



Is pedagogical translanguaging a panacea to the colonial monoglossic language ideology in the classroom? Focus on higher education in Lesotho

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Abstract

Translanguaging is an approach to language aimed at promoting diversity and plurality of languages in the classroom. In this approach, students are taught in two or more languages, and literature suggests that they tend to participate more in the classroom when concepts are explained in their mother tongue. However, higher learning institutions in most countries, including Lesotho, still practise a colonial monoglossic language approach in the classroom wherein native languages are not included as languages of instruction alongside colonial languages. Therefore, I believe that pedagogical translanguaging can serve as a useful strategy to curb the hegemony of colonial monoglossic ideologies that prohibit the use of African languages in the classroom. This study adopted a qualitative approach confined within a case study design. Data were collected through face-to-face interviews with three lecturers and focus group discussions with 60 students. Findings reveal that pedagogical translanguaging is an effective approach because it can promote social justice and plurality of languages in the classroom. The study thus recommends that minority African languages be included as languages of instruction as well, alongside the English language.

Keywords: bilingualism, language of learning and teaching, language ideology, mother tongue, multilingualism, translanguaging

Introduction

Language should not be a barrier to students' participation in the classroom or understanding of concepts therein (Charamba, 2023). This means that students' mother tongues (L1) should be used in the classroom alongside the language of instruction, which in the context of this study is English. Literature suggests that teaching students in their L1 alongside the language of instruction increases students' participation and lowers anxiety (Ayob, 2020; Cenoz et al., 2022; Nkhi, 2022; Sefotho, 2022; Zhou & Mann, 2021). This further implies that teaching students in their L1 could encourage diversity and pluralism of languages in the classroom. Therefore, in order to promote this diversity, I believe that pedagogical translanguaging can

be a strategy that could replace the monoglossic approach to language teaching in tertiary institutions in Lesotho. This does not have to be only in the language classroom, but in other courses as well. For instance, Charamba (2023) observed that translanguaging offered support for scientific knowledge attainment and concurrently, developed students' communicative competence in the second language (L2) in the science classroom. Translanguaging was initially coined by Williams (1994) to explain a bilingual pedagogical strategy in which two languages are employed in the classroom. In this approach, one language is used for receptive communication while the other is for productive communication (Flores, 2019). The term translanguaging was further expanded by García (2009) to include various dianoetic practices in which bilinguals negotiate meanings in order to try to understand the world. According to Cenoz and Corter (2020), translanguaging is a dynamic strategy that pays no attention to language boundaries. That is, translanguaging is a holistic approach that does not consider language boundaries as an isolated mode of communication (Windschitl et al., 2018).

Therefore, it is worthy to note in view of the above postulations, that pedagogical translanguaging is necessary if the aim of instruction is to produce competent students. Many studies have revealed that students understand concepts, and thus participate in the classroom—unlike in instances where they are only taught through language of instruction (Allard, 2017; Aung, 2021; Ayob, 2020; Ndhlovana & Charamba, 2023). Nkhi and Shange (2024) found that students from rural areas became anxious and disinterested when they were only taught in English because they were communicatively incompetent in that language. However, those authors further observed that the students understood easily and partook in the classroom activities when some of the concepts were clarified in Sesotho. In consonance, Beiller (2019), Chaka (2020), Mgijima (2021), Mgijima and Makalela (2021), and Sefotho (2022) concurred that students who were not bound by monolingual pedagogies tended to perform better because they could resort to their L1 when facing challenges in L2. Therefore, translanguaging serves as an approach that integrates students' L1, as well as a resource that scaffolds students and thereby advances their general academic performance (Ndhlovana & Charamba, 2023).

