Translanguaging in the Namibian Multilingual Grade 4 Classrooms: Examining Teachers Ideologies

Begani Ziambo Mashinja*, David Sani Mwanza

The University of Zambia

*Corresponding Author: *Begani Ziambo Mashinja, The University of Zambia*

Abstract: *This study examines the ideologies of teachers concerning translanguaging practices in multilingual Grade 4 classrooms in Namibia, aiming to uncover how these ideologies influence pedagogical practices and learner engagement. Translanguaging, a pedagogical approach that allows the use of multiple languages in instruction and learning, is particularly relevant in the Namibian context where diverse languages coexist. This qualitative study employed a case study design, utilising semi-structured interviews to gather data from seventeen teachers across various schools in Katima Mulilo and rural areas in the Zambezi region. The findings highlight the teachers' varying ideologies towards translanguaging, revealing both positive and negative perspectives. The implications of these ideologies for pedagogical practice, and language development are discussed, highlighting the need for professional development and policy reform in Namibian language education.*

Keywords: *ideologies, translanguaging, multilingualism, Grade 4, Namibia, Zambezi Region*

1. OVERVIEW

Namibia, a nation where multilingualism is a defining characteristic, faces unique challenges in its educational system. The vast majority of learners enter primary school with home languages other than English, the language of instruction. This creates a learning environment where language becomes both a resource and a barrier, demanding innovative pedagogical approaches to ensure equitable access to education. Translanguaging, an approach that recognizes and leverages the multilingualism of learners, has emerged as a potential solution to address this challenge. However, the successful implementation of translanguaging requires understanding the complex interplay between teachers' ideologies and the pedagogical realities of the classroom.

2. BACKGROUND

Language plays a pivotal role in the educational experiences of learners, especially in multicultural and multilingual contexts like Namibia, where numerous languages coexist. In educational settings, particularly in Grade 4, where learning transitions from mother tongue instruction to English medium, the interplay between languages becomes extremely significant. Translanguaging, defined as the process whereby multilingual speakers utilize their full linguistic repertoire to make meaning, communicate, and learn, has emerged as an innovative pedagogical approach that can enhance learning in multilingual contexts.

Studies have shown that the adoption of English medium at grade 4 in Namibia is a pedagogical challenge to many learners and at different levels (Ashikuti, 2019). Harris (2011) pointed out that a high proportion of learners are unable to understand their subjects well enough due to language problems. Scholars such as Iyambo (2011: 14), Harris (2011: 7), and Wolfaardt (2004: 370) noted that particularly rural primary school learners´ English language proficiency appears to be far weaker than that of learners in urban schools. Consequently, learners do not only underperform in English as a subject, but also other subjects that are taught and written in English. In the context of grade 4, Shikalepoh (2016) pointed out that there is a communication and language gap that learners cannot overcome when they switch to English for the first time. As a result, many Namibian learners fail to attain the minimum language proficiency in English before the introduction of linguistically and cognitively more demanding English medium subjects in Grade 4 (Wolfaardt, 2005). In other words,

this language barrier impedes learners' ability to grasp new concepts, participate in classroom discussion and perform well academically.

Therefore, to bridge this gap, the Ministry of Education Arts and Culture (MEAC) (2016:29) mandates that when the medium of learning shifts to English, "[i]n Grade 4, the mother tongue/home language should be used in a supportive role … to ensure that learners have understood new content or concepts when they seem to be having difficulty in understanding the English terminology." This means that teachers should employ translanguaging pedagogic practice to bridge the linguistic gaps and scaffold second language learning process in Namibian Grade 4 classrooms to ensure epistemic access. This provision is very crucial and has positive implications on teaching and learning because in translanguaging classrooms, teachers and learners use their familiar languages in the English classroom for learning and understanding.

However, despite the policy mandate, research suggests that the implementation translanguaging in schools is not widely embraced by teachers in many Namibian schools, due to teachers' varying ideologies and practices. For instance, Murray (2007: 76) writes that although the Language-in-Education Policy (LEP) of Namibia supports multilingualism and the use of local languages alongside English in learning contexts, many schools do not fully embrace this principle. Moreover, Simasiku, Kasanda, & Smit (2015:317) report that "[e]ven though the Namibian government has recognized the use of local languages in English medium classrooms to help learners to understand difficult concepts and terms, the idea of using the local language to bridged communication barriers has not taken root." Thus, despite the recognition of translanguaging as a means to bridge the linguistic gaps, aid comprehension and support second language learning process of Grade 4 learners, many teachers are hesitant to implement this practice in their classrooms (Mwinda & van de Walt, 2015; von Wühlisch, 2018). By implication, the success of translanguaging in educational settings largely depends on teachers' ideologies and their willingness to embrace multilingual practices.

Teachers' ideologies refer to their beliefs, values, and attitudes about language, learning, and teaching. These ideologies influence their language practices and interactions with learners because language practices in educational settings align more with teachers' language ideologies than with the formal or official language policies (Maseko, 2021; Lou et al., 2022). By implication, teachers' play a central role in teachers' decisions, judgments, and behaviours in their teaching process, influencing various aspects of teaching, including pedagogical decision making; what approaches, techniques, and classroom activities are adopted; and how learners should be chosen and evaluated. In other words, ideologies influence the ideas that a school or individual teacher holds towards a certain issue, such as the implementation of translanguaging in the teaching of the English language in multilingual contexts.

Considering that teachers construct ideologies and often "become the main agents through whom ideology is spread", it is important to examine their beliefs and practices, as these are shaped by the underlying "dominant language ideology" that is embodied in curricula, school manuals, teaching materials, and pedagogic practices (Ganuza & Hedman, 2017). In the context of Namibia, where the interplay of indigenous languages and English is prevalent, understanding teachers' ideologies towards translanguaging is vital. Understanding their ideologies and language stances can provide information the possible constraints and misconceptions that impede them from employing translanguaging in their multilingual L2 classes. While there have been several attempts to examine the underlying ideologies of teachers on translanguaging (Simasiku, 2015; Ipinge & Banda, 2020, Norro, 2023), there is still a dearth of research that investigates this topic, especially among grade 4 teachers. Therefore, this paper aims to examine how grade 4 teachers perceive the implementation of translanguaging in their classrooms and the implication thereof for teaching and learning.

3. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Language ideologies and educational language practices are tied together as language ideologies and hierarchies are reproduced but also contested in classroom interaction. Language ideologies impact one's perceptions of what language should be, how it should be used and by whom, and consequently, how it can be learned (Merchán, 2019). Teachers have their own ideologies about language and language learning that can affect how they teach and interact with learners. Therefore, ideologies are belief systems, attitudes, views, and mind-sets of educationists that inform and guide their work (Pomuti and Weber, 2012). Seeing classrooms as 'revealing sites' of struggle among different groups

and competing ideologies, teachers' language ideologies include their views towards ethnic minority learners' heritage languages and towards their involvement in mainstream language teaching and learning (Gu, Kou, & Guo, 2017). Teachers' ideologies about translanguaging, thus, refers to the beliefs, attitudes, and values that teachers hold about the use of learners' home languages, and its role in the classroom. Teachers' ideologies shape their pedagogical choices and can either inhibit or facilitate translanguaging practices.

In their framework for translanguaging pedagogy, García et al. (2017) highlight the concept of "Stance" as a crucial element of effectively implementing translanguaging. According to the scholars (p. 27), stance refers to "the philosophical, ideological, or belief system that teachers can draw to develop their pedagogical framework." García et al. (2017) argue that without adopting this stance, teacher cannot intentionally use learners' diverse language repertoires as important learning resources as well as fundamental human rights that should be taught in the classroom.

Despite its widely documented benefits, as previously discussed, existing literature reveals that language teachers hold diverse ideologies towards pedagogical translanguaging (Yusri et al., 2022; Almayez, 2022). Garcia & Kleyn (2016) note that many teachers avoid using the practice of translanguaging in their classrooms because it goes against what the schools have traditionally used as methods in the language classrooms. Put differently, the implementation of translanguaging practices in educational contexts often faces opposition due to prevailing ideologies that prioritize monolingualism or view languages other than the dominant language, English in this case, as inferior. Yusri, Huzaimi, & Sulaiman, (2022) state that despite the perceived benefits of translanguaging, there exists differences of perceptions and attitudes among teachers towards translanguaging which imposed ideological barriers, thus preventing its integration in the classroom. Thus, the success of translanguaging practices is heavily influenced by teachers' ideologies.

