

Complementing Home Languages and English First Additional Language through Non-Academic Activities



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ABSTRACT

This study explored how to harness non-academic activities to enhance the complementarity between learners' home languages and English first additional language (EFAL) in the Intermediate Phase in South Africa. A qualitative approach was used in this study. For this qualitative study, eight Intermediate Phase teachers were selected as respondents. Each teacher was engaged in a telephone interview because we found this data collection tool less time-consuming, allows for the recording of the conversation, and saves on transport costs. These eight teachers, two each from four primary schools, were referred to as T1 to T8 to maintain their anonymity and uphold confidentiality. The findings indicate that using non-academic strategies and activities such as songs, co-curricular activities, name building, school assemblies and announcements, bilingual/multilingual teachers and non-teaching personnel help learners realise the complementarity between their home languages and the English language. The other findings comprise inclusive strategies that could benefit EFAL learners in using their home languages to understand EFAL, namely the use of newsletters and telephone calls in the vernacular, Heritage Day and Cultural Week and school trips to cultural villages. The study has shown that in globalised multilingual learning settings, there is a need to embrace non-academic activities that the school and relevant stakeholders can use to promote the complementarity between learners' home languages and English first additional language. The study also recommends hiring bi/multilingual teachers to schools to enhance multilingual practices in teaching and learning English first an additional language.

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INTRODUCTION

In South Africa's multilingual learning settings, arguably, deficit ideologies tend to disregard the non-academic activities that the school and relevant stakeholders can use to promote the complementarity between learners' home languages and English first additional language in the intermediate phase. The authors say that under correction, the focus has been on academic and cultural activities, as well as capital and mobile semiotic resources that culturally diverse Intermediate Phase learners bring with them to school to promote multilingualism. How to harness non-academic activities to enhance the

complementarity between learners' home languages and English first additional language in the intermediate phase in South Africa is, however, still an open question.

The importance of the mother tongue in additional language learning is crucial. Thus, 21st February was declared International Mother Language Day globally and is meant to spread awareness of linguistic and cultural diversity and promote multilingualism. It serves to promote cultural understanding, tolerance and respect, thus building a more inclusive community in this world.¹ However, the authors' take is that scholars should not just accept UNESCO's de-contextualised claims about mother tongue education in Africa as a solution to educational problems defined by poor literacy levels and shocking school dropout rates. Rather, the authors advance the claim that UNESCO's stance on mother tongue education ought to be contextually archaeologically and geographically defined, thus bringing to the fore the idea of harnessing non-academic activities to enhance the complementarity between learners' home languages and English first additional language in the intermediate phase in South Africa. Therefore, this study aims to explore how to harness non-academic activities to enhance the complementarity between learners' home languages and English first additional language in the intermediate phase in South Africa.

LITERATURE REVIEW

School assemblies are customs that honour and memorialise the student body. They convey sentiments of loyalty and inclusion via both spoken and nonverbal means. Nonverbal communications are expressed by compliance with customs, regulations, and directives, whilst verbal messages are expressed directly.² School assemblies should give a sense of belonging, which can come through the language used during the assembly. According to the attachment theory, a child's sense of identity is crucial to their development and ultimately to their well-being.³ When youngsters feel pressured to fit in with their peers, even when it comes to language usage, they could be subjected to prejudice, intimidation, or taunting.⁴

Some studies have been conducted to determine the effects of extracurricular activities and the importance of incorporating co-curricular activities in English classes EFAL contexts so that learners feel interactive and productive while learning an additional language like English in South Africa, thereby leading to a brilliant educational outcome.⁵ EFAL integration is possible outside of the learner's restricted school schedule. Isolation, on the other hand, can make additional language learning more challenging.⁶ Besides, the findings reveal how sheltered EFAL learning can be isolating to learners and how socialising outside the classroom with other learners during co-curricular activities like chess can be helpful for EFAL learners' well-being and language skills.⁷ According to Mushati, name-building is integral to everyday communication since those indigenous names are cultural and identity markers for EFAL learners.⁸ Besides, naming school buildings is deemed an act of speaking about and remembering EFAL learners' shared experiences and values, an enriching understanding of the learners' cultural identities, constitutive history, the degree of national consciousness and ideological persuasion. It is a way of inscribing history and culture in the school environment.

