

**LANGUAGE VARIATION AND CHANGE IN A SOSHANGUVE HIGH SCHOOL**

BY

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## DECLARATION

I declare that LANGUAGE VARIATION AND CHANGE IN A SOSHANGUVE HIGH SCHOOL is my own work and that all the resources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete reference.

Signature: .....

Date:..... 2008

D.M. Nkosi.

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## SUMMARY

This study takes place within a school situated on the north eastern side of Soshanguve, a township to the north of the capital city, Pretoria, also called Tshwane. The school draws most of its learners from an area that started as an informal settlement. Certain parts of this settlement are now well structured and it is gradually becoming a formal settlement. The children who form part of this study are those whose parents have migrated from neighbouring provinces such as Limpopo, North West and Mpumalanga, as well as from neighbouring countries such as Zimbabwe and Mozambique. Owing to this migration, the community around this school is multilingual. Multilingualism has led to phonic, grammatical, semantic and stylistic language interference. This interference has caused language change, which in turn has led to variations that affect the standard form of Sesotho sa Lebowa, the first language of the school.

The school selected for this study has achieved very average matriculation results since its establishment in 1994. Although the school generally achieves a 100% pass rate in the subject Sesotho sa Lebowa, marks are generally low despite the fact that the learners are supposedly first language speakers of Sesotho sa Lebowa. The aim of this study is to investigate the reasons for the poor quality of these results. Matriculation results over the past four years attest to the fact that something needs to be done in order to reverse the negative trend of these results.

## KEY TERMS

Bilingualism, Interference, Adoption/Borrowing, Language varieties, Code switching, Code mixing, Phonological process, Tsotsitaal.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Declaration	ii
Acknowledgements	iii
Summary	v
Key terms	vi
<b>CHAPTER 1: ORIENTATION OF STUDY</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1 Introduction	1
1.2 Motivation for the choice of topic	1
1.3 Limitations of study	2
1.4 Research problem	2
1.5 Description of Kgadime Matsepe matriculation results	4
1.6 Research aim	8
1.7 Research questions	9
1.8 Definition of terms	10
1.9 Overview of the study and outline of chapters	14
1.10 Conclusion	14
<b>CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE STUDY OF LANGUAGE CHANGE AND VARIATIONS</b>	<b>15</b>
2.1 Introduction	15
2.2 Guidelines for educational research	16
2.3 Language variation and change	17
2.4 Language interference	18
2.5 Language varieties	19
2.6 Discourse and speech varieties	21
2.7 Language and reading	22
2.8 Language and development	23
2.9 Language change in adulthood	24
2.10 Conclusion	24

<b>CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY</b>	25
3.1. Introduction	25
3.2 Research approach	25
3.3 Research procedure and strategies	27
3.4 Description of research population	29
3.5 Data analysis	30
3.6 Ethics in research	30
3.7 Conclusion	30
<b>CHAPTER 4: EMPIRICAL FINDINGS AND INTERPRETATION OF EMPIRICAL DATA ON LANGUAGE CHANGE AND VARIATION OF KGADIME MATSEPE HIGH SCHOOL</b>	32
4.1. Introduction	32
4.2. Description of empirical survey	32
4.3 Findings from educators' questionnaire	33
4.4 Interpretation of the findings from educators' questionnaire	38
4.5 Findings from parents' questionnaire	38
4.6 Interpretation of the findings from parents' questionnaire	48
4.7 Findings from learners' questionnaires	49
4.8 Interpretation of findings from learners' questionnaire	60
4.9 Findings from learner interviews	60
4.10 Interpretation of findings from learner interviews	68
4.11 Findings obtained qualitatively from learners' essays	68
4.12 Interpretation of the findings obtained from learners' essays	81
4.13 Conclusion	81
<b>CHAPTER 5: SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION</b>	82
5.1 Introduction	82
5.2 The aim of the study	82
5.3 Summary of the findings	82
5.4. Conclusions	84
5.5 Recommendations	86
5.6 Suggestions for further research	87
<b>BIBLIOGRAPHY</b>	89



## **LIST OF TABLES**

Table 1: Sesotho sa Lebowa matriculation results	4
Table 2: Results of 2002	5
Table 3: Results of 2003	5
Table 4: Results of 2004	6
Table 5: Results of 2005	6-7
Table 6: Home language of parents	40-41
Table 7: Age of grade 10 learners	49
Table 8: Age of grade 11 learners	49
Table 9: Age of grade 12 learners	50
Table 10: Gender of learners	51
Table 11: Home language of learners	51-52
Table 12: Benefits of studying Sesotho sa Lebowa	56
Table 13: Ability of learners to speak other languages	62-63
Table 14: New words which are used in another form	73
Table 15: Mixed sentences used by boys	75
Table 16: Mixed sentences used by girls	75
Table 17: New words used by boys and girls	76
Table 18: The use of verbs	78

## **LIST OF FIGURES**

Figure1: Overall synthesis of matriculation results	8
Figure2: Gender of respondents (parents)	39
Figure3: Residential area of parents who registered their learners	40
Figure4: Language parents prefer	42
Figure5: Languages which parents think their children prefer	43
Figure6: The reading ability of learners according to their parents	44
Figure7: Pass rate between English and Sesotho sa Lebowa	45
Figure8: Parents who encourage their children to go to the library	45
Figure 9: Reasons for registering a child Sesotho sa Lebowa at Kgadime Matsepe	46
Figure10: Languages learners use to communicate with friends	53
Figure11: Learners' knowledge of mother tongue	54
Figure12: How learners regarded knowledge of mother tongue	55
Figure13: Learners' use of the library	57

Figure14: Language learners preferred as medium of instruction	58
Figure15: Increase in pass rate if Sesotho sa Lebowa is a medium of instruction	59
Figure16: Residential areas of respondents	61
Figure17: Languages learners use with friends in a Sesotho sa Lebowa class	62
Figure18: Languages learners prefer	63
Figure 19: Languages learners use with educators outside classroom	64
Figure 20: Description of how well respondents can speak Sesotho sa Lebowa	65
Figure 21: Learners' performance in Sesotho sa Lebowa	66
Figure 22: Educators' code switching	67
<b>APPENDICES</b>	94
APPENDIX 1: Learners' questionnaire	94
APPENDIX 2: Learners' interview questions	98
APPENDIX 3: Educators' questionnaire	99
APPENDIX 4: Parents' questionnaire	103
APPENDIX 5: Written consent for learners	109
APPENDIX 6: Written consent for teachers	110
APPENDIX 7: Written consent of parents of respondents	111
APPENDIX 8: Samples of learners' Essays	113

## **CHAPTER 1**

### **ORIENTATION OF THE STUDY**

#### **1.1 Introduction**

This chapter provides an explanation as to why this research was undertaken. It includes definitions of the terminology used throughout the dissertation and highlights the aspects that will finally lead to the questions the study attempts to answer.

