & Jintang, 2022: 272).

2.1.5 Early exposure to a second language

The first six years of a child's life are crucial to their language development, yet second language development is often neglected in South African preschools (Parusnath, 2016). Many children in South Africa are taught exclusively in restrictive linguistic environments in the early years, even though the vast majority of South African children are multilingual (du Plessis & Louw, 2008). Strategies must be put in place to allow young children to draw on their full linguistic repertoire[4] to maximize their academic success (Ferholt, 2015).

The current model of one 'home' language and one 'school' language often favours the experiences of White monolingual learners, while leaving those with more diverse linguistic backgrounds behind (Guzula, 2021). In this study, which was motivated by the author's own experiences of this restrictive environment, research was conducted to discover more about the impact a classroom's language policy can have on its learners (Guzula, 2021). It was found that learning spaces which encourage the use of translanguaging strategies can create opportunities for children to use their sociocultural resources to make meaning (Guzula, 2021).

Additionally, a study on the language practices of Xhosa-speaking primary school learners found evidence that the children were able to use far richer and more expressive vocabulary when expressing themselves in Xhosa than in English (Desai, 2001). In a study created to understand the role African languages play in South African education, Desai (2001) argued that language policy plays an important part in giving the citizens of a country the opportunity to participate in all aspects of social life (Desai, 2001). Using observations and examples, the author was able to establish a trend of isiXhosa-speaking children being able to express themselves far more elaborately in isiXhosa than they could in English (Desai, 2001).

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[4] Linguistic repertoire refers to all the linguistic varieties used by a specific speech community (Finegan, 2004)

2.1.6   Language in South African settings

When examining the use of language in South African school settings, there are many factors to consider. While significant research in this area has been conducted on the environments of Grade R, primary school, and high school children, contrastingly little has been done to understand the linguistic environment of preschool classrooms. What follows is an exploration of some of the work done to understand the use of language in South African classrooms.

Parusnath (2016) described language as the basis for academic progressions as success. In this study, the researcher set out to develop an understanding of the linguistic environment in South African Grade R classes (Parusnath, 2016). The researcher also asserted that restricting the young child to only one language hampered their over-all development and academic future (Parusnath, 2016). Furthermore, this research provided some insight into the various tools and methods used to create supportive communicative environments in rural Grade R preschools in the Western Cape. In this study, a communication-supporting classroom tool developed in the United Kingdom was used to evaluate the supportiveness of a bilingual Grade R classroom environment in the rural Western Cape (Parusnath, 2016).

A supportive classroom environment is a crucial factor in a child's early language acquisition journey (Dockrell, et al., 2012). The ability to communicate effectively with peers, teachers, and family can impact a child's success in all academic fields, not only in language classes (Aleksic & Garcia, 2022).

In a qualitative case study on the effects of attending a preschool which taught in a child's second language, Mulovhedzi and Ngobeli (2015) recommended that children be introduced to two languages from an early age. This study was created to establish whether or not young learners benefitted from early exposure to a second language within the South African preschool context (Mulovhedzi, et al., 2015: 110). In order to reach this conclusion, data was collected through observations and interviews (Mulovhedzi, et al., 2015: 110). The researchers concluded that there were long term benefits to exposing children to a second language within the preschool setting, and that this exposure helped them form a deeper understanding of language and its uses (Mulovhedzi, et al., 2015: 115).

Ntuli and Pretorius (2005) agreed that a child's academic success is heavily dependent on their linguistic skillset. In a study designed to assess the academic outcomes of a Family Literacy project, in which young children are often read to in their home language, the literacy skills of children who did and did not participate in the programme were compared (Ntuli & Pretorius, 2005: 91). The results of this research suggested that reading to a child in their home language supports their academic growth, even in their second language, and these benefits can be long lasting (Ntuli & Pretorius, 2005: 94).

In a study examining the difference in semantic processing performance in two South African Grade 1 classrooms, showed some benefit to integrating first and second-language speakers into the same classroom, instead of teaching them separately (Jordaan, 2011: 519). In this study, the psycholinguistic processing skills of the two groups were examined, and the integrated group performed better in every area (Jordaan, 2011: 533). The researchers concluded that early integration of a second language in the classroom can have positive effects on the children's later academic success (Jordaan, 2011: 533).

2.2 <u>Misperceptions of multilingualism</u>

There are many misconceptions about introducing multiple languages to young children. Although the concern is often voiced that learning two or more languages at a time will slow down language development, studies undertaken in bilingual preschool classrooms in the United States have found indications of significant parallel growth in the language development of both the languages used in the space (Winsler, et al., 1999).

In Portoles and Marti (2020) the impact that teacher training can have on teachers' beliefs about multilingual pedagogies is explored. The findings of this study concluded that teachers' personal and professional experiences of multilingualism had a profound impact on their approach to multilingualism in the classroom (Portoles & Marti, 2020). Teachers who reported positive experiences of multilingualism were more likely to look favourably at multilingual strategies being employed in their classrooms (Portoles & Marti, 2020: 249). In the study, interviews were used to ascertain what teacher trainees' beliefs about multilingualism were prior to their training, and how they used multilingual pedagogies in the classroom post-training (Portoles & Marti, 2020: 257). Portoles and Marti (2020: 257) also

found that teachers who were provided with more detailed, informative training on how to implement multilingual pedagogies in the classroom were more likely to feel competent and confident implementing these strategies in the classroom environment.

2.3   Ideology's impact on policy creation

The language ideologies of children, teachers, parents, school owners, administrators, and government bodies all have a part to play in language policy creation. A review of literature pertaining to the impact of these ideologies is explored below.

2.3.1   Conflicts and tension between multilingualism and standardization

In a study planned to discover more about the language environments of emergent bilinguals in the USA, Buckley et al (2021) found that systems which emphasize a monolingual pedagogy undervalue and underestimate the language knowledge of bilingual children in early childhood settings (Buckley, et al., 2021). This ideological impact has an influence on test and assessment scores, where bilingual children may be more likely to score low despite their extensive linguistic repertoires (Buckley, et al., 2021: 172).

Buckley et al. (2021) observed that teachers who were willing to use the emergent bilinguals' home language in the classroom, specifically through the use of open-ended questions, created a learning space which enabled children to be more confident participants in the learning process. Denying these children, the support of their additional languages in the classroom is denying them the opportunity to fully learn and retain new information, leading to disparities in educational outcomes (Buckley, et al., 2021: 173).

Puskas and Bjork-Willen (2017) investigated the challenging sociolinguistic landscape that policymakers in a trilingual preschool have to navigate in order to maintain an environment which supports effective communication and learning. In this study, researchers sought to highlight the tensions that exist between competing language ideologies, parent expectations, and government-set educational targets (Puskas & Bjork-Willen, 2017). The study found that these tensions create specific dilemmas for teachers and policymakers in the multilingual

preschool space, particularly when considering how each language choice impacts the social and language dynamics within the classroom (Puskas & Bjork-Willen, 2017).

Furthermore, Puskas and Bjork-Wilen (2017: 425) found that when offering dominance to one language, policy leads to other languages losing visibility and recognition in the setting, forcing teachers to navigate the line between offering a standardized language experience to the children and making sure that all the children in the classroom feel that their language and culture are valued and recognized. To add to this, the external pressures towards standardization from parents, school governing bodies, and government education standards were found to further limit the abilities of the teachers and policymakers to support the language needs and preferences of all their students in a multilingual space (Puskas & Bjork-Willen, 2017: 429).

In a case study of the work of a preschool teacher working in a monolingual classroom setting, Gelir (2022) examined the ways in which a teacher's individual language beliefs and ideologies can create a support system for linguistic diversity, even in traditional, monolingual classrooms. Although the teacher in the study held strong beliefs about the values of using a single language to create a sense of community in the classroom and promote social interaction between her students, she showed flexibility and creativity when finding language strategies to support individual learners from diverse linguistic backgrounds (Gelir, 2022: 9). Through the use of these flexible strategies, the teacher was more successfully able to navigate the tensions between the external drive for language standardization and the individual children's needs for diverse language support (Gelir, 2022: 10).

2.3.2 Contextualizing stakeholders' ideologies towards English

Studies exploring bilingualism in the preschool setting in the USA have found indications that children schools which provide a bilingual classroom show significant language development in both languages that are used in the space (Winsler, et al., 1999). Within the context of Montessori education, Gobbo et al, (2014) also speak of the importance of providing young children with multiple languages as early as possible in order to help them adapt to an ever-more globalized world.

Studies exploring educators' understanding of translanguaging strategies have found that misunderstanding the purpose and implementation of these strategies can lead to negative outcomes in the classroom (Aleksic & Garcia, 2022). Teachers' existing perceptions of multilingualism can have a significant to play in the success of their implementation of translanguaging strategies in their classroom (Aleksic & Garcia, 2022).

For many teachers, the progression towards translanguaging pedagogy defies their first training as educators, where the purpose of language education was often to homogenize students' language and perceptions of language (Aleksic & Garcia, 2022). This is particularly true of teachers working in early childhood education, where much emphasis is placed on guiding and supporting the development of verbal and written communication in the main language of their environment, while second language development is often overlooked or misunderstood entirely (Aleksic & Garcia, 2022).

This difficulty has been observed in primary schools in a variety of contexts, with researchers exploring the impact of teacher misunderstandings in countries with varying degrees of multilingualism (Aleksic & Garcia, 2022). In many instances, teacher training in supposed translanguaging pedagogy does not lead them to encourage those they are teaching to use their full linguistic repertoire, revealing a superficial understanding of the true spirit of translanguaging (Aleksic & Garcia, 2022). In many cases, teachers preferred simply acknowledging the linguistic backgrounds of their students rather than providing them with the support they need to access and utilize their full linguistic repertoires (Aleksic & Garcia, 2022).

> "Translanguaging pedagogical practices that address only aspects of language and multilingualism, without rooting themselves on historical and ideological consciousness so that students discern the political and structural aspects of domination through language, will always fall short (Aleksic & Garcia, 2022: 4)".

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Research done on the success of the implementation of various translanguaging pedagogy programs for teachers shows the importance of teachers' own ideologies on the outcomes and accuracy of translanguaging education (Aleksic & Garcia, 2022). In this study, recordings were used by researchers to observe whether teachers in Luxembourg were able to successfully adopt translanguaging strategies in their classrooms (Aleksic & Garcia, 2022). Through these recordings, it was observed that unless the teacher was able to shift their own ideological position about multilingualism in the classroom, the translanguaging strategies they were adopting were unlikely to have the desired effect and could even lead to negative outcomes (Aleksic & Garcia, 2022).

The environment, one of the three key factors in Montessori education, has been found to play a vital role in early language development (Degotardi, et al., 2021). A positive experience of multilingual learning in the early childhood setting can make a significant difference in the child's perception of the languages in their linguistic repertoire that is not part of the monolingual language programs of their country (Degotardi, et al., 2021).

An emotionally and intellectually supportive teacher is one of the most important features of a positive multilingual classroom (Degotardi, et al., 2021). Additionally, the child's linguistic autonomy must be respected wherever possible in order to encourage them to truly capitalize on their full linguistic repertoire (Degotardi, et al., 2021). Maria Montessori placed great emphasis on the importance of independence and autonomy for the developing child (Montessori, 1949).

Teacher ideology plays a critical role in the quality of language education received by students, as without clear, achievable guidelines and policy, it is ideology that dictates the level of respect and support for a second language in the classroom (Pujata, 2018). As discussed in Portoles and Marti (2020), teacher training programs have a critical role to play in the successful implementation of second-language curricula in schools. The beliefs and ideologies put forward by these training courses have a far-reaching impact, influencing the language choices of teachers working with the country's youngest children (Portoles & Marti, 2020: 264).