Music facilitates greater retention of linguistic content in second language learners. Insofar as human civilisation is concerned, music is a spectacle that follows people to communicate their emotions, goals and wishes to engage with others. It is a byproduct of heritage and serves as a bridge for people to integrate into a particular civilisation.⁹ Since music is understood as a universal language that cuts across

¹ Amira Šahbegović, "Lost in Târanslanguaging?: An Analysis of Mul-Tilingual Practices in CLIL," *ÖGSD TAGUNGSBERICHTE*, 38.

² Patti Silbert and Heather Jacklin, "'Assembling' the Ideal Learner: The School Assembly as Regulatory Ritual," *Review of Education, Pedagogy, and Cultural Studies* 37, no. 4 (August 8, 2015): 326–44, <https://doi.org/10.1080/10714413.2015.1065618>.

³ Nora E Saneka and Marike de Witt, "Barriers and Bridges between Mother Tongue and English as a Second Language in Young Children," *South African Journal of Childhood Education* 9, no. 1 (2019): 1–8.

⁴ Saneka and de Witt, "Barriers and Bridges between Mother Tongue and English as a Second Language in Young Children."

⁵ S. B. Chakraborty and H. S. Roy, "Effect of Co-Curricular Activities in Learning English as a Foreign Language at a Government College of Bangladesh," *IOSR Journal of Humanities and Social Science* 26, no. 6 (2021): 38–51.

⁶ Austin Donroe, "Increasing ELL Inclusion by Developing a Community of Practice That Creates Equitable Opportunities for ELLs within the School Community" (2020).

⁷ Brenda Ornelas, "English Learners Outside the Classroom: The Effects of Participating in Extracurricular Activities" (California State University, 2022).

⁸ Amos Mushati, "Street Naming as Author (Iz) Ing the Collective Memory of the Nation: Masvingo's Mucheke Suburb in Zimbabwe," *International Journal of Asian Social Science* 3, no. 1 (2013): 69–91.

⁹ Sunday N Nnamani and Henry U Anih, "Students' Attitude to Music in Foreign Language Classes in Secondary Schools in Enugu Urban," *International Journal of English Literature and Social Sciences* 5, no. 4 (2020): 1252–61.

different age groups and social and cultural structures, channelling translation-based activities toward music can be a powerful method of EFAL language learning.¹⁰ Rather than simply singing and rehearsing target language songs, learners can be given tasks and projects to translate target language songs into their home languages and additional languages and perform their work in classroom activities. According to Alfaro and Bartolomé, when teaching in bi/multilingual contexts, teachers are required to engage in critical reflexive practice, embrace their own and their students' cultural/linguistic identities, and locate allies to form a professional community.¹¹ Bilingual teachers, in particular, play a central role in schools that serve bilingual communities. They are the bridges between children/families and mainstream society. They have the linguistic and professional capacity to support learners to succeed academically and to advocate for learners and their families within sometimes linguistically oppressive structures. Bi/multilingual teachers' decisions can greatly and positively influence learners' learning opportunities in their classrooms.¹²

In any learning setting, parental input has long been beneficial for learner development and academic achievement, but engaging parents as participants can be challenging. Parental/guardian involvement in their children's education is often associated with several educational, social, and psychological benefits.¹³ These include higher rates of school attendance, greater communication with the school or education provider, better social adjustment, and higher levels of academic achievement, including in the development of literacy skills. Besides, Castillo and Camelo also indicate that communication and collaboration between parents and teachers pave the way for accomplishing educational objectives.¹⁴

METHODOLOGY

Thus, this study explored how to harness non-academic activities to enhance the complementarity between learners' home languages and English first additional language in the Intermediate Phase in South Africa. A qualitative approach was used in this study. The choice of this qualitative approach was informed by the need to gain an in-depth understanding of how EFAL teachers harness non-academic activities to enhance the complementarity between learners' home languages and English first additional language in the intermediate phase in South Africa. For this qualitative study, the authors used eight intermediate teachers as respondents. Each teacher was engaged in a telephone interview because we found this data collection tool less time-consuming, allowing conversation recording and saving on transport costs. These eight teachers, two each from four primary schools, were referred to as T1 to T8 to maintain their anonymity and uphold confidentiality.