#### **1.2 Motivation for the choice of topic**

The researcher was motivated by results obtained in the subject Sesotho sa Lebowa by learners of Kgadime Matsepe High School in Soshanguve which is about 45 kilometres north of Pretoria. Learners who register for Sesotho sa Lebowa at this institution do not perform well in the subject, although one would expect them to excel in their first language which they speak on a daily basis. According to the definition given in the Longman Dictionary (2000: 373), a first language is the language that you learn to speak as a child in your own home.

At Kgadime Matsepe High School, Sesotho sa Lebowa is studied as a first language by those learners who choose to study it. As such learners ought to pass the subject with better symbols than their other subjects. Symbols A to C should dominate the results of Sesotho sa Lebowa: however, from 2002 to 2004 only one learner achieved an A symbol and in 2005 not even one learner managed to achieve this. This indicates that the quality of results in standard Sesotho sa Lebowa is in fact deteriorating at Kgadime Matsepe High School instead of improving. It would appear that the existence of non-standard forms of Sesotho sa Lebowa interferes with the learners' language and this leads to poor scholastic results among them. This investigation was therefore undertaken not only to present the situation as it exists at the school but also to identify strategies to alleviate poor scholastic results.

### **1.3 Limitations of the study**

Three major limitations to the study could be listed. Firstly, the school where the research was undertaken was used as a case study. Therefore, because only one high school was used to collect data, the findings may not be conclusive.

Secondly, in general, the learners needed the questionnaire to be read and explained to them, which was time consuming.

Thirdly, only female teachers agreed to take part in the study. As such the data collected from the teachers had a gender bias in that the male teachers' views were not included as they refused to take part in the study.

### **1.4 Research Problem**

Kgadime Matsepe High School is situated on the north eastern side of Soshanguve, a township on the outskirts of Pretoria in the Gauteng Province. The community surrounding the school and the learners within it are multilingual. Learners from the North West Province also attend classes at Kgadime Matsepe High School. The number of learners at the school fluctuates yearly. This number varies from 900 to 1200.

The number of teachers also fluctuates because once the school has not reached its required target teachers are deployed to other schools with larger numbers of learners. Teachers who are affected by redeployment are usually language teachers and that hampers the development of the African languages since there is no consistent progression from one teacher to the next. Five languages, English, Afrikaans, IsiZulu, Setswana and Sesotho sa Lebowa, are offered at the school. Afrikaans is gradually being phased out.

The school has eight grade 10 Sesotho sa Lebowa classes, four grade 11 classes and three grade 12 classes. Grade 12 classes do not fluctuate radically. There are usually three or four classes

annually. Judging from the fact that each class has a carrying capacity of some 50 learners per grade, in relation to the small number of learners in the grade 12 Sesotho sa Lebowa classes, one can deduce that the number of learners in Sesotho sa Lebowa diminishes in grade 12. This situation is a result of a high failure rate in grade 11 which in itself is attributed to a poor language foundation in Sesotho sa Lebowa. The failure rate among grades 10 and 11 is extremely high and hence this investigation will focus on why such a situation exists at this school and what remedies can be offered.

The school has no formal language policy according to which the Department of African Languages in the school is run. In fact, policies to guide educators during the admission of learners to the school do not exist at this school. The Department of Education's Language in Education Policy for schools could be of assistance to learners if it is available and constantly consulted when the need arises. The language in education policy in terms of section 3(4) (m) of the national education policy act, 1996 (Act 27 of 1996) page 4 states:

Subject to any law dealing with language in education and Constitutional rights of learners, in determining the language policy of the school, the governing body must stipulate how the school will promote multilingualism through using more than one language of learning and teaching, and/or by offering additional languages as fully-fledged subjects, and / or by applying special immersion or language maintenance programmes, or through other means approved by the head of the provincial education department .

This policy was not implemented at Kgadime Matsepe School. With no language policy in place, this researcher assessed the situation by examining the matriculation (grade 12) results over four years (2002-2005).

### 1.5 Description of Kgadime Matsepe matriculation results

The results of grade 12 learners have been tracked by the researcher over a period of four years. Marks that were attained by learners have been arranged according to symbols that appear below.

The interpretation of matriculation symbols is as follows:

A = 80 – 100%
B = 70 – 80%
C = 60 – 69%
D = 50 – 59%
E = 40 – 49%
F = 33 – 39%
FF = 30 – 32%
G = 25 – 29%
GG = 20 – 24%
H = 0 – 19%
X = learners who did not write.

Table 1

#### 1.5.1 Results of 2002

In 2002, 55 learners wrote the grade 12 Sesotho sa Lebowa examination on the higher grade. There was one A symbol, sixteen B, twenty-six C, nine D and three E symbols as captured in the table below.

Year	Number of learners	Symbol	Frequency: number of learners per symbol	Percentage
2002	55	A	1	2
		B	16	29
		D	9	16.3
		E	3	5.4
TOTAL			55	100%

Table 2

#### 1.5. 2 Results of 2003

The following year, 2003, 73 learners wrote Sesotho sa Lebowa on the higher grade. One A symbol was obtained, three Bs, seventeen Cs, forty-one Ds and eleven Es. Three learners were absent.

Year	Number of learners	Symbol	Frequency: number of learners per symbol	Percentage
2003	73	A	1	1.3
		B	3	4.1
		C	17	23.2
		D	41	56.1
		E	11	15
TOTAL			73	100

Table 3

### 1.5.3 Results of 2004

In 2004, 111 learners wrote Sesotho sa Lebowa and the results included one A symbol, three Bs, twenty Cs, fifty-two Ds, thirty-two Es, two Hs and six learners did not write.

Year	Number of learners	Symbols	Frequency: number of learners per symbol	Percentage
2004	111	A	1	1
		B	3	3
		C	20	18
		D	52	47
		E	32	29
		H	2	2
		TOTAL	111	100

Table 4

### 1.5.4 Results of 2005

In 2005, 72 learners wrote Sesotho sa Lebowa and there was a 100% pass rate. The results the learners achieved were not good, however, and not even one managed to achieve over 80%.

