

**A Sociolinguistic Analysis of the Effective Translanguaging Strategies
of Some First Year Bilingual Students at University of the Western
Cape (UWC)**

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A thesis submitted in fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Masters in the Department of Language Education in the Faculty of Education, University of The Western Cape

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November 2015

ABSTRACT

In South Africa's educational system, many learners' academic literacy is substantially affected by the multi-language background and its inconsiderate language policies. From time to time, South African Education board have formulated, amended and re- implemented language policies to guide the use of language in learning and teaching in schools, in order to enhance the notion of academic bi literacy. However in different areas, some of these language policies had their successes and failures. Amongst the educational language policy for each university in South Africa, the University of the Western Cape (UWC) began its language policy implementation in 2003. Despite the aim and objective of this policy over a decade ago, students are still struggling to effectively learn in the language of instruction. And the fact remains that problem of students' language proficiency leads to poor academic literacy and performance during their undergraduate study period.

In this study, I seek to investigate the effective translanguaging strategies of some undergraduate bilingual students at the University of the Western Cape (UWC). It will focus on how the two closely intertwined sociolinguistic aspects: translanguaging and bilingualism impact on students' academic collaboration. The theoretical framework will draw on Weiner's attribution theory of motivation (1974, 1986). The conceptual framework that will be used will cover: language proficiency, additive and subtractive bilingualism, translanguaging and learning strategies. The main aim of this proposed project is to examine how effective translanguaging is as coping learning strategies by some bilingual students at University of the Western Cape (UWC). I propose the following research objectives: (i) to determine the forms of challenge(s) faced by bilingual students learning in a less proficient language at UWC (ii.) to investigate and analyze the translanguaging strategies that might assist bilingual students cope with learning in a less proficient language at UWC (iii.) to examine the patterns of use of translanguaging strategies on academic collaboration of bilingual students' at UWC (iv.) to find out areas in which the practice of translanguaging strategies differs to the stipulations of the UWC language policy. I plan to use a qualitative method to achieve my research objectives.

I adopted interpretive/ constructive approach in my study. The research techniques that I use includes: questionnaires, interviews, observations and document analysis. A semi structured questionnaire is given to thirty (30) first year bilingual undergraduates from three (3) tutorials groups in the Faculty of Education. The interviews were face to face and semi-structured. The interviews conducted with each of the 12 students are intended to know their linguistic background and how it plays a role during their first year of undergraduate study. Two out of the three groups are randomly selected and closely observed. The classroom observation helps me to identify the types of translanguaging strategies used by bilingual students and also see the various patterns in which the translanguaging strategies are used during their academic collaboration. The three documents use for analysis are the UWC language policy (2003) and two different academic tasks of my participants. All ethics for my study was strictly adhere to.

I categorize my findings according to the research questions and the four questions serve as main themes during data analysis. The data findings of my study indicate that during the first term, most first year bilingual student had difficulty in the use of English medium of instruction. Some of the language related challenges include English academic writing, inadequate vocabulary in English and accent and pronunciation of other bilingual speakers in English. This shows that there is the need for the struggling bilingual students to adopt learning strategies. Translanguaging strategies were minimally used during in class activities. This suggests that bilingual students did not see the justification to adopt translanguaging in the classroom. However, it was used outside of the tutorial space and other academic collaboration amongst students for various purposes. My research shows that majority of the first year bilingual undergraduate students' benefit from the use of translanguaging as coping learning strategies. Data findings also reveal that the first year bilingual undergraduate students are more motivated to add to their translanguaging strategies, other metacognitive learning strategies that they consider as helpful and related to their specific language challenges.

The conclusion of my thesis is that as much as the adoption of translanguaging strategies is a useful language support for bilingual students, there are contributory factors that can make its

use a success or failure in educational context. The most pertinent of these factors are trans-
languaging space and the complement of translanguaging in schools' language policy. I
recommend that translanguaging using speaking skills of bilingual students should be put to
use during teaching and learning in a recognized learning space.



DEDICATION

I dedicate this thesis to Jehovah God, the one who instilled in me wisdom, understanding and strength to complete the work.



DECLARATION

I declare that *A Sociolinguistic Analysis of the effective Translanguaging Strategies of some first year Bilingual Students at University of the Western Cape (UWC)* is my own work, that it has not been submitted before for any degree or examination in any other university, and that the sources I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged as complete references.

Name: Damilola Ibiwumi Joseph

Date: November 27, 2015.



Signed:

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The first one to be appreciated is Jehovah God Almighty for all his loving kindness, good health, the power beyond normal and wisdom granted to me to complete this thesis. This is because without his blessings upon me I would not have reached this point of academic work, Hebrews 3:4 “of course every house is constructed by someone, but the one who constructed all things is God”.

I am deeply indebted to my supervisor Prof. Sivakumar Sivasubramaniam for his enthusiastic supervision, constructive comments and constant motivation. He instills in me confidence and passion for academic writing with a strong personal voice. This has strengthened emotional involvement with my studies. I am able to press forward at each phase of his academic guidance.

I would like to thank Professor Vuyokazi Nomlomo profusely for her unremitting guidance, moral and financial support. Ma, all your support during my study period was given at the right time. You are indeed a source of motivation to me.

I would also like to express my gratitude to the Dean of the Faculty of Education, Professor Zubeida Desai whose concern and interest shown in my research encouraged me. I feel privileged to have benefited from some of her academic publications on language teaching and learning and language policy in Southern Africa.

Dr. Peter Plüddemann, thank you for exposing me to additional articles on the theory of translanguaging and for taking time to explain translanguaging as a concept. Also, many thanks to my academic mentor Mbirimtengerenji D. Noel for trusting my ability and the time given to me regularly, despite your own busy schedules.

I would also like to acknowledge the warmness and assistance received from the staff members in the faculty of education, Aunty Rhona, Aunty Brenda, Kim and others who I did not mention.

Sincerely, I appreciate Professor Felix Banda, Dr. J.O. Aransiola and Dr. (Mrs.) E.F. Aransiola who encouraged me to begin my Honours degree. It is after the successful completion of the degree, I applied for this Master's degree that I am about to complete too. Finally, a special acknowledgement to my enduring and supportive husband "ifemi" (my love), my God given gifts Jahgbemi and Jahtofunmi for their loving understanding and encouragement during the times of deadline and the pressure of work and study. Without my dear parents, who saw the need to sponsor my first degree, I would have struggled endlessly to get to this point of higher education.



ACRONYMS

MoI	Medium of Instruction
UWC	University of the Western Cape



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KEY WORDS

Translanguaging

Academic literacy

Language practice

Learning strategies

Language proficiency

Medium of instruction

Bilingual students

Academic collaboration

Motivation

UWC language policy



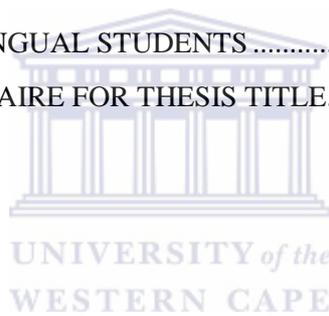
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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

This chapter is meant to inform the background to my study and the language policy context in which the research was conducted. I further explain the problem statement, rationale for the study and assumptions that the study was based on. In addition, the chapter presents the aim, objectives and research questions to which I intend to achieve and find answers. It also briefly discusses the research methodology used and the reason for my choice of method. The chapter also provides an operational definition of key concepts that were used in my study. I conclude the chapter with an outline of chapters that will be developed/ used in my thesis.

1.1 Background of the Study

The indispensability of Language in any form of communication is generally agreed upon by researchers in most fields(García, Castillo, & Durán, 2012; Mukherjee, 2013). Obviously, it is used in all ramifications of life's activities, be it social, political, economic and in education in particular. There are numerous types of languages, from international to ethnic languages. Amongst the international languages are English, French, Spanish, German and Portuguese. Some of these languages are used for academic and non- academic purposes. Empirical evidences appear to confirm that humans are able to acquire more than one language and hence we have persons who are bi/multilingual. Bi/Multilingual persons are those who can use at least two or more languages.

Interestingly, language has gained the attention of researchers in the field of linguistics and education. It has been widely investigated from varying perspectives: in terms of literacy, patterns of use, policies, classroom practices and attitudes of users (Baker, 2011; Cummins, 2000; Genesee, 2004). In South Africa's educational system, many learners' academic literacy is substantially affected by the multi-language background and its inconsiderate language policies. From time to time, South African Education board have formulated, amended and re- implemented language policies to guide the use of language in learning and teaching in schools, in order to enhance the notion of academic bi literacy. However in different areas, some of these language policies had their successes and failures.

Consequently, the South African language policy in higher education was adopted in 2002. In an effort by the higher education board to achieve its main objective, higher learning institutions in South Africa were allowed to formulate their own /respective institutions' language policies.

As a result the University of the Western Cape formulated its language policy in 2003. Despite the implementation of this policy over a decade ago, students are still struggling to effectively learn in the language of instruction. And the fact remains that the problem of students' language proficiency leads to poor academic literacy and academic performance during their undergraduate study period. Literature on South Africa's literacy skills shows that most learners are faced with language proficiency difficulties from intermediate phase because of the shift from home language to a second language. Evidently, learners proceed in learning in this less proficient language to matriculation level and worst sometimes to the University. This is probably the situation of some first year bilingual students at the University of the Western Cape.

Ironically, the low proficient language is also the language used in students' academic assessment. At this point, the student is compelled to find a way to cope with the language incompetency in learning. They derive learning strategies that assist them to cope in such academic setting so that the problem does not grossly affect their academic work. For various reasons; motivation, need to obtain higher qualification, better job opportunities and parental guidance encourage bilingual students to strategically involve in some classroom practices. Based on many of the research evidences garnered and reported over a century by the literature, I reckon that there are notable classroom practices or learning strategies. They are: code mixing, code switching and translanguaging. In light of this, my study proposes to investigate bilingualism in higher education with respect to language policy, incompetency in the language of medium of instruction and translanguaging as coping learning strategies by students of dual language. To achieve this, I shall present an overview of South African Higher Education policy (2002) and the Language policy of a selected university in South Africa. Following this, I proceed to state my problem statement, assumptions of the study, research aims and objectives, research questions, choice of methodology for the research, significance of study, definition of terms and the outline of chapters in my study.

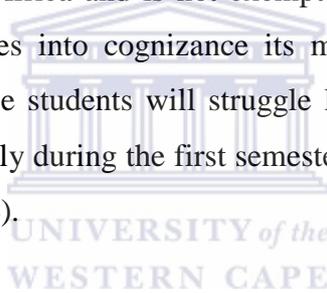
1.2.1 Overview of South African language policy on higher education (2002) and University of the Western Cape language policy (2003)

South African education has been shaped by significant changes and restructuring in schools' language policies at various points of time. As a result two official languages: Afrikaans and English were predominantly used as mediums of instruction in some schools. Desai (2010) explains that after sixteen years of the switch from apartheid to democratic period, black learners in South Africa did not have access to better education in English. Afrikaans and English benefitted the learners of white and colored races, because they could use these languages all through the primary and secondary levels of their schooling, while black learners were only able to use their African languages (L1) for the first four years of schooling after which they would be taught in English, which they were and still to a great extent are not proficient in (Herbert, 1992; Murray, 2002). In light of this, Murray highlights that the transition from policies that depicted strong bond between language and its users raise the spirit of learning and use of multiple languages. Furthermore, language users were extremely grouped according to "singular identities, rooted in an intimate bonding of race, language and culture" (Murray, 2002: p. 434). In the permeated spirit of racism, the department of education was divided into 'linguistic lines'. As a result departments came into existence according to Afrikaans, English and Black Africans. Even after twenty years of democratic governance in South Africa, singular identities –race is still a factor of advantage in varying context(s).

Consequently, learners' struggling with learning in a less proficient language further led to the provisions of more language policies. Notably for this study, I have adopted the South African Language Policy in Higher Education of 2002. The policy considers the challenge facing higher education and thus it stipulates that all 11 official languages in South Africa should be equally used as "academic/scientific languages" (Ministry of Education, 2002: Section 6). The policy is to promote and develop the various languages as medium of instruction (MOI) in higher education institutions, and not the underdevelopment of some languages for the development of the other in higher education. The implementation of the language policy for higher education in 2002 established grounds for higher learning institutions in South Africa (SA) to also formulate their own institutional language policy

which must be published and produced at the request of the Ministry of Education. One of the objectives of the SA higher Education language policy is to help students deal with the difficulty of learning in a less competent language during their academic programme in the choice of their universities. In addition, it is meant to promote a multilingual educational setting that accepts the use of all South Africa's (SA) 11 languages. More so, the issue of learner's language capability different to the MOI at schools should not hinder the pursuit or success of a learners' higher education (The South African Higher Education Language Policy, 2002: Section 5).

This multilingual policy opened doors for learners to be able to receive instructions in first languages and progress to acquire higher education in the same learning medium. Higher Education (HE) institutions also play a role for the effective implementation of SA's Higher Education language policy. The University of the Western Cape (UWC) is a higher educational institution in South Africa and is not exempted from this policy. UWC has its own language policy which takes into cognizance its multilingual student population. It seems obvious that some of these students will struggle linguistically and in the aspect of finding a cultural identity, probably during the first semester in the university (Murray, 2002; Young, Woodland & Byrne, 1994).



The stipulations in the Language policy of UWC likely answer the question as to how the policy provides opportunity to linguistically diverse students. The UWC Language Policy (2003: p. 2) stipulates the language of teaching, learning and assessment into five sub headings. These sub headings highlight the basis for language use and conditional phrase for the use of other languages. I shall summarize the subheadings as follows:

- i.) *“Language used in lectures, tutorials and practical”*- The Faculty concerned determines the language to use in its module. This may not be the case, where a lecturer is a competent user of another language apart from the main language of teaching or when the use of the lecturer's competent language can contribute to the topic discussed.
- ii.) *“Languages used in the setting of tasks, assignments, tests and examination”*- In this context, three official languages (English, Afrikaans and Xhosa) are suggested to be used “wherever it is practicable to do so”. This phrase seems to be very avoiding because it does not state any practicable conditions and who dictates the choice of language use.

iii.) “*Languages used in writing tasks, assignments, tests and examinations*” – It is emphatically stated under this heading that the language to use is English. Except, where there is an agreement between either student or a class and a lecturer. I shall examine the real scenario in this study.

iv.) “*Languages in which texts are available*” –it is the responsibility of departments to appoint student tutors to assist students in Xhosa or Afrikaans, and English.

v.) “*Access to Academic and Professional Discourse*”- The policy states that there should be provision to “entry- level course and support services” so as to facilitate learners’ academic language. Stroud & Kerfoot (2013) focuses on a rethink of multilingualism and language policy for academic literacy in particular to South African Higher Education. They pointed out that due consideration should be given to students’ academic enhancement in English. According to Stroud & Kerfoot, many black student are challenged in academic language because of poor support services in schools.

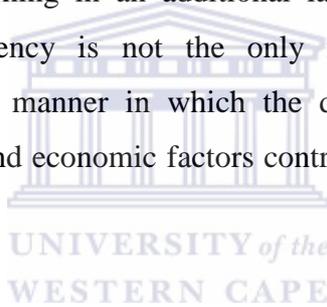
Academic scholars have derived/deduced concepts of additive and subtractive bilingualism (Cenoz, 2003; Cummins, 1979; Lambert, 1974) as a way of furthering our understanding of bilingualism. Additive bilingualism is a situation in which the use of a second language does not cause the discontinuity of the first language. Rather, both languages are developed, used independently and no language is dominated by the other. Meanwhile, Subtractive bilingualism refers to a situation in which the use of a second language does not encourage the use of the first language. It does result in underdevelopment of the first language (Sayer, 2013)

Bilingual students are at times faced with one of these types of bilingual education. In either or both types of bilingual education, learners may display the ability to use first or second language more than the latter or former. For example, when bilinguals are faced with the hassles of learning in less competent language, it is likely that, such students attribute success to his/ her motivations and translanguaging strategies. This prompts me to apply Weiner’s (1974, 1986) Attribution theory of Motivation and Translanguaging theory in my present study

1.3 Problem Statement

Some bilingual students are not able to cope with the rigors and routines of higher learning that takes place at UWC due to their incompetency in the UWC's language of the medium of instruction. The language of interpersonal communication is quite different from academic language. A reasonable number of UWC students have been taught in L1 from their foundation to matriculation level. This means that some of these bilingual students, in particular most Afrikaans-L1 student were only offered English language as a core subject. At some point in the first year of university education, these groupings will / can find it burdensome to effectively comprehend lectures in the English language. It could be due to home factors, language competency, non-availability of L1 materials and tutorials not in L1 also.

Leibowitz' (2005) study on learning in an additional language in a multilingual society contends that language proficiency is not the only factor affecting performance of multilingual learners, rather the manner in which the dominant language is taught and acquired; varying sociocultural and economic factors contribute to the success or failure in a dominant language in learning.



The above-mentioned points beg the question: In what ways have bilingual students at UWC been able to deal with the challenge of learning in a language that they are not proficient in? The proposed study seeks to investigate and analyze the use of translanguaging as coping learning strategies of selected bilingual students as well as examining bilinguals' learning experiences in relation to the UWC language policy stipulates. This study is important because it explores the motivations of bilingual students to cope with the language problem during academic collaboration. To the best of my knowledge, no research related to this particular topic has been carried out so far at UWC. I have chosen this group specifically because students are taught according to the UWC language policy and might be affected by the pros and cons of the university policy.

1.4 Rationale for my study

My main motivation to investigate the translanguaging strategies of university bilingual students was prompted during my honours degree in 2013 at the University of Western Cape, Bellville (UWC). One of the modules I registered for became an “eye opener” into the increasingly important research areas in the field of language education. The module name is multilingualism in education and the course outline centers on literacy and language. In this module, I was taught in depth the importance of language of instruction in teaching and learning, ongoing discussions on the need to recognize learners’ linguistic repertoires, the general history of language policy in education and was introduced to the South African language policy in education. I was also taught about language practices in the classrooms and how it differs to the language policy of schools. Among the most recent language practices bi/multilingual learners and students engage in is translanguaging. As part of my academic assessment, I was given a module assignment to investigate through observation the language practices of any classroom setting amongst Honours postgraduate students, and its relevance/difference to the language policy of UWC. The main finding of my module assignment was that both the lecturer and the students who were mostly Afrikaans first language speakers’ code switched at different intervals during lessons. It was at that point, I considered conducting/launching my current research around the purpose and benefit of code switching in the pedagogy process. My findings suggest that those bilingual students used their linguistic repertoires for academic learning even if it was not generally encouraged in classrooms at UWC. I became interested in the language learning challenges of newly admitted first year undergraduates and how they cope with those challenges. My view is that the purpose for students’ and lecturers’ code-switching practices assisted them to understand better the topic of discussion. I imagined the language context of newly admitted first year undergraduate students and how they will cope with the English Medium of instruction at my study site. Hence, I will be investigating the translanguaging strategies of both Isi-Xhosa and Afrikaans bilingual students in their first year. Also, I will take into consideration the assumptions that my study is based on.

1.5 Assumptions

I assumed that a reasonable number of UWC students are not competently literate in English as many of the undergraduates that are bilingual still find it a challenge to effectively communicate for academic purpose in English (Leibowitz, 2005). Nevertheless, English is offered as a subject at their various secondary school levels. Therefore, this study will focus on the assumption that a selected language of medium of instruction (MOI) which is English, stipulated in the UWC language policy is not fairly implemented for/ in academic activities. Based on empirical evidence and personal experience I also assumed that bilingual and multilingual students tend to highly comprehend a topic in the classroom if the lecturer uses the students' first language to teach. As a result, the students will easily receive, assimilate and be able to give output (recall for test and examination purposes) in either the first language (L1) or second language (L2). In case, a lecturer does not know the student's L1, I still assume that translanguaging can be achieved amongst bilingual students

1.6 Aims and Objectives for the study

The overriding aim of this study is to examine translanguaging and how its use is effective as coping learning strategies by some bilingual students at UWC. Additionally, it will focus on how translanguaging in practice differs to the stipulations of UWC language policy.

The research objectives for the proposed study are as follows;

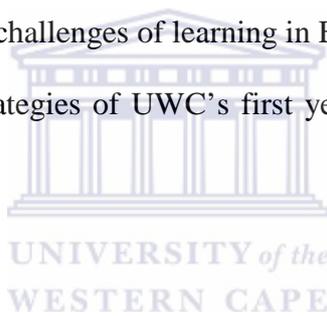
- (i.) To determine the forms of challenge(s) faced by bilingual students learning in a less proficient language at UWC.
- (ii.) To investigate and analyze the translanguaging strategies that might assist bilingual students cope with learning in a less proficient language at UWC.
- (iii.) To examine the patterns of use of translanguaging strategies on academic collaboration of bilingual students' at UWC.
- (iv.) To find out areas in which the practice of translanguaging strategies differs to the stipulations of the UWC language policy.

1.7 Research questions

Further to the issues discussed so far and the research objectives I propose to achieve in my current study, I propose to state my research questions. The main research question intended for this study is: What are the translanguaging strategies of UWC bilingual students on academic collaboration?

The following sub questions are meant to reinforce the central concerns that underlie the main research question by pointing out the subsequent component parts;

- (i.) What type of challenge(s) do UWC's first year bilingual students face while learning through the medium of English at UWC?
- ii.) What type of translanguaging strategies are used by UWC's first year bilingual students during their academic collaboration?
- (iii.) How do the different translanguaging strategies used by UWC's first year bilingual students help them cope with the challenges of learning in English?
- (iv.) Can the translanguaging strategies of UWC's first year bilingual students complement UWC language policy?



1.8 Research methodology

The research design for this study is predicated on qualitative approach as this is an inquiry based on meaningful claims of research participants' experiences; after which I as researcher would develop themes from the data (Creswell, 2012). I made use of an interpretive/constructivist approach in this study. The interpretive/constructivist paradigm aims to understand the experiences and views of people featured in research sample size/ population. I also focus on use of the experiences and views of my selected participants to analyze and discuss my findings (Creswell, 2013; Mackenzie & Knipe, 2006). The qualitative research techniques that I employ are observations, interviews, questions, and documents analyses. I believe that the above mentioned research techniques are appropriate and will assist me in identifying the translanguaging strategies and the ways in which bilingual students use it as a coping aid to their language learning challenges.

I use purposive sampling to select my research participants who were 30 first year bilingual undergraduates at UWC. I believe the selected bilinguals were most challenged students who struggle with coping in a less proficient language as the MOI. The participants of my research are bilingual students of English and Afrikaans or English and Isi-Xhosa. The same sampling method I used in the selection of three tutorial groups for reasons of operational efficiency and space. I will provide more details of the methodology which includes the ethical procedures that I have followed in chapter three of my thesis.

1.9 Significance of study

Given the aim for the formation and stipulation of language policy in education in South African context, it is apparent that there is problem of effective teaching and learning at all levels of education. There have been several language policy reviews done to look at ways to improve the success rate of learners/students who are less motivated to undergo academic learning, probably because of inadequate competence in the language of instruction used. In South Africa, literatures have shown that most language related challenges are carried on from the foundation phase of schooling. The general issue on the existing gap in language policy and their implementation, South African students at various higher institutions still find higher education burdensome because of their prolonged language difficulties. Hence, I am interested in the current language learning state of bilingual first year undergraduate students in South Africa universities, how they will use translanguaging strategies as medium of support or language aid when learning in English. In this regard, reference is made to two other official languages (Afrikaans and Isi-Xhosa) alongside with English used as the linguistic repertoires of undergraduate students. These selected categories of bilingual speakers are important to my research because it is the two most common languages spoken in the Western Cape Province of South Africa.

More importantly, there are different concurrent studies conducted on translanguaging, but few have given attention to the translanguaging practices of students in South African higher education. I believe that no studies have focus on the use of translanguaging as coping learning strategies for first year bilingual students at university level; particularly amongst different bilingual students in a classroom. As I explore the topic of my research, it is my belief and view that the results of my research can be significant to epistemological concerns

of university students. This will positively impact on the academic success rate of bilingual students during their first year. Rather than prolong the language challenges faced during the primary and high school, my study provides applicable learning strategies alongside that are effective. I assume that the UWC language policy makers and the South Africa language policy in Higher education may review some of the findings, and complement it with some sections in the policy. Also, my study can chart a path to future discourses and investigation on translinguaging in South African higher education, additive bilingualism and academic literacy in English.

1.10 Definition of key terms

Academic Collaboration- can mean the time and effort students put in by working with others on their academic curriculum to achieved targeted outcomes. Kuh (2009) describes two major facets of collaboration which are: in-class (or academic) collaboration and out-of-class collaboration in educationally relevant (or co-curricular) activities, both of which are pertinent to students' success.

Bilingual students – for the purpose of this study are first year undergraduates at the University of the Western Cape across the different Departments in the Faculty of Education that are literate in English language and either Afrikaans or Isi-Xhosa

Language proficiency - can be explained as the greater extent in which a language user can read, write and speak a language without disruption. These include the ability to use vocabulary of the peculiar language to a standard. A proficient language user should not struggle to communicate and be communicated to. Such a user will also be able to use his or her proficient language for numerous purposes. For instance, the proficient language can be used for academic learning/ varying cognitive purposes. Lo Castro (2012) as cited in Kelly (2013) points out that, academic language proficiency encompass terminology of subject and grammatical functions that are seldom used in day to day discourses.

Language practice – There is no actual definition for this term. It is the combination of two words that is used to describe a linguistic terminology. For the purpose of this study,

language practice will be viewed from Pennycook's (2010) description of it. He refers to language as an activity rather than a structure as something we do rather than a system we draw on. This suggests that whatever activity we use our language for should constitute a major part of our social and cultural life rather than leading us to viewing it as a distinct phase of daily activities. He further states that language should be discussed from the different situation for which it is used, for example transacting business, schools, politics, religion and so forth. The way the language is used in a context relates to any action that emanates from such settings as is the case in this study.

Learning Strategies - can be described as approaches a learner puts in place to facilitate processing information in a learning context; considering learners' behaviors, thoughts, time, effort and goals. Based on six important features- actions/activities, consciousness, goals oriented, self-regulation, goals of self-regulating, facilitates learning of up to three decades of findings, Griffiths (2008: p.87) refers to learning strategies as "Activities consciously chosen by learners' for the purpose of regulating their own learning". One of the features of learning strategies according to Winne (2013) is that learners have a goal to achieve improved learning. Winnie adds that the effect of goal setting is measured when comparing the learning outcomes of a student that applies it and the other student who does not apply learning strategies.

Medium of Instruction (MOI) is the main language in which students are taught in the classroom and that same language they learn. Lo and Lo (2014) point out that, there are several reasons schools use students' second language (L2) as (MOI) while the first language (L1) is usually the default MOI. At UWC, one of the reason for L2 as (MOI) may be the strong preference for the language. Since, it is recognized as an international language. According to the language policy underlying the setting of this research, the MOI is L2, while L1 is used in exceptional academic activities (see page 3 of this study).

Translanguaging – In terms of use, refers to "pedagogical practices" whereby learners deliberately inter-use languages to receive and disseminate information. Bilingual learners

make use of this practice to understand in - depth a context. To illustrate, a bilingual learner (English and Afrikaans) who receives academic instructions in English language (L2) is more

likely to understand, assimilate and explain to a similar classmate in Afrikaans (L1) (Garcia & Wei, 2014).

1.11 Outline of Chapters

Chapter One

This chapter presents the role of language in general, an overview of South Africa's Language Policy in Higher Education (2002), UWC Language Policy (2003) as well as the research problem, assumptions, rationale for study, research aims and objectives, research questions, methodology, significance of study, definition of terms and an outline of chapters.

Chapter Two

In this chapter, I shall present a detailed literature review on translanguaging as adopted learning strategies of bilingual students in an educational setting. In order to do this, I first critically review literature on operational concepts like bilingual education, learning strategies, language policy and translanguaging. This will lead me to a scholarly review of the translanguaging strategies/ skills and its significance in bilingual education. The third direction of the review of literature will examine the patterns of use of translanguaging on academic collaboration of bilingual students. Finally, I shall draw on the Attribution theory of motivation and the relevance of its application to this investigation.

Chapter Three

This chapter will attempt a detailed description of my research design. It will include data collection techniques, research population and procedure. Furthermore, the reason for choice and the appropriateness of each research tools and method will be discussed.

Chapter Four

This chapter will present and analyze data findings using thematic codes and sub codes. It will consist of two sections. The first section includes tabular presentation and analysis while the second part signposts the narratives of my participants.

Chapter Five

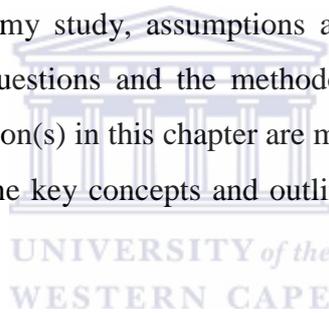
In this chapter, I shall present a detail discussion of the data findings that are featured in chapter four. I shall ensure that my discussion chapter is in keeping with the thematic codes and sub codes.

Chapter Six

The last chapter will focus on an overview of my research findings, reconsideration aims and objectives of my study. It will also present limitations of my study, recommendations and suggestions for further research.

1.12 Conclusion

In this chapter, I have presented the detailed background of my study. I proceed to relate my problem statement, rationale of my study, assumptions and aims and research objectives. Also, I highlight the research questions and the methodological approach adopted in my research. The subsequent discussion(s) in this chapter are meant to capture the significance of my current study. Briefly, I define key concepts and outline the chapters that constitute my thesis.



CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Introduction

This chapter will present a review of relevant literature on translanguaging as the adopted learning strategies of bilingual students in educational settings. In order to do this, I will first critically review literature on operational concepts such as bilingual education, learning strategies, language policy, academic collaboration and translanguaging. This, I believe, will lead my proposed discussion on to a scholarly review of the translanguaging strategies/ skills and their significance in bilingual education. The third direction of the review of literature will entail examining the patterns of use of translanguaging in the academic collaboration of bilingual students. Finally, I will draw on the Attribution theory of motivation and the relevance of its application to this investigation.

2.2 Operational Concepts used in the literature review

2.2.1 Learning strategies of students

Students who face challenges during academic activities should not be idle but should make an effort to find a way out of the difficulty. In most cases, students employ strategies to cope with a specific language skill (Bidabadi & Yamat, 2011). Students adopt various learning activities and strategies to input and output academic content that will be used for academic assessment for a stipulated period (Donche, Maeyer, Coertjens, Daal, & Petegem, 2013). Thus, learning strategies can be referred to as tools used by students to acquire academic knowledge and successfully confront learning tasks. In the context of second language learning, Ehrman, Leaver & Oxford (2003: p.315) are of the view that a learning strategy is good or bad depending on its outcome. In fact, when the usage of a particular strategy produces successful learning then the strategy is said to be effective. On the other hand if the outcome is the reverse, the strategy will not be used again. They further state that learning strategy is beneficial within three contexts: (a) the strategy relates well to the L2 task at hand, (b) the strategy fits the particular student's learning style preferences to one degree or

another, and (c) the student employs the strategy effectively and links it with other relevant strategies (Ehrman *et al.*, 2003: p.315). Based on these three contexts, the current study will establish whether translanguaging as a coping learning strategy is considered worthwhile to use and if it contributes to the learning success of bilingual students. This is despite the fact that the student has a weak proficiency in the language of medium of instruction.

Vermunt & Vermetten (2004) cited in Donche *et al.* (2013: p.239) categorize learning strategies in two terms: metacognitive and cognitive processing strategies. Donche *et al.* appear to suggest that cognitive strategies are forms of reasoning used by students in an effort to process subject matter. For example, students memorize concepts, they visualize what has been read or taught, keep in mind and frequently pronounce new words and they give acronyms to what they need to remember. Likewise, metacognitive strategies are described as the “kind of control one has when processing subject matter which, for instance, can be identified by a more self-regulated or externally regulated monitoring of the learning process” (Donche *et al.*, 2013: p.239) This is to suggest that metacognitive strategies are more guided by context rather than instinct or self. It can also refer to the strategies used in ‘conditional knowledge’ after the students have thought of the reason for use, at which point to use them, and the place to use them (Alhaqbani & Riazi, 2012: p.233) Examples of metacognitive strategies can include “Self-critique, taking responsibility, personal reflection, individual monitoring, and changing study habits” (Simsek & Balaban, 2010: p.37). In the case of learning a difficult language in classroom settings, students also employ what is referred to as language learning strategies. Hismanoglu (2000) describes language classroom as a problem-solving setting in which language learners often experience difficulty with the input and output process of academic instructions given by their instructors. As a result they strategize a means to manage such a situation. One of the language learning strategies that learners resort to is translanguaging. Translanguaging strategies are considered a type of metacognitive learning strategy. In light of this, translanguaging as a coping learning strategy will be examined in this current study. In real educational settings, students’ use of learning strategies differs according to purpose, context and personal interest. Also, students can adopt one or more strategies depending on the complexity of the task. Some researchers assume that the blend of personal and contextual factors stimulate students’ use of learning strategies, while different personality traits account for most personal factors (Chamorro-Premuzic,

Furnham & Lewis, 2007; Douche *et al.*, 2013: p.240). In addition, academic motivation is also an important factor considered by students when adopting suitable learning strategies. For example, first year undergraduates may enroll at a university for a bachelor's program based on personal interest, but as they progress in the first semester they may experience learning difficulties which may be lack of certain regulatory skills or like in this study, low language proficiency in the medium of instruction (ibid, 2013: p.248). Douche *et al.* conclude from the study conducted on differential use of learning strategies in first-year of higher education in Belgium, that variances in student motivation are linked with their learning activities. In the context of this study, I will make known the importance of motivation and the reasons for first year bilingual students' adoption of translanguaging as a coping learning strategy.

The level of interest to use one or more learning strategy should be compatible with learners' motivational belief in order for successful learning to happen (Braten & Olaussen, 1998; McWhaw & Abrami, 2001). Learning interest built by a student becomes the compelling force which can help the student accomplish a set goal. This means that learners are first aware of the importance of the learning strategy or expressed in another way, learners give attention to a particular strategy because of the benefit to be derived. It has been reported that, "motivational components are assumed to support the use of learning strategies and do not directly influence student achievement" (McWhaw & Abrami, 2001: p.313). In a similar vein, McWhaw & Abrami (2001:324) hypothesize that students whose level of interest is high, adopt more strategies compared to students with a low level of interest in a learning context. Thus, interest in using the strategy is paramount and yet it appears that students cannot develop interest when there is no full understanding of how the strategy will facilitate successful learning. I wish to provide an example for this. The University of the Western Cape provides an academic forum in which first year students are oriented on how to deal with academic work despite their challenge of learning in a low competent language. At this forum, types and benefits of learning strategies are explained to students. Based on this, students develop interest in the type of strategy that helps them cope with their learning difficulty. Hence, I agree with McWhaw & Abrami (2001: p. 325) who contend that "interest is an important motivational component of self-regulated learning".

The usage level of any form of a learning strategy is determined by the motivation of the student. It is noteworthy that some students have reluctantly used learning strategies as a result of improper motivation, while others have procrastinated on the use of learning strategies. An improper motivation can be described as lack of understanding the importance of using a specific function. Some researchers view is that when students are abreast of the usefulness of a subject in their non-academic activities, they will be drawn closer to the subject: in terms of interest to learn and zeal to apply the subject to their lives (Garcia-Santillan, Moreno-Garcia, Carlos-Castro, Zamudio-Abdala & Garduno-Trejo, 2012). Furthermore, Garcia-Santillan *et al.* (2012: p.14) affirms that a well-informed student feels confident to use a particular learning instrument. Students that procrastinate or reluctantly use coping learning strategies do not complete a set task or goal as effectively and efficiently as their counterparts who value the use of adopting learning strategies. Howell & Watson (2007) studied the association of procrastination with the achievement of goal orientation and the learning strategies of one hundred and seventy undergraduates in one of Canada's higher education colleges. The findings from the study show that students who had a positive outlook made all the necessary effort to learn every detail of the academic content and did not procrastinate. On the other hand, other students who did not deem it fit to establish a learning objective and put forth effort, procrastinated (Howell & Watson, 2007: p. 174). Howell & Watson (2007: p. 169) claim that the effort demanding and time-consuming nature of learning strategies does have a direct negative consequence on unmotivated students. The unmotivated students may not consider it necessary to use learning strategies when faced with challenging learning situations. The findings from the study show that students who had a positive outlook to accomplish learning goal, made all effort to learn every details of academic content and did not procrastinate. This study investigates if UWC bilingual first year undergraduate students consider translanguaging strategies as time consuming and requires more effort than the task difficulty itself and if there is any reason relating to translanguaging strategies that make them procrastinate the learning of academic content.

The majority of students that effectively use one or more learning strategies have performed outstandingly in their course-work and progressed to the next academic level, while some have successfully completed academic programs. However, some students are unsuccessful in their academic work despite adopting learning strategies. There are notable reasons for

this, but it is not pertinent to this study. Simsek & Balaban (2010) conducted a study on the most used learning strategies of undergraduate students and how these strategies contribute to their academic performance. Using a purposive sampling method, 278 undergraduate senior year students were chosen from five faculties according to different departments and cumulative grade point averages. Results showed that there were positive and substantial effects in the use of learning strategies and the level of academic performance. The researchers observe that the “more the learning strategies were used, the higher the student performance was” (Simsek & Balaban, 2010: p.43). Based on Simsek & Balaban (2010) results it can be suggested that first year bilingual students at UWC can successfully complete their modules and complete their academic session irrespective of initial language difficulty, if they adopt more translanguaging strategies during academic collaboration.

2.2.2 Language Policies in Schools

On a global scale, there have been on-going investigations into the discrepancies in effectively implementing school multilingual policies and linguistic practices in the classroom (Hornberger & Vaish, 2009; Garcia *et al.*, 2012). A study by two scholars using an ecological and sociolinguistic approach (Ehrman *et al.*, 2003) reveals the effect of rigidity of multilingual policy and actual classroom practices in three countries: India, Singapore and South Africa (Hornberger & Vaish, 2009). These three countries shared a similar language background with English being the language of hegemony in the schools' medium of instruction and yet not being the language they are proficient in or which is mostly used in the homes of the learners. Also they all have different educational language policies that guide ethnically diverse learners from primary to tertiary education. Noting the various time frames in the formulation of the three countries' multilingual policies, it can be said that all are facing the challenge of learners' competency in the use of standard or academic English. Most of the learners in these countries are especially faced with the difficulty of accessing academic content in the language of proficiency (home language) and English as the language of globalisation. They conclude that “the current multilingual language in the education policies of all three countries are still struggling to meet these demands” (ibid, 2009: p.316). The demand is the provision of language practices that officially involves the use of learners' linguistic resources in academic learning. Hornberger & Vaish, (2009: p.317)

argue “that use of mother tongue in the classroom, or as in the case of Singapore the judicious use of the quotidian register, can be a resource through which children can access Standard English while also continuing and indeed cultivating multilingual practices inclusive of their own local languages”. Equally, Garcia *et al.* (2012: p.12) found that some Latino schools in New York do not fully adhere to the educational language policies, in order to assist students to academically succeed despite limited proficiency in the language of teaching and learning. It was observed that school principals supported teacher use of language practices that facilitated students learning using home language and language of medium of instruction in and out of the classroom. This appears to support that flexibility in the language policy stipulated by the Department of Education and individual schools’ language policy encourages students’ academic success, and at the same time increases bi-literacy. Yet, in a traditional classroom if flexibility in language policy is not allowed or encouraged by the institution or lecturer, any form of language practice in the classroom is considered inappropriate or stepping on the lecturer’s classroom power. In the current study I will examine the pattern of language practice (translanguaging) used by first year bilingual students during tutorial class. In addition I will investigate whether the tutors in these classrooms support translanguaging practices or consider it a form of their classroom power. Also I will investigate which of the two languages of the bilinguals is mostly used during learning, and if actually the objective of the language policy is accomplished or not.

In South Africa, issues relating to the implementation of a multilingualism goal in its education language policies have been disapproved because the language policies are seen /viewed in more of a monoglossic language context rather than heteroglossic context. According to Garcia & Torres-Guevara (2009: p.182), “a monoglossic language ideology sees language as an autonomous skill that functions independently from the context in which it is used”. More so, monoglossic language context place more importance on monolingualism while neglecting bilingualism (Garcia & Torres-Guevara, 2009). Viewed in realistic terms, language practices are not equitable and in compliance with educational language policies (Reagan in Mesthrie, 2004: p.423). More recently, studies conducted on language practices in the classroom and implementation of education language policy reveal a wide disparity amongst them (Hornberger & Link, 2012; Doiz, Lasagabaster & Sierra, 2014; Makalela, 2014). Using two comparative literacy studies of universities in the United

States and South Africa, Hornberger & Link argue that educational policies and practices should give attention to the mobile and fluid multilingual resources which students bring with them to class. As these practices and linguistic resources contribute immensely to their academic learning. On the other hand, Yiakoumetti (2012: p.1) construe that restricting the use of learners' linguistic backgrounds in the classroom have a tendency to diminish their experience of a meaningful education. Makalela (2014: p.680) also states that there is a wide gap between the language-in-education policy and the students' different linguistic resources which they bring along to classrooms. He explains that amongst the factors responsible for this space is the early introduction to the English medium of instruction - the intermediate phase. This has negatively impacted students' creativity and expressive ability. Thus, Makalela locates the re-consideration of language policies that will facilitate bilinguals', languaging practices, especially in a new learning space.

Savin-Baden (2008) explores the generality of delineating learning spaces. She describes the notion of "learning spaces as an idea of having diverse forms of spaces within the life and life world of academic where opportunities to reflect and analyse their own learning position occur" (Savin- Baden, 2008:p.7). In her view, there are varying learning spaces depending on its occurrence. These may include physical, mental and metaphorical settings. I will adapt in this study the physical normal learning space of the tutorial classes. Often challenges occur in the learning space due to disengaged thoughts and ideas which may be traced to learning abilities, knowledge and identity (Saven-Baden, 2008). In the context of the current study, students' identity will be related to their language background. Saven-Baden points out that despite the existing challenges affecting learning and teaching in academic spaces, university leadership who are mostly policy makers do not invariably provide practicable solutions to these challenges.

Murray in Mesthrie, (2004) generally describes language issues in South African education by focusing on the past, present and future developments in relation to schools. Further, she reviews code switching as a language practice and how it relates to South Africa's educational policies. According to Murray (2004: p.444), "The idealistic goals of South Africa's multilingual language policy in education are hard to take issue with, but difficult to achieve in practice. Outside the classroom, people use their linguistic resources in flexible

ways to achieve their communicative purposes. Inside the classroom, however, the teacher is expected to develop students' linguistic abilities in particular languages in demonstrable ways". She affirms that to fully implement a multilingual education setting at any level of education in South Africa and elsewhere requires 'inconsiderable human and material resources' (Murray, 2004: p.445). Recently, Evans & Cleghorn (2012: p.56) have emphasized the reasons for the discrepancy of an effective implementation of South Africa's language-in-education policy in terms of 'practicalities and cost' of an effective diversified classroom. Realistically, having more than two official languages and the language of MoI used in one classroom or school at the same time shows in orderliness. For example, in the context of this study, Afrikaans, Isi- Xhosa and English are used in same learning space. It will not depict the proper use of language. This is because language in communication should be understandable to parties communicating. It is logical for students to use a common language which assumes centrality in the present study.

From a perceptive view, it is not wrong to make it known that English will remain the language of medium of instruction, despite the incumbent learning challenges that are encountered: bilinguals are encouraged to strategically make use of preferred language activity to manage their language issues (Murray, 2004: p.445). On the contrary, (Stroud & Kerfoot, 2013: p.403) argue that the development of appropriate repertoires in English is not best achieved by offering merely bilingual support as this can serve to re-ignite partial construct of one's cultural identity over the other. Although they pose that the initial cost to put in place human and material resources is considerably high, they point out that in the long run the goals achieved can be invaluable. On the other hand, (Tsung, 2012) contend that rather than the value gained through the use of human and material resources, it is a challenge to bi/multilingual education. He attributes the challenge to the short supply of textbooks, standard use of home language in textbooks and insufficient teacher. To address Murray's charge which he made over a decade ago, I will find areas in which the practice of translanguaging strategies differ to the stipulations of UWC's language policy in the sense that code switching involves translanguaging.

Scholarly works have shown that cultural and language differences amongst learners and educators have added to the non-effectiveness of education language policy. Evans &

Cleghorn (2012) appear to concur with Cleghorn & Prochner (2010) on the conclusion that education policy is intended to foster national identity and can be a facilitative platform for the use of various linguistic practices in learning contexts. Ironically in South Africa, a Western language like English is being predominantly used for learning and teaching. In light of this, these researchers' view is that learners are brainwashed into learning and behaving in a westernized way. Consequently, the promotion of English as a lingua franca can result in less use of the indigenous language not only in the education system but also in the socio-economic system. Garcia *et al.* (2012: p.72) conclude that language-in-education policies are not accommodative of language variances as a result of the state and policy makers not tolerating students' linguistic resources. Breton – Carneau, Cleghorn, Evans & Pesco (2012) describe the priority of political effect on learners' linguistic and cultural repertoire rather than the classroom practice, i.e pedagogical situation. Thus, it can be deduced that policy makers are more focused on the economic benefits of using a language rather than the effect of using the language for academic purposes. Although, many studies have been conducted on the consequences of the use of a foreign or western language for medium of instruction based on political gain, it is not among the objectives of this current study to elaborate on them. From a global view, the negative face by policy makers towards the actual language practice in classroom is considered beneficial to the education system of country and a country as a whole. Following the charge to gain a better understanding of English language, quite a number of countries are prioritizing the use of English as a language of MoI in its educational policies (Canagarajah, Kafle & Matsumoto in Yiakoumetti, 2012: p.77). More so, the increased demand to use English as the dominant language of a nation has led to it paying the price. The price in this context is the negative effect of wide gap between language policies and language practice. Mckay (2012: p.105) advocates that English is the only official language of some countries. The main reason is the political alliance and help gained with other English- speaking nations. Definitely, to a large extent the benefit of the discrepancy is to the state rather than for educational system.