This study employed the content analysis method to analyse the qualitative data gathered. The analysis was conducted through an interpretive approach, which involved the identification of significant patterns from the information obtained by 8 Intermediate Phase teachers, resulting in the volume of data. The analysis of the respondents' responses involved finding links and similarities in their responses, which were subsequently coded appropriately. The researchers then proceeded to condense and organise the results into coherent themes. By employing this rigorous method of analysis, the researchers were able to derive meaningful insights from the qualitative data that provided valuable contributions to the study's overall objective.

The researchers used conversation analysis to collect data. Before the respondents took part in the conversation analysis, they were informed of the general aim of the study. During the conversation analysis sessions, the researchers audio-recorded the sessions and wrote some notes. This study employed the content analysis method to analyse the qualitative data gathered. The analysis was conducted through an interpretive approach, which involved the identification of significant patterns from the information

¹⁰ Alfred Ndhlovu, "Music Is a Gateway to the Soul: Exploring Ways of Utilising Music and Song Projects in Promoting Foreign Language Learning," *Translation Today*, 2018, 93.

¹¹ C. Alfaro and L. I. Bartolomé, "Preparing Ideologically Clear Bilingual Teachers to Recognise Linguistic Geniuses 1," in *Art as a Way of Talking for Emergent Bilingual Youth* (London: Routledge, 2018), 44–59.

¹² Christian E Zuniga, Kathryn I Henderson, and Deborah K Palmer, "Language Policy toward Equity: How Bilingual Teachers Use Policy Mandates to Their Own Ends," *Language and Education* 32, no. 1 (2018): 60–76.

¹³ Claudia Galindo and Steven B Sheldon, "School and Home Connections and Children's Kindergarten Achievement Gains: The Mediating Role of Family Involvement," *Early Childhood Research Quarterly* 27, no. 1 (2012): 90–103.

¹⁴ Rigoberto Castillo and Linda Catherine Camelo, "Assisting Your Child's Learning in L2 Is like Teaching Them to Ride a Bike: A Study on Parental Involvement," *GIST—Education and Learning Research Journal*, no. 7 (2013): 54–73.

obtained, resulting in the volume of data. The analysis of the respondents' responses involved finding links and similarities in their answers, which were subsequently coded appropriately. The researchers then proceeded to condense and organise the results into coherent themes. By employing this rigorous method of analysis, the researchers were able to derive meaningful insights from the qualitative data that provided valuable contributions to the study's overall objective.

PRESENTATION OF RESULTS/FINDINGS

Thus, this study sought to explore how to harness non-academic activities to enhance the complementarity between learners' home languages and English first additional language in the intermediate phase in South Africa, and these non-academic activities are presented as themes below.

School assemblies/school announcements

Some schools in South Africa and elsewhere start with a morning school assembly. In such schools, it is a norm that all the learners and teachers gather at the designated place and follow the assembly programme usually manned by the school leadership or prefect board. School assemblies help develop learners' sense of identity in the school and encourage school spirit. Besides this, school assemblies help build a culture of communication in home languages and even represent co-curricular activities. In line with this, the respondents shared:

“The announcements made at assembly need to be culturally responsive by acknowledging and using learners' culture and language in instruction and valuing the learners' personal and broad-based, community identities. Whoever oversees the assembly, the principal or someone else should allow dialogue even in learners' home languages.” T3

“When teachers develop the activities of the lessons, they factor in learners' cultures. Likewise, whatever is shared by the teachers and learners at the assembly point should take heed of learners' cultures, including their language diversity. This will help learners develop confidence in their cultures and languages as well.” T8

