

**Supporting professional development of in-service educators  
teaching English in a multi-language environment**

**by**

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**at the**

**UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA**

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**AUGUST 2022**

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I declare that the dissertation/thesis, which I hereby submit for the degree magister educationis at the University of Pretoria, is my own work and has not previously been submitted by me for a degree at this or any other tertiary institution.



Casandra Willers

31 August 2022

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## Dedication

I dedicate this research to my mom, without whom I would not have had the willpower to continue my studies, for her pushing me to want more and always to do better. This is dedicated to all those who supported me throughout this journey, my husband, my dad, my friends and my colleagues. Thank you for your unwavering support over the years and for motivating me to finish this journey. To my supervisors, thank you for all your guidance and patience with me throughout this journey and without whom I would not have been able to finish this degree.

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## Abstract

Language is a contentious issue in South African history and although changes have been made regarding the language policies in education, more needs to be done to ensure that the language needs of learners and educators are being met. This study explores the developmental needs of educators working in multilingual environments where the language of instruction is English. Language teaching methodologies are explored – pertaining to the methods and strategies educators use when teaching. The six participants were purposively selected from educators working at a multilingual school based on their experience and the subjects they teach. The qualitative study took the form of a single case study where the participants were involved in a focus group interview, an individual interview and then two educators were selected to have an observation lesson to determine their developmental needs as based on their experiences in a multilingual environment. Following the data collection process, the data was analysed using inductive analysis where no pre-determined themes were used but rather were drawn from the data sets collected. It became clear that the participants were willing to engage in developmental opportunities that could develop their English proficiency, provided the focus of such programmes would enable them to function more optimally in the classroom and enable them to teach their respective subjects in a way that would benefit their learners. The participants felt that they needed to be consulted in the planning phase of such in-service development programmes and believed that their teaching context should be considered when preparing materials for such courses.

There was a preference shown for face-to-face, in-service training opportunities. The sampled participants felt that their needs could best be met by online learning platforms which personalise learning more, as they viewed this as being able to cater best to meet their developmental needs. These afford them the opportunity to engage with the content, receive feedback and add meaningfully to their portfolio. The format in which educators receive their training would be a mediating factor to determine their willingness to participate. It is clear that educators are willing to develop their proficiency in English, but that multiple factors impact this and need to be investigated further. This should be on a much-larger scale to be able to make impact where they are needed.

**Key Terms:**

In-service professional development, multilingual environment, additional language, language proficiency, distance education, English language.



## Language editor

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Marietjie Schutte

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Marietjie Schutte

### List of abbreviations

BE	Bilingual Education
CALP	Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency
CAPS	Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement
CCMD	Curro-Curriculum Management and Design
CLIL	Content Language Integrated Learning
CoL	Communities of Learning
CoP	Communities of Practice
COVID-19	Coronavirus Disease
DBE	Department of Basic Education
DL	Distance Learning
DoE	Department of Education
EAL	English as an additional language
ECD	Early Childhood Development
EMI	English as a medium of instruction
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
IPD	In-service Professional Development
IQMS	Integrated Quality Management System
L1	Mother tongue
L2	Additional language
LoLT	Language of Learning and Teaching
LTSM	Learning and teaching support materials
Mol	Medium of instruction
MOOC	Massive open online courses
OER	Open educational resources
PCK	Pedagogical Content Knowledge
PD	Professional Development
PGCE	Post Graduate Certificate in Education
SFL	Systemic Functional Linguistics

## Table of Contents

<b>Declaration</b> .....	<b>i</b>
<b>Ethical Clearance Certificate</b> .....	<b>ii</b>
<b>Copyright declaration</b> .....	<b>iii</b>
<b>Dedication</b> .....	<b>iv</b>
<b>Acknowledgements</b> .....	<b>v</b>
<b>Abstract</b> .....	<b>vi</b>
<b>Key Terms:</b> .....	<b>vii</b>
<b>Language editor</b> .....	<b>viii</b>
<b>List of abbreviations</b> .....	<b>x</b>
<b>Table of Contents</b> .....	<b>xi</b>
<b>List of Figures</b> .....	<b>xv</b>
<b>List of Tables</b> .....	<b>xvi</b>
<b>Chapter 1: Introduction and Overview of the Study</b> .....	<b>1</b>
<b>1.1 Background</b> .....	<b>1</b>
<b>1.2 Problem Statement</b> .....	<b>4</b>
<b>1.3 The Overall Research Aim and Individual Research Objectives</b> .....	<b>6</b>
1.3.1 <i>Main Research Question</i> .....	7
1.3.2 <i>Secondary Research Questions</i> .....	7
<b>1.4 Concept Clarification</b> .....	<b>7</b>
<b>1.5 Paradigmatic Perspectives</b> .....	<b>8</b>
1.5.1 <i>Conceptual Framework of the Study</i> .....	8
1.5.2 <i>Epistemology of the Study</i> .....	9
<b>1.6 Research Design and Data Collection Strategies</b> .....	<b>10</b>
1.6.1 <i>Research Design</i> .....	10
1.6.2 <i>Selection of Participants</i> .....	11
1.6.3 <i>Data Collection and Documentation</i> .....	11
1.6.4 <i>Data Analysis and Interpretation</i> .....	13
1.6.5 <i>Ethical Considerations</i> .....	14

<b>1.7</b>	<b>Chapter Outline.....</b>	<b>17</b>
1.7.1	<i>Chapter 1: Introduction .....</i>	17
1.7.2	<i>Chapter 2: Literature Review .....</i>	17
1.7.3	<i>Chapter 3: Research Methods .....</i>	17
1.7.4	<i>Chapter 4: Findings .....</i>	18
1.7.5	<i>Chapter 5: Conclusion .....</i>	18
<b>1.8</b>	<b>Conclusion.....</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>Chapter 2: Literature review of language learning in educational settings ..</b>		<b>19</b>
<b>2.1</b>	<b>Introduction.....</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>2.2</b>	<b>Language Development and Additional Learning of Languages ..</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>2.3</b>	<b>Language of Instruction.....</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>2.4</b>	<b>Multilingualism .....</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>2.5</b>	<b>Teaching Methodologies Used to Teach Content Subjects.....</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>2.6</b>	<b>Additional Language Teaching Methodologies .....</b>	<b>29</b>
<b>2.7</b>	<b>Open Distance Learning and Professional Development .....</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>2.8</b>	<b>Educator Motivation .....</b>	<b>35</b>
<b>2.9</b>	<b>Conceptual Frameworks Adopted for the Study .....</b>	<b>36</b>
2.9.1	<i>Daloz's Stage Development Theory.....</i>	37
2.9.2	<i>The Systemic Functional Linguistics Model .....</i>	37
<b>2.10</b>	<b>Discussion of the Interaction Between Stage Development Theory and Systemic Functional Linguistics .....</b>	<b>38</b>
<b>2.11</b>	<b>Conclusion.....</b>	<b>41</b>
<b>Chapter 3: Research Methodology .....</b>		<b>42</b>
<b>3.1</b>	<b>Introduction.....</b>	<b>42</b>
<b>3.2</b>	<b>Purpose of the Study .....</b>	<b>42</b>
<b>3.3</b>	<b>Paradigmatic Assumptions .....</b>	<b>44</b>
3.3.1	<i>Epistemology of the Study .....</i>	44
3.3.2	<i>Methodological Approach .....</i>	44
<b>3.4</b>	<b>Research Methodology and Strategies .....</b>	<b>47</b>
3.4.1	<i>Case Study as Research Design .....</i>	47
3.4.2	<i>Advantages of Case Study Design .....</i>	47
3.4.3	<i>Limitations of Case Study Design .....</i>	48

<b>3.5</b>	<b>Selection of Participants.....</b>	<b>49</b>
<b>3.6</b>	<b>Data Collection and Documentation .....</b>	<b>53</b>
3.6.1	<i>Semi-Structured Focus Group Interviews .....</i>	53
3.6.2	<i>Semi-Structured Individual Interviews.....</i>	54
3.6.3	<i>Observations .....</i>	55
<b>3.7</b>	<b>Data Analysis and Interpretation.....</b>	<b>56</b>
<b>3.8</b>	<b>Quality Criteria.....</b>	<b>57</b>
3.8.1	<i>Credibility.....</i>	57
3.8.2	<i>Applicability .....</i>	58
3.8.3	<i>Dependability.....</i>	58
3.8.4	<i>Confirmability.....</i>	59
3.8.5	<i>Triangulation.....</i>	59
<b>3.9</b>	<b>Ethical Considerations.....</b>	<b>60</b>
3.9.1	<i>Beneficence and Non-Maleficence .....</i>	60
3.9.2	<i>Fidelity and Responsibility .....</i>	61
3.9.3	<i>Integrity.....</i>	61
3.9.4	<i>Justice .....</i>	62
3.9.5	<i>Informed Consent and Voluntary Participation .....</i>	63
3.9.6	<i>Assessment of Risks and Benefits.....</i>	64
<b>3.10</b>	<b>Conclusion.....</b>	<b>65</b>
<b>Chapter 4: Analysis and Interpretation of Data .....</b>		<b>67</b>
<b>4.1</b>	<b>Introduction.....</b>	<b>67</b>
<b>4.2</b>	<b>The Findings of the Study .....</b>	<b>67</b>
4.2.1	<i>Theme 1: English in a Multilingual Context .....</i>	68
4.2.2	<i>Theme 2: Professional Development.....</i>	87
4.2.3	<i>Theme 3: Undergraduate Training.....</i>	96
4.2.4	<i>Theme 4: Educator Involvement in Planning.....</i>	99
4.2.5	<i>Theme 5: Educators' Language Context.....</i>	105
4.2.6	<i>Findings from the observation lessons.....</i>	112
<b>4.3</b>	<b>Conclusion.....</b>	<b>114</b>

<b>Chapter 5: Conclusion</b> .....	<b>115</b>
<b>5.1 Introduction</b> .....	<b>115</b>
<b>5.2 Overview of Previous Chapters</b> .....	<b>115</b>
<b>5.3 Addressing my Research Questions</b> .....	<b>116</b>
5.3.1 <i>Which Areas of Language Development Lead to Proficiency in English According to Additional Language Educators?</i> .....	116
5.3.2 <i>How is an Educator’s Language Context Considered in the Planning of Professional Development Courses, If At All?</i> .....	117
5.3.3 <i>How Should Current Additional Language Teaching Methodologies be Adapted for the Professional Development of Educators Through Distance Education?</i> .....	118
5.3.4 <i>What Do In-Service Educators Teaching English in a Multi-Language Context Perceive as Necessary Components in a Professional Development Programme Through Distance Education?</i> .....	120
<b>5.4 The Emergent Conceptual Framework: Integrated Framework for Understanding In-Service Educators’ Professional Development Choices</b> .....	<b>120</b>
<b>5.5 Significance of my Study</b> .....	<b>125</b>
<b>5.6 Recommendations</b> .....	<b>126</b>
<b>5.7 Reflections</b> .....	<b>126</b>
<b>5.8 Conclusion</b> .....	<b>127</b>
<b>List of References</b> .....	<b>128</b>
<b>Annexures</b> .....	<b>140</b>
<b>Annexure A: Focus Group Interview Schedule</b> .....	<b>140</b>
<b>Annexure B: Individual Interview Schedule</b> .....	<b>143</b>
<b>Annexure C: Permission to Conduct Research</b> .....	<b>145</b>
<b>Annexure D: Informed Consent Form</b> .....	<b>148</b>

## List of Figures

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework for Educator Professional Development Choice and Language Acquisition .....	40
Figure 2: Integrated Framework for Understanding In-Service Educators' Professional Development Choices.....	121



## List of Tables

Table 1: <i>Concept Clarification Table</i> .....	7
Table 2: <i>Ethical Concepts Summary</i> .....	16
Table 3: <i>Outline of Methodological Choices</i> .....	43
Table 4: <i>Biographical data of participants</i> .....	50
Table 5: <i>Overview of Themes and Subthemes</i> .....	68
Table 6: <i>Excerpts on the Hegemony of English</i> .....	71
Table 7: <i>Excerpts on English language as a Medium of Instruction</i> .....	76
Table 8: <i>Excerpts on Areas of English Proficiency</i> .....	80
Table 9: <i>Excerpts on English Teaching Methodologies</i> .....	83
Table 10: <i>Excerpts of Current Training Available</i> .....	88
Table 11: <i>Excerpts of Future Training Possibilities</i> .....	92
Table 12: <i>Excerpts on Undergraduate Training</i> .....	98
Table 13: <i>Excerpts on Educator Involvement in Planning</i> .....	101
Table 14: <i>Excerpts on Educators' Needs</i> .....	103
Table 15: <i>Excerpts on Use of Language</i> .....	107
Table 16: <i>Excerpts on Educator Background and Environment</i> .....	110

## Chapter 1: Introduction and Overview of the Study

### 1.1 Background

English (which refers to English language) as a medium of instruction (EMI) has become more prevalent in recent years both globally and locally due to its status and the notion that it is prestigious (Dearden, 2014; Iffat Jahan & Obaidul Hamid, 2019). The hegemony of English language has been notable since the British set foot in South Africa, where English language was favoured over indigenous languages and seen as a tool to keep black Africans in a subservient position in the society (Evans & Cleghorn, 2012; Schoepp, 2018). English, to be understood as English language, has been used as the integrating language since the start of the 21st century and has created both a linguistic and cultural problem for teachers and learners in South Africa who have not yet acquired the literacies necessary to succeed scholastically (Evans & Cleghorn, 2012; Schoepp, 2018).

South Africa has 11 officially recognised languages and there is an acknowledged right for individuals to receive an education in their mother tongue (Heugh, 2013; Whitelaw, Filby & Dowling, 2019). Multilingualism poses a threat to conventional models of language, learning and assessment (Heugh, Prinsloo, Makgamatha, Diedericks & Winnaar, 2017). This is due to the ever-expanding nature of multilingualism across all societies, not just in post-colonial or southern settings (Heugh et al., 2017). Multilingual education incorporates the use of the first language or mother tongue, a regional language and lastly includes a foreign language in the school (Omidire, 2021). Further exploration into multilingual education has found ways to incorporate multiple languages into teaching such as the use of code-switching, translanguaging and translation (Omidire, 2021). This then necessitates the need for multilingual assessment to be considered as a way to bridge the gap for learners whose home language is not English language. More and more societies have had to necessitate multilingual assessment as it has the potential to lessen inequalities and thereby become advantageous to students (Heugh et al., 2017).

However, English is viewed as the language that greatly allows access to secondary and higher education systems (Heugh et al., 2017), which means more schools need to offer education in English and that educators, regardless of their

home languages, will have to teach in English. This is because the focus falls on the majority language when it comes to assessment as there is often an international benchmark that needs to be attained (Heugh et al., 2017).

Educators need to be supported in order to function optimally (Chireshe & Makura, 2014; O'Hare, Powell, Stern, & Bowers, 2020). Lack of support, coupled with anxiety that is attached to lacking confidence in teaching in the language of instruction, could lead to avoidant behaviours in the classroom (Chireshe & Makura, 2014; O'Hare et al., 2020; Tum, 2015). Educators with a lower English language proficiency level have been shown to negatively impact learner results in external examinations when English is the medium of instruction (Nekongo-Nielsen & Ngololo, 2020). However, there is evidence that mother tongue instruction is linked to academic progression (Evans & Cleghorn, 2012; Schoepp, 2018). Scholars have found that there are serious ethical, validity and reliability issues surrounding the testing of marginalised students in a language they do not know very well (Heugh et al., 2017). According to the authors, an immense issue in exit examinations is that many of the learners are tested in a previous colonial language that is only mastered by a minority of the learners (Heugh et al., 2017). This is concerning as learners cannot be fairly assessed when they have not met the language milestones that they need to due to a language barrier created by the education system. The importance of language lies in its power to define the world around the individual.

Language is the lens through which students and learners view their academic world and more importantly, the outside world (Heugh, 2013; Raft, 2017; Rassool, Canvin & Heugh, 2007) and when the language used for teaching, is different from the home language, as is the case with multilingual learners this is demotivating for learners as they have not attained adequate Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP) (Evans & Cleghorn, 2012; Schoepp, 2018), which is problematic as motivation is regarded as a protective resource (Raft, 2017). Difficulties in language have been shown to be the basis of the "highest ranking intellectual challenges" (Raft, 2017, p.54).

Language proficiency should be considered a national concern and how it will be attained should be just as much of a concern to policymakers. The question then becomes how educators can best make use of multi-language capabilities (Heugh et al., 2017) to ensure proficiency in the international language is reached so that access to education, the economy and political climate is possible (Heugh

et al., 2017). A recently published work on multilingualism in education has emphasised the need for government to create “public awareness on the value of mother-tongue education and provide more support for teachers (Omidire, 2021, 36). Support to educators already in the teaching field is provided through professional development (PD) opportunities. Bearing in mind that multilingual education offers opportunities to make teaching more inclusive, it is necessary to look at the PD needs of educators so that they can address the needs of learners, including their language needs. Many education courses offered focus only on the “language teaching professional in one language only” (de Oliveira, 2014, p.267), which is usually English (Iffat Jahan & Obaidul Hamid, 2019). Even if dual-language preparation courses are on offer, there is often the decided notion that the teacher is more a teacher of one language than another (de Oliveira, 2014; Iffat Jahan & Obaidul Hamid, 2019). In order to bridge the gap within undergraduate training courses and to make the best use of multilingual opportunities, additional training outside of the traditional sphere should be considered.

To address these issues, Professional Development (PD) of in-service educators offers the opportunity to up-skill the individuals already out in the field through education and the use of supportive programmes (Coenders & Verhoef, 2019). Some in-service educators experience challenges with academic literacy when they embark on study courses due to having limited vocabularies and ineffective note-taking skills (Major & Watson, 2018; Roy & Van Wyk, 2016). Many educators do not have the opportunity to return to full-time studies as they need to work to provide for themselves and their extended families because higher education has previously been of an elitist nature that is still often not equitably funded (Nortje, 2017; Venter, 2006). A vast majority of education students and educators improve learning through distance learning, which is why this option has to be considered when looking into further PD opportunities for in-service educators (Nortje, 2017; Venter, 2006). In 2015, the United Nations (2015) set ambitious goals regarding sustainable development, which included the fourth goal that aspires to “ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all” (UNESCO, 2015, p. 40). In *Education 2030* (UNESCO, 2016, p.40), the suggestion was made for massive open online courses (MOOC) (p.40) and open educational resources (OER) to be promoted to improve access to education and to improve the quality of education as well (p.31 and p.41). This is

further justification for the necessity of programmes that centre around improving competencies through distance education.

Distance education, which is inclusive of online learning, but also encompasses a more traditional format such as through postal correspondence; has become a more standardised form of teaching, learning and working because of the COVID-19 climate. Distance education, and ODL offers opportunities for developing the competencies of educators (Major & Watson, 2018) through a “purposeful and structured set of learning experiences” (Mays, 2016, p.108). This provides in-service educators opportunities to develop pedagogical content knowledge (PCK) while allowing them to apply what is being learned in real-life scenarios in the classroom, which makes it more immersive than traditional face-to-face lectures (Sato, Haegele & Foot, 2017). Alternatives must be considered when exploring PD opportunities as the world is ever-changing and the demands made on individual teachers affect their willingness to participate in such activities (Kio & Lau, 2017). On the surface, important factors that influence participation in courses are that the courses must be considered useful and easy to access, and there must be the intention to make use of the knowledge and skills gained (Kio & Lau, 2017).

In order to facilitate student learning, educators must be willing and able to participate in courses that will aid them in improving their teaching practices in such a way that they see value in them. It is, therefore, necessary to explore the skills and proficiencies needed by educators to teach in an additional language so that they can better be supported by development programmes offered to them.

## **1.2 Problem Statement**

Professional development of educators teaching in a multilingual context like South Africa is necessary, as the English proficiency of educators is linked to learner performance (Nekongo-Nielsen & Ngololo, 2020). A negative emotional state in a learner renders even the best teaching strategies useless (O’Hare et al., 2020; Omidire & Adeyemo, 2015), which can be counteracted by providing motivation to learners that can assist learners in developing proficiency in English, as well as their CALP (O’Hare et al., 2020; Omidire & Adeyemo, 2015; Raft, 2017). Challenges arise from oral reading fluency, which is critical to developing reading comprehension skills which, if not mastered, affect scholastic development (Draper & Spaul, 2015; Morgan, 2017; Raft, 2017). It is important to teach reading effectively as it lays the

basis for further language acquisition (Morgan, 2017). This requires effective training that, if not mastered at undergraduate level, must be addressed in the numerous formats of PD for educators. Learning in the additional language is often a challenge not just for learners, but educators as well.

This creates challenges as there is acculturation into another worldview where the curriculum features content that is not based on indigenous cultures, but rather Western ones (Evans & Cleghorn, 2012; Heugh, 2013; Rassool, Canvin & Heugh, 2007; Schoepp, 2018). There is, as a result, another problem because schools are unable to offer the support needed by the learners when educators are insufficiently educated in “teaching a second language” (Raft, 2017). Scholastic challenges arise when learners go from learning in their L1 (mother tongue) to learning in their second or additional (L2) language. This is due to limited proficiency in the additional language which in turn limits what the learners understand and are therefore able to grasp with regard to the content contained in their subjects. This in turn affects their performance (Heugh, 2013; Nekongo-Nielsen & Ngololo, 2019; Rassool, Canvin & Heugh, 2007). Educator proficiency in the L2 plays a role as the educator’s ability to explain concepts adequately allows for learners to grasp content or not (Nekongo-Nielsen & Ngololo, 2019). Educators need to improve their proficiency in English in order to meet the learners’ language needs (Rassool, Canvin & Heugh, 2007; Strong & Escamilla, 2020).

This study aims to develop the literature surrounding how educating educators teaching in their additional language can best be approached.. It was found that although educator proficiency in EMI is a problem and that education is needed to resolve it (Dearden, 2014; Raft, 2017; Nekongo-Nielsen & Ngololo, 2020), there were only sparse studies that focussed on how South African schools had dealt with this issue through educator training (Amory, Bialobrzaska & Welch, 2018; Coenders & Verhoef, 2019; Nekongo-Nielsen & Ngololo, 2020). It is, therefore, necessary to explore means by which additional language educators can be supported through professional development in South Africa.

A study focussing on how to support educators teaching English in a multilingual context through professional development is necessary as it will provide insights into the current situation in classrooms in South Africa. Insights can be drawn from experienced educators of English into what such a professional development programme should look like because experienced educators in

English know which skills best foster English proficiency. The focus of this research is the professional development of educators within a multilingual environment. The aim is to explore what in-service educators teaching in a multi-language context perceive as necessary components in a PD programme. These factors are explored in Chapter 4.

### **1.3 The Overall Research Aim and Individual Research Objectives**

The purpose of this study is to explore how professional development can be utilised to better equip and support educators teaching English language in multilingual contexts. The study focused on perceptions and interpretations of the additional language educator as a means by which to gauge insights into how best to address in-service educators in multilingual contexts' needs through PD programmes. This was conceptualised against an interpretivist paradigm as the aim is to gain a deeper level of understanding of the contexts and experiences of participants rather than to generalise findings (Carminati, 2018). This study focused on gauging lived experiences of in-service educators to inform decision-making when it comes to the development and planning of in-service training programmes. Educators must be involved in order to take ownership of a project, so the purpose of this study was to provide the additional language educator with an opportunity to give valuable insights into what it is they need from a PD programme.

The objectives of the study were to establish which areas of language development lead to improved English proficiency according to additional language educators, to what extent educator context influences the development of PD courses and how to adapt current additional language teaching methodologies for the PD of educators through distance education. The answer to each of the research questions is discussed at length in Chapter 5 before diving into the limitations of the study. This study aims to contribute to language studies in South Africa as well as the growing body of research on distance education as a means of engaging educators in professional development.

These objectives were achieved by addressing the following research questions:

### 1.3.1 *Main Research Question*

What do in-service educators teaching English in a multi-language context perceive as necessary components in a professional development programme through distance education?

### 1.3.2 *Secondary Research Questions*

1. Which areas of language development lead to proficiency in English according to additional language educators?
2. How is an educator's language context considered in the planning of professional development courses, if at all?
3. How should current additional language teaching methodologies be adapted for the professional development of educators through distance education?

## 1.4 **Concept Clarification**

In Table 1, I have provided explanations for the integral concepts pertinent to this study:

**Table 1**

*Concept Clarification Table*

<b>Additional Language (L2)</b>	An additional language (L2) is a language that learners speak that is different from the language they learn in at school (Raft, 2017). According to the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS), English is referred to as the 'First Additional Language', but throughout this study, it will be referred to as the additional language (Department of Basic Education, 2021).
<b>Multilingual context</b>	A setting where individuals are teaching and learning in the L2, not their mother tongue (L1) (Raft, 2017). It includes schools that function in English even though the population in the school does not have English as their L1. Context is to be understood as the language context in which the educators function.



<b>Language proficiency</b>	Language proficiency is concerned with the individual's ability to make use of language skills in a meaningful way. It is important for learners to acquire CALP as this is what enables them to understand and produce complex oral and written tasks in language, according to Posel and Zeller (2010, as cited in Raft, 2017). In this study, language proficiency must be understood as CALP as these are the skills needed to obtain learning outcomes (Omidire & Adeyemo, 2015).
<b>Distance education</b>	Often referred to as distance learning, distance education implies that the tertiary education student is learning on their own, at their own pace without having face-to-face classes with lecturers on campus (Sato et al., 2017). This includes correspondence education through the mail and Open Distance Learning where students are studying at their own pace through various technological interfaces. For the purposes of this study, it implies any learning programmes where the tertiary education student will predominantly have to engage in course materials on their own.
<b>Professional development</b>	Any and all training received by in-service educators that improves teaching practices (Coenders & Verhoef, 2019). For the purposes of this study, it includes training programmes, distance education opportunities and workshops.
<b>Teaching methodologies</b>	Teaching methodologies incorporate the methods and strategies educators use in their classrooms (Killen, 2015). For the purposes of this study it is to be understood as the way educators teach their subject in their classroom.

## 1.5 Paradigmatic Perspectives

### 1.5.1 *Conceptual Framework of the Study*

Conceptual frameworks explain various concepts and differing viewpoints that will be used as a skeletal structure for the study at hand, discarding arguments that do not align with the aim and purpose of the study (Lester, 2005; Van der Walddt, 2020). This study draws on two major theories, Daloz's Stage Development (1986)

(as cited in Merriam & Bierema, 2013) and Halliday's Systemic Functional Linguistic model (SFL) (1975) (as cited in Llinares, 2013). A new framework had to be considered as there currently is not one dealing with both adult learning and language acquisition models and how the interaction determines the educator's need for professional development. Elements from both theories are conceptualised in Chapter 2 and the final interaction between the two theories is explored in Chapter 5.

In-service training of educators, or their professional development, should in part be viewed through a stage development framework as the needs of educators differ across their developmental stages and it influences what the educators will want to learn about and shows there can be improvement across their careers (Merriam & Bierema, 2013). The stage of development an educator finds themselves in will be based on where they are within their own careers but is also impacted by their own history and educational backgrounds. This is the contribution of the stage development model – to show that the context of the educator will impact their professional development programme. However, that would only be covering part of this study's focus.

The Systemic Functional Linguistics model (Llinares, 2013) explains language usage in context, focusing on what language is and what individuals can do with it (Llinares, 2013). This draws on Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory (1978) (as cited in Llinares, 2013) as language is seen as being acquired through the social context, via interaction with others. This theory provides an understanding that the educator's perceived language proficiency will impact their developmental choices, this is affected by the importance they have placed on the target language as well. This guides the study in understanding that the educator's language acquisition is based on their previous experiences and their contexts. In this study, where the educators' perceived areas of need are in language will impact their choice of professional development courses. The new conceptual framework is fully described in Chapter 5.