In view of the above assertions, I argue that pedagogical translanguaging as a heteroglossic (Bakhtin, 1981) approach could be adopted as a strategy to replace the monoglossic ideology because it can promote social justice and plurality of languages in the classroom, and thus cement itself as an approach for inclusive educational futures. My argument is substantiated by Busch's (2011) and Renandya and Chan's (2022) assertions that the adoption of heteroglossic approaches such as translanguaging is nowadays viewed as politically right because their employment in the classroom is seen as championing inclusivity and plurality in education. The aim of this study is therefore to explore whether pedagogical translanguaging can be a solution to a colonial monolingual approach that has long forbidden the use of Indigenous languages in the classroom. This is because, to my knowledge, there have been no studies conducted in Lesotho, in particular, in the context of higher education on this issue. Thus, that paucity of empirical research necessitated this study in order to fill the gap. Furthermore, the study intended to answer the following research questions: "What

are the students' perceptions about the use of pedagogical translanguaging in the classroom?" and "To what extent can pedagogical translanguaging be adopted as an approach in the classroom?"

Theoretical framework

The study espoused the sociocultural theory developed by Russian psychologist, Lev Vygotsky (1978). The theory stated that learning should always be consistent with students' prior knowledge, upon which lecturers should build appropriate experiences in order to attain higher cognitive processes (Lantolf & Thorne, 2006; Mustafal et al., 2017). The theory further emphasised the significance of interaction in the classroom as another way of developing students' motivation to learn. This therefore suggests that students would be highly motivated if they were permitted to think in their L1 and then produce meaningful utterances in the target language. For instance, during classroom group discussions, students could be allowed to discuss in their L1 in order to make sense of the task before presenting it in L2. This integration of L1 proposed by Ndhlovana and Charamba (2023) suggests that students would easily realise their intellectual potential. Interaction, according to Shannon (2011), encourages comprehensible output that may well be a result of the input provided by lecturers to students. This implies that students would, in turn, generate comprehensible output because the input from lecturers is in the language that they understand and are comfortable with. My view is therefore that allowing students to use their L1 during negotiation of meaning could forestall communication breakdowns because they can freely draw from their L1 to compensate for that gap in communication. However, students cannot easily resort to their L1 in the monolingual approach because they are discouraged to use their L1. This means that students cannot be in a position to forestall communication breakdowns because they would have exhausted their linguistic repertoire, but it becomes easy to compensate for gaps in communication if they draw from their L1 during communication breakdowns.

This thus brings up the notion of scaffolding, which is a central concept in L2 learning as well as in other disciplines (Nguyen, 2022). According to Abdelshaheed (2019), Gonulal and Loewen (2018), and Nguyen (2022), scaffolding is the help given to the students so that they can realise their intellectual potential. I thus believe that this kind of help can be in the form of letting students express their ideas or responses in their L1 in instances where they encounter challenges in conveying their feelings in the target language. Additionally, Fosnot (2013) has explained scaffolding as a situation created by a teacher, peer, or parent in which the student can participate and enhance their present capabilities and understanding to the higher echelons of performance. The supposition in this study therefore, is that students can arrive at those higher levels of performance if they are permitted to use their L1 in instances where they stumble upon challenges in the target language. This further implies that lecturers can scaffold students by teaching them in their L1 or by clarifying concepts in their L1 where they seem not to understand. I therefore believe that students will be able to use their language as a tool to solve problems that may arise as they learn (Pathan et al., 2018).

Literature review

Monoglossic and heteroglossic approaches in the classroom

The monoglossic language approach refers to a strategy in which only one dominant colonial language is used as the language of instruction in the classroom (Set, 2023). In this approach, minority languages are regarded as less important and therefore, they cannot be used at all (Bettney, 2021). Citing the work of Freire (1970), Bettney (2021) interrogated the hegemonic monoglossic ideology in Colombia by arguing that Colombian students are oppressed because their languages are barred from their classrooms. That author further argued that teachers are the oppressors because they disparage students' accents and thereby advocate for English only classrooms. However, my take is that teachers might inadvertently oppress students because they themselves may also be oppressed by the hegemonic monoglossic language policies in their countries. For instance, the Curriculum And Assessment Policy in Lesotho stipulated:

Mother tongue will be used as a medium of instruction up to Class 3 while English will be taught as a subject at this and other levels. From Grade 4, English shall begin to be used as a medium of instruction and to be taught as a subject as well. (Lesotho Ministry of Education and Training, 2009, p. 7)