Co-curricular activities

In a study in South Africa by Sheokarah and Pillay, critical pedagogy was one of their theoretical frameworks.¹⁵ The findings showed that to actively engage students in their learning and meaning-making, conversations in the students' native tongues were crucial in the English language club, as advocated by Freire (1970). A dialogic method allowed for questions and input, which changed their perception of how to learn EFAL.¹⁶ Collegial friendship is beneficial in the development of language acquisition as well. It can be demonstrated through group work, which raises test scores and fosters a happy learning environment.¹⁷ To cement the above, the respondents had this to say:

“At my school, we have a debate club, and they have a debating session fortnightly when we have a sporting session, that is, when learners debate current issues, and the teachers in charge are not prescriptive about which language to use when debating a motion. Many times, learners will be mixing the languages, and English is never avoided in conversations.” T5

“We have sporting days in our school every Friday afternoon for an hour. Learners are in different clubs, but these clubs depend on the season. We have athletics, netball and soccer clubs, to name a few, and during this time, learners won't be restricted to English but tend to codeswitch more often.” T1

¹⁵ Jennifer Sheokarah and Ansurie Pillay, “Beyond Classroom Walls: The Role of a Co-Curricular English Club in Supporting Second Language Learning,” *Journal of Education*, no. 82 (2021), <https://doi.org/10.17159/2520-9868/i82a07>.

¹⁶ Patrick Roz Camangian, “Teach like Lives Depend on It: Agitate, Arouse, and Inspire,” *Urban Education* 50, no. 4 (2015): 424–53.

¹⁷ Peter Goss and Julie Sonnemann, *Engaging Students: Creating Classrooms That Improve Learning* (Grattan Institute, 2017).

Names of classroom blocks/buildings/sporting clubs

The creation of natural dialogues and conversations is frequently restricted to salutations, farewells, and a few practised formulaic phrases that were learnt in class.¹⁸ Politically driven tasks, like posting signs or posters in the local tongue and, in the case of schools, renaming school buildings, are frequently performed in resurgence situations. Mushati reports that name-building is integral to everyday communication since those indigenous names are cultural and identity markers for EFAL learners.¹⁹ Similarly, the respondents articulated that:

“Our athletics teams are not named yellow, red, blue or green teams. We use names of our local heroes, indigenous names, not English. As you know, every community has its heroes and heroines. This makes the learners aware that their home languages have a place in EFAL settings.” T7

“Our school doesn’t have an English name, and this says a lot about the importance of naming structures after famous people or much-celebrated events in the area.” T6

School cultural trips

According to Dabamona and Cater, despite the current increase of studies on trips and learning, questions remain about what aspects of school trips best contribute to learners’ language development and how they help learners link their home languages to additional language learning experiences in the school.²⁰ School field trips to cultural villages are a suitable approach to fully utilise the educational opportunities provided by the local societal and natural heritage. Students can take their learning outside of the classroom and develop it independently. Additionally, they enable students to take full advantage of the opportunities to learn their home language as well as additional languages by exploring and appreciating nature.²¹

“Before COVID-19, we used to take our learners to cultural villages around the country, especially those whose languages were shared by the bulk of our learners. These trips help to evoke the learners’ previous linguistic experiences. Even their emotional experiences come into play as they redefine their identities through cultural awareness.” T2

“Cultural trips help our learners see how their home languages complement the EFAL they learn at school because the guides at all the cultural villages we visit explain the cultural experiences and artefacts in English and any of the learners’ home languages. Mostly, they code-switch.” T4

Music/songs

Kao and Oxford detail how music and language have been “holding hands” for thousands of years by saying that “music inspires language, and language enlivens the music.”²² For instance, allowing them to use the target language learning material to compile songs they can translate and perform (both the original and the translated version) in front of other learners and the teacher may give them the satisfaction of being the producers of their projects. Their chances of intimate relationships with their lyrics may be the much-needed bond between the learner and the target language.²³ In such scenarios, learners are allowed not only to enjoy the process of foreign language learning but most importantly, to localise the language experience into their lifestyle, thus domesticating the foreign. Thus, with music existing as a collective activity throughout human history, it can be hypothesised that music could be foundational in most spoken second language learning contexts, as in the current context, EFAL. In line with this, the respondents had this to say:

¹⁸ Mary-Anne Gale, “Grammar Rules, OK? What Works When Teaching a Highly Endangered Aboriginal Language versus a Stronger Language?,” in *Australian Linguistic Society Conference* (Australian Linguistic Society, 2012).