Stroud & Kerfoot (2013) investigated the language policy of the University of the Western Cape (2003) in relation to academic literacies and the rethinking of the concept of multilingualism after a transitional period in South Africa's higher education. They argue that the "reinterpretation of 'policy failure' as responsive engagement with complex new forms of

linguistic and social diversity can lead to a critical rethinking of the nature of multilingualism and language policy in a South African tertiary education sector in transformation” (Stroud & Kerfoot, 2013: p.396). Thus, it shows that there is a lapse in the implementation of the institutional language policy under study and other South African tertiary education language policies. Attention is therefore drawn to a more practicable use of new linguistic resources that stimulate students’ multi-cultural identities in learning. More so, these researchers’ view is that a transformative language policy will promote and increase higher education learning in all available official South African languages. Also, it will result in dialogic pedagogies and the overall academic success of students. Stroud & Kerfoot (2013: p.397) state that:

“A transformative language policy would take voice, rather than language, as a starting point, focusing on linguistic repertoires rather than languages, on practices rather than proficiency, and on translanguaging rather than codeswitching in which students mobilise multiple, multilingual discursive resources in achieving communicative aims”

This suggests that a transformative language policy is a just and practicable notion of multilingualism, which is the pronounced objective of South African higher education language policy and that of UWC. Stroud & Kerfoot postulate that the language policy of UWC is not excluded from the transformation process. It is relevant to examine the current state of UWC’s language policy since its publication in 2003. I propose to find out whether UWC’s language policy can be referred to as a transformative language policy and outline the underlying reasons for believe that it is or is not a transformative language policy.

More recently though, research evidence shows that there is a wide gap between schools’ language policies and the actual classroom practices. The wide gap in language policies and classroom practices has been described as ‘Softening the Boundaries between Languages’ (Cenoz & Gorter, 2013).

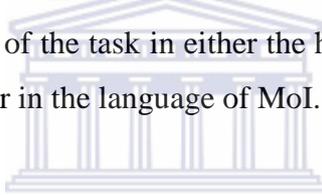
The researchers review the isolationist language policy of TESOL, an international association for educators in Europe. In addition, the study provides instruction/suggestions for TESOL educators in relation to the Council of Europe policy. Cenoz & Gorter (2013: p.596) argue for a “language policy that moves from the traditional monolingual ideology towards adopting holistic plurilingual approaches in the teaching of second and foreign

languages”. Some of the limitations to these plurilingualistic approaches were highlighted. In part, they include: setting attainable goals, using plurilingual competence, integrated syllabi and the creation of resources (Cenoz & Gorter, 2013: p.596-7). Obviously, plurilingual approaches are not contained in the language policy of TESOL. However, enormous benefits are derived from its application. There are many language approaches that are referred to by different terms in different educational settings e.g Translanguaging, transnational literacy. The present study focuses on translanguaging as a coping strategy to challenge(s) caused by language barrier. In this study I aim to find out how the argument of Cenoz & Gorter on the traditional monolingual ideology of language policy in Europe, can be (made) applicable in South Africa teaching and learning.

2.2.3 Academic Collaboration

Generally, the notion of collaboration as regards students in higher education institution implies that they help each other and find it more credible to work as peers than teachers dictating what should be given attention (Oblinger, Oblinger, & Lippincott, 2005). Seemingly, students that participate in academic collaboration are “active agents in learning, not passive recipients of teaching, although the teacher is central to the process” (Gardner, 2001: 69). This shows that academic collaboration is an important learning space for students. In relation to the present study, this learning space has provided students’ with a way out of their various learning challenges. According to Coleman & Ward (1999) there are some requirements that seem insignificant but which are essential to achieve effective knowledge sharing that produces successful academic collaboration. These include trust between the groups of students, the ability to communicate meaningfully and having sufficient allotted space to exchange information. There should be shared circumstances and shared language/s. It is reasonable to think that if there is no common ground in communication, then there is nothing to communicate. On the other hand, if there is no common ground in the communication process (i.e. home language) and collaborating members do not operate at the same level, it will result in a non-effective collaboration. Banda (2007) has investigated the importance of academic collaboration among bilingual university students focusing on their language proficiency in the Medium of Instruction (MoI). He concludes that the purpose of academic collaboration is futile if none of the

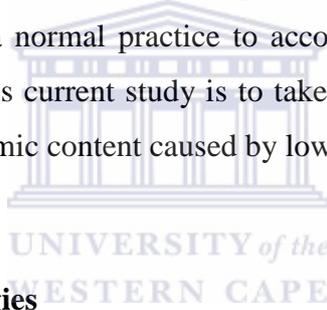
bilinguals in the collaborating group is proficient in the language of MoI. None of the bilinguals is able to explain academic content and materials to each other. Based on the conclusions of Banda I am inclined to deduce that there ought to be a central point where group members meet. Apart from the common ground, there are supporting factors that contribute to the effectiveness and success of academic collaboration. In this present study, the common ground will be to learn academic content. The supporting factors include availability of tutors and students, students' ability to use their home language and the language of MoI, few proficient language speakers of English and Afrikaans or Isi-Xhosa and willingness of members to share information. In the context of classroom translanguaging, there are bilingual students who are more proficient in both languages than the others. During academic collaboration, the course content that is a challenge to the low proficient bilingual student is better understood by the other students in the group. Hence, the more proficient bilingual student(s) explain the understood text or task in either or both languages to the challenged group members. This will result in most students in the collaborating group having an in-depth understanding of the task in either the home language or second language and importantly, giving the answer in the language of MoI.



Another factor that needs to be considered when forming a collaborating group is the role each member of the group will play. For example, how does the work of student A influence the subject matter, what is the effect of the task given to students and how detailed is the explanation from L2 to L1 by student C as collaboration involves good team work and players. Jones (2007) focuses on the “can do attitude” of English second language students, who have low proficiency in English Language and as to deal with the issue of academic literacy. He highlights the positive impact of students' independent learning in a well-planned working together educational space. It includes the value place on each other's contributions and cooperation amongst group members. A productive collaborative learning involves shared responsibilities by members of the group (Christudason, 2000 cited in Banda, 2007: 18). Findings from Banda's study reveal problems that arise when a group is not properly formed in that roles are not shared accordingly between members. When assigning roles to members of an academic group, individual cognitive abilities need to be factored in. Also, there should be caution so that one member of the group does not overshadow nor is

extremely idle during the collaboration process which results in other group members being forced to withdraw from participating or be reluctant to participate in the group.

Garcia, Woodley, Flores & Chu, (2012) in their study entitled “Latino Emergent Bilingual Youth in High Schools: Transcaring Strategies for Academic Success” identify transcollaboration as one of the three compositions of transcaring strategies used in United States schools and other educational settings. This transcollaboration of school and community helped Latino emergent bilinguals to draw from their entire range of resources, both in and out of school, and to perform academically and socially in ways that helped them to grow beyond their static position as English language learners to which they are often relegated in other schools. Although collaboration in the context of Garcia’s *et al.* study happened between educators with parents, family, and community, Spanish language was encouraged (2012: p.18). Also, Garcia *et al.* (2012: p.18) highlight the fact that collaboration amongst students is considered a normal practice to accomplish a goal. It is important to point out that collaboration in this current study is to take place between bilingual students, who share a difficulty with academic content caused by low proficiency in Language of MOI.



2.2.4 Translanguaging Strategies

Translanguaging originated in Wales in the 1980’s as a pedagogical practice. The term translanguaging was coined from a Welsh word “trawsieithu” to name a pedagogical practice, and was formed by a famous Welsh educationalist Cen Williams in the 1980s. Translanguaging can be referred to as the information that is received through the medium of one language and this received information is used in another language medium (Williams 1996: p.64). For example, a bilingual learner during a classroom session, receives knowledge in English language and for self-understanding of the topic itemizes the point in a written form in isiXhosa (which may be the learner’s first language).

More importantly, translanguaging has only received scholarly attention since the early twentieth century. Many scholars in the field of linguistics, sociolinguistics and education have researched three broad areas of translanguaging namely: Translanguaging as a practice,

translanguaging as skills and translanguaging as pedagogy (Baker, 2006, 2011; Garcia, 2009; Creese & Blackledge, 2010; Canagarajah, 2011). Translanguaging as a practice refers to what students do with language, how they understand and perceive language. Oostendorp & Anthonissen (2014: p.73) describe translanguaging as the “heteroglossic practices used by students in learning contexts”. Translanguaging as a skill relates to multilingual proficiencies and the simultaneous listening, speaking, reading and writing of language users in different context. Pedagogy literally means instructions. Translanguaging as pedagogy is described as the interrelation between languages, the learning process and learning environments. Also, translanguaging as pedagogy refers to new language practices bilingual students adopts in order to cope with linguistic difficulties in a language situation. The language context includes academic language practices (García, Flores, & Woodley, 2012: p.52). Notably, translanguaging can minimise the ‘risk of alienation’ on the part of students’ especially when the language of MoI is not the students’ familiar language. However, teachers have used translanguaging in a monolingual English only classroom to achieve main goals, namely: (1.) “the contextualisation of key words and concepts (2.) the development of metalinguistic awareness and (3.) the creation of affective bonds with student’s” (Garcia *et al.*, 2012: 58). I therefore suppose that teachers use translanguaging to accomplish the above three functions in teaching emergent English bilinguals. Hence, I will examine these functions in relation to UWC first year bilingual students and their linguistic difficulties encountered during learning. Different terms have been used to describe translanguaging within different areas of investigation. The other words used include: fluidity, transnational literacies, codemeshing, transcaring, neurolinguistic translanguaging (Canagarajah, 2009; Hornberger, 2003; Lewis, Jones & Baker, 2012; Garcia, Woodley, Flores & Chu, 2012). Some researchers relate the increased attention to translanguaging to a deeper understanding of the concepts of bilingualism and multilingualism (Lewis, *et al.*, 2012). Lewis *et al.* made a threefold distinction in translanguaging; classroom translanguaging, universal translanguaging and neurolinguistics translanguaging. In this study, translanguaging will be discussed according to Mazak & Herbas-Donoso’s description, which says that translanguaging is the use of multiple ‘languages’ in discourse, which goes beyond what has been traditionally known in linguistics as ‘code-switching,’ ‘code-mixing,’ or ‘language alteration’ in classroom settings (2014: p.2). In a similar vein, Garcia *et al.* (2012: p.52) assert that translanguaging “differs from code-switching in that it refers not simply to a shift between two languages, but to the use of original and complex discursive practices that cannot be easily assigned to one or

another code”. Garcia *et al.* include note taking, report writing, discussion, reading and taking exams as some of the complex discursive practices of translanguaging. The difference between these two linguistic practices is that code-switching most times involves one language practice which is speaking. It can also be used between only two languages as the term suggest ‘code’. Meanwhile, translanguagers can use more than two languages depending on the context and engage these languages deliberately in the general four literacy skills; writing, reading, speaking and listening.

Baker (2011) defined translanguaging as “the process of making, shaping experiences, gaining understanding and knowledge through the use of two languages” (p.288). It implies that in the long run, the process of translanguaging in Baker’s definition will help bilinguals to form a mutual relationship and there will be free flow of academic discussions. As for bilingual learners they will have in-depth knowledge and increased assimilation rate of information.

Translanguaging “entails using one language to re-inforce the other in order to increase understanding and in order to augment the pupils’ ability in both languages” (Williams, 2002: p.40). Translanguaging can thus be described as the deliberate act of using two languages to receive and give out information in a classroom environment to depict comprehension and assimilation of content by students. In addition, it shows that the bilingual student has a natural skill, which can be used to compliment the student proficiency in both languages (Lewis *et.al*, 2012: Williams, 2002). For example, it is natural for a bilingual student to explain a term to another bilingual student in both languages, e.g. English and Afrikaans, but also to dwell more on the use of the first language (L1) so that the bilingual receiving student can also comprehend and assimilate the term and thus put to use in the language of medium of instruction.

In some educational settings, translanguaging has been used as a tool for retention and development of bilingualism. Instead of duplicating effort to teach the second language at different intervals, both languages are simultaneously used to achieve the same purpose (William, 2012 as cited in Lewis *et. al*, 2012). The question that arises then is to what extent the advantages of translanguaging can be noticeable.

The benefits of translinguaging are perceivable to the teacher and the learner on the bilingual platform. Notably in this study, I shall consider four advantages of using Baker's (2006, 2011) conclusions on the advantages of a translinguaging classroom. He relates them to pedagogical practices, in a manner reminiscent of the recent language practices of bilingual learners:

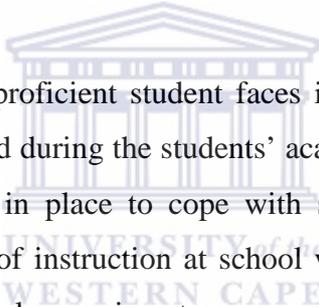
- (i.) It may promote a deeper and fuller understanding of the subject matter.
- (ii.) It may help develop the weaker language.
- (iii.) It may facilitate home-school links and co-operation.

2.3 Challenges faced by bilingual students when learning in less proficient language

In many academic settings and levels of learning, students are faced with varying learning challenges. In general, these challenges include the need for a large academically oriented vocabulary, the ability to communicate reasonably and effectively, a set of strategies when working with difficult ideas, and the ability to combine reading and writing (reading/writing) skills to learn and display content (Grabe & Zhang, 2013). It is a more complex situation when bilingual students learn in languages in which they are incompetent, and have no language choice to use for assessment purposes. In this study, I am keenly interested in finding out the challenges which undergraduate bilinguals undergo during the process of academic learning. Also, I will consider the bilingual students' proficiency in the language of medium of instruction. I will review the literature of bilinguals at all schooling levels and their challenges as it relates to language proficiencies and how it affects the use of language skills in both languages.

Previous studies have investigated the challenge in academic writing of a bilingual student with the focus on the second language (Banda, 2003: 2007: Leibowitz, 2005 and Daves, 2013). Writing in an informal setting is more demanding than any other language skill, even when using a proficient language. There is more complexity when the writer is bilingual and has to make a language choice between the two languages (Daves, 2013). Banda's (2007) study focuses on how some African university students mediate academic writing in English second language (ESL) using study groups and peer roles. The respondents of his study were bilingual students - English and Isi-Xhosa. Isi-Xhosa was used to negotiate the bilingual's

academic writing. The same study showed that despite students forming study groups and peer roles, there was no significant improvement in academic writing. Banda (2007: p.5) believed the reason for the result can be traced to the South Africa's language in education policy which does not encourage writing in ESL at lower primary level (grades 1-4) while from grade 5 onwards, learners are more likely to write in English, despite that teaching and oral classroom communication are in either Isi-Xhosa or the combination of Isi-Xhosa/English. Furthermore, he says that since Xhosa and other African language learners do not usually use their first language in writing, if given the opportunity to write academic text at a later stage, they are unable to do so. Though Banda confirms that Afrikaans learners perform better than Xhosa and other African language learners, there is an inconsistency in the fact. I say so, because the learning environment of Afrikaans students differs and likewise affects their writing ability. Banda (2007: p.19) concludes that using a first or proficient language does not automatically result in improved academic writing.



The challenges which a limited proficient student faces in the language of instruction can extend into a relatively long period during the students' academic life. Especially, when there are no immediate strategies put in place to cope with such challenges. No doubt, these challenges in a child's language of instruction at school will affect the development of the child. When the development of a learner is not commensurate to the academic phase it can hinder such a learner from progressing to the next class as the classmates. A student that is relatively competent in the language of medium faces less difficulty in learning and progress to the next academic level even if not in the category of distinctions. However, the development of UWC's first year bilingual students is relevant to this study. It helps us to examine how far this group of students have dealt with the use of English in learning at their primary and secondary level. Let us consider three out of the five important domains of a child's development as listed by the Australian Early Development Index (AEDI), namely: language and cognitive skills, communication skills and general knowledge. These domains are the challenges or odds of a limited proficient student (Goldfeld, O'Connor, Mithen, Sayers & Brinkman, 2014). The logistic regression analysis reveals that bilingual children who were not yet proficient in English had substantially higher odds of being in the AEDI domain (Goldfeld *et.al*, 2014). Meanwhile, English proficient bilingual children had equal or slightly lower odds. Thus there is the tendency that the first year undergraduate bilinguals in

the present study whose L2 is the low proficient and the language of MoI may also have a similar encounter. I will also make known how long the challenge has hindered successful academic learning.

The logistic regression analysis of Goldfeld *et.al* (2014) is on the average age (five years, seven months) in a study of Australian children in the first year of schooling and which is relevant to the current study. The analysis reveals that the language development and proficiency of a child is advantageous at an early age. The works of Cummins (1981a) provide a foundation for the acquisition of L1 and L2 development in bilingual literacy. A close examination to discover the grade in which South African pupils transit from the mother tongue medium of instruction to the second language (L2), reveals that it is grade 4 pupils who are between ages 10-11 years. It means that a bilingual student who is not fully competent in L2 at grade 4, may likely take along the three odds mentioned in the previous paragraph to the next grade, and thereafter to the higher educational level (see Harris in press, 2012: p.58,60). This is because learning is a task on its own, therefore how much more difficult must it be, learning in a less competent language. It is more helpful in bilingual education for learners to acquire L2 skills and be competent in both languages during middle grades before the transition to a L2 MoI (Harris, 2012). Further to this, Abrahamsson & Hyltenstam (2008) confirm that there is a relationship between the age of acquiring L2 and attaining advance proficiency in L2. Otherwise, students who do not have any coping strategy at this stage will continually regard higher academic learning as a challenge if L2 is still the Medium of Instruction (MoI). The present research seeks to find out which grade of schooling is the incompetency in the language of MoI identified and how the incompetency of language is a challenge to UWC first year undergraduate bilinguals. Thereafter, the study aims to investigate which of the L2 skills is the most difficult to competently use for academic work.

Robinson (2011) explores causes of middle year students struggling with reading, precisely in instruction. She emphasizes the negative effect on long time learning of the struggling readers, as they progress to the next grade with the challenge and still no remediation strategies. The writer points out that a struggling reader encounters difficulties in the central reading process including word recognition and good reading command (Robinson, 2011). It

is well known that when a student (monolingual or bi/multilingual) cannot recognise words in a language, it becomes more difficult for him/her to read and comprehend academic materials. Although for university undergraduates it is logical to assume they can identify words in their own language, it does not mean that they can easily recognise complex words. This implies that they will have a good reading command in the language of MoI. It is pertinent to examine the reading command of UWC's bilingual learners in L1 and L2, and how it affects their comprehension of study materials.

For a bilingual student it is expected that he or she displays reasonable competency in the four main language skills, namely; speaking, listening, reading and writing in at least one or both languages. Certainly, difficulties do differ in the use of one or more language skill by a bilingual student. Besides, some bilinguals can speak and listen to a second language for communication purposes but find it challenging to read and write for academic purposes in L2 and vice versa. Some studies have investigated the reading difficulty of students who are proceeding to the next level of academic pursuit or who are entering secular employment unprepared in some sense (Wilkins, Rolhus, Hartman, Brasiel, Brite, & Howland 2010, 2012; Mahboob, 2014). Of note, the research questions that guided Wilkins *et al.* (2012) centre on students' preparedness as regards high school and the reading of university level English textbooks. The results of two of the subgroups (Limited English proficiency status and English as a second language status) have a particular relevance to this my study. Both of the subgroups describe 1st year undergraduate bilingual students at the University of the Western Cape (UWC), who may also be faced with the issue of reading in L2. Out of the total of 10 subgroups, the two subgroups mentioned previously had the lowest percentile reading preparedness, the former (5%) and the latter (4%). This indicates that reading can be categorised as a problem for a first year undergraduate bilingual whose L2 is the MoI and the less competent language. It is the researcher's view that if bilinguals generally have difficulty in reading and this causes them to be unprepared for activities, it suggests that UWC's first year bilingual students may encounter the same situation.

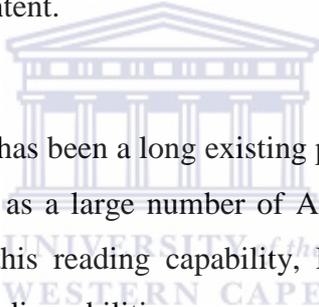
It is possible to conclude that a bilingual student will face the challenge of tasks that are directly linked to language competency specifically, when L2 is the language of instruction. L2 then will be viewed as the noticeable and undeniable academic difficulty. Conversely, a

recent study of 117 East Asian international students at a New Zealand university (Lee, Farruggia & Brown, 2013) found that as much as language limitations are associated with difficulties in learning, academic content and learning styles were more challenging to deal with during academic learning. Lee *et al.* (2013) point out that academic content was a bigger challenge than English language as a barrier to their academic outcome. Also, a related study shows that students not only consider language and academic content as their main obstacles but also the teaching methodologies of the course content (Kanwal & Khurshid, 2012). I want to know whether academic content, language of MoI generally or any other yet to be identified problem can constitute the major barrier to successful academic learning by UWC bilingual students.

Following Phakiti & Li (2011), it can be argued that factors such as academic English proficiency, self-regulation, motivation, self-efficacy, former learning experience and academic adjustment have assisted students to deal with academic challenges. The study confirms that students can encounter academic difficulties at any educational level as the participants of the study were postgraduate students (Master's Degree) at an Australian University. Phakiti & Li also report on the challenges of some student teachers with regard to synthesizing information and writing academically. The point here is that, if postgraduate students (who have undergone the general three levels of education, both potential and existing educators), do have difficulties which include academic reading and writing in L2, there is a tendency that first year bilingual students may have the same narrative or a more complex one. The current study will attempt to validate the reading and writing skills in L2 together with the way first year undergraduate bilingual students have integrated themselves into a more advanced academic level of English at UWC.

It may seem awkward given that naming abilities can present a barrier to bilingual students, mostly in their low proficient language. If we visualise a bilingual around us, it is possible for the individual to speak and pronounce words in certain vocabulary correctly but when asked to pronounce the same word in its L2 vocabulary, the opposite result accrues. The L2 speaker is likely to struggle hard to recognise words, which may affect pronunciation in L2 vocabulary. Next, the L2 speaker is discouraged to communicate among competent L2 speakers. Borodkin & Faust (2014) examine the naming abilities in low-proficiency second

language learners using the tip-of-the-tongue experimental paradigm. They found that less proficient L2 learners manifest L2 naming difficulties which was not due to their limited L2 proficiency but resulted from their incapability to retrieve and form phonological words, which is shared across languages. It is logical to see that we gain confidence and capability as we continually engage in a particular activity. The same will apply for a bilingual who frequently uses the L1 in most activities - it will become more convenient and at the same time advance language proficiency. I agree with Borodkin & Faust that since bilinguals are used to vocabulary in L1, they become more familiar with the terminologies that relate to academic content and pronounce such words correctly in L1. Unlike bilingual students that are obligated to use L2 for a specific reason (for example, academic learning). It is difficult to maintain the same level of proficiency in L2, as the language is sparingly used. This study aims to investigate if first year bilingual undergraduate student at UWC do encounter the problem of pronouncing phonological words in L2 vocabulary, especially words that are frequently used in their course content.



Desai (2010) affirms that literacy has been a long existing problem faced by learners in South Africa during academic learning, as a large number of African pupils have limited reading capability. In order to validate this reading capability, Desai examined reading skills of grades 4 and 5. The learners' reading abilities were compared to pupils of the same grade internationally. Admittedly, South African pupils who were older by one or two years than their international classmates display less capability to read. Looking at this scenario, it can be said that whether the language of MOI is L1 or L2, learners in South Africa's grades 4 and 5 experience reading difficulty. Although, the way in which they may struggle in reading may differ, depending on the competency in one or both languages. The experience of UWC first year undergraduate students as regards to reading difficulty only in L2 or in both L1 and L2 has not yet been provided.

Using a closed questionnaire and writing samples of tertiary level students in Bangladesh, Mustaque (2014) believes that grammatical accuracy is acquired and academic writing is still considered a difficult task by tertiary level students. In fact, his data analysis indicates the forms of writing difficulties from repetitions, inappropriate organization of ideas, parallelism, and short-length to use of vague words. Therefore, the work written by students is unclear to

the individual reading the work. Notably, Mustaque attributes the many problems of students to their personal approach to the task. This present study is specifically focused on bilingual first year undergraduate students at UWC in South Africa. I will investigate how the conclusions that were drawn from Mustaque's studies relate to my study. Since the participants of his study are second year undergraduate students whose MOI is English language, it is assumed that what applies to a general group can affect a specific group. This study will address any form of writing problem that may be identified. Or if at UWC, mistaken belief about academic writing is the basis of the challenge in learning in a less proficient language.

Nishioka, Burke & Deussen's (2012) research focuses on the proficiency levels of limited English proficient (LEP) students and LEP student subgroups on the Idaho English Language Assessment (IELA) in United States. Nishioka *et al.*, maintain that students' proficiency is more pronounced in writing and speaking skills, though at varying patterns and different school levels - beginning, middle and high. In addition, Nishioka *et al.* explain that even when students display a fluent level of proficiency, participation in classroom activities and support resources are needed to advance the students' academic English. This implies that low proficiency of language of MoI results in learning challenges; however the availability of supportive resources, reasonable freedom and a conducive learning context that facilitate classroom participation reduces these challenges. This study intends to look for available support resources (if any) and the factors that limit the freedom of UWC bilingual students to participate in a less proficient academic setting. In addition, the study aims to establish whether the difficulty in proficiency of first year UWC bilingual undergraduates is in output language skills (writing and reading), or if it is more pronounced as in the study of Nishioka *et al.*, (2012). The present study also investigates if the barrier in proficiency is eminent in the input skills (reading and listening) which will be in contrast to the result of Nishioka *et al.* in the United States. In sum, the current study will find out how students' language proficiency impact on their use of translanguaging skills (reading, writing, listening and speaking).

Through various studies, some researchers hold that bilingual students do face difficulty in writing and reading as most students display the incapability to recognize words and write word problems in L2 or less proficient language, and how they have benefited through

academic collaborative support (Esquinca, 2011 ; Brenders, van Hell & Dijkstra, 2011; Kempert, Saalbach & Hardy, 2011). Brenders *et al.* (2011) demonstrate through an experimental method that learners recognize words at different levels of L2 competency and in distinguishing task situations. Additionally, Brenders *et al.* said that learners who collaborated using their two languages (Dutch and English) processed faster in lexical decisions compare to the match controls of Dutch only or mixed cognates. Based on the findings of Brenders *et al.*, I believe that the simultaneous use of both languages by bilingual students during academic learning increase their vocabulary in both languages. Bilingual students will have variety of words to distinguish in both languages and the ability to recognize words and to know the meaning of words will improve their writing skills in L2. Just as Esquinca (2011) analyses the collaborative writing of bilingual (Spanish/ English) college students, he finds that the bilingual writers use several resources to make meaning and most noticeable in their bilingual behavior is the deliberate translanguaging practice used between each other. In comparison, Esquinca (2011) and Brenders *et al.* (2011) draw on notions of scaffolding and translanguaging. It is agreed that both languages are used to scaffold academic learning challenges without the exclusion of word problems and recognition of the bilingual's writing and reading. In this sense, the present study will outline the writing problems of UWC's bilingual students, investigating word recognition and word problems in writing and reading respectively. Also, I will review the tactical use of bilinguals' translanguaging skills.

Montanari, (2013) looked into the bi-literacy development of 60 children in a dual language program in South California. Some measures were put in place to determine the emergence of Italian and English literacy; they are oral reading fluency (ORF), accuracy scores and an assessment test. Results indicate that Italian students were the first to materialise reading fluency though English speaking students increasingly improved over a length of time. Admittedly, Montanari says that parallel use of two languages as shown in the case study of Italian and English readers significantly increased reading fluency. Thus, it can be confirmed that learners are more inclined to develop reading ability most especially in L2 through a regular literacy skills transfer in L1. This is because learners use the more proficient language / L1 to first engage in the task and subsequently transfer decoded information in L2. Reading and speaking fluency does vary with students' proficiency and so decoding transferability

differs. Based on UWC language policy, the language of MoI is English. In addition to this policy, there are some conditional clauses for the use of other language apart from English. In this study, I intend to identify the strategies used among UWC's first year undergraduate bilingual students to attain reading fluency. I believe that every academic content or task involves reading and becomes a challenge when the language of MoI is the non-proficient language.

Recently, studies have been conducted on the grammatical problems in the writing of higher education students in a second language which focused on their proficiency level (Golshan & Karbalaeei, 2009; Strauss, 2012). Generally constant grammatical problems in the writings of low and high proficient Iranian university students reveals preposition, lack of concord, article and distribution of verb groups and tense as their significant problems (Golshan & Karbalaeei, 2009). Similarly, Strauss (2012) points out the basic grammatical skills which include preposition, punctuation and sentence structure as problematic to two postgraduate L2 speakers of English. Strauss's study shows that there is no academic level of students that does not face challenges in a less proficient language. Notably, this form of challenge was shown during the thesis writing of two Masters Students at a University in New Zealand. Interestingly, the students are not novices to academic writing because they both had completed an undergraduate programme in other foreign language, e.g. Arabic. Although, one can ask a disturbing question such as this: Why will a postgraduate student experience difficulty in academic writing? As shown from Strauss's study, the assertion can be made that university bilingual students whether fully or less competent in the language of MoI do struggle with grammatical errors and this challenge may become more demanding if no strategy is in place. It must be pointed that most academic assessments involve academic writing, and students may display poor understanding of grammar according to the way they have built on their knowledge. This may explain why some first year undergraduates at UWC may regard grammatical problems in writing as daunting and insurmountable. The current study will identify the types of grammatical errors in their academic writing.

2.4 Translanguaging Strategies: It's significance in the academic learning of bilingual students

There have been some arguments on the significance of continual bi-literacy in students and educators' literacy development. Cummins (2007: p.238) is of the view that the use of bilingual instructional strategies in education will facilitate identities of competence among bilingual learners from socially marginalised group. Hence, it enables the bilinguals to engage more confidently in academic literacy and academic work in both languages. In light of this, I am encouraged to consider the bilingual instructional strategies as translanguaging in my study. Hornberger & Link (2012) concur with Baker (2003) who argues via the "continua of bi-literacy lens that the welcoming of translanguaging in classrooms is not only necessary, but desirable educational practice" (p.239). Baker (2003) cited in Hornberger & Link (2012: p.243) reiterates the relevance of the notion of translanguaging in students' development of continua biliteracy. Baker's view is that a deliberate use of the four skills in the students' two languages can encourage complete biliteracy. By the same token, Hornberger & Link attest to the impact of translanguaging in biliteracy development in two ways. The first way is that, as individuals make a conscious effort to simultaneously use two languages in a given context; it has a direct effect on his/her biliteracy development. The second way is that individuals improve their literacy in the two languages once they make use of alternative skills in both languages (p.244- 245).

Following Hornberger and colleagues, it can be said that the practice of translanguaging thus stimulates the development of both languages and over a period of time improves the weak language; which in turn leads to 'full biliteracy'; in terms of language use and classroom practice of bi/multi-linguals. I agree with Hornberger & Link (2012) and Baker (2003) that translanguaging enhances bilingual proficiency and biliteracy, and there is a need to encourage the use of four language skills as the need arises in context and in time translanguagers will acquire proficiency in both languages.

Garcia & Kano (2014: p.261) define translanguaging "as a process by which students and teachers engage in complex discursive practices that include all the language practices of students in order to develop new language practices and sustain old ones, communicate

appropriate knowledge, and give voice to new socio-political realities by interrogating linguistic inequality”. It can also be described as the way in which “bilingual students communicate and make meaning by drawing on and intermingling linguistic features from different languages” (Hornberger & Link, 2012: p.240).

Mahboob’s (2014) study that was conducted in Hong Kong considers the needs and challenges of using English as a MOI in higher education. The additional dominant native languages used at Hong Kong universities were Cantonese for speaking and Chinese for writing and English is the language of no choice. Regarding the low English language proficiency, university students had to cope with course content in English, since all except one of Hong Kong’s universities uses it as MoI. Literacy support was provided to these less proficient English students in the form of two projects, namely: Language Companion Course (LCC) and Scaffolding Literacy in Academic and Tertiary Environments (SLATE). SLATE was adapted as a genre-based approach to the difficulty in bi/multi-literacy of Hong Kong students. According to Pessoa, Miller & Kaufer (2014) the notable challenges of Qatar university students were limited experience with reading and writing as students further describe the understanding of genres and writing style as demanding. Interview analyses show the effective and efficient use of learning strategies by students, resulting in increased linguistic resources (Pessoa *et.al*, 2014). The recent study of Mahboob and Pessoa *et al.* highlights the understanding of genres as challenges of bilingual university students as a result of English MoI. Based on the issues and insights covered so far, it can be said that UWC’s MoI is English language. However, no conclusion can be made yet as to the challenges of its first year bilingual undergraduates. Given this, the present study will take note if genres in writing of bilingual undergraduates at UWC are problematic.

A recent study of South African’s higher education that covers almost two decades of transformation finds that there are impeding factors to the learning process of higher learning students, in part because of: intense course content, English as MoI and limited access to proficient languages (Seabi, Seedat, Khoza-Shangase & Sullivan, 2014). These identified challenging factors highlight time constraints as a major barrier to students’ workload. Time in this sense refers to the duration of programme. For example, although the undergraduate programme is three years, the year goes by quickly because all through the academic year

students are preoccupied with several academic assessments. Another scenario is stated in Seabi *et al.* (2014: p.75), “For a second language English speaker, there is the additional concern of ensuring that written work; which is only in English, is professional and up to academic standards bearing in mind the cost and time prohibitive nature of having work professionally edited and proofread”. The above two scenarios of the second language English learner suggests that most university students face the problem of time, either during input or output of academic content. Notably, UWC’s students are also experiencing challenges in higher education after the transformation in South Africa. This present study will take note of those issues that relate to time as a challenge and to which form of learning will UWC’s first year bilingual students attribute time as a problem.

Van Staden, (2011) explores literacy challenges of ESL learners and how they have effectively used coping strategies. He also emphasises the importance of reading scaffolding techniques and evidence-based direct instruction to facilitate improved reading abilities of L2 learners. The result of experimental/ control data of 288 L2 learners pointed out the tremendous impact in the mixing of direct instruction and reading scaffolding strategies on key literacy and useful academic skills of English low proficient learners (Van Staden, 2011).



Mounting anecdotal evidence appears to confirm that a cordial relationship between a learner and educator and between groups of learners provides a better learning environment, and that in most cases learners are able to attain academic success. This suggests the importance of a positive learning context which includes the conventional classroom. The classroom should be seen as the learner’s second home, because it is the place where a reasonable amount of the day is spent learning and while at the same time interacting. ‘Classroom interaction’ refers to verbal exchanges, between teacher and students and between students and students in classroom settings (Lo & Macaro, 2012: p.30). Individuals converse with those who speak or understand each other’s language. Classroom interaction takes place between teacher and student, and student to student who speaks and understands a common language, which may be the MoI or not. Lo & Macaro, (2012) assume that classroom interaction is a reliable and effective pedagogical practice. Furthermore, Lo & Macaro report on the effective role of MoI in classroom interaction on students’ academic development, specifically in bilingual education. To illustrate in an L2 MoI classroom, students will engage in academic

conversation mostly with other students who use the same home language. It may also apply to the teacher and students' interaction. This classroom interaction will help learners overcome the difficulty of L2 learning.

2.5 Language Proficiency and Bilingual Students

Research evidence (Lawrence, Capotosto, Branum-Martin, White & Snow, 2012) demonstrates the effect of language proficiency and home language status on learners' experiences. Lawrence *et al.*, 2012 report on the interaction between instruction and home language status on students' maintenance of word generation and merging of academic words. The result reveals that English proficient students whose home language is not English perform better than English proficient students who use English at home. And the former group showed more improved word generation during the instructional period. The impact of native language does improve the student's proficiency in second learning, thereby indicating the cognitive benefit of using L1 and L2 by bilingual students.

Apart from the cognitive benefits of using two languages in learning, some bilingual learners also experience specific reading disability in L2 (Shaywitz, Morris & Shaywitz, 2008; Borodkin & Faust, 2014). Borodkin & Faust, 2014 identify learning challenges in low L2 proficient learners. These include naming ability and mispronunciation of generated words. Thus, Borodkin & Faust point out that the difficulty which L2 proficient students face are first encountered in L1 before proceeding to L2 because there is a general weakness in retrieving phonological words from one language to the other. Contrary to this, Shaywitz *et al.*, 2008 conclude that the reading difficulties are usually caused by the incapability to create and use the sounds in a language; specifically meaning making in a text. It can be understood then that difficulties faced in L1 are carried along to L2 and may extensively impact on the academic learning of a child in a negative way. The truth is that there is hardly any form of academic learning that does not involve the reading of academic materials. If then a learner is not able to name or pronounce words, and struggles with sounds in language, how then can such a learner comprehend the read content and be assessed on it? It is imperative to point out the connection between naming, correct pronunciation and reading process. Reading involves

the naming and pronunciation of words or text either aloud or inward to the reader. In light of this, the present study will focus on the naming ability and mispronunciation of generated academic words of the bilingual in the low proficient language.

To a large extent, the manner in which strategies are adopted link with the language proficiency level of the bilingual learner. For a bilingual learner to take on a particular strategy, s/he must have first determined the personal ability to use a skill. Although, the level of competency differs according to bilingual learners, the behaviour to accept a strategy will also vary according to competence. Bidabadi & Yamat (2011) examine the relationship between two variables: proficiency and strategies as employed by Iranian English first language University students for their listening skills. Both researchers hold that there is an affirmative relationship between the listening strategies and their levels of proficiency, in terms of advanced, intermediate and lower-intermediate, while using more regularly meta-cognitive strategies than the cognitive and socio-affective strategies. Conversely, Kotze (2012: p.4) concludes from the analysis of Vietnamese-speaking Learners of English that there is no considerable correlation between the rate of using language learning strategies and language proficiency. Given this, I assume that relationship affects language proficiency and all listening, speaking, writing and reading strategies. This is because the competency level of a language user dictates how the language is used in all literacy skills. Hence, employing meta cognitive strategies means that the more advanced bilingual student gives more attention to more detail for the task at hand, and utilizes time and effort on successfully completing the task, rather than the lower- intermediate bilingual that pre- occupies strategic time to identify the problem and how to deal with it (Liu, 2008 cited in Bidabadi & Yamat, 2011: p.27). I believe that a learner will concentrate on how to perform exceedingly well using English language for assessment purposes rather than hurriedly accept a learning strategy to cope with speaking in English for academic purposes.

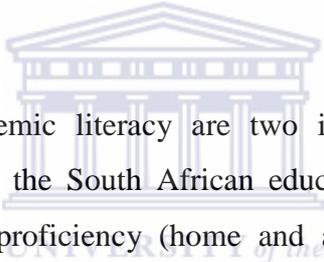
The cognitive roles of language proficiency in learners' academic activities cannot be overemphasized, as the effect is shown in the overall academic performance of such a learner. For instance, the ability to think fast, produce logical reasoning and act accordingly in a given academic context can be notable characteristics of a proficient language user. It therefore suggests that a language user must first be able to exhibit basic communication skills in daily

activities which will lead to the development of cognitive language learning. I also understand that my literature on language proficiency will be incomplete if I do not draw on the distinction between two common theories, in part: Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP) and Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills (BICS) (Cummins, 2008). CALP can be described as the “students’ ability to comprehend both oral and written modes, concepts and ideas that are applicable to a positive outcome in an educational context, meanwhile BICS refers to day to day conversational fluency in social settings” (Cummins 2008: p.72). In the same vein, Cummins (2008) explains that CALP develops initially from BICS, and is separated from each other soon after a child begins to acquire academic language at an early schooling stage. Cummins (2008: p.73) also states that “the notion of CALP is specific to the social context of schooling, hence the term academic”. I wish to argue that discussing the concept of CALP is not restricted to any form of educational learning like Universities and Colleges. Based on Cummins’s finding, language proficiency in bilingual education involves the notion of CALP by the learner. Therefore, the notion is applicable to less proficient bilingual undergraduates at UWC, considering that they should have developed cognitive academic language proficiency from an early stage of schooling.

It is generally believed and accepted that bilingual learners develop cognitive academic language proficiency during the early years of schooling. Though in many situations academic language proficiency is not acquired during this period because there are limiting factors that hinder the success of the notion of CALP. This in turn results in a bilingual learner developing a late proficiency level in one or both languages. These factors are traceable to academic and non-academic environments, namely cognitive, behavioural, parental influence, length of exposure, self-confidence and motivation (Halle, Hair, Wandner, McNamara & Chien, 2012; MacSwan & Pray, 2005; Krashen & Brown, 2005; Thomas, 2004). One of the non-academic limiting factors that are significant to this current research is the length of the learners’ exposure to the academic language. This particular factor can affect a language user positively and negatively. The research evidence of Halle *et al.* (2012) supports the belief that the variation in the reading and subject performance of English language learners (ELLs) and native English language learners’ proficiency depends on the grade at which the ELLs proficiency is attained. To add, ELLs who had gained competency from the kindergarten phase could compete relatively well with their native English language

classmates. Even the ELLs who were proficient at grade one, averagely carried out academic tasks like the native English learners and had increased proficiency in English overtime. The most affected ELLs were those that had insufficient length of exposure to the academic language and were not proficient by grade one.

Knowingly, most South African learners change to ELLs from grade four which is an intermediate phase of schooling; however it does not imply that all learners must have attained relative proficiency in the English language. At the same time it does not mean that most learners will have a low proficiency in the English language. All that is known is that gaining proficiency of an academic language has much to do with the learners' academic and non-academic context. The proficiency level of UWC bilingual students is very dazing as most learners were taught using home languages during early schooling; however, it is not the focus of this study.



Language proficiency and academic literacy are two interconnected variables that are relevant to bilingual learning. In the South African educational context, researchers have conducted studies on language proficiency (home and additional language) highlighting academic reading, writing, speaking and listening skills in bilingual learners (Leibowitz, 2005; Nomlomo, 2007). Nomlomo (2007) reveals the importance of using a suitable language of learning and teaching, as there is an encouraging connection that results in the concept development and academic performance of learners- especially, when the learners' home language or more proficient language is used as the Medium of Instruction. However, there have been contradicting views regarding the home language positively affecting learners' academic outcome (Leibowitz, 2005). Using writing analyses of university first and additional language students, he contests that composing ability and dialectical effect have a weightier impact than solely competency in the home language. I agree with both researchers on the importance of using the learners' home language for academic content. However I am inclined to agree with Leibowitz's point. He believed that there is a need for academic literacy of bilingual student in the language of MoI (English). By the same token fluency in the language of MoI which seems little is also highly indispensable. The dialectical effect of the learners' home language has been reviewed by scholars. More than a decade ago, Dyers (2000) summarised the works of Mashamaite, (1992) Nomlomo, (1993) & Msimang, (1994).

She discusses the extent to which dialects in particular languages affect the standardized use of the language. Furthermore, she states that “this type of dialect democracy is a daily reality for many South Africans, as can be seen by the development of the Black Urban Vernaculars which “...continue to revitalize the standard languages and add to their rich inheritance” (p.40). It can be deduced from the various studies that dialects affect the standard use of a language and it will be more demanding for bilingual students to standardize the language of MOI, since such student is more used to one dialect speaking skill.

Sayer's (2013) study that was conducted on bilingual teachers and children's use of home language, TexMex for academic content and standard languages in San Antonio, Texas reveals that some second-grade bilingual learners 'move fluidly' between conventional Spanish and English. To add, the participants use translanguaging among the standard and vernacular languages. Furthermore, Sayer explains that translanguaging through TexMex makes it possible to attain a good teacher and student relationships such that the bilingual Latinos are able participate in social meanings in school. Sayer emphasises the importance of educators giving room for translanguaging in the classroom, which should not only be viewed for meaning making of academic content and language, but rather also as a formal platform to show desired identities. I hasten to suggest that not only do learners use translanguaging as a learning strategy to get the sense of academic activities (teaching and learning) in a low proficient language, but also use it to show how their home and more proficient language impacts immensely on translanguaging as a practice.

In our day to day activities we normally employ strategies not just to tackle an existing problem but besides that we adopt strategies to improve or stabilise a situation. Given this commonsensical assumption, it is only reasonable to say that a very proficient and low proficient student will adopt learning strategies to cope or to advance a learning situation. However, it remains to be discovered if gender determines the pattern of use of a strategy. Nemati, Nodoushan & Ashrafzadeh (2010) found that male and female respondents use the same learning strategies irrespective of their proficiency group. Although less proficient male readers use more strategies than female readers at the same level of proficiency excluding memory strategies. Moreover, competent females use more strategies than did the males, excluding the social strategies. In the study, respondents were grouped in sub- strategies, in

part; direct, indirect, cognitive, meta-cognitive, compensative, and affective. These sub groups indicate the problems that students encounter as a result of language proficiency and how adopting strategies varies. Therefore it is not factual to say that male and female students equally use learning strategies, instead I am inclined to state that bilingual students, male or female, employ strategies according to language proficiency and challenges that they may be faced with.