Year	Number of learners	Symbols	Number of learners per symbol	Percentage
2005	72	A	0	0



		B	6	8.3
		C	21	29.1
		D	29	40.2
		E	12	16.6
		E#	3	4.1
		F	0	0
		F#	1	1.3
		GG	0	0
		H	0	0
		TOTAL	72	100

Table 5

The above-mentioned results indicate that there is certainly cause for concern and something needs to be done about the quality of these results. Why do learners perform so poorly in their first language? This dissertation provides some answers to learners' poor scholastic achievements. It also includes recommendations to various parties to accept language changes, which may help to improve scholastic results. On the other hand, learners should be encouraged to use standard Sesotho sa Lebowa.

Figure 1 shows an overall synthesis of matriculation results over four years.

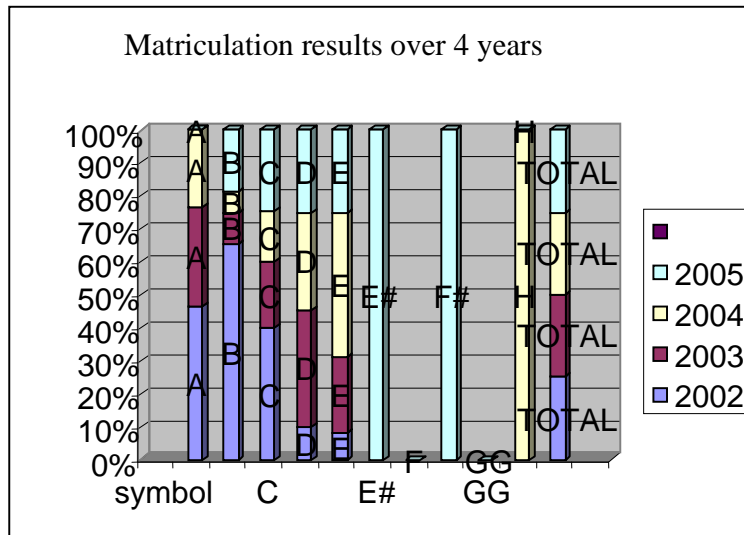


Figure 1

The above figure displays a combination of symbols attained by learners. It shows the number of symbols per year.

## 1.6 Research Aim

The research study has involved the gathering of information on both language change and language varieties. The aim of this research is to

- i. Investigate the effects of interference from other languages that precipitate language change and variation in Sesotho sa Lebowa at Kgadime Matsepe High School;
- ii. Explore whether Sesotho sa Lebowa is in fact the mother tongue or a language clearly understood by learners who have registered for it;
- iii. Consider the value learners and educators attach to the African languages, specifically Sesotho sa Lebowa;
- iv. Ascertain the efforts made by educators to purify Sesotho sa Lebowa i.e. investigate whether teachers are making an attempt to maintain standard Sesotho sa Lebowa;

- v. Investigate whether and how educators in the school motivate learners to read more books in order to improve their vocabulary and to enhance an understanding of the language.

This research will also attempt to establish if learners in townships have a proper foundation of their mother tongue. According to Aitchison (1991:165 as cited by Neettle 1999: 96),

If languages were learnt perfectly by the children of each generation, then languages would not change ....the changes are simply slight mistakes, which in the course of generations completely alter the character of the language.

Interferences in Sesotho sa Lebowa create permanent language change which will never be reversed. These changes have completely altered the character of Sesotho sa Lebowa in township schools. The changes will be highlighted in chapter 4 of this dissertation.

Sesotho sa Lebowa is continuing in its non-standard form in township schools due to the fact that learners do not register to study their first language. Most learners in township schools register for Sesotho sa Lebowa which is not their mother tongue. Interviews with parents prove that learners speak different languages at home from the one they prefer to speak in class. Neettle (1999:97) postulates,

Variants due to imperfect learning will normally stay with an individual for an entire lifetime and be produced on every occasion. Performance variants may be one-offs, which would make them much less likely to be adopted into the language though they may recur in the speech of several individuals or on several occasions if production constraints favor them.

## **1.7 Research questions**

In this study, an attempt will be made to provide answers to the following questions:

- Is there a difference between a spoken and a written language?
- Does the attitude learners have to Sesotho sa Lebowa cause most of the variations in the language, and

- Do educators have a negative attitude towards Sesotho sa Lebowa?
- Do changes and variation in the language contribute to the poor pass rate in Sesotho sa Lebowa?
- Do teachers also speak varieties of Sesotho sa Lebowa that contribute to changes in the teaching and learning of the first language?
- Is Sesotho sa Lebowa in fact the mother tongue of learners who study it as a first language?

Respondents who participated in this research did so of their own will. They were not forced or deceived in any way into participating in the research study. Letters of informed consent was given to learners' parents and to teachers who participated in this study (appendices 4 and 5). Data collected from learners were not of a confidential nature but the right to privacy was nonetheless granted to learners. Information offered by respondents during the research was not made available to any other person and was used only for the purposes of the study. Educators and learners were not required to fill in their names anywhere on the questionnaire. The research question was not related to names or other forms of personal identification.

## **1. 8 Definition of terms with reference to the study of language change and variation**

### **1. 8.1 Bilingualism**

Bilingualism is the ability to speak two languages fluently, e.g., most of the Sesotho sa Lebowa speakers are at least able also to speak Setswana fluently. It also means having such a command of two languages such that they could both be the speaker's first language. For Haugen (1953:12) "Bilingualism is the ability to speak two languages and produce complete meaningful utterances in the other language." The practice of alternately using two languages is also called bilingualism (Weinreich 1953:01). The regular use of two languages by speakers over a long period leads to being bilingual. Due to the ability of speakers to speak two languages, mutual interference in these two languages may occur. Language contact ultimately leads to bilingualism, which causes language interference. In the next paragraph, language interference will be explained in detail.

### 1.8.2 Language interference

Language interference is a process in which words of other languages become integrated within a specific language and are used commonly by speakers of that language. These words become a permanent part of this other language. Weinreich (1953:1) states, “Interference implies the rearrangement of patterns that results from introduction of foreign elements into the more highly structured domains of language, such as the bulk of the phonic system, a large part of the morphology and syntax, and some areas of vocabulary.” Interference allows borrowed words to be adopted into a language permanently.