¹⁹ Mushati, “Street Naming as Author (Iz) Ing the Collective Memory of the Nation: Masvingo’s Mucheke Suburb in Zimbabwe.”

²⁰ Samsudin Arifin Dabamona and Carl Cater, “Understanding Students’ Learning Experience on a Cultural School Trip: Findings from Eastern Indonesia,” *Journal of Teaching in Travel & Tourism* 19, no. 3 (2019): 216–33.

²¹ M. Carmen Sánchez-Fuster, Pedro Miralles-Martínez, and Francisca-José Serrano-Pastor, “School Trips and Local Heritage as a Resource in Primary Education: Teachers’ Perceptions,” *Sustainability* 15, no. 10 (May 12, 2023): 7964, <https://doi.org/10.3390/su15107964>.

²² Tung-an Kao and Rebecca L Oxford, “Learning Language through Music: A Strategy for Building Inspiration and Motivation,” *System* 43 (2014): 116.

²³ Ndhlovu, “Music Is a Gateway to the Soul: Exploring Ways of Utilising Music and Song Projects in Promoting Foreign Language Learning.”

“At the assembly points, apart from the national anthem sung in our home language, when we celebrate some achievement as a school, learners resort to songs, but never English songs. As teachers, we let them do so because these songs help them express their appreciation of their languages and cultures, plus they express themselves with ease.” T4

“Learners sing songs in their home languages, especially when we have sporting competitions. It seems they find these songs so encouraging; they are in a celebratory mood, giving them a sense of victory and oneness, as in one family.” T1

Bilingual/multilingual teachers and non-teaching personnel

Per Section 9 of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, unfair discrimination against employees or job applications on the grounds of race, gender, sex, pregnancy, marital status, family responsibility, ethnic or social origin, colour, sexual orientation, age, disability, HIV status, religion, conscience, belief, political opinion, culture, language and birth is prohibited.²⁴ In this study, the focus is on language. Whilst, understandably, one cannot lose or miss a job opportunity because they are not bilingual, the current South African education environment seemingly favours multilingual teachers and non-teaching staff. Alfaro and Bartolomé share that bi/multilingual teachers, in particular, play a central role in schools that serve multilingual communities; they engage in critical reflexive practices, embracing their own and their learners’ linguistic identities and locating allies to form professional linguistic communities.²⁵ The following resonates with the above claims:

“I believe that all front office bearers need to be comfortable with many languages, especially the dominant languages spoken by people in the communities serving our school. Fortunately, in our school, the secretary and even the security officers at the school gates are comfortable with our local languages, including English, in case a client who doesn’t speak any of the indigenous languages visits the school.” T6

“We are living in multilingual communities. Thus, where possible, teachers should be multilingual as well. This will greatly help as they interact with the learners, their colleagues, and all education stakeholders. I don’t expect any of the teachers to be glued to English when working in an environment where English is not the community’s home language.” T2

Heritage Day/cultural day/week

South Africa celebrates Heritage Day on 24 September; however, this is the only day in a year when black South Africans can actively express their heritage in a space that is extensively uplifting European cultural and linguistic heritage for 364 days a year. The Department of Arts and Culture’s national policy on South African living heritage explains that apartheid’s history meant that elements of cultural assets like language instruction and advancement were firmly and consistently avoided.²⁶ Summarily, it is evident that the apartheid authorities ensured that the heritage of the people of colour in South Africa was never appreciated or promoted.²⁷ Similarly, the respondents shared the following:

“In our school, learners spend several hours learning their subjects in English, meaning they are not celebrating their culture because language and culture are intertwined. Thus, as a school, we hold a culture day where learners bring anything associated with their culture, mainly cultural attire. However, we don’t suspend lessons on that day, but psychologically, learners will be unprepared to learn on that day because they will be in a festive mood if I can say.” T3

²⁴ Republic of South Africa (RSA), *Constitution of the Republic of South Africa No. 108 of 1996* (Pretoria: Government Printer, 1996), <https://www.gov.za/sites/default/files/images/a108-96.pdf>.