### **1.5.2 *Epistemology of the Study***

Social constructivism was chosen as the epistemological paradigm to guide this study. The Soviet psychologist Lev Vygotsky, who focuses on the collaborative nature of learning developed the social constructivism theory (Mpfu & De Jager,

2018). Teaching and learning occur within the social context and must be observed in the classroom environment (Mpofu & De Jager, 2018). This paradigm can be used to understand how teachers will be able to learn better practices from one another within their contexts. This viewpoint warrants that the perspectives of learners are valued and that emerging problems are focused on in lessons (Bostock, 1998), something that can assist in this study because the educators' viewpoints are being explored to get a deeper understanding of what they need from professional development courses. The social constructivist lens will help guide this study in that it allows for the research to be embedded within its context, ensuring that the professional development needs of English educators are understood from the multi-language context, noting educators' knowledge has personal and social qualities (Mpofu & De Jager, 2018). It will also allow for the data collected from the study to be used to guide our understanding of the English second language context in an authentic way (Kaufman & Grennon, 1996). Within the context of this study, social constructivism aids us in understanding that the best sources of knowledge will be the educators themselves as they are embedded in the multi-language context.

## **1.6 Research Design and Data Collection Strategies**

### **1.6.1 Research Design**

Case study allows for in-depth studying of a phenomenon (Gerring, 2007; Woodside, 2017). For the purposes of this research study, I used a single case study because the desired outcome is to get rich information about the 'case'. This case is about the professional development needs of in-service educators in a second language context. A single case was used as the intention is not to transfer findings or allow for generalisability, but to create a deeper focus on certain aspects within the context that the researcher wants to explore further (Tight, 2017; Yin, 2018). The exploration of the strengths and weaknesses of this choice of research design are explored below.

This research design was helpful as an explanation is sought of the professional development needs of educators from within a second language context and it yields in-depth descriptions of the phenomenon (Tight, 2017; Yin, 2018). The aim was to explore the factors that will aid educators in selecting their

professional development courses based on the context they find themselves in (Tight, 2017; Yin, 2018). This is fully explored in Chapter 3 and reflected upon in Chapter 5.

### **1.6.2 Selection of Participants**

Purposive sampling is based on the notion that one seeks participants that will yield the best data for the study based on certain criteria (Leavy, 2017). In order to do this, one identifies cases that best represent the research purpose and questions, that is three English educators and three content-subject educators (Leavy, 2017). Owing to the nature of this study, the six participants were selected based on certain criteria such as the teaching context they are in, that of English as an additional language context, as well as whether they teach English or a content-subject such as Business Studies. Three of each group (English educators versus content-subject educators) are required so that a comparison can be drawn between the two groups. The study was conducted at a school where the sought-after demographic was present. The sampling of participants is more fully explored and the methods used are explained in Chapter 3.

Using this sampling method holds value as the researcher can more easily build up a rapport with the participants (Leavy, 2017). The researcher is familiar with the participants as they work at the same school and the particular ethical concerns surrounding doing research and being in a dual capacity (colleague-researcher) have been fully explored in Chapter 3 (Health Professionals Council of South Africa, 2006; Leavy, 2017). There were no expectations regarding participation, participants were free to withdraw participation at any point (HPCSA, 2006; Leavy, 2017). Other ethical concerns regarding participants and the means that were used to guard against exploitation and to ensure justice are fully explored in Chapter 3.

### **1.6.3 Data Collection and Documentation**

#### **1.6.3.1 Focus Group Interviews.**

A semi-structured singular focus group interview was carried out by making use of an interview guide but allowed for more open-ended questions and the storytelling aspect of questions and answers. (Leavy, 2017). The focus group interview allows for a rapport to be built and to see where gaps arise that can be

further probed in individual interviews. This procedure, which was followed by the researcher, is explored in Chapter 3 and more fully answers to procedures applied in the data collection process. There was a fear that one or two participants would have dominated the discussions. This was guarded against by probing the more silent parties and politely limiting responses of all so that each participant had a turn to say what they needed to (Leavy, 2017). The participants felt more at ease discussing matters around others they knew, and this led to more in-depth responses and differing views contesting one another, which allowed for deeper discussion (Leavy, 2017). Another challenge was the time constraints and the unpredictable nature of focus group interviews, the participants remained on track during discussions and participants who were not participating as much during the focus group interview were probed for further information during the individual interviews to allow them to feel more at ease and to ensure that their responses were true to their own experiences rather than that of the group (Leavy, 2017). It was, therefore, necessary to keep discussions on track and probe in the direction needed (Leavy, 2017).

The focus group interview schedule used can be found under Annexure A to give more clarity on the type of questioning used by the researcher and showcases how some elements of ethical considerations were dealt with. This was achieved by rephrasing questions and directing discussions and comments back to the question asked when the commentary was going off topic. The researcher only served the purpose of asking questions during the focus group interview and to ensure participants were satisfied with responses and wanted to move on with further questioning – the researcher engaged minimally in the focus group interviews so as not to skew responses.

### **1.6.3.2 Semi-Structured Individual Interviews.**

In order to gain a deeper insight into the educators' professional development needs semi-structured individual interviews were used as these were pre-planned, but allowed for some flexibility in the process (Leavy, 2017). An interview guide was drawn up prior to the six interviews so that all the necessary questions were posed to participants based on gaps identified in the focus group interview while allowing for follow-up questions based on responses (Leavy, 2017). The individual interview schedule used can be found under Annexure B. More sensitive topics were dealt

with in individual interviews (Leavy, 2017). A variety of questions were used to allow for more in-depth descriptions to be given after the participants felt more comfortable (Leavy, 2017). The interviews were audio recorded, with consent given by participants prior to the commencement of the interview, this enabled the researcher to transcribe the information as soon as possible (Leavy, 2017). In addition, the recordings also helped the researcher to take note of cues that may have been missed when taking notes during the interview in the transcription of the individual interviews (Leavy, 2017). This ensured that the data collected remained sensitive to the individuals represented and that there was no homogenizing of voices (Leavy, 2017). Interviews can be intimidating for participants, which is why a rapport was built with them (Leavy, 2017). The procedures followed by the researcher during the data collection process are fully explored in Chapter 3.

#### **1.6.3.4 Observations.**

Observations of two educators, one English educator and one content-subject educator, were done in their classrooms, accompanied by field notes in the form of running records, so it was possible to establish a better understanding of the participants' reality from observation in a natural setting (Leavy, 2017). Observation of a content-subject educator's lesson was viewed and field notes taken and compared to one of an English educator's lesson to provide a broader view of what the developmental needs were within the additional language context, as needs may differ between content-subject educators and English educators. The purpose of the observation lessons was to see what procedures and teaching methods the educators use in their classes, and to see if their interview responses were similar to their actions while teaching. This allowed for some comparisons to be drawn up between English educators and subject-content educators' needs, which creates a more complete picture of the professional development needs of educators (Leavy, 2017). This is explored and incorporated in Chapter 4's findings. The data yielded is rich in content and allowed for a deep description of the phenomenon at hand. The data was then analysed from more than one source, which makes it more credible (Leavy, 2017).

#### **1.6.4 *Data Analysis and Interpretation***

Data collected was stored in a repository at the University of Pretoria. This includes the transcriptions of the interviews and then the field notes from the

observation as well as all audio recordings of the focus group interview and individual interviews (Leavy, 2017). The data collected was stored on a memory stick to be kept by the University of Pretoria as well as made available in hard copy for the purposes of examination. Inductive thematic analysis was used as this “bottom-up” approach allows for data to be categorised without creating predetermined themes (Braun & Clarke, 2020, 330; Clinton, Doumit, Ezzedine & Rizk, 2020). The phases are not sequential but include becoming familiar with the data, coding the data, doing a theme search, reviewing the themes created, then defining and giving names to the themes and afterward producing a report (Braun & Clarke, 2020, 331; Clinton et al., 2020). This is a flexible process (Braun & Clarke, 2020; Clinton et al., 2020). The procedure followed by the researcher is explored more fully in Chapter 3. A challenge comes in when accounting for choices made or alternative routes not being followed as my subjective observation and interpretations were used (Leavy, 2017). To counter this, the data was triangulated to ascertain whether an assertion made during interpretation was true or not as there were multiple sources of information, including transcriptions and field notes (Leavy, 2017). Member-checking with participants ensured that the findings are more valid (Leavy, 2017). To account for predispositions to interpreting data a certain way, my own biases and values will be made known through reflections (Leavy, 2017). To ensure there is rigour applied, it is important to note one cannot remain objective during qualitative inquiry (Leavy, 2017).

#### **1.6.5 Ethical Considerations**

Ethical standards of the University of Pretoria were adhered to, including getting ethical clearance prior to embarking on the research process (University of Pretoria, 2013). Informed consent from participants was attained, which informed them of the nature of the research as well as roles and expectations from them, including that participation was voluntary and that they were able to withdraw at any point, without risk of the data gathered being used (HPCSA, 2006). Consent to use recordings and data gathered was obtained from participants (HPCSA, 2006). Other ethical concerns pertaining to working with individuals known to the researcher in another capacity, such as beneficence, non-maleficence, fidelity and responsibility, integrity, justice and assessment of risk and benefits, are explored in Chapter 3, under the section dedicated to ethical concerns, as these ethical concerns became

more prominent only after the researcher had managed to get ethical approval to conduct research at the school where she works. Other ethical concerns are discussed briefly below as they pertain to procedures carried out by the researcher.

The permission to conduct research form is included under Annexure C, while the individual educator informed consent forms can be found under Annexure D. During data collection, transcripts were not beautified or edited as this takes away the essence of participant responses (Leavy, 2017). The language used throughout the data collection process and in all interactions with participants was culturally sensitive to ensure accessibility to participants (HPCSA, 2006; Leavy, 2017). Participants were informed that confidentiality cannot be ensured due to the nature of focus groups, where individuals may choose to speak outside of the room (Barbour, 2007; HPCSA, 2006; Merriam & Grenier, 2019), however, the anonymity of participants in findings and publications is ensured through coding to hide identities (HPCSA, 2006). Participants had roles and expectations as well as the extent of confidentiality made clear to them from the outset of the research to ensure the participants were not exploited (HPCSA, 2006). Participants were debriefed after each data collection activity and they had access to their own interview as well as the focus group interview data (Leavy, 2017). Reasonable steps were undertaken to avoid harming participants through the research process, there was no harassment or coercion (HPCSA, 2006). Reflexivity was ensured through documenting my impressions and assumptions throughout the collection and interpretation process to separate that from the findings that emerged (Leavy, 2017). It is important to bear in mind that the findings will contribute to a fuller understanding of the professional development needs of educators in a second language context which can inform how, when and what content is included in the courses offered (Leavy, 2017).

The major ethical concepts that were dealt with are summarised in Table 2:



### 1.6.5.1 Ethical Concepts Summary

**Table 2**

*Ethical Concepts Summary*

<b>Concept</b>	<b>Summary</b>
Informed consent	Participants have the right to be informed of what is expected of them from the researcher and research processes. The participants were made aware of how data was collected, stored and used by the researcher.
Voluntary participation	Participants were made aware that they could withdraw their willingness to participate in the study at any point and that the information they shared would not be used by the researcher.
Transcription modification	Scripts were not beautified or changed but kept true to what participants divulged throughout the data collection process.
Confidentiality and anonymity	Participants were aware that anonymity and confidentiality could not be fully controlled by the researcher as the focus group interview could lead to participants discussing certain matters with others, however, the researcher used pseudonyms (an assigned participants' number) to ensure names and personal details were kept as confidential as possible.
Doing no harm	The participants were debriefed and were checked in on by the researcher to ensure they were not distressed following the data collection process.

## **1.7 Chapter Outline**

### **1.7.1 Chapter 1: Introduction**

Chapter 1 provides the reader with background information on English as a medium or language of instruction in South Africa and the impact of learning and teaching in an additional language. The focus of the research is identified and justified, and the aims and objectives are laid out. The chapter provides an overview for the reader regarding the research design used, the data collection procedures, data analysis and ethical concerns before the reader dives deeper into the study and findings.

### **1.7.2 Chapter 2: Literature Review**

Chapter 2 provides a review of the literature pertaining to multilingual education and distance education. It explores elements deduced from the research questions to give the reader adequate background information that helped shape the researcher's understanding of the phenomenon being studied. It explores background information on language development and additional learning of languages before exploring the language of instruction. Multilingualism around the world and in the South African context, is explored next before embarking on a discussion of open distance learning and professional development. Educator motivation is discussed as this was understood to be a necessary proponent to understanding the developmental needs of the in-service educator, and finally, chapter 2 discusses the conceptual framework employed in the study more fully. This then moves to the more practical side of the research study, looking to the chapter where the research methods used by the researcher are discussed and analysed.

### **1.7.3 Chapter 3: Research Methods**

The research methodology and the research design are further discussed in Chapter 3 with specific reference to the research process conducted in this study. The purpose of the study is followed by an exploration of the paradigmatic assumptions, which includes the epistemology of the study and the methodological approach used in the study. The research methodology and strategies are explored

with reference to the use of case study design. The selection of participants is fully explained, followed by the data collection and documentation procedures employed in the study. Data analysis and interpretation are explored followed by the quality criteria applicable to the study, and finally, an in-depth explanation of the ethical considerations of the study is explored.

#### **1.7.4 Chapter 4: Findings**

Research findings that came from the data analysis and interpretation of data collected from the study are presented in Chapter 4. The five themes identified are explained and delved into by discussing the findings in terms of the 11 sub-themes identified. Each of the sub-themes has a section dedicated to a discussion, where the link to literature is provided.

#### **1.7.5 Chapter 5: Conclusion**

Chapter 5 focused on the summary of the findings through the answering of the research questions posed at the start of the study. An overview of previous chapters is included, research questions are addressed, the newly proposed conceptual framework is included and discussed. This is followed by the significance of my study followed by recommendations and reflections. Closing thoughts regarding the shift in professional development and methods are explored as a look towards future research is discussed, followed by a conclusion to the study.

### **1.8 Conclusion**

Chapter 1 provides an overview of the study, preparing the reader for what to expect from the study and its findings. Chapter 2 involves an in-depth review of current literature pertaining to the study and its key elements.

## **Chapter 2: Literature review of language learning in educational settings**

### **2.1 Introduction**

This study centres on language and its usage in the classroom. Language within a country like South Africa has always been contentious as it is associated with positions of power and politics and was often used to exclude certain people from the greater society (Iffat Jahan & Obaidul Hamid, 2019; Spaul, 2016). At the heart of this study lie a few central concepts. Therefore, within this literature review, there is an expansion on major concepts that pertain to the understanding of this study. In order for the professional development of educators to be improved, it must be understood using a conceptual framework that views their professional development choices based on their stage of development and their language proficiency – as these are viewed to be what would drive educators to engage in professional development opportunities.

The review of literature centres on language development, language of instruction and multilingualism which is linked to additional language teaching methodologies. The discussion then moves to professional development and open and distance learning and how educator motivation impacts willingness to participate in opportunities to develop. A discussion of the conceptual framework is the final point of discussion, which will assist readers in understanding how the study has been approached and what underpins the basic assumptions made about educators' professional development choices.

### **2.2 Language Development and Additional Learning of Languages**

Several authors discuss the course of language development and its preferred order when it comes to additional learning of languages. International studies on English as an additional language show that when English is learned as an additional language, learners will often experience a significantly lower academic achievement than their monolingual peers (Burgoyne, Kelly, Whitely & Spooner, 2009; O'Hare et al., 2020; Whiteside, Gooch & Worbury, 2016). Bearing this in mind, learners are often reported to display cognitive advantages in areas such as executive functioning, with this seldom carrying over to their academic performance

(O'Hare et al., 2020; Whiteside, Gooch & Worbury, 2016). This is typically as a result of not understanding the language in which they receive education rather than there being a deficit or learning disability present (Burgoyne, Kelly, Whitely & Spooner, 2009; Iffat Jahan & Obaidul Hamid, 2019; Whiteside, Gooch & Worbury, 2016). This is primarily because the learners' proficiency in the language of instruction is necessary for them to understand the teacher and their learning materials, with language proficiency being a necessary precursor to reading (Morgan, 2017; O'Hare et al., 2020; Whiteside, Gooch & Worbury, 2016). As educators in the South African teaching environment often deal with learners from diverse linguistic backgrounds, it becomes important to focus on the areas of language study that lead to proficiency in language learning.

Difficulties in language that are pinpointed to contribute to lower academic performance include expressive and receptive vocabulary as this contributes to comprehension or understanding of what is being read and listened to in class (Burgoyne, Kelly, Whitely & Spooner, 2009; Strong & Escamilla, 2020). Reading accuracy was not found to be the predictor of success as it is more the lack of understanding the text that contributes to poorer performance (Morgan, 2017; O'Hare et al., 2020; Burgoyne, Kelly, Whitely & Spooner, 2009). It is then clear that more must be done to ensure learners are able to read for meaning rather than just for accuracy. Should this be achieved, there will be greater language proficiency, which will result in a greater ability to tackle assessments (Schoepp, 2018; Whiteside, Gooch & Worbury, 2016). In essence, the degree to which learners have language proficiency impacts their overall academic attainment (Schoepp, 2018; Whiteside, Gooch & Worbury, 2016). These problems relating to language proficiency and academic attainment are not merely found in other parts of the world, but are of importance in the South African context.

Similar findings on the importance of language proficiency in the language of instruction have been mirrored in South African studies (Iffat Jahan & Obaidul Hamid, 2019; Mohangi, Krog, Stephens & Nel, 2016). In South Africa, the need for access to and enhanced quality of literacy in Early Childhood Development (ECD) Grade R has been acknowledged by the government as this is essential for successful literacy acquisition in Grade 1 and above (Isidro, 2021; Morgan, 2017; Mohangi, Krog, Stephens & Nel, 2016; O'Hare et al., 2020). For early literacy programmes to be successful it is important that literacy in the home should not be

ignored. Local studies have revealed that the home cannot be discounted when considering literacy development in young children as these young children engage in literacy through play and literacy mediators in the form of interactions with older siblings and adults in their homes (Sibanda & Kailee, 2019). An effective means by which to aid literacy acquisition is shared reading where the child engages in the reading process (Morgan, 2017; Sibanda & Kailee, 2019). Here, meaning is constructed through play and language learning is viewed as a form of socially constructed knowledge that is developed through experiences with members of the community and families (Sibanda & Kailee, 2019). However, certain steps must be taken in the classroom to ensure adequate literacy acquisition. It becomes important to consider the impact of parental involvement, but as this study looks to how one can best support educators, the focus is primarily on what educators can do within their classrooms to make a meaningful impact on the literacies learners have acquired.

Within the classroom, the educator should work to develop autonomy within the learner as this will aid them in dealing not just with learning, but with how to manage their own learning and develop responsibility for their own learning (Bajrami, 2015; Senouci, 2018). Learners must have knowledge of how to learn both in and out of the classroom and this makes it necessary for educators to provide them with skills and abilities to practice what is learned as well as by equipping them with different learning strategies and methods to aid their self-directed learning (Bajrami, 2015; Senouci, 2018). Learners were forced to become more autonomous in their learning as a result of Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) because there were numerous academic setbacks and changes made to the curricula as a result of the lockdowns put in place during the 2020 academic year (Marchiori & McLean, 2020). However, these skills or methods will be able to offer the learner an opportunity to take control of their own learning if fostered in the classroom setting first. This by no means implies that educators do not have work to do, rather it means they will mediate the learning process.

Knowledge of information and communications technology (ICT) became a necessary skill for both educators and learners as a result of the COVID-19 outbreak, which rendered face-to-face teaching impossible (Pozo-Rico, Gilar-Corbi, Izquierdo & Castejón, 2020). It was found that ICT in education is quite valuable as it may help to address some classroom challenges and offers customisable tools

that can be used to address instructional and educational needs (Pozo-Rico et al., 2020). However, it is also important for educators to be on the lookout for potential issues encountered in language, including language impairment. A study found that education students at higher educational levels were able to cope better during remote learning but what was heavily emphasised was the need for teacher-university student interaction, which meant that synchronous classes (where the lessons are live-streamed through platforms like Zoom, Google Classroom or Teams) were viewed as being more effective (Jelińska & Paradowski, 2021). Educators are at the forefront and with their training and experience, are the most likely individuals who will be able to identify the learners' needs and use their discretion when they tackle the problems learners may be experiencing.

The need for educators to identify and deal with learning difficulties has become more important in these uncertain times. Should these difficulties not be identified, it leads to persistent difficulties in language attainment and as stated above, this will impair overall academic achievement (Demie, 2018; Whiteside & Norbury, 2017). In this sense, well-trained educators act as interveners and are capable of helping identify potential problems in language acquisition, which could ultimately lead to the learner having greater success at school. Teacher training needs to adjust to newer instructional formats, and in the wake of the pandemic, this means making use of alternative instructional formats such as online classes (Jelińska & Paradowski, 2021). Teacher training in the use of technology in the classroom becomes quite important but the educators' ability to use language effectively during any form of instruction remains of paramount importance. All teaching occurs within the bounds of the language of instruction, which can hinder learner achievement. The educator has the power to make a meaningful difference to the learners' educational experiences, this includes the need to acknowledge the impact the language of instruction has on the learning environment.

### **2.3 Language of Instruction**

The language of instruction or medium of instruction (Mol) has the capacity to enable or conversely hinder the academic achievement of learners. Numerous studies have shown there is a link between the language education is received in and academic achievement. Globally, introducing English as a foreign language (or

in the South African context as an additional language) in primary education is one of the major educational policy developments of our time (Canh, 2019).

In international studies, the focus has been on the positive effects of not only learning an additional language but being educated in this language. In the Netherlands, a study revealed that after three years in Bilingual Education (BE) where subjects were delivered in the additional language, the learners outperformed their Mainstream (MS) counterparts in History (Oattes, Fukkink, Oostdam, De Graaf & Wilschut, 2020). This was achieved through using Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) which allowed for the acquisition of language through the learning of subject content in the additional language (Oattes et al., 2020). Other studies where CLIL was incorporated revealed that the learners are not negatively impacted by learning through the additional language and that it enables them to develop cross-cultural competencies (Cenoz & Ruiz de Zarobe, 2015; Llinares & Vinitskaya, 2021).

A little closer to home, a study was conducted in Tanzania about the effect the language of instruction in secondary schools has on learner achievement (Vuzo, 2018). A major stumbling block found was that when one has to learn in an unfamiliar language the problems are two-fold: firstly, you struggle to understand the language and secondly, understanding the content fully is hindered (Vuzo, 2018). It was also found that failure was due to the language used in the assessment (Vuzo, 2018). This then begs the question, why are we not using appropriate languages to educate learners despite their evident failure as a result of not understanding the language of instruction? This failure can, to some extent, be mediated and corrected if the education system changes its language policies.

The language in which education is provided has always been precarious in South Africa as it alludes to positions of power and access in society (Iffat Jahan & Obaidul Hamid, 2019; Spaull, 2016). It is acknowledged in the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (Act 108 of 1996) that every learner has the right to receive education in their mother tongue if it is practical (Iffat Jahan & Obaidul Hamid, 2019; Mkhize & Balfour, 2017; Spaull, 2016). This begs the question of what the term 'practical' means? This further negates the importance of initial education in the mother tongue. It has been previously acknowledged that mother tongue education holds benefits for learners and allows for a deeper understanding of the content learned (Taylor & Von Fintel, 2018). Educating children in a language they have



knowledge and understanding of ensures a solid foundation on which future learning can be built (Coetzee-Van Rooy, 2018). However, this does not always happen because English is viewed as the language of upward mobility (Schoepp, 2018; Taylor & Von Fintel, 2016). Studies found that there are numerous factors impacting academic achievement, including but not limited to, community and home level poverty, weak school functioning, poor instructional practices and constraints in education (Ramrathan, 2017; Taylor & Von Fintel, 2018). Looking into teaching subjects in an additional language, the importance of educator proficiency is raised. The degree to which an educator is able to clearly communicate in the additional language is going to impact the learners' ability to fully understand the content they are being taught at school.

A study into intermediate phase mathematics teachers' proficiency in the language of learning and teaching by Tshuma and Le Cordeur (2019) revealed that language has an impact on education, as proficiency in the language in which the concepts are explained will affect how well this is done and then understood by learners (Tshuma & Le Cordeur, 2019). The majority of teachers are not home language speakers of English and find it challenging to communicate in the language of learning and teaching (LoLT), which often results in frustration, a slower rate of learning, a teacher-focused instruction style and disciplinary problems (Hugo & Nieman, 2010; Tshuma & Le Cordeur, 2019). Studies suggested that for optimal learning to occur in a language, the educator must be a native speaker of the language as this individual will be able to expose learners to the 'correct' form of the language (Blandina, 2014; Demie, 2018). This study showed that educators agreed that there is a need to promote teacher development due to consistent changes made in educational policies, this often leaves educators lacking sound pedagogical practices that enable them to teach in English as the language of instruction (Blandina, 2014; Demie, 2018).

In other studies surrounding the needs of educators when teaching in an additional language, it is found that English use in the classroom can be a barrier to learning (Hugo & Nieman, 2010; Tshuma & Le Cordeur, 2019) and that competence in the second language is needed in order to teach in it. Studies show that educators do not often know the difference between code-switching (where you use the mother tongue to supplement explanations) versus translation (where the content of the lesson is translated into the mother tongue fully and often not explained in the

language of instruction at all) (Blandina, 2014; Demie, 2018). Compounding this is the educators' experience (number of years in the teaching profession), their own proficiency skills and their backgrounds, which all have an impact on their ability to teach in the language of instruction (Blandina, 2014; O'Hare et al., 2020).

Another problem faced in schools is that the educators are often unable to speak the learners' home language and this makes code-switching impossible when it has been shown to be a useful aid in multilingual classrooms (Hugo & Nieman, 2010; Blandina, 2014; Makiwane-Mazinyo & Pillay, 2017; O'Hare et al., 2020). The teaching methods used by educators as well as an overloaded curriculum often leave educators racing against the clock to finish the curriculum rather than to ensure there is a sound understanding of concepts (Makiwane-Mazinyo & Pillay, 2017; Demie, 2018).

Again, this leads to the increased need for workshops and other training opportunities for teachers to learn new skills on how to manage the teaching and learning in their classrooms more effectively. Another contributing factor to the language of instruction dilemma is that teachers often lack confidence in teaching in the additional language and more needs to be done to ensure training is provided at pre-service and in-service levels (Hugo & Nieman, 2010; Schoepp, 2018). However, the language of instruction is not the only factor at play in the classroom.

Spaull (2016) and Schoepp (2018) raised an interesting concern that centred not on the debilitating effect of language of instruction, but rather on the importance of the quality of education received in the foundational schooling years. This was determined by looking closely into Grade 3 literacy results by comparing the results of a National School Effectiveness Study (NSES) administered first in the language of instruction and then in English a month later to determine to what extent learning in an additional language has an effect on performance (Spaull, 2016; Schoepp, 2018). According to the authors, results revealed that the extent that language factors contribute to lower academic performance is not clear as these are linked to many other interfering factors such as historical disadvantages and teacher quality (Spaull, 2016; Schoepp, 2018). The quality of instruction outweighs the language of instruction when it comes to considering the impact of the language of instruction on the academic performance of learners. This again drives the idea that better training is of the utmost importance to ensure educators are properly equipped to teach in the language of instruction, no matter what that would be (Makiwane-

Mazinyo & Pillay, 2017; Iffat Jahan & Obaidul Hamid, 2019). These workshops or training opportunities must be planned for and conducted early in the school year and carried out in more manageable segments (Makiwane-Mazinyo & Pillay, 2017; Iffat Jahan & Obaidul Hamid, 2019). The language of instruction does not need to be a hindrance – by exploring multilingualism and how best to incorporate it into the current language policies in education, there could be a more positive outlook on education and development of the learners. A look into multilingual policies and practices may be of use here in understanding why language is still acting as a barrier to education, rather than bolstering it.