### 1.8.3 Borrowing/adoption

Borrowings are words that are used by Sesotho sa Lebowa speakers but are adopted from other languages. These words end up forming a permanent part of Sesotho sa Lebowa. Monolingual speakers who use words from different languages interchangeably create borrowing. According to Adey, Orr and Swemmer (1996: 165),

borrowing is particularly prevalent in South Africa where numerous languages are spoken. Words such as ‘trek’ have long been accepted in English; a more recent addition is ‘apartheid’. In colloquial English, words that are often used include ‘lekker’, ‘indaba’, ‘donga’, ‘dop’, ‘zol’, ‘toyi-toyi’, ‘induna’, ‘krans’ and ‘ubuntu’ and many more.

Some words enjoy wider acceptance than others do. Just as words from other languages are accepted permanently into English, so too are English words and words from other languages accepted into Sesotho sa Lebowa.

### 1.8.4 Language change

Language changes occur when borrowed words are incorporated into a language. This happens in a multilingual environment because speakers are multilingual. Their languages change and

they do not speak the same way all the time. According to Barber (1972:50), “All living languages change though the rate of interference varies from time to time, and from language to language.”

Changes in languages can be internal or external. Internal changes are due to changes within the language, such as morphological and phonological changes. Calteaux (1994:25) states that “language change takes place from within the language through internal innovation, or from outside as a result of adoption and interference’.

#### 1.8.5 Variety

Mulaudzi and Poulos (2001:2) explain a variety as being determined in terms of a specific set of linguistic items which it includes. They say these linguistic items are also associated with external factors such as geographical area and social group. The term “variety” thus includes what might more usually be referred to as dialects and registers. They add that the changes, which create varieties in a language, indicate that there is no language in the world that can be regarded as homogeneous.

When a person or a group of people speaks two or more languages, the languages they speak are said to be in contact. Weinreich (1953:1) regards languages as being in contact if the same person uses them alternately. Because of the use of more than one language, languages will come into contact and interference will create language change, which leads in turn to the formation of varieties.

Varieties indicate that languages are heterogeneous and competence is always overpowered by performance. Performance will always take place because people interact with one another (Wardhaugh 1986:05).

This research has aimed at detecting varieties spoken by learners in class and how they affect their performance. The fact that learners come from a multilingual society makes their language heterogeneous and that disadvantages the so-called ‘purity’ of Sesotho sa Lebowa.

#### 1.8.6 Dialect

Dialects emanate from varieties. People who live in the same area, such as Soshanguve in the present study, speak the same language. The language they use to communicate contains adopted words from source languages such as English and Afrikaans and is called a dialect. Trudgill (1984:5) says, “Dialect refers to varieties which are grammatically and perhaps lexically as well as phonologically different from other varieties.” On a similar note, Wardhaugh (1986:40) defines a dialect as “a subordinate variety of language.”

#### 1.8.7 Tsotsitaal

Tsotsitaal is a particular street or township language. It is used mainly in informal settings and is dominant in townships among the black and coloured youth. Criminals use this language on the streets to avoid being understood by the people they attack. Tsotsitaal is also used by inmates in jails so that warders do not understand them.

Over the years Tsotsitaal has become an acceptable language and is used in schools and churches. It is used by the youth everywhere and it forms part of the Sesotho sa Lebowa’s variety. Ngwenya (1992: 13) defines the word, Tsotsitaal, as originating from South Sotho “ho tsotsa” which means to perform thuggery. Ngwenya further explains that children learn Tsotsitaal from their parents who consciously or unconsciously teach it to them. He says that parents convey their past experience to their children through Tsotsitaal.

Tsotsitaal is not stagnant. It attaches itself to languages and becomes a variety of that language. It is constantly changing. Just like any other language its vocabulary improves and develops. It shifts from being dominated by Afrikaans to being a combination of all languages. It has become a dominating language in schools especially among boys.

## **1.9 Overview of the study and outline of the chapters**

This dissertation consists of five chapters. Chapter 1 comprises an introduction to the study. It includes a motivation for the choice of subject; choice of topic and research problem; research aims and goals of the study; research questions; the research approach; research type; research procedure and strategies; description of the research population; data analysis as well as definition of terms that have particular reference to the study. Chapter 2 presents a literature study on language change and variation. Chapter 3 presents the methods of analyzing the data that are used in this research. Chapter 4 considers the findings and provides an interpretation of the empirical data on language change and variation in a Soshanguve high school. Chapter 5 contains the summary, conclusions and offers some recommendations.

## **1.10 Conclusion**

This introductory chapter has highlighted the research problem and includes a definition of some terms. The definition of terms used in the chapter will be applied throughout the research. The questions that had to be answered by this project are also presented. The overview of all five chapters is highlighted in the last section of the chapter. The following chapter will deal with the literature review which briefly examines research undertaken by other scholars in the field.



## **CHAPTER 2**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW: LANGUAGE CHANGE AND VARIATION**

#### **2.1 Introduction**

Chapter 2 briefly examines research undertaken by other scholars that is pertinent to this study. Many researchers have conducted studies on change and variation in language in various settings. This research will add to what others have already done and the researcher will apply what others have written on the topic. An explanation of how other researchers' literature has assisted this research is given in this chapter. According to Leedy (1993:87), the primary purpose of a literature review is to assist one in tackling one's own research problem. Johnstone (2002:20) explains a review of literature as a summary of others' research on the topic. MacNeil (1990:20) gives three major uses of a literature review:

- It gives ideas about research design, key issues and methods of data collection.
- It identifies problems in the research proposal and saves the researcher from repeating other researchers' mistakes.
- It is part of the process of increasing human knowledge that every contribution is built on or at least relates to previous work.

Strydom (1998: 180), on the other hand, believes that the main purpose of a literature survey remains the broad orientation of the prospective research with regard to the researcher's prospective investigation, and to alert him or her to certain matters during the main investigation.

It therefore has been necessary to conduct such a study in order to situate this research within a broader scientific context and to identify those key role players who have laid the foundation for this and future studies.

## **2.2 Guidelines for educational research**

Bogdan and Biklen (1982) explain the guidelines for educational research. They provide an excellent method of writing field notes. For instance, they explain how to write these, preferably on a word processor or computer, after observations, interviews or other research sessions the researcher typically conducts. These guidelines have been applied to this study.

Johnstone (2002) offers general advice on how to conduct sociolinguistic research. She concentrates on research in general and also on important terminology relevant to sociolinguistic research. She explains ethnography in detail. Ethnography, the study of culture, is useful to this study because language variety and change emanate from an interaction between cultures. Johnstone gives an explanation of how ethnographers observe the people they are researching. This explanation has assisted this project because learners were closely observed in class during contact time. Johnstone clearly explains the stages of conducting research and the procedures that should be followed. The skeleton of writing a dissertation from introduction, literature review, methodology, findings, and discussion of other genres and the grammar of particularity is outlined in her work. This has been applied to the present study.