Studies that measure the translanguaging ideologies of teachers have been conducted in recent years. These ideological studies have provided there is a wide range of opinions among teachers when it comes to translanguaging. For instance, teachers perceive local languages as helpful in advancing classroom interactions (Alemania, et al., 2022; Macawile & Plata, 2022), teaching new concepts or language and and shaping clasroom activities. They also observed that using learners' linguistic skills allow them to understand their lessons better, contributing to to their positive L1 perspective (Mwambula, 2021). Teachers believe that integrating translanguaging in their language classrooms can enhance their cognitive processing, communication skills, and learning experiences (Adler & Ljungdahl, 2022). In other words, teachers view translanguaging positively, seeing it as a way to build on learners' linguistic resources and facilitate their learning. They see it as a means to create a more inclusive and equitable learning environment. In like manner, the in-service teachers who participated in Deroo and Ponzio's (2019:221) study "recognized that translanguaging is an inclusive stance toward learners' linguistic diversity". In Namibia, Hashoongo (2022) noted that some teachers held the view that it was not necessary to teach in English because they all belonged to the same speech community. As a result, Grade 11 teachers in Namibia's northern regions use their learners' familiar languages (Oshiwambo dialects) instead when delivering their lessons.

On the other hand, some studies also have revealed that teachers view translanguaging negatively, seeing it as a hindrance to learning English. For instance, Burton and Rajendram (2019:40) examined the attitudes of five English language instructors at a major Canadian university and found that four of the five participants perceived translanguaging "as slowing learners' English learning" rather than "as a resource that can deepen their understandings and extend their knowledge". Likewise, some of the participating teachers in Wang's (2019) study saw no benefit of translanguaging and consequently felt a sense of guilt whenever deviating from the target language; they therefore reported their adherence to monolingualism in their classroom practices because the L1 is thought to hinder the acquisition of the foreign language". Burton and Rajendram (2019) discovered that most of the teachers thought the use of translanguaging was regressive rather than progressive in terms of developing the pupils' skills in English. These teachers see translanguaging as a pedagogical approach that undermines the importance of English as the medium of instruction. Thus, they may also believe that using home languages in the classroom is unprofessional and may undermine their authority in the classroom. Doiz and Lasagabaster (2017:157), for instance, carried out a study with English medium instruction (EMI) teachers at the University of the Basque in Spain, and concluded that "the majority of the participants are prone to exclude the L1 from their everyday teaching". Along similar lines, Anderson,

and Lightfoot (2021) surveyed the attitudes of 169 teachers in India towards translingual practices in English language classrooms. More than half of the respondents thought that the use of any language other than English should be kept to a minimum.

In Namibia, scholars including Iipinge & Banda (2020), Simasiku, Kasanda, and Smit (2015a), Simasiku, Kasanda, and Smit (2015b), Simasiku (2016a), established that even when their learners could not understand the language of instruction, teachers still resisted incorporating familiar language in the classroom. The majority of Namibian teachers and politicians, according to Simasiku, Kasanda, and Simit (2015a), continue to hold the belief that African languages cannot be employed as the primary language of teaching in schools. Furthermore, the researchers found that teachers were concerned that if learners spoke their mother tongues in class, they might not be able to get employment and that mother tongue might creep into their writing. Denuga, Abah, & Michael (2017) findings confirmed and indicated that some teachers were against translanguaging because examinations were written in English and the language policy did not recommend the practice. Simasiku (2016a) suggested that translanguaging should not be shunned but welcomed and incorporated into the Namibian language policy.

The discussion above shows that teachers' ideologies often shape their pedagogical choices, significantly impacting learner engagement and achievement in language learning. In the context of Namibia, studies suggest that teachers often hold ambivalent ideologies towards bilingual instruction, influenced by sociopolitical histories and educational policies (Simasiku, Kasanda, & Smit, 2015). Therefore, uncovering the ideologies embedded in their classroom practices would help teachers to be more aware of them (Kiramba 2018, 293). Thus, understanding how teachers perceive and enact translanguaging is critical to advancing multilingual education in Namibia.

4. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

4.1 Language as a Problem: This perspective views language diversity as an obstacle to academic achievement. Teachers operating under this orientation may perceive the use of multiple languages as a hindrance to academic success, often favouring a monolingual approach that prioritizes the dominant language. Such teachers may resist translanguaging, viewing it as a potential source of confusion or as promoting linguistic interference. Consequently, they might implement a "sink or swim" approach, with the expectation that learners will assimilate to the dominant language without appropriate support (Hult & Hornberger, 2016; Vikøy & Haukås, 2021). This ideology underscores the need for professional development and training for teachers to reframe their perceptions of multilingualism.

4.2 Language as a Right: This orientation emphasizes the fundamental human right of individuals to use their languages in educational settings (Paulsrud et al., 2020). In this context, translanguaging can be viewed as an affirmation of linguistic rights, allowing leraners to leverage their linguistic skills to enhance their learning experiences. Therefore, teachers embodying this perspective may embrace translanguaging as a means of affirming learners' identities and promoting equitable access to education. Thus, In this framework, translanguaging is seen as a legitimate and necessary approach for empowering learners, affirming their identities, and fostering inclusivity. This orientation aligns closely with sociocultural theories of learning, which emphasize the importance of learners' cultural and linguistic resources in the learning process.

4.3 Language as a Resource: This perspective frames language as a valuable resource for cognitive, social, and academic development. The orientation is the antithesis of the language-as-problem orientation (Alstad & Sopanen, 2020). The orientation values linguistic diversity as a valuable resource and as part of society's cultural capital (Rodríguez-Izquierdo, 2021). Through this orientation, therefore, language is viewed as a resource to be "managed, developed and conserved" and "regard language minorities as important sources of expertise" (Ruiz, 1984:28). Teachers who embrace this perspective view translanguaging as an effective pedagogical tool that enriches the learning experience. In this view, translanguaging is not only supported but is also seen as a strategic educational tool that enriches the learning experience.

5. METHODOLOGY

This qualitative study employed a case study approach to gain an in-depth understanding of teachers' ideologies regarding translanguaging in multilingual Grade 4 classrooms. Data was collected through semi-structured interviews with seventeen teachers from ten purposefully selected different

multilingual urban and rural schools in the Zambezi region of Namibia. Participants were selected based on their experience teaching Grade 4 in multilingual environments and virtue of monitoring policy implementation. The sample included ten teachers and seven HoDs. Interviews were transcribed and analysed thematically to identify key themes and patterns emerging from the interviews related to teachers' ideologies towards translanguaging. The selection of Grade 4 classrooms was influenced by the fact that it was at this grade level where change of the language of learning and teaching (LoLT), from mother tongue to English, was experienced and translanguaging is recommended.

6. FINDINGS: TEACHERS' IDEOLOGIES TOWARDS TRANSLANGUAGING PEDAGOGICAL PRACTICE

The findings suggest that teachers hold varying ideologies regarding translanguaging in the classroom. Many teachers acknowledged the cognitive benefits of allowing learners to use their home languages, especially in enhancing comprehension and participation. However, a significant number expressed concerns about the potential diluting of English language skills, fearing that translanguaging could hinder learners' acquisition of the official language. These ideologies are presented under two sub themes. The first one reports positive ideologies while the second one presents negative ideologies about translanguaging. This classification was based on the partens observed during data collection and analysis which showed that ideologies can either facilitate or hinder implementation of translanguaging.