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Chapter 3: Theoretical Framework

3.1   Introduction

This chapter will explore the main theoretical framework of this thesis namely, Bakhtin's theories of heteroglossia and dialogism. After a thorough examination of the literature around multilingualism in preschool and teachers' perceptions of language, several tensions have arisen. To address these tensions and the research problem, this framework will be explored in relation to preschool education. In addition, concepts that express ideas similar to Bakhtin's such as translanguaging will also receive attention. Several studies have used these frameworks to investigate various educational contexts around the world, and a review of such literature will follow.

Bakhtin's (1981) theories of heteroglossia, dialogism, and multi-voicedness will be laid out and discussed, after which their applications in education research will be elaborated on. The influence of Bakhtin's ideas within the South African and Montessori context will be explained. Additionally, literature on translanguaging strategies and their implications within the preschool context will be considered.

3.2   Bakhtin's theories of heteroglossia

The primary theoretical framework which will be used to interpret the data in this thesis is that of Bakhtin's (1981) theories of heteroglossia. Bakhtin's ideas were used to make sense of literature (specifically the novel) and other cultural forms of expression but has been widely applied outside of literary theory. According to Bakhtin (1981: 262) "the novel can be defined as a diversity of social speech types (sometimes even diversity of languages) and a diversity of individual voices, artistically organised". Heteroglossia thus refers to the coexistence of diverse 'voices' within society and within each individual (Bakhtin, 1981: 263).

Bakhtin's heteroglossia defines the tensions that exist between bureaucratic requirements and tendencies towards monolingualism and standardisation, against the natural human tendency towards multilingualism and heteroglossia (Bakhtin, 1981). His analogy using the concepts of centripetal and centrifugal forces to explain the pressures and tensions around language use

can be applied to a variety of contexts (Holquist, 2002: 27). Centripetal forces are used to describe the forces pulling towards unity and authority's desire to establish a single-meaning system (Holquist, 2002: 27). In contrast to this, the idea of centrifugal forces is used to describe the unofficial or 'unsanctioned' and varied uses of natural language (Holquist, 2002: 27). In this model, every utterance is a point of tension and contradiction (Holquist, 2002: 26).

Dialogism refers to Bakhtin's theory that no word or utterance exists without many layers of meaning (Holquist, 2002: 26). Within this theory, it is impossible to participate in any language use without also participating in the dialogue that gives it meaning (Busch, 2014: 9). The multiple meanings behind any utterance rely on the existence of many interlacing forms of the language it is being used in (Holquist, 2002: 14). It is this complex 'web' of language varieties and dialects that Bakhtin refers to as dialogism (Bakhtin, 1981: 133). In other words:

> "The internal stratification of any single national language into social dialects, characteristic group behaviour, professional jargons, generic languages, languages of generations and age groups, tendentious languages, languages of the authorities, of various circles and of passing fashions, languages that serve the specific sociopolitical purposes of the day, even of the hour" (Bakhtin, 1981: 262).

Any attempt at creating a variety of 'official' or standardised language finds itself in conflict with this basic truth of language, that its use is always subjective to the experiences of the speaker and listener (Bakhtin, 1981: 270). There is no truly neutral use of language (Bakhtin, 1981). The tensions between society's natural tendency toward multilingualism and authority's push toward monolingualism that are highlighted in Bakhtin's work may be paralleled with the child's natural tendency toward multilingualism and the teachers' need to create a monolingual classroom space (Stuart, 2017: 67).

3.2.1 Multivoicedness

Central to Bakhtin's theories was the notion that plurality is inherent to human language (Holquist, 2002). Within this theory, it is understood that each word and utterance is associated with multiple different voices and layers of meaning (Holquist, 2002). It is impossible for any speaker to use an utterance that is only associated with precisely the meaning they intended for it and has no outside points of reference or preconceived ideas in the mind of the listeners (Bakhtin, 1981). This idea is expanded upon in the extract below:

> "Language lies on the borderline between oneself and the other. The
> word in language is half someone else's. It becomes 'one's own' only
> when the speaker populates it with his own intention, his own accent,
> when he appropriates the word" (Bakhtin, 1981: 293)

This relationship between speaker and listener is a crucial feature of any communication (Bakhtin, 1981). Additionally, one speaker can have multiple relationships with the same word, each associated with a different 'voice' (Bakhtin, 1981). Furthermore, due to the existing voices around every utterance, no use of language can ever exist without meaning or context (Holquist, 2002). It is impossible to separate any word from the layers of meaning associated with it (Bakhtin, 1981). It is in the tension created by this multivoicedness that meaning is created (Skaftun, 2019).

The notion of Language Ecology refers to the interconnectedness of language and how different varieties, dialects, and languages interact with one another to create social meaning (Blackledge & Creese, 2014). While this perspective takes a wider view of the issue. Bakhtin's theories fit in here due to the belief in relationships and interplay between multiple voices and perspectives in every use of language (Holquist, 2002). Within the Western Cape, over 98% of adults are self-reported first language speakers of Afrikaans, isiXhosa, and English, resulting in a system of a Three Language Ecology (Deumert, 2010: 55)

3.2.2 Bakhtin in education

As an educator himself, Bakhtin's theories have many applications within the educational context (Holquist, 2002; Maclean, 1994). In this section, research on Bakhtin's work within the educational setting will be discussed.

Much of the research surrounding young children's linguistic experiences and performances are centred around play (White, 2015). Common theorisation involves using the theories of Bakhtin and Vygotsky together to create a developmental approach to the way children create meaning in their play (White, 2015). When using this approach to understand the young child's experience of play, it can be noted that a variety of voices are used, particularly during role-play (Busch, 2014). Within this type of play, children 'try on' the different voices they encounter in their lives, such as those of parents, teachers, doctors, store attendants, etc. (Sisson & Kroeger, 2017). Observing this phenomenon through a Bakhtinian framework, a deeper understanding of the tensions these children are exploring can be developed (Cohen, 2009).

Authors have also found that humour is a way that young children make meaning outside of adult authority and regain control of social interactions in the preschool setting (Jennings-Tallant, 2018). Through the use of jokes and humour, the young child is able to subvert ideas of their relationship with authority figures and go about creating an environment with a less authoritarian system (Duncan & Tarulli, 2003). Researchers in education have also developed tools to use Bakhtin's ideas of carnival to analyze the classroom, viewing the educational context as a text (Skaftun, 2019). Within this framework, the tensions inherent to the classroom teacher-student dynamic can be broken down, using Bakhtinian ideas to address the voices from both sides of the tension without devaluing them (Skaftun, 2019).

In a study exploring the challenges that globalization has posed to primarily monolingual hospital settings in Finland, Virtanen (2017: 115) used a Bakhtinian approach to uncover more about the voices and tensions at play. Focusing on the experiences of an international student from Kenya and the written documentation he was required to use in the program, it was found that multivoicedness was a key feature of workplace literacies, particularly in the use of hospital forms (Virtanen, 2017: 134). Furthermore, the research found that the mentors'

language ideologies and beliefs about the status of standardised Finnish in the hospital setting could create tension and impact the written performance of the international student (Virtanen, 2017: 134-135).

In a study observing the discourses used by Brazilian high school students discussing the theory of matter, Mortimer (1998) set out to find out more about how multivoicedness can impact classroom life (Mortimer, 1998: 68). Through the analysis of video recordings and their transcriptions, it was established that students frequently moved between authoritative and internally persuasive voices when discussing the topic at hand (Mortimer, 1998: 79). The use of this multivoiced discourse was a prominent feature of classroom discourse and provided the students with a way to demonstrate their understanding of the topic, mimicking the teacher's authoritative voice as a way to prove that they had achieved the academic goals for the lesson (Mortimer, 1998: 79).

Using a Bakhtinian approach to understand the language use of university students in Bangladesh, Sultana (2014) performed an analysis of their heteroglossic language practices (Sultana, 2014: 44). The study uncovered the ways in which students used strategies such as mockery and parody to build and confirm aspects of their individual and group identities, often working to differentiate themselves from the traditional identities ascribed to them (Sultana, 2014: 53).

Barwell (2012) designed a study to learn more about the type of language used in multilingual mathematics classrooms. Drawing on Bakhtin's heteroglossic theory, the researcher analysed the tensions which occurred around language use in linguistically diverse mathematics classrooms (Barwell, 2012: 317). This analysis highlighted the ways in which centripetal ideological forces can impact language in the classroom, and ultimately limit academic understanding and growth (Barwell, 2012: 322).

Lillis (2003) set out to establish a learning design that supports an academic literacies approach to student writing (Lillis, 2003: 192). Through this research, it was observed that dominant language ideologies in university settings in the United Kingdom often took a monologic approach, viewing language as a static and objective tool to express academic competence (Lillis, 2003: 194). Ultimately, the findings of this work called for a more

dialogic approach to teaching academic literacy, as opposed to the monologic approach so often taken (Lillis, 2003: 204).

Drawing on the work of Bakhtin, Blackledge and Creese (2014) question the concept of individual languages as entirely separate forms of communication in modern times. This work highlights the complications which arise from attempting to study linguistic diversity by identifying distinct languages and varieties, and not recognizing the reality of language interactions (Blackledge & Creese, 2014).

Within the educational setting, one of the ways in which this tension is evident, is in the coexistence of the child's home language(s) and the official language they are required to use at school (Busch, 2014) which in many contexts are not the same.

3.2.3 Bakhtin within the South African context

In a country with such a rich and diverse linguistic history, the idea of centripetal and centrifugal tensions discussed in Bakhtin's (1981) have proved a rich theoretical framework to interpret data. What follows is an exploration of the research done into the application of these ideas within the South African context.

In their paper exploring the tensions which stem from attempting to create a classroom language practice plan that aligns with a multilingual government language policy, Hornberger and Vaish (2009) uncovered several parallels between occurrences within the South African context and those of Singapore and India. When examined alongside the theories of Bakhtin (1981), it can be seen how centripetal forces, such as the need for a lingua franca to sustain participation in the global economy, and centrifugal forces, such as pride in national history and the desire to decolonize learning spaces, interact. This paper also highlighted the issue that despite the raising of nine African languages to 'official' status in South Africa, in conjunction with English and Afrikaans, many parents still prefer to send their children to monolingual English schools (Hornberger & Vaish, 2009). In an attempt to provide a 'solution' to this tension, the researchers use examples from classroom observations to "argue that multilingual classroom practices can be a resource through which children

access Standard English while also cultivating their own local languages." (Hornberger & Vaish, 2009: 305)

In a study conducted with students at the University of Witwatersrand in Johannesburg, researchers endeavoured to create a deeper understanding of how multilingual teaching approaches can be used to improve course design for education students (Dixon & Mendelowitz, 2016). This study working with first-year pre-service teachers in Johannesburg explored the implementation of a heteroglossic curriculum for university students (Dixon & Mendelowitz, 2016). Researchers found that by viewing the students' linguistic diversity as a resource and encouraging them to value their varied academic experiences, students were better able to create meaning and take risks in their academic writing (Dixon & Mendelowitz, 2016).

Busch (2010) explored the tension between language policy and lived experiences of high school students at a school in the Western Cape. In this study, the issue of monolingualization in schools was highlighted, where children were boxed into linguistic categories that did not accurately describe their lived language experiences (Busch, 2010: 286). It was concluded that, despite taking a learner-centred approach to language education, the school was still neglecting some of the important ideological tensions and issues tied to their curriculum and policies (Busch, 2010: 293). McKinney et al (2015) built on this research, further noting the need for an emphasis on the concept of language as a social tool rather than a standardized and discrete entity (McKinney et al, 2015: 103).

When considering the rich and diverse linguistic heritage of Southern Africa, Rasool (2014) also pointed to the importance of a heteroglossic approach (Rasool, 2014: 51). In this paper, it is argued that an approach which supports the natural state of heteroglossia in the region is key to encouraging the region's economic and social development (Rasool, 2014: 52). Issues such as colonization and immigration were shown to have significant impact on the centripetal forces driving language policy in this region (Rasool, 2014: 57). Overall, this work pointed to the need for better support for heteroglossic language practices within South Africa and the Sub-Sharan Africa region (Rasool, 2014: 71).