From the above quotation, it is evident that English is preferred to Sesotho and other minority languages such isiZulu, isiXhosa, and Siputhi as a medium of instruction because they are only used from Grades 1 to 3, while English assumes its hegemony from Grade 4 throughout tertiary education. Therefore, both teachers and lecturers are probably bound by the language policy to use only the language of instruction in the classroom. This substantiates Bettney's (2021) argument that students are oppressed. It is for this reason that McKinney and Tyler (2019), Rabbidge (2020), and Set (2023) argued that the heteroglossic approach is most appropriate to post-colonial Africa where in the past, Indigenous languages were frowned on and oppressed in favour of the minority colonial languages. Thus, Prasad (2014) recommended that language policies should permit students and teachers to manage and expand their communicative lexicons across an assortment of languages and selectively draw on both L1 and L2 features from their linguistic lexicon in relation to their classroom context. This means in the context of this study, that higher education institutions should rethink their policies and allow lecturers and students to freely draw from a variety of languages in the classroom without necessarily subscribing to one dominant language.

Furthermore, Krause and Prinsloo (2016) found that teachers in one of the schools in Cape Town employed heteroglossic approaches in their classrooms because students understood concepts better when they taught in their own language. However, the authors further found that this translanguaging practice by teachers was somewhat short lived because students were expected to write in standard English in testing activities. This revelation further shows that Indigenous languages are not valued—especially when it comes to written tests or assignments because students are expected to write in the language of instruction, which is

regarded as the language of prestige. I view this process as discouraging and not laying a strong foundation for inclusive educational futures.

Mweli (2018) argued that African languages should be used in education because that could guarantee the cultural identity of students and thus grant access to knowledge through the alignment between language of instruction and ways of knowing. He further proposed a new concept, *epistemic decolonial language of learning and teaching* (EDLoLT; Mweli, 2018, p. 41). He argued that the use of EDLoLT could acknowledge African people and their knowledge systems, cultures, and identities. I agree with Mweli (2018) that the use of African languages, which are entrenched in the Afro-centric culture in the classroom, can grant epistemological access to many students who speak those languages and thus forge a strong education foundation. Thus, I argue for a language framework that acknowledges the inclusion of African languages in the classroom instruction. I further argue that they should be accorded similar status as colonial languages or English for the purposes of social justice and linguistic diversity.

Translanguaging

“Translanguaging” was initially coined by Williams (1994) to explain a bilingual pedagogical strategy in which two languages are employed in the classroom. In this approach, one language is used for receptive communication while the other is for productive communication (Flores, 2019). The term translanguaging was further expanded by García (2009) to include various diaphasic practices in which bilinguals negotiate meanings in order to try to understand the world. She expanded the term to challenge the monoglossic approaches to language education (which maintain a stringent division of languages), contending that the translanguaging practices of bilingual communities should be considered as an instructional tool in the classrooms (García, 2014a). I agree with García’s view that African languages should be treated the same way as English, and they should both be seen as equally important in the classroom. For this reason, García (2014b), Sánchez et al. (2017) and Sefotho et al. (2023) recommend that translanguaging should be incorporated into the language policies as well as imagining a more overt function of African languages in English as Second Language classrooms.

Pedagogical translanguaging provides several advantages in the classroom. According to Bolkvadze (2003), pedagogical translanguaging centres on nurturing critical thinking as well as encouraging the development of appropriate skills through the usage of both languages in a way that renders students able to divulge their full linguistic repertoire, and not be narrowed by incomprehensible and imperfect L2 knowledge. Furthermore, it guarantees an unfathomable comprehension of content as well as augmenting the weaker language by scaffolding with the one that is dominant (García & Wei, 2014; Sefotho et al., 2023). Baker (2011) noted four benefits of pedagogical translanguaging in the classroom:

- It can stimulate a profound and fuller comprehension of content.
- It may assist students in developing abilities in their weaker language.
- It can expedite home–school collaboration.