## **2.4 Multilingualism**

First, one must consider how language-in-education policies affect practices in South Africa. In South Africa, the problem is not that multilingual policies do not exist, but rather that they are not effectively implemented (Coetzee-Van Rooy, 2018). What lies in the way of developing and implementing multilingual policies? There is an inability to overcome the effects of colonisation and dominance awarded to English that inhibit the development of African languages, a lack of political will to implement multilingual policies that are not specific enough and language plans are too general (Coetzee-Van Rooy, 2018). Some problems stem from the hegemony of English and Afrikaans, which negatively impacts African-language speaking learners (Mkhize & Balfour, 2017; Llinares & Vinitzskaya, 2021). Policymakers must take note of socio-linguistic diversity and create policies that take into consideration the different types of situations by making provincial planning more realistic to the specific contexts (Coetzee-Van Rooy, 2018).

Research into multilingual education reveals that in South African schools, education is primarily in English language and educators adopt code-switching which is in direct violation of stipulated policy (Omidire, 2021). Code-switching and code mixing are frowned upon in practice, but educators have found that it can be useful technique to engage learners with content more fully (Omidire, 2021).

Coetzee-Van Rooy (2018) did a study in Gauteng that required participants to indicate what languages they believed they were most proficient in. In this study by Coetzee-Van Rooy (2018), Southern Sotho (Sesotho), English, Zulu and Tswana were identified as the languages individuals were more versed in. Even then, it varied according to purpose such as reading, which was highest in Southern Sotho

and followed by English; the influence of Southern Sotho language knowledge gained was mainly from the family and television, however, the impact on language learned was greatest in English (Morgan, 2017; Coetzee-Van Rooy, 2018). Surely this should impact the policy created in implementing a multilingual policy for Gauteng? Yet these policies seem to lack enough details to be implemented. In order to bridge the gap between multilingual realities outside the classroom and within it, more has to be done (Coetzee-Van Rooy, 2018).

What is striking is even when considering language rights, the study notes that there is little awareness of how to teach the language and content area simultaneously (Mkhize & Balfour, 2017; Demie, 2018). This makes CLIL difficult to implement to bolster the learning of language in the content classroom. As there is an assimilationist ideology in language education policies in South Africa where one language is chosen to be the Mol above another, this gives the impression that other languages are not of importance and need not be learned (Mkhize & Balfour, 2017; Demie, 2018). Ideologies are the beliefs, attitudes, values and cultural orientations about how something should be understood in society (Mkhize & Balfour, 2017; Iffat Jahan & Obaidul Hamid, 2019). This line of thinking is dangerous and very little is currently being done to rectify these ideologies.

However, there is a strong drive towards developing multimodal, multi-discursive and translanguaging practices in order to accommodate more learners beyond just the concept of code-switching which entails the ability to switch between languages smoothly, not interrupting the flow of ideas (Mkhize & Balfour, 2017; Coetzee-Van Rooy, 2018; Omidire, 2021). As Coetzee-Van Rooy (2018) notes, in classroom practice, the question must be asked of how family language can be used to activate prior knowledge and help learners achieve their academic potential. So, then what methods can be adopted in an effort to help the learners learning an additional language? A recent publication from Omidire (2021) has suggested that a wide range of teaching styles should be implemented by educators in multilingual settings as this will impact the academic performance of learners. Strategies used by educators in their specific language context, offer learners the opportunity to overcome difficulties brought about by the language of instruction and this stumbling block can be turned into an opportunity to embrace diversity and create an awareness and acceptance of the value of African languages for educational purposes.

## 2.5 Teaching Methodologies Used to Teach Content Subjects

Employers utilise numerous methods to teach their subject. The educator will apply different teaching methods, depending on the subject taught. Subjects like mathematics (a content-subject) might employ direct or explicit instruction where the educator takes the main role in explaining content to the entire class in a lecturing style, making expectations known, followed by modelling the desired way to approach a problem or equation (Killen, 2015). This method is teacher-centred and demands the educator to monitor activities and provide frequent and clear feedback to learners to assist them in staying on track. Here, too, the emphasis is on academic achievement. Another method is enquiry-based learning, which allows the learner to be guided on specific subject matter, while reinforcing skills needed for them to apply what they have learned to other areas (Killen, 2015). The aim with enquiry-based instruction is to promote critical thinking among learners and should consist of a compelling question, time to investigate and gather information, then time to share the information, and finally to reflect on what the learners have learned (Killen, 2015). This style of teaching should lead to the learners discovering a general rule relating to the subject's content for example, how to approach questions relating to the volume of containers (Killen, 2015). Problem-solving as a teaching method involves engaging the learners in problem-solving activities that will assist the learners in learning other things such as teaching volume or measurement in mathematics, which requires knowledge of the underlying concepts, then using these concepts to solve subject-specific problems and finally posing broader problems to solidify the learners' knowledge and understanding of the content (Killen, 2015). ICT can be incorporated with the problem-solving teaching methods and these methods entail thinking about the question, evaluating and comparing information, having high expectations of the learners and allowing them time to share and reflect on what they have learned (Killen, 2015). These teaching methods are three of many teaching methodologies that educators use when teaching. The characteristics of each are what is generally observed when doing some form of observation, such as class visits. These teaching methodologies are not always applicable to language study which then requires a discussion of the teaching strategies employed by language educators in the classroom.

## 2.6 Additional Language Teaching Methodologies

These practices are found in slightly more outdated literature. In these methodologies, there is a clear emphasis on linking context to purpose when teaching language (Leung, 2010). More recently, a study conducted by Schoepp (2018) looked at such methodologies as will be further discussed by considering content-based language teaching. This methodology focuses on content-based language instruction where the learning of language objectives is grounded in the content of another curriculum area (Harper, Cook, & James, 2010; Llinares & Vinitskaya, 2021). Using this method, the educator will incorporate resources that cover a wide range of subjects that are relevant to the learners' interests so as to encourage participation (Wessels, 2010). Content-based instruction has the following characteristics: planned elements along with some improvised elements so that it is not too rigid; offers stability while also incorporating variety to maintain learners' interest; a focus more on the process than the final product; long-term goals such as listening skills, reading with comprehension, speaking and writing cohesively are important; but short-term goals such as mastering a specific language area like active and passive voice is also important (Wessels, 2010). Other characteristics involve the use of varied resources from dictation to choral repetition, scaffolding social interaction to reconstruct knowledge with emphasis on input processing to develop language systems by using assessment with definable criteria and incorporating gaps such as reasoning gaps where new information is derived from the information given (Wessels, 2010).

Reciprocal teaching has been found to be useful as it offers the learners who are more advanced in their language development to gain a deeper understanding by working with learners who may not yet have achieved the same milestones by giving each learner in the group a specific task (predicting, questioning, summarising or clarifying), which they then develop mastery in the area assigned as the interaction they have allows for development through conversational scaffolding (Harper, Cook & James, 2010; Llinares & Vinitskaya, 2021). This idea of a 'buddy system' is found in other literature too where peer support mixed ability grouping is seen (Graf, 2011; John & Mafumo, 2017; Llinares & Vinistkaya, 2021). A recent work published by Omidire (2021) explores practical ways that multilingualism can be incorporated in classrooms and calls for multilingualism to be

viewed and used a resource in South African classrooms. This can be applied in practical ways such as by incorporating code switching, translanguaging and translation practices into the teaching repertoire to accommodate learners in the multilingual environment by using their experiences as the basis of teaching and learning content.

Other strategies that lead to English as an additional language (EAL) acquisition include incorporating the home language where possible such as by learning basic greetings in the learners' home language and by giving an explanation in English and having a peer translate it for them (Graf, 2011; Demie, 2018). What becomes apparent is the exposure to good examples or good modelling of the target language (Graf, 2011; John & Mafumo, 2017; Demie, 2018). By grouping learners in varying ability groups, you allow for the anxiety associated with using the target language to diminish and this aids them in feeling more comfortable in using the language (John & Mafumo, 2017; Demie, 2018). These are only some strategies that have been implemented successfully in EAL classrooms around the world. What is apparent is that this requires training to enable educators to cater to the needs of a learner who is learning an additional language. A method of engaging with learner contexts is through SFL, which has been found to bolster the capacity to provide meaning-centred language instruction where the learners' context, function and language become the driving force behind grammar teaching (Semiante, Cavallaro & Troyan, 2020). It should be understood that language learning is dynamic, non-linear, engages with previous experiences, and in its nature is unpredictable and often chaotic (Canh, 2019). As such, a need for qualitative studies that seek to draw upon the complex nature of teacher language learning is important (Canh, 2019) and will be discussed by exploring open distance learning and professional development opportunities. Professional development of in-service educators provides them with an opportunity to improve their skills, to evaluate and incorporate new ways of approaching the subject they teach. It is invaluable for educators to engage in these opportunities to ensure they are moving with the times and are able to use best practices to guide their teaching practices.

## **2.7 Open Distance Learning and Professional Development**

Open distance learning (ODL) is characterised by the learner being separated from the person instructing the course in both time and space (Onuka,

2015; Gumbo, 2020). Distance Learning (DL) implies that a larger portion of the teaching is done by someone far removed in time and space, whereas Open Learning (OL) makes use of easy-to-understand teaching materials where learner constraints are minimal (Onuka, 2015; Gumbo, 2020). There is an increased movement to online platforms to present content to learners (Onuka, 2015; Gumbo, 2020). This has happened considering the COVID-19 pandemic at tertiary level where universities had to consider alternative ways to keep learning going and this shows that ODL may be the way forward for education. This is seen in studies conducted by the University of Pretoria, which explored blended learning as a measure to overcome some of the struggles encountered in tertiary education due to the destabilised nature of the educational setting during the protests and riots that took place around 2016 (Louw & Thukane, 2020). The inevitable shift to online learning platforms was researched by Mays and Aluko (2019), which shows the ever-increasing changing nature of education and the major shift that has needed to be made to account for COVID-19. In international studies, Zhang and Xu (2015) found that micro-lectures provided the much-needed link in the blended-learning syllabus. However, this shift has not fully been made for professional development opportunities. Where individuals often have a choice of when and how they embark on their educational journeys, educators are often forced to participate in programmes, which they do not believe hold value for them. This often leads to a lack of motivation to engage in the course on offer and prevents them from reflecting on their practices and affecting change to the strategies they use in the classroom.

Most professional development or in-service learning opportunities on offer are made available and are often compulsory for educators to participate in by allocating points in the Integrated Quality Management System (IQMS) that is used in South Africa to track the professional development and interaction of educators in the programmes (Budeli et al., 2022). These often follow a top-down approach and are usually in a lecturing style (Canh, 2019). Considering the educators and their reluctance to participate in the generic opportunities on offer, there must be cause to investigate different methods of relaying the training and offering alternatives. This has become increasingly important in the time of COVID where online platforms became the go-to, leading to a focus on ICT.

This is why modern electronic teacher education technology or ICT has to be developed and constantly improved upon so that instruction is as straightforward as



possible with as little assistance as possible (Onuka, 2015; Gumbo, 2020). The problem of access is still quite a great one and it must be improved as ODL is a second chance for many because it offers an alternative to traditional face-to-face learning experiences (Onuka, 2015; Gumbo, 2020). These platforms may need to be considered for professional development courses as these have traditionally been offered face-to-face. Educators have been faced with the necessity to use technology in their teaching, and without an open mind to the possibilities that distance education can offer, their developmental needs may not be met.

What is apparent from older studies is that the continuance of professional development is essential in creating effective schools and in-service education and training enable educators to improve skills, knowledge and attitudes while they are employed (Mestry, Hendricks & Bischoff, 2009; Llinares & Vinitskaya, 2021). What this study found is that educator background influences their willingness to partake in developmental opportunities (Mestry, Hendricks & Bischoff, 2009; Llinares & Vinitskaya, 2021). What becomes clearer when considering the professional development of educators is that teacher burnout (experiencing sustained high stress levels, negative emotions and work-related exhaustion) is an ever-increasing reality for many educators in the profession and that the well-being of educators must be considered when developing and implementing professional development programmes (Pozo-Rico, Gilar-Corbi, Izquierdo & Castejón, 2020).

In-service professional development (IPD) encompasses any and all approaches to ensure and promote quality education for learners (Ajani, 2020). It denotes all interventions and initiatives that are able to enhance the classroom instruction of learners (Ajani, 2020). The purpose of these interventions then is to improve teaching responsibilities and equip educators with the capacity needed professionally to provide effective teaching and learning in order to improve learner performance (Ajani, 2020). Traditionally these were derived from the Department of Education and had a top-down approach often given in a lecturing style, however, by 1998 a Development Appraisal System had been developed, which focused on teacher-driven, school-based intervention (De Clercq & Phiri, 2013; Budeli, Mashau, & Nesengani, 2022). These clusters brought about the capacity “to improve the quality of education by enabling the sharing of resources, experience and expertise among clusters and facilitating school administration by pooling resources from several schools to be shared equally” (De Clercq & Phiri, 2013:79) with similar

nuances being shared in a study by Budeli et al. (2022). Teacher clusters were not found to be entirely effective as they were dependent on the educators' available expertise, which became problematic when dealing with an influx of first-time or inexperienced teachers making up a given cluster. However, it encouraged collegiality and the idea that educators function better as a team and had positive influences on teacher confidence and allowed for accountability to take place, especially where district-level support was lacking (De Clercq & Phiri, 2013; Budeli et al., 2022). Educator clusters have become the norm when considering professional development from the DoE (Budeli et al., 2022). The content of these developmental opportunities and the way in which they should be presented brings contention. There are varying views on what these courses should comprise.

Studies indicate that educators who must embark on professional development courses for a second or foreign language often feel that courses on offer are provided by individuals who are out of touch with the authentic teaching realities most educators face and, therefore, cannot understand the contexts they work in (Johnson, 2015; Gumbo, 2020). Educators want the workshop or course to be concrete, an active experience in which there is reflective observation and the ability to apply what is learned to their own teaching contexts (Ajani, 2020). It is important that participants (the educators) are involved in the planning and implementation of the developmental opportunities to ensure authenticity and to facilitate educator participation (Dichaba, 2011; Johnson, 2015; Ajani, 2020). It becomes evident then that the educators' language and teaching context is important when considering professional development courses and their content.

What then is context? Context can be defined in numerous ways, ranging from a disciplinary context, to time or sphere (Leibowitz, Bozalek, Van Schalkwyk & Winberg, 2015; Gumbo, 2020). For the purposes of this study, it should be understood as the "environment in which features of a system are reproduced or transformed" (Leibowitz et al., 2015, p. 315; Demie, 2018). Context, herein, refers to the language context in which the educators find themselves when teaching. Without being context-specific, the courses fall short of expectations and leave educators feeling demoralised and unwilling to participate in future opportunities. So what then hinders participation in professional development opportunities?

There are numerous reasons why educators do not participate in professional development opportunities. Among them is the lack of available funding, workload

and lack of leadership support as well as the workshop content not being subject-specific (Dichaba, 2011; Leibowitz et al., 2015; Ajani, 2020). Other factors influencing participation in and making use of development opportunities centre around the individual educator's characteristics, how the programme is designed, how the knowledge gained can be retained and transferred, how the skills learned can be utilised in the classroom and how quickly this transfer takes place (Dichaba, 2011). Although outdated, these sentiments are echoed in more recent studies such as those carried out by Johnson (2015) and Ajani (2020). More specific to language development and progress, educators may not feel that their use of the language is important or that it matters (Isaacs & Waghid, 2015; Johnson, 2015; O'Hare et al.; 2020), which in turn makes ignorance a contributing factor to not wanting professional development opportunities. What then could contribute to improving professional development courses so that educators want to attend them?

Research shows that appraisal and promotion systems with clear criteria for professional development would encourage educators to participate (Leibowitz et al., 2015; Gumbo, 2020). Reflective courses yield greater satisfaction with courses attended as they provided critical feedback and an opportunity to engage in discussions (Wang, Gitsaki & Moni, 2015; Gumbo, 2020; Budeli et al., 2022). There is a call for continuity in courses offered as this is often a problem (Ajani, 2020). The format that seems to encourage participation most is communities of learning (CoL) or communities of practice (CoP) as these allow for the deeper engagement with subject knowledge and mastery of content and sharing of practices and professional efficacy. There are numerous reasons why educators should attend professional development courses on offer, some of these reasons are now explored.

It provides a focus on classroom challenges and eases the teaching of difficult-to-teach topics, which will in turn aid in learner understanding and can help keep them abreast of the latest technological advancements in their respective fields of specialisation (Ajani, 2020). The opportunity to give feedback and show how what is learned has been implemented allows for greater growth (Ajani, 2020). What is of the utmost importance when planning and developing these courses is to ask educators what their needs are to ensure that the content of workshops or courses is specific enough and will allow them to develop in ways that they feel they need to (Ajani, 2020). This then leads to the role of motivation. Everyone is driven by something to achieve their goals, for some it is driven by incentives, for others it may

be about reaching a higher level of satisfaction or the possibility of gaining new skills, but ultimately there is need for motivation.

## 2.8 Educator Motivation

Motivation refers to a set of beliefs and emotions that influence and direct behaviour (Heystek & Terhoven, 2015; McInerney, 2019). Educator motivation or morale is what drives them forward and ensures they are giving their best in their jobs. Motivation is the drive to move forward and do more than what is expected and is the most important factor in determining the quality of education learners receive (Chireshe & Makura, 2014; McInerney, 2019), which is why educator morale is of concern to this study. Quality of education has been pinpointed as a contributor to learner performance earlier in this chapter and, therefore, how morale impacts it is of importance.

A study conducted on underperforming schools in South Africa (Heystek & Terhoven, 2015; McInerney, 2019), noted that professional development is seen as a way to transform schools but that it is often not realised because of lack of funding, lack of self-confidence of teachers, time constraints, lack of interest and emotion or stress linked to the job. Educators who find themselves in underperforming schools have less than 60% matric pass rate and the label awarded to them often becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy (Heystek & Terhoven, 2015; Budeli et al., 2022), which is why these educators must be motivated to participate in professional development as this is a way in which they can improve the standing of the school and their profession. Professional development has the capacity to make vulnerable educators feel valued and motivated, which capacitates them to enhance the outcomes for their learners (Chireshe & Makura, 2014; Heystek & Terhoven, 2015; Budeli et al., 2022). These educators are seen to be driven predominantly by passion that can be negatively impacted by continuous harsh working conditions (Heystek & Terhoven, 2015; McInerney, 2019), which is why it is important to provide opportunities for growth for them. Low morale must be accounted for and ways to counteract it should be investigated.

Factors that are seen to lower motivation and morale include low salaries, increased working hours, arbitrary educator deployment systems, insufficient support and supervision and because educators see themselves as lacking 'necessary competencies to teach effectively' (Chireshe & Makura, 2014, p. 132;

McInerney, 2019). According to the authors, frustration is the leading cause of teacher dissatisfaction while opportunities for further training are seen as a motivating factor. Without motivation, the educators are disempowered and this impacts negatively on their classroom practice (Chireshe & Makura, 2014; Heystek & Terhoven, 2015, McInerney, 2019). This is why professional development can offer a unique opportunity to bolster spirits and allow for growth.

From the above it is evident that to ensure better learner performance in the classroom, the educator must be adequately trained and be provided with opportunities for growth in order for them to remain motivated in the workforce. It is, therefore, necessary to ensure that teachers are being trained on an ongoing basis to allow for adequate time to meet the demands of their profession.

## **2.9 Conceptual Frameworks Adopted for the Study**

Conceptual frameworks are used when there are arguments that must be posited in the study from different points of view, which do not always align with the aim and purpose of that study, so certain elements get left out or replaced in light of other explanations (Lester, 2005). This study draws on two major theories, Daloz's Stage Development (1986) (as cited in Merriam and Bierema, 2013) and Halliday's Systemic Functional Linguistics Model (SFL) (1975) (as cited in Llinares, 2013). The conceptual framework chosen for this study is an interaction of Stage Development Theory and the Systemic Functional Linguistics Model.

The study seeks to gain an understanding of what the professional development needs of in-service educators in English additional language contexts are. This cannot be understood using a theory to explain only adult learning (as seen in professional development) or language acquisition models (as the study focuses on proficiency in the second language of educators as well). It is for this reason that a new framework had to be considered as the study would draw on understanding both professional development and language acquisition. Neither of these theories alone is sufficient to understand the in-service educator's professional development needs and decisions. A closer look into the Stage Development Theory follows.

### **2.9.1 Daloz's Stage Development Theory**

In-service training of educators, or their professional development, should be viewed through a stage development framework as the needs of educators differ across their developmental stages and it influences what the educators will want to learn about (Trotter, 2006). Daloz's Stage Development Theory (1986) (as cited in Merriam & Bierema, 2013) holds in it useful concepts for understanding adult learning. Adults are seen to move across three stages, the first being the pre-conventional stage, which focuses on survival, the second is the conventional stage where fitting in takes the forefront in importance and lastly, the post-conventional stage as it shows a move towards reflection and evaluation of thinking and events (Merriam & Bierema, 2013). This theory allows for an understanding that educator training can be improved throughout their career, moving the educator to higher stages of development that require activities in programmes to be structured around improving techniques and methods to meet teaching demands (Merriam & Bierema, 2013). This further allows for the structuring of programmes that hold real-life value to educators, so they can implement what is learned into their own classroom practice (Merriam & Bierema, 2013).

However, that would only be covering part of this study's focus. In order to conceptualise educators' language acquisition, one needs to look into second language acquisition models. The Systemic Functional Linguistics Model guided this study.

### **2.9.2 The Systemic Functional Linguistics Model**

The Systemic Functional Linguistics Model (Llinares, 2013) explains language as a system of choices the speaker has available to express meaning. What is useful about this theory is that it explains language usage in context, focusing on what language is and what individuals can do with it (Llinares, 2013). Language learning is considered a result of the need to use the language for functional purposes and its meaning potential (Llinares, 2013). This goes further to draw on Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory (1978) (as cited in Llinares, 2013) as language is seen as being acquired through the social context, via interaction with others. This allows for a cultural and social view of how language is developed in the individual to be understood and guided the study in understanding that the

educator's language acquisition is based on their previous experiences and their contexts.

## **2.10 Discussion of the Interaction Between Stage Development Theory and Systemic Functional Linguistics**

In this section, my suggested conceptual framework encompasses the combination of two theories that helps to explain in-service educators' development as consisting of the Stage Development Theory of Daloz, which is seen to influence the professional development course choice when considering the educator as an individual who has gained a certain level of language proficiency in the target language and needs further training to improve it. This influences the chosen developmental courses while considering that the educator functions within a social context that is considered an overarching factor that will influence in-service professional development choices made or considered.

Systemic Functional Linguistics prepares educators to engage learner language, context and function in language learning by focusing on meaning-centred language (Semiante, Cavallaro & Troyan, 2020). When looking into the power of language, a study in medical education found that it is more important to examine how something is said, rather than what is being said in and of itself (Konopasky, Ramani, Ohmer, Artino Jr, & Battista, 2019). This links to functional linguistics and the power it has to shape what is understood as the beliefs, processes of reasoning, values and emotions of both educators and learners (Konopasky et al., 2019). It is by looking at how language is used that we can discover the power it holds.

In this study, the educators' view of their own language proficiency will impact their choice of professional development courses. This conceptual framework will guide how the L2 educator is viewed, understanding that their choices and perceptions surrounding professional development are influenced by their own language acquisition and then also impacted by their personal stage of development. Without this understanding of the L2 educator, it is difficult to conceptualise what guides their choices and may impact their perceptions of the courses offered. It provides an overview of what will impact their choices and, therefore, their responses in the study, all being based on their own level of language acquisition and what it is they see as what they need, based on their stage

of development. Educator background, experience in the teaching field and the educator's proficiency are seen as major influences on their willingness to participate in training opportunities offered, while it is acknowledged by educators that there is a need for educators to remain up-to-date with changing policies and curricula (Mestry, Hendricks & Bischoff, 2009; Blandina, 2014; Makiwane-Mazinyo & Pillay, 2017).

The L2 educator's choice, of course, is influenced by the language they have acquired (up to that point) and this is then impacted by the stage of development they are currently in. It is understood that the L2 educator functions within the social context and his or her selections, language acquisition and developmental stage will all be functioning in and as a result of the social context they find themselves in (Merriam & Bierema, 2013).

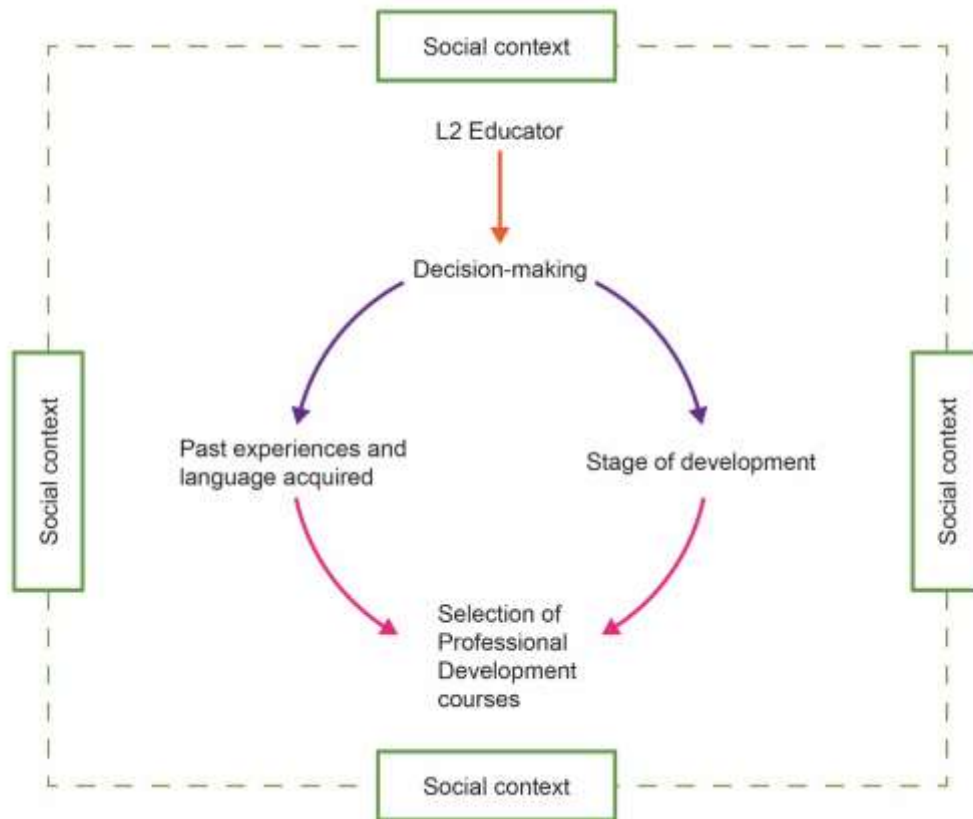
The initially hypothesised conceptual framework, as it is explained in Chapter 2, positions the L2 educator in the social context, functioning and making decisions based on past experiences (including their exposure to the language and how often they use the acquired language) and their stage of development, as this is seen as what would influence selections made with regard to professional development courses. This then accounts for the influence of prior experience (personally and with language abilities) and places importance on understanding that adult learners function predominantly from previous knowledge when engaging in further courses (Merriam & Bierema, 2013).

As reflected in Figure 1, the professional development choices made by the additional language (L2) educator are seen to be as a result of the educator's current stage of development (linking to experience in the field and within the subject areas taught) and the level of language acquisition (how well they believe they function in the language of teaching and learning). These are seen to interact with the educator while functioning within a specific context (a multilingual context for the purposes of this study).



**Figure 1**

*Conceptual framework for educator professional development choice and language acquisition*



In the visually presented interaction of these theories, the educator is seen to be influenced by the context he or she teaches in. In addition, their own language development as well as their teaching experience will influence their willingness to participate in developmental opportunities as well as what areas they are willing to develop through opportunities offered.

Each theory incorporated contributed to what was understood or can be understood by what drives in-service educators' professional development choices. All educators remain lifelong learners and developments in the field require educators to continuously add to their knowledge of the subject they teach, but also the ways in which they will teach it. In this instance, how well they are able to tackle the language aspect of their subjects is brought forward as a concern that still needs to be fully investigated. Therefore, this study hopes to contribute to attempts to fill this gap.