Velasco & Garcia (2014) conducted their study on how translanguaging can enhance the academic writing of some bilingual students. The analyses of five written texts done by bilingual writers identify the 'planning, drafting and production' stages in translanguaging writing. Translanguaging in writing is considered as a learning aid used by bilingual students rather than an instructional guide that is used in the teaching of writing (Velasco & Garcia, 2014). It can then be said that translanguaging serves as a support tool for bilinguals to improve writing skills or other language skills as the case may be. It is not that bilinguals use translanguaging to learn how to write academic texts. For example, a bilingual university student must be able to do some academic writing at least in one language. Then, translanguaging is employed by such a bilingual student to develop his/her writing ability in other languages and shift the use according to purpose. Velasco & Garcia (2014) direct attention to the translanguaging approach which increases the cognitive ability of a bilingual using one language in writing. It is evident that UWC's bilingual undergraduates are able to write some academic texts but the translanguaging writing stages are yet to be identified.

Many research studies conducted on bilingual education have focused on English language as a second language and as the MOI in most learning contexts. On a different note, Oriyama's (2002) studied Japanese–English bilingual children with Japanese as a first language and not as the second language, and applied the concept of translanguaging to the study. According to Oriyama, a Linguistic Conference held in Australia views 'translanguage' as 'a developing minority language in a bilingual system' (Oriyama 2002: p.2). In the context of Oriyama's study, the language of power is English and Japanese is the minority language. Oriyama's investigation focused on three groups of bilingual speakers, namely; Japanese–English (Translanguage), Japanese monolinguals (First language), and English monolinguals learning Japanese as an L2. The result of his study was based on a three year longitudinal

translanguaging analysis and interview test (oral and written). He found that translanguaging is paramount to the improvement of Japanese (i.e. minority language) as it serves as a communication resource to complement the proficiency of bilinguals. Further to this, Oriyama points out that “translanguage Japanese is closer to the Japanese monolinguals’ L1 than to the English monolinguals’ L2 Japanese” denoting that translanguage bilinguals will be opportune to add on minority language proficiency (p.11). In light of this, Japanese–English bilinguals will have more potential to achieve a higher level of Japanese proficiency than L2 learners of Japanese; given adequate support for its development. In short, it reveals the beneficial and supplementary effect of translanguaging strategies on less proficient bilingual students. Hence in this study, I am determined to probe ways in which adopting translanguaging strategies can enhance learning for UWC’s undergraduate bilinguals.

Related studies have been carried out on how bilingual students draw on practices and strategies to comprehend complex instructional materials in the languages available to them (Paxton, 2009; Van der Walt & Dornbrack, 2011; Van der Walt, 2013). The researchers used two distinctive educational settings with separate language(s) as its MoI. Van der Walt & Dornbrack (2011) did a qualitative study on postgraduate students at the University of Stellenbosch which reveals that participants make use of either English or Afrikaans or both languages to process the lecture and understand study materials. Van der Walt & Dornbrack show that students make use of their linguistic resources as coping strategies to deal with cognitive challenging materials. Furthermore, they conclude that translanguaging has been used by bilingual students to negotiate complex academic texts. In a similar vein, Paxton (2009) examines how bilingual students at an English MoI strategically use their home language to learn difficult concepts and attain academic success. Both studies imply that bilingual students used their proficient language which in the two learning contexts includes the first language. Considering UWC’s language policy, it can be said that English is the MoI, yet I will examine if UWC’s undergraduate bilingual students see the language use for lecture and study material as difficult tasks. Also my study will investigate if the bilingual makes use of the first language or both languages at their disposal to tackle the task of understanding lectures and study materials. I want to find out whether participants in this study view translanguaging strategies as a way to improve their proficiency in the second language.

The challenge bilingual student's face is more complicated when the subject involves calculations, computations and the use of scientific jargons during practical sessions. Subjects like Mathematics, Physics or Geography has proved more difficult to learn in a second language. Related studies have been conducted on bilingualism in the learning of mathematics, focusing on how bilingual use two languages to participate in a mathematics classroom (Moschkovich, 2007a, 2007b; Planas & Setati, 2009). A critical sociolinguistic approach analysis on immigrant bilinguals in Catalonia, Spain shows that language is fundamental to the construction of teaching and learning opportunities. They point to the variation in the ways in which Spanish first language students use both Catalan and Spanish during mathematical communication. These researchers also established that the bilingual students use both languages for various reasons, based on compound mathematics lessons and social relations in the classroom (Planas & Setati, 2009). In the study of Planas & Setati, bilingual students were grouped into two based on languages. The languages used in each group were Spanish and Catalan respectively. The results of the analysis reveal that there was a shift between the student's use of Catalan and Spanish which according to (Planas & Setati, 2009: p. 36) is no coincidence to the students' complex mathematical practices. It should be noted that the form of shifts that occur is not code switching or diglossaic as both languages can hardly be mixed when speaking. Planas & Setati describe bilinguals in the small group as having 'more active learner identity when using Spanish in the small group mathematical discussions and a more passive "listener" identity when using Catalan in the whole group' (p.56).

More recently, studies have been conducted on translanguaging as a practice and pedagogy, in relation to bi/ multilingual classroom (Creese & Blackledge, 2010; Garcia & Sylvan, 2011, Mazak & Herbas-Donoso, 2014). In four case studies of language schools in the United Kingdom on translanguaging as a bilingual approach to language teaching and learning, Creese & Blackledge (2010) argue the transition from a 'monolingual instructional approach and advocate teaching bilingual children by means of bilingual instructional strategies, in which two or more languages are used alongside each other' in educational settings (p.103). A comparison of bilingual classrooms in the 20th and 21st century indicates that bilinguals who were faced with the problem of when to use and with whom to use their languages,

which is describe as a diglossic language arrangement is now viewed as a heteroglossic context (Garcia & Sylvan, 2011). Moving further with Creese & Blackedge's argument, Garcia & Sylvan (2011) state that "Translanguaging includes code switching and is defined as the shift between two languages in context as it also includes translation, but it differs from both these simple practices in that "it refers to the process in which bilingual students make sense and perform bilingually in the myriad ways of classrooms reading, writing, taking notes, discussing, signing, and so on" (p.389). Furthermore, Garcia & Sylvan are of the considered view that translanguaging does not have limited use and should not only be used for coping with language and learning problems. They believed that translanguaging is amongst the 21st century linguistic resource that bilingual students engage in, which in turn 'standardises academic languages required in schools'. In a realistic sense, if bilingual students consider bilingualism as a resource, it will help them develop a positive view of learning in a monolingual medium of instruction, which is the less proficient language (Mazak & Herbas-Donoso, 2014: p.15). Hence, these scholars conclude that if bilingual students make use of their proficient academic language in their school curriculum, they will also benefit by increased knowledge, increase confidence to continually use academic English and advance their translanguaging practice (Garcia & Sylvan, 2011: p.398). Notwithstanding this, Creese & Blackedge demonstrate how bilingual pedagogy allows the use of translanguaging in such a way that particular skills and knowledge are exhibited in learning. Some of the independent skills and knowledge include bilinguals' skillful use of functional goals such as narration and explanation; and use of translanguaging for making notes on texts, providing greater access to the curriculum, and lesson accomplishment (p.113).

Based on a classroom ethnographic study on translanguaging strategies of Saudi Arabian undergraduate students' essay writing, Canagarajah (2011) assumes that students learn from their translanguaging strategies and at the same time develop language proficiency through 'dialogical pedagogy'(p.415). Dialogical pedagogy is the act of learning by means of exchanging ideas amongst students. He draws attention to second language writing and the literacy skill of Arabic, French and English bilingual students. Canagarajah found that the response from instructors and peers to academic content encourages students to weigh matters, critically think about choices, examine its effectiveness and thus advance their

metacognitive awareness. This signifies the positive impact of translanguaging strategies on the writing skill of bilingual students in both languages, specifically in standard academic writing. Thereafter, he identifies four forms of strategies used by the multilingual students in their academic narratives, in part: recontextualisation, voice, interactional, and textualisation strategies. In light of this, my research will examine if some of these identified strategies used in the multilingual academic writing are also used by UWC's first year bilingual students in writing. South Africa is known for its many official languages that occasionally give rise to adjustment of language policies in education, so as to accommodate the use of multi-languages of learners in schools. Many studies on academic bi-literacy in South African higher education mention that most of the country's universities use the English monolingual medium of instruction, except for two universities that encourage the bilingual medium of instruction; these universities are the University of Stellenbosch and the University of Limpopo (Van der Walt & Dornbrack, 2011; Hornberger & Link, 2012; Banda, 2009; Paxton, 2009 and Madiba, 2013). The former makes use of English and Afrikaans while the latter uses English and Sepedi. Bilingual students are more often faced with the challenges and problems in the development of their first and second language proficiency as they juggle with their academic content. Bilingual students have extended classroom practice to incorporate the difficulties of learning in low proficient languages, and adopting suitable strategies. Importantly, most of South Africa's universities new intake do not fully possess academic literacy skills, and can only develop these skills as they proceed with academic programmes and continually involve themselves in different academic activities with the aid of their home languages (Van der Walt & Dornbrack, 2011: p.103).

The findings of a qualitative research carried out on the University of Stellenbosch's postgraduate students show the effective use of strategies and processes those bilinguals employed in learning difficult instructional material, despite receiving instructions in dual languages (Van der Walt & Dornbrack, 2011: p.101). The practice of note making was mostly used by the bilingual students. They identified various reasons the postgraduate students engage in the practice of note making. These are to cope with time pressure and the use of more Afrikaans to English which made it easier to put down every detail of the lecture. Van der Walt & Dornbrack affirm that the practice of note taking involves shuttling between languages and relates to translanguaging (p.101). Translanguaging on the other hand is a

devising strategy that is used to “negotiate complex academic text” (Van der Walt & Dornbrack, 2011: p.101). Similarly, they identified patterns of translanguaging strategies used by these postgraduate bilinguals that include: “using dictionaries, befriending students fluent in the other language, talking oneself through a text and taking notes in the language of the lecturer” (p.102). In light of this, my current study is designed to examine whether UWC’s first year undergraduate bilingual students employ note taking as one of their translanguaging strategies and also to find out if there is any correspondence with the patterns of Van der Walt & Dornbrack’s findings, even when the University of Stellenbosch uses a dual language medium.

A case study of higher education in Rwanda on multilingual first year students’ collaboration points to the significance of using French/English (medium of instruction) and Kinyarwanda (common language) to negotiate meaning (Andersson, Kagwesage & Rusanganwa, 2013). Scholars have acknowledged the positive impact of using multilanguage to support learning, so that common/home languages are not excluded in academic learning but instead take up a complementary position in bi/multilingual education (Andersson *et.al*, 2013: p.447). Although, the researchers in focus here draw on theories of code switching and learning in a multilingual context, yet, it is observed that ‘continuous translanguaging’ is strategically utilized in meaning making of the students’ task (p.448). Translanguaging allows the use of more than two linguistic resources as the setting permits. This leads to various pattern of translanguage use. For example, the study of Andersson *et.al* locates that translanguagers “read text aloud to share content, reformulate the text, pose questions and make requests for medium of change” (2013: p.449). To add, Kinyarwanda (common language) was only used in the input process of learning while French/English (medium of instruction) were used in the output process of learning. Another related study was conducted on Rwanda multilingual newcomers in the university focusing on the strategies used by the students in order to cope with learning difficult academic content in a foreign language (Kagwesage, 2013). She found, through a thematic analyzed data, the various coping strategies that assist students in completing academic assignments in the English language (unfamiliar language amongst Rwandans). Kagwesage reports how these students use their home language (Kinyarwanda) to cognitively negotiate meaning in academic tasks. Despite that, key concepts remained in English because the students could not find corresponding words in Kinyarwanda. Thus, the

studies of Andersson *et.al* (2013) and Kagwesage (2013) conducted in East Africa is an indication that UWC's students who are bilingual in Southern Africa can also make use of their common language to their academic advantage, thereby increasing the two language proficiencies. Hence, in my current research I will find out ways in which both languages are used in translanguaging.

Menken (2013) through the theory of translanguaging, critically reviews emergent bilingual students in secondary school, in particular to their academic literacy and literacy continuum. Menken concurs with Garcia's (2009) as to who can be classified as an emergent bilingual. Emergent bilinguals are referred to as "students, typically immigrants, children of immigrants, or indigenous peoples, who are adding the dominant state language taught in school to their home language, and becoming bilingual in the process" (Menken, 2013: p.438). Like every other bilingual, emergent bilinguals have to face the challenge of academic literacy since they usually use a monolingual continuum which is not their home language. This suggests that they will have to attain proficiency in the language of MoI, in the meanwhile maintaining home language proficiency. Menken points out how emergent bilinguals simultaneously gain literacy skills in both languages.



Translanguaging is viewed as a social construct and a pedagogical practice. Can translanguaging be taught in the classrooms? Canagarajah (2013) considers teachable strategies in translanguaging as one of the issues in pedagogical practice. He explains that in most school contexts the practice of translanguaging is not surprising, despite the fact that the act is not encouraged by teachers or lecturers and monolingual educational policies (Canagarajah, 2013: p.8). Moreover, translanguaging is often produced in non-accommodative and non-supportive contexts, especially schools that use a foreign or second language like English.

An ethnographic case study of a professor in a bilingual university classroom in Puerto Rico reveals that translanguaging was strategically and dynamically used in learning academic content (Mazak & Herbas-Donoso, 2014). The case study focuses on what type of translanguaging practices occur when impacting on scientific content and how

translanguaging evolves in academic instruction. Notably, Spanish and English are the co-official languages in Puerto Rico and are used for different purposes as in Mazak & Herbas-Donoso's case study. Spanish is used as the medium of instruction, while English serves as 'the language of science' (Mazak & Herbas-Donoso, 2014: p.1). It is deduced that two languages are inevitably used in the delivery of lectures. The lecturer uses Spanish for the language of communication in Puerto Rico to impart knowledge but students have to read and understand textbooks in English. Contrary to UWC's bilingual students whose low proficient language is English (Language of Medium of Instruction). Furthermore, they identified the following translanguaging practices:

- (1) using English key terminology in discussion of scientific content in Spanish
- (2) reading text in English and talking about it in Spanish
- (3) using Spanish cognates while referring to English text
- (4) talking about figures labeled in English using Spanish
- (5) pronouncing English acronyms in Spanish (Mazak & Herbas-Donoso, 2014 : p.7)

It is my point of view that the practice of translanguaging is the intentional use of two interrelated repertoires by a bilingual to construct and negotiate meaning in a context. In view of this, it can be said that the translanguaging practice is not independent of other modes in the context. I will relate modes to the four literacy skills (reading, writing, speaking and listening). In particular reference to classroom translanguaging, Mazak & Herbas-Donoso (2014: p.3) claims that translanguaging occurs in a given context and "is linked to other discursive practices at work in bilingual classrooms". In the same vein, García & Sylvan (2011: p.389) describe these discursive practices as a 'myriad of ways of the classroom'. This shows that translanguaging, unlike traditional languaging (code switching), involves the use of one approach to understand the other approach using two languages. For example, a bilingual of Isi –Xhosa and English, will read in English and at the same time use Isi- Xhosa to explain reading content to collaborating classmates. By so doing, bilingual students are able to learn both languages.

Teachers and students play a major role in classroom translanguaging, despite the fact that teachers do not support the practice in some learning contexts. That is why students ‘blatantly or surreptitiously’ engage in classroom translanguaging. In a different consideration of the benefit of translanguaging in students’ learning in a less competent language, it will be imperative to visualize greater benefits if teachers support the practice and collaborate with students. Palmer, Mateus, Martinez & Henderson’s (2014) ethnographic study shows that in a small urban public school in Texas, American teachers and students made use of dual language instruction within the classroom. This was made possible through the practice of translanguaging instructional strategies, namely; demonstrating ‘dynamic bilingual’ language practices, positioning students as bilingual and emphasizing the need to simultaneously use languages. Palmer *et al.* (2014: p.763) suggest that the practice of translanguaging is more effective if teachers are ‘fluent bilinguals’, as only then can they be supportive of their students’ learning of both language(s) and content. Students are then grouped according to their languages and not proficiency. Teachers are now able to focus on the use of both language developments. Although the combination of these aforementioned instructional strategies in Palmer *et al.*’s study is considered to be a resource for academic instruction, I disagree that it cannot be applicable in a monolingual medium of instruction like the one in the University of the Western Cape. Even there, there is a ‘break away from the traditional dual-monolingualism paradigm’ (ibid, 2014: p.768). Multiple languages are spoken in South Africa; hence there are different groups of bilingual students and teachers in multilingual schools.

2.6 Patterns of use of Translanguaging

Bilinguals’ language abilities can be determined through the use of both languages in an interrelated manner and not as a single separate space. The pattern of use of translanguaging strategies are evident in writing, reading, speaking and listening skills of bilinguals. It is often the case that writing and reading, speaking and listening are discussed in connection to each other. Garcia & Kano (2014) explore the English writing of bilingual American Japanese students focusing on translanguaging as a process and its use in academic instructions. It is a challenge for bilingual students to engage with academic writing and the organizing of thoughts, ideas and text in a low proficient language. For example, the study of Garcia &

Kano identifies the challenges in the academic writing of Japanese students to include text organization and the quality of ideas; apart from the differences in language proficiencies. Noting the language experiences of two Japanese students (Satomi and Masato); it is deduced that both bilinguals had different forms of translanguaging and they use it for different purposes. Garcia & Kano (2014: p.267) narrate “Satomi first reads the English text, knowing that she would have to write in English, and only relies on Japanese when she does not understand. Masato goes straight for full comprehension of the reading and thus reads the Japanese text first, going back to the English text only when he has to write... Satomi is interested in doing well in English, and uses Japanese as a resource when she does not understand English”. This suggests that the purpose of translanguaging and language proficiencies can be the criteria for the pattern of use of translanguaging. Masato’s translanguaging practices reveals the importance of first language usage in gaining an in-depth understanding of what is to be written; and hence be able to give a coherent and concise written essay. Also, translanguaging was used for support purposes, expansion of vocabularies or as a concept for bilinguals with good receptive ability, strategic expediency and enhancement (Garcia &Kano, 2014).

García, Woodley, Flores, & Chu (2012: p.2) examine the language experiences in a secondary school that resulted in the successful graduation of some Latino emergent bilingual students in New York City. The study draws out language practices adopted by the schools in order to produce successful bilingual students. Translanguaging is identified as one of the transcaring strategies used by schools in a bilingual’s pedagogy. Translanguaging was used to achieve different academic purposes irrespective of the bi/multilingual learning space. Garcia’s *et al.* (2012) point out that the translanguaging practices used for students’ learning can benefit them in the observed schools. These forms of translanguaging include content mastery, the teacher’s support resource, improving English language proficiency, negotiating academic texts, debrief questions and answers, and construction of complete sentences (*ibid*, 2012: p.12-14). It is important to note that translanguaging in Garcia’s *et al.* study (2012) was made possible by teachers. This does not suggest that students cannot create their own translanguaging space. Though, some of the aforementioned patterns of translanguaging can also take place amongst students. In my current study, I intend to find the patterns of use of tanslanguaging in bilingual students’ academic collaboration.

The manner in which bilingual students adopt translanguaging strategies is related to an individual's language identity. This is evident in the usage of a language over the other language by bilinguals. It is a complex situation when the bilingual is in a new academic environment. For instance bilingual newcomers at an urban university will have to adapt to the dominant language in this new setting. A recent study in South Africa has shown how students use their language identity to build new learning space. For example, Makalela (2014) investigates how identities are performed through language practices among multilingual students who live in polyglot townships of Johannesburg. He noted that it is imperative for bi/multi lingual students to make use of the mobility of language systems in the twenty-first century to improve a plural vision in which they form a fluid identity of themselves and are confident as they continuously acquire new ones (Makalela, 2014: p.680). Next, Makalela (2014: p.671) refers to translanguaging in academic writing as the pedagogy of mediating and negotiating the incomes of multilingual speakers in academic discourses. In addition, he argues through a translanguaging framework that language strategies seen in the narratives can be used to balance the 'symbolic violence of monoglossic ideologies that are dominant in our classrooms'. What it means is that translanguaging strategies are used to bridge the gap between the use of a more proficient language and the second language, such that the student overcomes the difficulty of learning in the language of MoI. Hence, there is a balanced approach to students' language identity and academic language. This is made possible by using the confident language in an imposed monolingual English classroom and the multilingual spaces in a new academic context. Consequently, bi/multilingual students 'recreate themselves in new spaces and adopt new identities' as they develop their biliteracy skills through different translanguaging strategies (Makalela, 2014: 679).

Martínez-Roldán (2015) documented translanguaging practices of second- grade Latino bilingual students and the interceding activity of bilingual teacher candidates in the United States. The teacher candidate's role was to "interact with bilingual children, observe and document their reading and learning, and make pedagogical decisions to support the children's literacy and bilingual development" during a designed after school program. Most Latino bilingual students shift from Spanish to English medium of instruction at the fourth grade (ibid: p.53). She explains that the after-school program was not intended for

translanguaging practices but results show that it encourages interconnectivity of languages in discussions around a variety of texts (Martínez-Roldán, 2015: p.54). She further states that these languages serve as mobilization of linguistic resources used by students and teacher candidates to ‘make meaning and assert their identities’ (Martínez-Roldán, 2015: p.54). The first finding of Martínez-Roldán’s (2015) study reveals that students translanguage at various points to make meaning and form identities, these include to explain a context to the other, to participate, to better understand a context, to mention a few.

The benefits of using translanguaging strategies in bilingual education have been over-emphasized by linguists and educationalists. Meanwhile, there is little or no attention given to factors that impact on the effective use of translanguaging strategies in today’s classroom. The practice of translanguaging may be complex depending on varying learning contexts, use of available linguistic resources and independent schools language policies. Translanguaging involves the simultaneous use of dual languages. Thus, translanguaging is a heteroglossic practice. In my current study, three official languages (English, Afrikaans and Isi-Xhosa) are to be examined in a multilingual University, particularly looking at ways in which bilingual undergraduate students use translanguaging in academic collaboration. My attention is drawn to the feasibility of translanguaging strategies of UWC’s bilingual students in their multilingual classroom. It is yet to be identified if the class scenario of UWC’s first year undergraduate bilingual students depicts translanguaging and not plurilingualism. Plurilingualism is described as the exclusion of purposeful complementarily in language practice, while giving protection to home language (Garcia, Flores & Woodley, 2012: p.46). Garcia (2014) (edited) attribute the failure of pluri-lingual practice in the US classroom and generally to the misconception of dual monoglossic practice. Based on this description, it is deduced from Garcia that bilinguals claim to use two languages but for separate purpose and at different times. More common in the 20th century the idea of bilingualism is been replace with monolingualism in education. This is as a result of school integrating the “flows of globalization” (Garcia, 2014: p.105). However, Garcia *et al.*, (2012: p.47) contend that the increase in peoples’ mobility and use of linguistic repertoires in the twenty- first makes homogeneity defective in education. Garcia (2014: p.116) further suggests that in as much the world is English, the complex discursive practices (translanguaging) of bilingual students should be considered for their effective learning.

Mckay (2012) identifies several factors that impact on the sole use of foreign languages amongst diverse people, namely: personal opinions, individual focus and goals, language in education policies and cultural identity. For instance, she emphasizes the high global status of English language and the widespread number of its users. The high regard for use of English by an individual determines the purpose and level of its usage. In turn, such user of English may or may not associate with local linguistic territory. Individual perception can be link to wants and needs of using English language despite the availability of home language. In light of this, Yoxsimer Paulsrud (2014) focus on perspectives and practices of two educational setting that use English language as its Medium of Instruction. The results of the study pin point the increasing significance of English for instruction purposes compared to using student's linguistic repertoires for content and integration learning purposes. More so, he found out that reasons that the majority of students use English include personal interest, status and future opportunities (studies and career). This appears to concur with Gardner's (2012: p.248) findings that "the identities, perspectives and everyday practices of children and teachers around the world" is being entrenched in the use of English for academic instructions. Yoxsimer Paulsrud concludes that: the use of Translanguaging differs in both schools and English Medium of Instruction students despite various learning difficulties are motivated and self-assured of the use of academic English. Considering the overall multilingual learning context of bilingual students at UWC, the "World of English's" position (Canagarajah, Kafle & Matsumoto, 2012: p.77) may reveal language choice and how students use each language in local classrooms. This thesis will investigate the different translanguaging strategies used by first year bilingual students at UWC. I have mentioned earlier in this chapter that motivation is a key factor to students' use of learning strategies. I will discuss attribution theory of motivation in the next section of this chapter.

2.7 Attribution Theory of Motivation

Attribution theory of motivation is significantly relevant to my current study as it offers insights into the reason(s) UWC's bilingual first year students use translanguaging strategies as coping learning strategies while learning in English. When a question like this is asked to anyone, "What has helped you to overcome or handle this challenge?" This answer will not

be an exemption to many likely answers, motivation. Motivation to take a particular course in different situations has produce positive and negative outcomes. In my study, motivation is attributably used to comprehend what are those factors that have assisted bilingual students to deal with their difficulty in learning in English.

A motivated student is characterized by his/her goal orientation and task value. Goal orientation refers to the reasons or goals students have for engaging in learning tasks. Similarly, Task value is the emphasis on students' feelings about the topic or task (McWhaw & Abrami, 2001: p.313). The ability to attribute reasons for an action by students who have put together motivational components helps them to improve on good and bad learning outcomes. For example, Harvey & Martinko (2009: p.148) affirm that attribution helps us recognize the positive steps that led to a successful outcome and the negative steps taken that resulted in a bad consequence. This can become relevant if such an individual wants to continually use or avoid those steps depending on the desired outcome. This is to suggest that an individual learns from an outcome, and lessons gained are used to "shape emotional and behaviorial responses" (Weiner, 1985 cited in Harvey & Martinko, 2009: p.148). Although, Harvey & Martinko's application of attribution theory of motivation was carried out on employees, the theory can also be applied to educational settings. The popular belief is that students will seek to continually use a positive step that he/she attributes to a successful learning outcome and avoid an approach which he/she considers will lead to failure.

To further understand the underpinning theory of this study, attribution theory of motivation, I shall separate the name of the theory as two words: *Attribution and motivation*, I shall move on to relate both terms to L2 in educational space. Firstly, Attribution will be considered from the study of Weiner (1986), Kelly & Michela (1980) and Martinko, Harvey, Sikora & Douglas (2011) attribution theory. Thus, attribution is individuals' explanations and perceived meanings for the causes of their positive or negative actions. This suggests that, in day to day activities people give meanings to other people decisions or steps taken and vice versa. For example, there are two bilingual learners A and B in a classroom. Learner A is repeating the class, Learner B see learner A frequently at the school library. Learner B will most likely form an attributional explanation, may be Learner A does not want to fail the class the second time, because the parents of learner A cannot afford to pay the school fees

for that class the third time. Otherwise learner A will be withdrawn from school. The mentioned casual explanation by learner B can result in consequence. It is important to know that for every attributional explanation, there is a consequence.

Secondly, Bylund & Oostendorp (2014) states that motivation is a change in trend of a process due to cultural factors or lived experiences. Bylund & Oostendorp grouped motivation into two types, namely; instrumental and integrative. Instrumental motivation as the name suggests, is the drive or the booster to do activities because of the benefit that will be derived. This benefit is called the instrument. To illustrate, in the context of a less competent L2 students, the students' instrument for making effort is first competently completing an academic task and to communicate proficiently in L2 for social and educational purpose. Integrative motivation on the other hand is the zeal to engage in an activity because of the individual desire to associate with a group of people. Perhaps to widen out or participating in social events.

Scholars have also categorized attribution in various scopes. In Weiner (1995) attribution is stated as intentional and controllability of a cause while Harvey & Martinko (2009) classify attribution into the locus of causality and stability dimensions. Further to this, Law (2009) asserts that attribution is categorized according to the success or failure of a particular action. Weiner's classification suggests that attribution is a premeditated act which makes it possible to obtain a direct result. Whether the outcome of cause is positive or negative, it is traced to how the act is planned. Harvey & Martinko further group each dimension into two subgroups, namely internality and externality: stable and unstable causes. Internality of an attribution, for example, is when a lecturer wrongly marks a student because of poor and illegible handwriting and expression of idea, the student confirms this with other classmates but refuses to go back to the lecturer to re-mark. This means that the student has made an internal attribution. But if the student blames the lecturer directly for impatience while marking, then the student is making an external attribution. Stable causes are those factors that influence outcomes and behaviors over a prolonged period and the context. Examples are: governmental laws and institutional policies. Unstable causal factors are actions taken that are easy to change or adjust, e.g. efforts put into a task. Notably, outcomes that result from stable causes are not going to change in the near future. Meanwhile, unstable causes can

result in improved varying outcomes (Harvey & Martinko, 2009: p.148). For instance in this study, bilingual students in South African whose academic work is affected by language policies carry the difficulty from primary to tertiary education. Outcomes as a result of the policies are inevitable. But in a situation when there are exceptions to the policies and these exceptions are put to use by the bilingual students then outcomes can be positive or negative.

Some researchers investigate the association between students' cognitive and affective learning outcomes, focusing on their motivation to learn a second language (Chua, Wong & Chen, 2009). The results of a multiple regression analysis in Chua *et al.* (2009) study reveal that three dimensions of the learning environments were linked to students' motivation to learn Chinese. These dimensions are: Teacher Support, Involvement and Task Orientation. The most attributed reason of motivation by students to learn Chinese is Task Orientation. Chua *et al.* (2009: p.60) assume that task-oriented classroom involvement invigorates students to be more focused on the task and this leads to the motivation of learning a language. In contrast, Ehrman *et al.*, (2003) discuss expectancy as it draws upon the Attribution theory and how it facilitates second language learning. According to Ehrman *et al.* (2003: p.321) expectancy leads to success. The reason is "some learners believe that their language learning success is attributable to their own actions or abilities, while others believe that their success depends on other people or on fate." If this is so, it suggests that students adopting translanguaging strategy as a means to cope with the challenge of less competent language as MoI boils down to the individual's expected learning outcome.

Based on the findings of Chua *et al.*, 2009 and Ehrman *et al.*, 2003, I am inclined to believe that the students' rate of expectancy leads to being more focused on the task. As such these two attribution reasons produce successful learning outcomes while most contextual learning challenges are overcome. Although it will be unreasonable in a learning context to expect that a poor learning outcome is attributable to someone else's mistake or action being that there may be other unknown reason. Liu, Cheng, Chen & Wu (2009) found that through a multilevel longitudinal analysis of the academic achievements and expectations of some adolescents that they attribute most negative learning outcome to the influence of friends, relatives and of all their teachers rather than external casual factors like task difficulty and effort (Liu *et al.*, 2009). The study further points out that those students that attribute negative

outcomes to others are those whose academic expectations and achievements rates are low. “Students with attributions reflecting an internal sense of control, such as the belief that efforts affect learning outcomes, will work harder to improve themselves in school. On the other hand, when students attribute their success or failure to external factors, such as teacher instruction, parental discipline, or the help of friends, they tend not to invest more time in learning”(*ibid*, 2009: p.921). This finding appears to be consistent with the conclusions attested by McClure, Meyer, Garisch, Fischer, Weir & Walkey (2011) that most successful learning is strongly attributable to students’ effort while students’ low marks are attributed to teachers. Hence, it is deduced that there is a comparable relationship between students’ attributions and motivation which results in their academic achievement. Yet, motivation orientation takes first place in regard to students’ achievements, followed by causal attributions (e.g. effort, task) and social attributions (e.g. Teacher, family).

Lin, Wong & McBride-Chang (2012) found out that the motivation for reading and comprehension of bilingual students is considerably higher in L1 than English as a foreign language (EFL) reading. This is as a result of the bilingual student motivations for reading purpose which is prompted by their personal-efficacy, eagerness to know, participation and socialization with other bilingual students’. Equally, Law (2009) reiterates the importance of attribution belief and motivation in the reading competence of bilingual learner’s. Consequently, the effective and skillful reading of the bilingual learner was traced to their inherent confidence in brainpower and capability in demanding tasks.

There can be possible reason for a continuous effect of an action that is performed by someone. For a proficient individual, the connecting ties between his/her value; belief and motivation may be fundamental to decisions made for whatever purpose, whether academic or not (MacIntyre & Gardner, 1991; Roberts, Davies & Jupp, 1992; McGroarty, 1996). The motivation a language user has for the language produces positive or negative outcomes when it comes to a bilingual student’s acceptance of the language for medium of instruction. This attests to the conclusion of Weiner (2010) that, the cause in a context leads to someone adopting an approach that might affect the cause positively.

In same vein, Dyers & Abongdia (2010) explores the relationship between language attitudes and ideologies of some French and English bilingual students as well as the motivations for learning a language. Dyers & Abongdia reported that attitudes or motivations are not the only reasons bilinguals' learn a language, but the bilingual students' ideology of language used. This can be put as the personal thoughts of the bilingual to do what is right in a given context. If a bilingual strongly believes that using a language for learning has a reward, then the student may be motivated to use and show a positive attitude to the language.

These attributions (motivation and goal) may relatively account for classroom practices and academic performances of the bilingual (McGroarty, 1996). According to McGroarty (1996), "positive attitudes about language and language learning may be as much the result of success as the cause" (p.4). This indicates that the attitudes of the students go a long way to produce advantages or disadvantages with respect to instructional opportunities they may be faced with. More so, Baker (1992: p.9) relates the term 'attitude' to language and language users, narrowing it to bilingual education. Baker affirms that positive approach to language is meaningful to the "restoration, preservation, decay or death" of the language. It can be deduced that, if a certain group of language users prefer language A to language B, they will be exceptionally loyal in the maintenance of language A more than language B. In the context of bilingual education, the language attitudes of bilinguals will prompt the use of one language over the other, or the use of both languages interchangeably

2.8 Conclusion

In both word and spirit, this chapter has focused on the literature that relates to translanguaging strategies, how it is used by bilinguals in learning and teaching context and its meaning in the academic learning situations of bilingual students. It discussed the operational concepts such as learning strategies, language policies and academic collaboration that serve as a basis for this study as it examines translanguaging as a coping learning strategy of students who use English as a language of medium of instruction (MoI). Further to this, I have discussed challenges faced by bilingual students when learning in a less proficient language which in turn affects the practice of translanguaging. However, I have said that proficiency in the both languages of students thus contributes to the success of

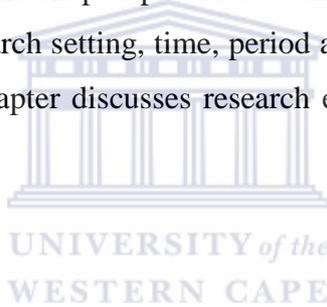
classroom translanguaging. This is in addition to a favorable learning contexts that takes into consideration the linguistic repertoires and personal motivation of students by educators and school authorities. The focal point of this study is the learning strategies adopted by challenged bilingual students learning in English and how the use of these adopted strategies has helped them to academically progress. Hence this study is set to examine the various underpinnings of attribution of motivation theory as the fundamentals for the use of coping learning strategies by the bilingual students who the use of English in learning is difficult. Thus, the abovementioned issues that were discussed in this chapter serve as a point of departure into an in-depth discussion on the methodology used in my study. I will lay out my research methodology in the next chapter and provide information as to the kind of research questions, the purpose of each adopted data collection instrument, the reason/rationale for the selected research method/approach and the research ethical procedure that I followed in this study.



CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1. Introduction

This chapter lays out the methodological framework used in the current study. In light of this, this chapter “transparently documents the research process” and concerns itself with the development of a method (Silverman, 2010: p.330). It consists of ten (10) sections. Beginning with the research questions that guided my study and a description of the research design, this chapter describes data collection techniques, reason for their choice and the appropriateness of each research tool and methods employed in the research. Next, the data collection procedures discuss step by step of the data collection. Following that the section on data size and population explains the basis of sampling and the selection condition of research participants. After that, the chapter provides a summary of the role of the researcher followed by, a report on the research setting, time, period and cost incurred during collection of data. The final part of this chapter discusses research ethical procedures, reflexivity and limitations of the study.



3.2. Research questions

The main research question intended for this study is: What are the translanguaging strategies of UWC first year bilingual students and can these strategies promote their academic collaboration?

The following sub questions are meant to reinforce the central concerns that underlie the main research question by pointing out its subsequent component parts;

- (i.) What type of challenge(s) do UWC’s first year bilingual students face while learning through the medium of English at UWC?
- ii.) What type of translanguaging strategies are used by UWC’s first year bilingual students during their academic collaboration?
- (iii.) How do the different translanguaging strategies used by UWC’s first year bilingual students help them cope with the challenges of learning in English?

(iv.) Can the translanguaging strategies of UWC's first year bilingual students complement UWC language policy?

3.3. Research Design

The research design for this study is predicated on qualitative approach. I envisage that the qualitative approach is well suit for this study rather than the mixed approach given the nature of my investigation. Qualitative research is concerned with various aspects of individual activities with the aim of giving reason and understanding of a specific action. This research method is fitting for the current study because of its “valuable and trustworthy accounts of educational settings and activities, the contexts in which these are situated, and the meanings that they have for participants that have nothing directly to do with causation.” (Maxwell, 2012: p.655). However, I am aware of the question: “Are qualitative methods always the best?” as posed by Silverman (2010: p.8). By the same token, I also understand that the descriptive nature of qualitative research can downplay the objectivity of the research findings because it is assumed that objectivity of analyzed data is often not viewed in terms of statistics and quantity (Silverman, 2010). Yet I uphold his affirmation that there is no “golden key” to the validity of a qualitative research (ibid: p.275) and that there is no best method to determine the objectivity of a research since the applicability of a method is linked to particular research questions (Silverman, 2010).

My investigation focuses on the use of language(s) by first year undergraduate students and their lived learning experiences in relation to these languages (English, Afrikaans and Isi-Xhosa). The qualitative approach used in my inquiry is based on meaningful claims of research participants' experiences; after which I develop themes from the data (Creswell, 2012). As my research is a field research, which makes use of observation and interaction on the study site, I have used an ethnographic approach to the investigation. Ethnographic approach is an investigation which centers on expectable forms of individual thought and conduct (Fetterman, 1989: p.11) Fines (1993) examines the moral dilemmas of field research thereby addressing the limitation of qualitative approach. Also, he describes ten attributes in the form of 'lies' of the ethnographic researcher. These are “kindly ethnographer, the friendly

ethnographer, the honest ethnographer, the precise ethnographer, the observant ethnographer, the unobtrusive ethnographer, the candid ethnographer, the chaste ethnographer, the fair ethnographer and the literary ethnographer” (Fine, 1993: p.5). Fine (1993: p.7- 15) briefly identifies the method of each ethnographer with reference to data collection:

- i.) The kindly ethnographer - “it is based on a lie—a lack of kindly intentions, a hidden secret”.
- ii.) The friendly ethnographer- “Hated individuals are found within our ethnographic world, but in the narrative representation of that world, they often vanish”.
- iii.) The honest ethnographer- “The ethnographer announces the research intent but is vague about the goals”
- iv.) The precise ethnographer- “We trust that quotation marks reveal words that have been truly spoken. This is often an illusion, a lie, a deception of which we should be aware”
- v.) Observant ethnographer- “The ability to be observant varies, and we should not assume that what is depicted in the ethnography is the whole picture”.
- vi.) The unobtrusive ethnographer - “Too great an involvement in a social scene can transform ethnography into a field experiment”.
- vii.) The candid ethnographer – “Being candid becomes a situated choice that is forever linked with how the candor is likely to affect one's reputation as a scholar” (ibid: p.17).
- viii.) The chaste ethnographer – “One of the dirty little secrets of ethnography, so secret and so dirty that it is hard to know how much credence to give ...” (ibid: p.18).
- ix.) The researcher must admit the lack of “fairness” while alleging that this lack is evident in all policy claims” (ibid: p22).
- x.) The literary ethnographer – “This is the heart of the textual practice of the qualitative researcher” (ibid: p.22).

Needless to say that it is not my intention to make an exaggerated appraisal of myself; I regard myself as an honest, observant and literary ethnographer. My self-appraisal in this regard is based on the fact that during data collection, I have informed my participants of my research objectives and questions. I have even given an explanation of the key term

'translanguaging'. This, I believe must have made my research goal clear/convincing to them. Also I did not rely only to the practices observed in the classroom as if it was not meaningful or relevant to the study. The use of documents as data indicates that texts used during observation have been significant to the investigation.

The approach served as a guide in the conduct of a comprehensive observation of two tutorials in the classroom and face-to-face interviews with a total of twelve bilingual students at the University of the Western Cape. In light of this, I have been able to establish a social relationship with the participants, which helped me during interviews (Neuman, 2006).

I looked out for the languages used by the research participants while they collaborated academically, that is, the body language (gestures and countenances) when using either or both languages- L1 and L2. This observation, I believed would help answer the research question four; ways in which language practice differs from UWC language policy. Additionally, this might help determine at which points during observation, the participants changed language and the reason for choice of language used in the situation.

Three of the basic types of data as recommended by Creswell (2013) were adopted, namely: non observations, open ended interviews, private and public document. Further to this, I used personally administered questionnaires. I have used some of the aspects of the interpretive/constructive paradigm with a view to understanding the experiences and views of people featured in the research sample size/ population. This necessitated my using the experiences and views of the selected participants to analyze and discuss my findings (Creswell, 2013; Mackenzie & Knipe, 2006). The methodological approach, which I believed would help achieve the aims of my study, was then predicated on a qualitative method analyses. This, I believed would enable me to determine the translanguaging strategies and the ways in which bilingual students use it as a coping aid for their learning challenges.

3.4. Data Collection Techniques

Since the research method adopted in this study is qualitative, I deemed it fit to make use of qualitative research techniques. The qualitative research techniques are synonymous with the

instruments used in collecting data in 'forms of words or pictures' (Neuman, 2006: p.41). I used different research techniques in order to draw together adequate information using different procedures. I assumed that the techniques used will help the author to understand the research problem, thereby providing precise outcomes from the data collected. This will make it convenient to seek answers that are closely related to the study. I have made use of three of the basic types of data as delineated by Creswell, (2013) namely non participant observations, open ended interviews, and private and public documents. Further to this, I personally administered the questionnaires.

3.4.1. Classroom Observations

Creswell (2009: p.182) classifies observation into five groups, these include; observation conducted as an observer, as a participant, taking the role of a participant more than an observer, engaging more time as an observer than as a participant, and at first an outside observer and later as an outside observer. In this study, observation was intently done as an observer. This means that I took note of every detail in unused settings and I made proper use of such details as a compass to its users. Wragg (2012) indicated amidst other forms of observation, watchful classroom observation can be used to light up unfamiliar events. The observation took place in classroom setting. It is in light of this, that classroom observation in this study was considered as a place that opens up acquaintances and originality.

Furthermore, Wragg stresses the important of each classroom observation methods allying with its purpose. Hence, I examined the unfamiliar translanguaging practice of first year bilingual students at UWC (a monolingual English setting). In my current study, closed classroom observations are particularly meant to examine various translanguaging strategies of the bilingual student and the pattern of use of the mentioned strategies by the research participants during academic collaboration, in this case is the observed classroom. Two (2) tutorial groups were observed and randomly selected based on participants' two languages: Isi-Xhosa and English and Afrikaans and English group. Eight (8) observations were conducted on two (2) tutorial groups, four (4) times each. The observation period was four weeks, and in a week, each group meets once for tutorial classes. That means two (2)

observations for a week. It was assumed that classroom observation will enable me pay close attention to seemingly unusual language experiences, watch and listen attentively in the research space. This is because any information is important in forming discussion (Neuman, 2006).

The tutorial time allotted to each module is an hour. This tutorial module is not an exception. The classroom observations were used to investigate the translanguaging strategies of bilingual student, the patterns of use of these strategies if any and lastly, to examine the real classroom practices of bilingual students and their variance with the university language policy. It was quite challenging for me to see the real classroom practices of students especially in terms of language use. I had eight Isi- Xhosa students out of the total of twenty I observed. These eight participants, despite their voluntary participation did not make use of their first language either amongst other bilingual students or with their tutors. They actually became introverted when the tutorial began. The observation was audio recorded and field notes were also taken. The recorded information was all transcribed and translated accordingly. In the case of missed conversations in recordings due to semantics, field notes were used to compliment what was lost. Only during two tutorial sessions did students made use of their first and second language out of eight observed tutorial sessions. The languages used were English and Afrikaans. The use of these languages was strictly during the students' classroom interaction. It was observed that participants that used both languages used it to clarify and understand concepts or confirm what the tutor said. I had a routine where I arrive each week at tutorial classes before the tutors and students arrived. It allowed me the opportunity to familiarize myself with the students. Also, out of the two tutorial classrooms, five students are coincidentally my students. I tutored them in another module in the Faculty of Education (EDC 101- Educational practice). These known students informed other classmates that I am/was a tutor. This caused some of students to be relaxed while others were cautious of my presence despite the fact that I was seated at the last row.