6.1. Postive Ideologies about Translanguaging

The findings revealed that a significant proportion of teachers and HODs embraced translanguaging with positive ideologies, viewing it as a valuable pedagogical approach that recognises and builds on upon the linguistic resources of multilingual learners. Teachers who embraced this strategy saw learners' diverse linguistic resources as assets rather than deficits. As observed from the data, this perspective is characterised by the belief that:

6.1.1. Translanguaging Enhences L2 Learning and Comprehension

Some teachers perceive translanguaging a helpful teaching strategy that enhances second language (L2) learning and comprehension. The teachers stated that first languages serves as a valuable resources for understanding and processing new information. These teachers saw translanguaging to enhance learners' understanding and retention of the subject matter, as are able to make connections between their prior knowledge and new information, ultimately enhancing comprehension of complex concepts and grammatical structures in L2. Consider the following response:

> **T1:** *For me translanguaging is good and I recommend it ... it is better to switch to help learners understand and learn the target language, but it should not be abused that all the lessons or everything being taught should be translated, it's not good.*

> **T2:** *For grade 4 learners I think it's the right thing...they are taught in English for the first time, so most of the words are difficult to understand, so it's good to translanguage ... learners will pick the English language quickly and begin asking question in English and know the different word.*

> **T5**: *It is a good teaching practice, it helps learn the target language, English, especially for those learners that completely do not understand...*

> **T6:** *... it is good... it makes it easier for learners to understand and learn the new language, English, in cases where they are failing to get what the teacher is saying in English...*

> **HOD1:** *...it really helps the grade 4 learners given that they are transitioning from mother tongue medium to English...the situation here will not allow you to continue using one language, English... learners will keep quiet ... Also, they are struggling with Silozi, their mother tongue here at school... when translanguaging is used ... it will familiarise learners with the target language, English, and Silozi could reduce their tension in learning.*

6.1.2. Translanguaging Develops Learners Vocabulary

Other teachers believed that translanguaging contributes to leaners' vocabulary development. The teachers mentioned that by allowing learners to draw upon their home languages, dialects and other languages familiar to them, translanguaging can facilitate deeper comprehension of new vocabulary

and its connections to existing knowledge. Thus, they are able to access a wider range of vocabulary and develop a profound understanding of word meanings. The teachers said the following:

> **T7:** *For me translanguaging is a good practice because the learners are still new to English, and we need to lay the background using their mother tongue. So, when we use the language that they know I think they will develop the vocabulary of the English language when they compare the concepts in the local language and target language. So, learners will build up from there.*

> **T9:** *I feel, it's a good thing, especially for grade 4… they struggle with English. So, translanguaging helps them learn new terms…it's really a good thing because it helps both the learners and the teacher in terms of vocabulary development, as teachers sometimes we find challenges on some words…*

6.1.3. Translanguaging Bridges the Linguistic Gaps between Home and School

The findings also shows that some teachers viewed translanguaging as a means to bridge the gap between learners' home languages and the language of instruction. The HOD emphasised that integrating learners home languages into classroom activities can create a sense of familiarity and comfort, making learners feel more confident and empowered to participate in learning. The HOD observed that when learners are encouraged to draw upon their full linguistic resources, they are more likely to engage with the English language in meaningful ways. Thus, when teachers intentionally integrate learners' familiar languages into activities, they create a more inclusive and welcoming learning environment. The HOD said:

> **HOD7:** *… translanguaging, really plays an important role in stimulating learners background knowledge in class, especially here in the rural areas … some learners are coming to know the language, English, when they are at school, because it is not spoken at home or communities where they are coming from. So, the use of other languages helps learners to see the link between the languages of instruction the language they speak at home, helping them learn easily.*

6.1.4. Translanguaging Enhance Performance in Assessment Tasks

Another teacher mentioned translanguaging enhance performance in assessment tasks as it provides them with a more comprehensive understanding of the task at hand, leading to enhanced interpretation, better informed responses, and ultimately improved performance on assessments. The teacher said the following:

> **T8:** *… given that these learners struggle with English, I feel translanguaging is good since it helps learners to follow and understand the lesson. You will find that, when I explain to them in Silozi, especially on the tasks and activities, most of them will perform better, because they will have understood what is expected of them even during exams…*

6.1.5. Translanguaging Engenders Inclusion

Some HoDs stated that translanguaging helps create an inclusive environment by recognising and valuing linguistic diversity of learners in the classroom. Thus, translanguaging promotes inclusivity by celebrating the richness that linguistic diversity brings to the classrooms. Consider the extract below:

> **HOD3:** *I think it is the best, yeah, it is the best… here we have learners speaking different languages, when their mother tongue is used, they will feel good and have a sense of belonging because the teacher recognises their languages. This will also motivate them to actively participate in the lessons.*

6.1.6. Translanguaging Builds Stronger Teacher-Learner Relationship

Some HODs mentioned that translanguaging promotes solid teacher-learner relationships founded on mutual respect and understanding. Teachers stated that incorporating learners' languages into interactions helped them to build rapport with learners and gain a better understanding of their individual needs and experiences. Moreover, the HODs mentioned that the use of translanguaging increases motivation by making the learning experience more relevant and relatable to the individual

learner, ultimately boosting their inspiration to be actively engaged in the lessons. Consider the following responses:

> **HOD5:** *For me alternating languages when teaching Grade 4 is better, because these learners don't understand English ... when you do that as a teacher, you will have a good relationship with your learners and they will be motivated to engage in the lesson as they may feel free to express their thoughts and ideas when asked questions and to contribute in the lesson.*

> **HOD6:** *... it creates an environment for learners to understand and gives them the confidence to want to try to participate in the lesson...*

6.2. Negative Ideologies about Translanguaging

In contrast, other teachers expressed concerns regarding translanguaging, viewing it as a potential barrier to acquiring proficiency in English. They perceived it as source of confusion, or as a practice that that undermines the importance of learning the language of instruction. This apprehension was predominantly rooted in the belief that reliance on local languages might hinder learners' English language development and academic performance. These perspectives are characterized by a belief that:

6.2.1. Translanguaging Lowers Target Language Proficiency

One of the main concerns among teachers was that translanguaging impede the development of proficiency in the target language. Teachers believed that translanguaging in the classroom would lead to a reliance on their first language, resulting in inadequate exposure to and practice with the target language. The teachers argued that this reliance may prevent learners from achieving the required academic language proficiency required in standardised assessments. The following are some of the responses:

> **T5:** *... the bad side of it is that most of the learners, when you give them an essay, you will find that the words they don't know in English are written in Silozi. Also, when speaking, they substitute the words they don't know in English with those they know in their languages especially in Storytelling. So, this negatively affect their English language learning.*

> **T6:** *...I think this is why our learners even fail to express themselves in English because they are used, they know that they mother tongue will be used. So, if teachers were to stick to the use of English only as the medium of instruction, I think our school learners could be at a certain level when it comes to self-expression in English.*

> **HOD6:** *In my view, it is not a good teaching practice...If Silozi is used too much, learners may not get used to the English language, since they also don't speak it at home. So, learners find it hard to connect well with the language because of the different languages. So, it was important to just focus on English for them to easily pick the language.*

> **HOD7:** *...Using Silozi too much will make learners to be afraid of using English even when speaking and writing because they will be afraid of making mistakes... This will result in learners not getting used to the English language.*

6.2.2. Translanguaging is Time Consuming and leads to Confusion in the Classroom

Other teachers indicated that translanguaging can be time consuming and confusing for learners when not applied appropriately. T4 stated that frequent switching between languages may slow down communication process during learning, leading to inefficiencies in conveying lesson contents and potentially impeding effective and timely delivery of the lesson. The teacher further states that translanguaging has a detrimental effect on the syllabus completion. Here is what some of the teachers said:

> **T4:** *...It is also time consuming because you need to switch between languages and that takes time... you delay in finishing the lessons, such that you get into the other teacher's period, which is not appropriate. This also affect the completion of the syllabus, but there is nothing we can do, the managers must understand us. So, I would suggest that we need to focus more on using English, but translanguaging cannot be avoided in grade 4.*

> **T10:** *... I think it causes confusion among learners, especially here in the Zambezi region where learners find a different language when they get to school. So, sometimes it is confusing for learners, especially when they don't have the vocabulary of both Silozi and English as the school languages. So, I would suggest that we use translanguaging minimally and focus much on English so that they don't lose focus on the English language.*

6.2.3. Local Languages have no Academic and Professional value

Some HoDs held the view that that mother tongue has no place elsewhere in education, hence learners transition from it when they get to senior primary in grade 4. Thus, the HoD believes that overusing mother tongue in education can imped language learners' success by limiting their proficiency in the target language, English, which is essential for academic and professional advancement. Here is how the HoD describes the usefullness and uselessness of mother tongue:

> **HOD4:** *... English should just be English. I see that mother tongue will not take them anywhere, because wherever they'll go, they will need to communicate to people outside there in English, they will not use their mother tongue. Not everyone understands their mother tongue, so they must use the international language that can help them communicate anywhere. So, mother tongue is not that important and that is the reason they transition from it when they get to grade 4.*

6.2.4. Translanguaging is a Barrier to Assessment and Evaluation

Some teachers perceived translanguaging as a barrier to accurately assess learners' performance. Teachers were concerned that translanguaging will compromise the validity of assessment. They mentioned that learners rely heavily on their first language when responding to assessment items, leading to inaccuracies in the evaluation of the subject matter. Teachers also highlighted the challenges inherent in designing assessment that accommodate translanguaging practices. The teacher mentioned feeling unprepared to create assessments that effectively evaluate multilingual learners while acknowledging their linguistic flexibility.