3.2.4 Bakhtin and Montessori

The preschool classroom is a crucial 'first step' in the child's developmental and academic journey (Montessori, 1949). These settings are where children build their ideas of the world around them and create meaning from the vast range of social experiences, they are now exposed to (White, 2015). Montessori's concept of the child's progression from 'spiritual embryo'[5] to 'social embryo'[6] during this period aligns with much of what we know of preschool-age child and their drive to understand the social world around them (Gobbo, et al., 2014).

Tying in with Bakhtin's (1981) ideas on decentralizing authority and establishing a discourse where multiple voices are heard and respected, much of Montessori philosophy is based around the idea of the teacher as a guide who has the responsibility to avoid interfering with the children's day-to-day lives and take on the role of an observer in the classroom, allowing the children to direct their own learning and social interactions (Montessori, 1912).

Furthermore, in an environment where children are encouraged to advocate for themselves and their ideas with both peers and adults, a variety of voices can coexist (Cohen, 2009). Through the observation of these voices and the tensions they create, the child is better able to understand the value of multiple voices and inputs, rather than relying on one sole authority figure to provide a reference of what is true or correct (Cohen, 2009).

3.3 <u>Language ideologies in the South African Context</u>

In Ruiz (1984), ideologies around language are separated into three distinct categories. Through his observations, it was established that language policy can be framed through the lenses of language as a problem, language as a right, and language as a resource (Ruiz, 1984). Each of these frameworks led to different language policies being put in place, with varying

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[5] The term 'spiritual embryo' refers to the earliest period of a child's life, where their focus is on building themselves and meeting their own needs, with little concern for the needs of those around them (Montessori, 1949).

[6] The term 'social embryo' is used by Montessori to define the period of social awakening which usually occurs between 2.5 and 6 years of age (Montessori, 1949). It is in this period that the child becomes interested in understanding and conforming to the social expectations of their culture (Montessori, 1949).

success. Within the South African preschool context, these frameworks add value to the description of teacher and policymaker language ideologies. When language is viewed as a resource, children can be empowered to support their own learning as well as the learning of those around them, as explored by Makoe & McKinney (2009: 91). In this study, a Grade 1 learner draws on her linguistic repertoire and uses hybrid discursive practices to engage with the curriculum and assist the other children in the space (Makoe & McKinney, 2009: 80).

In recent years, government policymakers in South Africa have placed more emphasis on the framing of language as a right, creating many public education policies around the position that every child has a right to learn in their home language (Mathole, 2016). The gap between these policies and their practical implementation have resulted in many schools and teachers in South Africa viewing second language teaching as a problem to be solved, rather than a resource to be drawn upon (McKinney, et al., 2015). Despite the diversity which defines South African culture, many school administrators and policymakers continue to encourage only the use of standardized monolingual teaching practices in the classroom (Probyn, 2009).

3.4 <u>Translanguaging pedagogy</u>

The idea of translanguaging was first used by Cen Williams to define a new model of multilingual education in Welsh classrooms (Aleksic & Garcia, 2022). This term is defined as a pedagogical practice that involved differing languages of input and output used by the same teacher within one classroom (Aleksic & Garcia, 2022). Since its initial use, the term has come to describe the broad range of strategies used by teachers and students to make meaning in a multilingual setting. This term is connected to Bakhtin's theorisation since it more fully wants to embrace the inherent multivoicedness and heteroglossia of society.

Successful translanguaging in the classroom can only occur under specific conditions (Aleksic & Garcia, 2022). For this practice to have the desired results, teachers need to successfully take on what is referred to as a 'translanguaging stance' (Aleksic & Garcia, 2022). This refers to the shift in an individual educator's ideology on multilingualism, leading to a positive and productive perception of translanguaging techniques in the classroom (Aleksic & Garcia, 2022). Teachers who have developed a translanguaging stance have

shifted to a position where they can make their students feel empowered to use their full linguistic repertoire without feelings of shame or doubt (Aleksic & Garcia, 2022).

Critical to a translanguaging stance is the idea that every child's background and linguistic repertoire is a resource in the classroom, not a barrier (Garcia & Lin, 2017). This ideological position allows the teacher to best support the child, by encouraging self-confidence and pride in their background, giving them the confidence to draw on all of their language resources to improve their understanding of classroom material without fear of being shamed or humiliated (Garcia & Lin, 2017).

3.4.1   Translanguaging strategies and preschool context

Translanguaging strategies have been shown to support young bilingual children and improve their participation in the classroom (Buckley, et al., 2021). Among the most frequently used of these strategies is the use of open-ended questions by the teacher, which allows and encourages students to use their full linguistic repertoire without feeling ashamed or embarrassed (Buckley, et al., 2021). The attitude of the teacher is of great importance here, as it is often their reaction to translanguaging which will guide the children in their care's attitudes toward the practice (Aleksic & Garcia, 2022).

Research into trilingual early education in Hong Kong highlights the importance of improvisation in practising translanguaging strategies in the preschool classroom (Sanders-Smith & Davila, 2019). In a study focused on the languages practices of children and within the context of a progressive, multilingual preschool classroom, researchers used a case study design to determine what strategies were being used to support the language and social development of children in the classroom (Sanders-Smith & Davila, 2022: 279). This research determined that teachers' translanguaging stance allowed and encouraged the children to draw on their full linguistic repertoires to develop their language skills naturally and build relationships with those around them (Sanders-Smith & Davila, 2022: 287).

In a study working with bilingual Spanish-English preschool-aged children in the United States, researchers set out to develop a language policy which can support bilingual learning in the preschool setting (Gort & Sembiante, 2014). Through their observations of three

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teachers in one bilingual classroom, researchers collected qualitative data on the use of language in a bilingual classroom (Gort & Sembiante, 2014). The study found that teachers were able to support young bilinguals through the use of translanguaging strategies such as bilingual recasting and language brokering, without discouraging the children from using all the language resources available to them (Gort & Sembiante, 2014).

3.4.2   Translanguaging pedagogy in South Africa

South African studies have shown the benefits of using translanguaging strategies to improve learner understanding and development (Guzula, 2021). Multilingual education poses a challenge to South African preschool teachers, as pressures from parents and school management to research language targets, such as proficiency in English before attending primary school, often force them to follow teaching styles that are not always in the best interest of the individual child (du Plessis & Louw, 2008). While many of these teachers express a desire to better support children of all linguistic backgrounds, they also recognize their limitations and their pressing need for more training and support (du Plessis & Louw, 2008).

In a research study working with a primary school in Khayelitsha, questions about the translanguaging strategies used in South African schools and the tensions this creates between teachers, students, and school governing bodies were explored (Krause & Prinsloo, 2016). Using a case-study design and embedded in a Bakhtinian framework, researchers were able to identify a broad range of creative translanguaging strategies used by teachers to support the academic progress of the students in their classrooms (Krause & Prinsloo, 2016). Additionally, researchers were able to uncover significant tensions between the monolingual, heteroglossic ideas of the school's management, and the teachers' desire to support and encourage learning wherever possible (Krause & Prinsloo, 2016).

In McKinney, et al, (2015) researchers argued that through the adoption of translanguaging strategies in the classroom, educators have the ability to promote a more inclusive learning space and encourage children to draw on their full linguistic repertoires, deepening their learning and improving their schooling experience. This study further highlights the need to

move away from monoglossic academic systems in South Africa, as these practices fail to meet the needs of its linguistically and culturally diverse people (McKinney, et al., 2015).

A wide variety of translanguaging strategies and multimodal learning techniques are proposed and supported by the research done by Guzula, et al, (2016). In this study, the researchers argue for the validation and encouragement of these methods and strategies to support the diverse language backgrounds and learning styles of South African children (Guzula, et al., 2016).

3.4.3   Translanguaging strategies and Montessori

The Montessori curriculum creates room for a variety of translanguaging strategies to be adopted in the preschool classroom (Chavarria, 2021). With its focus on supporting the needs of each child through the use of individual lesson planning, as opposed to planning one lesson for the entire class at a time, and frequent observations to recognize the child's needs and interests, Montessori teachers should be well placed to support the child on their linguistic journey (Chavarria, 2021).

In a case study on a bilingual Montessori high school in Lund, researchers set out to discover the impact of different translanguaging strategies on academic outcomes (Longchamps, 2015). Through observations, interviews, and questionnaires, it was established that a creative and dynamic approach to translanguaging in the classroom had the best outcomes for students (Longchamps, 2015). Moreover, it was found that the students in these classrooms performed exceedingly well on the Swedish National Tests in a broad range of subjects, suggesting that this approach encouraged a high level of creativity and cognitive development (Longchamps, 2015).

Researchers observing a program designed to assist underprivileged learners in the transition to an English-medium Montessori school in Mumbai set out to discover more about the ways translanguaging strategies could be used to support this transition (Goenka, 2019). The study combined classroom observations with interviews with teaching staff to develop an understanding of this issue (Goenka, 2019). Ultimately, it was found that teachers' approaches to translanguaging in the classroom and their support of strategies such as codeswitching and

codemixing had a significant impact on their students' ability to make the transition (Goenka, 2019).

The Montessori approach creates a broad range of opportunities for the implementation of translanguaging strategies (Gobbo, et al., 2014). Multi-modal education is the norm in Montessori education, where children are provided with linguistic input, concrete experiences, and an environment rich in written language such as labels and signs (Longchamps, 2015).

Chapter 4: Research Methodology

The first step toward addressing the issue of monolingual Montessori preschool spaces is to investigate the perceptions and lived experiences of the educators working in these classrooms. In order to accomplish this, the study was designed to learn more about the self-reported strategies teachers use to bring bilingualism into their classrooms and the beliefs these teachers have about teaching multiple languages to preschool-aged children within the Montessori context.

4.1 <u>Logic of inquiry</u>

In order to discover how Montessori teachers go about supporting emergent bilinguals in the classroom and how they themselves feel about operating in multilingual classrooms, data for this study was collected through qualitative research methods. These methods are guided by a desire to create a deeper understanding of social issues (Mann, 2011). Qualitative methods allow researchers to explore complex issues without having to fit the data into rigid frameworks, giving them the opportunity for the data to guide their process (Richards & Talmy, 2011). Furthermore, this approach can provide greater insights into people's ideologies and experiences (Richards & Talmy, 2011).

The interviews were semi-structured and designed to learn more about the ideologies of the teachers involved, as well as discover which strategies they believe they use to support multilingual learners in their classrooms. This method allowed the research to be more flexible and adapt to the developing needs of the study (Mann, 2011). The open-ended questions which were used encouraged the participants to speak about what they felt was important, revealing more about their own ideologies and priorities in the classroom (Mann, 2011). However, as it is impossible to fully remove the researcher's own ideology from the interview process, there is the risk that this had an impact on the results of the interviews and the information gathered.

Preceding the interview process, extensive research was done into several areas of multilingual preschool education. The main focus of this reading and research was to discover the methods used by international Montessori teachers to support and encourage bilingualism

in the classroom. Various translanguaging strategies were explored alongside the importance of Bakhtin's contributions to the field. Research was also conducted on the linguistic landscape of preschools in South Africa, and the challenges this creates for teachers.

To contextualize this study, information was provided on the most important features of Montessori teaching and the unique qualities of this approach to education. Concepts such as translanguaging and Bakhtin's heteroglossia were explored within Montessori pedagogy and philosophy to establish links to these approaches.

This initial research and literature overview was conducted over several months. Articles and books were found through the Stellenbosch University Library. Care was taken to ensure that all information used in this study originated from reputable academic sources and peer-reviewed studies.

Qualitative data collected in interviews was used to answer and expand upon the proposed research problem. The interviews involved posing questions to seven Montessori-qualified teachers working in preschool settings in the Cape Town area. These conversations were informal and semi-structured, generally lasting between fifteen and twenty minutes.

The collected data was then broken down into major themes by means of thematic analyses, before being examined from a lens based in Bakhtin's notions of heteroglossia, dialogism, and polyphony. Finally, the limitations of the study and further opportunities for research were explored before concluding with a summary of findings.