I used two to three small audio recorders to record the happenings in the classroom, in particular during the learning process of the research participants. I did not rely absolutely on the audio recorders because of unforeseen technicalities that might occur. Hence, personal note taking was considered important. The reason for the consideration was that it helped me

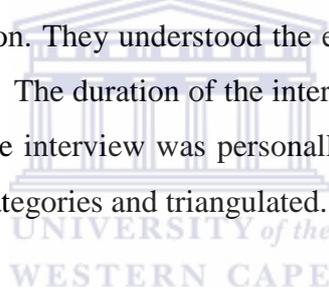
to record actions in readable form. In fact, it was the personal notes that were used as an alternative source of information after the data collected from the observation was transcribed. The normal seating arrangement was two students per table but it was not compulsory to adopt the arrangement to all tutorial sessions. There was room for a higher number of students per table depending on the task for different tutorials. For each weekly observation, the seating position of students changed. This was so because I did not want students to be overly conscious of the investigation which might have lead them to be uneasy during tutorials and as a result they may not have behaved naturally in their classroom setting. In the first two weeks of classroom observation, participants were left alone to choose their seat. As a norm they sat in two's at a table. At the two observed tutorials, most were friends seated together while few others were simply classmates for that module only. It was noticed that students who voluntarily participated were reluctant to use another language apart from the language of Medium of Instruction (MOI). I specifically re-arranged the tutorial classes such that four students per table were tactically asked to sit together in week three's observation. The arrangement was deliberately done to facilitate bilinguals of the same two languages, and proximity. During the last and fourth week, the students were seated in twos when the tutor's kindly asked them to seat as mixed gender pairs. The pairing was based on language competency of the MOI, the same other language (Afrikaans or Isi-Xhosa) and individual understanding of basic academic concepts and tasks.

3.4.2. Interviews

Another research tool that I have used in the study is the interview. One of the advantages of the interview is that it helped me to keep/sustain the line of questioning. The limitation includes using secondary information sifted from interviewees and two of the interviewees were not expressive and sensitive (Creswell, 2009: p.179). However, I checked the accuracy of respondent answers with the observations as suggested by Silverman (2010: p.225). Moreover what interviewees' tell the interviewer cannot be discarded since it is an expression of their lived experiences. Neuman (2006) highlights some attributes of the field interview. These include: asking non directed questions, attentive listening, showing interest, a series of interviews conducted, shared experiences, informal environment and markers. All of these attributes were considered.

In semi-structured interviews conducted with each of the students, they were questioned about their linguistic background and how it plays a role during their first year of undergraduate study. These were open ended questions that focused on what languages are used for what purpose and when they are used. They were also given questions on the challenges regarding academic language and how they are able to deal with the situation. And they were also asked how successful has the use of the adopted strategies been for them. Since all interviewees use English as one of their two languages and I do not use Afrikaans or Isi-Xhosa. The interview was conducted in English language.

Interviews were all recorded on a recording device. Notably, some were uncomfortable with the use of the recording device. I had to reassure them that it was strictly for the intended purpose and also to save their own time. I explained before starting that the option is to take note at every point of conversation. They understood the explanation, agreed to be recorded and the interview was conducted. The duration of the interviews was between 6- 13 minutes. All information gathered from the interview was personally transcribed, analyzed according to common thematic codes and categories and triangulated.



During the course of my interviews, I observed the enthusiasm of the participating interviewees. A total of twelve (12) participants out of the twenty participants observed were interviewed. The observed classroom practices could correspond with their responses. The location for the interview was relaxed and happened to be an everyday place for the interviewee. This has been my reason for asking if the participants resided at the University residences. The interview was one-on-one. The interviewees were given the time to reflect on additional experiences as they cope with learning. My question guide for the interview through open-ended questions was tailored towards the effectiveness and contribution of translanguaging strategies for their academic work.

Figure 1 below is the structure of my interview questions.

Figure 1

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR THESIS TITLE:

A SOCIOLINGUISTIC ANALYSIS OF THE TRANSLANGUAGING STRATEGIES OF SOME BILINGUAL FIRST YEAR STUDENTS AT UNIVERSITY OF THE WESTERN CAPE (UWC)

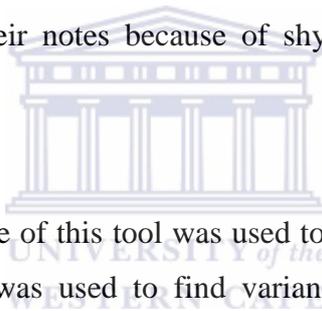
Questions:

1. What is your first language?
2. What is your second language?
3. Where can you say that you use both of them?
4. When can you say that you use both of them?
5. Do you ever use any language(s) other than English in the classroom?
 - 5.1. If yes, which language(s)?
 - 5.2. For what purpose do you use this/these language(s)?
 - 5.3. In what situations do you use this/these language(s)?
6. How well would you say you know English?
7. Relate your experience in terms of language difficulty (English or other language) and academic work from the beginning of this semester.
8. How do you deal with the language difficulty earlier mentioned?
9. Are there occasions where you simultaneously use both your first and second languages during tutorials or sessions with peer students?
10. Do you use both languages during tutorials or sessions with peer students?
11. Why do you use both languages during tutorials or sessions with peer students?
12. Describe the aspects/ways during the tutorials in which you use both languages?
13. Have the use of both languages contribute to your academic work in relation to language difficulty?

I must really thank you in earnest for the time spent in sharing your information for this research. I assure you that, I shall confidently keep your response now and in subsequent interviews.

3.4.3. Document analysis

This is the third research technique that was used in data collection. Creswell (2013) draws on that it is an issue if the researcher has to locate documents to be analyzed from distant places and still has to get permission to use the document. In this study, my documents were accessible via online access, consent from tutors and participants. I was free to access and use the UWC language policy since it is a public document. Although the secondary documents search (returned and marked tutorial tasks and written discourse of participants) does pose an obstacle during the collection of data. Creswell claims that research participants are often not comfortable 'journaling'. The term journaling is related to written text penned by the participants. He adds that, research participants' non comfortability might be caused by shyness about his/ her handwriting in the text. Indeed, seven out of the twenty participants were not only shy to release their notes because of shyness but were also aware of my presence in the class.



The data collected through the use of this tool was used to analyze research question one (1) and four (4). That is, the tool was used to find variance or to state it in another way, comparing and contrasting the real classroom context of applying translanguaging strategies and the stipulations of the UWC language policy. Documents in the form of completed and marked tutorial tasks performed by students and tutorial notes taken by the students were analysed. It was mandatory for students to have tutorial workbooks. Hence, I took notice of written discourse of students that showed understanding of the concepts taught. The tutorial notes of the students I focused on were tutorial task two on the concept of referencing. I scrutinized the language used in taking notes and the forms in which students write out points they need to recall. Also, I gave attention to tutorial task four and five of the twenty participants in the two observed tutorial classes.

3.4.4. Research Questionnaires

This is the last research tool that was used during data collection. For ease and orderliness during data collection and analysis, I have used twenty (20) Xhosa and English students and

ten (10) Afrikaans and English making up a total of thirty (30) research participants. But that was not possible as Isi-Xhosa students were not keen on participating in the research. Hence, the questionnaires were administered to respondents that signed the consent form. However, I had ten bilinguals drawn from each group, males and females. The thirty participants consist of ten (10) Xhosa and twenty (20) Afrikaans users. The ten (10) Xhosa and English respondents were made up of four (4) males and six (6) females while the twenty Afrikaans and English consist of eight (8) males and twelve (12) female respondents. I personally administered the research questionnaires to the thirty participants ten minutes before the end of the tutorial time. The questionnaires consisted of nine (9) open-ended and four (4) close-ended questions. The open-ended question was deliberately structured more than the close-ended questions while the closed-ended question was based only on the demographics of participants. The open-ended questions were meant to allow participants express themselves in writing about the difficulties they are faced with as bilingual students, learning in a less proficient language.

3.5 Research Participants



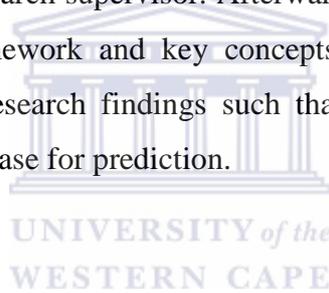
I randomly selected my three (3) tutorial classes for reasons of operational efficiency and space. At the same time, I considered the average of 15 bilingual students' attendance register in each tutorial group. The reason for this is that I wanted to make use of 10 students each from the three tutorials, so as to complete my sample size of thirty (30) bilinguals. Another point is that as participation is voluntary, each tutorial attendance should have more than the intended 10 students for each group. All things being equal, the gender of my participants were ten males and twenty females. This number voluntarily completed the personally distributed questionnaires. Out of the thirty participants, twenty were observed from two tutorial classes and twelve (12) were interviewed. The selection was based on voluntarily participation and participants' availability to be interviewed. The twenty participants who were observed were selected from tutorial class A and B with Ten participants each from the two tutorial groups. For tutorial class A, the gender for the ten (10) participants was three (3) males; two (2) males (Afrikaans and English), one (1) male (Isi-Xhosa and English) and seven (7) females; (four (4), Afrikaans and English and three (3), Isi-Xhosa and English). On the other hand, the tutorial class B also had ten (10) participants for the observation three (3)

males consisting of two (2) Isi-Xhosa and English and an Afrikaans and English participant. The remaining seven (7) participants for class B observation were females. Three (3) of the females were Isi- Xhosa and English bilinguals while the other four (4) were Afrikaans and English female bilinguals. Out of the total twenty participants that conducted the observation, they were asked who amongst them resides in the university residences. I needed to know about their personal academic study programme and their available time so that they will be less pressured. Five (5) out of the participants of tutorial A indicated their intention to be interviewed. They were two (2) males (Afrikaans and English), one (1) male (Isi-Xhosa and English) and two (2) females (Afrikaans and English). For tutorial class B, a total of seven (7) expressed an interest to be part of the interviewees. There was one (1) male (Isi-Xhosa and English), and three (3) females (Isi –Xhosa and English), they were close friends. In addition there were three (3) (Afrikaans and English) female interviewees. The total number of each gender and participants for each data collection process was determined by the signed letter of consent. This was different to my plan to use twenty (20) (English and Isi-Xhosa) students and ten (10) (English and Afrikaans). The reason for my proposed selection was based on my literature review which points to the need for greater use of English and Afrikaans as MOI at primary and secondary schools. On the other hand black learners (Isi-Xhosa) for example do not perform well in academic tasks because of English which is their MOI. And despite the upper hand of Afrikaans undergraduates, they are still likely to struggle with academic language proficiency. I had to investigate bilinguals in Afrikaans or Isi-Xhosa and English for validity.

After the sample selection process, the data collection using the classroom observation turned out to be really challenging. For the two tutorials, the total of eight Isi- Xhosa participants was introverted participants. I observed that they were very reserved during tutorial sessions, both males and females, but this was not the case before the tutors start to speak and immediately after the class ended. All the participants used English in and out of class as this was the language of MOI. Although they used English for different academic activities and their motivation varies as will be discussed during the data analysis chapter.

3.6. The Role of the Researcher

According to Walliman (2011: p.8) “Being a researcher is as much about doing a practical job as being academically competent. Identifying a subject to research, finding and collecting information and analysing it, presents you with a range of practical problems that need to be solved”. In summary, I believe that I have performed all the functions of a researcher as laid out by Walliman. Also, as the researcher, I tried not to dominate the process of data collection and the research space. Instead, I facilitated the participant’s interest and enthusiasm at the different stage of data gathering. To be specific during interviews, the atmosphere was relaxed and semi-formal. The subject of translanguaging and bilingual first year undergraduate students in a dual medium of instruction classroom was identified as the research area. Next, I conducted an ethnographic study in order to find out and gather data that focused on my research questions. Some challenges encountered during the collection of data were discussed with my research supervisor. Afterwards, I analyzed data gathered using thematic codes, theoretical framework and key concepts. In addition, I had the task of describing and explaining the research findings such that future researchers on a similar subject in the field could have a base for prediction.

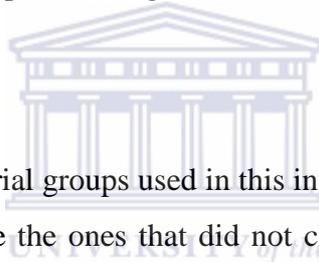


3.7. Research space selection

The setting of this study was three purposively selected tutorial classrooms in the Faculty of Education at the University of the Western Cape (UWC). Tutorial sessions are basically educational resource support programmes which the university offers to students in its eight (8) faculties. However, most departments that offer tutorials, the modules for tutorial vary according to departmental criteria. It also differs according to the level of the student programme, from the first year to the third year of study. The number of students varies for each tutorial class and students are selected for each tutorial according to the coordinator of the programme in each department. The tutorial module for this research is EDC 111 (Academic literacy and numeracy). It has a total of 15 tutorial classrooms and a tutor for two classrooms each, the fifteen tutorial classes are taken by the tutorial coordinator. This is a strategy meant to keep the language department abreast of the progress of the tutorials. Since the forum is smaller compared to the conventional lecture of a total of 333 students, it has for

each classroom between 12- 25 students. Student attendances for each tutorial group were 18, 18 and 25. There is no prerequisite for students that form each tutorial group and their tutors, in particular with regard to language. All that is known is that both tutors and students use English whether as a first or second language but it was also the language of MOI.

According to the student guide for prospective students in the Faculty of Education (2013), the level requirements for all students was Level 4(50%-59%) in English/ Afrikaans or Xhosa (home language) or level 5(60%-69%) in English (first additional language). This excludes student that would offer subjects in Mathematics and natural sciences. The minimum requirement for this group is level 4(50%-59%) in English/ Afrikaans or Xhosa (home or first additional language). This indicates that all students in the EDC 111 tutorial modules should have relatively passed their matriculation exam with an average of level 4(50-59%). I noticed that all the 30 participants could speak in English because I communicated with them in this space using English.



I deliberately chose the three tutorial groups used in this investigation because of tutorial time and availability. The groups were the ones that did not clash with my own tutorial classes. That means I purposively and conveniently selected the tutorial group. The tutors for the module consisted of three (3) non South Africans and five (5) South Africans. I used two non- South African tutors and one South African tutor in the classroom. Each tutorial was held for an hour. The first five minutes was for a recap of previous tasks, to complete the attendance register and the last five minutes was for conclusions and how to go about the next task. Content learning was between 45-50 minutes.

3.8. Ethical consideration and procedures

Following Shaw (2008: p.7), I took into consideration three of his ethics of qualitative research design namely: principles of informed consent, confidentiality and privacy. Considering the principle of anonymity and confidentiality, pseudonyms were used to replace the actual name of the tutorial class and the participants. As soon as the research proposal was approved by the Higher Education research committee in the last week of January, 2015,

I started to collect data in the second week of 1st term, which was the last week in February when tutorial classes started. I assumed that this period was suitable for the intended purpose. During this period, it was envisaged that the first year undergraduate bilinguals will have been inducted into the new linguistic environment. This is the time the participants were most likely to experience the problems pointed out in my research statement.

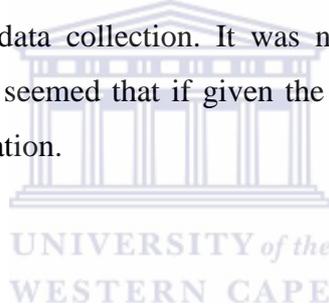
In addition, I dealt with the ethical issues by careful consideration of the use of time along with the use research tools. This suggests that issue of consent in regard to this thesis was done accordingly. Once I received the permission to proceed with my investigation, I explained the nature of my research to all those involved from the module lecturer to the interviewees. After this, I asked for their verbal and written consent as at when necessary. All participants in this study were at no time compelled or persuaded to participate, and hence were free to withdraw from participation. In addition, participants' anonymity and confidentiality of personal information was strictly adhered to.

However, when I encountered the challenge of the Isi Xhosa participants not actively being involved during data collection using classroom observation which I was worried may affect findings; I brought this situation to the attention of my researcher supervisor. In the process of establishing my thirty bilingual students, I sought the permission of the lecturer of the module asking her if I could make use of three tutorial groups. She permitted me to use the research space. Next, I went ahead to ask the tutors of the respective groups for their consent for me to be a non-participant observer. I explained my research purpose and the processes of investigation to the tutors of the groups that I used. After completing this phase, the tutor allowed me entry into their tutorial sessions, and then I introduced myself as a student researcher to the various tutorial groups.

At my first meeting with the three groups which depended on the module time table, I asked how many of them reside in the campus hostels. This helped me to select my interviewees. I thought that if my interviewees are easily accessible, then my follow up visit will not be a constraint given that most times during the day I am available on the university premises. I kept a record of the students who signified that they reside in the University hostels. Though,

after the first interview, there were no follow up interviews. This is because all interviewees were very expressive of their learning challenges and the strategies they put in place to cope. After identifying all participants for each research technique, I explained my research work and the reasons that I want them to participate. Also I made them aware of my intention to use every detail of my findings and responses solely for the purpose of the research. There was a form of agreement (See Appendix B and C), which states that I would not disclose their individual identity at any point during the research. More so, they would assist me in completing my questionnaire and for those that were interviewed, they would give me a reasonable time and venue for the interview. This agreement/understanding to participate was duly signed by me and the intended participants. This constitutes the letter of consent.

After a five week period of data collection, I went back to the three tutorial groups to specifically voice my appreciation to the whole tutorial class. Special commendation was given to all participants in the data collection. It was noted that all the eight Isi Xhosa students were very friendly as it seemed that if given the chance they would be keen to be involved in the classroom observation.



3.9 Reflexivity and Validity

Four different research tools namely classroom observation, semi structured interviews, document analysis and questionnaires was employed in this study for the purpose of triangulation. , I have deliberately used triangulation in order to validate the data gathered. Krathwohl (1998) affirms that triangulation is the most common technique used to achieve validity in qualitative research. According to Krathwohl (1998: p.276) triangulation is “a process of using more than one source of information, confirming data from different sources, confirming observations from different observers and confirming information from different data collection methods”. Similarly, Silverman (2010: p.277) describes triangulation as an “attempt to get a ‘true’ fix on a situation by combining different ways of looking at it (method triangulation) or different findings (data triangulation)”. Both scholars concur that triangulation involves the use of varying technique(s) and tools to arrive at a research conclusion. An anecdotal statement is that truth of a matter is usually confirmed by two or

more witnesses. So also, data gathered from four research techniques in this study is most likely to produce useful findings. Also, it could help defend that results of qualitative research can be objective without the use of numbers and statistical approach. Marshall & Rossman (1989: p.83) cited in Kimizi (2008: p.167) assert that ‘Using a combination of different data increases validity as the strengths of one approach can compensate for the weaknesses of another’. I combined the data of the completed and returned questionnaire to the responses of the interviews and linked it to what was noticed during the classroom observation. Overall, I examined the written tasks of students that were assessed by their tutors and compared the entire data to the UWC language policy. Reflexivity of the current study was based on the idea of Davies (2008: p.4), he describes reflexivity as “ways in which the products of research are affected by the personnel and processes of doing research”. This implies that reflexivity is shown in the manner in which the researcher (I) brings together the four research tools for the purpose of data collection. And how the data collected were analysed and presented with a focus on the research problem. Also, reflexivity involves using key concepts and terminologies and relating them to different findings. For the transcription of audio recorded data, it was given to a recommended nonacademic staff member of the Afrikaans department. Neither Afrikaans nor Isi-Xhosa was my first language. Hence it was difficult for me to do the transcription personally. There was no need for an Isi- Xhosa transcription as participants hardly make use of this language during the tutorial sessions. All interviews were conducted in English; hence I personally transcribed them and also gave it to the interviewees to confirm the information transcribed for possible contradiction.

Some of the questions that were asked enabled these challenged students to highlight the strategies (translanguaging) they employed as a way of coping. I used all the completed, returned questionnaires and findings from closed classroom observations, of two out of the three tutorial groups to analyze research questions one to three. To add, the interview questions were partly structured like the questionnaires. In order to collect the verbal form of their written responses and also to help draw out other relevant information, the interviewee could not write in the space provided. Probably, this was a result of an insufficient understanding of questions or laziness of respondents to fill in detailed information. Question four specifically focused on how the UWC language policy deviates from the learning and linguistic practices of students.

3.10 Limitations of the Study

In as much as validity and reflexivity of the study was significantly considered, some underlying issues limited this ethnographic investigation. Noteworthy was the time required for the collection of data, the academic period of the module, the size and population of the study, presence of the researcher, semantics during audio recordings and linguistic repertoire of tutors. Time was an aspect I contended with, as respondents were in a hurry to leave the tutorial venues and I did not want to cut into the tutorial time. On my part, time was judiciously used as I needed to make an effort to be punctual and in attendance at every tutorial sessions. I had to work according to the given interview time of the interviewees and having to know the location of the various hostels before time. The module used in this study is a semester module, planned only for first year undergraduate students. The participants were conscious of my presence in the classroom and this made the atmosphere of the tutorial class very formal. Because of ethics I had to introduce myself. Lastly, the linguistic repertoire of the tutors did not totally encourage the use of English along with other home languages. I did not use the conventional focus group research as my view is that participants are induced to engage in a practice which may not or may be the real situation. This in a way distorted the clarity and audibility of recordings, as the tutor's voice overshadowed that of the participants. Moreover, I assume it is the reason for the non-participation of the Isi- Xhosa participants. I propose to revisit the limitations in the final chapter of my study.

CHAPTER FOUR: DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter is the presentation and analysis of data that I gathered during the investigation of translanguaging strategies of some first year bilingual undergraduate students at UWC. The data gathered are from questionnaires, semi structured interviews, classroom observations and documents analysis as indicated in the preceding chapter. The chapter consists of two sections and in both sections all findings from the aforementioned data techniques were triangulated to yield trustworthy findings. I have intentionally intertwined/interlaced my presentation and analysis of data so as to engender a holistic view of the study.

The first section sets out to present all data findings from self-administered questionnaire that were distributed to 30 respondents. The open-ended questions were intended to facilitate participants to write out the difficulties they were confronted with as bilingual students, learning in a less proficient language (English). In addition they were meant to determine the coping learning strategies used by the students with a focus on translanguaging. More importantly, the data from semi structured interviews conducted with 12 bilingual first year undergraduates attempted to get answers in spoken words which corresponds to the questionnaires' responses. Likewise the findings from observations of classroom practices in two EDC 111 tutorial classes were presented, in order to know the actual language practice while students learn through the medium of English. The documents that were presented and analyzed are two tutorial tasks and the UWC language policy. The data presentation and analysis was concurrently done following categories of themes that I drew out from the research questions for my study. Notably, I do not base the frequency of participant and frequency % on the traditional approach that is the sum of number of responses. This is because most of my participants specifically during the analysis of completed questionnaires gave more than two responses. This made it difficult for me to sum up the frequency and arrive at the number of participants. Instead, in table 4.2 - 4.6 which is in the first section, I used the number of responses over total participants and multiply by 100 to get the percentages. In the second section, I used similar approach except that it is not written in table form. The percentile of frequency comes before the number of responses in bracket, followed by n representing total participants for that data. Data analysis was based on two

theoretical frameworks that underpinned my current study. They are translanguaging and attribution theory of motivation (See Chapter Two).

The second section of this chapter is a narrative of participants' responses from related data according to themes formed from the research questions. This section served to give a qualitative view of the presented data in section one and it clearly include participants' feedbacks that indicated their real language experiences. A demographic distribution and language knowledge of first year bilingual students who participated in the study precedes the presentation of my data.

4.2 Demographic Distribution

This study involved a total number of 30 participants in a questionnaire. The participants were first year UWC bilingual students whereby 50% (15) n = 30 were male and 50% (15) n= 30 were female. This was a balanced gender classification. The gender classification was even done on language basis. The 50% (15) n= 30 of male participants consisted of 40% (6) n=15 Isi-Xhosa speakers and 60% (9) n= 15 are Afrikaans speakers. The other 50% (15) n= 30 were female participants. 33% (5) n= 15 female participants were Isi-Xhosa speakers and 67% (10) n= 15 were Afrikaans speakers.

Furthermore in the interview category, there were 12 first year bilingual students who were involved in which 58% (7) n=12 interviewees were female while 42% (7) n=12 interviewees were male participants. In addition, the 58% (7) n=12 interviewees consisted of 57% (4) n=7 Afrikaans speakers and 43% (3) n=7 were Isi-Xhosa females. The remaining 42% (5) n=12 includes 60% (3) n=5 who were Afrikaans speakers while 40% (2) n=5 were Isi-Xhosa speakers. This was done to uphold issues that underpin gender sensitivity.

The distribution of the first language of participants in the questionnaire was 37% (11) n=30 first year bilingual students who said that Afrikaans is their first language while 26% (8)

n=30 bilingual students pointed out that Isi-Xhosa is their first language. The remaining 37% (11) n=30 respondents use English as their first language. I did not round off the decimal in the computed figures because the data sample in my study is human and they cannot be divided. Also in this chapter, I have used the term frequency in the tables to show the number of occurrence of responses (questionnaire and interviews) or participants that were involved in an observed practice. Then, the number of each data frequency will be computed into 100 percent (%). The repetitive use of “n” means the total number of respondents, interviewees and participants.

During the interviews with twelve (12) first year bilingual students at UWC, 42% (5) n=12 interviewees told me they were first language users of Afrikaans. Another 42% (5) n=12 interviewees said that Isi-Xhosa was their first language and 16% (2) n=12 interviewees said that English was their first language. From the questionnaire and interview data, the sum of the first language Afrikaans and Isi-Xhosa speakers is almost two thirds of the respondents and more than two thirds of the interviewees respectively. This signifies that Afrikaans and Isi-Xhosa are the preferred and more familiar languages of UWC’s first year bilingual students. It is likely that if given the choice of language of Medium of Instruction this number of bilingual students would opt for their first language. However, the result of 37% (11) n=30 participants is at the same level with Afrikaans which means that at least a third of bilingual students would choose English over Afrikaans and Isi-Xhosa. I assumed that for English first language users they are also accustomed to this language and they use it for any purpose.

During the observation, there was no classification of first language amongst the different participants. This is because most of the participants observed used English during tutorials. My role as a non-participant observer did not provide me with the opportunity of asking participants which of their two languages is the first language. However, I consecutively observed in the tutorial classes that before and after the tutors begin lessons, 30% (6) n=20 interviewees regularly use Afrikaans and Isi-Xhosa in addition to English which is the language of Medium of Instruction (MoI).

Table 4.1 Demographic Table

Items	Questionnaire Frequency n(30)	Quest. %	Interview Frequency n(12)	Interview %	Observation Frequency n(20)	Obs. %
Gender						
Male	15	50	5	42	8	40
Female	15	50	7	58	12	60
Total	30	100	12	100	20	100
1st language of participants						
Afrikaans	11	37	5	47	-	-
Isi-Xhosa	8	26	5	47	-	-
English	11	37	2	16	-	-
Total	30	100	12	100	-	-
2nd language of participants						
Afrikaans	11	37	2	17	-	-
Isi-Xhosa	0	0	0	0	-	-
English	19	63	10	83	-	-
Total	30	100	12	100	-	-
Departmental affiliation						
Mathematics & Science	8	27	3	25	-	-
Language & Literacy	22	73	9	75	-	-
Total	30	100	12	100	-	-

From the distribution table 4.1, the second language of participants in the questionnaire was marked as 37% (11) n=30 respondents for Afrikaans second language users and the remaining 63% (19) n=30 respondents were all English second language users. It can be seen from table 4.2 that there were no Isi-Xhosa second language users. This means that all Isi-Xhosa participants and some of the Afrikaans first language users make use of English as their second language (L2). Moreover, from the interview data, 17% (2) n=12 bilingual students mentioned that Afrikaans is their second language while 83% (10) n=12 first year bilingual

students said English is their second language. The data from the questionnaire and interview showed that more than 60% of all participants are English second language users. This shows that English is used by more than half of the participants in this study.

The figure of above 60% and 80% English second language participants can be considered as a good percentile if on a performance scale. However, this does not indicate that they are academically literate in this language. Though, the interest/focus of this study is not centered on the competency of using English, the important issue is the use of English by participants.

The departmental affiliation of the first year bilingual students is shown on table 4.1, although their affiliation to a department in the Education Faculty did not play any significant role in how often they use a coping learning strategy. I now proceed to discuss the participants' knowledge of language as this will/can help my readership understand the language context of participants.

4.3 Participants Knowledge of language

Based on Table 4.2, this section presents an overview of the background knowledge of languages used by all the selected bilingual participants in my study. The purpose of this section is to give in-depth information as to where and when the participants use both languages, to know what their competent language is and in what language they face learning challenges. This information can provide insight into the real experiences of the bilingual students. As mentioned in Chapter 3, most of the responses of the participants were more than one, hence the variance in total frequency of each data.

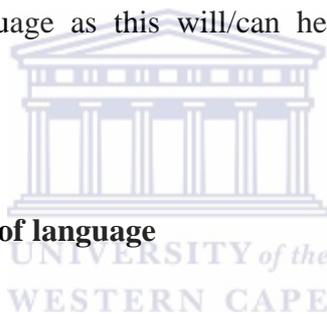


Table 4.2 Participants knowledge of language

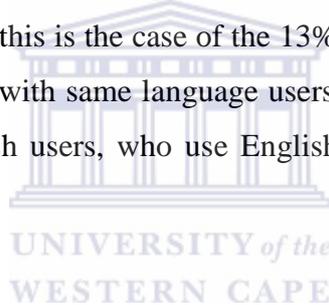
Item	Questionnaire Frequency n(30)	Questionnaire % (100)	Interview Frequency n(12)	Interview % (100)
Where do you use your first language?			Both languages	
Home	28	93	8	67
University (general)	9	30	12	100
University (Out of the class)	2	7	0	0
Family members	7	23	0	0
Social media	2	7	0	0
Friends or Peer students	10	33	10	83
Workplace	2	7	0	0
Community	3	10	0	0
Everywhere necessary	-	-	6	50
When do you use your first language?			Both languages	
Communicating with those that use same language in any situation (General)	4	13	7	58
Outside of the classroom	1	3	6	50
Communicating with parents and family members	15	50	0	0
Friends or peers/students in and out of classroom	11	37	8	67
Anytime the need arises	10	33	0	0
Socializing	2	7	0	0
Discussing academic related content	-	-	10	83
Where do you use your second language?				
Everywhere necessary	3	10	-	-
University	23	77	-	-
In classroom	5	17	-	-
Social media	1	3	-	-
Informal places (church, shopping malls)	4	13	-	-

Seldom use	2	7	-	-
Home	5	17	-	-
When do you use your second language?				
In classroom	10	33	-	-
University	10	33	-	-
Communicating with friends & peer students	10	33	-	-
Someone not using my first language	4	13	-	-
All the time as need arises	3	10	-	-
Parents and family members	3	10	-	-
Seldom use	1	3	-	-
Socializing	3	10	-	-
In which of the two languages are you more competent?	-	-	Not asked in session	-
English	15	50	5	42
Afrikaans	7	23	4	33
Isi-Xhosa	7	23	3	25
No response	1	4	-	-
How well would you say you know English?	-	-	-	-
Above average	-	-	4	33
Average	-	-	7	58
Below average	-	-	1	9

In the questionnaire, the respondents were asked where they use first language: 93% (28) n=30 first year bilingual students wrote that they used it at home, 33% (10) n=30 bilingual students mentioned that they use it amongst friends and peer students and 30% (9) n=30 students used their first language at the university for general purposes. Another 7% (2) n=30 respondents used their first language at the university but out of the class. The home holds the highest frequency as the place where bilingual students' first language is used. A home

literally is a place of relaxation, comfort and with no intimidation which may be caused by the compelling need to use a second language.

This articulates the importance of using a language that is not seen as a hurdle in order for effective learning to take place. Additionally, the questionnaire also shows that 50% (15) n=30 students use their first language when communicating with their parents and other family members, 37% (11) n=30 students use the first language in and out of the classrooms, 33% (10) n=30 respondents will use their first language any time there is the need to use it. On the other hand, 13% (4) n=30 students said that they use their first language when communicating with those that also use the same first language, irrespective of the context. As regards to when the first language of bilingual students is used, all the three responses apart from 37% (11) n=30 respondents that is used in and out of class reveals that the first language is widely used when communicating with close associates. As it is well known that language also strengthens bonds, this is the case of the 13% (4) n=30 students that mentioned that they use their first language with same language users. The 37% (11) n=30 students are most likely first language English users, who use English for academic and non-academic activities.



Still on the questionnaire data, the question was asked: when do you use your second language? 77% (23) n=30 respondents stated that the university was one of the places they use their second language. It was not surprising that the university as identified by UWC's bilingual first year students had the highest frequency. This is because their first language was mainly used at home to communicate with their family members. Also they are more inclined to use the second language at school, the reason being that the school should be the second home of a student. The multilingual context and the language of MoI of the university add up to the other reasons why the university has the highest frequency. 17% (5) n=30 respondents were more specific in saying that they use their second language at home. This group of bilingual students is composed of students who remarked earlier that English is their first language. The equal frequency of 33% (10) n=30 for bilingual students who use their second language in three scenarios, in classroom, at the university and when communicating with peer students, is evident that the second language is used more for academic purposes. Not to be overlooked is the lowest frequency of 3% (1) n=30 first year bilingual students. It means

that the use of second language for this one respondent is non-significant in all activities, which may or may not include learning, depending on what language is the second language.

The first four questions on table 4.2 were rephrased during interviews with the 12 interviewees. I enquired during interviews with first year bilingual students about where they use both languages and when they do use both languages. Rather than asking four questions, I asked two questions because I did not want to repeat my questions so as not to confuse the interviewees and take up their valuable time. As can be seen in table 4.2, that responses which are called an item were similar to questionnaire data, except that the frequency is different. All the 100% (12) n=12 students use both languages at the university for general purposes which may include speaking, listening, reading and writing. Friends and peer students occupied the second highest frequency of 83% (10) n=12 students. The frequency number 67% (8) n=12 students and 50% (6) n=12 students are used at home and everywhere necessary. The above data indicates that bilingual students can use both languages with ease in various contexts. The remark of 83% (10) n=12 of interviewees' use of both languages in discussing academic related content also links to the university as one of the places where bilingual first year students at UWC use both their languages. 50% (15) n=30 made up the number of bilingual students who confirmed that their more competent language is English, while an equal 23% (7) n =30 consists of respondents that said that Afrikaans and Isi-Xhosa is their more competent language. 4% (1) n=30 respondents did not make known his or her competent language. Also, the data from the interviews shows that English is the more competent language with 42% (5) n=12 interviewees, follow by Afrikaans more competent language users consisting of 33% (4) n=12 interviewees. And bilingual students who said that Isi-Xhosa is their more competent language had the lowest frequency of 25% (3) n=12.

The data from both questionnaire and interview is significant in understanding the cause of the language difficulty that first year bilingual students' face while learning in English. It is apparent that half of the respondents 50% and 8% less than 50% of interviewees' are more competent in English. Thus, if the bilingual students are competent in English as they said, there should not be any tendency towards facing difficulty in relation to English as the language of MoI. Referring back to item 2 in table 4.1 and comparing the result of the bilingual's more competent language, it is interesting to note that there is a decrease in the

frequency of Afrikaans and Isi-Xhosa language users. I expect that the 37% (11) n=30 students and 42% (5) n=12 interviewees Afrikaans first language bilingual students and 27% (8) n=30 students and 42% (5) n=12 interviewees Isi-Xhosa first language bilinguals cannot all competently use their convenient and familiar language. This suggests that some participants from these groups find it difficult to read and write in their second language. It is definitely more challenging for Afrikaans and Isi-Xhosa more competent language students to cope with English as the language of MoI. From a realistic view, it is more difficult to understand a subject in a language that is not clear when speaking and listening, therefore how much more difficult it must be to read and write in that language.

During the interviews, I probed further into the bilingual students' more competent language by asking the 12 interviewees how well they would say they know English. With the exemption of 9% (1) n=12 that said he is below average, the 91% (11) n=12 comprises of 58% (7) n=12 and 33% (4) n=12 were above average and on average in terms of how good their English is. In the later part of this chapter, I will discuss the written essays of some of the bilingual students as evidence to indicate their knowledge of English language and compare the reality of their use of English for academic writing with the bilingual's responses of being an average English language user (See table 4.3). The 1 out of the 12 interviewees who said his knowledge of English is below average did not want to boast that he can competently use English in an academic situation but he can use English in his day to day activities. Knowing the participants' knowledge of language led me to discover the language related difficulties either in their competent or non-competent language. Next I proceed to present data that describes the language related challenges of UWC's first year bilingual students while learning in the English medium of instruction. I propose to capture this in table 4.3 in the following page.

4.4 Language-related challenges of UWC's first year bilingual students

In this part, I propose to present the data gathered that relates to the categories of language difficulty experience by first year bilingual students at UWC while receiving academic instruction in English.

Table 4.3 Type of language related challenges

Item	Quest. Frequency (30)	Quest. % (100)	Interview Frequency(12)	Interview % (100)	Observation Frequency(20)	Obs. % (100)
What language related challenges do you face during tutorials or when talking to peer students?						
Using a non-competent language, English, as language of MOI	17	57	3	25	0	0
Academic literacy and terms (reading and writing)	5	17	6	50	5	25
No challenge(MOI for everybody)	2	7	0	0	0	0
Understanding proficient 2nd language peer students	3	10	0	0	0	0
Accents and pronunciation	7	23	7	58	4	20
Recognising new words, finding appropriate words and correct spelling	7	23	6	50	4	20
Speaking fluently and difficulty expressing oneself in 2nd language	6	20	4	33	6	30
Intimidation by other bilingual peer students	3	10	1	8	0	0

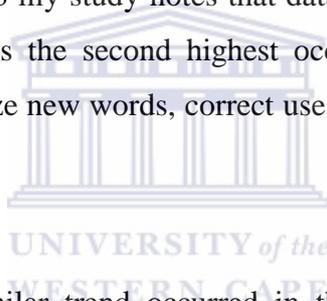
4.4.1 The use of an incompetent language for academic learning

The questionnaire data from Table 4.3 shows that 57% (17) n=30 of the first year bilingual students are incompetent in the use of English as the language of MoI, while 25% (3) n=12, said that the language related difficulty they face when learning is that the use of English as language of MoI was not good for them. It is depicted that an average number of bilingual students found learning at the university at first strenuous as they have to first understand the language of MoI before understanding the topic and then thinking of an approach to academic

tasks and assessment. 57% (17) n=30 is more than half and the highest frequency meaning that most faced with incompetency in English as MoI are second language English users. However, it is necessary to point out that some have carried this challenge from high school, but now they find that university is a more advanced academic environment. Moreover, it is an environment of self-learning and students' academic independence is very paramount to their academic success.

4.4.2 Accent and Pronunciation of other bilingual speakers

The first year bilingual students pointed out that accents and pronunciation, recognition of new words, finding appropriate words and the use of correct spelling, are two side by side language related problems which they encountered, particularly during their first semester at the university. Based on Table 4.3 my study notes that data from the questionnaire indicated that accents and pronunciation is the second highest occurring language related problem alongside the inability to recognize new words, correct use of words and spelling, standing at a balance of 23% (7) n=23 each.



It was also observed that a similar trend occurred in the tutorials when 20% (4) n=20 bilingual students asked the tutor to repeat slowly what she had explained. I too noticed that they stared at the tutor at some point during the initial explanation before they called for the tutor's attention and asked her to repeat what she had just said. I realized that their reason for asking the tutor to repeat the sentence or explanation was that they did not pick up some words that were spoken. This resulted in them not completely understanding the explanation and not having a sense of how what she had spoken was linked to the topic. The tutor was more competent in English than these bilingual students but she is not a South African. She had her own accent and pronunciation because her first language is neither Afrikaans nor Isi-Xhosa. Also, she is a fast speaker. First year bilingual students were not used to the accent and especially for first language Afrikaans and Isi-Xhosa speakers it was a challenge for them to familiarize themselves with the way a proficient English language user speaks.

More importantly, I noticed that after she explained again the students quietly repeat the word they did not get initially and nodded their heads to show they now comprehended. Likewise, I observed that during the tutorials on academic writing convention another 20% (4) n=20 showed that they were not familiar with some words and some could not even find the appropriate words to explain answers or ask their questions. I noticed this language challenge when the tutor used some words in her samples of academic sentences and replaced these words with synonyms to further explain how to play with words in academic writing. The class was generally attentive but noticeably the faces of some four students (three Isi-Xhosa and an Afrikaans first language) looked rather gloomy. I saw that they were disconnected from the examples given.

The interview data revealed the language challenge of first year bilingual students as 58% (7) n=12 for difficulty with accents and pronunciation for English proficient language speakers and an equilibrium of 50% (6) n=12 for bilingual students that struggled with the recognition of new words, use of correct words and spelling. As observed earlier, accent and pronunciation is the highest occurring language problem which interviewees expressed during the interviews. The Isi-Xhosa speakers they said that they still find it difficult to understand the English of their Afrikaans classmates, especially those that are first language speakers of Afrikaans. In the same vein, the Afrikaans speakers also expressed their concern about the pronunciation of words in English of their Isi-Xhosa classmates. Both Afrikaans and Isi-Xhosa speakers said it is extra work on their part to acclimatize themselves to the accent and pronunciation of second language English speakers. And they reiterated that this is important for them because it is the language of MoI and all academic assessments at the university.

The language problem of accents and pronunciation encountered by first year bilingual students indicates that speaking as one of the academic literary skills is crucial to the understanding of most academic content by students generally. Logically, when a student does not receive correctly what is taught during lessons, how then can such a student relate to what has been learnt? How in turn will the student absorb knowledge that is not adequately understood? Therefore, the scenario is more demanding when the academic language spoken by the educators and fellow classmates is the non-competent language of the bilingual

student. The same learning predicament will be faced by a bilingual student who struggles with vocabulary in their second language.

4.4.3 Unfamiliar words and inadequate use of Vocabulary in English hindered communication

Inadequate use of vocabulary in English is what led to the inability of first year bilingual students to be able to recognize new words, difficulty in finding fitting words in writing or speaking and not able to spell words precisely. As shown in Table 4.3, it is evident that the main cause of language related challenges in my current study is in being able to use English for academic purposes proficiently.

I have indicated earlier that the language difficulty due to accents and pronunciations connect to the speaking of other second language English users. I have also stated that it has indirectly affected the academic learning of first year bilingual students. However, the responses of 20% (6) n=30 bilingual students from the questionnaire data revealed that personally they are not able to speak fluently in English, the language of MoI. Thus, they find it difficult to freely express their thoughts and ideas amidst people that know English well. When I asked my interviewees to tell me what language related challenges they face during tutorials or among their peer students, a third of the interviewees 33% (4) n=12 remarked that as they are more used to speaking their first language (Afrikaans and Isi-Xhosa) almost all the time, it is a big problem to speak good English, especially like the way the lecturers speak. These four Bilinguals (two Afrikaans female and one Isi-Xhosa female and male) added that to say something or back up a point that was raised by a proficient English language classmate during lessons and group discussion is intimidating. On the other hand, I noticed during observation that some 30% (6) n=20 of participants displayed a similar trend, especially those that were non confident in speaking in English did not ask and answer questions. This suggests that not only do the first year bilingual students find it difficult to understand proficient English language speakers, but on their own they are also not able to speak confidently in English. I hasten to deduce that the proficiency in speaking a language is depicted in the manner of reading and writing that language.

4.4.4 Academic Literacy in English

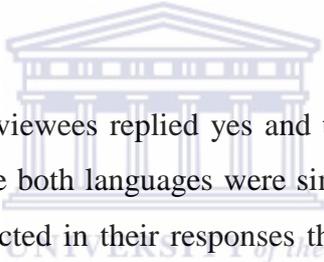
The university is the place where students experience more of academic reading and writing for most of their academic activities involve various forms of reading and writing. Students are expected to do self-reading when preparing an assignment and for tests and exams. Also reading takes place during lessons or group discussions. Likewise is the writing aspect of academic work. Writing follows the reading process. 50% (6) n=12 of interviewees indicated that 'academic reading and writing are amongst the most occurring language related challenges facing them as bilingual students'. Generally, at the university students are not spoon-fed like when they were at high school where teachers give them the very last detail that is required for an assignment. Far from this approach, students are expected to personally or as a group search out academic literature, read to understand the content and relate it to their academic tasks. I noted that first year bilingual students had great difficulty in using English for academic reading and writing. Considering the transition process from high school to university the volume of academic work and task requires students' effort and determination. In addition to the advanced type of writing found in their textbooks, they are faced with an unfamiliar writing style in the academic journals and encyclopedias. The difficulty is not just how to read and write but to know and use the convention, more especially in the language of MoI (English).

4.5 Translanguaging Strategies of UWC's first year bilingual students

I proceed to present the translanguaging strategies that are particular to UWC bilingual students. During data collection, I took note that the concept of translanguaging was not well known to first year bilingual students. Students were more familiar with code switching and code mixing. Hence, during data collection I made use of the definition of translanguaging as the simultaneous use of two or more languages to ask questions in the questionnaire and interviews and observed their language practices. The following Table 4.4 shows the type of translanguaging strategies that bilingual students used. In that table, it was noticed that 27% (8) n=30 respondents were positive towards the simultaneous use of both languages during tutorials and among their peer students while all the remaining 73% (22) n=30 first year bilingual students did not identify with the concurrent use of their languages in tutorials or

with peer students. It is evident from the interview data that most of the bilingual students are not aware of the advantages of the simultaneous use of their languages in academic learning. It is also likely that students may have reasons for not using both languages. Some of their reasons will be presented later in this chapter when presenting some of the data relating to how translanguaging can complement the university language policy (see Section 4.7)

However, for the bilinguals that identified occasions to simultaneously use both languages they must have used the languages to deal with one or more language related challenges. More realistically, it is possible that the bilingual students are not aware that they can use their languages at any point while learning at UWC. Therefore, it is apparent that the university environment does not recognize the other linguistic repertoire of students and this has resulted in their low inclination to concurrently use both languages in relation to their academic work.