## 2.11 Conclusion

This chapter offered insights into the literature available on teacher development in supporting educators in multilingual environments. This was approached by discussing language development and additional language learning as it is understood that the study is based on supporting the linguistic needs of educators teaching in multilingual environments. Further, the impact of the language of instruction was approached in a way that shows how important teacher proficiency is for those learning in a multilingual environment by then exploring multilingualism and what it means in the South African context. This then flows into an exploration of additional language teaching methodologies, as the methods currently incorporated at school level are proving to be insufficient and then discussing how open distance learning and professional development are to be understood and what it would mean for the study.

Penultimately, a closer look at educator motivation behind willingness versus unwillingness to participate in developmental opportunities was explored with an understanding that educator background and experience will either encourage or dissuade educators from participating in developmental opportunities. Lastly, the conceptual framework underpinning this study was discussed by looking at the influence of the Systemic Functional Linguistics Model, which posits that language learning occurs within a specific context and language learning should be pinned on learner context and the influence of Daloz's Stage Development Theory, which posits that individuals engage in developmental opportunities based on their current stage of development. This then allowed one to conceptualise how educators navigate professional development in language proficiency by looking at the educator's current level of proficiency, the programmes available, their developmental stage and understanding that these function within a specific context that will influence their choice of developmental course. This has led to the emergence of a suggested conceptual framework.

Chapter 3 explores the research methodology employed by the researcher in this study and fully explains the concepts introduced in Chapter 1.

## Chapter 3: Research Methodology

### 3.1 Introduction

This chapter offers a detailed explanation of the process through which the study was conducted. Chapter 3 starts with a discussion of the purpose of the study, followed by the research approach, paradigmatic perspective and research design of this study. This is followed by a description of the data collection methods, data analysis and interpretation used. The chapter is concluded with an overview of the quality criteria and ethical considerations that pertain to the research process.

### 3.2 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to explore how professional development opportunities can best be utilised by in-service educators to equip them to deal with their realities within a multilingual context. The objectives are to establish which language areas lead to English proficiency in the eyes of EAL educators, how an educators' context influences the development and planning of professional development opportunities, and how to adapt current EAL teaching methodologies to meet the needs of university-level students through distance education, albeit through a limited number of programmes offered via ODL such as a degree in education. The study aims to contribute to EAL research in South Africa and the use of distance education to promote the professional development of educators.

The focus is on the perceptions and interpretations of the EAL educators and content-subject educators to gauge what their lived experiences are as a means by which a deeper understanding of their contexts and developmental needs can be established. This is linked to in-service educators' lived experiences as a means to establish where their developmental needs are and how they feel professional development and distance education can help fulfil these needs. Educators must be involved in decision-making to ensure they take ownership of a project, which is why this study is going straight to the source to discover how best their needs can be met through professional development opportunities on offer.

This sub-section is depicted in Table 3.

**Table 3**

*Outline of Methodological Choices*

<b>Purpose of the study</b>
To explore what in-service educators teaching English in a multilingual context perceive as necessary components in a professional development programme.
<b>Paradigmatic assumptions</b>
Conceptual framework – Interaction of the Stage Development Theory and the Systemic Functional Linguistics model.
Epistemological paradigm – Social constructivism.
Methodological paradigm – Qualitative research.
<b>Research design</b>
Single case study was used as the research design.
<b>Participant selection process</b>
Purposive sampling.
Selection criteria: a. 3 English educators (1 with minimum 2 years' experience). b. 3 content-subject educators (1 with minimum 2 years' experience). c. School in a multi-language context.
<b>Data collection strategies</b>
1. Focus group interview with audio recording and transcription.
2. Semi-structured individual interviews with audio recording and transcription.
3. Observation with field notes (running record).
<b>Data analysis and interpretation</b>
Inductive thematic analysis: a bottom-up approach with no pre-determined themes.
<b>Ethical considerations</b>
Ethical clearance obtained from the Faculty of Education Ethics Committee at the University of Pretoria.
Informed consent of participants.
<b>Quality Criteria</b>
Triangulation.
Member-checking.

### **3.3 Paradigmatic Assumptions**

#### ***3.3.1 Epistemology of the Study***

Social constructivism was selected as the epistemological paradigm to guide this study. The Soviet psychologist, Lev Vygotsky, who focused on the collaborative nature of learning (Mpofu & De Jager, 2018), developed the social constructivism theory. Teaching and learning are understood to occur within the social context and must be observed in the classroom environment (Mpofu & de Dager, 2018). This paradigm was used to understand how teachers would be able to learn better practices from one another within their specific teaching contexts. This viewpoint warranted that the perspectives of learners were valued and that emergent problems were focused on in lessons (Bostock, 1998), something that assisted in this study because the educators' viewpoints were explored to get a deeper understanding of what in-service educators needed from professional development courses. The social constructivist lens helped to guide this study in that it allowed for the research to be embedded within its context, having ensured that the professional development needs of additional language educators were understood from the multi-language context, having noted educators' knowledge had personal and social qualities (Mpofu & De Jager, 2018). It further allowed for the data collected from the study to be used to guide our understanding of the multi-language context in an authentic way (Kaufman & Grennon, 1996). Within the scope of this study, social constructivism aided the researcher in understanding that the best sources of knowledge would be the educators themselves as they were embedded in the multilingual context.

#### ***3.3.2 Methodological Approach***

The qualitative approach was adopted in this study. This approach takes into consideration the reasons behind the individuals' thoughts or behaviours, with a desire and search to understand complex thoughts and actions within their lives (Denny & Weckesser, 2018). It allows for meaning to be attached to the experiences of the in-service educators involved in this study (Denny & Weckesser, 2018). It provided insights into the real worlds, experiences and perspectives of individuals'

lives that then had to be unpacked by analysis of the data collected from the interviews and observation lessons (Peck & Mummery, 2018).

This perspective allowed for the consideration of the individual in-service educators' thoughts and actions to be considered in a broader way, gaining insight into what the additional language educators have done and experienced in the multilingual context they teach in (Denny & Weckesser, 2018). The study's purpose was to give rich insight into the lived experiences of the additional language educators in the multilingual context, something that qualitative methodological design offered as it emphasised rich and deep descriptions so that meaning could be attached to these individual experiences (Denny & Weckesser, 2018). Without having thoroughly understood the experiences of the additional language educators in the multilingual context's lived experiences, it was impossible to develop any meaningful professional development courses that would benefit them, which was why this methodological approach was chosen. A deeper look into their struggles and their current teaching methodologies and classroom practices was necessary to see how professional development could meaningfully benefit them in their teaching context. Lastly, it was necessary to gauge how the educators thought professional course formats could impact them, something that needed to be explored in-depth – which was part of a qualitative methodological approach.

There were several benefits to qualitative approaches in this study. It allowed for the attitudes of the additional language educators in the multilingual context to be understood, while having given them a voice or say in how they would be professionally developed, thereby having empowered them (Mpofu & De Jager, 2018). It provided detailed experiences of how the additional language educators tackled their own teaching, which was a valuable source of knowledge for teaching ESL and having to teach in a multilingual environment (Mpofu & De Jager, 2018). The in-depth nature of the study could be used to inform the development of intervention programmes and help us understand barriers to, as well as facilitators of, development course success (Denny & Weckesser, 2018). However, there were disadvantages to having used a qualitative approach. The data collected was not quantifiable, being seen as less rigorous than the quantitative approach because the researcher would be the main instrument of data collection and analysis and it is often criticised because findings are not generalisable beyond the study sample (Denny & Weckesser, 2018). Notwithstanding this, it is worth noting that qualitative

research aims to provide insights that would be useful in similar locations, but the aim is never to generalise to the larger population in the first place (Carminati, 2018).

The study forms part of a broader body of knowledge that can be used to improve the development of in-service educator professional development courses and is merely a single part of this growing body of knowledge and, after completing the study, can form part of further research where other methods and designs are considered in a broader application. Having considered the disadvantages mentioned, the data collected came from more than one source, having engaged in a focus group interview, individual interviews and from the observation of two lessons. This allowed for the development of themes to be compared across different collected samples over the time the study was carried out. This minimised the chances of responses being considered a once-off phenomenon. Member-checking with the sampled participants ensured that the findings were true to the intention or the beliefs of the participating educators. This ensured that results were not produced in isolation. The researcher engaged in ‘bracketing’, a technique where the researcher put aside preconceived knowledge, values, beliefs and experiences while analysing data (Ataro, 2020). In this study, this meant considering only what came from the sampled participants’ responses in the focus group interview, the individual interviews and the observation lessons to see how and what the participants implemented in their daily teaching practices. The techniques mentioned above enabled the researcher to remain as unbiased as possible throughout the collection and analysis stage of the study. What the researcher realised after engaging in self-reflection during the writing up of Chapter 4 was that there were some surprising insights gained from the research study that had stood in stark contrast to what the researcher originally anticipated due to her own biases. The researcher attempted to remain as impartial as possible by engaging in self-reflection to actively work with what the original assumptions in the study were and how they had changed, accounting for the fact that one cannot ever truly be impartial when engaging in more qualitative research, but certainly can keep biases in check through reflecting on the procedures followed throughout the data collection and analysis phase.

### **3.4 Research Methodology and Strategies**

#### **3.4.1 Case Study as Research Design**

A case study provides for in-depth studying of a phenomenon (Gerring, 2007). For the purposes of my research, I used a single case study because the desired outcome was to get rich information about the 'case'. This case was about the professional development needs of in-service educators in a multilingual context. A single case was used as the intention was not to transfer findings or to have allowed for generalisability, but to have created a deeper focus on certain aspects within the context that the researcher wanted to explore further (Tight, 2017; Yin, 2018). Given the nature of the study, a single case was used because the data being researched was concise in nature and with the smaller scale of research conducted, a clearer image of the needs of educators could be more fully explored through a variety of data collection techniques. This would not have been possible with multiple case studies due to time constraints. This proved to be valuable for the study in that the needs of the sampled educators were more fully understood within their context, where more time was spent with participants and interviews could be more in-depth as there were not as many participant samples to get through. The depth of knowledge and understanding gained from the single sample, truly assisted in getting a much clearer picture of what the in-service educators needed. For future research, broader methods and multiple cases could certainly be considered, but this study was a mere starting point for trying to conceptualise and understand the in-service professional development needs of educators in a multilingual environment.

#### **3.4.2 Advantages of Case Study Design**

This research design was helpful as an explanation was sought of the professional development needs of educators from within a multi-language context and it yielded in-depth descriptions of the phenomenon (Tight, 2017; Yin, 2018). The participants were engaged more fully through the focus group interview held and then the individual interviews conducted provided for a more in-depth discussion of the beliefs held by the individual participants in the study and allowed for a much



deeper investigation to be explored rather than having to spread time and resources more thinly should multiple cases have been considered.

The aim was to explore the factors that would aid educators in selecting their professional development courses based on the context they found themselves in (Tight, 2017; Yin, 2018). Advantages of this research design link to the value of the holistic data that provides a deeper and more complete understanding of the phenomenon (Gerring, 2007). The needs of in-service educators in multilingual environments are now better understood by the researcher as the study was more focused in its design, having concerned itself with one case rather than multiple cases and this gave the researcher the opportunity to truly dive into the beliefs and attitudes held by the sampled participants. Case study design offered an opportunity for a fuller understanding of the subject matter to be explored in the hopes of discovering trends that can aid in better development of in-service courses. This was certainly the case with this study, having explored what the participants believe to be factors of consideration when creating the courses, valuable insights into what in-service educators want and need from developmental opportunities were explored more thoroughly.

### **3.4.3 *Limitations of Case Study Design***

The case needed to be well-defined to overcome potential challenges and to ensure one was studying what one set out to study (Tight, 2017; Yin, 2018). The 'case' studied was the developmental needs of educators in multilingual contexts. The study explained what it was that educators found was important for their development and how it influenced their choice of development courses. This definition allowed the relevant information about the educators to be collected (Tight, 2017; Yin, 2018). The boundaries of the case also needed to be defined to determine the scope of the study (Tight, 2017; Yin, 2018) – by having separated the phenomenon under study (case) from the context it was in (Tight, 2017; Yin, 2018). This study focussed on the professional development needs of additional language educators and content-subject educators who are working within a multi-language context. An understanding that the study was limited to this population group within a single school was helpful as it set up criteria relating to the selection of participants for the study. Contextual information gathered from the data collection process that pertained to the educators' levels of anxiety while teaching in the additional

language or the activities they participated in at school was not part of the phenomenon that was studied (Tight, 2017; Yin, 2018). The focus remained on what the sampled educators believed were important components of professional development courses. Limitations regarding the inclusion and exclusion criteria are explored in Chapter 5 of the study.

To strengthen the findings of the study, ‘rival explanations’ were addressed (Yin, 2018, p.68). This entailed dealing with explanations that could also answer the research question, but which stood opposed to the findings of this study. Rival explanations included but were not limited to tackling timing (availability due to teaching responsibility) as the only factor that might influence the educators’ choice of professional development courses. This study found that educators’ willingness to engage in professional development courses was impacted by far more than mere timing and that the educators’ sampled in this study believed that other mitigating factors such as remuneration for participation were important. This is noted by findings from the study in Chapter 4, considering the factors educators believed impacted their willingness to participate in professional development opportunities. This expanded on, but also included reasons given regarding willingness to participate in professional development opportunities, in previous studies and have been related and explored more fully in Chapter 4.

### **3.5 Selection of Participants**

Purposive sampling is based on the notion that one seeks participants that will yield the best data for the study, based on certain criteria that must be met (Leavy, 2017). The case was to explore the in-service development needs of educators in a multilingual environment, this was achieved by limiting the sampled participants to six participants of which three would be English educators and three would be content-subject educators (Leavy, 2017). Table 4 provides the biographical data of the selected participants.

**Table 4**
*Biographical data of participants*

<b>Participant code</b>	<b>Teaching Experience (in years)</b>	<b>Subject(s) employed to teach</b>	<b>Mother tongue</b>	<b>Pre-service training</b>
P1	20-25	Mathematics, Life Sciences	Shona	Teaching college
P2	10-15	Natural Sciences	Afrikaans	B.Ed through university
P3	5-10	English Home Language	Zulu	B.Ed through university
P4	1-5	English Home Language	Xhosa	B.Ed through university
P5	25+	English Home Language	Shona	Teaching college
P6	10-15	Business Studies, Accounting	Shona	Post-graduate Certificate in Education (PGCE)

From the above, it is clear that the participants were selected based on certain criteria related to the type of subject they teach (content-subject or English) and their level of experience (no less than 1 year of teaching experience) There are three content-subject educators and three English-language educators with varying years of experience in teaching, who participated in this study. The educators' knowledge of teaching methodologies did not form part of the inclusion criteria, the observation lessons served to help identify what teaching methods are being used by a content-subject educator and an English-subject educator.

The study was carried out at a school from within the private sector, that is situated in Tembisa, a suburb in the Gauteng province, South Africa, as this was found to be the most accessible research site to the researcher that met the sampling criteria. The permission to conduct research form under Annexure A gives details of how the researcher managed to get the ethical clearance to conduct research at this site. This was after two other research sites had been considered, but due to a number of interfering factors (mentioned later in this sub-section), they were abandoned for the third research site.

Owing to the nature of this study, the six participants were selected based on the teaching context they are in, that of teaching in an additional language within a multi-language context, as well as whether the in-service educator taught English as a subject or a content-subject such as business studies. Further inclusion criteria pertained to the level of teaching experience the participant had, one educator from each group (English versus content-subject educators) was selected based on their teaching experience (number of years they have been teaching) as they would be better able to give an account of their teaching practices as a result of having been in the field for longer. The other two educators from each group were selected based on the subject(s) taught as their experience is not primarily what was sought after. Ultimately, the participants' level of experience tended towards more experienced in both English-subject educators as well as content-subject educators as these were the willing participants that the researcher was able to source from the school where the study was conducted. Three educators of each group (three English subject educators and three content-subject educators) were required so that a comparison could be drawn between the two groups regarding their beliefs on what components should form part of professional development courses. As time was limited, the participants were sampled for convenience from the research site mentioned at the beginning of this sub-section. Annexure D is the informed consent form that the educators sampled as participants had to complete and detail the expectations placed on them as well as the purpose of the research with some basic background information about what brought about this study.

The initial research site became implausible for conducting research as the school's internal management structure was under strain due to COVID-19 and the instability of the staff turnover became too problematic to conduct research there. A different school from within the private school's group was selected next due to

increased workloads for educators from the school resulting in educators from the second research site needing to help the first research site's learners get through the curriculum in 2021. This research site was unviable as well. Ultimately, the researcher conducted research at the school where the researcher works as this was deemed to be the only option as access to educators from other schools had become increasingly difficult and had caused severe delays in the research journey. This raised a number of ethical concerns focusing on undue influence and coercion, these are fully discussed in the section dedicated to the discussion of ethical concerns and covers the procedures incorporated by the researcher during the study.

The third and final research site is a school situated in Tembisa, a suburb in Gauteng, South Africa, and although it fell under the private education sector, the demographic of learners and educators fell within the scope of the research study. This was because the environment in which the educators function is a multilingual environment. The research site has more resources than a public school might as a result of private funding, however, the learners do not necessarily come from high-income earning families. The educators sampled were predominantly not English home language speakers and, therefore, fit the purpose of this study well. The educators, having been through an education system that demanded they learn in an additional language, served to reinforce some of the pitfalls that were mentioned in the introductory chapter and made them more viable candidates for this study. This is because they had first-hand experience of the problems with the usage of an additional language (namely English) as a medium of instruction and could give a deeper understanding of their own struggles and then the perceived struggles of their own teaching practice, as well as what they have observed to be struggles on the part of their colleagues who too are teaching in a language that is not their MT. This wealth of knowledge served as invaluable for the purpose of this study and enabled the researcher to gain a deeper understanding into the lived experience of these educators and, therefore, allowed for a more thorough grasp on what the developmental needs of such educators could be to be explored.

## 3.6 Data Collection and Documentation

### 3.6.1 *Semi-Structured Focus Group Interviews*

The one focus group interview was semi-structured as there was an interview guide, but it allowed for more open-ended questions and the storytelling aspect of questions and answers was applied so that participants got an opportunity to engage in a more open setting and could guide one another's responses (Leavy, 2017). The focus group interview schedule, as seen in Annexure B, was used to guide the discussion held with the six participants. This proved to be fitting as the participants drew on one another's responses and added or took away from them, which led to a more focussed discussion. The focus group interview allowed for a rapport to be built with participants and allowed the researcher to see where gaps had arisen that could then be further probed in individual interviews. The focus group interview allowed for participants to get an overview of what the study was about and allowed for deeper engagement on their part. The participants, working with the researcher, were better able to engage in the discussions as they were already familiar with one another and the researcher. The rapport building was a lot smoother and there was much less concern surrounding the unfamiliarity of the researcher or other participants. The participants gave one another the opportunity to make their points, with fewer problems arising from one or two participants dominating discussions. This was my fear, that one or two participants would dominate the discussions, however, when participants had not fully engaged with a topic, I would address it in their individual interview. This dominance was guarded against by probing the more silent parties and politely limiting responses of all so that each participant had a turn to say what they needed to (Leavy, 2017). The researcher refrained from leading the discussion and limited responses to participants, having focussed on asking questions and at some points probing participants for further explanation. The participants were more at ease discussing matters around others they knew, and this led to more in-depth responses and the possibility of differing views contesting one another in the focus group interview, which allowed for deeper discussion (Leavy, 2017).

Another challenge was time constraints and the unpredictable nature of focus group interviews. The participants needed very little probing in the direction of questioning or discussion as they, for the better part, stayed on topic. Where some

deviations from the topic matter occurred, the researcher interrupted with a more focussed form of the question to get the discussion back on track. The participants welcomed the facilitation of the discussion and did not get dissuaded from participating or withholding responses as a result of probing from the researcher (Leavy, 2017). It was necessary at certain points to keep discussions on track and probe in the direction needed (Leavy, 2017). The concern regarding the anonymity of participants was safeguarded by assigning the participants numbers and by having them introduce themselves using the numbers. In the discussion, the participants used the numbers assigned to them to refer to responses of other participants with very little deviation having occurred. This enabled the confidentiality of participants to be upheld throughout the focus group interview, with this having been a previous concern. Very few demographic details were included in the questioning, which also makes it more difficult to ascertain which educators were involved.

### **3.6.2 *Semi-Structured Individual Interviews***

In order to gain a deeper insight into the educators' professional development needs, semi-structured individual interviews were used as these were pre-planned, but allowed for some flexibility in the questioning process (Leavy, 2017). Ahead of the individual interviews, the data from the focus group interview was analysed to start developing themes and to see where gaps occurred in responses so that further probing of responses could be handled on a one-on-one basis. An interview schedule was drawn up prior to the six interviews so that all the necessary questions were posed to participants based on gaps identified in the focus group interview while still allowing for follow-up questions based on responses given in the individual interview (Leavy, 2017). An example of the individual interview schedule can be found under Annexure C for further perusal. More sensitive topics were dealt with in individual interviews, such as the educator's usage of language in classes while teaching and their observation of their colleagues' use of the language of teaching and learning, which is English (Leavy, 2017). A variety of questions were used to allow for more in-depth descriptions to be given after the participant was more comfortable (Leavy, 2017).

Member-checking (ensuring the researcher correctly interpreted responses from the focus group interview) allowed for the participant to be eased into the

questioning process, this was then followed by basic questions surrounding the subject(s) taught and the demographic at the school of educators and learners allowed for the participant to be at ease. The interviews were audio recorded, with previous consent being given by participating educators, so that the information could then be transcribed (Leavy, 2017). In addition, the recordings helped the researcher to take note of cues that may have been missed when taking notes during the interview, these could then be added to the transcription of the individual interviews (Leavy, 2017). This ensured that the data collected remained sensitive to the individuals represented and that there was no homogenising of voices (Leavy, 2017). Interviews were feared to be viewed as intimidating for participants, which was why a rapport had to be built with them before engaging in the deeper discussion about central matters pertaining to the research study (Leavy, 2017). The interviews were conducted face-to-face, apart from one individual interview, as the participant preferred an online platform – an option given to the participants as they were willingly participating and their preferences had to be considered by the researcher due to time constraints on the participants as well.

### **3.6.3 Observations**

An observation of a lesson conducted by the two selected educators, one English educator and one content-subject educator, in their classes was accompanied by field notes so that a better understanding of the participants' reality could be established from observation in a natural setting (Leavy, 2017). The researcher was an observer as participant as her aim was to gain deeper understanding of the behaviours and teaching methodologies used by the selected participants, but the researcher remained uninvolved in the lesson and did not influence the dynamics of the setting (Maree, 2016). Ethical concerns arising here included asking the participant for consent to be in their class during their lesson, a point included in the informed consent form signed before data collection began, but which was again verbally attained prior to the agreed-upon lesson observation taking place. Informed consent, from the two educators whose lessons were observed, was necessary as the researcher focused on the educator's behaviour and actions, rather than the learners' response. The observation lessons served to give additional data that can be used to provide more concrete examples of the teaching methods used by the educators. Other ethical dilemmas surrounded how



to include descriptions of their observable actions without using too many descriptors that would give away the identity of the educator and the school, which was the chosen research site.

Observation of a content-subject educator's lesson was conducted with field notes. This was then compared to one of an English educator's lessons (again, with field notes) to provide a broader view of what the developmental needs were within the multi-language context, as needs might differ between content-subject educators and English educators. This allowed for comparisons to be drawn up between English educators and subject-content educators' needs, which created a more complete picture of the professional development needs of educators working in multi-language contexts (Leavy, 2017). The data yielded was rich in content and allowed for a deep description of the phenomenon at hand. The data was then analysed from more than one source, which made it more credible (Leavy, 2017). This is how the data was triangulated, by having collected it and analysing data from multiple sources to ensure a clearer image of the phenomenon at hand would be understood. Member-checking throughout the process allowed for participants to give the researcher feedback on the data collection process and to ensure the researcher did not homogenise voices and kept data collected true to the meaning intended on the part of participants.

### **3.7 Data Analysis and Interpretation**

Qualitative data is typically grouped into themes that are assigned names (Di Fabio & Maree, 2012). These themes were arrived at inductively from a close study of the data collected (Di Fabio & Maree, 2012), while trying to stay as true to the voice of the participant as possible. The specific method involved six phases of inductive thematic analysis – a “bottom-up” approach that allowed for data to be categorised without creating predetermined themes (Braun & Clarke, 2020, p. 330). The phases included becoming familiar with data by reading the transcripts of the focus group interview, the individual interviews and the running record kept of the observed lessons. After going over the data collected, codes based on major ideas that related to literature were conceptualised and then these themes were searched for by looking at participant responses and observable actions. Then the themes were reviewed to ensure the research questions were answered. This was done by colour coding responses and observable data to ascertain elements that were

related. The themes were then defined and names for them were created. Lastly, a report based off of these findings was written (Braun & Clarke, 2020, p. 330). This process was repetitive and required various readings of the transcriptions and in-depth interpretation of the data presented in the transcriptions and field notes. This was a flexible process (Braun & Clarke, 2020) that required the researcher to pull apart the data collected, breaking it down into information that related to the research questions and which would, therefore, be able to answer the research questions laid out at the start of the study. A challenge came in when accounting for choices made or of possible alternative routes not being followed as my subjective observation and interpretations of the data collected were used (Leavy, 2017).

Data collected was stored in the University of Pretoria's repository. This included the transcriptions of the interviews and then the field notes from the observation as well as all audio recordings made of the interviews (Leavy, 2017). These were saved on a USB stick in electronic format, which was stored in the repository along with all physical copies of the data collected to ensure the safe-keeping of all records and to ensure that individuals who wish to use the data at a later stage, will be able to access it for further research purposes.

To mitigate the effect of bias as much as possible when analysing data, a discussion of quality criteria applied to make the study more valid follows.

### **3.8 Quality Criteria**

Qualitative data collection required certain constructs to be discussed to ensure the validity of the research. The trustworthiness of this study will be discussed in terms of credibility, applicability, dependability and confirmability (Di Fabio & Maree, 2012; Maree, 2016). Triangulation will also be discussed as a form through which validity is ensured in this study.

#### **3.8.1 Credibility**

This refers to the significance and credibility of results obtained for the researcher and participants in the study (Di Fabio & Maree, 2012; Maree, 2016). To ensure credibility, member-checking was put in place so that participants could verify the preliminary findings and interpretations the researcher had made for them to have received an opportunity to make comments before the findings are finalised

and then published (Di Fabio & Maree, 2012; Maree, 2016). During the interview process, more specifically the individual interviews, participants were asked to clarify responses that may have been unclear to the researcher from the focus group interview so that a participant could verify what he or she meant. The debriefing of participants allowed for the sharing of interpretations of data with participants to serve as the last means by which their input could still affect changes to the analysis and findings gained from their responses.

### **3.8.2 *Applicability***

The purpose of case study research is not to generalise findings. Transferability refers to the conditions under which the results obtained in this study could be transferred or generalised (Carminati, 2018; Di Fabio & Maree, 2012; Maree, 2016). The aim of this study was not to transfer the findings. In order for results to be generalisable, the setting and context would have to be one of a multilingual context and it would have to be a multilingual setting with similar participants who are equally qualified as the participants in this study. Therefore, the findings of this study were not intended to be generalised as an in-depth explanation of the phenomenon that was explored instead (Carminati, 2018; Tight, 2017; Yin, 2018). The study revealed several findings that will likely not be replicable unless under similar circumstances. However, this shortcoming is addressed more in depth in the limitations explored in Chapter 5. As such, this study could act as a forerunner to further studies that could be conducted to explore the extent to which educators in other settings need professional development to teach effectively in multilingual contexts. With an in-depth study of the phenomenon, the basis will be laid for further research to follow on the topic of education in multilingual contexts.

### **3.8.3 *Dependability***

The degree of control found in the study is referred to as dependability (Di Fabio & Maree, 2012; Maree, 2016). To ensure this in the study, the researcher took note of the quality of all audio recordings and transcripts obtained from interviews and the field notes of the observations (Di Fabio & Maree, 2012; Maree, 2016).