> **T3:** *Honestly, I want to support my learners effectively, but I haven't been trained on how to assess their work when they are using translanguaging. I feel unprepared. Moreover, examination is taken in English, so this translanguaging might compromise with the learners' examination.*

> **HOD1:** *... I am worried that when learners translanguage during assessment, it will be impossible for the teachers to gauge their proficiency in either language. Mixing languages might reflect their understanding but could obscure their actual abilities.*

> **HOD5:** *... there is a problem, when we give them work, like classwork, and tasks to write essays and compositions, sometimes they interpret mother tongue into English; and then you will find learners are finding it hard, they don't write exactly what is supposed to be written because of high dependency on mother tongue and direct interpretation. So, the two languages collide, even when they are speaking, this affect their writing and even speaking skills, because you will find that the learners know what to say and write but English is a challenge. So, for me English should be the focus.*

6.2.5. Translanguaging is too Complex to Apply Effectively in the Classroom

The finding of the study also showed that some teachers expressed concerns regarding the complexity of implementing translanguaging strategies in their classrooms. The teachers mentioned that they lacked the necessary knowledge and support to effectively implement translanguaging in their teaching practices. The teachers find the concept of translanguaging to be complex to apply. They were concerned about how languages might affect each other negatively, confusion on how to effectively apply it due to unclear syllabus guidance and the fear of teaching learners. Consider the following responses:

> **T5:** *... I just don't have the skill to structure my lessons around multiple languages. It feels overwhelming. How do I even create a coherent structure that supports translanguaging without losing focus on the subject matter? We, as teachers really need to be guided on how to go about this methodology.*

> **HOD2:** *The idea of translanguaging sounds good in theory, but in practice, it can become chaotic, especially that teachers don't really know it, what we know is code switching… teachers never received formal training on translanguaging. Teacher do code switch, but I often feel like they are just guessing what works and what doesn't work. A clear guideline on translanguaging would really help us I guess.*

7. DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The findings suggest that teachers hold varying ideologies regarding translanguaging in the classroom and can be categorized into two primary frameworks: positive and negative ideologies. These ideologies are discussed under the two sub themes.

7.1. Positive Ideologies about Translanguaging

The analysis of the interview data revealed that teachers held a range of positive ideologies about translanguaging. These ideologies encompass the beliefs and attitudes of teachers who view translanguaging as a valuable and beneficial practice in the classroom. Teachers believed that translanguaging can facilitate learning and promote language development. The following are some of the key positive ideologies identified in the study:

7.1.1. Translanguaging Enhances Comprehension and L2 Learning

The most teachers interviewed expressed strong support for translanguaging as a pedagogical practice. Teachers said that it enhances comprehension and L2 (English) learning. They believed that translanguaging facilitates understanding and reduces language barriers by allowing learners to access and process information in their home languages. Moreover, they said that translanguaging provides opportunities for grade 4 learners to practice and develop their L2 skills by using it as a tool for comprehension and communication. These findings are in tandem with those of Nhongo & Tshotsho (2019) in Zimbabwe who argued that adopting translanguaging as a teaching method in bilingual classroom contexts aids learners' cognition thereby enhancing comprehension of concepts better than when only English language is used in teaching and learning. In fact, Hungwe (2019) and Nur *et al.* (2020) respectively reported that learners' reading comprehension improved significantly and concluded that translanguaging strategy enhances the reading comprehension of the learners. Similarly, Robillos's (2023) finding in Thailand revealed a significant difference in participants' listening comprehension performance as manifested by a higher mean score after the translanguaging intervention. Also, a positive improvement was shown regarding their L2 learning as manifested on their four listening comprehension activities. This gave Hashoongo (2022) in Namibia the impetus to argue that translanguaging should continue being legalised in schools because it helps learners who struggle to comprehend the subject content and also develop some sets of vocabulary.

Therefore, allowing grade 4 learners to use their familiar language alongside the target language helps them make connections and transfer knowledge more effectively. Thus by tapping into learners' linguistic resources, they could facilitate target language learning, scaffold comprehension, and create a supportive language environment. In this sense, translanguaging was seen as a pedagogical strategy that promote access to curriculum content and enable meaningful engagement. Moreover, these findings show that translanguaging supports the development of critical thinking skills by encouraging learners to compare and contrast ideas across languages, fostering a deeper understanding of concepts and cognitive flexibility. This positive ideology highlights the notion that translanguaging is a powerful strategy for enhancing learners' cognitive development and academic achievement.

7.1.2. Translanguaging Develops Learners Vocabulary

Furthermore, the study found that teachers believed that translanguaging was a means of developing and enhancing learners' vocabulary in the classroom. Teachers firmly held the viewpoint that the utilization of translanguaging permits learners to access their diverse linguistic repertoire and employ words and phrases from multiple languages to aid in the communication of meaning and the acquisition of new vocabulary within the target language (English). This finding align with Mashinja and Mwanza (2020) and Mashinja (2020) who reasoned that the exclusive use of monoglossic medium of instruction in the early grade classrooms is not a realistic view of the linguistic realities

both inside and outside the multilingual classroom. Concurring with view, Fuster (2022) noted that translanguaging allows learners to access their entire communicative repertoire, including both their first language (L1) and second language (L2), in the classroom.

By implication, utilising both languages in harmony, helps learners make connections between words and concepts, thus enhancing their vocabulary acquisition. Therefore, when learners use their familiar language in conjunction with the target language, they can make connections and relate new information to their existing knowledge. This helps learners retain new vocabulary and grammar more effectively as they can associate it with their prior knowledge (Barragan & Vazquez, 2016). In other words, teachers recognize that learners' L1 can help them understand and make connections between concepts and new vocabulary in the L2. This understanding aligns with the heteroglossic ideology, which acknowledges that languages are not static entities, but rather, they are in constant dialogue with each other. Teachers recognize that translanguaging enhances vocabulary development by allowing learners to use their first language (L1) in the classroom. This practice facilitates discussions about words that may not have equivalents in the second language (L2), promoting a collaborative learning environment where students share linguistic resources. Consequently, learners gain exposure to a broader range of vocabulary, enabling them to practice and reinforce newly learned words, thus enhancing their language learning experience. Research by Wawire & Barnes-Story (2022) supports these findings, showing that students engaged in translanguaging performed better in academic vocabulary compared to those in a traditional monolingual setting. According to Nation (2022), using L1 to clarify L2 meanings is effective for vocabulary acquisition, reinforcing the benefits of translanguaging pedagogy for grade 4 ESL learners (Hodgson, 2023).

7.1.3. Translanguaging Bridges the Linguistic Gaps between Home and School

The findings have indicated that translanguaging serves as a critical bridge between home and school environments. The teachers believed that when they incorporate learners' home languages into the classroom, they validate learners' identities and experiences, fostering a sense of belonging. The findings indicate that translanguaging practices facilitate better communication between schools and families, particularly for those who may be limited in their proficiency in the school's dominant language. Teachers noted that when schools adopt a translanguaging approach, families feel more empowered to participate in their children's education, fostering stronger home-school connections and support systems. Phiri, Chanda, & Mwanapabu (2024) affirms that translanguaging not only facilitates better understanding of subject matter but also fosters a sense of cultural identity and pride among learners. They further note that it helps bridge the gap between home and school environments, leading to increased parental involvement in education. In their study (cf. Phiri, Chanda, & Mwanapabu, 2024) noted the excitement by some parents who were happy that they would be able to help their children with homework since it was in their home language (Kiikaonde) was a sign that a bridge was been created between school and home, thereby enhancing the learners' education. By utilizing local languages, teachers can create a supportive learning environment where learners feel empowered to express themselves confidently, ultimately enhancing their overall academic achievement and promoting inclusive education practices.

7.1.4. Translanguaging Enhance Performance in Assessment Tasks

Further, teachers believed that translanguaging improves learners' performance in assessment tasks. The findings showed that it helped learners to understand the content of the task and its requirements more deeply. They mentioned that when learners are able to use their own languages to process information, they are able to make more connections to their prior knowledge and experiences. Thus, translanguaging allowed learners to express their ideas more clearly, elaborate their responses, and demonstrate their understanding of complex concepts. Therefore, the teachers believed that by incorporating translanguaging, learners could establish connections between the new information and their pre-existing knowledge thereby surmounting any language obstacles that may impede their comprehension. Consequently, this, empowers them to exhibit their comprehension with greater precision in the context of assessment tasks, ultimately resulting in improved performance. The findings suggest that translanguaging can be a positive pedagogical approach that can help learners to learn more effectively.