4.2   Selection of participants

Participants were selected through convenience sampling and direct contact with a range of local Montessori schools. Having worked in Montessori schools in Cape Town for about 5 years, I had access to a wide network of schools in the area. Due to my position as a teacher within the Montessori community in Cape Town, I had existing personal relationships with many of the participants. Due to the small and tight-knit nature of the Montessori teaching community in Cape Town, it was easy to create a list of viable participants for this study. However, as a result of the late time in the school year at which the interviews took place, finding participants who had the free time to take part in the study was challenging.

Participants included preschool directresses (lead teachers), assistant directresses (assistant teachers), and school principals who continued to participate in classroom activities. All participants had completed Montessori teaching qualifications.

In order to supplement the participants from my personal network, I made direct contact with a number of schools in the Cape Town area via email. Most schools were unresponsive, likely due to the pressures of writing end of year reports, holding annual parent-teacher conferences, finalizing details of phase graduations and end of year concerts and family events. Of the responses received, there was significant interest from principals and administrators. However, there was still difficulty attracting the interest of the active teaching staff being targeted in the study.

As a consequence of this, the decision was made to include Montessori qualified assistant directresses in the research pool. In most schools, assistant directresses perform many of the same duties as lead teachers, to a lesser degree. Many of the assistant directresses had a smaller group of focus children who they worked with and took academic responsibility for. Most assistant directresses in the Montessori system are also expected to work with after care children as well as take on extra cleaning, material making, and classroom preparation duties.

All of the participants were Montessori trained and qualified teachers working in Cape Town. Each of these teachers had completed a course focused on the teaching of 3 – 6-year-olds, and some had completed courses to work with additional age groups including 18 month to 3 year olds, 6-9 year olds, and 9-12 year olds.

While all of the participants were actively working with the 3 – 6-year age group, some participants had taken on additional roles as well as teaching, including the roles of principal, aftercare teacher, and head of department. One participant was also the owner of a Montessori school. Five of the participants were lead teachers in their environment, and three were assistant directresses. Between these seven participants, six Montessori schools in Cape Town were represented. Each of these schools is a full member of the South African Montessori Association (SAMA), the largest group of Montessori schools in the country.

Participants represented a wide range of teaching experience levels, with some having work experience in both mainstream and Montessori schools. The participant with the least teaching

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experience had been working in a Montessori school for one year, while the most experienced participant had over 20 years of Montessori teaching experience.

All participants identified as women and represented a range of racial identities including Indian, Coloured, and White. Participants reported speaking a wide variety of languages, including English, Afrikaans, isiXhosa, Hindi, Italian, and French. Half of the participants considered themselves to be monolingual, despite having basic comprehension and production skills in at least a second language.

Participant number	Pseudonym	Gender	Race	Languages spoken	Years of experience	Role
1	Sarah	Female	Coloured	English, Afrikaans	7	Lead teacher
2	Ashley	Female	White	English, Afrikaans, isiXhosa	20	Lead teacher, head of department
3	Rose	Female	Indian	English, Afrikaans, Hindi, Italian	4	Teacher, Extended day teacher
4	Jane	Female	White	English	20	Teacher, School owner, principal
5	Lily	Female	Coloured	English, French	10	Teacher
6	Carla	Female	White	English	4	Lead Teacher

| 7 | Olivia | Female | White | English, Afrikaans | 1 | Teacher |

Table 1: Background information on participants

4.3   Data collection instruments

The principal research instrument used in this study was a series of guiding questions selected prior to beginning the interview and recruitment process. These questions were developed following the successful submission of a research proposal to the Department of General Linguistics at Stellenbosch University.

The questions were selected to meet two primary research objectives. The first objective was to discover which strategies teachers reported using in their practice to support emergent bilinguals in their classrooms. This section of the interview included questions about the linguistic environment of each teacher's classroom and the linguistic background of the children in her care. Additionally, questions were asked about the teacher's own experiences of multilingualism and linguistic background.

The second objective was to explore the ideologies and perceptions these teachers have of multilingualism's place within the Montessori philosophy and curriculum. Questions were asked about the teacher's understanding of Montessori philosophy. Additionally, participants were asked questions about the positions of other stakeholders, such as parents, school owners, and administrative staff, took on multilingualism in the classroom.

The interview process itself was largely informal. Interviews took place in classrooms, coffee shops, restaurants, and via Zoom. Each location brought with it its own challenges, such as difficulty with background noise and interruptions from restaurant staff. Most of these conversations lasted between fifteen and twenty minutes, and recordings were only started after greetings and a brief explanation of the study was concluded.

The interviews varied in length and level of detail. Some participants were very enthusiastic about sharing their own experiences and ideas, while others showed hesitancy to expose too

much. There also seemed to be a degree of concern that the interview answers would somehow find their way to the principals or parents, as some teachers put significant effort into painting their school in as positive a light as possible. Teachers who also had some administrative duties at the school seemed to be the most forthcoming in the interviews, often sharing information about the policies and language goals of the school.

Overall, the subjective and interpretive nature of interviews had a significant impact on the outcomes of the study. As a member of the Montessori community in Cape Town, I had already briefly met most of the participants in a professional capacity, years before beginning the study. This existing relationship, as well as my position within the community may have caused some of the reluctance a few of the participants showed in sharing details of their practice. Additionally, my personal biases and ideologies had an impact on the research I was conducting and would have influenced the patterns and tensions I picked up on during my analysis.

4.4 **Analysis**

The research undertaken before data collection was used as a jumping-off point for the analysis aspect of this study. Braun and Clarke's (2012) thematic analysis method was used to break down the data and find broad, overarching themes. This form of analysis looks at qualitive data to identify and isolate repeated patterns that come up (Braun & Clarke, 2012).

The analysis took an inductive approach to discover some of the semantic ideas, or the specifically mentioned approaches used by teachers to support their bilingual students, and latent ideas, subtextual cues about the teachers' ideologies and perceptions of multilingualism in the classroom, which recurred throughout the interviews. These themes and ideas were then explored through a lens embedded in Bakhtin's notions of heteroglossia, dialogism, and polyphony.

After completing and recording each interview familiarization with the data occurred through the process of transcription. After transcription was complete, the data was separated into answers for specific questions prepared before the interview. The data was then coded to find themes which came up across multiple interviews.

The recurring themes coded in the data were condensed and collated to establish a selection of ideas to explore. These themes were named and defined before being examined from Bakhtin's theoretical position, exploring the constant tension between the natural state of multilingualism and societal pressure towards monolingualism (Bakhtin, 1981). While thematic analysis provided a starting point for analyzing the data, there were limitations to its use. To counteract some of the weaknesses of thematic analysis as identified by Pavlenko (2007), such as a lack of clear theoretical grounding , other frameworks were incorporated into the analysis to provide a better picture of the ideologies and experiences involved in multilingual preschool classrooms.

Largely following the path set out by Hong et al (2016) for using Bakhtinian theory as a means for data analysis as well as the work produced by Skaftun (2019) on dealing with the classroom as a text, the themes established in the thematic analysis of the interview transcripts were examined and analyzed. By looking for key moments of tension in the data and embracing the multiple voices involved in this tension, the tensional approach developed by Hong et al (2016) lent itself well to uncovering the points of ideological tension within the interviews. Additionally, Skaftun's (2019) framework of Dialogic Discourse Analysis set out a path to analyzing and understanding the different tensions that arise when considering the classroom as a text and recognizing the different voices at play.

Much of this approach involved positioning the teacher as the author and students as the subjects in the day-to-day classroom interactions (Skaftun, 2019). Of course, the view of the teacher as the author and students as their subjects has its limitations and risks robbing the students of their agency to author their own narratives (Matusov, 2011). As pointed out by Matusov (2011, p.40), "there is only one legitimate author of the student, namely the student him or herself as unique, limitless, unfolding."

This sentiment is mirrored in aspects of Montessori's philosophy, particularly the belief that each child ultimately has the work of constructing his "inmost self", regardless of the input they receive from the adult in their environment (Montessori, 1946). This is just one of the many tensions which arose from the analysis of interview transcripts, the balance between the teacher's responsibility to author the interactions within the classroom and guide the learning process, and the students desire to author their own experiences of learning (Skaftun, 2019).

Additionally, it was necessary to explore my own tensions as a researcher with the data I had collected. As a linguistic researcher, Montessori teacher, and a child who was raised in bilingual schooling environments, my own worldview and position impacted the questions I was asking and the answers I was hoping for (Bakhtin, 1981). As a researcher, I had to accept the inevitability that I was now also a participant in the dialogues I was hoping to learn more about. Through embracing this tension, I was able to build a better understanding of the centripetal and centrifugal forces guiding my own practice, both in research and the classroom.

4.5   <u>Ethical considerations</u>

As the study involved the participation of willing and informed adult volunteers, there were minimal ethical issues to consider before commencing the research. Each participant signed an official consent form[7], which they were given several days prior to being interviewed. In this consent form, participants were given some background on the study, its aims, and what their contributions would entail.

This consent form was submitted as part of the ethical clearance application made to the Departmental Ethics Screen Committee (DESC) and the REC Social, Behavioural and Educational at Stellenbosch University.

The participants were made aware of any risks which could stem from their participation in the study, as well as the data protection methods which would be used to protect their privacy after participating. No personal information belonging to the participants was used or shared with anyone not directly involved in the research process. Permission to create an audio recording was asked at the beginning of each interview. Audio recordings of the interviews were saved in a password-protected OneDrive folder.

All participants in the interviews were informed that their participation is entirely voluntary. Participants were reminded that they could withdraw their participation at any point with no negative consequences.

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[7] See appendix 1

Any personal information revealed during the interviews, about the participant, the children in their care, their place of work, or their co-workers, was omitted from the transcribed data.

Chapter 5: Results and Analysis

Seven interviews were completed with teachers working in Montessori preschools in Cape Town. Below follows an analysis of these interviews, using Braun and Clarke's (2012) method of thematic analysis. Additionally, the areas of ideological tension and conflict which arise from these interviews will be examined and explained through a Bakhtinian framework (Bakhtin, 1981).

The broad, overarching themes uncovered in the thematic analysis will be laid out first, in an answer to the first research question, "What self-reported strategies do teachers use to cultivate a bilingual pre-literacy environment?". Following this, an exploration of the points of tension found in the data will take place in response to the second research question "What language ideologies do preschool teachers draw on when discussing bilingual Montessori preschool environments?".

Themes were generated through a system of coding the interview data in search of overarching ideas and motifs, and exploring the themes noted by other similar studies. The coded data was first collated into groups relating to different translanguaging strategies being described by the teachers and the challenges around their implementation. Thereafter, the coded data was grouped based on the ideologies and beliefs about language it seemed to represent. Finally, the tensions between these ideologies and policies were examined.

5.1 <u>Strategies for cultivating a bilingual preschool space</u>

As explored in the theoretical framework chapter, translanguaging strategies provide a wide selection of options for teachers looking to support young multilinguals in their classrooms (Gort & Sembiante, 2014). Through a thematic analysis of the interview data collected, a selection of these strategies was identified among the teachers' self-reported strategies for cultivating a bilingual preschool environment. The themes identified by Gort & Sembiante (2014) were drawn on for the organization of the themes found in the data. Among these strategies, there were also approaches which were established to create a 'monolingual' classroom, with a focus on learning the primary language of teaching. The findings of this analysis are presented in the sections to follow.