An explanation of writing up research from introduction to conclusion is also provided by MacNeil (1990). He discusses types of questions, which have contributed in assisting this researcher in the formulation of the questionnaire. MacNeil proposes two types of questions, open and closed. He also explains types of sampling: quasi-random, stratified, multistage, quota and purpose sampling. From these types of sampling, the researcher has chosen to use quasi-random sampling. The phases of ethnographical research are outlined in detail in MacNeil's work. These phases are first, middle and final details. Chapter 1 of this research study is the first stage, chapters 2 and 3 form the middle while chapter 4 contains the final details.

Just as MacNeil (1990) outlines the phases of research, Sorantakos (1993:259,321) explains the processes of interviewing respondents. According to him, interviews are conducted in a number of stages with each stage including certain tasks. Sorantakos proposes five steps of the qualitative interview: transcription, checking and editing, analysis and interpretation,

generalisation and verification. These five stages have contributed positively to the formulation of interview questions and their analyses in this study. Chapter 4 where data are formulated and analyzed has been clearly outlined according to Sorantakos' methodology.

In 1990, Malimabe explained the guidelines for research in a school milieu. In her research, she explains how she collected data within the school milieu. She highlights problems she experienced during the research. The explanations of her procedure have also assisted this research, particularly in the manner in which she collected data. She did this, using essays, recorded speeches and interviews with teachers. Primary documents, such as official government publications and secondary sources, such as research reports, theses and books, were also used in this study.

### **2.3 Language variation and change**

This section focuses on researchers who studied language variation and change in various settings. In her doctoral thesis Calteaux (1994) covered a wide range of variation and change in language. She included research conducted by other researchers in educational settings who concentrated on language change and variations. Coetzee (1989) investigated varieties in standard Afrikaans. He also considered how these varieties influenced the competence of Afrikaans speakers. The effect of geography on language varieties and language change were also considered. As varieties also have an influence on the language competence of Sesotho sa Leboa speakers the research has had to be conducted using learners and educators in this specific school.

Schuring (1985) investigated township speech varieties. His research laid a foundation for this study because he concentrated on township language. Just as with this study, learners and educators who formed the population of his study came from Soshanguve and surrounding areas, which resemble townships.

In 1992 Radebe discussed colloquial language. The study covered the issue of interference of colloquial language on South Sotho, Afrikaans and English. Language varieties in Venda have

also been the subject of research. Mulaudzi (1996) investigated these varieties intensively. He investigated how dialects differ geographically. Apart from variations in language he also explained how languages change. He argues that all languages change and as they change, special linguistic usage associated with particular regions emerges and that the changes form natural language varieties because language is a form of human social behaviour.

De Stefano and Rentel (2001:328) explain the fact that school language has a special vocabulary. They point out that there is language that there are two varieties: the one that children speak and the one used as a language of instruction. This issue is covered in detail in Chapter 4 of this investigation where language of learners as respondents is explained. DeStefano and Rentel (2001:28) suggest that teachers must bridge these differences between the language of instruction and the language that the children speak everyday. They also say that the teacher's responsibility is even greater for those children whose home language is not the school standard language. This point is endorsed by this research in Chapter 4 where the investigation reveals that learners do not study their home language as first language. DeStefano and Rentel (2001:329) also note that

The task for the teacher is to provide intellectually rich social content and meaningful opportunities for language use. In other words, teachers must provide the data from which children can induce linguistic structure.

## **2.4 Language interference**

Language interference occurs when words from other languages become interrelated with a specific language and are used commonly by speakers of those languages. The words become a permanent part of this other language. Weinreich (1953) investigated language interference very thoroughly. According to him (1953: 1), interference "implies the rearrangement of patterns that results from the introduction of language, such as the bulk of the phonic system, a large part of the morphology and syntax, and some areas of vocabulary."

As mentioned above, in 1990 Malimabe also investigated language interference. She looked at the influence of other languages on Setswana. Malimabe's research has assisted the researcher to consider the effects of interference from other languages on Sesotho sa Lebowa. Malimabe

collected her data by using essays of learners from high schools. Within those essays, she discovered that there is interference of other languages in Setswana. Essays were also used in this research to collect data which are reflected in chapter 4 of this dissertation.

Zungu and Barnes (1995) discuss different types of languages that emerge from interference. They examine the language of soccer (*isigura*), the language of educational institutions and the language of shebeens (*isithabeni*). Their research provides guidelines on variation in urban areas. They indicate that there is a stage of modernisation and linguistic change which is evidence that, in their example, the Zulu language is alive and dynamic. This also applies to Sesotho sa Lebowa because it has also undergone linguistic changes which this research has investigated. The different languages Zungu and Barnes investigated were created by interference from other languages which resulted in variations of IsiZulu. They analyzed language that exists in a school institution and this research has added to their findings.

The influence of other languages on Afrikaans was investigated by Coetzee (1989). In his research, he places emphasis on the importance of accepting different varieties in languages. He explains the competence of speakers of Afrikaans. According to Coetzee (1989), interference exists in all languages, including a source language. Source languages in South Africa are English and Afrikaans. Even within English and Afrikaans there are changes because they are not spoken in isolation of all the other languages.

Coetzee investigated the existing application of classification criteria and how consistently and correctly they are applied. He highlights the fact that the existence of varieties in a language must not be ignored. His research has assisted in the writing of recommendations in chapter 4. It points to the fact that placing emphasis on accepting other varieties in schools is important.

## **2.5 Language varieties**

One language may contain many variations because of the geographical location of its speakers. Varieties in Sesotho sa Lebowa such as Tsotsitaal and Sepitoria have been investigated by a number of researchers. Some of these researchers will be discussed in the following section.

In 1987 Msimang conducted a study on the origin and semantic significance of Tsotsitaal, the lingua franca of certain groups of people in the townships. He indicates that Tsotsitaal was created mainly by the first generation in the cities. This first generation wants to transcend ethnic differences and regard one another as members of a common urban community. Participation and interaction in common activities, particularly in crime, also motivates these youths. Tsotsitaal was created by language change and it is a variation spoken mainly by young boys in high schools. This study by Msimang motivated the researcher to investigate the influence of Tsotsitaal on Sesotho sa Lebowa.

Ngwenya (1992) studied the static and dynamic elements of Tsotsitaal with special reference to isiZulu. He also examined three functions of Tsotsitaal, that is, to satisfy the speaker and listener's desire to communicate effectively, for identification purposes and for accommodation.