These results align with those of Li & Zhu (2020) and Gomez & Liang (2021) whose studies showed that learners who were encouraged to use translanguaging in their assessments demonstrated higher academic performance compared to those who were not given this opportunity. The data also revealed

that it helped learners engage in critical thinking and develop a deeper understanding of the subject matter. Additionally, the learners reported feeling more confident and motivated to participate in class activities when translanguaging was utilized. The findings of this study thus provide evidence for the benefits of translanguaging in improving learners' academic performance and promoting a more inclusive and equitable classroom environment. Therefore, by allowing learners to draw upon their full linguistic repertoires, translanguaging provides them with a more authentic and meaningful learning experience. In assessment contexts, itempowers learners to demonstrate their knowledge and skills in ways that are both linguistically and cognitively accessible. It reduces the cognitive load associated with translating and allows learners to focus on the content and tasks at hand.

7.1.5. Translanguaging Engenders Inclusive Learning

The findings also showed that that translanguaging promotes inclusive learning and supportive classroom environment. Teachers highlighted that allowing learners to utilize their home languages creates a more supportive and dynamic learning environment where learners' identity is respected and valued as a part of the teaching-learning process. Thus, by incorporating translanguaging into the teaching and learning process, classrooms evolve into more inclusive spaces where every learner feels esteemed and included, leading to higher engagement and motivation. Mahmoud and Galante (2020) echoes that providing learners with the chance to share their existing language knowledge and compare it with English transforms the ESL classroom into an inclusive and equitable environment where all learners actively participate in the learning process. They underscored that English can only be successfully learned when learners' identities are deeply involved in the learning process, and their communicative repertoire is respected and recognized as a fundamental aspect of their identity.

This finding is consistent with previous research, which suggests that using the learners' first language can create a more inclusive and supportive learning environment (García & Wei, 2014). Moreover, García and Wei (2014) and Banda and Mwanza (2020) established that translanguaging promoted a sense of belonging and inclusivity among learners, which led to increased confidence and motivation to learn. According to Cenoz and Gorter (2011), incorporating translanguaging in the classroom creates a more inclusive environment where all learners' linguistic backgrounds are acknowledged and valued. This positive perception of translanguaging demonstrates an understanding of the benefits it brings in terms of creating a supportive and nurturing learning environment.

7.1.6. Translanguaging Builds Stronger Teacher-Learner Relationship

The study's findings revealed that teachers held a positive view of translanguaging and believed that it fostered strong relationships between themselves and their learners. They said that it helped them establish trust and rapport with learners. By demonstrating a genuine interest in learners' linguistic backgrounds and cultures, teachers created a sense of belonging and fostered a positive teacher-learner relationship. The findings align with those of Garcia, Sylvan, and Curran (2017) who reported that using translanguaging in their classrooms had a positive impact on teachers' relationships with their learners, and they were able to establish trust and respect, which, in turn, improved communication and participation in the classroom. This means that translanguaging allows teachers to connect with learners on a personal level, building trust and rapport, ultimately motivating learners to participate more actively in lessons. This strong teacher-learner relationship is essential for effective teaching and learning. The findings of this study demonstrate the transformative power of translanguaging in the classroom. By valuing and utilizing the linguistic repertoires of multilingual learners, teachers can foster positive relationships, enhance motivation, and build confidence. Therefore, embracing translanguaging as a pedagogical approach is an essential step towards creating inclusive and equitable learning environments that support the academic and social-emotional development of all learners.

Teachers who hold positive ideologies about translanguaging align with the theory of language orientation, particularly the notion that language is a resource and a right. This perspective challenges the dominant monolingual ideology, advocating that everyone has the right to use and maintain their native languages in all life domains, including education (Ruiz, 1984). Consequently, educators embracing translanguaging view language as a fundamental human right and push for the inclusion of diverse languages in educational settings (Garcia & Li, 2014). These teachers understand that language is integral to one's identity, culture, and community. They believe that restricting learners from using their native languages in classrooms violates their educational rights and undermines

equity and inclusion principles. Thus, students should freely use familiar languages without fear of discrimination, and educators should actively promote this right.

This ideology proves especially significant in contexts like Namibian education, where certain home languages are often unfairly perceived as inferior to English, the dominant medium of instruction. By integrating translanguaging, teachers confront this discriminatory outlook and cultivate an inclusive environment that values all languages. In doing so, they empower learners and promote equal educational access. Moreover, teachers' positive attitudes toward translanguaging suggest that students' familiar languages are not barriers to learning a target language but rather valuable tools that enhance their educational experiences. This aligns with Ruiz's (1984) assertion of language as a resource, highlighting the potential benefits of utilizing multiple languages in educational contexts. Consequently, educators recognize learners' multilingualism as an asset that can significantly contribute to academic success, reinforcing the idea that diverse language backgrounds enhance rather than hinder educational achievement.

This study supports the value of multilingualism in today's globalized context (Garcia & Wei, 2014) and challenges Arafin's (2016) claims that multiple languages in classrooms lead to confusion and cognitive overload that impede academic progress. The findings reveal that such beliefs, stemming from linguistic imperialism and coloniality, do not represent the reality of multilingual classrooms in Africa, particularly in Namibia. Through translanguaging, educators can decolonize curricula and promote epistemic justice by facilitating dialogue between diverse knowledge systems and creating learning environments informed by decoloniality (Song, 2022). The traditional view of languages as separate entities is outdated; instead, languages should be seen as collaborative resources (Ruiz, 1984) essential for meaning-making in classroom interactions.

Moreover, teachers who adopt translanguaging recognize the critical impact of power dynamics on language usage in educational settings. They acknowledge that some languages carry more social prestige than others and work to establish a just language hierarchy. This approach aligns with the heteroglossic ideology, which disputes the supremacy of certain languages and advocates for linguistic equality. By valuing all languages and dialects equally, these educators foster an inclusive environment that respects and honors diverse linguistic identities. Ultimately, the study highlights the need to reconceptualize language in classrooms, moving away from oppressive narratives towards an appreciation of multilingualism that enriches learning experiences and supports equity in education.

7.2. Negative Ideologies about Translanguaging

The study established that teachers also held negative ideologies about translanguaging that may hinder its implementation. Negative ideologies, encompass the beliefs and attitudes of teachers that hinder the implementation of translanguaging in their classrooms. These ideologies are based on concerns about the potential drawbacks and challenges associated with translanguaging. The following are some of the key negative ideologies identified in the study:

7.2.1. Translanguaging Lowers Target Language Proficiency

One main concern noted by the participants about the implementation of translanguaging was that it limits learners' exposure to the target language (L2). Teachers believed that excessive switching between languages could limit exposure to L2, affecting comprehension and vocabulary development. Further, teachers argued that using L1 as a safety net could lower confidence and motivation to use L2 independently, impeding the development of necessary language skills for effective communication. According to and Canagarajah (2013) and Ren et al. (2016), translingual practices like code-switching and translation may become a "crutch" for language production, hindering L2 development. Further, Deniega & Neri (2024) highlight that when learners frequently revert to their native language, they miss out on the immersive experience necessary for language acquisition. This limited exposure can slow their progress in developing essential language skills, undermining their overall communicative competence. Thus, the reliance on translation can create a comfort zone that impedes learners from pushing their linguistic boundaries and actively improving their English vocabulary and grammar (Thongwichit & Ulla, 2024).

However, the argument is inconsistent because, when implemented strategically and appropriately, translanguaging can significantly enhance second language (L2) oral and written skills. By using elements from both languages, bilingual learners can draw on their existing knowledge and skills to

make new connections and learn new concepts. As Kiramba (2017) suggests that translanguaging in writing disrupts unequal voices and language hierarchies by transgressing standard ideologies in academic writing. Moreover, Champlin (2016) argued that translanguaging did promote the growth of learners' English language development and reduced anxiety in L2 speakers. Thus, translanguaging helps bilingual learners to develop their L2 skills more efficiently. By using elements from both languages, bilingual learners can draw on their existing knowledge and skills to make new connections and learn new concepts.

7.2.2. Translanguaging is Time Consuming and Causes Confusion in the Classroom

Teachers in the study expressed negative views about translanguaging, considering it time-consuming and confusing for learners. They believed it slowed down communication, especially in limited-time instructional settings. Teachers stated that when learners were not fluent in all languages used, they struggled to comprehend the lesson, leading to a need for additional explanation and clarification. They argued that this inefficiency resulted in repeated instructions and explanations, reducing the amount of content covered in class. These challenges were found to align with Mishra's research from 2020, which also highlighted the time and energy consumed by translanguaging in educational settings. Ultimately, the use of multiple languages in the classroom not only impacted the pace of learning but also caused frustration and fatigue for both teachers and learners. Moreover, teachers raised concerns that translanguaging, particularly among grade 4 learners may lead to confusion and misunderstandings. They mentioned that the multilingual nature of the Zambezi region makes it difficult for learners to track the language used and its meaning, which can result in a breakdown in communication. Thus, constant language switching can lead to disengagement and decreased learning and retention of information. Nyimbili and Mwanza (2020) also found that translanguaging was time consuming according to the views of the teachers.