5.1.1 Language brokering

One of the most prevalent self-reported strategies for supporting bilinguals in the preschool classroom was a system of language brokering, an interaction in which speakers rely on a third party to interpret across linguistic and cultural barriers (Deumert, 2010: 59). The term language brokering is often used to define assistance performed by a child or young person to advocate for an older person, particularly in the case of family immigration (Gort & Sembiante, 2014: 10). However, within the context of largely monolingual preschool spaces in Cape Town, two forms of language brokering were reported. Most commonly discussed was the use of an assistant teacher or support staff member to broker interactions between teachers and learners, particularly in the case of isiXhosa. During the interviews, participants Sarah, Ashley, Jane, Carla, and Olivia, all made reference to their reliance on an isiXhosa speaking assistant when navigating multilingual interactions in the classroom. Carla appeared to be particularly aware of the significance of this role when responding to a question on how she handles having non-English speaking children in her classroom saying:

(1) I guess if my assistant wasn't proficient in Xhosa it would be more of a struggle

Additionally, it seemed that the ability to speak isiXhosa to the children was a factor in choosing and hiring assistants and other support staff, such as cleaning and maintenance staff, not just for language brokering, but also for the purpose of having a first-language speaker of isiXhosa to incorporate the language into group time, songs, and greetings. Jane, a teacher who is also the principal and owner of a school, remarked on her recent experience of seeking out an employee to fulfil the role of language broker:

(2) So, when I employed my current 3-6 assistant, in an interview, I wanted her to be the learning medium … And I asked my assistant if she could speak to the children in isiXhosa, she said it's very challenging. For example, if they don't know what the table is when you call it a table in

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the new language and when they don't know what you're talking about
they can't respond. I think it was because she's also trying to come to
grips with the newness of the Montessori curriculum. I feel sad because
I think, for us, it's a lost opportunity.

It is notable that the use of this 'extra' adult in the environment to broker multilingual interactions was such a prevalent strategy in the data, particularly when considering that support staff are generally not considered to have teaching roles in the preschool environments, but their expertise in a local language has become an invaluable resource to the schools they work with. Similarly, data from Western Cape's hospitals points to a reoccurring issue of doctors who are unable to communicate with patients in their home language relying on the informal assistance of cleaning and security staff (Deumert, 2010: 58).

The shift towards a neoliberal commercialization of the ideas of multilingualism and diversity has contributed to the idea of languages like isiXhosa as a resource to be co-opted and exploited by the privileged, leaving home speakers of the language to be used as tools to teach their language without receiving adequate status and financial compensation for the labour they do within the classroom setting (Kubota, 2016).

Furthermore, it was found that the multilingual children in the classroom also occasionally took on the role of 'broker' in interactions with other children who are still working towards proficiency in the main teaching language. One participant shared an anecdote of a child who had entered the classroom two years previously with very little English, who has taken on the role of broker for a younger isiXhosa-speaking child who has recently entered the environment:

(3) It's quite sweet to see like now one Xhosa child who's six, who's become
pretty fluent now. We've got a new boy who only speaks Xhosa, and he,
the older child, will like translate for him. Yeah, it's so nice.

Approaching this trend from a translanguaging stance, the child's ability to draw on one single linguistic repertoire to make meaning in multiple socially recognized language systems is shown as an important tool in the classroom (Faulstich Orellana & Garcia, 2014: 387). Another participant shared a similar experience. Speaking of a group of newly arrived children in the classroom who were unable to communicate with her in English, she noted the assistance she received from other children in the environment, even those who were unlikely to have been speakers of the new arrivals' language:

(4) We've got two children in the school at the moment who are over from Spain, who only speak Spanish in the preschool. And one brother and sister who are here and they're having to adapt. Yeah, and the younger one, she's in the preschool, battling. Well, it's a strange environment, strange country, everything else that goes with it. But they were just here for a short period. I often had foreign visitors who come for three months and children got teary in the eyes, so you just approach them as normal. There are often children in the environment who will help as well.

As evidenced above, the use of a language broker is a common and important strategy used by preschool teachers in Cape Town's Montessori schools to support bilingual learners in their environments. Whether this broker is a learner or a member of the school staff, their work interpreting between culturally and linguistically diverse people in the classroom is a vital feature of the environments' linguistic landscape.

5.1.2 Codeswitching

Another strategy which was found in multiple interviews was the intentional use of codeswitching, a communication strategy that incorporates features of two or more languages (Gort & Sembiante, 2014: 15), to acknowledge the linguistic and cultural background of

multilingual learners in the environment. The strategic use of this approach was most commonly seen within the interviews, as evidenced in the extract from the interview with Olivia below:

(5) Well, during our group times in the morning or in the afternoon, we mostly greet in English. Obviously, you know, sometimes I'll say molweni or molo to our caretaker or to [a child][8] but mostly English.

Carla also reported using this strategy:

(6) When I greet them, I'll practice my molo, unjani. Whenever I do practice that with them, then some of the other kids also try and join in, which is sweet.

In the above examples, both teachers used greeting times as an opportunity to encourage multilingualism, and particularly the use of isiXhosa at school, despite the fact that neither teacher had reported the ability to speak any isiXhosa prior to these comments. Furthermore, Carla claimed that this strategy also led to the other children in the environment using the introduced language. A similar strategy was observed by Mary & Young (2018), when a teacher who had limited communicative competence in many of her children's home languages used her limited knowledge of this language to give them value and importance in the classroom, as well as scaffold the children's existing knowledge of the target language (Mary & Young, 2018: 324). This teacher went against the centripetal forces pushing monolingualism in her classroom to support the needs of the multilingual immigrant children she worked with (Mary & Young, 2018: 325).

Sarah also spoke of using strategic codeswitching to introduce additional languages to the environment, but with a different reaction from the children:

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[8] Edited to remove the child's name

(7) Sometimes I will request something (from a child) in Afrikaans or speak in Afrikaans. They're usually confused as to what I am saying.

This participant had also reported that Afrikaans was her home language, possibly guiding her choice to introduce this language to the classroom.

5.1.3 Bilingual recasting

Bilingual recasting, a strategy in which the target language is generally associated with a word or utterance used in another language (Gort & Sembiante, 2014: 15), was another strategy which teachers reported using to support young bilinguals in their classrooms. The clearest recollection of this refers to an occurrence in an interaction with a young isiXhosa-speaking child who was new to the English environment.

(8) It's quite sweet, because we do a bit of an exchange. Like, there's one kid, he arrived and all he would say to me is jingi and it was 'swing'. And just every day, he would be like jingi and I'd be like jingi ,and then slowly I'd be like 'swing', and now he likes to speak English.

In this interaction, it is clear that the teacher perceives her strategy of initially using the child's first language and slowly progressing to the use of the teaching language to have led to a desirable outcome, where the child willingly and enthusiastically communicates in the teaching language. In a further example, a teacher spoke about a situation where a child had brought in an Afrikaans book for her to read at story time. In this interaction, the teacher had to navigate the tension between the Afrikaans child's desire to share their language, and the other children's desire to understand the story:

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(9) There's also one Afrikaans boy who will often bring a book and then I'll read it, but the kids hate it. Like, the whole time they're saying "no stop it! Stop doing it! Stop reading!", so then I'll compromise. I'll read it in Afrikaans and then I'll translate in English, which is like, my not my strong point. But so I'll like read a bit in Afrikaans and I'll read a bit in English. I feel so shy, my Afrikaans accent is not great, but it's kind of fun actually.

In this example, the teacher's decision to use both languages to tell the story helped to balance the needs of all the children in the classroom, creating a space for multiple languages to be used while still ensuring that all the children were able to engage with the book.

5.1.4 Cultural celebrations

Many of the participants reported the use of group times and cultural celebrations to support and acknowledge the varying languages and cultures of the children in their classroom, making the most of the cultural funds of knowledge available to them (Gort & Sembiante, 2014: 15). These funds of knowledge are built through the child's lived experiences, family culture and social relationships, all of which have the potential to be utilized to improve their experiences in the classroom and academic growth (Moll, et al., 1992: 134). The most common strategy to accomplish this was the use of songs, as all seven participants referred to this strategy during their interviews. Rose shared an anecdote of her first opportunity to incorporate Hindi, her home language, in a group birthday celebration:

(10) I actually implemented, as a culture introduction, I sang the happy birthday song in my native language, so that was really special. The children were doing it and I enjoyed it too.

In the above example, the teacher has chosen to draw on her own funds of knowledge to provide the children with a new linguistic and cultural experience. This is just one example

of a participant reporting drawing on her own cultural and linguistic background to cultivate the idea of bilingualism in the classroom. It is through these experiences that the teacher can create a more inclusive space, encouraging the children to bring their own cultural funds of knowledge into the classroom by role modelling the process (Mary & Young, 2017: 462). Additional strategies used by the teacher in Mary & Young's (2017, 2018) study included involving parents in the day-to-day life of the classroom, encouraging families to use their home language around the children, and allowing the children to communicate with one another in their home languages while in the classroom. During her interview, Carla also described the group times led by her isiXhosa-speaking teaching assistant:

> (11)   My assistant will also do like a Xhosa circle time every now and then,
>   where she'll teach them counting or teach them singing, all that kind of
>   stuff. She has, like, a lot of games to teach them things like stand up,
>   sit down. But that's quite informal.

Moreover, Lily specifically referenced the school's cultural celebrations on Heritage Day as an opportunity to support and cultivate multilingualism in her classroom:

> (12)   I encourage parents to bring in any stories or items of clothing that
>   they wear and things like that, books or songs to share with me so that
>   we can bring it into the class. We usually sing in Afrikaans and in Xhosa
>   for birthday circles. When we celebrate heritage day, we bring in native
>   songs and we read stories in different languages.

It is apparent from the data that teachers find these group lessons and cultural celebrations the easiest way to introduce and support multilingualism in their environments, without disrupting the academic goals and routine of the classroom. Mary & Young (2017) reported similar strategies, in which teachers used specific activities and lessons to create safe spaces

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for learners to express themselves and learn in their home languages (Mary & Young, 2017: 465).

5.1.5 Formal lessons

There were also strategies found relating to the presentation of formal lessons. Within this strategy, teachers relied less on casual interactions with the children and had more specific academic targets for the language used. One such presentation was seen in the interview with Olivia, in which she was introducing a lesson on counting:

(13) We did counting on the Spindle Box[9], and because her dad speaks to her only in Afrikaans and her mother speaks English to her, when we were counting she would often go "ten, <u>elf</u>, <u>twaalf</u>, thirteen, fourteen", so I tried to do all of them in Afrikaans once or twice.

In the above example, the teacher made use of the child's home language to support her learning in a different curriculum area. When asked about other ideas for bringing bilingualism into the classroom, participant 1 suggested another approach to the materials:

(14) And if a different language could be introduced in a Nomenclature card[10] for instance, and through three period lessons[11], I think it could potentially be great to add.

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[9] A Montessori material designed to give the child a muscular impression of the quantity associated with each numeral (Montessori, 1912)

[10] A Montessori material consisting of a picture card, a label card, and a control card, that is designed to introduce new vocabulary (such as types of fruits or birds).

[11] Three-period lessons use repetition to introduce and reinforce new vocabulary.

The examples used here show a marked desire to include more languages in the formal academic aspects of classroom life. Both participants suggested creative teaching approaches for integrating bilingualism in the classroom outside of just the literacy area. One participant also had ideas on how bilingualism could be cultivated specifically through the literacy activities in the classroom:

(15) I guess an obvious one would be putting English and another language underneath it. Then those sandpaper blends or phonics, those could be like, language specific. I guess all the language work could have, like, double the things. I guess it would need to be separated though because that would be a bit confusing. But that could also be a material in itself like matching the English word and the Afrikaans word or something.

Through these more formal and academically driven strategies, the teachers show that they have spent time considering bilingualism and the ways in which it could feature in their practice. These strategies show an alignment with formal translanguaging strategies used in many classrooms, such as multimodal instruction, the use of different techniques like visual cues and gestures, and language awareness, in which children are encouraged to notice and reflect on language differences (Watson & Myhill, 2019). The emphasis placed on the idea of a second language as an important resource and a desire for diversity in the classroom by many of the interview candidates falls into conflict with the low value that seems to be attached to the staff members doing underpaid or unpaid language work in the classroom (Kubota, 2016).