### **3.8.4 Confirmability**

The extent to which data is free of errors and is objective, is referred to as confirmability (Di Fabio & Maree, 2012; Maree, 2016). The results were confirmable as they were “derived from the participants and the research conditions rather than from the opinion of the researcher” (Di Fabio & Maree, 2012, 141). The confirmability was verified through an external researcher (the supervisor) assessing whether methods and procedures were clearly described to allow for data to be verified (Di Fabio & Maree, 2012). Another way in which the study was confirmable was due to it being stored in the University of Pretoria’s repository (Di Fabio & Maree, 2012). Lastly, the researcher was kept self-aware of her own biases and beliefs throughout the process by keeping and maintaining a reflective journal to account for any particular interpretations arrived at during the data collection and analysis stages of the research process as discussed earlier in this chapter (Di Fabio & Maree, 2012). Member-checking with participants to ensure data is interpreted adequately also serves as a means by which the data collected and sent to the supervisor for overseeing, can be confirmed (Maree, 2016). To ensure that the findings would be confirmable, rigour was applied. It was important to note that one could not remain entirely objective during qualitative enquiry, but that biases, beliefs and values would be accounted for in a reflective journal (Di Fabio & Maree, 2012; Leavy, 2017).

### **3.8.5 Triangulation**

Triangulation means using multiple sources of data for validation (Carminati, 2018; Maree, 2016). To triangulate the data, I made use of three separate data sets, the data from the focus group interview, the data from the individual interviews and then the data from the field notes of the observation lessons. These data sets were collected at different times, leading to the information gathered from them being more reliable and valid. The purpose of the multiple data collection strategies was to provide deeper insights into the phenomenon under investigation. As well, this added another means by which the data could be validated and ensured that the findings would be more consistent (Maree, 2016). Through the multiple sources of information, I was able to ascertain whether for instance, an assertion made during interpretation was true or not (Leavy, 2017; Maree, 2016). The running record kept of the observation lessons allowed the researcher to triangulate the data as it

showed the implementation of what was stated in the interviews. It allowed an opportunity for the researcher to witness first-hand what teaching methods are being incorporated by cross-referencing observed data with literature on teaching methodologies.

### **3.9 Ethical Considerations**

Ethical standards of the University of Pretoria were adhered to, including getting ethical clearance prior to embarking on the research process (University of Pretoria, 2013). To further delve into the principles adhered to, the following will be discussed as applied in the research process: beneficence and non-maleficence, responsibility and fidelity, justice and integrity, informed consent as well as voluntary participation, and finally the assessment of risks and benefits of participation in the study are included.

#### **3.9.1 *Beneficence and Non-Maleficence***

This refers to the concept of ‘do no harm’ (HPCSA, 2006; Elias & Theron, 2012). The researcher ensured the welfare of the participants in the study by not abusing her influence or attempting to coerce the participants in any way (HPCSA, 2006; Elias & Theron, 2012). Reasonable steps were undertaken to avoid harming participants through the research process, there was no harassment or coercion (HPCSA, 2006). Participants were aware that participation was voluntary and that they could withdraw from the study at any stage should they feel the need to. Refer to Annexure D to see the informed consent form used by the researcher, which details what the participants needed to know about the research and gave them an idea of what was expected of them and informed them that their participation was entirely voluntary. Educators approached to participate were in no way forced to participate, it was made clear to them the purpose of the study and how the data collected would be used, and they were aware of what demands would be made of them during the research process and their availability guided the setting up of interview and observation dates. The availability of help, should they need it, was explained to them so that they could reach out should something troubling be brought about by engaging in the research study.

### **3.9.2 Fidelity and Responsibility**

Researchers must obtain and maintain relationships of trust and collaboration with participants (Elias & Theron, 2012). This was done through maintaining professional standards and clarification of roles and expectations with the participants as well as by taking responsibility for behaviour (Elias & Theron, 2012). This can be seen by perusing Annexure D (informed consent form) as this document details exactly what the participants were agreeing to and what their expected roles would be while maintaining the role of the researcher as a separate entity from the participants during the data collection process. Participants had roles and expectations as well as the extent of confidentiality made clear to them from the outset of the research to ensure the participants were not exploited (HPCSA, 2006).

Confidentiality was a concern and participants were encouraged to use the pseudonyms assigned to them, which were also printed onto name tags for them to make use of during the interview process, especially during the focus group interview. Confidentiality could not be ensured as individuals involved may have used names or may have given away characteristics that would help identify them without meaning to (Wiles, 2013). To minimise exposure, the identifying characteristics, including the description of the research site, were minimal as these characteristics could lead to others outside of the research process being able to identify the location and then they could start assuming who participated based on other identifiers (Wiles, 2013). The educators were allocated numbers to mask their identities. To assist in maintaining the anonymity of participants, there was a practice round before official recordings started of the focus interview as they were then able to practice using the numbers rather than the names of fellow educators. Educators were asked for ongoing consent throughout the data collection process to ensure they were still willing to participate and ensured that they understood they were allowed to withdraw from the study at any point should they have chosen to do so. The ongoing consent was maintained verbally during the data gathering procedures and would be available in the audio recording of the sessions.

### **3.9.3 Integrity**

Integrity refers to truthful and accurate conduct within the research project (Elias & Theron, 2012). Integrity was upheld by not cheating, stealing, or engaging

in unethical behaviour such as lying or using unclear communications with participants (Elias & Theron, 2012). During data collection, transcripts were not beautified or edited as this would take away the essence of participants' responses (Leavy, 2017). I disclosed information regarding the purpose of the research (to explore the professional development needs of educators teaching in a multilingual context) and the way in which the data gathered was to be used (as part of a dissertation in completion of my master's degree and publishing in a journal). The participants were informed of what the research was about (exploring language barriers experienced by those teaching in a multilingual context). This is seen in Annexure D and pinpoints the information that the participants needed to be aware of before taking on their roles as participants in the study. The emotional risk of involvement was explained, that they might experience discomfort or distress from some of the questions but that they were able to 'pass' on answering questions that made them uncomfortable (Wiles, 2013). Participants did not experience discomfort and were willing to answer all questions.

Informed consent covered the details mentioned above as well as the duration and level of participation required from them. They were also informed of the ways in which data was recorded, through field notes for the observation process specifically. They were informed that their participation was based on the inclusion and exclusion criteria- being that they are a content-subject educator, who has some teaching experience or an English subject educator with some teaching experience. They were informed that they could withdraw from the study at any time and that they were not to be treated differently because of it, they were assured that the data collected from them would not be used in the final findings of the study should they have chosen to withdraw from the study.

#### **3.9.4 Justice**

Justice refers to allowing access to processes and procedures of the research study (Elias & Theron, 2012). This is ensured by storing all transcripts, field notes and audio recordings at the University's repository and by publishing results for participants to be able to gain access to (Elias & Theron, 2012). The language used throughout the data collection process and in all interactions with participants was culturally sensitive to ensure accessibility to participants (Health Professionals Council of South Africa, 2006; Leavy, 2017). Debriefing of participants gave an

opportunity for any concerns on the part of participants to be aired and dealt with by the researcher. Following data collection, the researcher followed up with participants to ensure there were no rising concerns. The participants did not indicate any level of distress or discomfort from questioning. The participants were made aware of where the data would be stored, should they need access to it.

### **3.9.5 *Informed Consent and Voluntary Participation***

Informed consent from participants must be attained, which informs them of the nature of the research as well as roles and expectations from them, including that participation is voluntary and they can withdraw at any point, without risk of the data gathered being used (HPCSA, 2006). Consent to use recordings and data gathered was obtained from participants (HPCSA, 2006). There were concerns regarding the participants (my colleagues), being held as a captive audience. When I approached the educators who met the criteria, I immediately informed them of the purpose behind the research and the way in which the data would be used and I made it clear that participation was voluntary and that they could withdraw from the research process at any time (Wiles, 2013). Should they have indicated that they would not want to participate in the study, then I moved on to another individual who met the criteria needed (Wiles, 2013). In literature, there was fear of undue influence through the provision of excessive rewards offered to participants which could cloud their judgement and lead them to act unreasonably considering their values and own interests (Largent & Fernandes Lynch, 2017). In terms of addressing this, no rewards were offered for participation.

Participants were informed of the time that was needed to participate, as this might have influenced their decision to participate and it was necessary for them to know what was required of them throughout the process to ensure that they made an informed decision regarding participation. This is fully explained in Annexure D (Informed consent form). The research sought to gauge the educators' experiences of teaching in a multilingual context, and it was made clear that the purpose was not to highlight individual problems experienced, but rather to explore what and how best they could be assisted with teaching in an additional language.



### **3.9.6 Assessment of Risks and Benefits**

Participants were informed that confidentiality could not be ensured due to the nature of focus group interviews as the researcher had no control over what individual participants did once they left the venue (HPCSA, 2006; Barbour, 2007). However, the researcher explained the importance of not speaking about what was discussed during the focus group interview, as well as having set up rules that pertained to the focus group setting (such as the usage of the allocated number when responding in the focus group setting). The anonymity of participants in findings and publications was ensured through coding to hide identities (HPCSA, 2006). The participants were made aware that their anonymity could not be guaranteed due to the nature of the data collection processes carried out (the focus group interview) and the guidelines for conduct during the focus group interview were carefully explained as seen in Annexure D. Pseudonyms (assigned participant numbers) allowed the researcher to offer the participants some anonymity and allowed for the ideas they shared to be kept confidential as it cannot be directly linked to any one of the participants as no defining characteristics of the participants are given. Participants were debriefed after each data collection activity and they were given access to their own interview as well as the focus group interview data (Leavy, 2017). Reflexivity was ensured by documenting my impressions and assumptions throughout the collection and interpretation process to separate that from the findings that emerged (Leavy, 2017).

It was important to bear in mind that the findings would contribute to a deeper understanding of the professional development needs of educators in a multi-language context that can inform how, when and what content would be included in the courses offered (Leavy, 2017). We must consider potential harm when conducting research in an environment where we have more than one role (in this instance, as a fellow educator at the school and as a researcher). An ethics of care was adopted where I acted as the researcher, basing decisions on compassion and the desire to act in ways that benefitted the individual and group because it was acknowledged that there was an interdependence between the participants and researcher (Wiles, 2013). I was reflexive throughout the process, noting how individuals who agreed to participate and then formed part of the data collection process behaved during interviews. Should participants have seemed ill at ease,

they were allowed to 'pass' on answering certain questions that they might not have had an answer to, or that they did not feel comfortable answering (Wiles, 2013). During the data collection process, participants might have been emotionally affected by the questions asked (Wiles, 2013). To minimise distress, individuals were able to refrain from answering uncomfortable questions and they were monitored to see if there was a need for referral to counselling services and they were informed that they could contact my supervisor and co-supervisor should they have had concerns regarding any part of the data collection process or the interpretation of data as explained during the debriefing sessions (Wiles, 2013). Participants were, however, not in need of counselling services as they were debriefed after the data collection process was implemented and the participants did not indicate or show any signs of needing intervention.

The research participants were made aware of the ultimate purpose of pursuing the topic – to have allowed them an opportunity to be involved in the decision-making process regarding their needs while teaching in a multi-language context and give them a chance to air their opinions, be heard and to have allowed them to take charge of their experiences and development (Wiles, 2013). The study sought to engage with educators to give them a voice regarding the structure and content of in-service development opportunities offered to educators in multi-language environments. The participants gained deeper insight into their own developmental needs and were opened up to the possibilities and opportunities they have at their disposal, which will help them improve on their own teaching practices. More widely, the study was able to gauge lived experiences of educators working in multilingual environments and hopefully, it would be able to add to the body of language surrounding language usage and practices in the educational system of South Africa.

### **3.10 Conclusion**

Chapter 3 explored the research methodology undertaken in this study. This consisted of a discussion of the purpose of the study, the paradigmatic assumptions of the study by discussing the conceptual framework, as well as epistemological and methodological approaches applied in the study. Explanations of the research design (case study) followed with a discussion of how participants of the study were selected. The data collection procedures of semi-structured focus group interviews,

semi-structured individual interviews and observations followed. Analysis and interpretation of results were explored and quality criteria discussed in terms of credibility, applicability, dependability, confirmability and triangulation. Lastly, the ethical considerations were explored by explaining how the principles of beneficence and non-maleficence, fidelity and responsibility were implemented in the study. Other principles, such as integrity and justice, were explained and the informed consent procedure and voluntary participation were discussed. The assessment of risk and benefits of the study were explored as the final discussion of ethical principles applied in this study. Chapter 4 includes the data analysis and interpretation of data with a discussion of the themes and sub-themes identified from the thematic analysis.

## Chapter 4: Analysis and Interpretation of Data

### 4.1 Introduction

The purpose of this study was to explore how professional development can be utilised to better equip and support educators teaching English language in multi-language contexts. The main research question focused on what educators believed would be necessary components of a professional development programme through distance education. In this chapter, the experiences of the teachers who participated in the study and their needs regarding professional development are discussed. These are presented as the findings of the study. As discussed in Chapter 3, the data was collected through the following methods: a focus group interview carried out with the six participants, individual interviews with each of the six participants and lastly, through the observation of one content-subject educator and one English educator's lesson. The use of triangulation as explained under the section dedicated to procedures related to dependability of the findings which shows the value of using multiple data collection strategies to ensure deeper insights can be drawn from the data. Therefore, the findings are inter-woven and are supported by literature as discussed below.

### 4.2 The Findings of the Study

Five themes and eleven subthemes were identified in the data set through data analysis. Inductive thematic analysis was used to achieve this (Braun & Clarke, 2020; Clinton, Doumit, Ezzedine & Rizk, 2020). These themes and subthemes are outlined in Table 5 below.

**Table 5**

*Overview of Themes and Subthemes*

<b>Themes</b>	<b>Sub-themes</b>
1. English language in multilingual context	A. Hegemony of English language B. English language as medium of instruction (MoI) C. Areas of English language proficiency D. English language teaching methodologies
2. Professional development	A. Current training available B. Future training possibilities
3. Undergraduate training	A. Format of training
4. Educator involvement in planning	A. Current approaches B. Educator needs
5. Educator language context	A. Use of language B. Educator background and work environment

A brief description for each theme and sub-theme supported by the findings follows. Extracts from the focus group interview transcript, the individual interview transcripts and reference to the observation lessons are used to support the themes and sub-themes' findings. The link to literature is provided at the end of each theme. An amalgamated version of findings from the observation lessons is provided before the conclusion.

**4.2.1 Theme 1: English in a Multilingual Context**

The data sets showed a common theme relating to English and its usage in a multilingual context. The multilingual context is explained in Chapter 1 as a context where educators and learners function in an environment where multiple languages are spoken and where teaching and learning are often in an additional language. In the context of this study, this is to be understood as an environment in which the majority of the educators and learners are not mother-tongue speakers of English

language, but rather have other African languages as their mother tongue. This theme refers to the differing views of English and how it is seen to function in the multilingual environment that is made up of many indigenous African languages. This theme can further be expanded using four sub-themes: the hegemony of English, English as the medium of instruction, areas of English proficiency and English teaching methodologies. The theme and sub-themes are illustrated in Table 5. These sub-themes are discussed on the basis of interview extracts and observation commentaries made by the researcher.

#### **4.2.1.1 Sub-theme 1A: Hegemony of English.**

In literature (Mkhize & Balfour, 2017), English is regarded as an important language, often considered superior to other indigenous languages. In the context of this study, it is the belief that teaching in English is better than teaching in other vernacular languages as seen from the views expressed by the educators who participated in this study. Participants in this study indicated that they were more comfortable teaching in English, even if English is not their mother tongue. The participants were not able to give specific reasoning behind this preference to teach in English, but their answers pointed to a belief that English is somehow better than using other languages. This stems from beliefs held by the participants regarding the language policies used in education, which have been perpetuated over time as seen in various studies (Mkhize & Balfour, 2017; Coetzee-Van Rooy, 2018). There was an agreement among the participants that they were satisfied to teach in English and preferred it to having to teach in another language.

The data sets show the six participants in this study felt that English was an acceptable and favourable language to use in education as seen in responses given during the focus group interview and in a few of the individual interviews. The experience of teaching in English was overall positively framed as seen by participant 2's comment that there was a sense of being "relieved" (Focus group interview P2, I.106) when having to teach in English, despite having studied in Afrikaans. The participants were able to identify that English carries a lot of power in various circumstances and see it as the language of communication around the world. This is reflected in Table 6 by including observation of P1's lesson. They struggled to verbalise why they felt the way they did about English or having to teach in English, but certainly agreed that English is the best language to use in schools

as seen by a statement from participant 6 in the individual interview, quoted in Table 6.

The majority of the participants showed an understanding of the importance of language and how it links to culture but lacked the comprehension of why they should consider education in other languages, other than using it to aid understanding through translation as noted by participant 4 in the individual interview, quoted in Table 6. Other languages used in the classroom are considered as a way to accommodate learners. This is seen from the observation of P3's lesson where the educator translated a short part of the work being discussed to aid learner understanding of the concept and to engage them more fully with the information.

English has for centuries been regarded as superior and necessary for progress. It is deemed easier by educators for the purposes of teaching and learning as it is a common language of understanding, especially when the educator does not speak vernacular languages. This is evident in responses from the focus group interview as seen in Table 6.

There is a sense of achievement when getting learners to learn English. Participant 5 in the focus group noted the sense of accomplishment in one of their responses quoted in Table 6.

There was "a sigh of relief" (Focus Group Interview, P2, 116-117) in my field notes when participant 2 realised that teaching would only occur in English. The six participants held a belief that the mother tongue language of learners in their classes had the capacity to interfere with the learning of and learning in English, however, this may not have come across more harshly as noted by the response of participant 1 in Table 6.

However, it is notable that the participants in the study do not have English as their mother tongue, and due to the nature of their own experiences with English, this view may be skewed and is not representative of what all educators believe. The addition of the quote regarding the view of the vernacular language "corrupting" the learning of English is to show that perhaps the participating educators themselves are unaware of their own prejudice towards other indigenous languages and this is influenced by a variety of factors including, but not limited to, their own upbringing and the significance given to English in the participants' own educational experiences. It should be noted that there is an acknowledgement that if learners are unable to speak their home languages, they are "also frowned upon by other

learners” (Focus group Interview, P5, l.353). Yet, the belief that English should be used solely at school still exists and is seen in the following statements made by participants that English is somehow more suitable or ‘normal’ for use in education.

Participant 5 (a non-South African indigene) reiterated the above assertions by participants 6, 2 and 1 but added that there is some awareness of why this may be the belief held by some educators. The effects of colonisation must be acknowledged.

The teacher-participants in this study, who were not South African indigenes, were more inclined to put more faith in English and its use in the classroom and this could be linked to the norms and standards they experienced while growing up where the majority of their (the educator participants’) own education was carried out in English and greater emphasis was placed on the learning of the language. These educators who are not South African indigenes, placed more emphasis in their responses on English and the usage of only English in the educational setting. The reasons behind these beliefs are explored throughout this chapter. Ultimately, the data was triangulated by drawing information from responses given in the focus group interview, the individual interviews and then by incorporating field notes from the observation lessons, which took the form of a running record (a continuous account of what is observed) to put into focus how the described actions in the interviews are incorporated.

**Table 6**

*Excerpts on the Hegemony of English*

<b>Educator beliefs</b>	<b>Interview type, participant number, line number</b>	<b>Quotation</b>
English creates common ground	Individual interview, P6, l.356-361	“I see English as ah a language that can help learners, educators to be efficient in the teaching and learning um eh industry or the Department of Education as a whole. Why? Because if we teach our learners to speak in



		English, to write in English at an early age it will help them to explore anything they want in life.”
	Focus Group Interview, P5, I.1447-155	“They will want to use their mother language subject in between. So that’s a challenge, especially when some of us will not have the background of any South African language, it becomes very difficult to explain to the extent we should like the learners to understand so it’s quite a challenge...”
	Observation, P1	Educator engages purely in English so that learners are able to grasp subject terminology. Explanations given purely in English.
Use of other languages to accommodate learners	Individual interview, P4, I.157-158	“You translate. You put it in their own language so that they can understand.”
	Focus Group Interview, P4, I. 254-256	“I can try to accommodate that learner.”
	Individual interview, P6, I.96-103	“It makes it eh, it’s easier for our learners to understand us as educators and it also makes it easier for them to communicate. I think you know South Africa have got so many languages and most learners speak different languages, so if they can communicate in English and teachers can teach in English it makes it easier for everyone to understand the class and to accommodate everyone.”
	Observation, P3	Educator used translation to aid understanding of the concept taught (active and passive voice).
Viewed as an accomplishment to learn English	Focus Group Interview, P5, I.126-128	“Teaching that child to be able to use English as a language... It’s a great achievement.”

View of vernacular languages	Focus Group Interview, P1, I.1211-1213	“the learners who are mainly sort of corrupted by the mother tongue which is not English”
English as a suitable language for education	Individual interview, P1, I.70	“the normal language of education”
	Individual Interview, P2, I.126-127	“...a language of learning”
	Individual interview P6, I.73-74	“they [superiors and educational authorities] take English as something that is very important”
	Individual interview, P5, I. 93-95	“maybe it's because of ah colonisation or something because in my country, they emphasise on English more than any other language.”
	Observation, P1	All concepts explained in English and instructions given in English.
	Observation, P3	Instructions and the bulk of information shared (including presentations and activities) were given in English.

#### 4.2.1.2 Sub-theme 1B: English Language as Medium of Instruction.

English is the language through which content is taught at schools as seen in literature (Spaull, 2016). This definition was also used in Chapter 1 during concept clarification and holds true in this chapter as well. Attention is now to be drawn to participant responses to having to teach in English. Participants indicated they felt more comfortable teaching in English than in other languages. The participants expressed their discomfort when it comes to incorporating other languages in the classroom as they see it as being disruptive to the learners’ developing competency in English. There is an accepted view that English is the preferred language to teach in for the participants.

The participants gave the impression that educators indirectly influence the learning of English through how well-versed they are. Participant 2 felt that learning in English as well as the learning of English is related to the teacher's command of English.

Participants stated that they felt the use of English in classes is important as learners are assessed in English. This view, that bears in mind the language of assessment when teaching, is supported by studies conducted in other parts of Africa, where the language of assessment becomes a stumbling block to achievement in a subject (Vuzo, 2018).

Teaching in English as the language/medium of instruction is seen as something some of the colleagues of the participants struggle with as seen from the comments from individual interviews quoted in Table 6. However, the participants themselves do not see teaching in English as a struggle they experience; as they generally felt comfortable using English in the classroom setting and minimally make use of other languages to help explain concepts. The content-subject educators also felt a sense of ease teaching in English as this has been the norm for them since their own pre-service training. The English educators also expressed comfort of having to teach in the language, this would be an expected response as they have been trained specifically to teach the language and, therefore, have better English proficiency as a result of their training. A prominent belief held by the participants is that they are comfortable teaching in English while some of their colleagues are viewed to struggle with teaching the content of their subjects in English. Participants show awareness that their ability to teach in English will have an impact on how well the content can be taught.

From both observation lessons conducted as part of this research study, educators used only English in class and put an emphasis on explaining concepts thoroughly in English the learners could understand, slightly lowering the level of English used when necessary. The educators whose lessons were observed practised what they preached during their interviews, having only made use of English when teaching in the lessons observed. Furthermore, the effect of using the subject's terminology in class was evident from the learner responses that were verbally given to indicate the understanding of the work given to the learners. From the observation lessons it became clear that the two educators preferred teaching in English and felt comfortable doing so, this is seen in the strategies used to teach

as seen in Table 7. Views on the use of vernacular in class differ, in this study the view expressed give the impression that English alone should be used in the teaching of content. The use of vernacular in the class by learners was seen as difficult to control and had the capacity to interfere with teaching. Participants found that in instances where they were unable to use vernacular, there were problems when teaching in English.

On the other hand, according to some participants, there still seems to be some place for techniques such as code-switching, but only when the educator themselves know the language. Other approaches to multilingualism in education were not known or discussed by participants such as translanguaging or translation which is supported as practical approaches to incorporating multilingualism in the classroom (Omidire, 2021).

However, the participants held the belief that English should be taught early on in the schooling careers of learners as “more exposure” (individual interview, P3, I.99) to the language benefits the learning of the language. This is seen from the discussion regarding additional language learning. This is seen from the discussion regarding additional language learning. This stands in opposition to studies that find that the foundation of learning should be in the mother tongue as it provides a more concrete foundation on which to build further learning (Coetzee-Van Rooy, 2018). However, the participants did feel that foundation phase education in the mother tongue is preferential, however, they noted that English should be added earlier in the educational careers of school-attending learners.

These viewpoints fall in line with previous literature as the policies regarding language in schools are a contentious issue in South Africa as we have so many languages (Spaull, 2016; Mkhize & Balfour, 2017). The call to teach in all official languages for all subjects is “not viable” as noted by participant 2 in the individual interview (Individual interview, P2, I.458). However, more must be done to incorporate other languages at school as this links to culture.

It is understood by participants that the medium of instruction impacts learner achievement, something noted in past studies (Canh, 2019). However, there is still a call to stick to English as the medium of instruction as it is seen as being able to “bridge the gap” (Individual interview, P3, I.492). This then allows for the discussion of the third sub-theme, areas of English proficiency that the participants felt were important.

**Table 7**
*Excerpts on English language as a Medium of Instruction*

<b>Views of English language as the LoLT</b>	<b>Interview type, participant, line number</b>	<b>Quotation</b>
Educator as a role model of the language	Individual interview, P2, l.15	"I think it comes down to modelling. ...where teachers if they are bad role models in terms of language, learners will absorb whatever they indirectly teaching them."
	Individual interview, P4, l.105-107	"the teacher does not understand the language...which means the content that will be delivering is totally offsite"
	Individual interview, P5, l.73-74	"So if the teacher is sometimes diverting and mixing languages, I think that won't help the learners."
	Observation, P1	Educator breaks down steps to follow in English and focuses on using terminology used in past papers.
	Observation, P3	Educator explains concepts in English and includes numerous examples from real-life situations, including newspaper article headings as these are often in the passive voice.
Language of assessment	Individual interview, P5, 49-56	"You see that most teachers using their vernacular to explain concepts, which is going to be difficult for learners to... answer questions when it comes to exam. Why? Because they are now translating their own home language to

		English, some of them they can't even construct sentences that are reasonable, which is going to be a challenge."
View of own proficiency in the LoLt	Individual interview, P5, l.133-136	"Some teachers are struggling, and one of my colleagues even asked me, "ma'am, do you at certain times get stuck in expressing yourself in English?" So, to some other teachers, it's difficult expressing throughout in English."
	Individual interview, P1, l.63-64	"I am comfortable teaching in English because I feel that's my language of communication."
	Observation, P1	Educator seamlessly explains concepts and the method to work out the mathematical questions. The educator is well aware of using the correct terminology.
View of learner use of vernacular languages in the classroom	Focus Group Interview, P2, l.163-166	"And a lot of the time it is actually about the subject matter, and I can't correct them or you know, guide them."
	Observation, P3	The educator encourages learners to use English and only once responds in a vernacular language.
View of vernacular languages to assist learning	Focus group interview, P4, l. 253-256	"So now I have to switch sometimes, I have to switch languages. And I can try to accommodate that learner, also motivate that learner to read more, ja."
	Individual interview, P3, l.113-114	"What I do is, sometimes when I see that they don't get it, I will switch over to their lingo."

	Focus group interview, P1, I.189-193	“So there was a gap between me trying to explain a concept to a student or not, I couldn’t even get proper feedback, because they couldn’t even speak the language.”
	Observation, P3	Vernacular phrase used to assist in explaining the purpose of active and passive voice so that learners would have a better understanding of these concepts.
Views on LoLt in early childhood education	Individual interview, P5, I.278-282	“They can go to preschools where they are being taught in their mother languages again...So the home background really affects our children in terms of understanding English.”
	Individual interview, P6, I.55-59	“So, teaching our learners in English from a younger age, maybe starting from primary. It will make it easier for the people who are going to teach these learners in FET and it will be easier for learners again to answer questions in matric.”