However, the notion that translanguaging is time-consuming and confusing is a misconception. It is an effective way to enhance language skills, cognitive development, and cultural understanding. By using multiple languages, speakers (teachers and learners) can convey complex ideas more effectively and gain different perspectives. Moreover, translanguaging does not cause confusion but instead allows speakers to draw on their full linguistic repertoire to create meaning. This enhances understanding by providing multiple perspectives and clarifying complex concepts. However, many teachers lack training in implementing translanguaging, leading to uncertainty in its use. As a result, they perceive it as a problem and avoid using it altogether or use it in a haphazard and unstructured way, which could lead to confusion and time-wasting in the classroom. With appropriate guidance and implementation, translanguaging can empower learners, promote language development, and improve academic achievement, challenging the misconception that it is a confusing and time-consuming communication strategy.

7.2.3. Local Languages have no Educational and Professional value

Furthermore, some teachers believed that local languages had no educational and professional value. They perceived local languages as being limited in scope and lacking relevance to the modern world. They believed that focusing on local languages would distract learners from acquiring English, which they viewed they viewed as essential for academic and professional success. Consequently, other teachers emphasized the importance of using English as the main language in education for global success, as the mother tongue may not adequately prepare learners for higher education or the job market. They argued that not all first languages have well-developed terminologies, making it difficult for learners to understand complex concepts and communicate effectively. This lack of precise language could lead to misconceptions, misunderstandings, and shallow knowledge. DeTemple and Kim (2010) pointed out that some languages lack scientific terminology, hindering learners' progress in higher education and limiting their opportunities for academic and career advancement. Therefore, teachers in this study believed that English, as a neutral language, allows for better understanding among learners from diverse backgrounds, fostering unity and national identity. Hence, they supposed that exposing learners to English as the language of instruction from an early age would ensure their success in higher education and future careers.

However, this notion shows that teachers often prioritize teaching dominant languages like English for academic success, viewing learners' first languages as hindrances rather than valuable resources. This means that teachers view language as a fixed, separate entity, which aligns with the language as a

problem orientation. This ideology marginalizes home languages and ignores the benefits of translanguaging. Embracing translanguaging can enhance cognitive development, promote cross-cultural understanding, and empower learners by valuing their languages and cultures. This calls for a paradigm shift in language education towards inclusion rather than marginalization.

7.2.4. Translanguaging is a Barrier to Assessment and Evaluation

The findings also showed that teachers were concerned about the potential challenges that translanguaging practices can pose to conventional assessment methods. They expressed concerns the use of multiple languages during teaching can make it difficult to effectively evaluate learners' comprehension and mastery of the subject matter. They noted a lack of training in how to effectively assess learners who utilise translanguaging in their responses. Without adequate professional development, teachers may struggle to create assessment practices that genuinely reflect learners' diverse linguistic capabilities. According to Saleem et al. (2023) the traditional methods, such as written exams and standardized assignments, proved insufficient for capturing the depth of learners' understanding, particularly when multiple languages were involved. Also, Deniega & Neri (2024), emphasise that the integration of home languages into the learning process, while beneficial for oral skills, appears to be less effective when applied to writing. As a result, teachers often refrain from allowing learners to use their native languages in written outputs, focusing instead on English for such tasks. Similarly, teachers in this study noted that they do not usually apply translanguaging in written outputs, highlighting the perceived incompatibility of translanguaging with the rigorous demands of written English. Teachers highlighted that although translanguaging is used in verbal interactions and classroom deliberations, learners often struggle to translate these skills into their writing as teachers observed that learners have not achieved proficiency in terms of vocabulary and grammar. This suggests that while translanguaging can aid in immediate comprehension and verbal expression, it does not necessarily translate into long-term improvements in written language proficiency.

Teachers' negative ideology of translanguaging as barrier to assessment stems from a belief that writing in English demands a strict adherence to grammatical rules, proper syntax, and accurate orthography (Fang & Liu, 2020) in which areas where translanguaging offers little support. Therefore, Yusri, Huzaimi and Sulaiman (2022) emphasise that translanguaging is suitable for tasks such as in group discussion to build up knowledge on the topic discussed but in terms of language production such as in writing, the use of English is highly preferred. These findings align with the concerns expressed by ESL teachers about the limitations of translanguaging in enhancing learners' assessment and evaluation.

7.2.5. Translanguaging is too Complex to Apply Effectively in the Classroom

Participants in this study perceived translanguaging strategies to be too complex to apply in the classroom. One major concern expressed by teachers was lack of understanding of what translanguaging entails. This study established that teachers are not sufficiently trained in this pedagogical approach, leading to uncertainty and hesitation when considering its implementation. As a result, teachers felt overwhelmed by the complexities of designing lessons that encourage flexible language use while ensuring that all learners can participate effectively. Teachers expressed frustrations over the absence of guidance within the syllabi for implementing translanguaging. They felt that educational policies often favoured language separation models, which conflicts with their pedagogical intent. Therefore, teachers are left to navigating uncharted waters, often with limited professional development opportunities related to translanguaging. Constantine (2023) noted teachers lack full support from the syllabus to implement translanguaging effectively, they perceive the term translanguaging to be a vague concept, resulting in a vague implementation in the classroom and a preference for primarily adopting an English-only approach. Therefore, the absence of a clear roadmap can result in uncertainty regarding best practices and effective application in the classroom.

The concern regarding how to use it, the fear of misusing it, or the risk of overusing it can be explained by the fact that neither the current syllabus nor the language policy explicitly address the concept of translanguaging in English language classrooms. Despite the Namibian language policy and curriculum document acknowledging the use of translanguaging in the grade 4 classrooms, specific guidelines on its implementation or extent are not explicitly mentioned. Therefore, it is up to the teachers' judgment to decide to which degree it should be used in the classroom. In this regard the

current language policy should clearly outline how teachers should utilise translanguaging as strategic approach of facilitating teaching and learning.

8. IMPLICATIONS

The findings of this study hold significant implications for both practice and policy. The findings primarily indicate that one crucial interrogation needs to be taken into consideration: in light of the pervasive monolingual ideology that negatively influences many language teaching and learning practices in the context of this study and many other similar contexts around the world, how can language education programs and in-service professional development courses support pedagogical translanguaging?

Firstly, for these programs to be effective, they must consciously and methodically provide in-service teachers with opportunities to reflect critically on and deconstruct the normative assumptions that underpin many educational environments across the world. This can be achieved by exposing teachers to critically-oriented scholarship and engaging them in discussions regarding, for instance, multilingualism and translanguaging (Deroo & Ponzio, 2019). Besides familiarising teachers with the potential benefits of translanguaging, encouraging such discussions may "equip teachers with a sense agency to engage in attempts to disrupt and resist the monolingual forces that could constrain their actions" (Almayez, 2022:14). As Wang (2019:9) notes, "[a]ccommodating translanguaging in foreign language education requires the reconstitution of teachers' knowledge of language and language teaching."

Moreover, though familiarising and empowering teachers is important, Almayez (2022) argues that it not enough to eradicate monoglossic bias and integrate translanguaging practices. This means the promotion of translanguaging should not be left entirely to individual teachers; explicit policies also need to be laid down. Thus, at policy level, educational officials, curriculum planners, and decision makers need, as a first step, to break away from the current outdated policies that are at odds with today's globalized, multicultural, and plurilingual world (Almayez, 2022). This is only possible as Cummins (2007:222) explains, "when we free ourselves from exclusive reliance on monolingual instructional approaches, a wide variety of opportunities arise for teaching languages." Equally, (Rajendram, 2021: 23) suggests that policy makers "need to advocate for equitable policies that promote multilingualism as a norm and create official structures and resources within the education system for a translanguaging pedagogy." Consequently, this would allow teachers to embrace "the reality of diversity, not as a problem to be managed or resolved, but rather as an opportunity to enrich the lives of learners and teachers" (Cummins, 2011: 5).