5.2   Challenges to implementing a bilingual curriculum

A third important feature came up repeatedly in interviews. When exploring the strategies, they use to cultivate bilingualism in the preschool classroom, teachers also spoke of the challenges preventing them from instituting a bilingual curriculum. These challenges from are highlighted below:

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5.2.1   Complete immersion

Firstly, several participants reported cases where children who could not yet speak English were put into their classes for a fully immersive language experience. In these approaches of immersion education, a child is placed into an environment where the adults only use a specific language, in the hopes of encouraging that child's development in the target language (Garcia & Lin, 2017: 8). Ashley and Jane spoke of new arrivals who joined their schools speaking languages that none of the staff were able to speak, specifically, Spanish and Dutch. In the case of the Dutch child, Afrikaans was used as a 'bridge' by the teachers:

(16)   We also have a Dutch child who doesn't understand any English, so the teachers do broken Afrikaans to try and get her to understand what's happening.

In the case of the Spanish-speaking children, the teachers seemed to have fewer tools at their disposal to assist the children in their transition, with a notable impact on the children's learning experience:

(17)   We've got two children in the school at the moment who are over from Spain, who only speak Spanish in the preschool. And one brother and sister who are here and they're having to adapt. Yeah, and the younger one, she's in the preschool, battling. Well, it's a strange environment, strange country, everything else that goes with it. But they were just here for a short period. I often had foreign visitors who come for three months and children got teary in the eyes, so you just approach them as normal.

It is apparent from the example above that the teachers' own limited linguistic resources were not sufficient for her to give the language support needed to these new children. In both cases,

teachers had to resort to non-linguistic strategies to make the children feel comfortable and accepted in the new environment. The approach taken by many of these teachers is not dissimilar to that taken by teachers observed by Mary & Young, where despite being aware that their lack of resources in the child's home language was having a negative impact on the classroom experience, they made the choice to continue down a monolingual path (Mary & Young, 2018: 324).

5.2.2 Staffing needs

Another recurring problem was the difficulty finding staff who were appropriately experienced in the targeted second language. Ashley and Jane, both of whom have additional administrative roles at their school, pointed to the challenge of finding staff who are appropriately trained for teaching positions and also speakers of the schools' intended second language option. When discussing the support measures that have been put in place in the older age groups at her school Ashley stated that:

(18) In preschool, we haven't done too much this year and over covid just because of logistics and finding people.

This highlights issues with recruiting of staff that can meet the linguistic needs of the classroom. Jane also touched on this issue when discussing her goals for the school:

(19) There's a real challenge. I think it's based on the conviction of the adult who's going to be that second speaker in the environment. I think the challenge with it is that that person may only be here for three years, and then what? So, that's been the challenge of these past years in terms of consistency. You're going to start somewhere, but if you don't find another person to take that place who speaks that language it's a problem. Yeah, so I think that that is the challenge.

In both of these cases, it becomes clear that there is a need for more multilingual Montessori preschool teachers in the Cape Town area, if these schools are going to be able to put strategies in place to cultivate a bilingual preschool environment.

5.2.3 Stakeholder's expectations

A further challenge which presented itself during the interviews was the issue of balancing the expectations of different stakeholders including parents, administrative staff, and the children. All the teachers interviewed made specific reference to the children's specific sensitivity to language at this age, often tying in Montessori philosophy about the child's 'absorbent mind' (Montessori, 1949). A clear example of this can be seen below, in a participant's response to a question about the need for bilingual preschool teaching in Cape Town:

(20) I think that, especially in the Montessori preschool setting, it is important, because at this age the children are going through a sensitive period for communication or language, so they have a tendency to absorb and pick up languages much easier than a child that is older.

Despite the diversity which defines South African culture, many school administrators and policymakers continue to encourage only the use of standardized monolingual teaching practices in the classroom (Probyn, 2009). Participants also expressed feelings of concern about how administrators would respond to their unsanctioned use of bilingual strategies in the classroom, with one teacher describing a situation in which her use of language was not welcomed by an administrator:

(21) I don't know if there is a language policy. I think I haven't been told about it. But I do know that I've been indirectly told that the official

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language is English, after trying some of the other languages, so I got the hint.

Furthermore, the parent body's perceptions of language also had a part to play in many of the participants' language practice. One teacher spoke about how parents impacted the schools' choice of second language offering:

> (22) There are videos that get sent out and the parents can actually learn [isiXhosa] with their children. The parents are very supportive, they actually fought for this. They didn't want Afrikaans.

Finally, teachers also found themselves having to consider the future curriculum demands the children will face as they progress through the schooling system. More than one teacher showed specific concern around the lack of resources for the use of Afrikaans at a preschool level in her school, as she fears not teaching it limits the children's options down the line:

> (23) The only objections we have now is when our children go into high schools. There's only I think 6 high schools in the Cape Town region that actually offer isiXhosa as a second additional language.

With many of the schools making the choice to offer only one second language option, children are then presented with limited options when it comes to moving on to upper primary and high schools. As evidenced above, the lack of isiXhosa options for high school children in Cape Town has an impact on the language options chosen by schools, even at the preschool level. The interaction between the needs of these stakeholders presents ideological tensions around the use of a second language in the Montessori preschool space. These tensions will be further explored in an analysis to follow.

5.3   Areas of tension

To elaborate upon the themes unveiled in the thematic analysis of the interviews, further analysis of the data was conducted through a theoretical framework embedded in Bakhtin's theories of heteroglossia (Bakhtin, 1981). Research has shown that teachers' ideologies are closely tied to the language policies implemented in their classrooms, making this an important feature of the data to analyze. In order to achieve this, the data was searched for moments where teachers' ideologies seemed to present incongruous beliefs and moments where conflicts with other stakeholders, such as children, parents, and administrative staff, were described.

It is through this exploration of tensions that the second research question, namely, "What language ideologies do Montessori preschool teachers draw on when discussing bilingual Montessori preschool environments?" will be answered. A discussion of some of the major points of ideological tension in the data will be broken down in the following sections, initially using two of Ruiz's (1984) three orientations as ideologies, namely, language as a problem, language as a right, and language as a resource, and then expanding to include other notable ideologies found in the data. This approach was heavily influenced by the outline used by Iverson (2019) to learn more about the language ideologies of pre-service teachers in mainstream schools. This study aimed to establish which multilingual teaching strategies educators in Norway determined to be of value to the classroom (Iverson, 2019: 423). Finally, the tensions between these ideologies will be addressed and explored.

5.3.1   Language as a problem

The first of Ruiz's orientations uncovered in the data was the idea of language as a problem (Ruiz, 1984: 19). Within the data, it was not uncommon for teachers to suggest that the issue of using multiple languages within the Montessori space created problems. Much of this ideological issue centred around the relationship between language and culture.

Participants reported finding the line between language and culture a tricky one to navigate, particularly when trying to cultivate a more diverse preschool space. In one interview, the participant seemed to be struggling with herself about her own definition of these ideas. When

speaking about how she acknowledges the linguistic background of a child in her classroom, the participant said:

(24)   I don't know if he speaks a different language, but his mum does, but again, that's culture, not really anything about language.

A further example of the idea of language as a problem was seen in the interview with Olivia, describing the arrival of a new child to the classroom:

(25)   We also have a Dutch child who doesn't understand any English, so the teachers do broken Afrikaans to try and get her to understand what's happening.

In extract 25, the teacher establishes that in this context the child's language knowledge was a hurdle to overcome rather than a resource to be drawn upon, relating closely to the ideological view of language as a problem (Ruiz, 1984: 19).

Another instance in which the child's language was positioned as a problem can be seen in the interview with Rose, where the teacher makes a concerted effort to intentionally distance their language use from their cultural experience. When asked about the language used in her classroom, the participant responded:

(26)   I'm very open-minded and liberal. I think there's religion and culture, so I think that's where we have to draw the line.

In this case, the teacher's stance attempts to distance the child's cultural funds of knowledge from their language use, establishing an ideological tension between the teacher's ideal of distinct, standardised languages from the natural intertwining of language and culture. This

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response highlights the participant's hesitance to draw too much influence from other cultures, despite the classroom being a natural space for new culturally significant experiences to be introduced.

5.3.2 Language as a resource

Ruiz's (1984:16) idea of language as a resource was also a prevalent ideology found in the data. Teachers who have oriented themselves to view the children's full linguistic repertoires as a resource instead of a hinderance create more spaces for these languages to be used in their classrooms (Iverson, 2019: 431). Teachers who have oriented themselves in this way can be considered to have successfully taken on a translanguaging stance (Aleksic & Garcia, 2002: 3). Ashley went into depth on this issue, listing several of the advantages she perceived with regards to teaching a second language in the preschool classroom:

> (27)   I think brain development and learning many different languages is
>   so important. And I think learning from Montessori, if she was here
>   today, she would be going "teach them as many languages as you can"
>   or expose them to languages so that they can actually have the qualities
>   to go anywhere in the world and actually understand what's going on.

In the above extract, the teacher positions multilingual teaching as a tool which will help the children succeed later in life, not only socially but also psychologically. Jane also established her ideology around language as a resource when discussing her disappointment that the assistant in her classroom does not speak in isiXhosa with the children:

> (28)   I feel sad because I think, for us, it's a lost opportunity. It's a lost
>   opportunity for her to use her own home language while learning the
>   ropes

Many teachers recognized the value of using language to create emotional connections and safe spaces for the children and their families, most clearly in the interview with Jane:

(29)   [Montessori would feel] the same way as Mandela feels, that to speak a person's language is to speak to their soul or their heart. Such a beautiful thought.

As seen in the example above, language in the classroom can be used as a resource not only to further academic progress, but also as a way to create an emotionally intimate and secure environment for the children to learn in (Mary & Young, 2008: 326).

5.3.3   Standard language ideologies

Perhaps one of the biggest ideological tensions experienced by preschool teachers when it comes to linguistic diversity in the classrooms is that between the centripetal drive towards standardised curriculums and the centrifugal drive towards appreciating the diversity of the learners' experiences (Busch, 2014; Blackledge & Creese, 2014). The conflict which arises from the differences in official and unofficial discourses appears often in education (Holquist, 2002: 80). These standard language ideologies, in which homogeneity is enforced on natural, heteroglossic language, can have a significant impact on bilingualism in the classroom (Milroy, 2001: 531). Administrators and parents often share the aim of teaching a standardised or 'correct' version of the target language, ignoring the reality of the child's natural heteroglossia and ability to utilize their single linguistic repertoire to make meaning in a range of socially recognized languages (Busch, 2014: 22).

This tension is made itself particularly present in the differing expectations of parents. In one case, a teacher spoke of the different expectations of English-speaking and isiXhosa-speaking families and their responses to her occasional use of isiXhosa in the classroom:

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(30) They especially love when we learn Xhosa. I mean, it's lots of white parents, I think they're like "Yay! Exciting!". From what I've seen, they're very excited. But, it is interesting, the ones whose kids have come from places where they only speak Xhosa to their moms or whoever like brings them to school, are more like "He needs to be speaking English!", so they want the emphasis on coming to school to learn English.

This tension presents a challenge to teachers, who must find a way to balance the needs and expectations of all the families without depriving the children of any experiences. Another participant also discussed this issue with particular regard to Afrikaans:

(31) The one dad is Afrikaans and he's kept his daughter with us because we do Afrikaans as a second language, which is wonderful. I think a teacher made a joke about how Afrikaans is 'whatever', and the dad got quite upset. It became this little debate around the respect of Afrikaans at school. I did once purchase some materials in Afrikaans. Our second language in the primary school is Afrikaans. But, it's always been a last thought in terms of planning for the teachers, so we're not very strong in it. Now that we've opened up a middle school there's this little bit of a downward effect.

Here, the drive to teach children 'standard' varieties of a second language to benefit them later in their schooling journey is found in conflict with the time demands and knowledge of the preschool teachers. This tension puts added pressure on preschool teachers looking to cultivate a diverse linguistic environment in their classrooms. The ties and tensions between concepts of language and culture came to light again in Sarah's response to a question asking who determines the language policy of her classroom.

(32) I think it's left up to me. I think they embrace all cultures and differences of the children and I think it's mostly up to me as to how I incorporate that into the daily routine. I think it should be in English.