²⁵ Alfaro and Bartolomé, “Preparing Ideologically Clear Bilingual Teachers to Recognise Linguistic Geniuses 1.”

²⁶ Department of Arts and Culture and National Council for Library and Information Services, *The Library and Information Services Transformation Charter*, 2009, <https://www.sacr.fs.gov.za/wp-content/uploads/2012/03/Library-Information-Transformation-Services-Charter-6th-draft1.pdf>.

²⁷ Nkweni Fru, Johan Wassermann, and Marshall Maposa, “The Contested Nature of Heritage in Grade 10 South African History Textbooks: A Case Study,” *Yesterday and Today*, no. 10 (2013): 77–100.

“Clothing is one component that serves to express one’s culture. That is why we don’t force learners to come to school in uniform when we have a culture day. Those who come in school uniform pay more than those learners who wear traditional attire. The idea is for learners to appreciate their different cultures and identities through language and clothing. Likewise, we want them to know that their cultures or languages are on the same footing as English.” T5

Newsletters/emails/telephone calls

According to Gibbons, newsletters are another helpful instrument that EFAL teachers and the school use to establish a connection between the home and the school for EFAL learners and their parents.²⁸ Gibson asserts that using productive interaction techniques is the first component in creating a successful collaboration between the outside world and the school.²⁹ Using newsletters, emails, or bulk text messages written in the learners' home languages to parents is a means to start a communication path. This entails utilising children's languages for academic and non-academic purposes to "cultivate" languages rather than just accepting or tolerating them. In line with the above, the respondents echo the following:

“I think it is important that the school writes emails or notices to the guardians using any possible means, and they should attempt to use both English accompanied by some translations into the major indigenous languages spoken in that community. The use of indigenous languages could be a headache, but every speech community knows outstanding local languages.” T8

“Schools hold important events yearly, such as culture day or sporting competition day, and school trips to recreational places. It could be about reporting on learner progress or behaviour, and the school should also try to use indigenous language.” T7

“I must admit that although in our settings, our learners and their parents are more exposed to stuff printed in English, the school needs to try harder to get some materials printed in their home languages, as in newsletters written in two languages, meaning English and an indigenous language.” T8

Parental Involvement

The South African Schools Act of 1996 specifies that parents should be more involved in their children's education.³⁰ Parent involvement in school is essential because many of the needs for educational reform revolve around the cooperative efforts of all parties involved, which may include taking an engaged or indifferent role in the school's operations.³¹ Besides, according to Bilash, a child's identity develops towards both a home language and an additional language based on positive role models or agents of influence.³² Likewise, the respondents had this to say:

“When parents show interest in an additional language learnt by their children at school, the same interest in equal measure needs to be displayed by the same parents towards the learners’ home languages. This will help learners realise that all languages are equally important and serve the same main purpose: communication.” T1

In this world of work, most parents tend to uplift the importance of English at the expense of the learners’ home languages. However, my take is that both additional language and home languages are useful in that learners need a rich background in their home languages to understand an additional language like the English language. T5

²⁸ Meredith Gibbons, “Promoting Effective Home-School Connections for the English Language Learner,” *Academic Leadership: The Online Journal*, 2010, <https://doi.org/10.58809/TDPG1909>.

²⁹ Gibbons, “Promoting Effective Home-School Connections for the English Language Learner.”

³⁰ Republic of South Africa (RSA), *The South African Schools Act 84 of 1996* (Republic of South Africa, 1996).

³¹ Keshni Bipath and Mfulathelwa M B Nkabinde, “The Motivational Roles of Heads of Department in Learners’ Performance and Quality of Schooling in South Africa,” *South African Journal of Childhood Education* 8, no. 1 (2018): 1–8.

³² Olenka Bilash and Linguapax-Norh America Delegation, “2.7 Hope: Aboriginal Language Use in Canada,” *Linguapax Review* 2010, 2010, 132.