#### 4.2.1.3 Sub-theme 1C: Areas of English Proficiency.

Areas of English proficiency relate to language areas such as writing, speaking, viewing and comprehension, which are viewed as a measure of the individual’s command of the language (Whiteside, Gooch & Worbury, 2016). Within the discussions held during the interviews and from the observation lessons, it became apparent that participants (both English educators and content-subject educators) felt that certain areas of English should be focused on, regardless of the subject that is taught. These are areas that the participants believed would lead to greater proficiency and ability to use English across learning situations

The participants felt that exposure to the target language (in this instance, English language) is beneficial to learning and becoming proficient in the language (cf. Table 8). This exposure comes in the form of using English during every lesson.

This is in line with previous studies surrounding language learning, where receptive vocabulary contributes to what is understood by learners in class and if they are more proficient in the language, there will be greater comprehension of concepts (Burgoyne, Kelly, Whitely & Spooner, 2009; Mohangi, Krog, Stephens & Nel, 2016). Similarly, expression in the target language is also important. This also ties in closely with older studies where expressive language usage is also a major contributor to success in language learning and becoming proficient in it (Mohangi, Krog, Stephens & Nel, 2016).

A closer look at specific areas of English that the participants believed span across all subject teaching include vocabulary or terminology teaching, writing, and constructing sentences and paragraphs properly as well as spelling and reading with comprehension. Content-subject educators relied more heavily on terminology or vocabulary learning as a means by which to gauge proficiency in English of their learners as well as sentence construction, while English educators felt that reading held more weight in determining or improving proficiency in English.

The observation of lessons allowed the researcher to witness the use of vocabulary or terminology teaching and checking as being used in a content-subject lesson. In addition, the observation of an English lesson allowed for the witnessing of focus on terminology and reading to be seen. These areas of focus were produced by the participants verbally in their individual interviews and were observed in their classroom teaching practice, which further cements the validity of what they said they believed was important and what they practised in their own classrooms.



**Table 8**
*Excerpts on Areas of English Proficiency*

<b>Area of English Proficiency</b>	<b>Interview type, participant, line number</b>	<b>Quotation</b>
Receptive vocabulary	Individual interview, P6, l.128-131	“If we can stick to English we can also motivate our learners to speak in English, which is going to be easier for them to master all subjects.”
	Individual interview, P1, l.119-121	“At times the learners don’t...understand the terminology so that will lead to the learners not being able to understand the questions.”
	Individual interview, P2, l.193-194	“You really need to explain basic terminology before you can continue with your lesson.”
	Individual interview, P2, l.100-102	“I know definitely, there are learners who perform better, I can say...you can notice that their parents speak English with them at home.”
Expressive vocabulary	Individual interview, P4, l.92-93	“I express myself more when I speak in English than my home language.”
	Individual interview, P5, l.69-70	“Concentrating on the English speaking I think it will help the learners.”
	Observation, P1	Educator able to express meaning and expectations clearly in English.
	Observation, P3	Educator is able to explain the applicability and use of the language structure clearly.

Reading	Individual interview, P4, I.123	“Reading specifically is the key.”
	Individual interview, P3, I.98-101	“The more you read. Your exposure basically, so I definitely think more exposure to the language will improve, be it via...verbal or even non-verbal.”
	Observation, P3	Educator requires learners to read examples on their own and emphasises the need to understand the entirety of what is being discussed rather than only looking at questions on a superficial level.
Writing (sentence construction, punctuation, spelling)	Individual interview, P6, I.53-55	“Some of them... they can’t even construct sentences that are reasonable, which is going to be a challenge.”
	Individual interview, P5, I.314; I318-319	“[It will] encourage learners to write correct spelling... to really emphasise even on sentence construction, punctuation and other things so that it helps is with the English teaching itself.”
	Observation, P3	Educator gives numerous examples and then learners are given questions to practice the skills learned and to ensure that their sentences are well-structured in passive voice.

#### 4.2.1.4 Sub-theme 1D: English Teaching Methodologies.

English teaching methodologies refer to the methods used to teach the language in classrooms, including the use of techniques such as paired reading or skimming and scanning, which enable educators to explain concepts more clearly to learners (Morgan, 2017). Stemming from the discussions with the three English educators in their individual interviews, it became apparent that the participants are

satisfied with the methods used to teach language in schools, as can be seen in Table 9. The only matter of improvement is the incorporation of technology, which was noted by participant 3 and how it could aid in teaching language such as the use of videos to aid understanding literature. These methods are used to further aid understanding, not as the basis of teaching English. What was noted by the six participants in this study was that a lot of the preparation is done for educators, saving them time and effort. Although educators did not mention specific teaching methodologies used in the classroom, from the observation of lessons it became apparent that characteristics related to direct instruction and content-based instruction teaching methods were being used in the classroom.

It would appear then that more must be done to enable educators to feel confident when entering the language classroom. There is often this feeling of being unaware of what to expect from the classroom situation and that a lot of the undergraduate or pre-service training is theoretical, which was noted by the content-subject educator participants interviewed.

Of the educators interviewed, those who went through teaching colleges (these educators studied some years ago and received a more practical form of pre-service training) felt that they were better prepared to enter what would be their reality of teaching. Compare it to the educator who received training through a university who indicated that a major downfall of their pre-service training surrounded the lack of classroom experience. This leads to the content at university being very disjointed to the reality of having to teach it at school level.

From the observation lessons it became clear that the content-subject educator made use of direct instruction when explaining to the entire class, demonstrating how to do the various steps, giving clear instructions to learners and organising the sequence of teaching so that the learners could apply this knowledge in a different situation or sum. The language educator engaged in content-based instruction techniques as the resources used were applicable and of interest to the learners, there was a Power Point which indicates planned elements of the lesson, a variety of statements and questions were used to create variety and to maintain learner interest and the process of changing a statement from active to passive voice was more important than the answers given to specific questions.

**Table 9**
*Excerpts on English Teaching Methodologies*

<b>Methods used to teach in English</b>	<b>Interview type, participant, line number</b>	<b>Quotation</b>
Use of ICT	Focus group interview, P3, l.625-630	“Ja, and learner-teacher support material has been invaluable for teaching of English because uhm, we can use pictures we can bring words to life we can have discussions uh we can shoot videos.”
	Observation, P1	Educator projects questions on the whiteboard and gives activities for learners to complete on Siyavula.
	Observation, P3	Educator uses a PowerPoint presentation to engage learners and their interests, rather than just writing on the whiteboard.
Planning and preparation	Individual interview, P5, l.618-619	“A lot of the preparation is done for us we just need to apply it.’
	Individual interview, P5, l.158-161	“These lessons and everything else, which they give us, they explain how to follow and also teach. Sometimes they give us videos and audios and all those... other teaching methods and stuff.”
	Observation, P1	Educator first discusses the major concepts and techniques that learners later have to apply to their examples through explicit instruction.
	Observation, P3	Educator uses a variety of resources from newspaper headings to cartoons to maintain learners’ interest and create variety in the

		lesson, which indicates use of content-based instruction.
Pre-service training	Individual interview, P6, l.42-43	“I feel like if the practical was a little bit balanced with the theoretical part, I was going to benefit a lot.”
	Individual interview, P5, l.41-43	“So all of those they included English, specifically even if it was History, they were also marking grammar and eh everything else that involves English (Contemporary English and Applied English).”
	Focus group interview, P1, l.873-886	“I went through teacher training. The process ...actually equipped me enough because I spent about two and a half years in the school doing practicals...if you want to adequately prepare you must go for the teacher training one where you are exposed to the classroom situation more than the theoretical part of it.”
	Individual interview, P3, l.35-38	“Varsity level versus English high school level, completely disjointed, and you literally had to sit there and basically put in the gaps or ya...on your own, or with the help of the mentor teacher if a mentor teacher was willing and able.”
	Observation, P1	Educator shows a preference for a more traditional approach to teaching mathematics. There is evidence of direct instruction.
	Observation, P3	Educator showcases the tendency towards using content-based instruction, which is often

		a methodology encouraged during pre-service training.
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#### 4.2.1.5 Relation of Theme 1 to Literature.

The hegemony of English language and the far-reaching effects of this belief are echoed in literature where the continental South was colonised by the British and their language became the norm, taking preference over indigenous African languages. As noted by Coetzee-Van Rooy (2018), there appears to be an inability to overcome the effects of colonisation. This too is echoed by Mkhize and Balfour (2017) who found that the hegemony of English negatively impacts African students. It was interesting to note that the participants also held such beliefs that English language was somehow more valuable to use in teaching than vernacular languages.

From what was learned from the discussions, it became apparent that most of the participants felt that more was needed to aid them in dealing with the actual teaching situation, rather than focusing on the theory behind it so much. The methods the educators use to teach English are similar to methods used for decades as these are what they are taught during their pre-service training. This falls in line with literature stating that teacher training methods need to adjust to meet the new demands of the classroom and the new realities teachers face (Jelińska & Paradowski, 2021). Educators will feel more prepared to enter the classroom when they have received training that prepares them for the realities of the classroom, something that participants viewed as lacking in their pre-service training.

Regarding English as a medium of instruction, the participants, who teach content-subjects, found that they stick to English in the classroom as this is the language the learners will be assessed in. Supporting the view that learning content subjects in an additional language can be beneficial are studies conducted in the Netherlands, a developed nation with a more homogenous language background, which showed improvement in performance when learners were taught and assessed in the additional language (Oattes, Fukkink, Oostdam, De Graaf & Wilschut, 2020). Numerous studies (Hugo & Nieman, 2010; Blandina, 2014) have encouraged the use of vernacular in explaining concepts to learners, or code-

switching, as this can be an additional tool to aid learner understanding of concepts that they may not fully grasp in English, a view that is supported by research into multilingualism in South African schools (Omidire, 2021).

In literature, there are stumbling blocks when the medium of instruction stands in opposition to the language used and understood by learners in the school. Findings from one such study indicated that assessment is negatively impacted when there are language barriers (Vuzo, 2018). The participants in this study felt that English can be used a way to bridge the gap, to create common ground with the learners as the sheer volume of languages spoken and understood by learners would be too difficult to incorporate in their teaching practice. These beliefs are acted upon in the observed lessons as both the content-subject educator and the language educator were mainly using English to express themselves and to explain content. Evidence of direct instruction is present in the content-subject educator's lesson as the lesson delivered was to the entire class, had a lecturing style, it was very structured and well-organised and the educator monitored the learners' activities and provided them with feedback (Killen, 2015). The language educator's lesson indicated that content-based instruction was used as the following criteria were met- various resources were used, there was variety, there was interactive teaching and scaffolding of knowledge and methods pertaining to the use of active and passive voice in English (Wessels, 2010). This reflects the integration of knowledge of teaching methodologies in practice.

Studies in South Africa on literacy in the younger years, have supported the viewpoints above that focusing on expressive language is important, but also using the language outside of school, in the home (Sibanda & Kailee, 2019). Reading with meaning has also been found in other studies to support English proficiency (Morgan, 2017; Whiteside, Gooch & Worbury, 2016). The educators showed a great understanding that language learning does not happen in a vacuum and that areas of language proficiency impact all subjects being taught at school. As the final point of discussion for the first theme of English in a multilingual context, the discussion turns towards English teaching methodologies being used in the classroom by the participants in this study. The participants believe that reading, receptive vocabulary, expressive vocabulary, punctuation, spelling and sentence construction are the English proficiency areas that should be focused on in teaching to assist learners.

ICT usage in the classroom has become more closely studied as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and knowing how to use it effectively in class, such as seen above, will prove to be invaluable skills going forward (Pozo-Rico, Gilar-Corbi, Izquierdo & Castejón, 2020). When asked about the use of ICT in teaching, the participants showed an understanding that there is a clear move towards its incorporation in education and that they feel adequately prepared to make the shift as they have the necessary resources to make use of these strategies in their teaching.

#### **4.2.2 Theme 2: Professional Development**

Professional development includes all in-service training that educators receive once they have entered the educational field. This includes workshops, professional learning communities and more recently, webinars (Mestry, Hendricks & Bisschoff, 2009; Canh, 2019). The data sets revealed findings relating to professional development that showed the attitudes of the participants towards professional development opportunities. This theme is broken down into two sub-themes: current training available and the second being future training possibilities. These are illustrated in Table 10 and are discussed in lieu of the data presented in the focus group interviews and the individual interviews.

##### **4.2.2.1 Sub-theme 2A: Current Training Available.**

Current training available pertains to the professional development of educators available to them once they have entered the educational field. It includes all opportunities for them to improve on their skills and competencies through training opportunities provided in the educational sector. Participants expressed their discontent with the current training that is made available to them through both the private sector (CCMD: Curro Curriculum Management and Design) as well as those from the DBE (Department of Basic Education). A major shortcoming in the view of participants is that training sessions since the outbreak of COVID-19 have been virtually presented. A lot of the input during the focus group interview was received from participant 2 and participant 3, so the other participants were asked for their input during the researcher's individual interviews with them.



Participants made it clear that the online platform used currently was not to their satisfaction, constantly referring to the previous model used, that of workshops with face-to-face sessions in the interviews, as provided in the excerpts. On the other hand, some of the participants also experienced some difficulties using the old face-to-face model such as language difficulties when workshops are not presented in English. Overall, it was interesting to note that current online training is seen as being helpful when it relates to new content or provides guidance.

**Table 10**

*Excerpts of Current Training Available*

<b>View of training methods</b>	<b>Interview type, participant, line number</b>	<b>Quotation</b>
Preference for face-to-face sessions	Focus group interview, P2, l.1301-1310	“I think it was more valuable in person. Currently, to have a Teams meeting. Like the last one, the government scheduled since from, from eight o’clock in the morning till four thirty in the afternoon on Saturday – to sit down, to (interruption from participant 3). That’s not, that’s not gonna help, it frustrates you more than what it actually... helps you.”
	Focus group interview, P3, l.1350-1352	“And the actual interaction, actually see people (murmurs of ‘ja’ in agreement).”
	Focus group interview, P3, l.1440-1443	“On the Teams meeting, when there’s hundreds of people who you don’t know, could be intimidating, maybe.”
	Individual interview, P4, l.182-184	“I don’t really enjoy the meetings on Teams because you don’t get to associate with your other colleagues, learn something from them, get resources.”

	Individual interview, P5, l.179-184	“I prefer face-to-face because during that time of workshops, you could even go after the workshop and ask those facilitators or you could even ask during the uhmm workshop where you didn’t understand and other teachers’ contributions also helped so much, because we learn from each other the contributions they were making.”
Problems with face-to-face training sessions	Focus group interview, P5, 542-548	“You will feel very uncomfortable like they individually you would think of looking for somewhere else to go when very uncomfortable even when it was those department workshops. I usually delayed to get in the room.”
Online training sessions	Individual interview, P1, l.93-94	“Some of them, they’ve been helpful but some have been just repetitions of what we already have been taught.”
	Individual interview, P4, l.166-168	“I can say [good ones are] the meetings, the Zoom meetings that guide us on what to do, how to do the project, how to do everything is the meetings that I have been...”
	Individual interview, P5, l.157-160	“We also had a meeting last term on Teams that ...that prepared us and also these lessons and everything else which they give us, they explain how to follow and also teach.”

#### 4.2.2.2 Sub-theme 2B: Future Training Possibilities.

Educators were requested to give their views on the format they would prefer for future training opportunities that would be made available to them. Close inspection of the data sets revealed what the participating educators felt would make for improved training opportunities in the future. Training opportunities refer to the developmental opportunities the educators receive once they have commenced their in-service duties as educators.

Similar to the sentiments aired under the section discussing sub-theme 2A, a number of the participants indicated a desire to return to face-to-face workshops as they believed that it held more value for them to interact with colleagues. Educators are slow to change, and hold fast to their beliefs that face-to-face opportunities are better. However, studies indicate that there may be other reasons why this interface is preferred such as the ability then to focus on areas of difficulty experienced in the classroom setting, to engage in professional learning communities and to draw on the knowledge of specialists to assist educators (Ajani, 2020).

It is possible that the interactive possibilities available through the use of online platforms have not fully been considered by the organisers of the developmental opportunities. However, there has been a determined shift towards the use of ICT in education and educators will need to receive training through these platforms and how to make use of it in their own teaching practice (Jelińska & Paradowski, 2021).

Further insight was given into the nature of these workshops, irrespective of their format (whether online or in-person) reflected the need for session content to be focused. The format appeared to be quite closely linked to how the content is carried out. The focus fell on the time available and the idea that structure matters and that feedback and continuity also play into the nature of training opportunities on offer.

However, not much consideration from the participants indicated what would happen to the learners during times when the educators would be taken from school to participate in training. Other solutions would need to be considered instead of removing educators during contact time for training. From the responses of the participating educators, it is not unwillingness that then seems to lead to educators not participating, but indeed the teaching context they find themselves in as they see it as impacting their availability as they must adapt to their teaching environment. Attention was drawn to what motivates educators to participate or would motivate them in the future such as incentives.

Based on responses and years of teaching experience the educators have, the participants would fall under one of the three Stages of Development by Daloz (1986 as cited in Merriam & Bierema, 2013). For example, P4 is still coming to terms with how to approach teaching the subject and is in more of a survival mode (pre-

conventional stage of development), which means that the type of training that would benefit this participant would be centred more around teaching methods as the educator is still learning. P3 is in the conventional stage of development as there is a desire to stay on par with expectations, this means that choices regarding professional development would be influenced to include manners in which the educator can stay abreast of the latest developments in education. P1, P2, P5 and P6 are in the post-conventional stage as they are more reflective of their practices and more evaluative. These four participants will likely benefit from more reflective and evaluative programmes as they have been teaching long enough to fully understand what their strengths and weaknesses are.

As indicated in previous studies (Canh, 2019), there is still a top-down approach used when planning professional development opportunities as noted by the participants in the study. However, the educators felt they could add value to the planning phase of these courses as they are the ones in the classrooms and they know what it is they are struggling with. Therefore, they can provide real-life insights into their daily struggles.

Furthermore, one participant felt that facilitators must be carefully chosen as they will be responsible for the implementation of these developmental opportunities. As such, they must ensure they are addressing participants in a language they understand.

The participants indicated they were willing to partake in developmental opportunities aimed at improving their English proficiency in the future (cf. Table 11). Nonetheless, sensitivity to the background of educators and how to handle this was of concern as it may just discourage participation. This is seen in a study conducted by Chireshe and Makura (2014) originally and as discussed in a study by McInerney (2019) more recently show they noted that having educators feeling incapable of teaching or carrying out their duties is not beneficial. Therefore, the method used to engage educators in opportunities to improve their English would have to be handled in very sensitive ways; it has to be done tactfully. In addition, some participants regarded encouraging self-development would be key. The participants were able to envision some ways in which this difficult topic of training educators to teach in English efficiently could be handled, which included online platforms, interactive platforms that provide feedback and a few other ideas.

Other ideas centred around certain topics that could be covered such as how to get parents involved in developing their child's English proficiency. In addition, participant 1 felt that a programme aimed at improving English proficiency in educators should highlight how to simplify the language to meet the needs of learners.

**Table 11**

*Excerpts of Future Training Possibilities*

<b>Training possibilities</b>	<b>Interview type, participant, line number</b>	<b>Quotation</b>
View of online training	Individual interview, P4, l. 190; l.193	"So on Zoom you just sit there...it's not eh eh participative."
Suggested platforms	Focus group interview, P3, l.1277-1278	"If it's online, it must be very focused and uhm, definitely interactive."
	Individual interview, P2, l.366-367	"I think working with online tools. Okay, working with an online teaching system where students can actually do this on their own."
	Individual interview, P3, l.265-267	"It was an online thing where they went through the language structures, reading interventions, skills"
	Individual interview, P4, l.230-231	"I can go online like there's broad internet knowledge."
Content to include	Individual interview, P3, l.195-196; l.198-199	"Ja just that they must, like be focused. Be shorter, be to the point. Let's get through it...I think when there is such structure people tend to like it, it's more impactful and then you engage."

	Focus group interview, P3, I.1327-1330	“I think they should be short, targeted and focused...focusing on one aspect of development, look at it, narrow in.”
	Focus group interview, P2, I.1332-1333	“A bigger package, here’s something you can use.”
	Individual interview, P4, I.221; I. 227	“I think the involvement of parents... they should be hands-on as well...facilitating in getting parents on board.”
Impact of teaching environment	Focus group interview, P1, I.935-938	“We are diverting (from planning and having to make adjustments to our teaching methods) because of the current situation of we have to fit in the environment of teaching.”
	Individual interview, P1, I.24-25	“I think...we are not really considered much, it’s just a top-down approach.”
	Individual interview, P4, I.38-39	“Most of the time they do their planning without, I think they should also add us. They should seek our inputs on how we go about that.”
	Individual interview, P6, I.22-27	“Teachers are the ones that are actually involved in the actual teaching and development of learners, so the input of teachers can make a great influence on our learners, because at the meantime we are having a challenge that the policymakers are not the people who are actually on the ground.”
	Individual interview, P5, I.210	“It must start from the top to bottom. [A reference of the behaviour of facilitators who engage in code-switching during workshops without considering the context of the educators who are in their training sessions].”

Motivation to participate	Individual interview, P6, I.256-260	“If our organisation again can also motivate us in terms of training and development, like other institutions they say if a teacher gets a certain training, you’ll get recognised at work...on line on promotion...maybe can be an allowance...help us maybe with the money as an incentive to help us develop ourselves.”
	Individual interview, P3, I.307	“It’s also a matter of self-development.”
	Individual interview, P5, I.227-231	“I mean even studying even without...waiting for the school to say there is a workshop, there is a development in English. I must just have, say. “I want to improve my learning uhmm my teaching strategies”. I can go online.”
View of English Proficiency training	Individual interview, P5, I.196-199	“And again if we can remove the teachers’ attitudes towards English, you’d find that some other teachers, they have attitudes towards the language, so therefore it will hinder their progress.”
	Individual interview, P3, I.248-252; I.256-257	“How do you then approach someone and say uhh “I don’t really think you are very skilled in language and therefore you must go on an individual course or programme to improve your skills...I think there might be a lot of contention around that.”
	Individual interview, P3, I.274; I.277; I.285-286	“A platform...that’s continuous development...it is non-threatening would impact motivation and willingness...”
	Individual interview, P.2, I.272-274; 277	“If there was a grading system or something where and these skills should be tested I think,

		it's not something where you know once...and ...End up teaching what you learned.”
	Individual interview, P1, I.107-109	“Highlight how to simplify the language without changing the content, so that you go to the level of the learners.”

#### 4.2.2.3 Relation of Theme 2 to Literature.

A recent study considering COVID and the impact it has had on the workplace and methods of communication show that different approaches must be considered whether training or workspaces move online or make use of hybrid measures as the uncertainty of the current situation demands it (Ajani, 2020). It becomes clear that the participants are not yet open to this shift or movement to training or having to teach using online platforms. However, to better understand this hesitancy to newer platforms may be addressed when considering what educators feel would make for improved future training opportunities.

Studies around the professional development of in-service educators has focused on the availability of time as in-service educators often lack time and yearn for flexibility and brevity when engaging in developmental opportunities (Heystek & Terhoven, 2015; McInerney, 2019). Motivation is viewed as being a necessary element to encourage participation is not a new one and is echoed in other studies (Chireshe & Makura, 2014; Heystek & Terhoven, 2015; McInerney, 2019). The type of motivation sought differs depending on the context the educator finds themselves in. In this study, it became apparent that money and other incentives would encourage participation in professional development opportunities.

It becomes clearer which Stage of Development by Daloz the educator will fall under (1986 as cited in Merriam & Bierema, 2013) based on the participants' biographical data and their responses regarding their current and future training possibilities. It indicates that the educators will engage in training opportunities that meet their needs, rather than purely because of their language context (1986 as cited in Merriam & Bierema, 2013). The pre-conventional stage is where the younger educators will engage in training that will assist them the most in learning new ways in which to teach their subject (1986 as cited in Merriam & Bierema, 2013). More



experienced educators will tend towards the conventional stage where they are basing training on fitting in and moving with the trends in education. The post-conventional stage educator (teaching for 20 years or more) will be more interested in reflective opportunities when it comes to training as they are in a more reflective stage of their lives (1986 as cited in Merriam & Bierema, 2013).

Educators want to be more involved in all levels of planning, as seen from participant responses. This holds true when considering literature as teacher involvement in all levels of planning is considered a necessary component of getting them involved and seen as a means by which to empower them and enable them to take ownership of the programmes (Chireshe & Makura, 2014; Heystek & Terhoven, 2015; McInerney, 2019). Should educators be left out of the planning phase, it leads to disengagement and this influences their willingness to participate, as echoed by responses received from participants in this study.

Sparse research has dealt with English proficiency in educators and methods that can be used to develop it. The participants, therefore, added to the body of knowledge on how we can approach training that may be sensitive to deal with as seen in the studies by Chireshe and Makura (2014) and McInerney (2019). When considering the professional development of in-service educators, one must not discount the value of the undergraduate training the educators went through to obtain their teaching qualifications as this adds to the conceptual framework that helps frame the understanding of teacher development choices.

#### **4.2.3 Theme 3: Undergraduate Training**

The data collected revealed that undergraduate training (training received that enables individuals to enter the educational sphere and occurs before they commence official teaching duties) had an impact on both willingness to participate in professional development, the formats of training that would be considered, and on how prepared the educator felt to tackle the classroom situation. This impacts the conceptual framework (as described in Chapter 2 as an interaction between two theories – the Stage Development Theory and the Systemic Functional Linguistic model) in a way that had not been considered before when discussing the educator's concept and provided a link between the educator's context (influenced by their undergraduate training) and their choice of a developmental programme. The choice of course chosen to become an educational professional, can be

achieved through obtaining a teaching diploma, degree from a university or Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) (Jelińska & Paradowski, 2021). This was included as a consideration under Chapter 2 and the conceptual framework as included in Chapter 3.

As can be seen in Table 12, It became apparent that the educators had become professionals through a variety of programmes that impacted their beliefs and what they considered regarding professional development courses on offer. Two educators were trained through teaching colleges, they are foreign teachers whose home language is Shona and had been in the profession for more than 20 years. However, they had difficulties teaching in environments with diverse African languages as they could not understand the local vernacular.

One of the participants had diverted from a different degree into education through a PGCE and felt that classroom exposure was limited, with a reliance on English as this participant is also a foreign educator. The two remaining educators had completed teaching degrees through universities and were both South African and can speak and understand several African languages, which they have used to their advantage in the classroom to assist learners in understanding work. Nonetheless, the participants still felt the courses were overly theoretical.

The undergraduate training participants received partially prepared them to teach in English settings, but their feelings around having to teach in English and how well they could do it and whether or not they would engage in courses aimed at developing English proficiency appeared to be related to their level of preparedness. Another factor influencing decision-making is the planning of courses and teacher involvement in it, which is discussed next.

**Table 12**

*Excerpts on Undergraduate Training*

<b>Impact of undergraduate training</b>	<b>Interview type, participant, line number</b>	<b>Quotation</b>
Understanding of vernacular languages	Focus group interview, P1, I.486-491	“In my case, it was the Orange Farm, where the meetings were held in Zulu, that because you are black, the assumption was, like you understand the local language, but that was not the case.”
	Focus group interview, P5, I.532-542	“So you would find that demographic position of the teacher... it actually influences participation but especially even in classroom delivery. Because you will find children would like to ask you in (indigenous) African (languages), and you can't answer, they would like to speak in Zulu and you cannot also integrate properly even outside they would like to join you and say “huh ma'am” just social topics.”
	Focus group interview, P4, I.563-566	“So I can understand all other languages, even though I cannot respond to something, but I can hear it loud and clear.”
	Focus group interview, P3, I.388-390	“And the response I got was that we don't speak vernac, we speak English.”
	Observation, P1	Educator communicates in English only and requires learners to do the same.
	Observation, P3	Educator communicates in English mainly, with one example of integrating vernacular language into the lesson.