9. CONCLUSION

Teachers' ideologies about translanguaging profoundly shape the experiences of multilingual learners in ESL classrooms. Embracing translanguaging not only values the linguistic diversity of learners but also serves as a powerful pedagogical tool for enhancing engagement and fostering inclusive learning environments. As the landscape of education continues to evolve, and Namibia continues to embrace its linguistic diversity, it is vital for teachers, policymakers, and teacher training programs to acknowledge and challenge negative ideologies about translanguaging, recognizing the potential it holds for enriching the educational experience of multilingual learners, ultimately contributing to more equitable and effective language education in Namibia. Further research is needed to deepen understanding and expand the dialogue around multilingualism and translanguaging in various educational contexts in Namibia.

REFERENCES

Adler, K., & Ljungdahl, R. (2022). *Teacher perception on translanguaging in grades 4-6 in Swedish Schools.* Malmo Unversity.

Alemania, B. B., Beltran, J. M., Betancor, M. I., Eli, P. J., Escueta, M. A., Espiritu, M. J., & Mendoza, H. (2022). Examining the attitudes towards translanguaging and language positions of pre-service English language teachers. *Asian Journal of English Language Studies (AJELS) Volume 10*, 148-175.

Almayez, M. (2022). Translanguaging at a Saudi University: discrepancy between English language teachers' attitudes and self-reported pedagogical practices. *Asian. J. Second. Foreign. Lang. Educ. 7, 20.* doi:https://doi.org/10.1186/s40862-022-00148-3

Alstad, G. T., & Sopanen, P. (2020). Language orientations in early childhood education policy in Finland and Norway. *NORDIC JOURNAL OF STUDIES IN EDUCATIONAL POLICY*, 1-14. doi: 10.1080/20020317.2020.1862951

Anderson, J., & Lightfoot, A. (2021). Translingual Practices in English Classrooms in India: Current Perceptions and Future Possibilities. *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism, 24 (8)* , 1210-1231.

Arafin, M. A. (2016). Bilingualism: The Beneficial and Contradictory Findings. *Asian EFL Journal, 4(2)* , 48-59.

Ashikuti, S. (2019). *Implementating Namibia's Language Policy: A Case Study pf Practices and Language Belifies in Rural and Urban Namibian Schools.* PhD Thesis: University of Reading.

Banda, F., & Mwanza, D. S. (2020). Introduction. Multilingual Margins. *A Journal of Multilingualism from the Periphery, 7(3),*, 5-13. Retrieved from https://doi.org/10.14426/mm.v7i3.1421

Barragan, A., & Vazquez, L. (2016). Translanguaging as a form of academic literacy practice. *Global Journal of Human-Social Science, 16(2)*, 20-31.

Burton, J., & Rajendram, S. (2019). Translanguaging-as-Resource: University ESL Instructors' Language Orientations and AJ̌ itudes Toward Translanguaging. *TESL CANADA JOURNAL/REVUE TESL DU CANADA, VOLUME 36, ISSUE 1,* , 21-47.

Canagarajah, S. (2013). *Translingual practice: Global Englishes and cosmopolitan relations.* New York: NY: Routledge.

Cenoz, J., & Gorter, D. (2011). A holistic approach to multilingualism in education. In J. &. Cenoz, *Multilingual Education: Between Language Learning and Translanguaging* (pp. 1-18). Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Champlin, M. J. (2016). Translanguaging and Bilingual Learners: A Study of How Translanguaging Promotes Literacy Skills in Bilingual Students. *Education Masters*, 323.

Constantine, M. (2023). *Teachers´ perspectives on translanguaging in EFL classrooms: Discourses around its use in Swedish upper secondary schools.* Degree Project at Undergraduate Level. Stockholms Universitet.

Creese, A., & Blackledge, A. (2010). Translanguaging in the bilingual classroom: A pedagogy for learning and teaching? . *The Modern Language Journal, 94(1)*, 103-115.

Cummins, J. (2007). Rethinking monolingual instructional strategies in multilingual classrooms. *Canadian Journal of Applied Linguistics, 10(2)*, 221–240 .

Cummins, J. (2011). Preface. In A.-M. D. (Eds.), *Empowering teachers across cultures: Enfoques Críticos, perspectives Croisées* (pp. 5–8). Peter Lang.

Deniega, M., & Neri, S. (2024). A Case Study on Translanguaging in English as a Second LAnguage (ESL) Class Among Public High Schools Throught the Lens of Language Teachers. *Cognizance Journal of Multidisciplinary Studies, Vol.4, Issue.8*, 9-31.

Denuga, D., Abah, J., & Michael, E. (2017). An Investigation Into The Prevalence of Code Switching in the Teaching of Natural Science And Health Education In Three Primary Schools At The Zambezi Region in Namibia. *International Journal of Research in Engineering and Science (IJRES), 5(7)*, 55-61.

Deroo, M. R., & Ponzio, C. (2019). Confronting ideologies: A discourse analysis of in-service teachers' translanguaging stance through an ecological lens. *Bilingual Research Journal, 42:2*, 214-231. doi:10.1080/15235882.2019.1589604

Doiz, A., & Lasagabaster, D. (2017). Teachers' beliefs about translanguaging practices. In &. K. C. M. Mazak, *Translanguaging in higher education: Beyond monolingual ideologies* (pp. 157–176). Multilingual Matters.

Fuster, C. (2022). Lexical transfer as a resource in pedagogical translanguaging. *International Journal of Multilingualism*. doi:10.1080/14790718.2022.2048836

Ganuza, N., & Hedman, C. (2017). Ideology vs. Practice: Is there a space for translanguaging in mother tongue instruction? In B.-A. R. Paulsrud, *New Perspectives on Translanguaging and Education* (pp. 208-226). Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.

Garcia, O., & Kleyn, T. (. (2016). *Translanguaging with Multilingual Students: Learning from Classroom Moments* . New York, NY: Routledge.

García, O., & Wei, L. (2014). Translanguaging for emerging bilinguals in an urban high school in the United States. . *TESOL Quarterly, 48(4)*, 777- 801. doi:10.1002/tesq.189

Garcia, O., Sylvan, C., & Curran, M. (2017). Teachers' translanguaging practices and their impact on teacher-student relationships. *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism, 20(5)*, 521-536.

Gomez, K., & Liang, S. (2021). The impact of translanguaging on students' academic performance in assessment tasks. . *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development, 42(3), ,* 1-18. doi:10.1080/01434632.2021.1935012.

Harris, P. (2011). *Language in Schools in Namibia: The Missing Link in Educational Achievement?* Monograph 1. Windhoek: The Urban Trust of Namibia.

Hashoongo, M. (2022). *An Investigation on the Effects of Translanguaging Practices in a Grade 11 Bilingual Classroom: A case of Kaupumhote Nghituwamhata Combined School.* Windhook: The Namibia Uversity of Science and Technology.

Hillman, S., Graham, K. M., & Eslami, Z. R. (2018). Teachers' Translanguaging Ideologies and Practices at an International Branch Campus in Qatar. *English Teaching & Learning.*

Hodgson, D. A. (2023). Translanguaging and Language Learning. *The Encyclopedia of Applied Linguistics.* doi:10.1002/9781405198431.wbeal20441

Hornberger, N. (2019). *Things I've learned about Indigenous education and language revitalization* . Philadelphia, USA : On the occasion of receiving the Charles A. Ferguson Award. University of Pennsylvania.

Hult, F. M., & Hornberger, N. H. (2016). Revisiting orientations in language planning: Problem, right, and resource as an analytical heuristic. *Bilingual Review/Revista Bilingüe, 33(3)*, 30–49.

Hungwe, V. (2019). *The effectiveness of using translanguaging in collaborative learning to enhance reading comprehension in first-year university students.* PhD Thesis: University of Limpopo.

Iipinge, K., & Banda, F. (2020). Language ideology, policy and classroom practices in Oshiwambo speaking areas, Northern Namibia. *Multilingual Margins, 7(3)*, 14-32.

Iyambo, A. (2011). *Minister of Education speech at the Poetics and Linguistics Association Conference.* Windhoek: Polytechnic of Namibia.

Li, W., & Zhu, Y. (2020). Exploring the Effects of Translanguaging on Performance in Assessment Tasks: A Comparative Study of Multilingual Practices among Chinese College Students. *Language Assessment Quarterly, 17(4),*, 332-349.

Lou, K., Xiong, T., & Peng, Y. (2022). 'I have been dreaming about Chinese becoming the number one language in the world': Chinese language educators'language ideologies in Myanmar. *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development, 44:1*, 65-77. doi:10.1080/01434632.2022.2096051

Macawile, K. L., & Plata, S. M. (2022). Translanguaging as a Resource for Teaching and Assessment: Perceptions of Senior High School Teachers. *Modern Journal of Studies in English Language Teaching and Literature Vol. 4 Issue 2*, 1-17.