Ngwenya (1992) assisted this research in the definition of the term Tsotsitaal. Though the term is used in the Zulu language, it could also be applied to Sesotho sa Lebowa. Ngwenya observed that parents convey their experience to their children through Tsotsitaal. The fact that children learn Tsotsitaal from parents has assisted this research to include parents as respondents. They have been included as respondents because they are part of the community around the school and learners' languages are moulded further in their homes. Ngwenya's statement that it is rare to hear Tsotsitaal being spoken in formal places like schools and churches encouraged more investigation about Tsotsitaal in a school milieu. However, the statement proved to be unfounded in this research since learners, especially boys, speak Tsotsitaal daily on the school premises. They do not only speak it but also write it in their essays. To this end, Appendix 5 example 2 demonstrates that not only is Tsotsitaal spoken but it is also written in essays by learners.

Mulaudzi and Poulos (2001) investigated Tsotsitaal in a Venda community. They used the general Venda community as their population in their investigation and they discovered that the Tsotsitaal language variety represented a contact medium, which developed when blacks of various ethnic groups such as Zulu, Xhosa, Tsonga, Venda and Tswana came together in South

African cities, especially in Gauteng. Mulaudzi's research assisted this research by highlighting the fact that languages used in communities have to be investigated. Further research needed to be conducted on the community living around the school in order to get a clearer picture of languages used in homes. The failure of correct use of languages in learners' homes has an effect on learners' scholastic performance at school. Language foundation is laid at home and not at school. Teachers continue what has been started and add to what already exists in a child. Through this research, the investigation was able to draw interview questions that assisted to find more information about language use in learners' homes.

Rings (1992) examined the difference between written and spoken language. She discussed variations between casual spoken language and formal written language. She mentions the fact that there is a difference between what learners write and what they say. Her findings are that a language may be very different when it is written and when it is spoken. She notes that there are often formal written forms of language and an informal use in spoken language. Her research assisted the present study because it supports the belief that how learners write is not how they speak. One of the reasons for this research was to check whether there is a similarity between spoken and written language. Discussions by Rings (1992) highlight the fact that learners do not speak the way they write. They try to write pure language but speak a language that is mixed with others.

All the research that has been discussed is relevant to this investigation because it highlights the fact that some learners in high schools use Tsotsitaal as their lingua franca. The issue needs further investigation in order to discover when and where learners use Tsotsitaal. Other varieties used by learners will also be investigated in the present study.

## **2.6 Discourse analysis and speech varieties in Sesotho sa Lebowa**

The influence of a situational context on Sesotho sa Lebowa speaker-hearer relationships was researched by Sekhukhune in 1988. He considered how the situation can influence the language of speakers. He also researched varieties according to gender. Literature on speech varieties according to gender is relevant to this research study because this investigation also concentrates

on variation according to the gender of learners. Geography also has an effect on language. The Sesotho sa Lebowa which is spoken in Pretoria differs from that spoken in Limpopo, for instance. Sekhukhune reveals a network of linguistic contextual factors that have an influence on language varieties.

## **2.7 Language and reading**

Pretorius and Mampuru (2007) have examined language and reading questions from an African perspective. Data that were used in their article were similar to the data that were used in this research because these data were also collected from a high-poverty primary school in an urban South African setting. Some variables that they discuss in their article (2007: 7) such as poorly resourced schools, inappropriate instrumental methods print-poor environments, overcrowded classrooms, reduced time-on-task and poorly trained teachers are consistently identified as impacting negatively on literacy accomplishments. Their study therefore assisted this research to interview parents in order to investigate further the issues raised. The study indicates that “for many children, the local language may not be their “real” mother tongue. Geographic and social varieties considered non –standard are not used as media of instruction, and so only children familiar with the standard variety may be advanced” (2007:7).

Ntuli and Pretorius (2005) examined the effects that storybook reading in isiZulu had on the language and emergent literacy of pre-school Zulu children. The communities from which these children came are poor rural areas where there are high levels of illiteracy, poverty and unemployment. This article of Ntuli and Pretorius has assisted this research to investigate the reading ability of grade 10 - 12 learners. This research has concluded that the reading ability of some grade 12 learners was very poor. The reasons are highlighted by Ntuli and Pretorius when they say that

Many parents in South Africa think that it is the responsibility of the school to teach their children to read and introduce them to the world of books, yet there is a body of research findings that indicate that waiting to acquire literacy when they start school may already be too late (2005:91).



Appendix 5, example 1, shows that there are children in grade 10 that are illiterate but they have nevertheless progressed to grade 10.

Matjila and Pretorius (2004) observe that thousands of learners in South Africa do their schooling in a language that is not their primary language. As a result, many find it difficult to perform well academically. Their report was substantiated when an interview was conducted by this researcher with parents who in turn revealed that the language of learning is not the mother tongue of their children. The scholastic results of grades 10 -12 learners investigated by this research over a period of four years have proved that Matjila and Pretorius are indeed correct in their assumption.

## **2.8 Language and development**

Smyth (2002:9) explains the effect of the low status of African languages on South African learners. She says the low status of African languages, reinforced by long-lasting effects of apartheid, has led communities to undervalue their own languages by insisting on their children learning through the medium of English in order to secure future economic opportunities. Her statement assisted this research to include a question in the questionnaire which investigated the views of parents about the language children learn at school.

Language has an effect on the cognitive development of a learner. This research has considered what effect a first language has on learners. Lack of a foundation language, which is a mother tongue, affects children for the rest of their lives. It affects their cognitive development and this becomes clear up to grade 12 level. Cummins (1976) as cited by Smyth (2002:7) maintains that, “children need a certain level of proficiency in their home language without which their learning in a second language can be negatively affected”. For children learning in a bilingual situation it seems essential therefore that their home language should be maintained and developed for the effective development of a second language.

## **2.9 Language change in adulthood**

Raumolin-Brunberg (2005:37) provides empirical evidence of changes in linguistic behaviours of individuals during adulthood. Her aim was to document the behaviour of adult speakers undergoing linguistic change. She approaches her investigation from a historical sociolinguistic perspective. The concepts and arguments used were derived from sociolinguistic research on present day English.

## **2.10 Conclusion**

Detailed discussions of research issues related to language variation and change have been considered in this chapter. The chapter has outlined the contributions of other researchers. Language varieties and change in urban areas indicate that linguistic changes and modernization are taking place within African languages. These ideas have assisted this research in its attempt to find a solution to its research problem. The ongoing process of change in languages suggests further research.