A balance of 50% (6) n=12 interviewees replied yes and the other said no when they were asked if there was occasion where both languages were simultaneously used in tutorials and amidst peer students. It was reflected in their responses that each of them understood what simultaneously using both languages meant. Likewise, it means that they were aware of on what occasion to use or not to use both languages. The equal number of students that used and not used both languages implied that they exercised their linguistic rights as bilinguals. Contrary to the data from the questionnaire it is suggested that the will of students to use their both languages for academic benefit depended on how well known these languages are to them.

Generally, English second language users display a non interest in the use of their first language, also known as the home language, in formal places like schools, hospitals and companies. “Do you use your first language during tutorials” was a probing question that was asked to validate the comments of the question on occasions where both languages were used simultaneously by the student respondents. 73% (22) n=30 of the first year bilingual students indicated yes in their response while the remaining 27% (8) n=30 bilinguals replied no to the question. The data from the questionnaire is however significant because these same

respondents mentioned earlier that they did not use their both languages during tutorials. It seemed that students did not get the meaning of the word simultaneous as used in the question and context of the study. It had earlier been established that English is the MoI at the university, hence the 'yes' responses showed that the two languages of the students were used during tutorials or peer students because their first language was either Afrikaans or English.

Moreover, the responses contradicted that of students who implied that they were aware of the importance of using both languages for academic purpose. It appeared to relate to the challenge of vocabulary. 27% (8) n=30 bilingual students maintained that they do not use their first language in the classroom and have the perception of English as MoI, but may have a change of view had it been that there is a formal academic setting that encouraged the simultaneous use of both languages. This means that the use of first language during academic learning can complement the second language which is mostly the language of MoI and especially when language difficulty is encountered during learning. However, it does not automatically indicate that all bilingual students will identify their first language as an academic resource to cope with the stress of learning and learning in an incompetent language. Table 4.4 on the next page shows the type of Translanguaging strategies used by the first year bilingual students.

It was stated in the questions on the use of both languages if the language(s) is used in tutorials or with peer students. Yet, students were asked a sub question, 'If yes, whom do you use it with?' I observed that all the 73% (22) n=30 students who had previously said yes to the use of their first language replied that they did use their first language with peer students while some 60% (18) n=30 first year bilingual students mentioned that they actually used their first language with the tutors. However, 27% (8) n=30 respondents and 40% (12) n=30 respondents showed that they did not use their first language with neither the peer students nor their tutors as indicated in table 4.4. I found that there is a significant difference in the number of bilingual students who did not use their first language with the tutor compared with those that used it with their peer students. This suggests that language preference of bilingual students has drawn a line between the tutors who are expected to facilitate successful learning and the students. And this indicated that bilingual students rather look to

As seen in Table 4.4 on the previous page, the results revealed that bilingual students mostly used translanguaging strategies when speaking, listening, and insignificantly in reading during their academic collaboration. Moreover, it is noticed that bilingual students translanguage more amidst peer students than during tutorials or their tutors. This suggests that for effective use of translanguaging strategies, the use of languages should be encouraged in the particular setting. Translanguaging strategies are identified in how two languages are used in speaking, listening, writing or a reading activity in a particular space (see Chapter 2).

A total of 100% (12) n=12 interviewees reported that they use English in all the four literacy skills. 50% (6) n=12 students indicated that they spoke Afrikaans during tutorials and 17% (2) n=12 students also spoke in Isi-Xhosa during tutorials. Although, I did not observe the Isi-Xhosa language speaker use this language during tutorial. This showed that all bilinguals spoke in English, more than they would have spoken their other language during tutorials. However, this does not support that all bilinguals are confident enough to speak English during tutorials as revealed in table 4.1 and that most students are incompetent English speakers. But for class communication they would rather use English since they believed that it is the common language in the classroom context. There is a significant difference in the number of students who spoke Afrikaans during tutorials compared to the Isi-Xhosa bilingual students. This illustrates that majority of the Isi-Xhosa first year students do not use their first language during the tutorial as a result of being shy and their assumption that to use Isi-Xhosa in an English setting is not proper. Almost all Afrikaans first language students except for one used it along with English in the class. It appeared that they were more confident to use their Afrikaans language during tutorials than the Isi-Xhosa students and they took no note of the English MoI setting.

In Table 4.4, the result that related to speaking English alongside either Afrikaans or Isi-Xhosa with peer bilingual students was noteworthy in that it indicated that translanguaging is achieved in mostly a structured and relaxed learning space. Among peer students, 100% (12) n=12 bilingual students mentioned that they spoke in the English language, some 58% (7) n=12 first year students also said that they spoke in Afrikaans while Isi-Xhosa speakers were 42% (5) n=12 of the bilingual students. I noted that bilinguals had a more positive mindset in the use of their languages amongst peer students than they had during tutorials. This suggests

that bilinguals are more likely to simultaneously use both languages since data revealed that all used their first language in a neutral learning space. In addition, it is because they are familiar with the peer students, they share the same language background and at times their proficiency level in English is not visibly noticed by the others. Hence, they do not feel intimidated in using either of their languages while collaborating with peer students and it had contributed to academic learning.

Listening and speaking are viewed as interconnected literacy skills. The interview data demonstrated that the same 50% (6) n=12 students and 17 (2) n=12 students who spoke Afrikaans and Isi-Xhosa respectively, likewise listened to their second speaker during tutorial. While 58% (7) n=12 bilinguals and 42% (5) n=12 bilinguals accordingly listened in Afrikaans and Isi-Xhosa between peer students. I noted that the 100% (12) n=12 of first year bilingual students that were asked about their translanguaging strategies indicated that they listened in tutorials and among peer students in English language. This means that there is the trend to speak in a language and listen in the same language as revealed in this data. It is complicated for the brain to instantly change language vocabulary, especially when there is inadequacy of a second language. However, this trend will limit translanguaging from occurring, more importantly in the classroom.

In an English language MoI academic space, it is expected that students are equipped to read and write reasonably well in the language of instruction. This is paramount to students' academic success. Translanguaging strategies are also identified in these two literacy skills. On the contrary, the data revealed that 100% (12) n=12 of the interviewees said they were accustomed to the use of English language for all reading and writing activities related to academic study. In the exemption of 8% (1) n=12 which was insignificant considering the context of use, all of the first year bilingual students remarked that they did not use their first language for either reading or writing assignments or examinations. This indicated that bilingual students are adopting other coping learning strategies other than translanguaging because it seemed that their first languages were not used for academic reading and writing during tutorials or peer students. I am inclined to believe that so far the presentation of data appears to point that reading and writing in academic English was a notable learning problem which bilingual students face, and therefore; the use of the students' proficient language will

have helped them to cope with the language problem. The ensuing presentation of data is relevant to my study because it focuses on the different strategies that first year bilingual students used to cope with the challenges encountered while learning in English at the university.

4.6 Different strategies that first year bilingual students used to cope with their language challenges

From the preceding data, one could infer that students were not too interested or unaware of the use of their languages as coping learning strategies for language related difficulties encountered during tutorials. This implies that challenged first year bilingual students instead adopted other coping learning strategies to their language problems. This was a genuine reflection from the following triangulated data presentation.



4.6.1 The use of English dictionary and increasing English vocabulary

From the questionnaire and interview data, 33% (10) n=30 students and 50% (6) n=12 students respectively used the dictionary, made an effort to increase vocabulary in English and found the meaning for new words, as a type of coping strategy for their challenge of learning in English. As per Table 4.5 below, the use of dictionary and building a large English vocabulary was one of the most highly used coping strategies of the students. The data suggests that students found the dictionary to be more convenient to use and accessible to them rather than the use of both languages. It was clear that students independently searched out confusing and difficult words or phrases from the hardcopy or online dictionary.

Obviously, the dictionary is readily and freely available at a learning space like the university and at their level they are expected to be able to make use of the dictionary judiciously. It was also understood that the words or phrases that were searched for in the dictionary by the students are archived in their brain. This confirmed the strategy of the increased vocabulary used by the students. In addition, it indicated that students that made use of this strategy had a

routine of writing out words, searching for the meaning and using these new words and phrases in aspects of his/her literacy skills.

4.6.2 More communication and constant practice in English

The same high frequency as revealed above was also shown in bilingual students' use of regular communication and constant practice in English as a coping strategy of 33% (10) n=30 students and 50% (6) n=12 students from the questionnaire and interviews respectively (see table 4.5). From this data, it can be said that first year bilingual students believed that the more they are involved in a task the lesser the challenge and as a result they are adequately equipped to do such a task. This means that students identified English practice as a way to deal with their language related problems, especially academic speaking, reading and writing. I noted that students did not limit their ability to cope with the language problem but effortlessly adhered to the use of English language even during their personal study.

4.6.3 Reading more academic materials in English

As indicated in Table 4.5, the questionnaire and interview data respectively showed that 33% (10) n=30 bilingual students and 42% (5) n=12 bilingual students commented that they have adopted reading more academic materials (articles) in English as another highly used learning coping strategy for the problem of English as a MoI. These data confirmed that students must have identified this strategy as the most suitable strategy to cope, particularly for the language problem of academic reading and writing in English. It did seem that the simultaneous use of the two languages of first year bilingual students was not helpful in the multilingual academic space of students. The reason being that some of the bilingual students like the Isi-Xhosa first language users are not competent to use Isi-Xhosa for academic writing, so it was a waste of productive time reading literature in Isi-Xhosa. This can also be the situation for the first language user of Afrikaans.

Furthermore, it is possible that students might have received advice from second or third year students that encountered a similar language related difficulty and what had helped them to

academically progress to the next level. However, it is likely that the more bilingual students acquaint themselves with academic reading; the more they will become familiar with academic writing conventions and hence apply such writing knowledge to their academic essays.

4.6.4 Consultation with Tutors and peer Students

Generally, the term consultation is used at the tertiary level of education to describe a closer learning space between an educator and a student. Consultation times provide opportunities for students who are struggling with any form of academic activities to seek personal instruction in a more interactive approach. This forum had been identified as one of the academic resources mostly used by students. In response to the interview question and questionnaire on the strategies used by bilingual students to deal with the language challenges in English, 30% (9) n=30 first year students and 25% (3) n=12 first year students replied that they consulted with tutors and peer students for any type of learning challenges that were a consequence of English MoI. It suggests that students' individual interaction with tutors and peer students provided a solution in dealing with language related problems that included academic writing and speaking. This means that struggling bilingual students are assisted to write academically through tutor explanations on how to go about an academic task in a language understood by the bilinguals. It can also suggest that the tutors check the drafts of essays by the bilingual students until he/she considered it fit for submission and assessment purposes. Likewise, the bilingual students consult with their peer students when they ask and answer questions that related to academic content and task. This is to say that students considered consultation with tutors and peer students a faster and more effective coping learning strategy than the use of their languages. Since, bilingual students do not comprehend academic content/task because of being incompetent in the language of MoI; it is more difficult to use the competent language when the situation is still unclear, for example translation from first to second language or vice versa. Therefore, consultation as a coping strategy appeared to be more realistic for the students because the tutor is more aware of the aspect of the academic content/task the student is confused in and once students mentioned the aspect in the language common to tutor and students. Thus, the same applies to the use of consultation as a strategy between first year struggling bilingual students and his or her peer

students, though the choice of language(s) used during this consultation is determined by the consultation space and language users. Next, Table 4.5 represents the different translanguaging strategies used by UWC’s first year bilingual students to cope with the challenges of learning in English.

Table 4.5 Coping learning strategies

Item	Questionnaire Frequency n(30)	Questionnaire % (100)	Interview Frequency n(12)	Interview % (100)
Strategies used in coping with the challenges of learning in English				
Use of synonyms	2	7	2	17
Reading more academic articles in English	10	33	5	42
Listening attentively	6	20	3	25
Repetition and translation of sentence or phrase	2	7	2	17
More communication in English and constant practice	10	33	6	50
Consultation with tutors and peer students	9	30	3	25
Use of a common language	1	3	0	0
Use of dictionary, increase vocabulary and meaning of new words	10	33	6	50

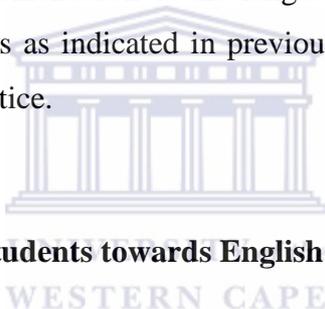
4.6.5 Attentively listening to competent English speakers

When first year bilingual students were asked to explain the strategies used to cope with each of the challenges they had mentioned previously, 20% (6) n=30 students and 25% (3) n=12 students respectively answered in the questionnaire and interview that they had to listen attentively to fluent English speakers (tutors and peer students) to help them cope with speaking associated problems. This indicated that students listened carefully to reduce the challenges they faced while learning in English. It also serves to support that bilingual

students understand English to an extent and that listening attentively is what they really needed to handle their difficulty of language problems such as accent and pronunciation and intimidation by fast speaking Afrikaans and English speakers. This implies that the strategy of bilinguals listening attentively to fluent English speakers involves students' consistency and it results in the students' fluency in English. The consistency in listening to fluent English speakers makes bilingual students less intimidated because they are familiar with the English accent of different bilingual speakers and the way they pronounce words in English.

4.7 Reasons for the complementation of Translanguaging Strategies to the UWC's language policy

Next, the data presented in this section focuses on the translanguaging strategies of first year bilingual students' and its complementation to the language policy of UWC, although, the coping strategies used by students as indicated in previous paragraphs involved minimal or insignificant translanguaging practice.



4.7.1 Perception of bilingual students towards English for instruction purpose

As shown in Table 4.6, respondents were asked to explain the reasons for their simultaneous use of both languages during academic collaboration. 17% (5) n=30 students remarked that they do not use their two languages during tutorials because English is the only language for academic instruction recognized by the university and tutors always give lessons in English. This reason stated by these bilingual students suggested that had it not been for English, which was fully recognized as the language of medium of instruction by the university; students will have made use of their other competent language in addition to English and managed the learning challenges they encountered during academic collaboration. It also indicates that academic collaboration settings such as the tutorial classes should recognize and use other linguistic repertoires of students in addition to English, especially for learning purposes. This makes bilingual students comfortable in using both languages and difficulty in a less proficient language will not be mentioned as one of the students' learning challenges.

Table 4.6 Translanguaging can complement UWC’s language policy

Item	Questionnaire Frequency (30)	Questionnaire (100%)	Interview Frequency(12)	Interview (100%)
Reasons for the simultaneous use of both languages.				
Do not use both languages because English is MoI and no tutors.	5	17	0	0
Different language for different peer students or tutors.	3	10	2	17
Expression and understanding of self and others.	15	50	3	25
Adaptation or trend	6	20	4	33
Explaining of concepts and lesson content with first language users	11	37	5	42
Why do you use these languages- with group members?				
Able to understand each other better	5	17	6	50
Feel more comfortable and relaxed in communication	2	7	4	33
We have same first language and convenient to use	4	13	2	17
To ask and explain questions regarding lesson content or task	2	7	2	17
Common language difficulty (language of MoI)	9	30	7	58
Use with the tutor				
Also a first language Afrikaans speaker	7	23	3	25
Preferred language to help understand explanations of questions asked.	5	17	4	33
Has the use of both languages contributed to your academic work in relation to the challenges encountered while learning in English?				
Yes	24	80	10	83
No/Indifference	6	20	2	17

4.7.2 Different bilingual students and language preference

However, when participants were asked to explain the reasons for the simultaneous use of both languages 10% (3) n=30 respondents mentioned that they use the two languages because there are students with diverse languages. Bilingual students deemed it ideal to use the language of preference or competence with each person for the purpose of understanding one another. This means that the use of both languages by bilingual students in the context of my current study depended on what language is preferred by those in communication. It also depended with whom students communicated, that is the tutor or peer students.

The interview data likewise revealed that 17% (2) n=12 first year students did use both languages when communicating with different language users. It seemed that first year bilingual students had a language preference when communicating with either the tutors or peer students. This implies that the simultaneous use of two languages in a multilingual setting is limited to the languages used by the individuals in communication; even though there are various bilinguals, it is complicated to use a first language with a different first language user viz-a-viz a second language. Hence, it was reasonable for first year bilingual students to use both languages with tutors and peer students with the same two languages. This is only when translanguaging can positively impact on the language difficulty faced by bilingual students.

4.7.3 Expression and Understanding of Self and others

As regards to the question on reasons for the concurrent use of both languages for academic purposes by first year bilingual students, 50% (15) n=30 respondents indicated that the use of their two languages facilitated them to better express and understand themselves and others, while the interview data showed that 25% (3) n=12 interviewees also gave the same explanations for their use of both languages. This appears to confirm that language used in any form of communication (verbal and nonverbal) is essential for expression by the sender of information and the in-depth understanding of information by the sender and receiver. In my current study, the senders of information were the bilingual students as speakers and writers while the receivers were the bilingual speakers, writers, listeners and readers of the

academic content. It is evident from the data presented in table 4.6 that students engage in translanguaging so as to freely communicate in a more familiar language with the aim that they are clearly understood by their peer students and tutors and understand others. This reason must have motivated the first year bilingual students to simultaneously use their both languages when speaking and listening during academic collaboration. It therefore implies that once students are able to relate more clearly the aspect of an academic task that is difficult or confusing in a more competent language to a collaboration group or student, there is an understanding amongst them which leads to academic assistance by the student who is knowledgeable in the specific topic or task. In addition, first year bilinguals understand the explained concept, lesson or answered question and are able to complete the academic task however in the incompetent language and vice versa.

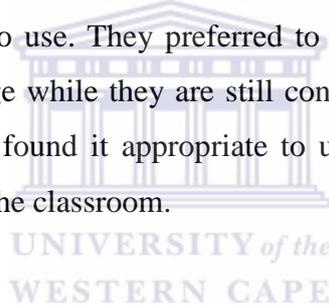
The data from the questionnaires showed from the response of 17% (5) n=30 respondents that they used both languages basically to better understand each other. Another 50% (6) n=12 first year bilinguals who were interviewed said that they used the two languages amongst peer students so as to deeply comprehend one another during discussions on lesson content and preparation for assignments. It was evident from the data that participants used the more familiar language to understand themselves in the form of communication, specifically in speaking. Generally, understanding is significant and unavoidable in any communication and if this is excluded there is no effective communication. This implies that first year bilingual students sought the opportunity to use their competent language to understand group discussions related to the lesson topics and academic tasks since the language of MoI presented a challenge to learning. It was compulsory for students to understand what had been taught in either one of their languages or both languages because it was a criterion for student completion of academic assessments.

4.7.4 Identity and Adaption to language community

As illustrated in table 4.6, I asked the first year bilingual students to explain their reasons for the simultaneous use of both languages for academic learning purpose, 20% (6) n=30 respondents and 33% (4) n=12 interviewees revealed that the use of their two languages made

it easier for them to adapt and identify themselves with a specific language used during academic collaboration. This means that depending on what language is used amongst the peer students or tutor determines the language that is used by the bilingual student during academic conversation. It also implies that in such a learning context bilinguals use the more competent language, the reason being that he/she is relaxed, familiar with the other bilinguals and aware that in whichever language is used, all in all the learning scenario adequately comprehends the information. It was evident that bilingual students extensively used one language more than the other even though both languages were simultaneously used in the learning context.

Furthermore as shown in table 4.6, 13% (4) n=30 students and 17% (2) n=12 bilingual students respectively from the questionnaire and interview data remarked that they used both languages with group members since they used English in the classroom and this language was not a convenient language to use. They preferred to use their first language with peer students who shared this language while they are still conscious of the use of English. This indicated that bilingual students found it appropriate to use their first language more than English but did so mostly out of the classroom.



4.7.5 Shared language related challenge- English MoI

Table 4.6 points that bilinguals had different reasons for translanguaging during academic collaboration. To further confirm the purpose of translanguaging by the students, I asked this question “why do you use these languages with group members?” from the questionnaire data, 30% (9) n=30 first year bilinguals stated that the reason for their use of both languages was because they shared a common language difficulty, (English MoI), while the interview data indicated that 58% (7) n=12 students likewise noted that they all were incompetent in using English. This means that the solution to this language problem for bilingual students was to use another language but not neglecting the language of MoI. Therefore, I hasten to note that a common problem of bilingual students while learning caused them to use a more familiar language to deal with the language challenge amongst their peers. This suggests that

students maintained the use of the difficult language (English) while they made use of the competent language at the same time.

On the other hand, 7% (2) n=30 respondents indicated that they used both languages with group members and peer students when asking questions and giving explanations or answers to the questions while 17% (2) =12 interviewed first year bilinguals likewise gave the same aforementioned reason. From table 4.6, the number of participants who stated that the reason for their use of languages, asking and explaining questions regarding lesson content, was the lowest. This revealed that the reason mentioned for their use of languages is not a common motivation for bilingual students faced with the challenge of learning in English but it was identified as a realistic learning strategy in the practice of translanguaging. It implies that once a student gets a clear picture of what he or she is expected to do for the lesson taught in either language, such a student is then able to independently carry out the task in the language of assessment.



4.7.6 Facilitates consultation with same bilingual speakers

As can be seen in table 4.6, 23% (7) n=30 bilingual students replied in the questionnaire that they used Afrikaans with their tutor because he/she was a first language Afrikaans speaker while 25% (3) n=12 interviewed first year bilinguals mentioned that they used the two languages with the tutor, the reason being that they had the same first language. There was evidence that participants used their two languages with tutors because both parties shared not just a common language (English) but also the same first language, Afrikaans. This means that the bilingual student is aware that the tutor has the same convenient and familiar language, though the student does not confirm the proficiency of the tutor in Afrikaans. Yet, the student is assured and feels comfortable to use the first language with the tutor. This indicates that students use their linguistic repertoires in the classroom and other academic learning settings with confidence when they are aware that the educator or tutor is from the same language background. Likewise, it suggests that bilingual students face less learning challenges particular to language and are not intimidated to relate and consult with the tutor because they use either one or both languages.

Furthermore, 17% (5) n=30 respondents and 33% (4) n=12 interviewed bilingual students explained that they used their preferred language to help understand explanations given by tutors or when the tutors answer an unclear aspect of a main lecture to them in class or in their consultation time. Even though, it was mentioned that bilinguals used a preferred language with the tutor for the reason of asking and answering questions, it is logical to believe that English was used concurrently with Afrikaans. Hence, English was the first language of instruction and the use of Afrikaans was to help the tutor explain properly what is expected of an academic activity, to the bilingual student.

The 'yes' response of 80% (24) n=30 first year bilingual students in the questionnaire and 83% (10) n=12 interviewees indicated that the use of their two languages in academic work had helped to deal with their learning challenges in English. Therefore, the use of English and either Afrikaans or Isi-Xhosa by the participants, positively impacted on the academic work of first year bilingual students. The remaining 20% (6) n=30 bilingual students who completed the questionnaire and 17% (2) n=12 interviewees were indifferent and responded 'no' when asked if the use of their languages contributed to the learning challenges faced while using English MoI. As pointed out in table 4.6 the high number of positive responses meant that students used both languages in some ways to deal with their language difficulty while learning. It revealed that bilingual students thus did not only cope with the language problem but the positive contribution meant that students progressed in academic learning.

In the earlier section, I have presented and analysed my triangulated data findings. Next, I will discuss the second section of this chapter. The second section of my discussion chapter will contain the narrative of participants' responses from related data according to the themes earlier formed from the research questions.

4.8 Language - Related Challenges of first year bilingual students at UWC

This section is intended to give a qualitative view of the presented data in the first section and include participants' feedbacks that indicated their real language experiences. Also, I will

discuss the implications of their identified language challenges. First year bilingual students were asked about the language related challenges that they face while using English as the Medium of Instruction. It was noticed that some students were not competent in using English as a language of MoI. For example during an interview, one of the Afrikaans male students pointed out that he felt so uncomfortable to talk openly because where he comes from they speak Afrikaans, yet on campus they are forced to speak English in which he is not proficient. Furthermore, another Isi-Xhosa male student said:

“Firstly each and every student at university can speak English, but understanding this language sometimes depends on who is speaking. It turns to be a problem for me to understand English especial if it is talked by other race people. Sometimes I feel like ask the question but due to the fact that my English is poor, I turn to keep it for myself. I can write English but it hard for me to always speak English”

The number of responses from the questionnaire also confirmed that students are incompetent in using English for academic purposes. This is because all other language related challenges mentioned by these bilingual students are linked to their skillful use of English while learning. A bilingual student that is proficient in his/her both language encounters little or no difficulties to use the languages in any communicative event (academic learning).

The document analysis of a written essay titled “the challenges of moving from high school to university” of an Afrikaans male participant revealed that the student’s inadequate knowledge of English at university had resulted in his introvert behavior and lack of confidence which prevented him from being involved in any form of academic collaboration. This is evident in the following excerpt:

“Secondly, attending school from home does not closely compare to University. The most common challenge I am currently facing is having all my classes in English. ... Although I have an excellent understanding of the language it is somewhat challenging speaking English in front of people who are fluent in English and whose first language is English. Some do refer to me as an introvert thus I am shy and always hesitate to

speak up. Being nervous always gets the better of me and then I start to stutter and lose focus.”

In the preceding excerpt, I could identify the learning challenges of the student and the role which English, the language of MoI, played in his understanding of academic work. Furthermore, he stated that many described her as someone that is withdrawn and mostly she seemed to be overly conscious of her incompetency in English, devoting better attention to it than her academic tasks. Also, she wrote that her understanding of English is excellent and speaking is the only language related problem but it appeared that the excerpt did not adequately point out that she had good academic writing skills. For example, the first line of the excerpt which is the topic sentence did not concur with the actual idea in the whole excerpt.

Another Afrikaans first language female participant narrated a similar language challenge while learning at the university. In her essay (similar title) with the preceding extract, she wrote:

“One of the new experience I faced and still am facing is learning to adapt the ...coming from a community whose first and most commonly used language is Afrikaans, I had to adapt to not only having a roommate who mostly speaks English but also having my classes in English. An enormous adjustment for me was the transition of having to get use to speaking better English. It is somewhat challenging speaking English in front of people who are fluent in English and whose first language is English.”

In general, speaking is the first ability to be acquired while learning a new language. The moment a new language user is able to communicate relatively well in that language then he/she can progress to acquire the skill of writing and reading in that new language. This implies that when there is a problem in speaking, communication for any purpose is not limited and thus impacts negatively on the individual's writing and reading in the new language. In a similar vein, the Afrikaans female student encountered the problem of speaking in English, although not a new language for her but a less proficient one. It also

showed that she cannot relate conveniently in English with classmates and people generally. This implied that she was not comfortable asking or answering questions in relation to academic tasks, or seeking academic assistance from tutors or peer students except if they are Afrikaans speakers. From the document analysis data, it is evidently shown that not all English speakers are proficient in writing, reading and speaking in an academic context. It can be inferred here that bilingual students of English and the other language struggle with one or more of the academic literacy skills because of their incompetency in English. This suggests that a bilingual student who is incompetent in academic English will likely struggle to communicate well in Standard English. Therefore, if there is no understanding of what is discussed the bilingual student will be unable to relate to the topic of discussion. This apparently affects the reading and writing skills of the bilingual student.

Based on the issues explained so far, in general English is difficult when used as a language of MoI for a bilingual student whose first language is Afrikaans or Isi-Xhosa because he/she is likely to be non-competent in using English language for academic purposes. This means that first year bilingual students are not familiar with and less comfortable with using English for general communication and academic learning. It also implies that the use of English while learning complicates the academic process on the part of UWC's first year bilingual students.

Evidently, Afrikaans and English bilingual students stated in the questionnaire that they do not have any language related challenge, especially in the use of English as MoI. This is to suggest that the bilinguals were able to use both Afrikaans and English competently for all purposes. But when I examined their written responses to confirm the no challenge statement, I found that the bilingual students are incompetent English language users. The first excerpt *“I hardly face much challenges, since I am most comfortable in English”* showed that there is a problem with writing. And the second excerpt *“I do not have any language related challenges in tutorials but I do sometimes find it hard to understand my fast talking Afrikaans friends. But with peers, it is difficult to communicate as they are speakers of different languages that I am not familiar with”* confirmed that the use of English for communication is a challenge. Thus, it serves to confirm that bilingual students who have English as a first or second language face the problem of incompetency which surfaces in their literacy skills.

The interview data revealed another challenge faced by first year bilingual students at UWC while learning in English namely academic literacy, in particular reading and writing. For instance, an Isi-Xhosa female student, when asked to relate her experience in terms of language difficulty and academic work from the beginning of the semester, replied that writing in academic English was the most difficult challenge she faced. She illustrated that when she is doing an assignment for a module like EDC 111(Academic literacy and numeracy) or any other assignment, she was not quite sure whether it was academic writing or not. In addition, she said that speaking good English is different from writing academic English. Based on her response, I further asked her if reading academic literature is also difficult for her. She answered that reading is not that difficult, just the writing is a challenge, especially when it comes to the use of punctuation marks and referencing. Similarly, the document analysis of selected written essays titled ‘the transition from high school to university’ and a task on referencing conventions of 10 participants shows that all of these bilingual students face difficulty when writing or reading in academic English, the use of correct punctuation marks or referencing style. My reason for choosing three excerpts out of the written tasks of the 10 participants was the relevance of their stated challenges and how it fits the data findings in my current study. My readership can find a full version of these three Excerpts in Appendix D. The three excerpts from the earlier mentioned written essay of these bilingual students, Excerpt 1 (Afrikaans first language female), Excerpt 2 (Isi-Xhosa first language female) and Excerpt 3(Isi-Xhosa first language male) are furnished below:

“Many people consider high school as “difficult”. Saying that it’s all sweat and tears, especially in your Grade 11 and Grade 12 years. But me? Right now I would say...”

“At this point the process of getting in the university vibe or mode then becomes a bit easier and nicer as now the lecturers also offer to give you some individual time with them to discuss whatever was unclear to you in class and as you get to know them they are easily approachable as one would not have imagined it to be.”

“When learners at the grade of 11 and 12 were asked by Peel (2000), what do they expect ...”

It is seen from excerpt 1 that the question mark was not fittingly used by the Isi-Xhosa female student. Also in the second excerpt the student, who is an Afrikaans male student, made use of day to day language instead of the formal (academic) language. Also, it indicated that the Afrikaans male student finds it difficult when expressing ideas in English, which is not the situation if allowed to write the same title essay in Afrikaans.

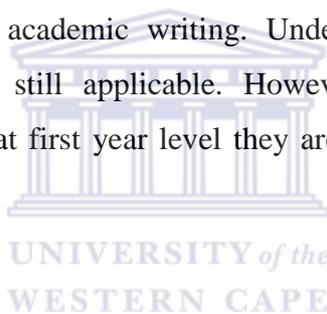
The sentence in the second excerpt is too long and evident he is struggling with knowing at which point he should use a punctuation mark. The third excerpt confirms that the Isi-Xhosa male student is aware that referencing is part of an academic writing but does not adequately know how to support his evidences academically.

More importantly, document analysis (written essays of an Afrikaans first language and Isi-Xhosa first language bilinguals) revealed that academic writing is one of the main language difficulties they encountered transiting from high school to university. The Afrikaans male student expressed through his essay that the last aspect of the transition process that is worth mentioning was referencing. According to him, referencing is an inevitable aspect of university writing that overwhelms him as a first year student. He referred back to his high school days where he hardly had to do any form of referencing except for completing assignments and been involved in research projects. He illustrated further that the first time they were taught how to reference, it was very vague to him. In addition, he pointed out that virtually every work that is an academic assessment involves referencing.

On the other hand, the Isi-Xhosa female student showed in her essay that academic writing, particularly the use of references, has put a strain on her since the time she started academic work in her first semester at UWC. She wrote as follows:

“Writing style is one of the most stressing and challenging thing, amongst all the challenges a student faces in the process of the transition. The writing style that is used in university is totally different from the way that is being used at school. Students are expected to use academic writing when they write their assignments and that’s what poses the challenges as they are not used to it. Especially the part of referencing raises a lot of confusion as student are expected to follow a certain rule of referencing”

The above statement expressed the feelings of the student towards references used in academic writing. Acknowledging a source of information or evidences through the text reference and reference list implies that such writing is for academic purposes. The Isi-Xhosa bilingual student used phrases like ‘most stressing and challenging thing’ to express her concern in the essay titled “Transition from high school to university”. This suggested that academic writing and referencing is not an academic task that students are willing to perform. I noted in this excerpt and the report of the Afrikaans male that apart from the issue of referencing which was pointed out by both students, there are more writing problems that I identified. These writing problems included the expression of ideas in day-to-day English, grammatical errors, correct use of tenses and punctuation marks. The above mentioned writing problems also confirm that second language students of English found academic writing burdensome especially as first year undergraduates have to do virtually all their continuous assessment tasks in academic writing. Under examination conditions at the university, academic writing is still applicable. However the students' challenge with referencing is minimal, because at first year level they are not given academic literature to draw evidence from.



In questionnaires, interviews and my observation data students reiterated that referencing was one challenge that they encounter while writing in academic English. It means that bilingual students were not clear on the tutorial lesson and task on referencing conventions because of the language used in teaching (English) and the similarities in the reference styles which prevented students from being able to distinguish each reference type. I observed that the tutorial task on referencing conventions was done in two tutorial lessons after which the essay title ‘transition from high school to university’ was given as an assignment. The two tutorial periods assigned for referencing conventions showed that the topic was given attention in the scheme of work for that semester. I observed that the tutor meticulously taught the students and focused attention on how they must reference in various styles.

Notably, the bilingual students were taught how to reference different academic literature and sources of information. I noticed that each student had the module manual and workbook

which served as a comprehensive notebook for the student. In the workbook, the section on referencing was explicit and had different signposts to aid students' understanding. All sections of the workbook were written in English language. English is the MoI and it is expected that students should be able to academically cope in the language. The EDC 111 manual and workbook had various examples of referenced academic sources with different reference formats. This indicates that there was minimal or no need for students to take notes during lectures and tutorials.

The module workbook and manual provided students the time to be attentive and follow each lesson. And it made access to instructional material more convenient and easier for bilingual students who struggle with English language, because comprehensive note taking during tutorial requires student proficiency in English (*See below figure 2-4 showing the module manual on referencing*). Yet, some students were observed taking additional points and writing in English shorthand on the pages of their workbook that corresponded to what the tutor explained at that point in time. This implies that the additional points noted in their workbook served as a reminder for the students during their personal study and revision on referencing. The students' participation during the lesson on referencing was encouraging. In this context, students' participation involved students identifying the references of book, article and journals, and asking and answering questions. At a point during the observation, the tutor gave a quick quiz in class task to determine the extent to which students understood in-text citation and reference lists. I noticed that the Afrikaans and English bilingual students were more inclined to go forward to the chalkboard to write out the answer to the task. Figure 5 is a picture of one of the first year bilingual students participating in a tutorial task on referencing.

single or double line spaces between paragraphs; and margins should be wide so that your marker finds it easy to write comments. Check that headings and subheadings are consistent in style.



Many courses have specific requirements for layout. Check each course handbook for details and follow instructions exactly.

8. WHEN DO YOU USE ROUND AND SQUARE BRACKETS?

Round brackets are used when you are putting an aside or additional explanatory material into your own writing.

In a small study (thirty-two participants) novice piano players were first introduced to major and minor chords.

Square brackets are used within quotations when you need to interrupt the quotation with your own brief clarification of some idea within it.

Langer (1998:24) argues that 'certain myths and fairy tales [especially those containing the Cinderella archetype] help advance a culture by passing on a profound and complex wisdom to succeeding generations'.

9. WHY IS REFERENCING SO IMPORTANT?

Academic writing is like an on-going conversation. Each new book or article (or student essay) is a new voice in this conversation. Each author critically evaluates previous research to gain increased understanding and create new knowledge. Referencing is a way of recording each voice in the conversation so other members can hear it again for themselves. **Referencing:**

- enables your reader to read the ideas you have taken from other writers in their original location. Your reader may want more information about the idea, or check your interpretation of it. This is why accurate publishing details, dates and page numbers are so important
- gives credit where credit is due. Ideas are regarded as intellectual property. It would be unreasonable to claim Einstein's Theory of Relativity as your own. The same holds true for less spectacular ideas and theories.

10. WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A REFERENCE LIST AND A BIBLIOGRAPHY?

A **reference list** is a list of all the authors whose work you have actually cited in your essay as in-text references. No other material should be included, even if you have used it in your essay

Figure 2: A page in EDC 111 module manual on the introduction to referencing

preparation.

A **bibliography** is a list of all the authors whose work has informed your essay. You can include all background reading here, even if you have not referred to it within the body of your assignment.

11. TO REFERENCE OR NOT TO REFERENCE?

Everything that is not common knowledge must be referenced. This includes information from books, journals, newspapers, magazines and the Internet, as well as ideas heard in lectures and seminars (referenced as Personal Communications).

Common knowledge is information that is known by most people in our society. In academic work, it also includes facts within a specific subject area which are very familiar to all those who study that subject. Ideas, opinions and theories must always be referenced.

'Scientists have observed a hole in the ozone layer' does not require a reference. This is a well-known fact that has been repeatedly confirmed.

'The hole in the ozone layer is caused by greenhouse gases' does need a reference because this is a controversial theory, not a well-known fact.

12. HOW DO YOU REFERENCE COURSE STUDY GUIDES?

If there is an author on the front cover, reference as you would a book.

If there is no author:

In-text: use title instead of author.

(EDST 529: Justice in Education, Study Guide 1998:32)

In the reference list: use title instead of author at the beginning of the entry.

EDST 529: Justice in Education, Study Guide 1998, University of New England, Armidale, NSW.

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13. HOW DO YOU REFERENCE ARTICLES AND CHAPTERS THAT ARE REPRINTED IN A STUDY GUIDE?

There are two ways of doing this.

1. Reference it as a primary source within a secondary source. The author of the idea is the primary source, but you read the idea in your Study Guide which is the secondary source. You use the secondary source as the major part of your reference.

(Fuller 1966:72, quoted in EDST 529: Justice in Education, Study Guide 1998:46)

Figure 3: A page in EDC III module manual on how to reference types of academic sources

The page number here refers to the pagination sequence used in the Study Guide itself, not the page numbers that have been photocopied with the article. You only use the secondary source (the Study Guide) in your list of references.

2. If, however, the entire article or chapter is reprinted, with full publication details and preserving the pagination of the actual journal or book, then you can reference it as if you had read it in the original source, making sure the page numbers you cite are those of the original source, not the Study Guide. Cite only the original source in the reference list. Thus in this case you don't have to mention the Study Guide at all.

14. HOW DO YOU EVALUATE INTERNET SOURCES?

Internet publishing is open to everyone, so you need to be critical of quality. Don't believe everything you read. Here are some **guidelines** to help you assess the reliability of the information.

- Can you identify an author or an official organisation? (If not, you have no way of easily verifying the validity of the information.)
- What are the author's or organisation's credentials? (Does the author have a responsible official position, or is he or she recognised as qualified to give an opinion?)
- Are there contact details for the author or organisation? (If not, be suspicious.)
- Has the material been printed in a reputable book, journal, magazine or newspaper? (This immediately confirms its reliability, though you should still apply your critical reading skills.)

15. HOW MANY REFERENCES DO I NEED IN AN ESSAY?

For a 1,500 word essay, your marker will expect to see at least five references, though a high distinction essay would normally include many more. Referencing only from your course textbook creates a poor impression and will not give a good range of viewpoints or demonstrate your research skills.

Don't take all your sources from the Internet. It looks lazy, and it is no substitute for the wealth of important and reputable resources that are in the library.

16. WHAT TENSE SHOULD I USE FOR IN-TEXT REFERENCES?

Use **present tense**, when introducing ideas from others.

Maritain (1943:22) argues that love is the foundation of all true education because it calls each student to service within the community.

Use **past tense** when introducing specific results and conclusions of others.

Clayton's (1998) second study showed that the Read and Review program significantly improved the reading levels of fifty-one students.

Figure 4: EDC III module manual showing ideas that can be referenced and tenses used in in-text references.

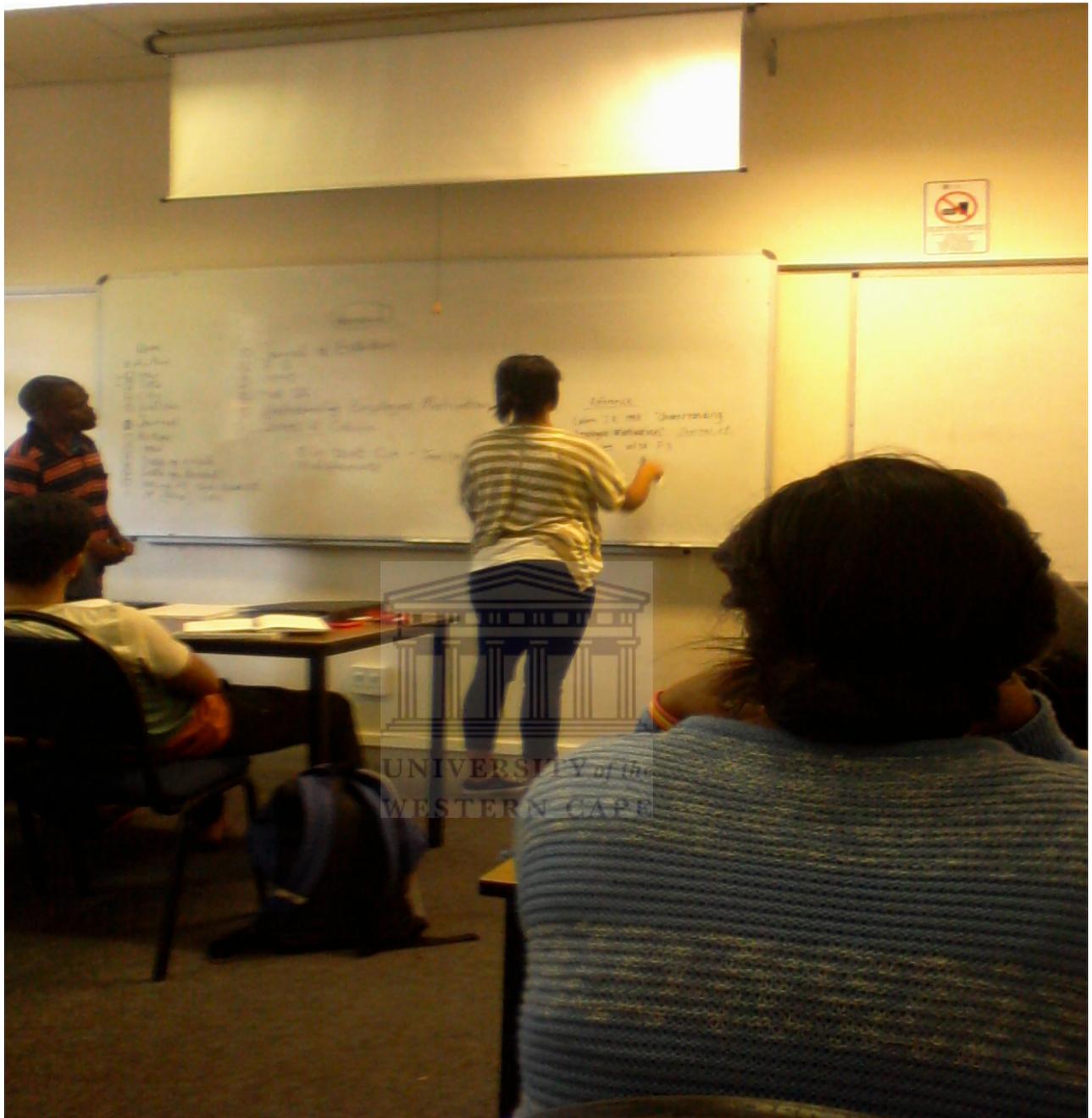


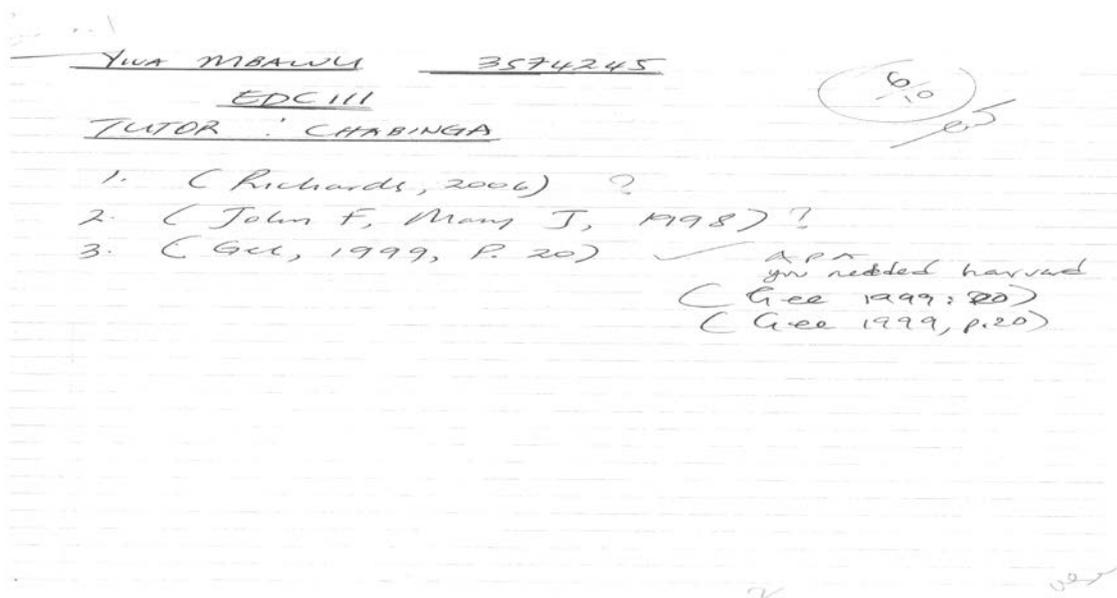
Figure 5: First language Afrikaans student participating in referencing task during tutorial.