- It can also advance students' second language aptitude in conjunction with content learning. (pp. 281–282)

Furthermore, translanguaging lowers language anxiety in the classroom. According to Papi and Khajavy (2023), multilingualism in the classroom lessens anxiety. This means that when multiple languages are used in the classroom, students have an opportunity to draw from their different linguistic repertoires and can thus communicate with ease. Nkhi (2023) found that tertiary-level students from rural areas were more affected by L2 anxiety because of lack of exposure at school level. As a result, these students feared to speak because they did not want to be negatively evaluated by their peers. However, they became comfortable and less anxious when they were allowed to draw on their L1 (Nkhi, 2022). Thus, allowing students to use their L1 is not a bad thing because they easily understand concepts when the content is delivered in both L1 and L2, thereby improving their academic performance (Chaka, 2020; Mgijima, 2021; Mgijima & Makalela, 2021; Ndhlovana & Charamba, 2023; Sefotho, 2022). Despite the aforementioned opportunities that translanguaging seems to offer, there are still those who oppose its benefits, especially teachers who are influenced by the communicative language teaching approach. For instance, Nkhi (2022) found that some lecturers did not entertain the use of other languages in their classrooms because they thought that the use of those languages hampered the learning and acquisition of English. Furthermore, Nkhi and Lebona (2022) found that teachers only used the direct method in which English is the only language of instruction because they are expected to produce students who are communicatively competent in English. However, I find this notion unfair given the different students' backgrounds. There are students who are exposed to English and there are those who are not, for various reasons, and the latter are more likely to underperform due to the language barrier as suggested by (Krause & Prinsloo, 2016).

Methodology

This study is underpinned by the interpretivist paradigm. According to Ryan (2018, p. 9) interpretivism maintains that “truth and knowledge are subjective, as well as culturally and historically situated, based on people’s experiences and their understanding of them.” This means that the researcher studies the phenomenon at length before applying their understanding instead of making guesses. The study adopted a qualitative approach confined within a case study design. Qualitative research approach was seen by Aspers and Corte (2019) and Mahajan (2018) as being constructed on a set activity that studies variables in their natural setting, and then makes sense of the phenomena in terms of the denotations that people ascribe to them. Creswell and Creswell (2017) pronounced qualitative research as an approach used to explore an individual’s analyses and answers to social problems. Furthermore, a case study is defined by Yin (2018) as an empirical method that studies a current phenomenon or case in depth and in context of its background in the real world, particularly when the boundaries between a phenomenon and the setting may not be perceptibly apparent.

In this study, data were collected through face-to-face interviews with six lecturers. Focus group discussions were also used to gather data with 60 students divided into six groups of 10 students per group. Participants in the study were purposively sampled. Purposive sampling was defined by Bryman (2008) as the deliberate selection of representatives of the population under study. I therefore purposively selected 60 adult students who were doing the same six-month course. These students were radio presenters who did not have the necessary journalism skills, so they had been selected by their radio stations enrol in this course that would equip them with the required journalistic skills. Amongst these students, there were degree holders, some who had only completed Grade 12, and others who had not completed Grade 12. I did not ask for the number of students with degrees or without because I did not

Before collecting data, it was necessary to seek permission from the gatekeepers (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). Therefore, I wrote a letter to the registrar of the institution where the study was conducted asking permission to interview lecturers and students. The letter detailed what the study was about as well as how interviews were to be conducted. After permission was granted, I sought permission from the participants. I explained the research process to them, that participation in this study was voluntary, and that should they feel uncomfortable, they were free to withdraw anytime. Participants who agreed to partake in the study were given consent forms to sign. I then assigned pseudonyms to lecturers (coded, L) and the student focus groups (coded, SFG).

Data were analysed through latent thematic analysis because I went beyond the surface meaning of the data set. I viewed the participants' assumptions subjectively because I used my words and contemplations to interpret what they told me. Furthermore, I recognised themes in the data inductively. That is, I analysed the participants' answers through inductive thematic analysis by analytically reading through the data in order to categorise meanings connected to the study's topic. Additionally, pieces of data that bore similar meanings were grouped together and then allotted codes; similar pieces of text could be fused into many categories generated from the data set (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Frith & Gleeson, 2004). To ensure the trustworthiness of the findings, I took them back to the participants in order for them to verify that their views had been captured correctly. Moreover, I asked my colleagues who were familiar with the study for their constructive input.