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **Methodology**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

This chapter presents the research approach, research procedure and strategies, procedure of data collection, and description of the research population. Following this background, the data are then analysed and research ethics discussed. The data, which were used in this project, were both primary and secondary.

#### **3.2 Research approach**

The research will employ both a qualitative and a quantitative approach in the investigation of solutions to the presented problem. Triangulation was necessary as it assisted the researcher in the interpretation of collected data. It also made the achievement of valid and reliable results possible. Denzin (1989), cited by Sorantakos (1993:168), explains the difference between inter-method triangulation, which includes two or more methods of different methodological origin and nature, and intra-method triangulation, which employs two or more techniques of the same method.

According to Sorantakos (1993:168), triangulation is employed for a number of reasons:

- To obtain a variety of information on the same issue;
- To use the strengths of each method to overcome the deficiencies of the other;
- To achieve a higher degree of validity and reliability; and
- To overcome the deficiencies of single-method studies.

The investigation uses the triangulation method, which is a combination of more than one research method. De Vos (1998:359) defines triangulation as a concept used to designate a conscious combination of a quantitative and qualitative methodology.

Mouton and Marais (1990:72,91) believe that the term triangulation was originally coined by Denzin (1978), and refers mainly to the use of multiple methods of data collection with a view to increasing the reliability of observation, and not specifically to the combination of qualitative and quantitative approaches.

The research used both qualitative and quantitative methods in order to obtain valid and reliable results. Quantitative and qualitative methods were also necessary in the collection and manipulation of data.

Qualitative and quantitative methods of research were used in this study because different methods were needed at different stages of the research. Leedy (1993) identifies qualitative research as a broad methodological category which encompasses a variety of approaches to interpretive research. Leedy distinguishes within this category: case study, ethnography, phenomenological research, grounded theory research and others, such as sociological, political, and educational research (Leedy 1993).

Quantitative research "manipulates variables and controls natural phenomena" (Leedy 1993: 143), and as such it is impersonal, cold and experimental. Leedy adds that the main purpose of quantitative research methodology is to test the theoretical conceived null hypothesis against the facts of reality and to represent the data in numerical values.

In this study each research stage is explained according to the appropriate method. The two methods are defined and then subjects, procedures and data analyses are discussed according to the two methods.

### **3.3 Research procedure and strategies**

Research procedure involves the processes the researcher has undergone during the study. The procedures will be discussed to explain how the conclusion was reached. Strategies for solving problems and creating new knowledge will also be discussed.

#### **3.3.1 Procedure of data collection**

Questionnaires and essays written by pupils in class and recorded interviews were used to collect data for this study. Primary and secondary data collection was both qualitative and quantitative in nature. Recorded interviews, discussions, observations, written essays and questionnaires were also used to collect data. All forms of data collection approaches used will be discussed in the following sections.

##### **3.3.1.1 Interview procedure**

Interviewing was one of the methods used to collect data. This is a qualitative method of data collection. The interviews with respondents were recorded on audiotape. Interviews were focused, intensive and face-to-face.

Focused interviews were used in this study, as the researcher was interested in the language that learners and educators use daily, and the language variations among respondents outside the classroom and at home. According to Sorantakos (1993:253), R.K. Merton developed the focused interview in the 1940s. Its name derives from the fact that it focuses on a specific topic which respondents are asked to discuss by offering their views and opinions on the issue. Learners were given a topic, which they discussed freely. Qualitative data were collected through these discussions. The advantage of this method is that respondents were able to respond freely, and in so doing, they provided ample information for this study.

The researcher chose intensive interviews to highlight problems that the respondents were unaware of, such as, that the varieties they use may affect their pass rate. The varieties they use might not be in the memorandum of the external grade 12 markers. Non-standard words might be unknown to the markers. Sorantakos (1993:254) defines an intensive interview as an interview that aims to advance deeply into the personality structure of the interviewee in order to ascertain problems of which the interviewee might not be aware. This study made learners aware through the interview that they should speak the language they use in class and at home. Learners were not aware of the fact that it is important for them to know the standard mother tongue and not mix it with other languages especially for exam purposes.

Intensive interviews differ from focused interviews in that they are flexible and the interviewer can develop the questions as they are required and as they best fit the interview situation. Learners were interviewed using questions that were presented as topics rather than as pre-structured questionnaires. The main advantage of this was that it “allowed flexibility, continuing thought, freedom [to probe], evaluation of behaviour during the interview, and interest in all aspects of the respondent, including those not in the areas covered by an interview schedule” (Sorantakos 1993:259). The researcher took into account the limited concentration of learners due to their age and chose to use the intensive interview. Discussions were kept flowing during interviews. For example, learners were asked questions which they had to answer in order to keep discussions flowing.

#### 3.3.1.2 Questionnaires

Respondents also completed questionnaires as one of the methods of collection of quantitative data. Two types of questionnaires were drafted to accommodate the two kinds of respondents, i.e. teachers and learners. According to Wray, Trott and Bloomer (1998), a questionnaire is a set of questions on a topic or group of topics designed to be answered by a respondent. A questionnaire makes it possible for data to be collected from a large number of respondents.

Questions were grouped into four categories. This made the analysis of responses easier for the researcher. The four types of questions were open, closed, dichotomous and scaled questions.

### 3.3.1.3 Written essays

Respondents wrote essays that added to the data collected. These essays assisted in identifying varieties of Sesotho sa Lebowa. They were also used to investigate the difference between spoken and written language. Learners were asked to paste a picture of anything they wanted to discuss and then write an essay. There was no specific chosen topic as this would limit the learners.

## 3.4 Description of the research population

Sampling is the process of selecting a population from which data is collected for the purposes of research. A selected population is representative of the rest who are not selected in that particular setting. According to Baily (1982:83), a sample refers to a portion of the total population, an approximation of the whole rather than the whole itself. Sampling is the process used to determine the type and number of respondents who will be included in the study. Sampling enables the researcher to study a small number of units in place in the target population in order to obtain data that are representative of the whole target population. In the case of this research study, ten learners per grade were selected as the sample. The learners were selected randomly from the class list of each class.

The population of this study concentrated on the learners and staff of Kgadime Matsepe High School. The sample was selected from this same school. Baily (1982:85) defines population as the sum or total of all units from which a sample is drawn. Grinnel and Williams (1990: 118) define population as the totality of persons or objects with which the study is concerned. All the learners and educators became the population of this study and that is from where the samples were drawn.