Mahmoud, A. E., & Galante, A. (2020). Pedagogical translanguaging in a multilingual English program in Canada: Student and teacher perspectives of challenges. *System, 92.*

Maseko, B. (2021). Teachers'language ideologies, conflicting language policy and practices in Zimbabwean education system. *Southern African Linguistics and Applied Language Studies, 39:1*, 30-42. doi: 10.2989/16073614.2021.1886591

Mashinja, B. Z. (2020). *Enabling or disabling epistemic access?: exclusivity of Silozi as language of instruction in selected Sibbinda Circuit Pre-Primary Classrooms Of Namibia.* Lusaka: M.Ed Dissertation: University of Zambia.

Mashinja, B.Z, & Mwanza, D.S. (2020). The Language of Literacy Teaching and Learning in a Multilingual Classroom: Is Silozi Appropriate in the Zambezi Region of Namibia? *International Journal of Humanities Social Sciences and Education (IJHSSE), 7(3)*, 31-42.

Menken, K. (2015). *Foundations of Multilingualism in Education: From Principles to Practice.* Caslon Publishing.

Merchán, R. A. (2019). *A survey of elementary teachers' language ideologies and their perceptions of biliteracy.* Huntsville, Texas: PhD Thesis: Sam Houston State University.

Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture. (2015). *Final Draft Language Policy for Schools in Namibia: Pre-primary, Grade 1-12.* Okahandja: National Institute for Educational Development (NIED).

Murray, C. (2007). Reflections on the question of mother tongue instruction in Namibia. *AWA Journal of Language and Communication.*

Mwambula, H. (2021). Teachers' Perception on Translanguaging in Mother Tongue Based Languages as a Tool for Teaching and Learning in Lower Rural Primary Education in Tanzania: A Case Study of Rungwe District. *International Journal of English Language & Translation Studies. 9(3)*, 41-45.

Mwinda, N., & van der Walt, C. (2015). From "English =-Only" to Translanguaging Strategies: Exploring Possibilities. *Per Linguam, 31(3)*, 100-108.

Nation, P. (2022). Translanguaging and Vocabulary Learning. . *TESL-EJ,*. doi:10.55593/ej.26103a24

Nhongo, R., & Tshotsho, B. P. (2019). Translanguaging as an instructional method in science and mathematics education in English second language classroom contexts. *The Independent Journal of Teaching and Learning - Volume 14 (2)*, 57-71.

Norro, S. (2023). *Namibian Primary School Teachers' Beliefs and Practices in a Multilingual Context: Language Ideologies Underlying the Language Education Policy and Its Implementation.* Turku: Doctoral Dissertation, University of Turku, .

Nur, R., Namrullah, Z., Syawal, S., & Nasrullah, A. (2020). Enhancing Reading Comprehension through Translanguaging Strategy. *Journal of Language Teaching and Research, 11(6)*, 970-977. doi:http://dx.doi.org/10.17507/jltr.1106.14

Nyimbili, F., & Mwanza, D. (2021). Translanguaging Challenges faced by Teachers and Learners in First Grade Multilingual Literacy Classrooms in Zambia. *International Journal on Studies in English Language and Literature (IJSELL) 9(3)*, 20-31.

Paulsrud, B., Zilliacus, H., & Ekberg, L. (2020). Spaces for multilingual education: language orientations in the national curricula of Sweden and Finland. *International Multilingual Research Journal*, 1-15. doi: 10.1080/19313152.2020.1714158

Phiri, M., Chanda, C. T., & Mwanapabu, N. H. (2024). The Effect of Using Local Languages as A Medium of Instruction on Academic Performance of Learners: A Case of Selected Primary Schools in Solwezi District of North- Western Province, Zambia. *International Journal of Novel Research in Humanity and Social Sciences, (11)3*, 9-26.

Pinto, J. (2020). Chinese Teachers' Attitudes Towards Translanguaging and Its Uses in Portuguese Foreign Language Classrooms. *Theory and Practice of Second Language Acquisition, vol. 6 (1)*, 11–30.

Rajendram, S. (2021). The Affordances of Translanguaging as a Pedagogical Resource for Multilingual English Language Classrooms in Malaysia. 186-198. doi:10.4324/9781003057284-14

Rodríguez-Izquierdo, R. M. (2021). Monolingual ideologies of Andalusian teachers in the multilingual schools' context. *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism*, 1-13. doi:10.1080/13670050.2021.1918627

Ruiz, R. (1984). Orientations in language planning. . *NABE Journal, 8, ,* 15-34.

Saleem, T., Latif, S., Khan, A., Javaid, M., & Khan, B. S. (2023). Bridging linguistic divides in higher education: An exploration of translanguaging practices in Pakistan. *Ampersand 11*, 1-8.

Shikalepoh, P. (2016). *Learners' self-efficacy beliefs in reading comprehension in English Second Additional Language in a Namibian rural school.* Magister Thesis. : The North-West University.

Simasiku, L. (2016a). Is Code switching complementary to English as medium of instruction in Namibian English Second Language classrooms? *JULACE: Journal of University of Namibia Language Centre, 1(1)*, 12-26.

Simasiku, L., Kasanda, C., & Simit, T. (2015a). Barriers to Code Switching in English Second Language medium classrooms. *International Journal of English Literature and Culture, 3(1)*, 7-13.

Simasiku, L., Kasanda, C., & Simit, T. (2015b). Can Code Switching Enhance the Learning of the Target Language? *Journal of Modern Education Review, ISSN 2155-7993, USA, 5(6), ,* 564–575.

Simasiku, L., Kasanda, C., & Smit, T. (2015). Teaching Subject Mater through English as the Medium of Instruction in the Namibian English Second Language Classrooms. *European Scientific Journal*, 315-324.

Tai, K. W., & Wong, C. (2022). Empowering Students Through the Construction of a Translanguaging Space in an English as a First Language Classroom. . *Applied Linguistics,*. doi:10.1093/applin/amac069

Thongwichit, N., & Ulla, M. (2024). Translanguaging pedagogy in Thailand"s English medium of instruction classrooms: Teachers" perspectives and practices . *TESL-EJ, 27(4)*.

Vikøy, A., & Haukås, A. (2021). Norwegian L1 teachers'beliefs about a multilingual approach in increasingly diverse classrooms. *International Journal of Multilingualism*, 1-20. doi:10.1080/14790718.2021.1961779

von Wühlisch, A. (2018). *Analyzing Student Perceptions on Translanguaging: A Case Study of a Rural Namibian School .* Carl von Ossietzky Universität Oldenburg.

Vygotsky, L. S. (1978). *Mind in society: The development of higher psychological processes.* M. Cole, V. John-Steiner, S. Scribner, & E. Souberman (Eds.). Cambridge: MA: Harvard University Press.

Wang, D. (2019). Translanguaging in Chinese foreign language classrooms: Students and teachers' attitudes and practices. *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism, 22(2)*, 138–149. Retrieved from https://doi.org/10.1080/13670050.2016.1231773

Wawire, B. A., & Barnes-Story, A. (2022). Translanguaging for multiliteracy development: pedagogical approaches for classroom practitioners. *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism*. doi:10.1080/13670050.2022.2094702

Wei, L. (2010). Theory, evidence and practice: Translanguaging and the education of emergent bilinguals. In C. K. Leung, & B. V. Street, *The Routledge companion to English language studies* (pp. 385-398). Routledge.

Wolfaardt, D. (2004). 'The Influence of English in the Namibian Examination Context.'. *Symposium Proceedings*, (pp. 366-374).

Wolfaardt, D. (2005). Namibia: A Case for a Gradual Transitional Bilingual Language Programme. *Proceedings of the 4th International Symposium on Bilingualism* (pp. 2357-2366). Same.

Yusri, N., Huzaimi, N., & Sulaiman, N. (2022). Translanguaging in Malaysian ESL Classroom: Teachers' Perceptions. *International journal of academic research in business & social sciences, (12) 9*, 607 – 619. doi:10.6007/ijarbss/v12-i9/14542

Begani Ziambo Mashinja, Ph.D. student at the University of Zambia, School of Education, Department of Language and Social Science Education, Language Lecturer at the University of Namibia, Katima Mulilo Campus, School of Education, Department of Intermediate and Vocational Education.

David Sani Mwanza, Professor and Senior Lecturer at the University of Zambia, School of Education, and Director of the Confucius Institute, University of Zambia.