DISCUSSION

One of the findings is that co-curricular activities are some non-academic measures used to show the complementarity between the learners' home languages and English first additional language. Similarly, as shared by Sheokarah and Pillay, learners should embrace the challenge of friendly, supportive, fun-filled competition.³³ Naturally, as the learners concentrate on the activity to increase their chances of winning the 'prize', they engage in any language of their liking by translanguaging, translating and codeswitching.

Music/songs is another finding that shows the complementarity between the learners' home languages and English first additional language.³⁴ For example, at the assembly, learners are allowed to sing songs in English or their home languages. These kinds of 'assignments', which incorporate learners' choice (i.e., freedom) and their interests, can amplify learner investment in managing language complementarity and reflect on their learning process, which are indications of learner autonomy in language learning. In short, music seems to be an effective tool in aiding the complementarity between EFAL and the learners' home languages. Besides, songs create opportunities for EFAL learners to acknowledge and develop the diversity of South Africa's cultures and heritage.

The celebration of Heritage Day in South Africa is another way of showing how cultures, including languages, complement each other. It is known that Black South African heritage subsisted through the colonial period and apartheid due to Africans asserting themselves in their culture, and language is culture. In the book *Things Fall Apart*, the protagonist, Okonkwo, kills himself for his Igbo culture, which was usurped by missionary schools. Chinua Achebe's statement on Okonkwo's rejection of colonial rule allows Africans to see themselves as the protagonist, which is a statement reasserting the fight and agency of Africans, and in this study, through language.³⁵ A good example of the rejection of colonial rule and usurping of African heritage is the Soweto Uprising in 1976, where a student-led movement rejected Afrikaans as a mode of instruction in predominately African township schools. African heritage remains diverse through years of resilience against oppressive systems. This study highlights the need to revel in our diverse heritage, including languages, by letting the learners celebrate this important day so that they realise the need to address the language question in schools. They will appreciate the need to use EFAL, alongside their home languages, to showcase their Africanness by tolerating additional languages like English in the learning processes.

This study found that when parents show interest in an additional language learnt by their children at school, the same interest in equal measure needs to be displayed by the same parents towards the learners' home languages. This will help learners realise that all languages are equally important and serve the same main purpose: communication. Besides, it was reported in this study that although some parents prioritise EFAL for commercial reasons, there is a need to raise awareness that both additional language and home languages are useful in that learners need a rich background of their home languages to understand an additional language like English.

Also, this study focuses on language. However, while it is understandable that one cannot lose or miss a job opportunity because they are not bilingual, the current South African education environment seemingly favours multilingual teachers and non-teaching staff. According to Alfaro and Bartolomé, bi/multilingual teachers are essential to schools that cater to multilingual communities because they apply critical reflexive practices, embrace the cultural identities of both themselves and their students, and find allies to create a professional linguistic society.³⁶

RECOMMENDATIONS

There is a need for many studies that focus on exploring the non-academic, cultural activities and capital and mobile semiotic resources that culturally diverse learners bring with them to school to promote multilingualism. The study also recommends hiring bi/multilingual teachers to schools to enhance multilingual practices in teaching and learning English first additional language.

³³ Sheokarah and Pillay, "Beyond Classroom Walls: The Role of a Co-Curricular English Club in Supporting Second Language Learning."

³⁴ Dwayne Engh, "Why Use Music in English Language Learning? A Survey of the Literature.," *English Language Teaching* 6, no. 2 (2013): 113–27.

³⁵ Chinua Achebe, *Things Fall Apart*, 1958.

³⁶ Alfaro and Bartolomé, "Preparing Ideologically Clear Bilingual Teachers to Recognise Linguistic Geniuses 1."

CONCLUSION

This study explored how to harness non-academic activities in multilingual South African classrooms. One critical finding in this study is that the current South African education environment seemingly favours multilingual teachers and non-teaching staff. However, it is understandable that one cannot lose or miss a job opportunity because they are not bilingual, and the South African constitution does not prejudice anyone on linguistic lines. Also, this study has shown that using non-academic activities such as songs, co-curricular activities, name-building, school assemblies and school trips to cultural villages helps learners realise the complementarity between their home languages and the English language. These inclusive strategies could help EFAL learners use their home languages to understand EFAL in the intermediate phase.

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