Impact of undergraduate training type	Focus group interview, P6, I.572-584	“Although I’m not a local person I also had an advantage of coming here, here and there, so I can understand most of the (unintelligible word) languages, I can’t speak but I can understand...So it made me more comfortable to work in any school because I can hear it and also laugh with them.”
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#### 4.2.3.1 Relation of Theme 3 to Literature.

Both participant 1 and participant 5 indicated willingness to engage in professional development opportunities geared towards improving English proficiency as they believed English is important in education, which is seen in studies relating to the hegemony of English (Mkhize & Balfour, 2017). These two educators also indicated their willingness to participate in developmental opportunities to improve English proficiency but indicated that there would need to be considerations of how it is dealt with due to its sensitive nature. Their ability to speak vernacular is used to aid learners’ understanding in class, which is also seen in studies such as the one conducted by Mkhize and Balfour (2017) and Coetzee-Van Rooy (2018). This ability is influenced by the educator’s own background, their home language and where they were raised. This also meant they studied locally and completed a degree in education, thus allowing them to still see value in their mother tongue and using it to assist learners in class.

#### 4.2.4 *Theme 4: Educator Involvement in Planning*

Another theme came out in the analysis of the data sets that related to how involved educators are allowed to be in planning of professional development courses and how they would want it to change in the future. There are two sub-themes, current approaches and educator needs. The degree to which educators believe they are involved in current planning geared towards professional development.

Some participants held the belief that planning excluded the educators, who were involved in the study, in terms of their diversity in languages, which often lead to discomfort (cf. Table 13). Planning of courses is also seen to follow a top-down

approach, where support is given in terms of all planning and content the in-service educators must teach their learners, which relieves some stress for educators, but that the top-down approach is considered as being out of context to their teaching realities.

This is in line with other research as studies find that most planning of content is created without the input of teachers who are working on the ground, the preference remains one of using a top-down approach (Dichaba, 2011; Ajani, 2020). This also ties in with research that shows what educators feel is lacking in training, that of applicability where the information can be used in the teaching situation (Leibowitz, Bozalek, van Schalkwyk & Winberg, 2015). Educators feel that they need to be informed of and involved in the planning and creation of training programmes so that they can truly take ownership of it and feel empowered through the process. This also corroborates earlier studies by Chireshe and Makura (2014) and Heystek and Terhoven (2015), and more recently McInerney (2019), which pointed to educators feeling disregarded in the planning process; therefore, they feel the programmes were not useful, and as a result, are reluctant to participate in professional development opportunities. The question we then face is, what then do teachers need from courses that will encourage their participation in them? This is discussed in Sub-theme 4A: Educators' needs.

**Table 13**

*Excerpts on Educator Involvement in Planning*

<b>Educator involvement in planning</b>	<b>Interview type, participant, line number</b>	<b>Quotation</b>
Feelings of educators	Focus group interview, P5, I.522-525	“So I would look for an Indian lady or any other teacher is sitting there, I will feel comfortable.”
Top-down approach	Individual interview, P1, L.24-25	“I think uhmmm we are not really considered much, it’s just a top-down approach.”
	Individual interview, P4, I.38	“Most of the time they do their planning without...(us)”
	Individual interview, P6, I.21-22	“It is very vital for them to consider ehh the teaching context.”

**4.2.4.1 Sub-theme 4A: Educators’ Needs.**

It is clear through literature that for educators to engage in professional development courses, many obstacles stand in the way, such as lack of time (Heystek & Terhoven, 2015; Spaul, 2016; Whiteside, Gooch & Worbury, 2016; McInerney, 2019). To encourage participation, the needs of educators, in terms of training, need to be discussed.

From the observation and as referred to in Table 14, it became clear that participant 1 was proficient in English, but indicated during the individual interview, that there could be benefits to training specifically focusing on English usage in the classroom. This focused a lot on the capacity to enable comprehension of content in the classroom to learners. This is echoed by participant 2 who held a firm belief that his language has “definitely (been) watered down” (Individual interview, P2, I.176) over his years of teaching. In addition, training should be focused on mentorship and how they will be useful to teachers in the classroom, how they can

benefit from it and that programmes should be flexible. The extent to which an educator will be able to deliver their content adequately was shown to relate to the educator's English proficiency, as noted in the observation lesson of P1 where the use of formal terminology purely led to greater confusion and needed further explanation, thus agreeing with a statement made by P1 in the individual interview, which relates to being able to teach and alter the language usage in the classroom to meet learner needs and how this could form part of the focus for a literacy programme.

In addition, during the individual interview sessions with two participants, participant two commented that training should be done at "own pace" (Individual interview, P2, I.419), while participant 3 believed training should be more focused and structured.

The majority of the participants felt that more participative-styled courses would be more beneficial as they get to engage with the content and they allow them to see how to use them and where they can be used.

This shows a trend towards training that helps educators with topics they are struggling with, such as getting parents involved in the learning of their children or how to address learners with specific educational needs. Comments from some participants showed their support for this. A lot of the time educators feel the work that is dealt with is repetitive and that they should change the focus to weaknesses of educators. The timing of courses was considered very important.

Found in this study is that educators felt better supported in their teaching situation and more confident in teaching in English where there were adequate resources at the school. The participating educators also noted the impact of having these easily accessible resources made available to teachers.

It is evident that teachers should be the focus of the teaching and more must be done to investigate what it is the educators need in their context. This then leads to the final theme's discussion of educators' context in terms of the use of language, educators' background and the work environment.

**Table 14**

*Excerpts on Educators' Needs*

<b>Needs of educators</b>	<b>Interview type, participant, line number</b>	<b>Quotation</b>
English proficiency needs	Individual interview, P1, l.99; l.107-109; l.119-120	"I think it's helpful...I think it would highlight how to simplify the language without changing the content, so that you go to the level of the learners...understand the terminology..."
	Observation, P1	Explanations are given in formal English and at times, the terminology used by the educator is difficult. This leads to learners having to ask for additional assistance or a more simplified explanation.
Benefits of participation	Individual interview, P2, l.267	"If I gain something for my portfolio."
	Individual interview, P2, l.295-296	"You know the outliers in their field and and specific topics that can teach that that teachers or anyone can learn from."
Timing	Individual interview, P3, l.207-210	"More structure around the topics I think participants will feel a lot more motivated to attend and to know this is how my time is going to be spent."
	Focus group interview, P3, l.1398-1399	"Keep it to the week, working weekdays, don't expect people's private time. ('yes' from participant 5)."
	Focus group interview, P6, l.1414	"And it should not be too long again."
Style/format	Focus group interview, P3,	"It should be interactive...break away into small discussion groups like four uhm, people and everyone in that group gets to be added



	I.1478; I.1481-1484	and then gets to present to the rest of the forum.”
	Individual interview, P4, L.195-199	“I prefer it like that, so that we can learn like the other meeting I once went to. We were divided into groups where you have to learn, then I discovered that oh, other schools they also struggling on this. Then we helped each other.”
	Focus group interview, P1, I.598-601	“Availability of the internet, the availability of devices to use that will lead you to be able to have videos or somebody to explain it better.”
Content of sessions	Focus group interview, P1, L.1377-1378)	“Like a development where my learners can achieve better at; that I’ll go for”
	Individual interview, P5, I.201-206)	“You get to interact with other colleagues, you get to get to get new ideas on how to handle certain situations, how do you deal with difficult learners, how do you deal with learners with barriers because we are not people who are really trained to teach special needs but we get those learners in our classes.”
	Focus group interview, P6, I.1422-1423	“So at least if they can focus on what participant number 2 emphasised, our weaknesses, not our strengths.”

#### 4.2.4.2 Relation of Theme 4 to Literature.

What became clear from participant responses is that there is a greater need for more individualised learning opportunities. Considering that the training is geared towards adults, the approach would be better suited to one-on-one development sessions through shorter courses. Participation would be influenced by the level of support received from the school itself. Both the format and support received at school level will be a major consideration in meeting the needs of educators with

regard to their training opportunities and the choices they will make regarding this. This can be dealt with by making training opportunities more customisable through the use of online platforms, as indicated by a recent study carried out by Pozo-Rico, Gilar-Corbi, Izquierdo and Castejón (2020).

It becomes evident that motivating factors such as allowances or monetary contributions are also necessary on the part of educators, which must be considered as seen in the discussion of previous themes. This again, is something recognised as a contributing factor to participation in developmental programmes in different studies such as those conducted by Chireshe and Makura (2014) as well as one by Heystek and Terhoven (2015) and McInerney (2019) which showed that finances are often the reason why educators are unable to participate adequately in development opportunities. The support offered at all levels, from school level to district level, impacts willingness to engage and this was seen in statements made by the participants as well as in previous literature, (De Clercq & Phiri, 2013). Parental involvement in literacy training at home is acknowledged as important in a study conducted by Sibanda and Kailee (2019). As seen in previous studies, authenticity and the consideration of the teachers in their contexts is important (Dichaba, 2011; Johnson, 2015; Ajani, 2020).

#### **4.2.5 Theme 5: Educators' Language Context**

The context the educator works in has an influence on their working and personal lives. Educators' context can be defined as being inclusive of their working environment, but also includes the social context they are in. A theme that came out of the interviews and observation, was that educator context is important, specifically the language context This will be discussed using two sub-themes: Sub-theme 5A: Use of language and Sub-theme 5B: Educators' background and work environment.

##### **4.2.5.1 Sub-theme 5A: Use of Language.**

Use of language refers to the mother tongue of the educator as well as the language the educator uses in daily interactions (Linares, 2013). Language usage should be considered in terms of the language the educator speaks, their mother tongue and then the language used in their work environment for teaching purposes

versus what is used socially in the work environment. This helps shape what is understood by educators' context.

There were three participants whose mother tongue is Shona (a foreign African language, not native to South Africa), one participant's home language is Afrikaans, one's mother tongue is Zulu and another one participant's home language is Xhosa (both are considered vernacular languages in South Africa). Of those who spoke foreign African languages, their overall impression was that they had to adapt more to the English work environment, but that their own education focused on English (cf. Table 15).

However, the struggle experienced by those whose mother tongue was a foreign African language related more to learners using their own languages in class and that they were limited in their understanding of it as attested to by some participants. Those whose mother tongue was a local South African language (vernacular) felt that their struggles centred around the assumption they can speak all African languages and their focus was on expanding learner vocabulary in English. The one participant who could not speak or understand any of the vernacular languages felt that a lot can be lost in translation and that little to no guidance can be offered when you do not understand what is being said around you.

Those who are able to understand and speak some local African vernacular will incorporate it to accommodate learners, whereas those who speak foreign African languages as their mother tongue have developed a sense of the local languages, but cannot necessarily speak them. It became apparent that the sampled participants used English in most school-related situations as this is the main language of communication at the school.

This then moves on to the next sub-theme's discussion: that of the Educators' background.

**Table 15**
*Excerpts on Use of Language*

<b>Language usage</b>	<b>Interview type, participant, line number</b>	<b>Quotation</b>
Teaching in English predominantly	Individual interview, P6, I.94-103	“As someone who is teaching learners from diverse backgrounds, I think it is very important for us to teach in English. It’s easier for our learners to understand us as educators and it also makes it easier for them to communicate. I think you know South Africa have got so many languages, so if they can communicate in English and teachers can teach in English it made it it makes it easier for everyone to understand the class and to accommodate everyone.”
	Individual interview, P5, I.90-92	“But with all training and teaching, even at home our small ones even as young...it depends with family background anywhere but we emphasise in English mostly.”
	Individual interview, P1, I.69-70	“I don’t feel it’s much of a challenge because I feel everyone is trained is, that’s the normal language of education.”
	Focus group interview, P1, I.188-193	“So there was a gap between me trying to explain a concept to a student or not, I couldn’t get proper feedback, because they couldn’t even speak the language.”
	Focus group interview, P6, I.393-405	“In terms of diversity of languages and schools, uhm, as something that is going on in most schools and it will also help or add value to the way we teach our learners in our classes like a subject like accounting might explain the concept to yourself as I teach in

		English, but some of the learners might not grasp the concept, but if another learner explained to them in their own language they will understand it better. So, we can't really rule out diversity."
	Focus group interview, P5, I.306-309	"This environment where we are now, they are enforcing English as our main language in school."
	Observation, P1	Only provides examples and explanations in English.
	Observation, P3	Encourages learners to use English in the class but incorporated some vernacular into an explanation when learners were struggling to grasp the content.
Challenge of not speaking vernacular language	Focus group interview, P5, I.146-152	"You'll find when you are teaching English, they will want to use their mother language in between. So that's a challenge, especially what some of us will not have the background of any South African language."
	Focus group interview, P6, I.201-206	"It was very difficult for me to help learners because I could not understand Tsonga and most learners would want you to explain in their own language so that they can get the concept."
	Focus group interview, P4, I.119-121	"For me, I would say it was difficult to teach in a township where it was a combination of the languages."
	Focus group interview, P2, I.160; I.165-166	"There are instances where I feel lost...I can't correct them or you know, guide them."
	Observation, P1	Engages only in English and requires the same from learners – there is no tolerance for use of vernacular in class as the educator

		does not understand fully what they are saying.
Educator's proficiency in English	Focus group interview, P3, I.212-215; I.222-223	"For the first school I was at, it was more rectifying pronunciation of words and expanding learners' vocab...I think for them my accent threw them off."

#### 4.2.5.2 Sub-theme 5B: Educator Background and Work Environment.

Educator background and work environment can be defined as the educator's previous teaching experiences in differing contexts. For this study's purposes, it should be understood as how the experiences of working in different contexts have shaped the views and beliefs of the educator. The environments educators have taught in before have an impact on their current beliefs and feelings regarding their current situation and this, therefore, has to be discussed as it adds another layer of understanding to the educator context. A working explanation is given in Table 16.

It is evident that the participating educators who have worked in rural areas had a different experience of usage of languages in the classroom. Those who taught in more rural settings struggled more to use some methods to accommodate learners with less understanding of English; they used vernacular when they had little knowledge of these languages themselves. However, those participating educators who could use vernacular were able to engage differently with learners. The participants who worked in more affluent areas, had learners whom they could almost entirely communicate with in English.

This context of teaching in rural areas may lead educators to view their current teaching situation (that of a multilingual teaching environment) differently. This may include viewing their current challenges as not being as major or as large of an issue to the educator or not considering certain experiences as challenges because they have experienced worse in different settings. However, a causal link cannot be established from the data that was collected. The impression created from responses certainly pointed to educators judging their current experiences and attitudes towards training as being impacted by their previous teaching experiences in other environments. As expressed by participants, their previous working

environments differed from their current one, where English is viewed as being a language that more of the learners have some knowledge of and proficiency in.

**Table 16**

*Excerpts on Educator Background and Environment*

<b>Effect of educator background and environment</b>	<b>Interview type, participant, line number</b>	<b>Quotation</b>
Influence of learner knowledge of LoLT	Focus group interview, P1, l.177-181	“I was teaching learners in Eastern Cape where the learners couldn’t even understand just a sentence in English. And imagine you want to teach math.”
	Individual interview, P4, l.42-43; l.52-54	“There are other learners who are behind who were learning from rural areas. They never did that content... It goes both ways, cause I can be good in English. My accent and everything but if the child is not willing,... then there’s nothing you can do.”
	Individual interview, P6, l.48-52	“Yes, I think especially in rural areas, I once taught in rural areas. You see that most of the teachers, they end up using their vernacular to explain concepts, which is going to be difficult for learners to ahh answer questions when it comes to exam. Why? Because they are now ...translating their own home language to English.”
	Observation, P1	Terminology and meaning are focused on in the lesson to ensure learners grasp the content and will be able to answer examination questions posed in English.

	Observation, P3	Focus is on learners understanding the real-life application of the term so that they can more readily identify the various language elements that contribute to active and passive voice.
Educator backgrounds	Individual interview, P2, I.128; I.154-156)	“I steered away from Afrikaans schools...”
	Individual interview, P6, I.73-78	“So if the teacher is sometimes diverting and mixing languages, I think that won’t help learners. Even if we are trying uhm to help them understand the concept but they will understand in their mother language or in any other language, which might also disturb their understanding of English.”
	Individual interview, P6, I.70-74	“It was something that I really wanted to do, like teaching in English because of course I’m a Shona, things were done in English cause eh can I just...in Zim they also uh take English as something that is very important.”
Educator knowledge of LoLt	Focus group interview, P3; I.111-112; I.212-215; I.290-292	“I think I resonate with you because I started at an Afrikaans/English medium school...for the first school I was at was more rectifying pronunciation of words, and expanding learners’ vocab...I think they are a lot more expressive when they are speaking in their home languages.”

#### 4.2.5.3 Relation of Theme 5 to Literature.

In the South African situation where there are eleven official languages, there are going to be many feelings surrounding the use of language at school (Johnson, 2015; Mkhize & Balfour, 2017), however, what was discovered in this study is that



the language the educator themselves was raised in and, therefore, what they have been exposed to, impacts the language they use.

It was interesting to note that the educators had picked up similar trouble teaching in rural contexts as educators involved in studies from earlier years (Mohangi, Krog, Stephens & Nel, 2016). This shapes the view that educators have regarding the use of multi-modal language practices in the classroom as they do not necessarily have previous experiences where it aided them and learners. This is contradictory to the studies conducted by Mkhize and Balfour (2017) and Coetzee-Van Rooy (2018) which showed growing trends towards using multiple languages in teaching strategies employed in classrooms.

#### **4.2.6 Findings from the observation lessons**

The purpose of the observation of lessons was to reinforce and see in action how the educators approach teaching in their classes. The observation lessons allowed for key characteristics of two main teaching methodologies used to be incorporated – direct instruction in P1’s observed lesson and content-based instruction in P3’s observed lesson. This data could then be used to triangulate the findings of some of the themes (relating to Sub-theme 1A: The hegemony of English; Sub-theme 1B: English as a medium of instruction; Sub-theme 1C: Areas of English Proficiency; Sub-theme 1D: English Teaching Methodologies; Sub-theme 4A: Educators’ needs; Sub-theme 5A: Use of Language; Sub-theme 5B: Educator background and work environment).

The findings relate to the views of the two observed educators’ teaching methods in a classroom that places emphasis on just how important English is deemed to be in the educational setting, which relates to previous studies such as Mkhize and Balfour (2017) and Coetzee-Van Rooy (2018) where it is emphasised as holding great weight for the future of the learner. From the observed behaviours in the classroom, it became clear that educators will, as far as possible, only use English in their classes as they believe this will assist learners in performing better in examinations, a finding seen from a study conducted by Vuzo (2018).

What became clear from the observation lessons is that proficiency in the language of instruction is closely linked to how well content will be understood and explained by the educator, a view that is echoed in Mkhize and Balfour’s study from

2017. The educators were found to be proficient in their use of English in terms of their subject terminology, however, finding simplified ways of engaging with the terminology and making it more accessible to learners was a key point of concern from P1 who teaches a content subject.

From the observation of the English educator's (P3's) grammar lesson, the teaching methodology applied was content-based instruction. This was identified as a number of characteristics found in literature by Wessels (2010) and Schoepp (2018) indicate that this method is commonly used in the English as an Additional Language classroom as a teaching strategy. This comprises immersing language content within real-life examples that learners can relate to and then apply the skills they have learned to new examples. From observing P1, direct instruction characteristics came to the forefront as the lesson was in more of a whole-class and lecturing style where the educator is responsible for the content and is viewed as the knowledgeable entity in the teaching and learning situation. This is echoed in the book on teaching strategies by Killen (2015) where the characteristics mentioned, appear.

The need for educators to improve their proficiency in the language came to attention from observing the content-subject educator's (P1) lesson where the educator struggled to simplify the terminology and methods used to the learners. This sentiment is shared in studies relating to English proficiency and the impact it has on learning, as seen in Nekongo-Nielsen and Ngololo (2020) and Sibanda and Kailee's 2019 study. P1 refrained from using vernacular or including vernacular languages in the class procedures at all, the educator only explained work in English and questions had to be framed in English. This idea of immersing learners in the target language and enforcing an English-only policy will assist learners in developing their proficiency in the language faster as seen in a study by Nekongo-Nielsen and Ngololo (2020). P3 only used vernacular once to aid deeper understanding for the learners. The use of code-switching and other techniques to incorporate some vernacular language in the classroom is supported by recent work carried out by Omidire (2021). The use of multiple languages to aid learner understanding has become increasingly important and is echoed in various studies (Mkhize & Balfour, 2017; Coetzee-Van Rooy, 2018).

The educator's ability to converse or express themselves in vernacular languages will impact whether he or she can use it in lessons to aid learners'

understanding of concepts and from the observation of P1's lesson, it became clear that not having knowledge of the vernacular languages or not being fluent in expressing yourself in the language, will hinder rather than improve performance, which is echoed in Nekong-Nielsen's (2020) study. However, from observing P3's lesson, the use of vernacular in the classroom allowed for deeper understanding of and grasping the content, which is supported by literature from Omidire (2021) and Coetzee-Van Rooy's (2018) study. What is clear is that the language environment, especially a multilingual environment, will have to be considered when approaching further development opportunities available to in-service educators.

### **4.3 Conclusion**

This chapter outlined teachers' experiences of their current teaching environment and its multilingual nature. Attitudes of educators and their perceptions of their colleagues' attitudes and the attitude of learners towards the use of English were explored to determine how these impact their developmental choices. It explored how these educators felt regarding professional development programmes currently on offer and highlighted what they felt would be necessary components for future professional development programmes. The influence of the educators' background and previous experiences was further explored to add on to the conceptual framework created before embarking on the data collection process. A lot of the findings are drawn from the focus group and individual lessons while the observation of lessons was used to show how the educators incorporated what they felt are necessary language concepts into their own teaching practice to see if their beliefs and practices agreed with one another. These experiences were discussed with reference to the 5 themes and 11 sub-themes. The following chapter, Chapter 5, discusses the answers to the research questions posed in Chapter 1, the contributions and limitations of this study; and lastly, a discussion of the possible areas for further research.

## Chapter 5: Conclusion

### 5.1 Introduction

This study has brought to light many shortcomings regarding in-service professional development programmes organised for educators. However, it has also brought to light the many ways in which educators look forward to and are willing to engage in developmental opportunities where they will learn new skills relating to teaching in a multilingual context in English. This chapter serves as a conclusion to the study where an overview of previous chapters is included, research questions are addressed, the guidelines for the development of in-service educators' teaching in a multilingual environment are suggested, the significance of the study is discussed, followed by recommendations and reflections. The study is drawn to an end with a final concluding thought.

### 5.2 Overview of Previous Chapters

Chapter 1 provided an overview of the key concepts and elements that were pertinent to understanding the purpose and value of this study. It allowed an opportunity to introduce readers to the major concepts that the study would focus on and serves as an introduction to the study.

Chapter 2 provided a more in-depth review of literature and takes the reader through central themes and concepts that help situate the study within literature. This chapter shows the reader some of the theory the study hopes to contribute to in later chapters.

Chapter 3 provided an opportunity to discuss the methodological choices made by the researcher and provides the reader with a more in-depth understanding of the methods used in this study. The reasons behind choices made are thoroughly discussed and the effects of choices are reflected on briefly.

Chapter 4 provided the immersion in the analysis and interpretation of results the study brought about. It engages in discussions on the insights gained from the

focus group interview, the individual interviews and the observation lessons and what was learned by the researcher from the data collection process.

Chapter 5 is focused on providing a conclusion to the study, taking a look towards the shortcomings of the study and the possible further research the study can lay the grounds for. It provides a reflection on the research process and gives insight into what was gained from conducting the research study.

### **5.3 Addressing my Research Questions**

The views expressed by educators in their interviews and the observation of two lessons follow below as the answers given by the participants relate to the research questions and the incorporation of the themes identified in the findings (Chapter 4). This will be done by discussing the secondary research questions and finally the primary research question.

#### ***5.3.1 Which Areas of Language Development Lead to Proficiency in English According to Additional Language Educators?***

The ability to read and write came to the forefront in discussions with the educators. English educators placed more emphasis on reading ability and advocated for more to be done to assist learners in comprehending what they are reading while the content subject educators felt more that an emphasis on vocabulary or terminology development was better aligned with their goals (Morgan, 2017; Raft, 2017). The content-subject educators also insisted that meaning-making or comprehension is of the utmost importance and that using past papers as well as having knowledge of question verbs used in assessments could benefit the learners at all levels. This has been found in other studies that focus on English proficiency (Morgan, 2017; Raft, 2017, Mkhize & Balfour, 2017).

A few of the educators believed that the ability to speak and to respond was important to allow for language proficiency while the greatest emphasis fell on the ability to read and certainly focused on vocabulary development as this is crucial to the individual being able to comprehend the written or even spoken word which has been echoed in previous studies (Nekongo-Nielsen & Ngololo, 2020). Parental engagement with the use of the language was also identified as an important

component when it came to improving English proficiency which was touched on in a study by Makiwane-Mazinyo and Pillay (2017). More reading must occur and more communicative forms of the language must be used (Makiwane-Mazinyo & Pillay, 2017; Morgan, 2017).

### ***5.3.2 How is an Educator's Language Context Considered in the Planning of Professional Development Courses, If At All?***

The educators did not feel that their input was needed or even remotely considered when planning is being done. They felt that a top-down approach is followed and that they merely must attend and make necessary changes to their own teaching based on what they receive from those above them which are sentiments expressed in other studies that consider the measurement of professional development such as Budeli et al.'s (2022) study on the IQMS system. The educators indicated a desire to be consulted, to give input and to have their voices heard.

The sampled participants indicated their willingness to engage in discussions that surround them and their professional development and believed they would benefit greatly from being involved and saw it as an opportunity to engage with other educators and to help make what they feel are necessary changes to a system that certainly is not flawless. In literature, the focus falls on what the government makes available to educators, rather than on methods to engage with in-service educators and their needs (Gumbo, 2020; McInerney, 2019). There is a necessary shift required to ensure that educators will be involved in the planning and implementation of professional development courses. Educators show a distinct desire to keep to the formats of professional development courses that involve face-to-face sessions, not taking into account that due to the destabilised nature of the education system during times of trouble as seen in a study by Mays & Aluko (2019), the interface may need to be altered to include more technologically savvy methods such as online sessions (Louw & Thukane, 2020). However, the educators' contexts need to be considered as not all schools have adequate access to internet or alternative means for engaging in online sessions. A clear drive towards online platforms is indicated in literature and must form the basis of further studies and considerations when it comes to developing educators (Canh, 2019). The educators teach in a multilingual environment and their knowledge of and use of vernacular

languages can assist their learners in fully grasping content. However, the participants felt that language can be a divisive factor when it comes to training opportunities as facilitators do not always realise not everyone can speak a vernacular language and, therefore, to ease communication, a preference for English in training comes to the forefront.

### ***5.3.3 How Should Current Additional Language Teaching Methodologies be Adapted for the Professional Development of Educators Through Distance Education?***

Educators did not have a distance education background and could not speak to the use of distance education and how it influenced their pre-service or in-service training as it is currently not an outlet they are aware of. However, the sampled participants did feel that online or more personalised learning, where the individual doing the training can set the pace, would work. This is something catered to by distance education as it offers greater flexibility in terms of subjects taken and the pace at which it can be completed (Gumbo, 2020). Research has recently focused on Open Distance Learning and its ability to cater to more diverse learning needs including pacing and the access to quality education (Louw & Thukane, 2020; Ajani, 2020). These methods were not fully explored in the study as the participants sampled did not have much knowledge of or interest in distance education opportunities. However, the educator participants acknowledged that distance learning in the form of online, personalised learning platforms would be considered for the purposes of them up-skilling.