My positionality during research

I developed my positionality in this study based on Savin-Baden and Major's (2013) three critical steps towards reflexivity. The first step suggests that one should locate one's preconceptions about the subject, which entailed acknowledging my point of view that might have the possibility to influence the study. This means that as both the insider and the outsider researcher, I was aware of the participants' education background, which knowledge could have somewhat influenced the study. This is because of my belief that students who did complete their Grade 12 might want to be instructed in their L1, and those with degrees might only want to be taught in English.

Second, I tried by all means to be impartial by employing morality and fairness criteria in my engagement with all the participants during data collection. During data analysis, I did not look for information that confirmed my presupposition or worldview, but I was more interested in information that challenged it. It was in this way, that I was able to curb my biases.

The last step suggests that one should locate oneself in the context of research and its process, which means that I had to acknowledge having influenced my study and its context. Therefore, I considered myself an outsider when I entered the field by adjusting my position in the study. When adjusting my position, I had to slightly divorce myself from my position as a lecturer of the English language and an advocate of pedagogical translanguaging to avoid confirming my biases. I therefore had to ask for their opinions regarding the topic under investigation, and this paved a way for smooth discussions between me and the participants.

The participants provided quality responses, some of which confirmed my presuppositions while others challenged them. This I did in relation to Marshall and Rossman's (2016) elucidation that qualitative research is conducted in authentic life settings, thus drawing on several methods that hold in the highest regard the humanity of the participants in the research study. Therefore, I sought to figure out both students' and lecturers' experiences concerning the topic under investigation by involving myself profoundly in their world. I was aware that the research context and I had a power to influence the research process, so I analysed and interpreted the findings to the best of my ability by doing away with any bias that I was aware of, so that the quality of the study could not be compromised. Nevertheless, as Holmes (2020) rightfully put it, "no matter how much reflexive practice a researcher engages in, there will always still be some form of bias or subjectivity" (p. 4).

Findings and discussion

Findings from the focus group discussions with students regarding the first question on their perception about the use of pedagogical translanguaging in the classroom revealed the following themes: inclusion, understanding, participation, and confidence.

Inclusion

Many students reported that the use of both Sesotho and English in the classroom made them feel included because some of them were not that competent in English. One of the students expressed the following:

Most of us here, our English is not good because we do not have a qualification, so we feel included when our lecturers teach us in English and Sesotho. I do not think that we would cope if we were only taught in English. (SFG 1)

Another student added the following comments:

We are from different backgrounds with different English language competencies, so using Sesotho in the classroom is a good strategy because no one can see any

difference between us—difference in the sense that some have degrees while others do not have them. (SFG 10)

The above comments imply that students were satisfied with the use of translanguaging in the classroom because they felt included in their learning. This finding is commensurate with Ayob (2020), Nkhi and Shange (2024), and Sefotho (2022) that students feel included when their L1 is used in the classroom. Szelei et al. (2021) asserted that the use of the L1 in the classroom promotes diversity and social justice in the classroom by empowering minority languages even in environments that do not encourage heteroglossic approaches. Furthermore, Driouch (2022) concurred that adopting pedagogical translanguaging in the classroom promotes inclusion.

Comprehension

In terms of understanding, the students revealed that pedagogical translanguaging helps them to understand concepts clearly. This suggests that students' performance in class will improve if they understand what they are being taught. This is what one student revealed:

Some of the things that we are taught are not simple given the level of English that some of us have, so I get to understand when our lecturers explain them in English. (SGF6)

Another student agreed that some of the media terminology is hard to comprehend especially given that some of them do not have qualifications for the level they find themselves in, so explaining such concepts in Sesotho makes them want to learn more because they understand. This finding resonates with Allard (2017), Ayob (2020), Aung (2021) and Ndhlovana and Charamba (2023), that students understand concepts better when they are taught in their L1 and thus, they participate in the classroom unlike in instances where they are only taught through the language of instruction. Moreover, Chaka (2020), Mgijima (2021), Mgijima and Makalela (2021), and Sefotho (2022) concurred that students who are not bound by monolingual pedagogies tend to perform better because they can resort to their L1 when facing challenges in L2. Therefore, pedagogical translanguaging serves as a strategy that incorporates students' L1 as well as a resource that scaffolds them and thereby improves their general academic performance (Ndhlovana & Charamba, 2023).