I have earlier indicated that the first year bilingual students had a good understanding of how and when to reference a source or sources in academic writing. Though, when I looked at the marked and returned task paper of the bilingual students, I noticed that Afrikaans first

language and English first language students scored above 6 out of a 10 mark score. Though, my current study does not direct attention to the scores of bilingual students in any academic assessment, it was used instead to understand the reasons for their performance. Figure 6-9 below shows the assessed tutorial task of students on referencing. The other assessed task will be shown in Appendix D.

The objective of the task was to facilitate students' understanding of in-text referencing using the Harvard referencing style. During the analysis of their marked task, I observed that most of the students had knowledge of what they were expected to do, except that a few of them confused the in-text reference of Harvard with APA referencing. Notably, two Afrikaans female students as seen in figure 8 and 9 below revealed that these students do not have an in depth understanding of the pros and cons of referencing. It also implies that academic writing as a whole poses a challenge to UWC's first year bilingual students as the evidence from document analysis data depicted that they are not able to cope with an aspect of academic writing (referencing). Furthermore, figure 8 revealed that the bilingual student was faced with language difficulty as she seemed not to grasp what the task is about. The tutor's comment on the task paper showed that she was aware of the language related challenge of this student because the tutor remarked politely, asking the student to consult him.

The following assessed students' task on referencing is sequentially arranged below as figures 6-9.



received
Innita De Bruyn
#3574900

6/20

Tutorial Task 4

Instruction

Correct the highlighted intext-referencing mistakes, using 'Harvard' referencing style.

Appendix 2

According to (Richards, 2006) a text-based approach or genre-based approach is of the opinion that communicative competence involves the mastery of different text types. And he says that in this instance text, refers to structured sequences of language used in specific contexts in specific ways. For example the style of language use when speaking to your friend will be different to the style of language used when speaking to your lecturer. These language uses (formal/informal) can be regarded as text types, because it requires specific structure that is embedded in the specific context that it occurs. In addition John Feez and Mary Joyce (1998) states that text-based approach to teaching language includes "Linking spoken and written texts to the cultural context of their use, designing units of work which focus on developing skills in relation to whole texts, providing students with guided practice as they develop language skills for meaningful communication through whole texts."

Appendix 3

"Language has a magical property: when we speak or write we craft what we have to say to *fit* the situation or context in which we are communicating. But, at the same time, how we speak or write *creates* that very situation or context. It seems, then, that we fit our language to a situation or context that our language, in turn, helped to create in the first place."

Gee (1999p20)
(Gee, 1999, p. 20)
APA
you need to use
harvard
(Gee 1999:20)
or
(Gee 1999, p.20)

Figure 7 Students' academic task on referencing

Rochelle Lucas
3574763
Tut PREP 4
Kelvin Chabinga

- 1 (Richardt2006) (Richards, 2006) ?
- 2 (John) Feez and (Mary) Joyce, 1998 ?
- 3 Gie (1999, p20)

Let's
meet
please
Rochelle

Tutorial task 4
ERC III
Sumayon Davids - 3502703

Appendix 2 .
(Richards, 2006) ?
(Feez, J. 1998) ?

group 3

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4

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Figure 8 and 9: The assessed task of the struggling two first language Afrikaans students on referencing

In contrast to the Isi-Xhosa female student's interview response that reading is not a challenge another Isi-Xhosa male student stated during the interview that:

“Sometimes reading. Like when it comes to academic reading, because sometimes there are words that you don't understand, like the big words. And sometimes you can't make sense of sentences. So that is a difficulty sometimes”

This excerpt confirmed that the difficulty in using English in academic literacy is not limited to writing but also reading for students. It showed that reading as a literacy skill corresponds to writing and students experience both academic reading and writing difficulty. Academic reading in a non-proficient language, English in this case, adds to the usual challenge of academic learning itself for a bilingual student. As stated in the excerpt, learning is difficult when he does not know the meaning of a word or sentence. Therefore, it suggests that in such an uncertain context an increased ability in academic reading supports academic writing.

However, it was observed when the tutor asked three out of the participants to read paragraphs from their workbooks, different gestures and reading ability were identified. The first reader was a male Afrikaans student, before he read the paragraph he said briefly “sorry my English is bad” and he read the paragraph in a low tone. The second reader was a female Isi-Xhosa student. It was noticed that she was willing to read but more careful not to wrongly pronounce unfamiliar words that she might come across while reading. The volume of reading aloud was relatively higher than the first Afrikaans male reader but careful in reading. The third reader was another male Afrikaans student. He read loud but it was observed that there were intersections while reading such as ‘emm’, ‘sorry’, ‘pardon’, when he got to an unfamiliar word in the passage.

This means that bilingual students find academic reading in English demanding. It also showed that despite the difficulty of students in academic reading they were still motivated to read in the class, not overly concerned about their incompetency in English reading. It suggests that the motivation and persistence of bilingual students in academic reading will improve their reading skills, and improve their vocabulary in English for academic purposes

which in turn will increase their academic writing skills. Overall, it is deduced that generally first year bilingual student at UWC face difficulty in academic literacy in English, although the literacy difficulty is more specific to reading and writing. However, some encounter one or two challenges with literacy. Also the level of difficulty varies in different first year bilingual students at UWC.

In answering the interview question on what language related challenges first year bilingual students face while learning during tutorials or when with peer students, some interviewees mentioned that accent and pronunciation posed a learning threat. It became a threat to their learning activities such that listening to tutors and other peer students when they speak involved extra effort. The act of listening during academic collaboration was very necessary in order to comprehend the discussed topic. Logically, when a student listens clearly to an instructor or classmates in the case of a group discussion, he/she can absorb knowledge on the topic and be confident to express what had been learnt through the medium of academic assessment. My observation and interview data showed a contrasting scenario, bilingual students found it outrageous when they are not able to effectively communicate to and with English speakers due to the way they speak. It was noted that bilingual students who encountered the difficulty in accent and pronunciation were second language users of English. I drew from most of their comments that it was more difficult for them to identify and correlate the words of English proficient speakers. Not just that, sometimes the students feel as if they are not understood by the 'self-categorized' proficient English speakers when they make an effort to speak with them during tutorials.

In this regard one Isi-Xhosa male student said that his first term at the university was very intimidating because he did not have Xhosa friends that could explain a topic to him when it seemed unclear. However, he mentioned that despite English being the MoI at high school he did not find learning extremely hard and that most of the tutors and intelligent classmates he could have consulted with, were either English or Afrikaans speakers. According to him, he remarked that he was 'still in the same hot soup'. It is evident that the bilingual student was not a proficient English speaker, particularly using it in his academic learning at University. From his comment, I deduced that he was able to progress from high school to university by the assistance received from Isi-Xhosa first language speakers, notably his subject teachers. It

means that he was familiar with the way they spoke English and add Isi-Xhosa to help him get a better understanding of the topic. This suggests that the language difficulty in relation to accent and pronunciation confronted by some bilingual students is attributed to the unfamiliar way and diction of the English language. It is insignificant whether the English speaker is a first or second language user.

Responding to the same question, another Isi-Xhosa female student replied:

“Ok, the first time I was, during the time that I came here it was difficult for me. Because of in terms of the accent the (tutors or students) (not exact) are speaking. Sometimes I get lost; I didn’t understand what they are (pause) saying. So it is where it was hard and difficult for me. To communicate with people it was difficult”

From the response above, it is seen that the student was specific about her language related difficulty with accent. Unlike other bilingual students who face more than one language difficulty, accent could be seen as her only challenge. Her feeling with regards to the difficulty with accent was clearly illustrated in the choice of words and the manner in which she made this comment. In addition, she pointed out that the problem with accent was more pronounced during her initial period at UWC. It is noted that the accent problem was with her tutors and peer students. Also, it means that the accent problem did not emanate from her but on the part of other bilingual students and tutors. It is understood that she can speak in a manner that her listeners get to comprehend what is being discussed but it is the opposite for her when other bilinguals speak. She related that at that point she is lost in communication. This indicates that parties involved in any communicative event such as in the learning context of this study must understand others and be understood by others. For example at UWC (with diverse bilinguals with the common language of English), it becomes a ‘hard’ learning situation because the language spoken for academic purpose is the incompetent language of students.

During an interview, another first language Afrikaans female student appeared to also encounter the problem of accent and pronunciation which was prominent when speaking English. In her view, spoken words in English do not come out as fluently when she spoke in

Afrikaans. To her, proper pronunciation in English language limited her communication in most academic contexts, as she began to doubt the understanding of her listeners. Below is an excerpt that explains further her above mentioned language plight:

“Ok , I struggle to sometimes speak some words in English like a sentence I sometimes struggle, you can hear even when am talking to you, I struggle. Ok the writing is fine (pause) it's only the speaking that I have problem with. Because you see when I am speaking to somebody that speaking good sentence and is using English, so I have to understand ok that is what he was saying but now I don't know how to speak it back. Because I will like mumble and make a gesture as a sign of understanding (both laugh) you see I will like do that, and (break) that is the challenge that I am facing”.

In the above excerpt it is evident that speaking was the main language related difficulty as related by the student. It is however implied that the form of her speaking challenge is traceable to pronunciation in English. From her first response in this excerpt, she voiced that I can confirm her language challenge in our present communicative event (the interview). I also saw that the spoken English of this bilingual student was far from what is expected of an average English language speaker, especially at university level. She showed basic communication in her spoken English. Evidently, English was confidently spoken. The positive aspect of all her spoken responses during the interview was that she chose and spoke her utterances with caution. Thus, it means that there is a problem of speaking good English by bilingual students. When words are not correctly spoken in English it automatically distorts the message and the intended meaning is not clearly stated. This suggests the importance of a clear understanding of what is spoken and the pronunciation, especially by a tutor or a peer student that is capable of assisting struggling students, knowing that listening and speaking are correlated literacy skills.

During observation, I heard the intonation of some Afrikaans and Isi-Xhosa first language students while they participated in classroom activities which included reading from module workbooks, asking and answering questions. For some of the bilingual students, the accent of their first language was conspicuous because it is the language they are more familiar with and mostly used on a regular basis. Some of the Afrikaans speakers depicted the Kaap Afrikaans accent when they read. However, it was not so difficult to understand their spoken

English because the tutor seemed to understand each one of these bilingual students. Also, when the students spoke in English, others who were listening nodded their heads, some in a low voice said *oh* and others replied *ok* which indicated that the spoken message was comprehended and no hitches that were attributed to accent and pronunciation. A few instances were not significant when it came to pronunciation but the language challenge of word recognition was observed during students' reading of passages.

Generally, the user of any language is expected to be familiar and abreast with the language vocabulary. A language user that is conversant with vocabulary exhibits confidence and is able to conveniently carry out the different literacy skills in both a formal and non-formal context. Bilingual students are not exempted from the use of vocabulary in their languages, most importantly the language that is used for academic instructions. On the other hand, there is a language related problem when a student does not display good knowledge of vocabulary. This is also the situation of bilingual students who indicated during interviews that they are not completely equipped when using their second language, English. And since they must use English in all their academic work, amongst the language challenges encountered is their insufficient vocabulary in English. It had resulted in problems like not recognizing new words, searching out appropriate words in written and spoken expressions and most of their written essays and assignments, and their attention being drawn to incorrect spelling by tutors and lecturers. This indicated that a good knowledge of English vocabulary will reduce the stress of bilingual first year students as they will be able to learn and understand what are being taught independently. Likewise, instead of giving attention to the task that is being taught and comprehended, the uncertainties of knowing what was taught and how to proceed with the related academic task doubled the challenge of bilingual students. For example, first language speaker of Afrikaans explained that sometimes it was difficult for her to find words in English as she is not sure of the appropriate English word to use at a certain point.

In particular, she said in her mind the Afrikaans words that she is looking for the exact English word kept ringing but always she must first explain to someone that knows English well in Afrikaans, then the other bilingual will tell her the word or translate the sentence in English last sentence unclear. Although, she remarked that sometimes translating from

Afrikaans to English is not so effective when transferring a message because it does not normally convey the full meaning. But in most cases translating from English to Afrikaans helped her to understand her academic work better. Moreover, she commented that I should not be shocked to hear that a long sentence she struggles to understand in English is described in one word in Afrikaans. This concurred with the comment of one of the Isi-Xhosa male interviewees that translation of words or sentences from English to Isi-Xhosa and vice versa had enabled him to deal with the difficulty of finding appropriate words. He illustrated with this example “there must be love and unity amongst people”, in Isi-Xhosa this means “Ubuntu”. This means that the meaning of a complex sentence or phrase can be made clear in one word which in turn produces a wide understanding of the context.

This suggests that it is more advantageous for a bilingual student to have relative familiarity in his/her languages and when the knowledge of vocabulary is used in either verbal or nonverbal communication; vocabulary is not regarded as a language related problem. The obvious reason is that the bilingual will have a vast range of words to play with especially in academic writing and speaking, which is evident in earlier mentioned language difficulties of first year students. This example can be a reliable reflection of a female Afrikaans and English language student that had acquired more of the Isi-Xhosa vocabulary than English (MoI). It can be understood from her remark that had she knew English vocabulary as well as she knew her Isi-Xhosa vocabulary, and hence; it will have been much easier for her to consult with her tutor and other peer students without the obstacle of finding the right words to express her confusion or for help needed on a topic.

The excerpt below can help illustrate this point:

“The interpretation of how they use words differ from the way I interpret words. I also find it difficult to translate to second language which makes it difficult for me communicate with tutors”

The above comment suggests that a bilingual should display a competent level of use in both languages and as revealed in this current study, it minimizes the problems of recognition of new words and spelling. However, it is noteworthy that competency in the two languages clearly entails learning more vocabulary.

4.9 Type of Translanguaging Strategies used by first year bilingual Students

I will proceed now to discuss the narratives of my participants and its relevance to the second thematic data findings as indicated in the first section of this chapter. For the first year bilingual students at UWC, the linguistic term ‘translanguaging’ was very unfamiliar but the language practice involved is easily remembered by the students. I asked various leading questions especially in the questionnaire and interview, to help them understand and share their lived experiences.

Regarding the occasion where bilingual students use their both language with tutors and peer students, the responses from most students was not positive. It means that the majority of the students struggle with the language of MoI(English) if they cannot occasionally use their languages for academic purposes. Generally, it is believed that bilinguals tend to use either or both languages as deemed necessary. However, it is evidently shown that most students did not consider the simultaneous use of both languages in tutorial as a strategy to cope with their aforementioned learning difficulties. For instance, two of the Isi-Xhosa respondents seemed not to support the idea because they feel that the simultaneous use of languages will reduce their learning pace significantly in the language of MoI. Another English first language male respondent stated:

“... even at home and everywhere am used to English, all my school life is English. I am better in English than my Afrikaans .Why should I use Afrikaans when I am thought in English’

In the same manner, answering to the same question a female Afrikaans respondent replied:

“It is not formal to use English with my tutor but when with my classmates that their preferred language is Afrikaans, then I code switch and miss”

The above comments of the students suggest that the awareness of students of the use of English for instructional purposes is limited. In addition, their perspective of English being the official academic language has reduced the use of their linguistic repertoires for their

academic advantage. Although, many indicated that they may use both languages with their peer students but separately.

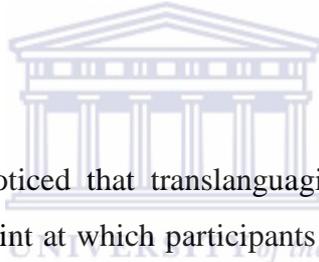
More considerably, I observed the first year student participants who stated that they simultaneously use both languages during tutorials. A reflection of the classroom setting and participant first languages did not provide the space for most of the bilinguals to use their languages. I noted that all through the period of gathering my observation data, students were simultaneously using their language amongst same language students and not with the tutor. Thus, it suggests the importance of academic space in which the simultaneous use of languages is considered and encouraged by the school.

An additional probing question was asked to validate the responses of most participants who did not have any occasion of the simultaneous use of both languages during lessons been achieved in the questionnaire data. It was noted that the same group of students who mentioned that they do not use both languages in the tutorials reiterated in a positive way their use of first language during tutorials. Their responses to the question of use of first language were a yes or no option. It is evident from table 4.4 above that the majority used their first languages during tutorials. From the demographic table shown at the early part of this chapter, their first language is Afrikaans or Isi-Xhosa. The indication of the yes option by most bilingual students is clear evidence that students seemed not to know the meaning of the word simultaneous that was used to ask the previous question on the occasion of use. There is current use of English as language of MoI in the tutorial yet; the remarks of students' use of their first language pointed out that those two languages are used during tutorials. It could also mean that students are confused and shy to accept the use of their linguistic repertoire, notably using first language in academic learning at university level.

I proceeded to ask the students who wrote yes to the question on the use of first language who they use it with. A significant number 73% (22) $n=30$ of the respondents agreed that they use it in and out of classrooms with their peer students. Also, some use their first language with the tutors. It was observed that the difference in the bilingual students who did not use their first language with the tutors are likely Isi-Xhosa first language users. I noted that there was no tutor; hence there could be no consultation privileges for Isi-Xhosa speakers to use their

preferred Isi-Xhosa. Unlike, Afrikaans and English first language speakers who have tutors that can use these languages and assist students with academic tasks. The data suggests that bilinguals will prefer to use their first language in learning if there is official provision made by the school. However, it does not imply that bilingual students will not encounter language related challenges while learning in their first language, particularly for academic reading and writing.

I noted that the students who maintained their no ground to the use of first language during tutorials are not disregarded. The first year students' no responses on the use of first language implied that students combine effort and determination to cope in the language of MoI, instead of crisscrossing languages at every given time. It is based on this view that first year bilingual students progress to the next semester, building on their proficiency in both languages. Moreover, the ability to withstand and overcome challenges is also considered as learning.



During tutorial observation, I noticed that translanguaging practice was minimal. It was difficult for me to identify the point at which participants made use of their translanguaging skills. As discussed earlier, most bilingual students were reluctant to use their home language in the classroom. I observed that the Isi-Xhosa participants were not comfortable learning in English and did not attempt to use Isi-Xhosa among their classmates who also spoke Isi-Xhosa. However, I identified translanguaging in the speaking of Afrikaans female students at some points but they spoke very softly. As a result of the low volume of students when they spoke, I did not identify for what purpose they used both languages. But translanguaging was evidenced in the conversation Afrikaans students had with their classmates, not with tutors.

It is important to point out that the questionnaire responses were not detailed as most students commented in a word “speaking” to the question: what are the translanguaging strategies used during tutorials? It was evidenced from their comments that speaking was the only literacy skill where both languages were used for during tutorials, despite that the students did not describe how they used the two languages when speaking. Also it was not clear whether and with whom the bilinguals used their languages during tutorials.

The data from the interview also revealed that speaking between bilingual peer students was the highest literacy skill that translanguaging occurred. This was followed by bilingual students speaking in both languages during tutorials. However, it was quite noteworthy that most of the bilinguals who mentioned that they used both languages during tutorials meant that they spoke with their classmates who had the same first language and not the tutor. Furthermore, I noted that students used it for explanations, asking and answering questions related to academic work among peer students. They also stated that the use of the two languages made their academic content easier to understand and continue learning. For example, an Isi-Xhosa first language female student related how she made use of Isi-Xhosa and English amidst peer students. She remarked:

“I don’t use Isi-Xhosa in the class but it will have been the best for me so I do not bother others... Before I go home every day, myself and some of my friends have made a routine to discuss what we are taught and there is this one of our sister, she is good in English at least better than me. She will explain to all of us in Isi-Xhosa, and since we understand little what was said in English class, everything she will then explain amongst our group will be very very clear. Someone like me, I will ask her the question on the part I don’t understand, the other friends will also contribute in mix of English and Xhosa. Even all our assignment, we explain together before we do it individually...”

In the above response, I identified that the bilingual students in the above context were able to speak and understood what had been spoken to an extent. It also showed that the bilinguals were weak in one language and strong in the other language. Evidently, the comment indicated that the speaking of both languages was between familiar groups of students and this made them feel comfortable when speaking any of their languages. They also shared the same academic task and goal. This suggests that for translanguaging to take place there must be a proficient language and the second language is improved within a period.

Likewise, an English first language student had also explained academic content to some of her peer students who struggled to cope while learning in English. She explained that at most times she willingly assisted her peer students and at other times they asked her for academic

assistance. According to her, she said that the students were intelligent but the challenge of English limited their learning pace. She explained that once she recapped the lesson which they found difficult and highlighted the salient points in Afrikaans, she saw that her friends became happier. In addition, she commented that during tutorials she explained a few sentences or concepts in Afrikaans to the bilingual students seated close to her. Moreover, she made it known that it was only when speaking that she used Afrikaans and English.

On the other hand, just one Isi-Xhosa male student replied that he did use both languages when speaking and reading but not in tutorials. When asked the same question on 'what translanguaging strategies do you use during tutorials?' He answered:

“I do not know if I get you correctly, but the strategies I have used are translating to Isi-Xhosa using google and asking my friends if they understand well a topic, then we will speak in Xhosa together. We will use English only when we need to say a concept that cannot be translated in Isi-Xhosa. The reading from google helped me a lot but I have to take time to type on the system the aspect of the chapter or paragraph that is giving me problem. But once it translates to Xhosa I can know how to prepare for test and do my assignment alone”.

I found in his answer an indication that translation from English to Isi-Xhosa helped the student to deal with the learning challenge of reading academic material. It also appeared that translation from the incompetent to the competent language was the first strategy he considered, after that he made use of both languages to fully understand the taught lesson. Furthermore, it is clear that he first understood academic material in Isi-Xhosa and then did his academic task in English, the language of MoI. This suggests that bilingual students can use their languages in any of the literacy skills, though it depends largely on the bilingual's decision to use his/her languages for the purpose and how the languages are used.

As regards bilingual students' use of both languages in academic reading and writing, it was evident that all bilinguals made use of English and none of them used neither Afrikaans nor Isi-Xhosa during tutorials. This was in contrast to the result of bilingual students' use of both their languages while speaking and listening during tutorials. The use of English only for the purpose of reading and writing indicates that students were accustomed to the language used at university level. Despite that the first year bilingual students' use of English did not

generally conform to academic standard, students did not recognize the simultaneous use of their languages to deal with the reading and writing difficulties they faced. This suggests that students had other coping learning strategies that excluded the use of their two languages, though it will have been logical for students to do so, since, the earlier mentioned learning challenges of the first year bilingual students concerned the language of MoI. Thus, the preceding data leads me to direct attention to the other coping learning strategies of the bilingual students, and I categorized this section as the coping strategies used by first year bilingual students when learning in English.

4.10 Strategies used in coping with the challenges of learning in English

Generally, it is believed that students are more inclined to use effective, comfortable and accessible learning strategies to deal with problems that relate to academic content. Also, students use more than one strategy depending on the type of problem that is encountered. This section presents the strategies used by bilingual students in their language related problems. Although in terms of manner of use, students' adoption of these strategies are slightly different to translanguaging strategies. Yet, I noted that the strategies adopted by these bilingual students are connected to the type of translanguaging.

From the questionnaire data, respondents were asked to explain the strategies that they use to cope with the various challenges mentioned. Some of the bilingual students replied that reading more academic articles in English had been very functional in managing the language difficulty of academic writing. For example, an Afrikaans first language female student related that she read books at the library. And she said that the use of library books had broadened her knowledge of English. In a similar vein, another Afrikaans female student responded that she made it a routine to do more reading on the topic discussed in class. She emphatically said that she read the material in the language (English) that was challenging, for her to get a better understanding of words that she struggled with. In this data it is believed that reading in English had helped first year students to deal with language problems such as unfamiliar words, difficulty with pronunciation and advanced written phrases that were not clear during tutorials. It was also revealed that students depended more on English

rather than the use of their languages and regardless of their incompetency using it. This was probably because the first year bilinguals were focused on improving the language of MoI(English). In addition, students must have given it much attention because of reasons such as the world's use of English, prospects in the home(first) language is limited, and belonging to a certain social class.

Furthermore, data from interviews showed that academic reading in English was used by bilingual students as a coping strategy. From the response of interviewees, I identified that students preferred reading more academic materials in their non-proficient language to the use of both languages in order to cope with problems encountered while learning. This is evident in the excerpt of an Isi-Xhosa male interviewee below:

“I try to read a lot of books and to give myself a lot of exercises that I can give to someone else to go though, to see that do I upgrade myself or not... Somewhere, somehow it can restrict, conflict the Xhosa and the English because some of the words are not in English, the Xhosa words that we using it is difficult to find it in English and that is why I don't use it because some of them... Even if you go in the linguistics books you will find that some of the Xhosa words, you will not find it in English. That's why I would rather read a lot and trying to do the exercise by writing it down and give to someone to read it. So that I can see where do I lack. Do I progress or not?”

This interview established that students engage more with academic reading in English. At the same time, it confirmed that the use of first language (Isi-Xhosa) as a coping strategy to deal with the difficulty of English was not an option for the student. She stated that it is more likely the simultaneous use of Isi-Xhosa and English for the purpose of academic reading resulted in a confused state. Her belief was based on the difference between the vocabulary of Isi-Xhosa and English. She further explained that reading more academic literature had assisted her in dealing with writing problems, in such a way that she used some of the read words fittingly when she wrote in English. This demonstrates that students had dealt with the challenge of academic writing in English by continuous academic reading in English and constant academic writing practice.

In general, reading to grasp the point of academic content and academic writing is more demanding than speaking and listening for bilingual students. However, coping strategies for different language related challenges can complement each other. Therefore, more academic reading by the students does not only help them handle the challenge of academic writing but also helps them to manage the difficulty of word recognition and appropriate use of words. Correct use of punctuation marks and spellings are other challenges first year bilingual students had used the strategy of more academic reading in English. This was identified in the response of an Isi-Xhosa first language female interviewee as presented below:

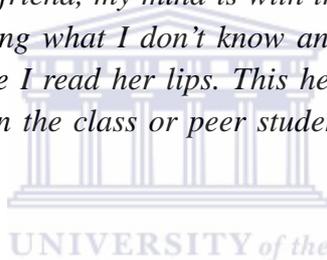
“The only difficulty I experience with language was the use of academic words in English and that’s in certain cases. If in certain lectures, there was maybe instructions or lectures given with the use of academic language I will not understand it the first time just by hearing what the lecturer is trying to say. I will have to actually first quickly go and read over it myself, and create a better picture in my mind. Into understanding what they are trying to say and express. The other thing I will also use the use dictionary if there is words I do not understand, then I will just look it up in the dictionary and I will apply that unto whatever passage that was given”

The above comment gave a definite indication that generally bilingual students have used reading to deal with the language challenge of understanding academic content, word recognition and finding new meaning of words in English. This implies that reading more academic materials in the language that is difficult assisted the bilingual students to deal with most well-known language related challenges while learning.

Attentive listening was another learning coping strategy that first year bilingual students adopted to manage their language related challenges during a semester. I observed that the use of this strategy is synonymous with the translanguaging strategy of listening. The only difference was the use of one language instead of the two languages of the bilingual students. I also noticed during classroom observation that most of the bilinguals that participated listened carefully to the tutor. I observed that students who struggled with the tutor’s accent and pronunciation were seated so that they had eye to eye contact with the tutor. Moreover, first year bilingual students gazed more at the tutor particularly when she explained a new topic. I realized that the probable reason was that students did not want to struggle with the

accent and pronunciation of the tutor. Also, I confirmed that once the class directed its attention on tutor, there were limited repeated questions by students because bilingual students were more cautious in listening during explanations and feedback by the tutor. This suggests that attentive listening of bilingual students during tutorials reduces the language difficulty when learning. When a student gives careful attention during lessons to all class activities, he/she is more likely to self-effortlessly recall salient points that serve as a reminder to the topic discussed than a student that was unduly occupied in class. However, listening attentively does not override the fact that problems relating to speaking and listening in a non-competent language are removed; it just minimizes the effect on bilingual students' learning. The below comments are from the interview data of bilingual students who use English as their second language:

“I listened carefully to what people are saying when speaking and try to become more competent in the language. During the class I do not use that time to chat with my friend, my mind is with the tutor or in case is a classmate that is explaining what I don't know and she is not Afrikaans speaking, I will make sure I read her lips. This helps me to concentrate. This is the way I follow in the class or peer students” (Afrikaans female student)



From the above remark of the Afrikaans female student, I identified her relentless effort put in during tutorials in order to cope with the problem of pronunciation in the second language and the purpose for her effort still in the use of the difficult language.

Furthermore, the same type of effort was also identified in the following comment of an Isi-Xhosa female student in the questionnaire data. She stated:

“I listen and try to understand what is discussed and answer if I feel comfortable about the topic. The problem I have when I don't listen well or focus in tutorial is that all the idea of the lesson is gone. The fact is I must at least understand 60% of what is being discussed even if English is difficult before I discuss with my study group in Xhosa. If not, I can't just follow when they explain just so”

From the above statement, it can be inferred that the bilingual student was aware of her language limitation and capability while learning and this prompted the drive in her to be

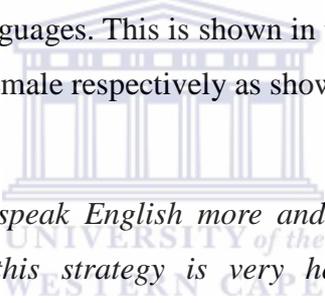
more attentive during class periods. Otherwise, she said it became more challenging to understand when she seeks academic assistance from fellow classmates or tutors.

Moreover, Afrikaans male student responded in a similar view of attentive listening. He mentioned that he either listens closely to the fluent English speaker, students most times or politely ask the speaker to be a bit slow so as to pick words and understand accordingly. However, he revealed that he cannot control the pace in which the lecturer or tutor spoke while they delivered lesson content. Thus, he was extra careful listening at lectures and tutorials; in particular when the topic involved the application of advanced concepts and terminologies.

Evidently from the three comments presented above it can be said that students are able to use the language of MoI (English). It is just that for some of the students their language background and the language of MoI at their high schools affected their competency in speaking and reading in English. Clearly, this challenge is being carried along to the university where learning is mostly independently done by students. Likewise, the university is a multilingual setting; there are many languages in addition to English such that the way student with language A speaks English is quite different to the way student with language E speaks English. Therefore, the first year bilingual students that participated in my current study struggled to understand and hear when other bilingual students speak and pronounce words. Although, the response of the Afrikaans male student showed that in some occasions the speaker is asked to reduce the pace of speaking so that the receiving and struggling student can fully understand the discussion. It is believed that some of the words may seem to be unfamiliar at first but diligent efforts in attempting to listen to others and vice versa had confirmed that the seemingly unfamiliar words were known to them. This means that attentive listening by bilingual students helps them to give time to academic content taught as they were conscious that any distraction during tutorials may hamper their language difficulty and understanding of academic content over a longer period of time. On the other hand, it was quite noteworthy that bilingual students diligently listened in the language of MoI and not in both languages.

Next, the presentation of data revealed that bilingual students at the University of Western Cape (UWC) maintained the use of English in communication and constant practice in this incompetent language as one of their learning coping strategies. The interview data indicated that first year bilingual students were more motivated to continually use English for academic purposes. It appeared that their consistency in English entails all the four literacy skills (reading, writing, speaking and listening). However, this rejects the general view that any challenged bilingual student learning in an incompetent language like English, is inclined to use the competent language (in most cases home/first language) to manage the language difficulty while learning.

On the contrary, the persistent attitude of bilingual students to use English for academic learning implied that students were committed to performing extra exercises mostly in their literacy skills, with minimal focus on the listening skill and their action had a corresponding positive effect on both of their languages. This is shown in the replies of two interviewees, an Afrikaans female and Isi-Xhosa female respectively as shown below:



“The first strategy is to speak English more and less Afrikaans for in pronunciation. For me this strategy is very helpful because I can pronounce the word immediately after the speaker and when am alone I pronounce the word to myself.”

“From time to time, I also look out for unfamiliar words when people speak, take note of it and learn to say correctly in English because that is the big issue”

From the above response it can be said that bilingual students used regular practice to handle the challenge of pronunciation of English words or the academic vocabulary of a subject in English. I noted that the strategy of constant literacy practice in English was very effective and efficient for coping, particularly the problem of pronunciation in English. From the comment, it could be perceived that the student was aware of using spoken communication between her and competent English speakers to identify words that were unfamiliar. Then she made it a routine to practice the right pronunciation personally. She also expressed that she

had to choose to use this strategy of finding out new words to learn pronunciation in English and that it presented a main challenge to her learning. Moreover, instead of any other coping learning strategy the bilingual student confirmed that pronunciation in English for reading and speaking purposes had helped her deal with the language challenge instantly and that she is no longer intimidated by the pronunciation of English fluent speakers. This suggests that the use of a coping learning strategy for a challenge is largely dependent on the suitability of the strategy adopted by the student.

Similar to the response of the above Afrikaans female students on the continuous use of English in a language difficulty context is the reply of an Isi-Xhosa female student. According to her explanation, she said that what she did first when with fluent English speakers is that she makes herself comfortable and always practice communicating with good English speakers. And she stated that her motivation was that when the time came to talk or reply to questions during an academic collaboration it will not be difficult and demanding for her to use the English language. Furthermore she mentioned that during tutorials she was encouraged to answer questions asked by the tutor in one or two sentences. She added that she did ensure that she continued her discussion with the tutor on her way out of class, still communicating in English. She confirmed that this seemingly insignificant routine with her tutor, both of them speaking in English, gave her comfort and boosted her self-esteem, knowing that she was coping. This shows that the more a bilingual student uses his or her languages for literacy purposes, the more it will result in increased competency of bilinguals in both languages (See table 4.3). This corresponds to the data strand from the questionnaire of an Isi-Xhosa male student that described his adopted coping strategy as follows:

“I try to use English everyday even when I am communicating with someone who share the same first language Isi-Xhosa. This helps me to improve my second language and be fluent on it. I believe that the more you get involve with an activity like you...you are experience to do ... the same way for me. I can use my Isi-Xhosa at least well, then it is time for me to know English well”

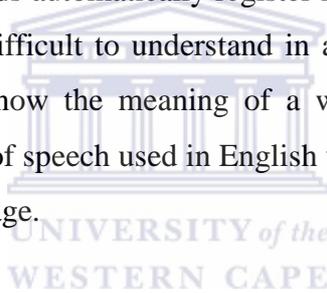
This statement provided a verifiable picture of how this bilingual student had set an objective in the form of a coping strategy to ensure that he used English daily. He related that he used English even when he spoke with another Isi-Xhosa first language speaker. This revealed that

there is a conscious effort to use English in convenient and non-convenient learning scenarios. Unmistakably, he indicated the reason for maintaining the use of the English language, despite being with same language speakers, was that he had the objective of speaking fluent English as he did for Isi-Xhosa. It seemed that he considered speaking fluently important for academic collaboration purposes, especially when the collaboration group is not Isi-Xhosa first language speakers. In addition, he had to constantly practice academic literacy in English considering that he still had a few academic semesters to go before the completion of his undergraduate study. And that in the meantime, English will be used for instructional purposes at the university and other future prospects.

From the observation data, it was the norm for students to use English for academic purposes. Hence, I perceived that the use of English for instructional purposes was not completely strange to the bilingual students. More notably, I observed that the majority of the participants used English in speaking, listening, reading and writing. I took note that even in instances when students wrote in their workbooks for the EDC 111 module, they did so through the medium of English and neither Afrikaans nor Isi-Xhosa were used. All speaking activities like answering and asking questions took place in English, except as discussed earlier a few peer students used only Afrikaans. It was also noticed that all academic assignments and tasks were done in English and assessment was in the same medium. This means that bilingual students appeared to know what coping strategy that can be used for more than one of their language related difficulties. The strategy of more communication and constant practice in English also suggests that English must be learnt at a competent level for the purpose of academic progression at least. However, it does not indicate that the use of first or preferred languages alongside English should be disregarded or that it is not a suitable strategy for managing types of language difficulty while learning at university.

On the other hand, the response of some participants showed that dictionary check, a focus to increase vocabulary and search out meaning for every new word in English was also amongst the learning coping strategies used by the first year bilingual students while they learn in a less competent language. Therefore, this suggests that the dictionary is a reliable and available resource for students to discover the meaning of unfamiliar words and how they are used in sentence construction. The dictionary provides information in terms of examples such

as the use of the words in sentences, how the word is used in tenses and how the word is classified under the parts of speech. Most dictionaries give simple and short definitions for words. This attribute of the dictionary thus makes it easier for students to master that word and use it for the first time as illustrated in the dictionary. The use of a dictionary suggests that it is more helpful for bilingual students whose learning style depends on visual content. This is supported by the experience of a female first language Afrikaans speaker during the interview who related that the dictionary was her only self-help for her lack of good English. In addition she said that after making use of the school library's dictionary for a while she had to purchase a pocket dictionary for herself. She added that the pocket dictionary was so handy and it became a textbook for her. Moreover, she mentioned that apart from reading more in English, when she reads the examples of words used in sentences seen in the dictionary, she reflects on it when she tries to make use of the word. She remarked that once she had searched the dictionary for the word established the meaning and put the new word to use two or three times, those words automatically register in the vocabulary of English in her brain. And such words are not difficult to understand in a sentence. This indicates that the dictionary is not just used to know the meaning of a word or word(s) but also to help language users identify the parts of speech used in English with examples and in turn it builds students' vocabulary in the language.



A related response to the Afrikaans female interviewee above is the excerpt of an Isi-Xhosa first language male student from the questionnaire data as presented below:

“I commonly use my cell phone or the dictionary to look up for the words I heard in the lectures or tutorials that I do not understand. Most of the time I prefer to use the google dictionary because my cellphone is usually with me. This is helping me a lot because when I forget the meaning of the word

I immediately go check the google dictionary on my phone again. You know what at times when someone say something while speaking I do ask the person to come again or write out the word for me then I check immediately. I do this most times with my peer students.”

From the comment above, it can be understood that the bilingual student also adopted the use of the dictionary as a coping learning strategy for the language problem except that the use of the dictionary is slightly different to the Afrikaans female student. Nonetheless, it was evident from his statement that the purpose of the use of the dictionary, either online use or hard copy, was the same for the two bilingual students. The use of the dictionary was a significant and practicable coping learning strategy for less proficient language users. Despite the commonly held belief that very competent language users often do not check unfamiliar words in the dictionary, they still check new words in the dictionary to determine if such words are appropriately used in a written or spoken sentence. Thus, it indicates that the use of the dictionary by language users increases their vocabulary of the language in question. This means that there are more words for the bilingual students to play with while engaging in writing and speaking practice.

However, the data from document analysis, that is the written essay of the students entitled “the transition from high school to the university”, did not signpost that any of the students used the dictionary as a coping learning strategy. I identified from the remarks of the tutor on the marked scripts that some bilingual students repeated words and short sentences in their essay and that words were not fittingly used in sentences or paragraphs. At first glance, it seemed to me that they were grammatical errors but another vivid consideration suggested that students used new words and tried to adopt these words in their written essay but it was not done correctly. Despite the incorrect use of new words in students' academic tasks like the essay, it was noteworthy that bilingual students used their developing vocabulary in English when writing.

4.11 Translanguaging Strategies that can complement UWC’s language policy

Generally, educational language policies are intended to provide a basis for a common language(s) of instruction that will ultimately yield to successful students’ learning. Thus, it will only be logical and considerate for UWC to complement its language policy with the translanguaging practices of its bilingual students. At this point, I will discuss how the

responses of participants connect to the sub themes in Table 4.7 of my study and the implication of complementation of translanguaging into UWC's language policy.

It is evident from the data that the coping learning strategies used by first year bilingual students did not generally involve translanguaging. However, triangulated data revealed that bilingual students used minimal translanguaging while speaking and listening during academic collaboration. Moreover, I was able to identify from the reply of three Isi-Xhosa first language students the reason for not using both languages during tutorials. According to the view of two of the Isi-Xhosa students, they considered the simultaneous use of both languages as an unacceptable language practice. From the comments of the two female Isi-Xhosa students, it was clear that they perceived the use of Isi-Xhosa (competent language) in the tutorial as unethical and offensive to other language users. The perceptions of these interviewees were shown in the following phrases "I don't think that..." and "why should I use ..." while another similar view was maintained by an Isi-Xhosa male student. He stated:

"Personally there is not a single occasion where I can use my first and second language simultaneously in tutorials everything is in English"

The comment above confirmed that perception and the belief about not using any other language apart from English, which is the medium of instruction, had negatively impacted on the bilingual male student such that he did not imagine there was any occasion where he could use his competent language alongside English. This suggests that the type of perception and belief of language users contribute to the use of translanguaging strategies in any language practice.

On the same question on the reason for using both languages, I identified from the following comments that bilingual students at UWC translanguage because of their motivation to confidently and freely communicate with same language users, especially for learning purposes. During the interview, one Afrikaans second language female student replied:

"I sometimes use both my first and second languages to help myself and at times friends to understand and phrase things in a better way... Maybe"

I would speak or switch in Afrikaans. and try to figure it out and then oh yes I would remember it...”

The response above signified that this student regarded the use of her languages as an academic resource to improve her academic work acceptable, irrespective of the challenge of learning in a non-competent language. It was evident from her comment that she must have used Afrikaans which is the less competent language to understand a word or phrase in English (her first language). She added that she did use both her languages to support her peer students to grasp academic tasks that were problematic for them. It implied that she translanguaged when collaborating with peer students. This is because she used Afrikaans for explanation to her peer students, meanwhile she was taught in English like her peer students. Also, it suggests that the use of both languages by bilingual students lead to understanding academic content, tasks and improved learning.

Another Afrikaans first language female respondent stated:

“I found it very interesting and helpful to use my two languages because I am able to explain to myself and others in a more understandable way. Because sometimes it is better to express yourself in first language...”

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From the comment above, it was understood that the student had a close bond with her first language; it was evident that she could use her first language more conveniently and confidently than the second language for learning purposes. That was evidently her objective in the use of her two languages. Therefore, she deemed it important to add her first language to the language of medium of instruction so that learning in English becomes less challenging. A similar reply was noted in the questionnaire data of an Isi-Xhosa first language female student regarding her reason for the simultaneous use of two languages. She said that both languages helped her to better understand a seemingly difficult topic when her peer students explain it to her, likewise when she also explains to her peer students what they do not understand during the normal classroom lectures. Moreover, she expressed her feelings in her comment concerning the use of Isi-Xhosa alongside English that when she uses her own language it comes to her heart and the second language comes to her mind. The words heart and mind used by her in her comment suggests how valuable the two languages are to her.

During observation I noticed that Afrikaans speaking students that translanguage during tutorials used Afrikaans to discuss problems with their peer students. I identified that bilinguals used more Afrikaans than English when telling each other what the tutor had said or when explaining to one another an aspect of the lesson that seemed confusing. However, I noted that the translanguage practice of this group of students was discreetly performed.

Adaptation and trend of use is also a reason mentioned by first year bilingual students for the concurrent use of their languages during academic collaboration. Generally, language users have used one or both of their languages as a medium of identity amidst same language users. In addition, some bilinguals have the custom of simultaneously using both languages so as to acclimatize in a certain language context. This was confirmed in the comment of an interviewed Afrikaans first language student who said:

“I came from an Afrikaans background, we almost never speak English and it is automatic to mix the two languages in a place like this. Since English is used more...”

In the above comment, I identified that her language background and current language learning situation was the attributed reason for her use of both languages. Even though, it appeared that she had the knowledge of English which she used to first learn the lesson or topic in the classroom, she did use her other language when she was with the same language users. Also, it was evident from the interview data that bilingual students profoundly use both languages for speaking purposes. And the data indicated that bilingual students made intense use of English together with Afrikaans for academic discussions and to gain a sense of belonging with the same bilinguals.

In another example, a second language Afrikaans student remarked:

“I use both to fit into the discussion. Whether it being my peers or in class so far there are Afrikaans and English students”

The preceding statement reveals that students did not limit their use of language to the competent language or the language of MoI but used both languages in order to fit in a group

discussion that definitely used specific languages. This suggests that the use of two languages simultaneously by bilingual students is an indication of their attachment to one or both languages. However from the questionnaire data, an Isi-Xhosa first language female student mentioned that as much as she simultaneously used both languages for adaption purposes, she did not use it in the classroom context.

Similarly, an Afrikaans first language female student explained how she used the two languages during tutorials and she did so in order to adapt to the languages of different speakers. What she said is furnished below:

“...when I speak to my tutor, I would use English. When I speak to some of the guys who speak Afrikaans in my class then I use Afrikaans. Even at times between my peer students that are Afrikaans. We are used to code mix and code switching ... some like to speak so much in Afrikaans and other peer students alternate English, whichever way I try to adjust the use of my language.”

What I understood from the above statement is that the bilingual student used both languages when using words or phrases in either language or her and her peer students used different languages when uttering sentences. From her comment, it implies that the language she used more when speaking depended on the language used by the other student.