The teaching methodology of additional languages or being able to teach in an additional language was not immediately apparent in the responses given (the educators did not name specific methodologies used, rather they indicated how they go about teaching their subject). However, from the two observation lessons and referring to literature on teaching methodologies in content subjects and additional language teaching methodologies, two came to the forefront: direct instruction and content-based instruction were used by P1 and P3. The educators indicated that they were not specifically trained or prepared to have to teach in an additional language, rather they learned while on the job how to adapt and make sense of the language of instruction. The three content-subject educators chosen to participate in this study indicated that little to none of their pre-service training focused on how

they would teach their subject in English. The three English-subject educators specialised in English and had a better idea of how to adapt English to a variety of settings. Literature focuses on the academic attainment of learners who are learning in an additional language and sparsely comments on the educator and what is done to ensure they can teach in an additional language (Morgan, 2017; O'Hare et al., 2020). In addition, literature focuses on content-based learning in languages as a method to be used to incorporate language studying across more subjects (Llinares & Vinitskaya, 2021; Schoepp, 2018). The sampled participants had all received their pre-service training in English, except one who had studied in Afrikaans. The participants did not show any knowledge of how they were equipped to teach in English, only that they studied in English and that this was what prepared them. This should beg the question then of how teaching in an additional language can be addressed through future training possibilities. This is because it was not something that put off educators. They acknowledged the need to improve their own proficiency and recognised the benefits it could have on their teaching practice. A number of the participants indicated their willingness to make use of options such as online platforms that could be referred to as forms of distance education.

As far as how it could be done through distance education is concerned, they indicated that online platforms could rather be made use of. The movement towards online learning is emphasised in the study by Ajani (2020) and Mays and Aluko (2019) as it offers a wider variety of learning opportunities, especially in uncertain circumstances. The preferred format for training remained face-to-face, regardless of what the training would be about. It is apparent then that teaching methodologies should incorporate more of the 'how-to-teach' in an additional language rather than just accepting they will be able to. This is echoed in a study by Strong and Escamilla, (2020) and a study by Sembiante, Cavallaro and Troyan (2020) which focussed on how content teaching can be tackled in content-subject learning areas. Apart from a literacy course done early in training, most educators from the sample had not received training specific to or having any acknowledgement of their level of proficiency in the additional language they would spend teaching in, in most instances. Clear from the above is that this needs to be more deeply studied to try gain a deeper understanding of how pre-service training and PD courses can be used to tackle this phenomenon.



Finally, the primary research question can be discussed in lieu of what was learned from the study.

#### ***5.3.4 What Do In-Service Educators Teaching English in a Multi-Language Context Perceive as Necessary Components in a Professional Development Programme Through Distance Education?***

Educators need programmes to be flexible and to be able to work at their own pace, a point made in various studies (Ajani, 2020; Gumbo, 2020; Louw & Thukane, 2020). They would seemingly benefit from programmes that included their input prior to the creation of the courses as echoed in McInerney (2019). Educators need facilitators and creators of training opportunities to account for their viewpoints and experiences as they often feel these are unheard and believe it would be beneficial for them to be listened to, something that has not been fully discussed in previous literature (McInerney, 2019). The professional programme should add to their portfolio, it should be something they receive acknowledgement for and it should be something that is practicable in their own classrooms and similar motivations behind participation are seen in literature (Budeli et al., 2022). Whether this would be from a distance education standpoint was not fully explored as educators remained steadfast in their claim that face-to-face or one-on-one opportunities for training would be more beneficial to them as it offers the possibility of collaboration and allows them to feel like part of something greater, where grievances can be aired and heard. Literature speaks to the need to move more and more platforms online, with educators seemingly being behind the curve but slowly acknowledging the shift and the need for change (Ajani, 2020). The sampled participants want to have a greater voice in the creation of their own training and are open to online training and using platforms such as Duolingo or specific programmes aimed at improving English proficiency as they believe it will only aid their teaching further the more comfortable they feel using the language.

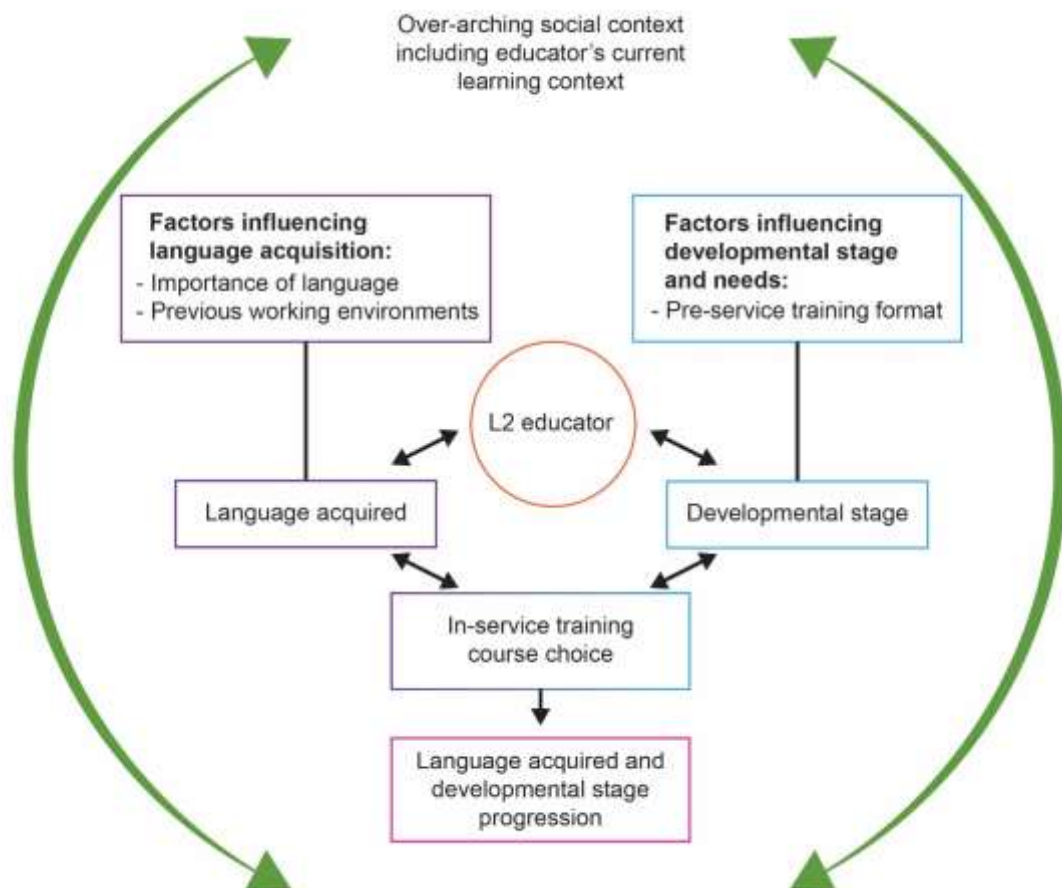
#### **5.4 The Emergent Conceptual Framework: Integrated Framework for Understanding In-Service Educators' Professional Development Choices**

The Stage Development Theory of Daloz (1986) (as cited in Merriam & Bierema, 2013) is still valid and incorporated, but with the addition of understanding some of

the elements that are involved in ascertaining the stage of development the educator is at. The Systemic Functional Linguistic Model (1975) (as cited in Llinares, 2013) is also still incorporated in the model presented in Figure 2 as the choice of development course on the part of the educator will be influenced by the level of language acquisition the educator believes themselves to be at. However, what is added is that the understanding of their language acquisition is influenced by numerous factors such as the educator’s own educational background and how important they believe the language to be. Ultimately the model is now more inclusive and representative of what was learned during the study and incorporates elements that were otherwise not considered prior to having conducted the study.

**Figure 2**

*Integrated framework for understanding in-service educators’ professional development choices*



What was abundantly clear from the sampled educators is that they yearn to be involved in planning and to be considered when decisions are being made regarding their professional development. They are willing to engage in programmes they believe will benefit not only them, but the learners they teach. As they function within a multilingual environment, the educators believed a greater focus on the language of instruction must be present throughout all subjects and rejected the notion that including other languages in their instruction could be beneficial.

The educators' background in teaching impacted the Stage of Development they are currently in, according to Daloz's Stage Development Theory. Participant 4 has the least teaching experience and is still working out how best to approach teaching English, thus, this participant would be in the pre-conventional stage of development where the focus is on survival (1986 as cited in Merriam & Bierema, 2013). Participant 1 and Participant 5 have the most teaching experience, and their needs are more focused on reflection and evaluation, meaning they would be in Daloz's post-conventional stage of development (1986 as cited in Merriam & Bierema, 2013). Participant 3 has been teaching for a number of years and is willing to make changes based on what is needed from the environment, to meet the norms and standards required, thus indicating this participant is in the conventional stage of development (1986 as cited in Merriam & Bierema, 2013). Participant 2 and Participant 6 have both been teaching for over 10 years, having gained a lot of knowledge regarding their teaching practices and exhibiting more autonomy when it comes to their teaching style and they reflect on their practices continuously, meaning they would be in the post-conventional stage of development (1986 as cited in Merriam & Bierema, 2013). This indicates how and to a certain extent why the educators are willing to participate in professional development programmes, it is based on what the focus of the educator is, what their needs are in a developmental sense.

These views are likely influenced by the educators' backgrounds and their own mother tongue and the importance it was given in their home and schooling backgrounds, however, such claims are only hypotheses and were not the focus of the study. Certainly interesting that despite having various mother tongue languages represented, the choice of language for instruction remained English among the sampled participants and was viewed as the more accessible language in which learners could be taught. This was not expected as more allegiance to and

importance of language in identity and culture was expected on the part of the researcher due to the majority of participants being black Africans.

The professional development courses must engage educators, no matter the platform. Professional development programmes must be easily accessible and flexible so that educators can do them in their own time. There needs to be a choice on the part of educators of which courses they will engage in, noting that sampled participants in this study felt that programmes surrounding language of instruction and training in it would be beneficial. All efforts must be focused and deal with matters that educators have to face in their own teaching reality. Content must be trimmed and a more collaborative style incorporated as this was viewed most positively by the participants sampled in this study. Practicalities of teaching and the reality educators are faced with were major factors the participants believed should impact the professional development programmes as they cannot create a one-size-fits-all approach to training. This is because it often results in programmes being repetitive and this was seen to contribute to the willingness to participate in training opportunities on the part of the participants.

From the findings of this study, educators want to improve their ability to help their learners learn more efficiently and are willing to engage in training that will benefit their learners' performance, including, but not limited to, developing their proficiency in English. The educators need to feel heard and they need to feel as though they have been properly engaged when it comes to training. Their own training (pre-service) influenced their feelings of preparedness to teach in an additional language and their own previous teaching experiences bore weight when it came to them being willing to participate in training opportunities on offer. The educator's belief in the importance of the language of instruction also added another layer of meaning to the context and influences whether they are willing to engage in training, not just their age, level of development and programmes available (as previously thought). It became clear that a deeper expression of the educators' beliefs and attitudes also had to be considered and their own specific pre-service and in-service training opportunities will influence their decision regarding whether or not they choose to engage in professional development. Of course, it still stands to reason that age and level of development are important issues, but a greater focus on the individual and how their perceptions have been shaped by their

experiences became apparent from engaging in interviews and observations of lessons.

However, the two theories used on their own were lacking some elements that were not fully explored by the researcher at first. The Stage Development Theory and the Systemic Functional Linguistics Model do not account for the individual educator's experiences and needed further expansion.

What I learned from the study was that the theories adopted for conceptualising the educator's professional development choices had not fully been explored. Therefore, I have come up with an expanded version, which is more comprehensive and deals with how the additional language educator is conceptualised or what factors influence their target language proficiency. The latter is expanded to include some originally lacking aspects like the influence of their own mother tongue and how important they believe the target language to be. On the stage developmental side, the interesting characteristic I have learned from participant responses settled around the additional language educator's pre-service training, which was originally not conceptualised by the researcher. This was an interesting finding as their responses indicated that their own knowledge of and exposure to various formats of pre-service training influenced the in-service educator's likely choices regarding future training possibilities. It expands on the notion that only the developmental stage of what the individual has or has not achieved is all that influences the in-service educators' developmental choices.

Therefore, Figure 2 will hopefully showcase the new elements that were previously overlooked by the researcher when framing educators' professional development (in-service training). The additional language educator (L2) is seen to interact with their level of language acquisition and developmental stage, and these are seen to impact their developmental course choices. The expansion is brought into what is understood by factors influencing language acquisition and how the developmental stage and the needs of the educator are to be understood. Factors such as the importance of the target language to the individual and the pre-service training format the educator has received will impact their openness and willingness to engage in further developmental opportunities. Finally, the social context is expanded on to include the educator's current teaching context as this will also have an impact on the professional development choices of the educator.

## 5.5 Significance of my Study

This study will contribute to the knowledge sources on professional development in South Africa and can meaningfully add to a deeper and fuller comprehension of the developmental needs of educators in multilingual contexts. This study sheds light on the beliefs held by the educator participants regarding their views on professional development and what they require from such opportunities to make participation valuable for them. This can help shift discussions regarding professional development practices and how the development of and implementation of such programmes can be approached by the Department of Education.

Insights can be taken from this study to guide how training and further development of in-service educators can be approached, to ensure that educators are better-equipped to function in multilingual environments. The hope is that this study can form the basis of further studies which expand the scope of this study, engaging educators from a wide variety of schools (private and departmental schools) in South Africa. This will lead to ways in which the adjusted conceptual framework can be implemented and used to guide further studies on this topic.

This study allows for a focus on educator experiences and highlights the importance of partnering with educators at all levels of planning as a means by which the DoE can empower educators and get them to engage more fully with programmes offered. This study also sheds light on the types of PD courses that will lead to greater engagement of educators in the programmes as it explores what the participant educators want from professional development courses.

The study is meant to be merely the start of the exploration of professional development needs of educators in a multilingual environment and seeks to engage stakeholders in reflecting on current practices and investigating how these can be improved and adapted to meaningfully help in-service educators. This study starts exploring the additional language educator and sheds some light of what is at work in the additional language educator's decision-making and offers a suggested means by which these educators can be conceptualised and engaged to engage in PD.

## 5.6 Recommendations

Based on my findings, I recommend there is a need to:

- Engage in further study involving more educators with a background in distance education.
- Use the adjusted framework to form the basis of a doctoral study to widen the scope of the study.
- Engage participants from a variety of schools to widen the scope and its applications in practice.
- Study the beliefs and experiences of educators in foundation phase where the LoLT is offered in an indigenous language to gauge their understanding of the value of mother tongue education in multilingual settings.
- Sample participants with inclusion criteria that includes educators who teach indigenous languages, from rural settings to engage methods that educators practice in teaching in an additional language.

## 5.7 Reflections

Although valuable insights have been gained from this study, there are a few shortfalls which are:

- My access to the research sites was limited by the unforeseen challenges resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic such as school closures and staff turnover. This also slowed down the data collection process.
- The research site limited applicability in other situations as it was a private school that offers educators many resources, the need to engage with educators from diverse backgrounds is important
- Inclusion and exclusion criteria must be addressed to ensure a wider variety of educators are involved, including educators who obtained their pre-service training qualification through distance education and a wider variety of educators who teach content-subjects
- Assumptions of the researcher regarding the importance or value placed on education in English language must be re-evaluated based on what was learned from the study; the assumption that participants would regard their own proficiency in the LoLT must also be re-evaluated.

## 5.8 Conclusion

The study brought to light the experiences of a few educators and explored what the educators believed were necessary components of a professional development programme. The study will lay the foundation for further research into how the proposed integrated conceptual framework can be used to guide studies on professional development of educators. This allows for further research to expand on and more fully engage with educators to create a broader understanding of what the educators' needs are within the South African education system and other similar contexts.



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## Annexures

### Annexure A: Focus Group Interview Schedule

Introduction:

Good afternoon. My Name is Casandra Willers. Thank you for coming. A focus group is a discussion of ideas and values that are held by individuals (Maree, 2007). It is an opportunity for you to engage in discussion and build on your experiences by being exposed to those of other educators (Maree, 2007).

Procedure:

I will be taking notes during the discussion and will be making use of an audio recording in order to allow me not to miss anything being discussed. During the proceedings, answer when you feel comfortable, but please can only one person speak at a time? It is important that we not reveal the names of participants during the discussion, so please do not refer to your colleague by name. Should you want to refer to them, whether it is to agree or disagree with a point made, rather refer to them as numbers one to six (which we have already assigned and a name tag made with the number so that it is visible to all) so that we can remain anonymous during the discussion. Please allow everyone a fair opportunity to comment. This session will be 90 minutes long, should we stray too far off track I will probe in order to move the discussion along but I will speak only to ask a question or offer a probe so that the discussion is under your control.

Participant introduction:

To start off, I want you to introduce yourselves using your assigned number and then state what subject(s) you teach and for how long you have been teaching.

Rapport building:

I want each of you to think of one word that describes how you felt about teaching in English at the start of your teaching career. Then I want you to think of how you currently feel about teaching in English.

Interview questions:

1. How would you describe your current teaching context in terms of language use? What language context are you teaching in?

Probes: What is the learner demographic, how many learners would you estimate speak each language? What is the teacher demographic, are most teachers teaching in a language other than their home language?

2. Is there support available to aid you in teaching at the school?

Probes: What makes teaching in your specific context easy/difficult? In what ways do you feel that you as well as the learners cope with teaching and learning demands?

3. Are the resources available to you helping you teach your subject effectively?

Probes: what do you feel is lacking? What would better equip you to teach in your context?

4. What is your opinion regarding the influence of the language context on teacher planning?

Probes: do you feel your teaching context is taken into account, what makes you feel this way? How do you think this can be resolved?

5. Do you feel your pre-service education trained you to teach in a multilingual environment?

Probes: What language are you expected to teach in? Do you feel that you should have been better prepared in undergraduate training on how to teach in the language you are expected to instruct learners in?

6. Are there challenges regarding the medium of instruction at your school being English? Explain.

Probes: Do you find that learners sometimes struggle to learn in the medium of instruction offered? What makes it difficult for them to learn in your school's medium of instruction?

7. How can the challenges created from the medium of instruction be handled?

Probes: What will make teaching in your medium of instruction easier for you?

8. Describe your view of professional development.

Probes: Think of attending workshops and various meetings aimed at improving how you teach. How do you feel about attending them?

9. Are the current professional development platforms available appealing to you? Explain.

Probes: is it the structure, the content, the format used, the time involved?

10. What is your preferred format for professional development?

Probes: Think of face-to-face sessions/workshops, online learning, coursework sent through the post, online facilitated sessions.

## **Annexure B: Individual Interview Schedule**

(The interviews are semi-structured and therefore only a guideline of questions to be asked will be given as some questions will be adapted based on responses received from educators during the focus group interview).

Common questions for both English-subject educators and content-subject educators:

1. What is your mother tongue?
2. What percentage of your staff complement do you think has English as their mother tongue? Does this influence how they teach?
3. What percentage of your learners do you think have English as their mother tongue? In what ways will this affect their learning?
4. Do you feel comfortable teaching in English? Do you think you are proficient in English?
5. Do you feel all educators are comfortable teaching in English? How do you think this impacts their teaching?
6. What do you think can help educators who are teaching in English when it is not their mother tongue?
7. In what ways have you been trained to teach in English? Are there any courses that focused specifically on your ability to teach in a language other than your mother tongue?
8. Do you always teach in English? If not, why do you make these changes?
9. What techniques have you used to aid learner understanding? What methods do you use to encourage learning?
10. Describe the current methods used for training at your school. What forms of professional development do you have access to?
11. Explain how you feel about attending workshops and training sessions and for what reasons you feel this way.
12. What are your feelings about teacher training in how to address language barriers or teaching in an additional language?
13. Would you be willing to receive training in how to teach in an additional language (in this case, English)? If not, what prevents you from wanting to attend such training?



14. How could training opportunities being offered be improved? What would make you want to attend training?

Questions specifically for English subject educators:

- What language skills do you feel are the most important to teach your learners to equip them to survive outside of school? (writing, speaking, listening, comprehension, language [e.g. parts of speech, tenses], reading, visual literacy, vocabulary development)
- What areas do you find your learners struggle the most with?
- What do you think impacts their learning of English?
- What do you think can be done to improve it?
- What language skills do you think should be taught across the subject board? (So no matter what subject you teach, what areas of the language of instruction should be taught?)
- Do you think that the current teaching methodologies used for teaching languages are effective? What do you feel would be better? How can this be achieved, what would need to change or be developed in order for the methodologies to change?

Questions specifically for content-subject educators:

- What is, in your opinion, the biggest challenge of teaching a content subject?
- What is your opinion on teaching language skills in all subjects?
- Do you think you should be teaching language skills during your lessons? (Think of writing coherently, spelling properly, being able to speak clearly)
- What language skills do you think you focus on in your lessons?
- Do you find it difficult to incorporate language into your lessons? What struggles do you have with having to teach language skills?
- Do you think you could benefit from receiving training in how to teach in an additional language? How could this improve your content teaching?

## Annexure C: Permission to Conduct Research



### REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT A RESEARCH STUDY

Dear School Management Board

I am currently a registered Master's student at the University of Pretoria and I am completing a Master's programme in Educational Psychology, in Learning Support and Guidance Counselling. As part of my degree requirements, I need to conduct a research study, which I wish to conduct at your school. I hereby request your permission to conduct my research study at your school with 6 of your educators, 3 English subject educators and 3 content-subject educators. The topic I am conducting my research on is:

*Supporting professional development of in-service educators teaching English in a multi-language environment*

The purpose of this case study is to explore and describe how professional development can be utilised to better equip and support educators teaching English language in multi-language contexts than is presently the case. Teachers play a significant role in the language development of learners. It is mainly through them that learners acquire the necessary language skills to equip them to learn adequately at school. However, research indicates that educators who struggle to teach in the additional language have a negative impact on learner performance. Therefore, this study can contribute to our knowledge and understanding of the professional development needs of educators in multi-language contexts.

This research study will be in the form of a focus group interview with the 6 educators, followed by individual interviews with the 6 educators from your school. These interviews will be conducted via Teams or Zoom (depending on educators'

preferences) as access to campuses is limited and this allows for the scheduling of the interviews to be more flexible. Thereafter, an observation of a lesson with one English educator and one content-subject educator will be conducted. The questions, which will be addressed during the focus group interview, are attached to this letter for you to review. The focus group interview will take place via Teams or Zoom, with educators from Curro Academy Pretoria. This will be at an arranged time, outside of school hours, that will be convenient to all the teachers involved. The duration of the focus group interview will be approximately 90 minutes in which teachers will be encouraged to share with each other and with me about the challenges and strategies they use when teaching in English. A debriefing session of approximately 30 minutes will be used to ensure that results have been interpreted correctly after being analysed. There will be individual interviews conducted hereafter. A copy of the questions that will be asked is attached for your perusal. Each educator's interview will take approximately 60 minutes and will also be conducted via Teams or Zoom with the educators from Curro Academy Pretoria, outside of school hours, convenient for all the teachers involved. The purpose of the individual interview is to fill in gaps that became present from responses given during the focus group interview. It will give the educator an opportunity to clarify responses and answer questions more specific to the subject and grade that they teach. Each teacher will be requested to attend a debriefing session in which they can peruse the interpretation of the findings to ensure it has been accurately portrayed. Observation of one English educator's lesson and one content-subject educator's lesson will allow for me to witness their teaching methodologies in action and aids in understanding where development may be needed. The relevant educators involved will have debriefing sessions of approximately 20 minutes to ensure findings are accurately represented. The final results, as presented in my mini-dissertation, will be made available to the teachers and your School Management Board.

Teachers who participate do so on a voluntary basis and are allowed to withdraw at any stage if they wish to do so. Issues regarding confidentiality and anonymity will be discussed with the teachers. Rules will be established to ensure that information shared during the focus group interview remains confidential. To ensure the identity of teachers is protected, their names will also be removed from

transcripts in the dissemination of the research results and they will be given a pseudonym. The information given will only be used for academic purposes, in my mini-dissertation. However, the data sets will be the intellectual property of the University of Pretoria. I also would like to request your permission to use your data, confidentially and anonymously, for further research purposes. Further research may include secondary data analysis and using the data for teaching purposes. The confidentiality and privacy applicable to this study will be binding on future research studies.

The collected data will be in my possession or my supervisor's and will be locked up for safety and confidential purposes. After completion of the study, the material will be stored at the University's Department of Educational Psychology, according to the policy requirements.

Your permission to conduct this research at your school will be highly appreciated and the contribution of your teachers will be of great value. Please complete the form below if your permission is granted. Thank you for your consideration of this request.

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Casandra Willers  
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## Annexure D: Informed Consent Form



### REQUEST FOR PARTICIPATION

Dear Sir/Madam

I am currently registered as a student at the University of Pretoria and I am completing a Master's programme in Educational Psychology, Learning Support and Guidance Counselling. As part of my degree requirements, I need to conduct a research study. I hereby request and invite you to participate in this study. The topic I am conducting my research on is:  
*Supporting professional development of in-service educators teaching English in a multi-language environment*

The purpose of this case study is to explore and describe how professional development can be utilised to better equip and support educators teaching English language in multi-language contexts than is presently the case. Teachers play a significant role in the language development of learners. It is mainly through them that learners acquire the necessary language skills to equip them to learn adequately at school. However, research indicates that educators who struggle to teach in the additional language have a negative impact on learner performance. Therefore, this study can contribute to our knowledge and understanding of the professional development needs of educators in multi-language contexts.

This research study will be in the form of a focus group interview that will be audio-recorded, with 6 teachers from your school. The questions which will be addressed during the focus group interview are attached to this invitation for

you to review. The focus group interview with the 6 educators will take place via Teams or Zoom with educators from Curro Academy Pretoria. This will be at an arranged time, outside of school hours, that will be convenient to you and all the other teachers involved via Teams or Zoom. There will be a debriefing session of 30 minutes (which will be done via Teams or Zoom) after the findings from the focus group interview have been analysed to ensure it was interpreted correctly. Thereafter, individual interviews will be conducted with the educators, which will be audio-recorded (the educators will be required to change their profiles on Teams or Zoom so that their names are in line with the coding that will be used as identifiers by the researcher and as a means to protect their identities they will be requested to turn off their cameras during the interviews). This interview will take approximately 60 minutes and will focus on gaps that became apparent from the focus group interview answers. A preliminary set of interview questions is attached for your review. The individual interview will give you an opportunity to clarify responses and answer questions more specific to the subject and grade that you teach. After the findings have been interpreted another debriefing session will be held with you via Teams or Zoom to ensure the interpretation of findings is accurate. An observation of one of your lessons may be requested so as to view your teaching methodologies in action. Field notes will be taken during the observation lesson. A short debriefing session after the observation findings have been analysed will be held, for approximately 20 minutes to ensure that interpretation is accurate (this may be conducted via Teams or Zoom with the relevant educator, if preferred). The final results, as presented in my mini-dissertation, will be made available to you and your School Management Board.

Your identity will be known to other participants who will partake in the focus group interview as you will share information among each other and me. Rules will be established to ensure that the information shared during the focus group interview remains confidential. This matter will again be emphasised at the end of the research study.

Your identity will be protected in the dissemination of the results as your name will be removed from transcripts and you will be given a pseudonym. Only my

supervisor and I will know your identity and this information will be treated as confidential. The information you give will only be used for academic purposes, in my mini-dissertation and any other academic communication. Collected data will be in my possession or my supervisor's and will be locked up for safety and confidentiality purposes. After completion of the study, the material will be stored at the University's Educational Psychology's department according to the policy requirements.

Your participation in this study is voluntary and you may at any point withdraw from the study. Should you decide to withdraw, please inform the researcher timeously. Data collected up to the point of withdrawal will be incorporated into the overall findings of the study.

If you are willing to participate in this study, please complete the form below. Thank you for your consideration of this request.



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### INFORMED CONSENT FOR TEACHERS

Title for research project: *Supporting professional development of in-service educators teaching English in a multi-language environment*

I, \_\_\_\_\_ the undersigned, in my capacity as a teacher at \_\_\_\_\_, (school's name)

hereby agree to participate in the above-mentioned research study.

Furthermore, I give my permission for the sessions on Teams or Zoom to be audio-recorded. I understand that my contribution will be treated as confidential and anonymous within the limitations discussed above. I would/would not like to use a pseudonym to be linked to my responses once the results of the study are disseminated. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I may withdraw from the study at any point should I wish to do so. Should I wish to withdraw from the study I will inform the researcher timeously of this decision.

Signed at \_\_\_\_\_ on \_\_\_\_\_ 2021.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Participant

\_\_\_\_\_  
Researcher