Participation

Students further revealed that pedagogical translanguaging increased their motivation to partake in classroom activities. Unlike monolingual approaches that do not allow students to draw from their L1, pedagogical translanguaging allows students to resort to their L1 in cases where they encounter challenges. This was confirmed by one of the students who said the following:

If you come to one of our classes, you will think that we are at one level because the lecturer in that class lets us use both languages. This really helps us because we make a lively class and the motivation to learn improves as well. (SFG 6)

Another student added that having two languages at their disposal helps them to navigate through the content easily because when challenges arise in the language of instruction, they can surmount them by resorting to their L1. This implies that teaching students in their mother alongside the language of instruction increases students' participation and lowers anxiety (Cenoz et al., 2022; Nkhi, 2023; Zhou & Mann, 2021). Furthermore, I believe that students can arrive at the higher levels of performance when they are allowed to use their L1 in instances where they stumble upon challenges in the target language. This further implies that by teaching students in two languages, lecturers advertently scaffold them by clarifying concepts in their L1 where they seem not to understand so that they can learn better.

Confidence

Students reported that using both language of instruction and their L1 improved their confidence. They revealed their lecturers allowed them to answer in Sesotho in cases where they failed to express themselves in English. This therefore augments their confidence because they are not shy to express themselves. This implies that every student feels included in their learning. One student revealed the following:

Most of us in this class are old and did not go to school like others here, so it would have been so unfortunate if we were not allowed to use Sesotho. English should not be a barrier to our knowledge because all these things that I am learning now, I am going to apply them in Sesotho at my radio station. (SFG11)

Other students added that they had been unable to go to university because English was a failing subject. This means that a student could not get admission to tertiary institutions even if they got good grades in other subjects if they failed English. This is the social injustice brought about by the hegemony of colonial languages in the African education system (Mweli, 2018). Others further revealed that English was used as a measure of intelligence that denied students to go further with their studies. One student said:

I wish even our students could be taught in two languages at primary school. This English thing is killing our language. Our children do not know Sesotho because of English. If the Ministry of Education does not rectify this, I am telling you that we are going to kiss Sesotho goodbye. I do not have a problem with myself being taught in English, but I have witnessed that the use of two languages in class makes a lively class in which everyone takes part. (SFG15)

The above comment does not only show a damage brought about by the hegemony of English as a colonial hold on the education system in the country, but it also demonstrates how colonised and oppressed schools and children are for sacrificing their identity at the expense of a colonial language (Bettney, 2021; Set, 2023). In light of the above postulations, I

therefore reiterate Mweli's (2018) proposal that EDLoLT be espoused because it can promote the self-esteem of African people, as well as their knowledge systems, cultures, and identities, which will in turn make a provision for multi-African languages to be employed in education to instruct the African child. It would be a shame to see an African child expressing themselves with beaming confidence in a colonial language but failing to do so in their own language. I therefore maintain that pedagogical translanguaging should be a solution to the colonial monoglossic language ideology in the classroom.

Adoption of pedagogical translanguaging in the classroom

The second question on which the study was grounded was: "To what extent can pedagogical translanguaging be adopted as an approach in the classroom?" In addressing this question, lecturers were asked if they translanguaged in their classrooms. Their responses are discussed below.