I also observed that the Afrikaans speaking students who used Afrikaans and English during tutorials used it to adapt to a flow of communication amongst their peer students. I noticed that this group of Afrikaans speaking students did not use their languages for academic purpose but for socialization. Though, as an observer I did not have a knowledge of Afrikaans, I identified that most times the three bilingual female students who spoke in Afrikaans among themselves, laughed out loud and caused a distraction for other bilingual students who focused attention on their English speaking tutor. Moreover, I noted that the students used some English words in their spoken Afrikaans and I realized that no section of the lesson content taught in English was funny and what they discussed did not link to the current lesson or the previous one. This indicates that the use of the bilingual student's

linguistic repertoires for adaption can also benefit the bilingual students if they direct the purpose for the use of both languages to academic content.

I inquired from first year bilingual students about their motivation for the use of their languages with group members. The purpose for this question was to determine the reason students reiterated that they preferred to use both languages amidst peer students and outside the classrooms. The questionnaire data evidently showed that students basically used their languages to understand lesson content and one another in communication and to give academic assistance to their peer students. I identified this in the answer given by an Afrikaans first language male student. According to him, he used both languages so that he was understood by others and he also understood others in discussions. Further, he had the view that some people he talked with did not understand what he said because of the language used. He said that if he noticed the person he spoke with did not understand something and made a gesture that suggested he/she did not grasp an aspect of the talk, he will change to either English or Afrikaans, as the situation may be.

An Afrikaans second language female student also voiced that she did code mix in Afrikaans and English to help other classmates to interpret academic content that was unclear to them during tutorials, especially when the peer students are seated next to her. She added that in an effort to assist peer students to use their understandable language, the task became much easier for her to comprehend and she recalled the information better.

In the previous two responses, I noted that the use of bilingual students' languages did not just help in understanding each other but it also assisted bilinguals to individually reminisce what they explained to peer students. It also suggests that the use of languages by bilingual student promotes understanding in academic learning and it may be an academic resource for students while learning in a less competent language.

4.12 Conclusion

This chapter so far has presented findings on the coping translanguaging strategies of bilingual students at UWC when learning in a less proficient language. These findings consisted of four sets of data that were presented and analyzed in an interconnected manner. Furthermore, this chapter was based on overall broad themes that have emerged during data analysis. The findings suggest that bilingual students who learn in a less competent language like English encounter varying learning language difficulties, yet they are motivated to adopt one or more coping learning strategy using more of English language (incompetent language) than the competent one. On the other hand, bilingual students used more of their competent language (Afrikaans or Isi-Xhosa) mainly when speaking alongside English with tutors and mostly with peer students. This implies that translanguaging as a coping learning strategy by first year bilingual students was minimally used for understanding of academic content and tasks during tutorials. This is probably due to the perception and orientation of the bilingual students that it will be more beneficial for them to develop their competency in academic English especially, when they know that most if not all of their academic tasks and assessments are in English language. Moreover, data from interviews and questionnaire indicates that bilinguals have increased literacy in English than Afrikaans or Isi-Xhosa. Furthermore, students maintained the use of English for academic writing and reading. The resolve of first year bilingual students in this study is understandable as data suggests that they are not familiar with the concept of translanguaging. This may have reduced the interest and use of bilingual students to adapt classroom translanguaging. I propose to discuss in the next chapter the findings presented and analyzed in this one.

CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION OF DATA FINDINGS THROUGH EMERGING THEMES

5.1 Introduction

This chapter is a detailed narrative on the implication and benefit of data findings that are based on the previous chapter. The findings are categorised according to the four research questions that guide my study. Hence, this formed the four thematic sections of the present chapter. I deliberately used the same four themes in my prior data presentation and analysis chapter so that my readership can follow the sequence of my findings. I related some research evidence that was reviewed in chapter two of the study which connects to my current data findings. Also, the concepts of learning strategies and language policy were used in the discussion of findings. Overall, I discussed the findings using the theory of attribution of motivation and the theory of translanguaging.

5.2 Type of language-related challenges faced by UWC's first year bilingual students

This study has found that an average number of bilingual students found learning at the university strenuous at first as they have to understand the language of MOI (English) before understanding the topic and then thinking of the approach to academic tasks and assessment. This suggests that English is still a problem amongst first year students at UWC, despite English being one of their languages. The finding indicates that students' low proficiency in English at UWC led them to experience more difficulty in understanding the academic lesson or materials. Doiz, Lasagabaster & Sierra (2013) found that English MOI for bilinguals can create doubt in how successful students achieve in academic content. Furthermore recently, Belhiah & Elhami (2015) pointed out that being able to understand class material is related to the ability to understand examination questions and it is essential for success amongst university students. Therefore, if students are not working hard or cannot cope with English MoI, the outcome is always a failure not only in the examination and other forms of academic assessment but also affects their self-worth as a graduate student of UWC.

I found in my current study that as a result of the difficulty of bilingual student in using English for instructional purposes, UWC's first year students during their first semester displayed introvert behaviour in class and lacked confidence in being involved in any form of academic collaboration. The disadvantage of the displayed introvert behaviour and lack of confidence of first year bilingual students in using English for instructional purposes is that it affects the bilinguals' ability and freedom to communicate; particularly among peer students and how much more when it comes to classroom related conversation between tutors and students. Thus, this affects the relationship between tutors and bilingual students because the student is restricted when asking and answering questions. More so, the tutor cannot effectively impart knowledge of content due to non-familiarity of the common language, English, between both parties. According to Bolton & Kuteeva (2012: p.444), the difficulty encountered by bilingual university students with English MOI makes the communication and discussion of academic ideas and perspectives non effective. Although, they pointed out that despite the difficulty in using English for instructional purposes, it is unrealistic not to use it for academic purposes in this day and age. Therefore, it implies that the use of English for students' learning and as a MoI can be advantageous if there is the necessary academic support given to them. In addition, the required academic support depends on the level of bilingual students' English proficiency that is irrespective of their participation in classroom activities (Nishioka *et al.*, 2012: p.12). On the other hand, if there is no academic support offered to the students so as to develop their academic literacy in English, it will result in the non-participation of bilingual students during academic collaboration and in turn students are not sure of the right approach to academic tasks and display low performance in the task. Thus, if the low performance in academic tasks accumulates it results in an overall poor outcome.

This study has shown that most of the first year undergraduate bilinguals are second language English speakers but they are not proficient in using English for academic literacies, specifically writing and speaking. The low proficiency of UWC's first year bilingual students is traceable to their acquisition of English and the use of the language after acquisition as I discovered that bilingual students who have acquired the basics of English language used it mostly in the school setting and not for general purposes. In addition, there was little or no attention paid to the use of English for academic purposes during the primary and post

primary school levels of the bilingual students. Evidently, I found that currently at the university level (UWC) most first year bilingual students still use English second language mainly in the university environment. Meanwhile, the first language of the bilingual students (Afrikaans and Isi-Xhosa) is highly used at home (see Table 4.2 in chapter 4). This indicated that bilingual students are more used to the first language and have reserved English language for school's context. In some ways, this limited the development of their academic English while learning at university which is characterised by an advanced use of English. This is a reason bilingual students at UWC find it challenging to use English for instruction purposes. Though, this finding is not surprising as Cummins (2013) pointed out that Basic Interpersonal Communicative Skills (BICS) of a language are first acquired and developed followed by the Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP), in this study, the English language. Moreover, Cummins noted that the development of language depended on the context and cognitive load. Therefore, I attributed the fact that bilingual students found it difficult to cope during the first semester at UWC because some students like the Afrikaans first language bilinguals had the opportunity of Afrikaans Medium of Instruction (MoI) while the Isi-Xhosa had English MoI but the contextual use of Isi-Xhosa. And I assumed that academic English during their high school was not given the required attention. Consequently, most bilingual students in my study have regarded English for instructional purposes as one of their learning challenges since they cannot boost their English academic language proficiency (Cummins 2000: p.67) and learning therefore becomes a complicated academic process.

In my study, the main learning problem for new bilingual undergraduates was English as a MoI. I found that this problem had a negative effect on students' academic literacy skills and each of the literacy skills had an extensive issue. This corroborates with Evans & Green (2007); Hurst (2015) who found that students recognize complications relating to an all-encompassing range of academic literacies as a result of English academic proficiency. As my data presentation and analysis chapter showed, there were other challenges that resulted from incompetency in the use of academic English by UWC's first year bilinguals which included academic reading, writing, accents and pronunciation and word identification.

The findings from the data have shown that UWC's first year bilingual students were not confident in reading during the tutorials. Also, for some of the bilinguals who built their

confidence in reading amidst peer students and tutors, did not read fluently. It is clearly evident that if bilinguals are not motivated to persistently develop their academic reading skills, particularly in English MoI; the consequence for their overall academic performance is severe. This is because academic reading in the language of MOI is an inevitable learning practice for university students, regardless of the level of study. Meanwhile it will be advantageous for bilinguals at UWC if they have knowledge of academic English when reading academic materials. Research shows that academic reading and writing in a second and low proficient language has been a challenge for university bilingual students, despite the fact that these two literary skills are very essential to their academic success (Gersten, Baker, Shanahan, Linan-Thompson, Collins, & Scarcella, 2007; Lee & Tajino, 2008; Evans & Morrison, 2011). According to Gersten, *et al.* (2007: p.16) a knowledge of academic English benefits students such that they adequately perceive the read content, understand the relationships and accordingly follow thoughts and ideas. Therefore, the first year undergraduate bilinguals are more pressured into acclimatizing themselves with academic reading for the sole motivation of academic progression. On another note, if they do not make an effort to sufficiently acquire a knowledge of academic English significantly, and input cognitive literary skills (reading and listening), then the output (writing and speaking) would not be attainable. Also, the implication is that the first year bilingual students cannot advance in their studies as they did not work towards this objective. Although, Wilkins, *et al.* (2012), who found the importance of reading preparedness in the second language of bilingual students, confirmed that bilinguals who find it difficult to read in L2 MoI and the less competent language are more unprepared for their academic reading activities. This suggests that there should be an increase in the reading preparedness of UWC bilingual student's for academic content and this in turn will facilitate reading comprehension.

Further, my data findings revealed that academic writing is one of the main language difficulties which first year undergraduate bilinguals face when moving from high school to UWC. Many of the bilingual students in this current study attributed their difficulty to their low proficiency in English MoI. This creates a complex learning context for a bilingual student because the language of writing is focused on by the student rather than what is expected for the academic writing task. This is consistent with the findings in the study of Lee & Tajino (2008: p.3) who identified the different factors that can improve students' L2

writing as L1 writing ability, L2 proficiency, and writing experience in both languages. In addition, they concluded that bilingual students who use their second language for instructional purposes such as writing viewed the language used in this space as more difficult than structure/content-related components. This showed that more attention was given by bilingual students to English in the instance of this study rather than the academic conventions of writing. However, Lee & Tajino (2008) reported that L2 writing difficulties are closely related to L1 writing difficulties. It was not evidently clear from the findings if the bilinguals were challenged academically in writing in the proficient language. Like the findings showed that students did not face many problems in writing before entering the university, the problem of academic writing in English is compounded because all modules at UWC involve one or more forms of academic writing. Most especially, the research papers are required to be written by all undergraduate students as a completion of their study programme.

I discovered through data that bilingual undergraduate students in my present study found it challenging to write academically and to relate their ideas in assignments through academic English. This means that despite the bilingual student understanding the requirements of the assigned task and a mind map of how to perform the task; to put the idea or answer in English academic writing is an obstacle. Therefore it is unrealistic to expect bilingual students whose language of MoI is a non-competent language, to effectively introduce an idea in a paragraph and be certain of the coherence of paragraphs in the written task. It was also found that expression of ideas in English was an intense task when UWC's first year undergraduates were expected to write and submit academic assignments. The disadvantage of students' lack of expression in English is that they procrastinate or avoid doing their module assignment. It can lead to bilingual students' low academic performance because non submission of assignments or tasks affects continuous assessment marks at university. Evidently, if this happens, student fails the module because the same problem will apply to him or her under examination conditions. And the re-registration and re-seat of modules is a norm for such challenged first year bilingual students. Gersten, *et al.* (2007: p.16) found that bilingual students who have knowledge of academic writing in English effectively develop topic sentences, provide smooth transition between ideas, and are able edit their writing independently. Furthermore, Evans & Morrison (2011: p.203) reported in their study that first

year undergraduate bilingual students are frustrated with the unsophisticated style of writing. Evans & Morrison attributed the students' dissatisfaction to insufficient vocabulary and syntactic hallmarks of high school English which do not correspond to their academic writing tasks at university. The peculiarity of these findings is that bilingual undergraduate students, when learning in a less competent language, find it demanding to display the learnt content via their academic writing skills.

With regard to the challenge of academic writing in English, the findings also show that the academic convention of referencing was difficult for bilingual undergraduate students in the first semester, despite that two to three tutorial periods were used to teach referencing. Generally, any well written work without literature to support ideas and views is not recognized as an academic material and regarded as a plagiarized written work. This made it mandatory for universities to include referencing conventions as a topic in the academic curriculum of selected faculties and departments. There are different reference styles and for first year students it is expected that they familiarize themselves with all the conventions. At this level of study, the bilingual students they do not have the option to select which style to memorize and put to use when writing academically. Instead the option available to them is based on the lecturer's required convention for the written task. The consequence of this difficulty is that it is more demanding for first year undergraduates at UWC to differentiate each convention for in text referencing and the reference list until they proceed to the final year of study programme where they are instructed to use a particular style according to their field of study. A related finding is Ellery (2008) who reported that the possibility of first year bilingual students committing plagiarism varies according to their academic writing ability but all first year undergraduate students are faced with the problem of referencing which is caused by bilingual students' lack knowledge in constructing ideas and the establishment of an authorial voice through language and referencing. The finding of Ellery on knowledge of constructing ideas and the author's voice was not a focus or objective of my study but it connects to the challenge of referencing in academic writing. Also, this indicates that first year students plagiarise because they are confused in terms of what to reference and how to reference ideas that are used in their writing. However, if bilingual students develop the practice to reference the smallest piece of academic writing at this stage, academic writing

will increasingly be perceived by the student as an enormous task and they will gradually lose the zeal to develop their academic writing skills in the English language.

Another language related learning challenge of first year bilinguals was the accent and pronunciation of proficient English language speakers. This study has found that it is difficult for L2 English UWC's first year undergraduates to instantly understand the way the tutors and other peer students speak English. Thus, learning during the first semester for UWC's first year bilingual students became more complicated and is attributed to their accent and pronunciation which they acquired before university study (Bifuh-Ambe, 2011). Bifuh-Ambe (2011) points out that high school learners advancing to mainstream university are often unintentionally limited to the studying of English vocabulary pronunciation in the classroom context. This shows that fresh bilingual students at the university considered the accent and pronunciation of other fluent English speakers as strange. Consequently, this leads to poor communication between L1 and L2 English undergraduate students and tutors. Evans & Morrison (2011) observed that first year bilingual undergraduates also experienced a challenge with the lecturer's accent and often students were unfocused during lecture presentation. In addition, they found that students regarded the style of presentation lacking in effective teaching skills. The results of Evans & Morrison are similar to the findings of my current study. I found that the attention of students was divided when the tutor uttered some English words. And rather than remain focused on the lesson content, students rather asked the next peer student what the tutor was saying and at times they laughed over the manner in which the word was pronounced. Notably, not only did participants in my study lose attention because of the tutor's accent, even other language bilingual students like Afrikaans and Isi-Xhosa, struggle to listen and understand each other's accents. This clearly adds to learning and teaching problems in the learning space. For the students in this study, it means that they are likely to struggle to receive and give academic assistance to each other during collaboration, except the same language bilingual students. For the tutor, he/she may feel that there is a lack of communication between himself and the students. In turn, assistance that is supposed to be given is hampered or limited because of word pronunciation.

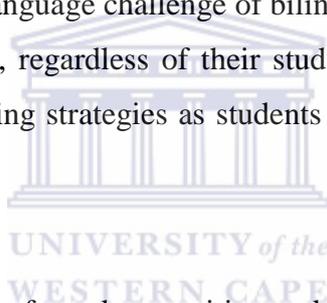
In terms of the problem of accent and pronunciation, it is logical to assume that students should not struggle with the accent and pronunciation of educators and fellow students in a multilingual setting like UWC, the reason being that they are aware of the language of MoI before admission to the university. It was expected of any student, irrespective of language of proficiency, to devise a coping plan to handle any foreseen language problems while learning. Also, in a public university like UWC, students are not given the total freedom to choose the language of lecturer, tutor or classmate. The language challenge of accent and pronunciation is complicated because English low proficient students are not conversant with the language and the manner in which the language is spoken. The findings in this study revealed that bilingual students preferred to consult and relate to same proficient language speakers, either as tutors and peer students. In a way the consultation with same bilingual peer students and tutor provided a form of language support to the struggling bilingual student. This phenomenon is central to the discussion in the findings of Evans & Morrison (2011). Evans & Morrison (2011: p.203) reported that bilingual students desired that their instructors were the same first language speakers because they found the English accent of these speakers easier to understand than other English accents and also because instructors with the same first proficient language like these first year bilingual undergraduates, were more familiar with their difficulties and needs. However, Evans & Morrison also reported that towards the end of the second term, the majority of participants sensed that they were progressing in terms of the demands of English-medium instruction. This implies that bilingual students increasingly came to terms with English MoI as the academic semesters passed by and the diligent effort put in by each bilingual student in facing the challenge of accent and pronunciation of non-first language tutors and peer students, was advantageous. Moreover, the effort and time put in place by the English low proficient first year students to acclimatize to the accent of individuals that contribute to the learning and teaching at UWC, is considered a necessity and deemed significant to bilingual undergraduate academic achievement.

This study has shown that the consequence of the challenge of accent and pronunciation is in the identification and correlation of spoken English words by proficient English tutors and peer students. This has led to the lack of confidence of first year bilingual students in pronouncing naming similar words, even when they are aware of those words using their own

English accent. In addition, the act of listening became monotonous for the bilingual students during their first semester at the university due to the accents and pronunciation of other first language speakers. Yet, the act of listening during academic collaboration is very necessary in order to comprehend the topic of discussion. Matsuura, Chiba, Mahoney, & Rilling (2014) investigated the effect of English (foreign language) spoken in familiar (North America) and unfamiliar (India) accents on Japanese students in the comprehension of academic content while listening, using two experiments. The study of Matsuura *et al.* (2014) determined that second language English university students initially find it more difficult to grasp the less familiar accent (Indian English) than the more familiar North American English accent. It was also found that as time passed and by consistently listening to the less familiar accent of English, comprehension for students significantly increased. This confirms that the challenge of accent and pronunciation is not limited to bilingual students' English proficiency. The result of Matsuura *et al.*'s study is not far from what Borodkin & Faust (2014) noted a year ago. They confirmed that less proficient L2 students evidently encounter L2 naming problems which are not because of their low L2 proficiency but as a result of students' incompetence in retrieving and forming phonological words. It can be suggested from the findings of Matsuura *et al.* (2014) and Borodkin & Faust (2014) that there are other attributed reasons why bilingual students face the problem of accent and pronunciation, and not just non competency of the language. By the same token, time and the consistent use of the language amongst familiar and less familiar accent speakers helps improve the level of comprehension for the struggling individual. However, if the bilingual student does not exercise patience to allow a period of adaptation for the unfamiliar accent speaker, the implication for the student is that he/she is restricted in English language communication to a circuit of the same bilingual speakers. This in turn leads to limited social exposure and other future academic study advantages.

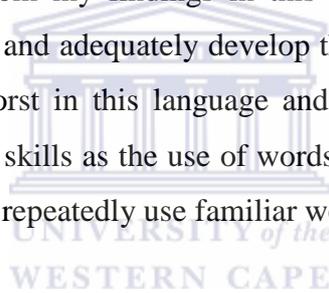
With regards to the language related challenges of first year undergraduate students, my findings indicate that inadequate use of English for academic and non-academic purposes limited the students' vocabulary in English. Consequently, it led to the incapability of bilingual students in this study to recognise new words, use of appropriate words in academic writing and a speaking context and incorrect spelling while writing. This had an indirect impact on the reading of academic content, depicting meaning and using the words in similar

self-writing instances. In the academic learning setting, a student is expected at different levels to have acquired a certain language vocabulary which also applies to the vocabulary in a subject or field of study. Evans & Morrison (2011: p.203) stated that there are different reasons why bilingual students cannot comprehend lectures and the most obvious one is the use of a “plethora of unfamiliar technical vocabulary” by the lecturer. They also found that students often acquire inadequate knowledge of specialist vocabulary which hindered them from adequately understanding disciplinary materials. Though, in my study the students at first year level have not begun to handle disciplinary terms in English because they have not started to offer specialized modules, hence first year students generally have to deal with advanced academic English. Therefore, I reason that if students are able to consistently and effectively deal with advanced English vocabulary during the first year, they are likely to have less difficulty understanding and appropriately using disciplinary terms in English as they progress with their university studies. Although, Cobb & Horst (2013: p.640) alluded that vocabulary is a reoccurring language challenge of bilingual students in their set academic tasks in first or second language, regardless of their study level. This clearly indicates the significance of their adopted coping strategies as students academically progress to the next study level.



In light of the language challenge of word recognition and vocabulary, I found that first year students made it an objective to develop their academic English vocabulary by making an effort to find new words and meaning but not knowing when and where to insert the new words in an essay for instance. My study finding is consistent with that of Gersten, *et al.* (2007: p.13) who pointed out that there is a difference between knowing the meaning of a new word and fittingly using such word(s) in context. They focused on the effective literacy and English language instruction for English learners, and their findings indicated that all things being equal, when the meaning of a new word is known to an English learner, this does not give assurance that he/she is aware of the correct use of the word(s) for communication or academic purposes. This implies that an educational space like the tutorial may be non-conducive for a less proficient language speaker when he/she seems not to be able to identify and find the meaning of a word or words. And any spoken or written discourse contains many words forming sentences to make a paragraph or an idea in a discourse. Therefore, without a good knowledge of English vocabulary as in the context of UWC first year undergraduate

bilingual students, it becomes difficult to develop the four academic literacy skills (speaking, listening, writing and reading). As shown in the data and presentation chapter under the theme of language related challenges, as a result of insufficient English vocabulary students came across words that were unfamiliar and were not able to appropriately use words to explain and ask questions. This restricted academic related discussions and learning for the challenged bilingual student. Incorrect spelling was found in the written tasks of participants. This indicates that perhaps those words had been newly added to the English vocabulary of the student, having also found the meaning or correct use but who was not certain how the word is spelt. I also found that the underdevelopment of bilingual English vocabulary at university level affected their reading confidence and flow of reading. Research has indicated that the slow or no recognition of words, appropriate use of new or familiar words and spelling has characterised the challenge of English vocabulary as a second language for bilingual students while learning (Gersten, *et al.*, 2007; Evans & Morrison, 2011; Robinson, 2011; Cobb & Horst, 2013). From my findings in this study, it implies that if bilingual students are not able to promptly and adequately develop their English vocabulary, academic reading and writing becomes worst in this language and students become fearful of their engagement in these two literacy skills as the use of words are unlike speaking and listening where bilingual students avoid or repeatedly use familiar words.



5.3 Type of Translanguaging strategies used by UWC's first year bilingual students

Having discussed my findings from the theme on types of language related challenges faced by UWC's first year bilingual students while learning through the medium of English, I now proceed to discuss the findings from the theme on the type of translanguaging strategies used by these students during academic collaboration. The main finding under this theme is that most of the bilingual students were not aware of the advantages of translanguaging in their collaborative learning, despite that data showed that some bilinguals were involved in speaking and listening translanguaging skills. This suggests that bilingual student's translanguaging purposively in and out of the tutorials. Though, for the Afrikaans and English bilingual students it is a norm to use their linguistic repertoire under any circumstances, considering that it is a positive step with the benefit of a successful learning outcome. This is an attribution to an unstable external cause which led the bilingual students to casually and

blatantly use translanguaging during tutorials (Harvey & Martinko, 2009). It is obvious that if this group of bilingual students did not habitually use both their languages in daily conversations, there will not have been any translanguaging practice during tutorials. The implication is that the cognitive benefit of the use of a bilingual's linguistic repertoire is not achieved. In turn, the academic development in both of the student's languages is hindered. This is because the classroom does not encourage the use of both languages of the first year UWC student.

Also from the data, I found that the majority of the bilinguals who were involved in speaking and listening translanguaging skills did so outside the classroom rather than in the classroom. For example in the data presentation and analysis chapter, I reiterated the remark of the Isi-Xhosa first language female student who affirmed that she did not use her first language in the class but told me how she had used her linguistic repertoire with some bilingual peer students outside the classroom. Out of classroom learning is also a form of academic collaboration even though my current study focused on translanguaging in the class setting. The involvement of bilingual students' translanguaging in an unofficial learning space shows that bilingual students are keenly aware of the positive impact of their linguistic resources while learning in a non-competent language (English). Since the classroom did not accommodate the languages of the first year bilingual undergraduates; they were motivated to use both their languages outside the classroom because it helped them to deal with the unclear part of the tutorial and the academic misunderstanding of the task (Chua, Wong & Chen, 2009). The data shows that bilingual students mostly use their languages during academic discussions. Thus, the only motivation for first year bilingual undergraduates to use both languages for academic learning is task oriented. Evidently, bilingual students benefited from translanguaging in their newly created space but it is disadvantageous for them because they are bound to a particular learning space and peer students. It is also time consuming because they need to first understand the academic content before proceeding to assigned tasks. Thus, it is imperative for first year bilingual undergraduate students at UWC to endeavor to improve their academic English, as they get more integrated into the world of academic English.

In my study, the data further indicates that first year bilingual students misunderstood the concept of translanguaging with code switching and code mixing. It is depicted from the findings that students assume that the interchange of both languages, rather than the simultaneous use of languages, is translanguaging. This finding is in line with the more recent study of Otheguy, García & Reid (2015: p.281) who clarifies the concept of *translanguaging* and establishes it “as a particular conception of the mental grammars and linguistic practices of bilinguals”. Also, they reiterated that translanguaging is different from code switching. I found that the use of translanguaging when bilingual students at UWC spoke or listened to peer students in the classroom, was minimal. Minimal translanguaging was evident when bilingual students used their proficient language to explain lessons that were taught and the requirement of a task amongst peer students. It also means that less effort is exerted by the university language policy body in educating and allowing students to utilize both their languages as a means to deal with the low proficiency language. However, translanguaging was not observed in the writing and reading of the bilingual students, indicating that they had a reasonable proficiency in the language of MoI. But it will have been beneficial for bilingual students to be able to apply translanguaging to their reading and writing as they did to speaking and listening for learning purposes. Though, this is another complex situation because academic literature in other languages is not available except in English. And this negatively affects translanguaging in reading and writing for first year bilingual students.

I found out in my study that there is no translanguaging space in the classrooms at UWC. This discouraged bilingual students to involve and maximally benefit from the use of translanguaging skills and they were not motivated to create a translanguaging space, either intentionally or secretly. (García, Woodley, Flores & Chu, 2012). Generally, when bilingual students construe that their learning space does not accommodate the use of both languages then it mitigates classroom translanguaging and the pedagogical benefits of translanguaging are unattainable. This suggests that for translanguaging to take place there must be a translanguaging space, either created intentionally or unintentionally. However, intentional translanguaging space produces more effective and efficient learning than the unintentional translanguaging space. Li (2011a: p.1223) refers to the translanguaging space as “The act of translanguaging then is transformative in nature; it creates a social space for the multilingual language user by bringing together different dimensions of their personal history, experience

and environment, their attitude, belief and ideology, their cognitive and physical capacity into one coordinated and meaningful performance, and making it into a lived experience”. This implies that a space for translanguaging is essential for effective pedagogy at UWC. It facilitates bilingual students, particularly first year students, to adequately manage their possible language related challenges if the space is officially provided either by the institution or by educators. On the other hand, the consequence of no translanguaging space is that first year bilingual students do not have the opportunity to develop their academic proficiency in both languages. Instead, they will be cognitively, physically and routinely conditioned to the dominating language of MoI (English). Consequently, the less academically used /preferred language becomes a threat to learning rather than an academic advantage.

Additionally, in my study, data has shown that as a result of the non-provision of a translanguaging space, the minimal translanguaging that took place amongst the Afrikaans and English bilingual students was not effective because the tutors that I observed in the tutorials were not same language speakers. For this reason, the tutor did not consider the deliberate translanguaging practice of the students. However, it was discreetly performed, not gaining the attention of tutors. This depicts that there was no academic resource support given by the tutor to the students in terms of using both languages to impact academic content and tasks (Palmer, Mateus, Martinez & Henderson, 2014). Therefore, translanguaging in any of the academic literacy skills for effectiveness asks that the translanguagers should be users of the same languages. It will also require an in-depth understanding of individuals involved in classroom translanguaging on how translanguaging strategy will facilitate successful learning and teaching. Consequently, it will increase the level of interest of students and their educators in the use of translanguaging as coping learning strategy. So, classroom translanguaging was not entirely helpful as other members in the setting, inclusive of the tutor, could not gain from the translanguaging process. Moreover, the tutor could not contribute or help a challenged bilingual student using a proficient language. If it had been that the tutor was a fluent same bilingual speaker, he/she will have grouped the struggling bilingual students according to their languages and not the proficiency of their languages. By following this process to give and to receive academic instruction is more efficient and successful for the tutor and student. And gradually the challenged bilingual student develops his/her self-esteem in academic learning, regardless of the language used. However, if the

struggling bilingual student is not able to build on his/her self-esteem within a reasonable time, it will result in the learning challenges being carried forward. All of these implications can be attributed to the improper motivation of the bilingual students and tutors (Garcia-Santillan *et al.*, 2012: p.14).

5.4 Strategies used by UWC's first year bilingual students learning in English

The findings of the data show that there was no attributed motivation by UWC bilingual undergraduate students to solely rely on translanguaging as a learning strategy for their language related difficulties learning in English. Instead, participants used four additional learning strategies namely; more communication and constant practice in the incompetent language (English), reading more academic materials in English, increase of vocabulary and use of the English dictionary and consultation with tutors and peer students. However, it was only the first two mentioned coping learning strategies that were noticeable during tutorials, communicating more in English and reading more materials in English. The use of these additional coping learning strategies alongside translanguaging implies that the strategies are beneficial to the language related challenges encountered by first year bilingual undergraduates. Importantly, I believe that it is indication of the academic motivation of my participants to be able to identify and adopt all their metacognitive learning strategies (Douche *et al.*, 2013). Also, the data confirmed that the bilingual students attribute their motivation to the benefits of the use of other coping strategies because of the corresponding three learning contexts (Ehrman *et al.*, 2003). The first context, why the first year bilingual students adopted these strategies, was that they relate well to the L2 task at hand. The second context is that the different coping strategy is appropriate for each student's learning style preferences between a degree and another and the third context is that bilingual students considered each of the strategies to be effective and convenient for combining with other relevant strategies. However, I found that the four additional coping learning strategies were adopted by bilingual undergraduates extensively outside the tutorial classrooms. As indicated earlier in theme two, minimal translanguaging as a coping learning strategy was used during tutorials. This suggests that if the use of the students' linguistic repertoire is official in the classroom, in addition to it one or more learning strategies then the practice of translanguaging will be anticipated and its use will be worthwhile as it definitely contributes

to the learning success of bilingual students. As much as the benefits of combining one or more learning strategies are enormous, the use of translanguaging in the classroom saves the time of the students and educators such that there is a relative understanding of academic content and tasks in the class which encompasses one way or the other the outlined additional learning strategies.

As I have indicated earlier in Chapter two, that translanguaging is a metacognitive strategy. I also support the view of Van der Walt & Dornbrack (2011: p.101) that Translanguaging, on the other hand, is a devising strategy that is used to “negotiate complex academic text”. However, based on my data findings, I do not totally agree with Van der Walt & Dornbrack about some of the identified patterns of translanguaging strategies that were revealed in their study on postgraduate bilinguals given the perceived mismatches. I found that in my study, my participants used dictionaries to discover the meaning and spelling of new words, notably in their struggling language (English). This is in contrast to the use of preferred languages in their study. Moreover, it should be noted that participants in my study befriend other fluent English speakers but not for the purpose of translanguaging. Rather the motivation of my participants is to acquaint themselves with the skilful use of academic English. Apparently, bilingual students took notes in the language of instruction and this is not the first language of either the lecturer or tutor. This implies that the pattern of use of translanguaging varies according to learning context and tasks.

The data finding also indicate that the first year bilingual students deemed it relevant to adopt each aforementioned learning strategy to the particular language related challenge while learning. This depicts that bilingual students expect to gain a reward for the use of appropriate adopted learning strategies (Ehrman *et al.*, 2003). The reward is a driving force in overcoming the specific language challenge. For instance, when presenting the data in the earlier chapter, I stated how reading more academic materials in English had assisted two Afrikaans female students in coping with recognizing words and increasing their academic vocabulary in English. Thus, this shows that rather than avoid the use of the difficult language, English, bilingual students invigorate themselves by learning academic English with the appropriate learning strategy. I found that the academic tasks which lay ahead of the first year bilingual students and their expectancy of progressing to the next academic year

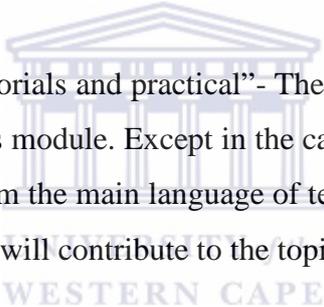
motivated them to put consistent effort into learning in English. This is similar to the finding of Chua *et al.*, (2009) who identified three dimensions to the motivation of learning a language, namely: Teacher Support, Involvement and Task Orientation. But the teacher support dimension is insignificantly established in my present study. Therefore, the expected learning outcome of bilingual students strongly determines the choice and adoption of learning strategies. To illustrate, a bilingual student whose learning challenge is the reading of academic material in English, will expect to overcome this challenge in good time and confidently. At this stage, for the bilingual student to discontinue his/her study is not an option. Rather, the student may consider the option of regular reading of academic literature in English, he can also ask proficient English readers to guide him while reading or constantly practice listening to proficient English readers and imitate how they read. Amongst the aforementioned three learning strategies, the challenged bilingual students can choose one or all of the available strategies.

Furthermore, I establish from the triangulated data that most first year bilingual students use their first language as an additional resource, especially when discussing academic content and tasks not understood but maintained their motivation to do well and improve their academic English. It shows that language identity does not always result in language use, particularly in the context of my study that language identity does not contribute to the development of the language of MoI. Also, it is realistic at the educational level of the bilingual students to become proficient in the use of academic English as it is essential for learning. This finding corroborates with those reported by Garcia & Kano (2014) and Makalela (2014) who explain that bilingual students recreate a new learning space after adopting appropriate learning strategies and this results in the adoption of their new identity. However, this does not imply that the use of their linguistic repertoire in the classroom should not be considered. It is unheard of that at university level a bilingual of English and Afrikaans or Isi-Xhosa cannot confidently use English for all academic and nonacademic purposes. I believe that the world is changing. This apparently affects the educational trend globally which is relevant to my study as it includes the language of education-English. Anecdotal evidence says that English is a language of neutrality. This denotes that the explicit use of English in a multilingual educational setting such as UWC is fair to all students, regardless of race and proficiency in English. In my own view, other first language bilingual students like

Isi-Zulu, Sepedi and Ndebele, who are not familiar with Isi-Xhosa and Afrikaans, will also choose to learn and improve their English, being the language of Instruction.

5.5 How Translanguaging strategies can complement UWC language policy

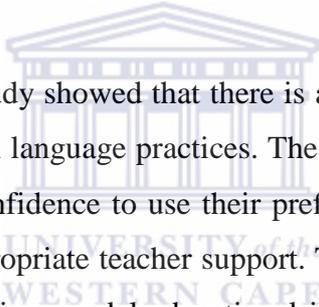
I will proceed to discuss this theme based on my research question four; can the translanguaging strategies of UWC's first year bilingual students complement UWC's language policy? To discuss this finding in-depth, it is appropriate to re-state the aspect of the UWC language policy that is supposed to accommodate the actual classroom language practices and assessment of bilingual students in its multilingual setting and how the theory of translanguaging is used in my study. According to the UWC language policy (2003: p.2), it states that:

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- i.) "Language used in lectures, tutorials and practical"- The Faculty concerned determines the language that should be used in its module. Except in the case where a lecturer is a competent user of another language apart from the main language of teaching. And also, when the use of the lecturer's competent language will contribute to the topic discussed.
 - ii.) "Languages used in the setting of tasks, assignments, tests and examination"- In this context, three official languages, (English, Afrikaans and Xhosa), are suggested for use "wherever it is practicable to do so".
 - iii.) "Languages used in writing tasks, assignments, tests and examinations" – It is emphatically stated under this heading that the language to be used is English. Except, where there is an agreement between either the students or between a class and a lecturer.
 - iv.) "Languages in which texts are available" –it is the responsibility of departments to appoint student tutors to assist students in Xhosa or Afrikaans, and English.
 - v.) "Access to Academic and Professional Discourse"- The policy states that there should be provision to "entry- level course and support services" so as to facilitate academic language learning.

From the five sub-headings of UWC's language policy, I deduced that provisions are made for the use of additional languages (Afrikaans and Isi-Xhosa) over and above the language of teaching and learning (English). However, my data findings confirmed that these provisions are not effectively used by the students and are not implemented by the university. I believe that a reasonable number of the first year bilingual students at UWC are not aware of the stipulations of the language policy. This limits them from exercising their linguistic rights in accordance with the language policy during their learning activities. For instance, sub heading one states that a lecturer who is competent in a second language can use this language as an academic resource. From my experience as a student at UWC, though not a speaker of any South African languages, I can recall a number of times that first language Afrikaans and Isi-Xhosa lecturers used either of these languages with students. The first language Afrikaans lecturers were the ones that used Afrikaans for humour and reference to non-academic discussions while teaching and not to contribute to the topic discussed. Even if this subheading were to be implemented by a second language lecturer, it will only benefit the bilingual students who speak the same language as the lecturer. Hence, what effect will the use of the lecturer's other language have on the rest of the class? This suggests that there is a barrier to the implementation of sub heading one in UWC's language policy. The condition stated in sub heading one can be helpful to both lecturer and students when the language policy includes a translanguaging space. Although, it is apparent in sub heading four of UWC's language policy that the university shifts this responsibility to each faculty. This presents a challenge to the faculties at the university. I do not have a figure of student tutors and their languages but from my experience as a student tutor in the faculty of education where I conducted research: on average the student tutors are speakers of more non South African languages than of Afrikaans. Therefore, if faculties are to actually focus on the languages of tutors especially in the other language apart from English, it will be cumbersome and very few may be Isi-Xhosa first language tutors.

This implies that the language of MoI English has gained hegemony at UWC regardless of the bilingualism resource of its students and the conditions and provisions as stated in its language policy. Likewise, it shows that the linguistic repertoire of bilingual students is perceived as a problem or threat to the students' acquisition of the world's language, namely English. It is motivating for universities to use an international language as a language of

instruction such as English; but bilingual students should also have the advantage of learning in a preferred/proficient language rather than deaden the use of their second language. However, completely learning in the bilingual student preferred language is not the best idea. Generally, native or preferred language of bilinguals is not used outside of the home country of its users. Hence, it can be disadvantageous for bilingual students who had received academic instructions in a preferred language; as such languages are not recognised outside the country of use. Consequently, future opportunities and communication of bilingual students outside the domain of preferred language use is limited. As result of the preceding motivation, I am of the view that the benefits of the use of translanguaging identified in my data should encourage the language policy makers of UWC to accommodate the linguistic repertoires of students, particularly first year undergraduates. This indicates that none of the both languages of the students will be the language of power, in a classroom that accommodates translanguaging.



The findings of this my recent study showed that there is a gap between the language policy of UWC and the actual classroom language practices. The data shows that bilingual students did not have the freedom and confidence to use their preferred first language because there was no official space nor the appropriate teacher support. This is surprising because UWC is highly rated in South Africa and is a model educational institution yet Hornberger & Vaish (2009: p.316) attested that South Africa is one of the countries that has not been able to meet the demand in the provision of language practices that officially involve the use of learners' linguistic resources in academic learning. Hence, there is a general implementation of language policies in South Africa. The long-term consequence has a negative effect on students' academic learning success and that is why recently there has been a call for the transformation of language policy in schools. Notably, I confirmed in my study that the language policy that guides UWC teaching and learning continues in this disadvantageously learning trend of the supposed beneficiaries. However, it implies that the use of English to most bilingual students is disadvantageous for instructional purpose.

Earlier in chapter two, I examined the literature on language policy and proposed to find out if UWC's language policy is considered to be transformative in nature, based on Stroud & Kerfoot's (2013) definition of a transformative language policy. My finding indicates that there is minimal pedagogy translanguaging involving codeswitching which students have used to achieve their communicative aims (Stroud & Kerfoot, 2013: p.397). Also the translanguaging occurred during peer students' interaction and not during tutor–student interaction. This suggests that there is little or no transformation in the implementation of UWC's language policy since its publication in 2003. However, the fact that there is minimal use of translanguaging between peer students only and not with tutors implies that there is a possibility for change if all strategies are well coordinated to effect the changes. This implies that if the constraint factor of UWC's language policy is not revisited, the consequence is that most students who are bilingual and their less proficient language is English cannot maximise the benefits of classroom translanguaging. Instead, as new bilingual students are admitted for undergraduate studies they continually struggle with learning in the language of instruction for the first year or throughout their study program. If the situation persists it will suggest that UWC's graduates are not adequately skilled in their respective field of study. On the other hand, bilingual students do not thoroughly comprehend topics and academic content due to the language problem. Instead, his/her effort is geared towards progressing to the next study level until graduation. Hence, most bilingual students who did not overcome their language difficulties in their first year disadvantageously proceed to the final year of undergraduate study. Also, it could impact on the credibility of UWC's graduates in the labour market.

From the triangulated data, I also found that the first year bilingual students benefited in one or more ways from the use of translanguaging, both in and outside of the tutorials. There were four outstanding benefits/ reasons for bilingual students' use of translanguaging. These include: for better understanding of oneself and others, positive contribution to academic work, comfort and motivation to participate in learning and increase language proficiency. These four aforementioned benefits suggest different implications for the learning environment of first year bilingual students. Also, the findings prove to me that if translanguaging practices are encouraged by the institution and recognised as a learning resource for bilinguals; learning becomes interesting and successful. The only contradiction to this objective is when bilingual students encounter other challenges when learning such as

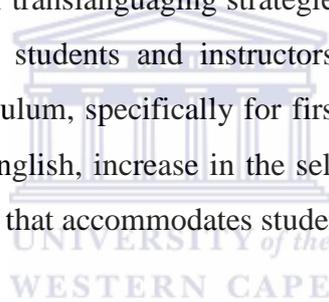
lack of finance and family support or alternatively lack of the students' own efficacy. According to Hornberger & Link (2012: p.240) "bilingual students communicate and make meaning by drawing on and intermingling linguistic features from different languages". This implies that bilingual students can sufficiently make use of any aspect of both languages in any of their academic literacy skills. This is in contrast to my current study which finds that the bilingual students made use of only their speaking and listening linguistic features. The attributed reason is that the learning space has restricted the use of the students' linguistic backgrounds. This will apparently have a diminishing effect on their involvement of a meaningful academic instruction (Yiakoumetti, 2012: p.1).

In my current study, the data has shown that translanguaging occurred more amongst peer students and that there was a reward. This does not imply that the use of translanguaging cannot benefit the instructor. The instructor (teacher/tutor) can also benefit from the use of translanguaging when teaching is effective. In this way students' learning difficulty is reduced. The students, because of the use of translanguaging by the instructor, are motivated to regularly attend classes, and to attempt and complete academic tasks. This results in successful learning and teaching. In general, the success of the instructors and students increases the reputation of the institution. On the other hand, an instructor feels the pain of his/her students when not able to assist them in fully understanding a topic of discussion as a result of the language barrier, especially when the common language is the students' less proficient language. The implication of this is that students are limited in seeking help from their instructors, instead they are forced to always bond with their peer students. This means that if the initial cordial relationship amongst peer students is broken then the struggling student suffers in many ways. This shows the importance of an instructor who shares the same linguistic repertoire as the bilingual students. I indicated earlier in chapter four under Table 4.6, that for the few that used the same languages as the tutor, their reason for the use of translanguaging was that the tutor was also a first language user of Afrikaans and it made it easier to understand academic content in this preferred language. Evidently, it was only the Afrikaans and English bilingual students that could benefit teacher support outside the classroom. From my experience as a tutor at UWC, there are a lower number of tutors who are Isi-Xhosa speakers compared to Afrikaans and other non- South African languages. This situation makes it more disadvantageous for the Isi-Xhosa and English bilingual students

since the use of their linguistic repertoires with tutors is minimal, both within and outside the classroom. Far from Creese & Blackledge's (2010: p.112) findings, the Isi-Xhosa first language users are not able to use their preferred linguistic forms with the tutors, little or no connection exists between them and how much more to have a similar commitment amongst each other. Though, the learning context is not totally strange to the first year bilingual students, particularly first language users of English and Afrikaans. They have been exposed for a long time to the two commonly used educational languages in South Africa. Yet, if at the institutional level, UWC make its language policy flexible to include the linguistic forms of its bilingual students, and not just stating conditional clauses for the use of languages, then there will be academic success alongside the development of students' bi-literacy (Garcia *et al.*, 2012).