As seen above, even a teacher who does not recognize herself a first language speaker of English holds to standard language ideology and the idea of teaching in English above teaching in the childrens' home languages (Mary & Young, 2018: 323). Adhering to Milroy's (2001) concept of common-sense attitudes towards language ideology, in extract 28 the teacher shows her belief in English's superiority in the classroom due to its position as the most widely spoken language among the children (Milroy, 2001: 536). The tension that arises here between a desire for students to be able to participate in an ever more globalized world and still continue to reap the benefits of using their full linguistic repertoire to understand new concepts is emblematic of one of the most significant ideological conflicts around language in the South African preschool classroom.

5.3.4 Iconization as Ideology

Iconization is one of the three semiotic processes for recognizing linguistic differences identified by Irvine & Gal (2000: 37). Within this process, language is linked with a social group through the attribution of similar qualities by the listener (Irvine & Gal, 2000: 37). The other semiotic processes identified by Irvine & Gal (2000:37-39) include fractal recursivity or the "projection of an opposition from one level to another", and erasure, a process by which social experiences are left invisible due to ideological simplification.

In the South African context, an example of ionization can be seen in how, for many people, Afrikaans has come to represent whiteness through the history of apartheid, despite the fact that many speakers of the language are not white (Van der Waal, et al., 2018: 452). This complicated history creates a tension around the use of Afrikaans in the Montessori preschool setting. Ideologies around the selection of a second language in the classroom added another tension to many of the interviews, particularly when it came to choosing between isiXhosa and Afrikaans. In Ashley's interview, she discussed the school's decision to teach isiXhosa as a second language instead of Afrikaans.

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(33)   Because [our area][12] is very European and American, there's very little diversity here. We are very much into our D and I[13]; we believe in total inclusivity, and we want to make sure that children are prepared for living in South Africa. We also chose isiXhosa because it is Western Cape's African language.

Ashley, Jane, and Carla, all spoke of negative reactions they had received from various stakeholders about the use of Afrikaans in their classrooms.

(34)   We do sing songs in Afrikaans, but again, I don't know what it is but they don't like it. I guess they don't like not understanding it. Maybe it's just a few of the older ones who will be like, "stop singing! Don't sing in Afrikaans!", even when we're singing Jan Pierewiet. Often if I sometimes use a bit of French or a bit of Italian or whatever in the classroom, they always guess I'm using Afrikaans."

In the extract above, a participant discusses the way the children in her classroom react to her use of Afrikaans.

(35)   I think a teacher made a joke about how Afrikaans is 'whatever', and the dad got quite upset. It became this little debate around the respect of Afrikaans at school.

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[12] Edited to remove private information

[13] Diversity and Inclusion policy

Above, a parent's reaction to criticism of the school's use of Afrikaans had an impact on the school's language policy and planning. In contrast to this, Ashley spoke about the very different ideological stance on Afrikaans taken by the parents at her school:

(36) The parents are very supportive, they actually fought for this [isiXhosa as a second language]. They didn't want Afrikaans.

The conflict between these two very distinctive parent ideologies around Afrikaans presents schools with a challenge. With the limited resources available to schools and preschool teachers, this tension must be navigated with great care due to the highly sensitive nature of this conflict and the troublesome ties standardised Afrikaans has to South Africa's oppressive history.

Overall, the multitude of voices that can influence the linguistic environment of the preschool classroom make it a frequent point of ideological tension and conflict around the use of language. Balancing the needs and expectations of so many stakeholders pose a challenge to the teachers' aim to create rich, diverse learning environments while still meeting the curriculum standard set out for them.

5.4 **Discussion**

The data from this research shows that multilingualism is mostly valued by the interviewed teachers in the Montessori schooling environment. However, one can argue that this is a kind of multilingualism mostly captured by neoliberalism. Like Duchene (2011: 1) we can argue that "powerful institutions exploit the linguistic skills of their least qualified employees", in the case of my study, in service of so-called diversity and inclusivity. Duchene (2011:2) urges us to ask "who benefits—or not—" from the added value of multilingualism and diversity. In addition to neoliberalism being apparent in the fact that it is the lower-level staff that provides most of the linguistic labour, the view of 'language as a resource' also serves this same purpose. Ruiz' idea was put forward to challenge the then prominent view of language as a problem and thus signalled a positive step towards recognizing multilingualism as something

that can be of benefit, this discourse nonetheless "holds not so hidden dangers' (Petrovic 2005: 396). Petrovic (2005: 400) argues "that resource orientation appeals to neoliberal economic forces to promote cultural pluralism and prop up language diversity". In other words, language as a resource gesture towards a kind of tokenistic use of multilingualism. In the interviews, teachers mentioned the cognitive advancement received through multilingualism, and how multilingualism fits their "D" and "I" goals. Multilingualism is thus viewed as "as a way to gain a competitive edge" while the transformative potential of multilingualism for the learner is not really mentioned to the same extent (Bernstein et al. 2020: 652).

More encouragingly, the teachers can imagine possibilities of using multiple languages in the classroom for learning. Some of these possibilities are already used and seem to align with principle of translanguaging such as recasting and he deliberate and pedagogical ways of integrating other languages in learning. In addition, linguistic boundaries are challenged through some practices (like using Afrikaans with a child who spoke Dutch). These possibilities are however constrained by stakeholders and their ideas and needs of language, and by language ideologies the broader community and the teachers themselves hold. The language choices available to children in primary and secondary school settings also seems to shape how multilingualism is cultivated in the pre-school environment.

Chapter 6: Summary and Conclusions

6.1 **Summary of findings**

Teachers from Montessori schools in Cape Town reported using a broad range of established translanguaging strategies to support emergent multilinguals in their classrooms. While most teachers did not have language-specific training, strategies such as language brokering and codeswitching were prevalent in the data. Many teachers used the closely intertwined nature of language and culture to support language development through cultural celebrations and activities, even when the teacher herself was hesitant to bring in too much 'foreign' culture into the environment.

Classroom assistants, cleaning staff, and other support staff members were shown to be an invaluable resource in the process of supporting young bilinguals. These adults were frequently relied upon to provide linguistic and cultural translations for teachers who did not feel competent in the home languages of their children. It is notable how much reliance is placed on these staff members, many of whom are not expected to take on a teaching role in the environment.

Formal lessons were another way in which teachers reported attempting to support multilingual children in their classrooms. These generally took the form of directly translating simple vocabulary lessons, such as counting and the names of colours.

This study highlighted several areas of tension in the area of language teaching in the Montessori classroom. Issues such as staffing needs, stakeholder expectations, and the iconization of Afrikaans presented areas of conflict which teachers needed to navigate in their classrooms.

Many participants reported struggling with issues of language teaching in the classroom, particularly in the case of children who were not yet confident using English. Taking the viewpoint of language as a problem to be overcome, teachers seemed to neglect the value of the child's cultural funds of knowledge and full linguistic repertoire, resulting in further points of conflict down the line.

Parent expectations presented another major point of ideological conflict for teachers, who were often torn between the desires of different families. While some parents wanted a strict emphasis on English-only education, others wanted more linguistic diversity in the classroom. When it came to creating this linguistic diversity, further issues arose around the choice of second language to be introduced. With passionate arguments for and against the introduction of Afrikaans into the classroom, teachers needed to show caution and respect when navigating the issue.

6.2   Limitations and resources

A significant limitation of this study was the size of the Montessori community in Cape Town. Due to the nature of the Montessori community within Cape Town, there was a relatively small pool of applicants to draw from. Furthermore, due to the timing of the data collection in the fourth term of the school year, many teachers were under tight time constraints to write reports, prepare concerts, and other extra duties on top of those usually expected of them. This led to many potential participants being unavailable for interviews.

A significant resource in the completion of the study was that, due to my position as a Montessori teacher in Cape Town, I was already considered a part of the community of my participants. This position, when considered in conjunction with my experiences as a child who attended a school which did not teach in my home language, informed a significant part of my research and my own ideologies towards this issue.

6.3   Considerations for future research

There is a broad scope for further research into the issue of multilingual preschool education in South Africa. This is a topic that has been largely under-researched, leaving room for a variety of approaches to new research in the field. There is a need for more investigation into how multilingual South African children are being supported in the classroom, and how this impacts their academic growth and progress in later school years.

Studies observing classrooms would be a valuable contribution to the knowledge base around this issue. There is a wide variety of preschool teaching approaches used in Cape Town, and

it would be of interest to observe and define how each of these deals with the issue of language in the classroom.

6.4   Conclusions

6.4.1   The importance of research in the preschool environment

The language used and taught in preschool classrooms forms the foundations for the academic experiences if many South African children. Historically, much focus has been placed on the use of language in primary and high school classrooms, with markedly little attention paid to the widely varied range of preschool options experienced by young children in our country.

Around the world, the importance of a child's first six years to their overall life and development is coming to prominence. To keep up on a global scale, South Africa needs to develop a modern, inclusive approach to inclusive education that empowers young learners and sets them up for later academic success.

6.4.2   The need for a novel approach to teacher language training

The language choices of preschool teachers have a profound impact on the learning environment of the children in their care. The literature reviewed demonstrated a clear link between the language ideologies held by teachers and the success of the multilingual children they teach. It is critical that teachers are trained to confront their own ideologies about multilingualism and the specific languages spoken by the children in their classrooms to ensure that they are not limiting the children in the use of their full linguistic repertoires.

In order to provide a truly inclusive preschool experience to South African children, efforts must be made to explore the different strategies available to teachers and create more training opportunities for them to understand how best to support young multilinguals.

6.4.3 Misleading beliefs about monolingualism

The concept of 'monolingual' children also needs to be challenged and addressed in teacher training courses, particularly within the South African context. In a country with such a diverse linguistic landscape, it is highly unlikely that any child brings experience of only one language to the classroom, without having any other linguistic experiences to draw on when learning.

Multilingualism is embedded in the South African experience, where advertisements, music, and day-to-day interactions with other people are highly likely to introduce new vocabulary and language to almost all children.

6.4.4 Afrikaans as a point of linguistic conflict in the classroom

The perceived language hierarchy and tensions around Afrikaans in the classroom create further challenges for South African preschool teachers in Cape Town. Due to its historical position during apartheid, many of the city's Montessori preschool teachers are hesitant to engage with Afrikaans within the classroom, due to concerns of being perceived as being insensitive to the experiences and needs of people of colour.

There seems to be a limited understanding of the demographics of Afrikaans speakers in the country, particularly within the Western Cape. This leads to tension between school policymakers and their Afrikaans speaking students, whose learning may not be getting adequate support due to ideologies about Afrikaans.

6.4.5 Idealistic language policies and classroom realities

Teachers are often expected to play the role of mediators between idealistic policies and the realities of classroom life. Meeting the expectations of parents and administrators while providing adequate scaffolding and individual learner support can be highly challenging, particularly in South Africa where most children have had highly diverse linguistic experiences.

The tensions between traditional monolingual teaching practices and the real experiences of most South African children pose a challenge to teachers and policy makers. Many parents and governing bodies continue to approach language teaching with the strong desire for their children to master English, due to its perceived position as a global language. This often leads to other local languages being devalued and sidelined in the classroom, despite the richness they add to the linguistic landscape of the teaching environment and the value they offer to each child's individual learning experience.

6.4.6 The marginalization of African languages in the preschool setting

In all of the participants' classrooms, English was centred as the most important tool for communication, marginalizing many local languages. However, due to parent and institutional pressure, schools are also clearly feeling a push to include African languages in their programmes. The consequence of this has been the clear linguistic exploitation of isiXhosa-speaking assistant teachers and support staff, such as housekeeping staff. In these schools, speakers of African languages are often expected to do the labour of teaching their language to the children without appropriate training, status, or renumeration. This has fostered a cycle in which languages like isiXhosa continue to be seen as 'extras' in the classroom, rather than a crucial component of the core curriculum.