All the six lecturers admitted that they use both English and Sesotho in their classrooms. This is what one lecturer said:

I have to use both languages because of the nature of students that I have. They are adult students with different levels of education, so I try as much as possible to make them feel all included by teaching them in a language that they all understand. (L1)

Another lecturer added the following comments:

I use both Sesotho and English because some students are not qualified for this level, so I have to accommodate them by using the language that they understand. You cannot tell their difference if you come to class not knowing that others do not have Grade 12 because they participate a lot. (L2)

In addition, one lecturer stipulated that:

It is important to incorporate two languages in the classroom so that all students can feel included. Most of my students, even from other classes tend to participate a lot when they are allowed to answer or ask questions in Sesotho, but they do not take part in classroom activities where only English is used because they are challenged when it comes to spoken English. (L6)

The above comments imply that translanguaging is an inclusive approach in the classroom. This finding resonates with what the students attested to regarding inclusion. Furthermore, the finding is consistent with Wang's (2022) finding that pedagogical translanguaging increases the communication flow in pairs or groups in which students are working together and exploring more intricate topics which would otherwise be difficult to understand if only L2 was used. This means that even students who are somewhat communicatively incompetent will feel included when more complex topics are discussed in a language that they comprehend (Miranda & Gervacio, 2023). This further implies that allowing students to draw from their linguistic repertoire will increase their motivation to learn. It is for this

reason that Mweli (2018) argued for the introduction of EDLoLT in which African languages would be used to teach African students, thus making parallel their worldview, cultures, and language to ensure effective teaching and learning. Accordingly, EDLoLT can amalgamate African methodological analysis with African culture to steer the acquirement of new knowledge that would establish a new world order as well as accommodate numerous methodologies and information systems to unfetter peoples situated in the subjugated parts of the world (Mignolo, 2011; Mweli, 2018). I therefore argue that, given the findings of this study, pedagogical translanguaging can serve as a good strategy that could curb the hegemony of colonial monoglossic ideologies that prohibit the use of African languages in the classroom.

Limitations of the study

The study focused on one institution of higher learning in Lesotho. The sample of the study was radio presenters with varied levels of education, and as such, it is possible I might have been biased by targeting students who had not completed high school because they were more likely to provide more insights regarding their understanding of concepts through translanguaging. Therefore, I believe that a similar study whose sample will include only students with a similar level of education will shed more light on the same topic. I further believe that a bigger population will also help to unravel this phenomenon.

Conclusions and recommendations

This study was premised on the following two research questions: “What are the students’ perceptions about the use of pedagogical translanguaging in the classroom?” and “To what extent can pedagogical translanguaging be adopted as an approach in the classroom?” Findings regarding the first question reveal that students prefer to be taught in both English and Sesotho in the classroom. One of the reasons for their preference is that pedagogical translanguaging encourages them to participate in classroom activities because they can express themselves in the language that they are comfortable with. Furthermore, they revealed that pedagogical translanguaging lowers their anxiety because they are not intimidated by their colleagues who are communicatively competent in English because they are allowed to express themselves in a language they understand. These revelations suggest that pedagogical translanguaging creates a relaxed ambiance in the classroom in which all students understand what they are taught, which will turn improve their performance, especially since they are not bound by monolingual pedagogies, and they can resort to their L1 when facing challenges in L2 as observed by Beiller (2019), Chaka (2020), Mgijima (2021), Mgijima and Makalela (2021), and Sefotho (2022). Therefore, it can be concluded that translanguaging serves as a strong foundation for an inclusive education future.

Moreover, findings regarding the second question reveal that pedagogical translanguaging can be a panacea to the colonial monoglossic language ideology in the classroom because students are free to use their linguistic repertoire. Therefore, the study recommends that minority African languages should be included as languages of instruction alongside the English language. This recommendation is made in line with Mweli’s (2018) proposal in the

South African context that EDLoLT be fully adopted because if it is “applied in South African schools, we would use African languages to teach African learners, thereby aligning their worldview, cultures, and language for the purpose of ensuring quality learning and teaching” (p. 49). It is therefore recommended that this heteroglossic strategy be adopted in tertiary institutions in order to ensure quality learning and teaching. Finally, this study makes an immense contribution to the theme of the 2023 SAERA conference *Education(al) Foundations, Education(al) Futures* (<https://www.saera.co.za/saera-conference-2023-educational-foundations-educational-futures/>) by suggesting ways in which African languages can be incorporated in the classroom in order to teach an African child. This further implies that this approach is a suitable method for a better educational foundation in higher education institutions in Africa.

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Conflict of interest

The researcher declares no conflict of interest whatsoever.

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