I refer to my earlier discussion in the previous chapter on the types of translanguaging strategies. This will provide support for the significance of complementing translanguaging practice, in particular the first year bilingual students to UWC's language policy. As I have mentioned earlier, bilingual students translanguage mainly outside the classroom context. Table 4.7 (in Chapter 4), shows that 80% and more of my participants benefited academically in the use of both their languages. Even though, some bilingual students added other coping learning strategies in accordance with their language challenge. This suggests that translanguaging can be included for pedagogy purposes in UWC's language policy. I believe that if the first year bilingual student can employ speaking and listening skills in both languages freely with peer students and this contributes to their academic work; such language practice should be made official during teaching and learning activities. Moreover, if the translanguaging practices of bilingual students complement UWC's language policy, it implies that there is an inherent motivation for the bilingual students to deliberately adopt the use of their other language alongside the language of MoI for input and output of academic content (Donche *et al.*, 2013).

The complementation of translanguaging strategies in UWC's language policy may not be considered as coping learning strategies due to ineffective implementation and the existing gap in UWC's language policy (Stroud & Kerfoot, 2013). This is not surprising as my finding concurs with that of Reagan in Mesthrie, (2004: p.423) that language practices are not equitable and not in compliance with educational language policies. In my preceding discussion on the present theme, I mentioned some of the ways in which UWC's language policy implementation has avoided some of the subheadings in the policy that were supposed to encourage the use of bilingual students' other language for academic learning. Based on Table 4.3, it is apparent that first year bilingual students are more competent in the English language more than in their other language. But the same Table 4.2 indicates that there is a variance in how well bilingual students are able to use the more competent English language. This is because their ability to use English is just average. Evidently, this leads to the language related challenges that are shown in Table 4.3. The above mentioned factors lead me to believe that the complement of translanguaging strategies for UWC's language policy will yield significant benefits to the students and instructors (Probyn, 2015). These benefits include accessibility to the curriculum, specifically for first year bilingual students, who are struggling with their academic English, increase in the self-esteem of the struggling student and an improved learning context that accommodates students' linguistic resources.



As I have earlier discussed in this chapter that majority of the bilingual students' translanguage when speaking and listening outside the classroom. I believe that the use of students other language apart from the language of MoI is to their linguistic advantage in other non-academic setting. It is my logical view that the assumption of bilingual students' use of English as the official classroom language within UWC's classrooms is reasonable, on the bases that the world is going English. Generally, the knowledge and skills a student gains during the time of academic learning should be put to use outside the learning space. This shows that the students has benefitted and improved both academically and non-academically. Academic benefit and development can be described as when a student graduates from one level of study to the other or complete a study programme. It can be non-academic development when a student can relate well in a social context using his/her English competent language alongside the first language. Though, it may seem contradictory that I advocate the use of students both linguistic repertoires for academic collaboration but it

is to establish that students' proficiency in English allows such students an edge for future prospects outside of the education context. Therefore, as much as I argue that the use of both linguistic repertoires of bilingual students be used during academic collaboration, I maintain that the use of English should still be the language of MoI at UWC. This implies that in the long run struggling bilingual students will gain for academic purpose and significantly for general purposes which includes job opportunities and social competitiveness.

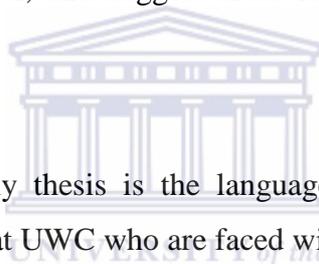
5.6 Conclusion

In this chapter, I have discussed the translanguaging strategies as coping learning strategies of bilingual students, the overriding aim of my study. I did this by unveiling my findings from the four themes that emanated from the chapter on data presentation and analysis. These four themes help me to give answers to my four research questions with a focus on first year bilingual students at UWC. With the first theme on the language related challenges, I found that the majority of first year bilingual students, during their first semester at the university, had the challenge of English MoI, which led to further academic literacy difficulty. The second theme on the translanguaging strategies used by these students, I found that due to the unrecognized translanguaging space in the classroom, very few students used their both languages in the classroom. However, most of the bilingual students involved in speaking and listening translanguaging strategies. The different ways in which the translanguaging strategies were used is the third theme. I discovered that bilingual students did not limit themselves to the use of speaking and listening translanguaging strategies. Practically, they used appropriate additional learning strategies that were relevant to specific problems. The fourth theme on how translanguaging strategies can complement UWC's language policy, I found that there is an existing gap in the provisions of the language policy and the actual classroom language practices. Despite the fact that there were conditional clauses for accommodating students preferred languages during learning and teaching, it was overlooked by instructors and students. Also, I found that those bilingual students that translanguage did so outside the classroom and the practice benefited them. In the next chapter I will state the conclusions, limitations of my study and make recommendations for further research.

CHAPTER SIX: SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Introduction

This is the concluding chapter of my study. I propose to discuss this chapter using the following structure. Firstly, I will re-examine the aim and objectives that guided my study. This is meant to allow my readership to understand and conclude as to how my research has achieved its set objectives accordingly. This will lead me to an overview of the study, summarizing my research findings that were discussed in the preceding chapter. Further to this, I reflect on the limitations of my study and what I consider as the cause of the limitations. Based on the study findings, I made recommendations for successful learning regardless of the language of MoI, and suggest areas for future research. Finally, I draw conclusions based on my thesis.



The statement of problem of my thesis is the language related challenges of first year undergraduate bilingual students at UWC who are faced with the challenges of learning in the medium of English, their less competent language. In addition, the burden of most bilingual South African students is that they are not encouraged to progress in their education due to language barriers and the effects of educational language policies at different levels. In light of this I have used, two theoretical frameworks namely, translanguaging and attribution of motivation with the concept of learning strategies in order to understand the motivation of bilingual students to use or not use translanguaging as coping learning strategies.

6.2 Research Aim and Objectives Re-examined

I have earlier stated in chapter one that the main aim of my study is to examine how effective translanguaging is as coping learning strategies used by bilingual students at University of the Western Cape (UWC). The following objectives were also set out:

- (i.) To determine the type of challenge(s) faced by UWC's first year bilingual students while learning through the medium of English at UWC.
- (ii.) To investigate and analyze the translanguaging strategies that might assist UWC's first year bilingual students during their academic collaboration.
- (iii.) To examine the different translanguaging strategies used by UWC's first year bilingual students' to help them cope with the challenges of learning in English.
- (iv.) To find out areas in which the practice of translanguaging strategies can complement the UWC language policy.

6.3 Overview of study findings

The following section on the overview of study findings discusses how the aforementioned objectives were achieved in the research.



6.3.1 Types of language related challenges

Regarding the language related challenges encountered by UWC's first year bilingual students when using English as a medium of instruction, my findings of the study reported in chapter five indicated that learning became more difficult and demanding due to the incompetency in English of the bilingual students. Likewise, the findings of my study revealed common and realistic challenges that bilingual students in similar language learning context face, regardless of their educational level. A number of language problems faced by the first year undergraduate bilinguals at UWC are as follows:

- i.) academic reading and writing
- ii.) understanding academic content and tasks in English
- iii.) not being able to understand proficient English speakers due to speaking pace and unfamiliar words
- iv.) not able to follow a different bilingual English speaker due to issues related to accent and pronunciation

v.) difficulty in confidently relating ideas and contributing during class or group activities through English as a second language

vi.) inadequate acquisition of English vocabulary

Amongst the language difficulties identified above the most problematic for the first year students were the accent and pronunciation of other English bilingual speakers, including their tutors, inexperience in the use of the English vocabulary and speaking fluent English with other bilingual speakers. More so, academic writing cannot be undermined as a problematic learning language. As in any process of acquiring a new or unfamiliar language, it is generally known that a new speaker perceives the language well before producing or linking general ideas from what is first understood. This is why, the challenge in English academic writing precedes speaking and listening difficulties. I have no doubt that academic learning is unsuccessful if a student cannot speak and express clearly academic content or ask questions. Likewise, to understand the other peer students when they speak becomes a relative clear context. It is generally believed that for academic instruction to be regarded to have been effective there ought to be evidence of the use of a common language or languages between the teacher and student. However, this common language must be well understood by the student. This scenario was contrary to the finding of my study. There is a common language that is English but it is not totally understood for instructional purpose by most first year bilingual students during their first semester. For the earlier mentioned reason, I conclude that the discussed objective is achieved.

6.3.2 Translanguaging strategies used in academic collaboration

Regarding the translanguaging strategies that first year undergraduate bilingual students' might have employed during academic collaboration, my findings of the study showed in chapter four and five that the bilingual students are involved in speaking and listening while translanguaging. In light of the study findings presented in chapter four and five my thesis has established that the speaking and listening translanguaging was minimally used during tutorial classes which were my focus of attention. This does not imply that translanguaging outside the focus area was not significant to the study. In chapter two, I reviewed theoretical

views that define my approach to academic collaboration, since, my objective is to investigate and analyze the translanguaging strategies that might assist in academic collaboration of struggling first year bilingual students with English as the medium of instruction. Therefore, on the basis of my findings, I am of a realistic view that the ongoing objective has been attained because the majority of the first year undergraduate bilingual speakers are involved in shuttling between both their languages for better understanding of lesson content, peer assistance support and completion of academic tasks. Even if, the translanguaging was performed outside my research space, the data findings cannot be disregarded.

6.3.3 Different Translanguaging Strategies

The next objective is to examine how the preceding objective helped first year bilingual students cope with the challenges of learning in English. With respect to first year undergraduate bilingual students use of different translanguaging strategies, the findings reported in chapters four and five, indicated that most of the bilingual students used both their linguistic repertoires as a medium of understanding themselves and others in relation to academic content. The findings showed that some of the Afrikaans first language students consider the use of both their languages irrespective of context, as a norm, and this led them to a deliberate and sometimes unplanned attempt to speak in their languages. However, as shown in chapter four of my study, some Isi-Xhosa participants as a way of coping with their difficulty in the use of English MoI, have formed a uniform bilingual peer student study group. One of the Isi-Xhosa first language participants in this study group mentioned that it became a routine to attend this study session because it assisted her in performing most of the academic tasks. This suggests that the language use for learning in the study group definitely had a positive impact on their academic learning. However, the study findings have revealed that there are other coping learning strategies which the first year bilingual students deem very relevant and helpful to the nature of their language difficulty. For instance, some students who find it difficult to familiarize themselves with the type of English spoken by their tutors because of accent and pronunciation, were motivated to adjust to the way of speaking and hence paid more attention when listening. Some of the participants who struggle with “big grammars” that they come across when reading or being spoken to, deem it

appropriate to first identify the new words, know the correct spelling and look up the meaning in the traditional or Google dictionary. Afterwards, the bilingual students regularly put these new words to use and gradually increase their English vocabulary. More of the different types of learning strategies used by the first year bilingual undergraduate students are presented, analyzed and extensively discussed in chapters four and five of my study. More importantly, I am inclined to believe that the majority of the first year bilingual students made use of translanguaging alongside other coping language learning strategies. And the bilingual students are motivated to progress in their academic learning regardless of the language of instruction, indicating that they are conscious of the predicted language learning challenges.

6.3.4 Areas of Complementation of Translanguaging Strategies

With regards to the fourth objective, results indicate that there is still an existing gap in UWC's language policy which is not too surprising or uncommon with previous scholarly findings. Nevertheless, the study findings have demonstrated that there are areas and logical reasons for the complement of the translanguaging practice of students at UWC, specifically first year undergraduate level into the university language policy. The study findings have revealed that most bilingual student mentioned that translanguaging space was the main hinderance to their use of translanguaging as coping learning strategies. As have I experienced in the free common areas where students interact, a reasonable number of bilingual students communicate in their mother language, not English. This suggests to me that learning for bilingual students in their common language alongside the English language will prove more resourceful and yield academic progression. It may seem expensive and in some respects impracticable to complement translanguaging as an official language resource at UWC, but the consideration of my recommendations below and the implications of neglecting the linguistic repertoires of students' (see Chapter five) may engender the policy makers at UWC to add this language to its policy.

6.4 Summary of Thesis Chapters

In order to present a sociolinguistically attuned analysis of the Translanguaging Strategies of bilingual first year students at University of the Western Cape (UWC), the previous chapters have dealt with the following discussions:

In the first chapter my readership has been introduced to the general importance of language and language for teaching and learning. An overview of the South African Language Policy on Higher Education (2002) and the University of the Western Cape Language Policy (2003) was presented. Also, I explained my problem statement that prompted investigation into the area. The chapter too presents the study aim, objectives and research questions, all of which serve as a basis for this research. Next, I highlighted the theoretical and conceptual framework to be used in the study. I related my assumptions and defined key terms to be used in the thesis. I concluded the chapter by outlining the other chapters of the thesis.

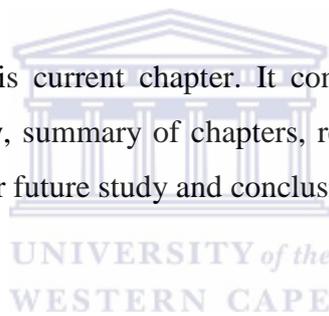
I reviewed relevant literature in Chapter two. I started the chapter by reviewing relevant literature that relates to translanguaging as the adopted learning strategies of bilingual students in an educational setting. Afterward, I critically review literature on operational concepts such as bilingual education, learning strategies, language policy, academic collaboration and translanguaging. I have then discussed the scholarly view of translanguaging strategies/ skills and their implication for bilingual education. Pursuant to this, I reviewed related literature on the patterns of use of translanguaging in the academic collaboration of bilingual students. Finally, I gave a detailed account of the Attribution theory of motivation and the relevance of its application to my investigation.

Chapter three is a presentation of the methodological approach that I used in my study. I stated the research methods used and the reasons for use of the method and also why I chose the method over the other research methods. Also, I related my sample space, size and time and my reasons for my choice of sample. However, I discuss the data collection and ethical procedures that were followed.

In Chapter four of the study, the collected data were presented and analyzed according to manual thematic codes that were based on and the same that underpinned my research questions. The sub themes which emerged from data were collected and grouped into main themes. In addition, I deliberately divided this chapter into two parts. The first part is the numeric or table like form and the reasons for the result. The second part is the narratives of the triangulated data gathered.

The fifth Chapter is the discussion on data findings in chapter four, adding to the presentation of the implications of the findings. The discussion chapter was fundamentally based on my literature review chapter and other academic readings. Most important of all, the concept of learning strategies and the theory of translanguaging and attribution of motivation were applied in the discussion.

The sixth and last chapter is this current chapter. It consists of a revisit of the research objectives, overview of the study, summary of chapters, relevance of the study, limitations, recommendations, suggestions for future study and conclusion.



6.5 Limitations of Study

I have to point out that during the process of data gathering, presentation and analysis; I faced some challenges and problems before the conclusion of my thesis. The following challenges and problems are mentioned below:

As a result of lack of time and the scope of research, my research space was limited to three classroom tutorials and thirty participants. Moreover, the thirty participants were purposively selected during data gathering using various data techniques. Therefore, I cannot say with certainty that the outcome of my study is valid. The reason for this is that the number of my participants and tutorial groups is comparatively small. Therefore, there is a need to investigate the verifiability of the same findings using a major study and a wider scope of research.

I did not consider the need to use a focus group during data collection. As a result, it was challenging for me to clearly record the spoken discourse of a few of the Afrikaans and English bilingual students during the tutorials. I was only able to observe their gestures and mood alongside which languages were used by the identified bilingual students. Not having a focus group limited students' use of their linguistic resources. Therefore, I do not want to generalize that translanguaging is not an effective coping learning strategy for the language related difficulty of first year bilingual undergraduate students. Moreover, the number of research participants and observed tutorial groups is incomparable to the total number of first year undergraduate tutorial groups.

The classroom participation of the Isi-Xhosa first language bilingual students was not encouraging, even though during my interviews with them it was better. Yet if they had participated freely like their Afrikaans first language bilingual peer students, data findings would have been different. As I pointed out in Chapter three, I believe they were not motivated to use their languages and were timid due to their incompetency in English. If they had an average level of bi-literacy then translanguaging may have been considered during tutorials.

I found it difficult to analyze my research question three which is on how do the different translanguaging strategies used by UWC's first year bilingual students help them cope with the challenges of learning in English? This question became difficult for me because the data gathered indicated minimal use of translanguaging and more use of other suitable metacognitive coping learning strategies such as familiarizing self with the accent and pronunciation of others, more communication in English (the incompetent language) and more academic reading. I was hesitant to add these strategies to the two identified translanguaging strategies outside the classroom but did so for academic collaboration. I think that if I would have focused on the particular translanguaging strategies of the first year bilingual students in the same research space, my findings would have been more accurate.

The language of tutors whose tutorial classes from where I used to collect my data is another limitation to my study. This refers back to the limitation of the focus group. If the tutor's languages were the same languages as my participants, translanguaging may have been effective coping learning strategies for the struggling bilingual students. Also, there is possibility of teacher support in any or both languages.

Based on some of the challenges that I encountered during data collection and data findings in Chapter five of my study, I will proceed to suggest ways to encourage the complementation of the language practice of translanguaging at UWC, particularly for first year bilingual undergraduate students who may be struggling with learning in English.

6.6 Recommendations

This section of the chapter is based on literature that was earlier reviewed in Chapter two and the major study findings. My study therefore proposes the following recommendations:

1. UWC's language policy (2003) should be reviewed as the data findings confirm a gap between the actual classroom practices and the stipulations of the policy. It will yield a positive outcome for both teaching and the learning process should the University put into practice the conditional clauses that are stated in its policy.

2. After the review of UWC's language policy, there should be flexibility in implementation, so that the policy can benefit both the lecturers and students. In my own view, I say that had lecturers and tutors been flexible in their use of students linguistic repertoires during classroom discourse, students would have been encouraged to follow the trend.

3. Based on the previous suggestions, UWC should use students' linguistic repertoires officially during the process of teaching and learning. The data under theme two and three in the discussion chapter shows that most bilingual students view that the use of any other

language apart from English is inappropriate. Therefore, I would recommend that the University should begin the process of transformation using a focus group of students, for example, all the first year bilingual students. This will in turn encourage the use of translanguaging, most importantly, when students are receiving academic instructions. By the same token, it will improve the academic learning of bilingual students.

4. Unlike the avoided conditional clauses in UWC's current language policy (2003), the University language policy makers/reviewers should introduce translanguaging practice as a mandatory complementary strategy. To reduce the seemingly side effect(s) of translanguaging in a multilingual educational setting such as UWC, I recommend that classroom translanguaging should be practiced in two more official languages that are common to the Western province in which the university is located. These languages are Afrikaans and Isi-Xhosa; these will be simultaneously used with English, the language of instruction. And realistically, these aforementioned languages are commonly used by students in the school catchment areas.

5. It is apparent that the process of transformation does not accrue easily. For this reason, the University should begin the complementation of translanguaging during teaching and learning of first year undergraduate levels and across all its faculties. I believe that the first year students are more challenged when learning in academic English and facing increased academic knowledge and tasks.

6. Still on the pros and cons of the process of transformation, it is an extra cost and more resources are needed to initiate students' linguistic repertoires but as discussed in Chapter two of the thesis, it is more rewarding in the long run. Therefore, the university should begin the process by speaking and listening in/via students' and instructors' preferred languages. More importantly, the UWC language policy makers can consider Translanguaging in terms of speaking and listening skills during academic communication. This can save the cost of producing academic materials in Afrikaans and Isi-Xhosa.

7. It is evident that there are tutorial programmes in place at UWC to assist and encourage students learning. It will result in the same situation when the language of instruction is a problem. For this reason, the university, through its faculties and departments, should divide new first year students into tutorial groups according to their competent language of instruction (English, Afrikaans or Isi-Xhosa), although, main lectures will be given in English and the lecturer's language. These groupings will assist the students who may be challenged with the English medium of Instruction to ask and understand better the difficult aspects of the task or lesson. Moreover, students will not have to be over dependent on peer students to understand academic content and perform tasks.

8. Based on the literatures that I reviewed in Chapter two, there is no doubt that translanguaging yields good results. These include bi-literacy, academic learning success, students' self-esteem and motivation to learn. I believe that the struggling students must have benefited from their classroom translanguaging in the first academic year. Accordingly the university should integrate all previous first year students into the English medium of instruction in their second year of study. Yet, there should be departmental provision to monitor the academic progress of the students who had participated in classroom translanguaging. This will assist the department in determining the coping level of students when there is only English as the medium of instruction. This follow-up process should be intensified by delegated staff members of the departments.

9. The University of the Western Cape should provide an academic forum in which first year students are oriented on how to deal with academic work despite their challenge of learning in a low competency language. At this forum, the facilitators should educate newly admitted students on the types and benefits of using learning strategies, focusing on translanguaging. Based on this knowledge, students can develop an interest in adopting a translanguaging strategy that can/will help them cope with their learning difficulties during their first year study at the university.

10. Each faculty at UWC should be charged with the responsibility of conducting formative assessments before or after admitting students, according to their capability in using English for academic learning at university level. This will provide useful information for the faculty and the university as regards to the administration and provision of learning resources for different groups of students' English proficiency. Generally, for effective learning to occur, students ought to first understand lesson content, then the student can proceed with other academic tasks. Hence, there is a need to be able to identify students that are willing to acquire a university degree but who may be discouraged because of the language of instruction.

11. As revealed in Table 4.4 and Table 4.6, (in Chapter 4) the data established the significance of lecturers and tutors who are the same bilingual speakers as the students. It thus encourages teacher support to students. The university should encourage postgraduate first language speakers of Afrikaans and Isi-Xhosa to participate in the tutoring programme. The prospective first language speakers of Afrikaans and Isi-Xhosa tutors can cater for the grouped struggling students in their first year. These tutors should also be trained on how to use their linguistic repertoires for maximum benefit of the struggling bilingual students. This should be emphasized to the tutors because the effectiveness of their translanguaging practice will be reflected in the coping level of the students they may have tutored, during their second year when English is the only medium of instruction.

6.7 Suggestions for future research

This study proposes further research areas for augmenting our understanding of this domain of inquiry and its beneficial implications in our educational practices of language teaching. For instance, there is a need to determine the effect of translanguaging strategies on the academic learning of bilingual students, who are not competent enough in the language that is used as the medium of instruction, by studying a focus group. Another area of academic investigation is to investigate into the role of teacher language support in classroom translanguaging by looking at new first year English second language undergraduate students.

Also, further research is needed to comprehend the perceptions and attitudes of undergraduate bilingual students towards the use of classroom translanguaging. Another researchable area may be “the use of speaking and listening versus reading and writing (in) translanguaging how to cope with academic English instruction” particularly in undergraduate study. Or “can translanguaging be effectively used as an intervention tool for undergraduate students who are less competent in English?”

6.8 Conclusion

In my study, it is apparent that most first year bilingual undergraduate students would have adapted translanguaging strategies in the classroom if there had been an official space for it. The focus of my study was on first year bilingual students during the first term at UWC. However, the benefits of translanguaging cannot be measured, but, it is evident in the academic collaboration of bilingual students outside of the classroom. From the data, I identified language related challenges of the bilingual participants which mainly relate to their proficiency in the English medium of instruction. The most common type of language challenge, if not given proper attention by the university and students themselves, is the difficulty in the use of academic English. It may be inevitable for all students, regardless of language proficiency, to be equipped with the use of academic English for literacy purposes. My study has shown that the most used translanguaging skill was speaking. It is obvious that bilingual students, when involved in speaking both their languages, must listen to one another. Although, data shows that Afrikaans first language students translanguage minimally in the classroom, the Isi-Xhosa first language students did not attempt to be involved in the language practice. Additionally, as indicated in the data, it is obvious that most Isi-Xhosa first language students translanguage in their selected academic group of peer students. For these Isi-Xhosa first language speakers, translanguaging has assisted them immensely to deal with the challenge of English medium of instruction. The data also verifiably show that other coping learning strategies include more communication in English, increasing one’s English vocabulary and the meaning, and familiarizing with the accent and pronunciation of other bilingual English speakers. In my study, translanguaging and the above mentioned strategies are all viewed and described as metacognitive learning strategies. The data indicate that

translanguaging contributed one way or the other to the academic learning success of first year bilingual undergraduate students. The data also revealed that the majority of the participants involved in translanguaging between their peer students, showed the effect of academic collaboration as a learning resource. In the context of my study, I argue that the motivation of first year undergraduate bilingual students to adapt coping learning strategies, should also motivate the recognized use of translanguaging in the classroom and lecture halls. Yet, it does not mean that the use of English as the medium of instruction should not maintain its hegemonic position, considering the global trend in the use of English. I argue for a balanced use of both linguistic repertoires of undergraduate students, at least for the sole aim of integrating them into advanced academic English during the first year at university.



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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: INFORMATION SHEET

Researcher: Mrs Damilola .I. Joseph

Contact number: 0739323995

Email: 3371575@myuwc.ac.za

Institution: University of the Western Cape, Faculty of Education, Bellville, South Africa

Dear Sir/Madam,

My name is Damilola .I. Joseph. I am a Masters student in the Language Education Department, Faculty of Education at the University of the Western Cape. I am conducting research on translanguaging as a coping learning strategy used by some bilingual first students at University of the Western Cape (UWC), where the language of medium of instruction is students' low proficient language.

Research Title: A Sociolinguistic Analysis of the Translanguaging Strategies of some Bilingual first year Students at University of the Western Cape (UWC)

The specific objectives are:

- (i.) To determine the forms of challenge(s) faced by bilingual students learning in a less proficient language at UWC.
- (ii.) To investigate and analyze the translanguaging strategies that might assist bilingual students cope with learning in a less proficient language at UWC.
- (iii.) To examine the patterns of use of translanguaging strategies on academic collaboration of bilingual students' at UWC.
- (iv.) To find out areas in which the practice of translanguaging strategies differs to the stipulations of the UWC language policy.

The overriding aim of this study is to examine translanguaging and how its use is effective as coping learning strategies by some bilingual students at UWC. The aim is to demonstrate

how bilingual undergraduate students use translanguaging to deal with the difficulty of learning academic content in a less proficient language of MOI.

Notably, research participation is not mandatory. The research participants who are thirty (30) first year bilingual undergraduate students from an EDC 111 (Language and Literacy) module can decide not to participate at any given time of the data collection process. All information collected from the students will be kept strictly anonymous and will not interrupt participant's privacy.

In case there is need for further explanation on the study, kindly contact me on the above details.

THE RESEARCHER: SIGNATURE:

DATE: -----



APPENDIX B: PERMISSION LETTER TO EDC 111- Literacy and Numeracy Module LECTURER

5, Mark Close,
Kuilsriver, Cape Town.
7580

The Lecturer of EDC 111 Module,
University of the Western Cape,
Faculty of Education,
Bellville, Cape Town.

Dear Sir/Madam

Permission to conduct research on EDC 111- Literacy and Numeracy Module



My name is Damilola .I. Joseph. I am a Masters student in the Language Education Department, Faculty of Education at the University of the Western Cape. I am conducting research on translanguaging as a coping learning strategy used by some bilingual first students at University of the Western Cape (UWC), where the language of medium of instruction is students' low proficient language. My research title is: A Sociolinguistic Analysis of the Translanguaging Strategies of some Bilingual first year Students at University of the Western Cape (UWC).

The overriding aim of this study is to examine translanguaging and how its use is effective as coping learning strategies by some bilingual students at UWC. The aim is to demonstrate how bilingual undergraduate students use translanguaging to deal with the difficulty of learning academic content in a less proficient language of MOI.

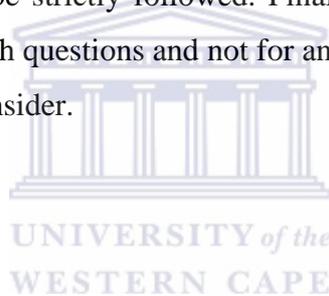
My participants and interviewees will be first year undergraduate bilingual students from the Faculty of Education, offering EDC 111 module. I would like to request your permission to

conduct research during your lecture periods and EDC 111 three tutorial group sessions in this term. I will closely observe two out of the three tutorial groups. The closed classroom observations are particularly meant to examine various translanguaging strategies of the bilingual student and the pattern of use of the mentioned strategies by the research participants during academic collaboration, in this case is the observed classroom. A number of the participants will be interviewed. My question guide for the interview through open-ended questions will be tailored towards the effectiveness and contribution of the translanguaging strategies towards their academic work. I will also look at the students' written work to achieve the goals of this study.

I assure you that the investigation will not disrupt your lecture periods and the tutorial classes will be judiciously used for data collection in a manner that there is no interference with teaching and learning. Similarly, all ethical principles in part: confidentiality, anonymity, accountability and privacy will be strictly followed. Finally, all data gathered will only be used in the analysis of my research questions and not for any other personal purpose.

I hope that my request will be considered.

Yours sincerely



Damilola .I. Joseph

Student Number: 3371575

Email: 3371575@myuwc.ac.za

PERMISSION LETTER TO EDC 111- Literacy and Numeracy Module TUTOR

5, Mark Close,
Kuilsriver, Cape Town.
7580.

The Tutor of EDC 111 Module (Group xx),
University of the Western Cape,
Faculty of Education,
Bellville, Cape Town.

Dear Sir/Madam

Permission to conduct research on EDC 111- Literacy and Numeracy Module

My name is Damilola .I. Joseph. I am a Masters student in the Language Education Department, Faculty of Education at the University of the Western Cape. I am conducting research on translanguaging as a coping learning strategy used by some bilingual first students at University of the Western Cape (UWC), where the language of medium of instruction is students' low proficient language. My research title is: A Sociolinguistic Analysis of the Translanguaging Strategies of some Bilingual first year Students at University of the Western Cape (UWC).

The overriding aim of this study is to examine translanguaging and how its use is effective as coping learning strategies by some bilingual students at UWC. The aim is to demonstrate how bilingual undergraduate students use translanguaging to deal with the difficulty of learning academic content in a less proficient language of MOI.

My participants and interviewees will be first year undergraduate bilingual students from the Faculty of Education, offering EDC 111 module. The module lecturer, Mr/Mrs ... has granted me permission to use any of the module tutorial groups for my research. I would also like to request your permission to conduct research during your tutorial classes this term. I

will closely the tutorial groups. The closed classroom observations are particularly meant to examine various translanguaging strategies of the bilingual student and the pattern of use of the mentioned strategies by the research participants during academic collaboration in this case is the observed classroom. I will also look at the students' written work to achieve the goals of this study.

I assure you that the investigation will not disrupt your tutorial classes and will cautiously collect my data. In such manner that it will not interfere with teaching and learning. Similarly, all ethical principles in part: confidentiality, anonymity, accountability and privacy will be strictly followed.

Finally, all data gathered will only be used in the analysis of my research questions and not for any other personal purpose.

I hope that my request will be considered.

Yours sincerely



Damilola .I. Joseph

Student Number: 3371575

Email: 3371575@myuwc.ac.za

PERMISSION LETTER TO EDC 111- Literacy and Numeracy Module STUDENTS

5, Mark Close,
Kuilsriver, Cape Town.
7580.

EDC 111 Students, (Group xx),
University of the Western Cape,
Faculty of Education,
Bellville, Cape Town.

Dear Sir/Madam

Permission to conduct research on EDC 111- Literacy and Numeracy Module

My name is Damilola .I. Joseph. I am a Masters student in the Language Education Department, Faculty of Education at the University of the Western Cape. I am conducting research on translanguaging as a coping learning strategy used by some bilingual first students at University of the Western Cape (UWC), where the language of medium of instruction is students' low proficient language. My research title is: A Sociolinguistic Analysis of the Translanguaging Strategies of some Bilingual first year Students at University of the Western Cape (UWC).

The overriding aim of this study is to examine translanguaging and how its use is effective as coping learning strategies by some bilingual students at UWC. The aim is to demonstrate how bilingual undergraduate students use translanguaging to deal with the difficulty of learning academic content in a less proficient language of MOI.

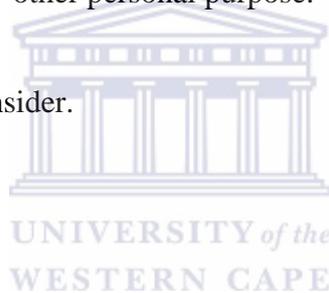
My participants and interviewees will be first year undergraduate bilingual students from the Faculty of Education, offering EDC 111 module. The module lecturer, Mr/Mrs ... has granted me permission to use any of the module tutorial groups for my research. I would also like to request your permission to conduct research during your tutorial classes this term. Depending on your willingness to participate in this research, participants will help complete

questionnaires. For those that voluntarily want to participate in the interview, my question guide for the interview through open-ended questions will be tailored towards the effectiveness and contribution of the translanguaging strategies towards their academic work. I will closely observe the tutorial groups. The closed classroom observations are particularly meant to examine various translanguaging strategies of the bilingual student and the pattern of use of the mentioned strategies by the research participants during academic collaboration in this case is the observed classroom. I will also look at your written work to achieve the goals of this study.

I assure you that the investigation will not disrupt your tutorial classes and I will cautiously collect my data in a manner that there is no interference with teaching and learning. Similarly, all ethical principles in part: confidentiality, anonymity, accountability and privacy will be strictly followed. Finally, all data gathered will only be used in the analysis of my research questions and not for any other personal purpose.

I hope that my request will be consider.

Yours sincerely



Damilola .I. Joseph

Student Number: 3371575

Email: 3371575@myuwc.ac.za

APPENDIX C: CONSENT LETTER FOR EDC 111 MODULE’S LECTURER

Researcher: Mrs Damilola .I. Joseph

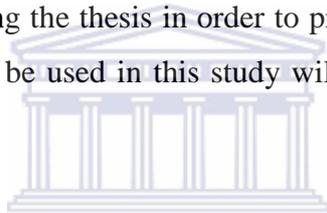
Contact number: 0739323995

Email: 3371575@myuwc.ac.za

Institution: University of the Western Cape, Faculty of Education, Bellville, South Africa

Research Title: A Sociolinguistic Analysis of the Translanguaging Strategies of some Bilingual first year Students at University of the Western Cape (UWC)

The study was explained to me clearly and I understand that the presence of the researcher will not disrupt or interfere with the functioning of the school. Participation in this study is voluntary and I have the right to withdraw at any stage of research. All information will be treated confidentially when writing the thesis in order to protect my identity. I promised that my permission to let the module be used in this study will not risk my personal image and that of the school.



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WESTERN CAPE

The Lecturer’s Name:

Signature:

Date:

CONSENT LETTER FOR THE TUTOR

Researcher: Mrs Damilola .I. Joseph

Contact number: 0739323995

Email: 3371575@myuwc.ac.za

Institution: University of the Western Cape, Faculty of Education, Bellville, South Africa

Research Title: A Sociolinguistic Analysis of the Translanguaging Strategies of some Bilingual first year Students at University of the Western Cape (UWC)

I hereby give consent to the researcher to do observations in my tutorial class.

The study was explained to me clearly and I understand that the presence of the researcher will not disrupt or interfere with my daily classroom practices. Participation of my class in this study is voluntary and I have the right to withdraw at any stage of research. All information will be treated confidentially when writing the thesis in order to protect my identity. I promised that my classroom participation in this study will not risk my job and my personal image will not be damaged.

Tutor's Name: (Group) Signature:

Date:

University of the Western Cape, Bellville, Cape Town.

Participants' Consent Form for Thesis Title:

A SOCIOLINGUISTIC ANALYSIS OF THE TRANSLANGUAGING STRATEGIES OF SOME BILINGUAL FIRST YEAR STUDENTS AT UNIVERSITY OF THE WESTERN CAPE (UWC).

Researcher: Damilola .I. Joseph

Please initial box

1. I confirm that I have read and understand the information sheet explaining the above research project and I have had the opportunity to ask questions about the project.
2. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without giving any reason and without there being any negative consequences. In addition, should I not wish to answer any particular question or questions, I am free to decline.
(If I wish to withdraw I may contact the lead researcher at any time)
3. I understand my responses and personal data will be kept strictly confidential. I give permission for members of the research team to have access to my anonymised responses. I understand that my name will not be linked with the research materials, and I will not be identified or identifiable in the reports or publications that result for the research.
4. I agree for the data collected from me to be used in future research.
5. I agree for to take part in the above research project.

Name of Participant Date Signature
(or legal representative)

Name of person taking consent Date Signature
(If different from lead researcher)

Damilola . I. Joseph

Lead Researcher Date Signature
(To be signed and dated in presence of the participant)



Copies: All participants will receive a copy of the signed and dated version of the consent form and information sheet for themselves. A copy of this will be filed and kept in a secure location for research purposes only.

APPENDIX D
ACADEMIC TASKS OF BILINGUAL STUDENTS



THE TRANSITION FROM HIGH SCHOOL TO UNIVERSITY

The transition from high school to university might be a bit easier on some than it is for others. In the following essay I will be speaking about just that, considering the highs and lows that some students might have had to deal with and also about what the change in the environment does to them.

Many people consider high school as "difficult". Saying that it's all sweat and tears, especially in your Grade 11 and Grade 12 years. But me? Right now I would say that I had the time of my life in high school, compared to the academic life I got introduced to this year. In other words, let us just say that high school was more like a humongous five year party. Assignments needn't be handed in on set out dates as teachers would nag learners until they've completed it. The school would come up with ways to create "extra credit" in the form of mini-class tests or little "catch up" assignments just to ensure that your final grades went up in order for you to progress to the next term or grade.

Group work was suffice to all those lazy learners as they would force themselves into groups with hardworking, nerdy-looking peers, knowing that those are the learners who are dedicated and hardworking, leaving them as lazy peers to just sit back and relax while reaping the rewards when the final marks were given.

Oh, and do not forget the most important part, that for some or other reason, high school kids always had some amount of money in their pockets!

Now compare all those things to the life of a university student.

Real sweat and tears, as you get floundered with tasks, assignments and tutorials that has to be done in a very specific manner with very precise due dates.

And do not even dream of submitting assignments after its prescribed due date. Immediate 10% deduction for everyday late!

Did I also mention that no one really cares about you or what you are doing?

Lecture halls are so big that no one even notices if you are attending class or not.

as both an opportunity and a challenge as now you will be finding who you really are. Adjusting to what other students see as a fragment and isolated learning is such a big challenge on its own as you become a "nobody but just a number" you are really insignificant, there are no consequences and no help in university but at a later stage you get to see that there are a lot of consequences as you fail if you do not adapt quickly even though you hardly get any help from anyone.

Who watches you? Who notices you at university? Parker (2006) asked learners at school, and they said "you are used to being someone, being noticed and being watched in here though there is just structure everywhere, whereas at school teachers would help you with everything and guide you through the year so that you can do well in your exams". University modules at first do not really give a sign or something that gives you a hint on what to expect on that particular course you are taking, it's all on to you to know what you want to do.

if you were lucky or you are to know get to know the varsity life quick enough, then you get to see that there is some kind of help of which you get and it is extremely helpful as it will take you from a point of not knowing anything or one can say from a point where you do not understand much of the work to a point where you can actually feel comfortable, as stated by Hoyles (2001) this then help comes as form of a tutoring system, of which one never really had at school but if you were in a family that could afford to get you one then you were lucky because now this wouldn't be any harder to them.

At this point the process of getting in the university vibe or mode then becomes a bit easier and nicer as now the lecturers also offer to give you some individual time with them to discuss whatever was unclear to you in class and as you get to know them they are easily approachable as one would not have imagined it to be. For me this experience has been something that has taught me a lot as it was difficult at first and also the point of isolation also got to me at some stage but that was just for a little time. The transition has not been smooth but I guess to me it was not as bad because before I could attend university I gained a little experience on how to be independent.

According to Parker (2004), as time goes by you get to know the campus even though, at first it was one of those nightmares. As some students are not so much on the talking side. It becomes quite a challenge now to suddenly approach someone and asking for direction, for instance if you are someone who is new in a place and getting lost all the time. People at first find it really hard to adjust, As they get to struggle a lot but when they get motivated and finally get to know the campus, they then start to see everything fall in place now. It turns out to look like they have been there for a long time, as they get to know where to find help when they need it and where to go when something is not clear maybe in a lecture or in the textbooks they can just consult their tutors for the help. To some extent it has been proven that it is not an easy time for the students to cope with all the pressure especially if they were not used to the resources that one finds at this level.

The transition though is not easy as the records have shown in the past it takes a well motivated person and someone who is eager to learn in order for you to have what it takes to last in university. Not everyone makes it to this point so the freedom you get when you must know how to utilise it in order for you to succeed in university.

Name of student : Theo Samkelo Bam

Student number : 3574383

Lecturer : Ms. Michelle Van Heerden

Tutor : Caven

major assignment

The Transition from High school to university

The very first when one comes to this new life, it's as confusing as ever worse of all if you have never been exposed to such facilities. To someone who has never went to get himself a school he panics to a point where it just gets boring and most importantly if that particular person is a shy person, then it's a nightmare for him as he would have to ask a lot of people where to find certain venues in the campus. The transition to university from high school is no simple as it comes with a lot of challenges. The most thing that gets to people is that you are not prepare for what's coming ahead of you in high so it all depends on how you adapt to the new life.

According to Hoyles(2001), the lack of preparation and weak curriculum at secondary level contributes to this in such a way that students end up being drop outs before they can even finish the first year. As the pressure gets to them and they cannot really cope at this level as the work load gets to be too big for them. Some find it hard to adapt as they come to university with no friends or someone who they know. They need guidance at this stage but they hardly get any as they do not know anyone. It is been proven that isolation for most of the students coming from high school is the major problem, as they try to adapt to the new things this becomes what troubles them the most.

When learners at the grade of 11 and 12 were asked by Peel (2000), what do they expect learning would be like in varsity the most frequent answer to come up was the fact that (studying would be more individualised) . the other issue that came about was the independency that seemed to be a problem as they were used to abide by the rules given by their parents now there would be no parents which meant that now things would either be hard for them as now they have to be well taught at home or they would eventually turn into something they never really thought they can be because of the much freedom they have.

To some students varsity can be daunting, uncaring and a cruel place to be as no one is telling you what to do next or how to go about your business when you want to succeed in university. Clearly they great deal of freedom at university is perceived by Marlamd (2003)

Repetitive

way. It is completely different from how things are done in high school. You have to print your own tasks and assignments because no one will do it for you. You are completely independent if you like it or not (Friedlander, et al, 2007). Even the essays are different from that which I am use to writing. Almost everything is done on a computer. You have your own student e-mail account, which you have to check every day. Technology plays a big role in the life of a scholar.

Furthermore, when it comes to the challenges I have to say that it is referencing. I did not know what plagiarism was before coming to university. In high school we would write essays and that would be that. You sucked everything from your thumb or just used someone else's story. But at university you have to do research on each topic and reference every thought. Which is very challenging and stressful at the same time. You do not know if the words you are using ^{was} used before. You have to be extra careful. Another challenge would be finding your way with the computers (Austin, 2002). We have access to computers but if you are not fast enough you end up without a computer. As a first year student you do not really know what to do at first, but adapt easily.

In conclusion, being a first year at university is challenging. It is just another phase we go through if chosen. Some challenges are more difficult than others. But once you know your way there is nothing standing in your way. Every challenge can and will be conquered one way or another.

Proofread your work before submitting as this will enable you to avoid unnecessary mistakes such as the repetition of the same sentence

Lee Benting

3502859

EDC III

Tutorial Prep 4

1. ... (Richards 2006). Richards (2006)

eg. According to (Richards 2006)

2. & ... Feez and Joyce (1998) ✓

eg. ... Feez and Joyce (1998) states that ...

3. ... (Gee 1999, p.20)

eg. "Language has ...
" therefore (Gee 1999, p.20)
states that ...

9/10

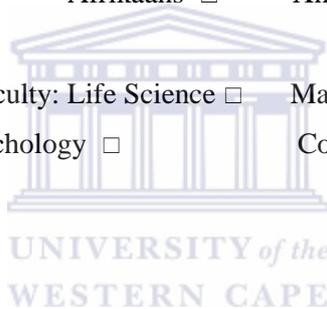
APPENDIX E: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR THESIS TITLE

A SOCIOLINGUISTIC ANALYSIS OF THE TRANSLANGUAGING STRATEGIES OF SOME BILINGUAL FIRST YEAR STUDENTS AT UNIVERSITY OF THE WESTERN CAPE (UWC)

SECTION A: Please tick your options.

Demographic / Background information

1. Gender: Male Female
2. Home/first language: English Afrikaans Xhosa Other _____
(Mention)
3. Second language: English Afrikaans Xhosa Other _____
(Mention)
4. Department in Education Faculty: Life Science Mathematics & Science
Language & Literacy Psychology Comparative Studies



SECTION B: Please write in detail your answer to the following questions.

5. Where do you use your first language?

.....

6. When do you use your first language?

.....

.....

.....

7. Where do you use your second language?

.....

.....

8. When do you use your second language?

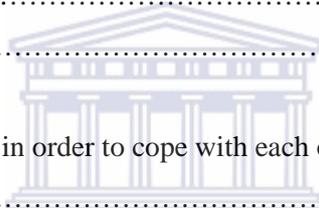
.....
.....

9. In which of the two languages are you more competent (your first/second language)?

.....
.....

10. What language related challenges do you face/experience during tutorials or sessions with peer students?

.....
.....
.....



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10.1. Explain the strategies you use in order to cope with each of the challenges listed above?

.....
.....
.....

11. Are there occasions where you simultaneously use both your first and second languages during tutorials?

.....
.....
.....

11.1. Please explain the reason why you simultaneously use both languages?

.....
.....
.....

12. Do you ever use your first language during tutorials?

.....
.....

12.1 If yes, is it with your group members?

.....
.....

12.2 If yes, is it with your tutor?

.....
.....

12.3. If yes, is it with your group members and tutor?

.....
.....

13. Why do you use this language?



13.1. With your group members

.....
.....

13.2. With your tutor

.....
.....

13.2. With your group members and tutor

.....
.....