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Appendix 1: Participant Consent Form

STELLENBOSCH UNIVERSITY

CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

You are invited to take part in a research project. Please take some time to read the information below which will explain the details of this research project.

Please feel free to contact the researchers about any part of this project that you do not fully understand. It is very important that you are completely satisfied that you clearly understand what this research is about and how you could be involved.

Your participation is completely voluntary, and you are free to decline to participate. In other words, you may choose to take part, or not. Saying no will not affect you negatively in any way whatsoever.

You are also free to withdraw from the study at any point, even if you do agree to take part initially.

The Research Ethics Committee: Social, Behavioural and Education Research at Stellenbosch University has approved this study (Project ID #: 24857]. We commit to conduct the study according to the ethical guidelines and principles of the South African Department of Health Ethics in Health Research: Principles, Processes and Studies (2015).

1. WHO IS CONDUCTING THIS STUDY?

This research study is conducted by Daniela Ruth de Castro. The researcher is from the General Linguistics Department at Stellenbosch University.

2. WHY DO WE INVITE YOU TO PARTICIPATE?

You are invited to participate in this study because you are a Montessori preschool teacher working in Cape Town.

3. WHAT IS THIS RESEARCH PROJECT ABOUT?

This research project is intended to uncover information about the linguistic environment in Montessori preschool classrooms in Cape Town. Through this study, we hope to learn more about the perceptions Montessori preschool teachers have of bilingualism and what strategies, if any, they use to support bilingual children in their classrooms.

4. WHAT WILL BE ASKED OF ME?

If you agree to take part in this study, you will be asked to participate in a short, semi-structured interview. This interview will take 30-45 minutes, and will take place over Zoom or face-to-face at a location convenient to you.

5. ARE THERE ANY RISKS IN MY TAKING PART IN THIS RESEARCH?

There are very limited risks to taking part in this research. Audio recordings of the interviews will be stored on a password-protected hard drive and no personal information (participant's name, name of the school, etc.) will be recorded.

6. WILL I BENEFIT FROM TAKING PART IN THIS RESEARCH?

While there are no direct, personal benefits that you can expect when taking part in this study, this research will likely open the door to further research opportunities into how Montessori educators can best support young learners in the South African context.

7. WILL I BE PAID TO TAKE PART IN THIS STUDY AND ARE THERE ANY COSTS INVOLVED?

There will be no costs involved in your participation in this study. Participants will not be paid to take part, but the interviewer will supply coffee/tea and biscuits during in-person interviews.

8. WHO WILL HAVE ACCESS TO MY INFORMATION?

Any information you share with me during this study that could possibly identify you as a participant will be protected. All audio recordings of the interviews will be stored on a password-protected hard drive. These recordings will be deleted upon the completion of the study and research report. Participants will not be identified in the research report, and raw data will not be shared with any other people or third parties other than the study's supervisor.

9. HOW DO I MAKE CONTACT WITH THE RESEARCHERS?

If you have any questions or concerns about this study, please feel free to contact the researcher, Daniela Ruth de Castro at XXXXXXXXX, and/or the study supervisor Dr. Marcelyn Oostendorp at XXXXXXXXXX.

10. RIGHTS OF RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS

If you have questions, concerns, or a complaint regarding your rights as a research participant in this research project, please contact Mrs Clarissa Robertson [cgraham@sun.ac.za; (+27) 021 808 9183] at the Division for Research Development.

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DECLARATION OF CONSENT BY THE PARTICIPANT

As the participant, I declare that:
- I have read this information and consent form, or it was read to me, and it is written in a language in which I am fluent and with which I am comfortable.
- I have had a chance to ask questions and I am satisfied that all my questions have been answered
- I understand that taking part in this study is voluntary, and I have not been pressurised to take part.
- I may choose to leave the study at any time and nothing bad will come of it – I will not be penalised or prejudiced in any way.
- I agree that the interview with me can be [video-recorded / audio-recorded].

By signing below, I _____ *(name of participant)* agree to take part in this research study, as conducted by _____ *(name of principal investigator)*.

_____   _____

Signature of Participant   **Date**

<table>
<tr><td colspan="2" align="center">DECLARATION BY THE RESEARCHER</td></tr>
</table>

As the **researcher,** I hereby declare that the information contained in this document has been thoroughly explained to the participant. I also declare that the participant has been encouraged (and has been given ample time) to ask any questions. In addition, I would like to select the following option:

	The conversation with the participant was conducted in a language in which the participant is fluent.
	I did/did not use an interpreter. (If an interpreter is used then the interpreter must sign the declaration below.)

_____   _____

Signature of Principal Investigator   **Date**

_____   _____

Signature of Interpreter (if applicable)   **Date**

Appendix 2: Interview questions

1.   What was your path to Montessori teaching? Did you start at a mainstream school, or have you always worked in Montessori schools? How many years have you been teaching?

2.   What languages or varieties do you speak and how did you learn these?

3.   How would you describe the linguistic background of the children in your classroom? Do most of them use English? What other languages or varieties are used by them or their families?

4.   How would you describe the linguistic environment in your classroom?

5.   Do you do anything in particular to acknowledge the children's different linguistic backgrounds in the classroom?

6.   Does your school's language policy require you to only use specific languages at specific times?

7.   How often do you use a language other than English in the classroom? (Birthday circles, greeting times, Songs, etc)

8.   How often would you say children speak a language other than English in the classroom Or playground? What languages do they use?

9.   Are there any materials in your classroom specifically designed to support bilingual learners? (books, posters, card sets, etc).

10. What are your thoughts on bilingual teaching in the Montessori preschool setting?

11. How do you think the parents feel about the school's current language policy?

12.   Do you think bilingual education aligns with Montessori philosophy? Why/Why not?

Appendix 3: Ethical Clearance

**UNIVERSITEIT
STELLENBOSCH
UNIVERSITY**

RESEARCH ETHICS APPROVED WITH CONDITIONS

REC: Social, Behavioural and Education Research (SBER) - Initial Application Form

27 October 2022

Project number: GENL-2022-24857

Project title: Strategies for cultivating a bilingual Montessori preschool environment [14]

Dear Miss DR De Castro

Your REC: Social, Behavioural and Education Research (SBER) - Initial Application Form submitted on 29/09/2022 12:13 was reviewed by the Social, Behavioural and Education Research Ethics Committee (REC: SBE) and has been approved with certain conditions.

This conditional approval means that you may proceed with your planned research, provided that you adhere or respond to the stipulations/conditions provided below.

Your research ethics approval is valid for the following period:

Protocol approval date (Humanities)	Protocol expiration date (Humanities)
27 October 2022	26 October 2025

REC STIPULATIONS/CONDITIONS:

Title	Comment
2.6.1 Please describe what such engagement entailed and how this assisted with planning your research process?	It seems this study will be conducted at the researcher's workplace, because it has been mentioned that the PI is a teacher at Montessori school. [Clarity required].

---

[14] Note: Title of thesis was changed after obtaining ethical clearance

| 3.3 Please confirm whether you are fulltime or part-time student: | The PI mentions in section 2.6 "As a Montessori teacher I have had conversations with other teachers about the potential for my research". Please select that this study will be conducted at your workplace in this section. You will be prompted to reflect on potential bias that may emerge. |
| 8.1 Is gatekeeper permission required to access information/individuals for this study? | "Yes" should have been selected, because permission from the school should be obtained. |

How to respond to the REC: SBE's comments/questions:

Click on the links provided below for steps on how to edit your online application to respond to this request for clarification/changes:

Instructional video (See: How to edit your online application)

FAQ guide (See: Form FAQs > How to revise/edit my online form)

Template for response letter (See Other templates > Response letter template)

INVESTIGATOR RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Please take note of the General Investigator Responsibilities attached to this letter. You may commence with your research aftercomplying fully with these guidelines.
2. Your approval is based on the information you provided in your online research ethics application form. If you are required to makeamendments to or deviate from the proposal approved by the REC, please contact the REC: SBE office for advice: applyethics@sun.ac.za
3. Always use this project ID number (24857) in all communications with the REC: SBE concerning your project.
4. Please note that the REC has the prerogative and authority to ask further questions, seek additional information, and monitor theconduct of your research and the consent process, where required.

RENEWAL OF RESEARCH BEYOND THE REC EXPIRATION DATE

You are required to submit a progress report to the REC: SBE before the project approval period expires if renewal of ethics approval is required.

If you have completed your research, you are required to submit a final report to the REC: SBE to close the active REC record for this project.

Project documents approved by the REC:

Document Type	File Name	Date	Version
Informed Consent Form	Daniela de Castro (XXXXXXXX) Consent Form	06/06/2022	1
Data collection tool	Daniela de Castro (XXXXXXXX) Interview Questions	06/06/2022	1
Research Protocol/Proposal	Daniela de Castro (XXXXXXXX) MA SLS Research Proposal	25/07/2022	2

If you have any questions or need further help, please contact the REC office at applyethics@sun.ac.za.

Sincerely,

Mrs Clarissa Robertson (cgraham@sun.ac.za)

Secretariat: Social, Behavioural and Education Research Ethics Committee (REC: SBE)

Principal Investigator Responsibilities

Protection of Human Research Participants

As soon as Research Ethics Committee approval is confirmed by the REC, the principal investigator (PI) is responsible for the following:

Conducting the Research: The PI is responsible for making sure that the research is conducted according to the REC-approved research plan. The PI is jointly responsible for the conduct of co-investigators and any research staff involved with this research. The PI must ensure that the research is conducted according to the recognised standards of their research field/discipline and according to the principles and standards of ethical research and responsible research conduct.

Participant Enrolment: The PI may not recruit or enrol participants unless the strategy for recruitment is approved by the REC. Recruitment and data collection activities must cease after the expiration date of REC approval. All recruitment materials must be approved by the REC prior to their use.

Informed Consent: The PI is responsible for obtaining and documenting affirmative informed consent using **only** the REC-approved consent documents/process, and for ensuring that no participants are involved in research prior to obtaining their affirmative informed consent. The PI must give all participants copies of the signed informed consent documents, where required. The PI must keep the originals in a secured, REC-approved location for at least five (5) years after the research is complete.

Continuing Review: The REC must review and approve all REC-approved research proposals at intervals appropriate to the degree of risk but not less than once per year. There is **no grace period.** Prior to the date on which the REC approval of the research expires, **it is the PI's responsibility to submit the progress report in a timely fashion to ensure a lapse in REC approval does not occur.** Once REC approval of your research lapses, all research activities must cease, and contact must be made with the REC immediately.

Amendments and Changes: Any planned changes to any aspect of the research (such as research design, procedures, participant population, informed consent document, instruments,

surveys or recruiting material, etc.), must be submitted to the REC for review and approval before implementation. Amendments may not be initiated without first obtaining written REC approval. The **only exception** is when it is necessary to eliminate apparent immediate hazards to participants and the REC should be immediately informed of this necessity.

Adverse or Unanticipated Events: Any serious adverse events, participant complaints, and all unanticipated problems that involve risks to participants or others, as well as any research-related injuries, occurring at this institution or at other performance sites must be reported to the REC within **five (5) days** of discovery of the incident. The PI must also report any instances of serious or continuing problems, or non-compliance with the RECs requirements for protecting human research participants.

Research Record Keeping: The PI must keep the following research-related records, at a minimum, in a secure location for a minimum of five years: the REC approved research proposal and all amendments; all informed consent documents; recruiting materials; continuing review reports; adverse or unanticipated events; and all correspondence and approvals from the REC.

Provision of Counselling or emergency support: When a dedicated counsellor or a psychologist provides support to a participant without prior REC review and approval, to the extent permitted by law, such activities will not be recognised as research nor the data used in support of research. Such cases should be indicated in the progress report or final report.

Final reports: When the research is completed (no further participant enrolment, interactions or interventions), the PI must submit a Final Report to the REC to close the study.

On-Site Evaluations, Inspections, or Audits: If the researcher is notified that the research will be reviewed or audited by the sponsor or any other external agency or any internal group, the PI must inform the REC immediately of the impending audit/evaluation.