The population for this research study consisted of 2 educators and 60 learners. Respondents were selected from grades 10 -12. Twenty learners per grade were randomly selected from Sesotho sa Lebowa classes at Kgadime Matsepe High School. Simple random sampling gives all

units of the target population an equal chance of selection. Class lists of students' names were used for random selection: learners were chosen by pointing randomly with a pencil at the class lists. Then the number that was under the pencil was identified. This continued until 60 learners, twenty learners per grade, had been recorded.

### **3.5 Data analysis**

Two forms of data analyses, qualitative and quantitative were used to analyze collected data. Bogdan and Biklen (1982:153) explain data analysis as a process of systematically searching and arranging the interview transcripts, field notes and other materials.

### **3.6 Ethics in research**

Before respondents were asked to fill in the questionnaires and answer questions during the interviews, ethical issues in social research were considered. The welfare of respondents and their free and informed consent, their right to privacy, their right to anonymity and to confidentiality were all taken into consideration during the study. Strydom (1998: 24) defines ethics as:

a set of moral principles which is suggested by an individual or group, is subsequently widely accepted and which offers rules and behavioural expectations about the most correct conduct towards experimental subjects and respondents, employees, sponsors and other researchers, assistants and students.

### **3.7 Conclusion**

Chapter 3 has presented the methods that were used during the research. It has concentrated mainly on the research approach. This research was approached by using the triangulation method, which is a combination of different methods. The two different methods which were used are quantitative and qualitative methods of research.



The research followed a certain procedure and strategy of collecting and analyzing data. Data were collected by interviewing respondents; questionnaires were distributed and written essays were used. The description of the population, which is used throughout the research, is explained in this chapter. An explanation of how data were manipulated and then analyzed is also given.

Ethics of research, which are extremely important to this research, are also discussed. They are important in that they advise the researcher about his/her general behaviour during the research. The following chapter will present the empirical findings that emerged from the research conducted.

## **CHAPTER 4**

### **FINDINGS AND INTERPRETATION OF EMPIRICAL DATA ON LANGUAGE AND VARIATION IN A SOSHANGUVE HIGH SCHOOL**

#### **4.1 Introduction**

Chapter 3 highlighted the methods of research used in this project. This chapter will describe the empirical survey applied by the methods described in Chapter 3. It analyzes results attained from data that have been collected both qualitatively and quantitatively from the three sets of groups i.e. learners, educators and parents.

This chapter presents the findings and their interpretation. The chapter first describes the empirical survey. Qualitative data are then presented followed by the quantitative data. The chapter explains how change can create variation. Words appearing in the learners' essays and interviews are also explained to show language change.

#### **4.2 Description of the empirical survey**

Data are collected from 60 learners of Kgadime Matsepe Secondary School in grades 10, 11 and 12. Sixty questionnaires and consent forms were issued to learners' parents to request permission to include them as part of the research. Parents were requested to grant their children permission to be part of the research because it was being conducted after contact time. Learners stayed one extra hour at school so that they could complete the questionnaire and answer interview questions. Two teachers, 26 parents as well as 60 learners took part in this research. Therefore, this research involved 88 participants.

In summary then twenty learners were chosen randomly from their class lists in order to be respondents to this research. Questionnaires were issued to 60 learners and 2 educators at Kgadime Matsepe Secondary School. Learners of three grades and their parents as well as two educators formed part of the study.

#### 4.2.1 Presentation of qualitative data

This section will concentrate on qualitative data. The information will be analysed according to the data collected from educators, parents and learners.

##### 4.2.1.1 Analysis of data obtained from educators' questionnaires

Two educators were asked to complete a questionnaire, which was also answered after contact time as was done with learners' questionnaires. Educators who agreed to fill in the questionnaire also filled in a consent form. They gave their point of view about what their experiences signified in language teaching. At the end of the questionnaires, they highlighted the changes that could be made in the department of African languages in the school.

##### 4.2.1.1.1 Personal details of educators

The two educators who filled in the questionnaires were 46 and 38 years old. One lives in Soshanguve while the other lives in Atteridgeville. They are both females. Two male teachers in the school refused to cooperate. The teachers who filled in this questionnaire are Sesotho sa Lebowa speakers and it is their home language. They also have more than 10 years of experience teaching the subject.

#### 4.3 Findings from educators' questionnaires

This part of the data will be discussed by dividing respondents into teacher 1 and teacher 2. Teachers' answers are explained exactly as they answered them on the questionnaire.

##### TEACHER 1

Question: Are all learners in your class Sesotho sa Lebowa speakers?

Answer: No

Question: If no explain.

Answer: They speak township language but we have few learners who migrated from Limpopo and Mpumalanga who speak standard Sesotho sa Lebowa.

Question: How do you rate learners' interest in African languages?

Answer: Poor.

Question: If poor, explain.

Answer: Learners take mother tongue as the least preferred subject of them all because they think they know the subject but they do not perform well.

Question: When teaching Sesotho sa Lebowa do you switch to other languages?

Answer: Yes

Question: If yes which language do you usually switch to and why?

Answer: I switch to English because learning areas integrate e.g. when explaining about geographical terms I use English.

Question: When marking learners' essays do you come across words that are not standard Sesotho sa Lebowa.

Answer: Yes e.g. a word like "tsamaya" learners commonly use is a Tswana word.

Question: What is your response if learners in their essays write non-standard words?

Answer: I underline them and write the correct word on top of the wrong word.

Question: What do you do if borrowed words, which exist in Sesotho sa Lebowa are found in learners' essays?

Answer: I underline them and write them in standard Sesotho sa Lebowa.

Question: When communicating with learners outside the classroom do you speak standard Sesotho sa Lebowa?

Answer: No, I use township language, which is a mixture of most of the African languages including English and Afrikaans. When going to class I use Sesotho sa Lebowa.

Question: How do you allocate marks to learners who use other languages including Tsotsitaal in their essays? If your response is “poor”, explain.

Answer: I allocate poor marks because I think they undermine Sesotho sa Lebowa as a subject. They must be able to codeswitch and write standard Sesotho sa Lebowa in class.

Question: 12. Did you encourage learners to read unprescribed library books?

Answer: No

Question: Do you give learners projects and assignments that require the use of a library?

Answer: No

Question: In your opinion what can be done to maintain the standard Sesotho sa Lebowa and improve its pass rate?

Answer:

- Learners must be motivated to value their African languages.
- Schools must organize language exhibitions.
- Prescribed books must be enough for all learners. Three learners presently share a book.
- Learners must be screened during admission and non Sesotho sa Lebowa speakers be advised to register it as a second language.
- Learners must also be interviewed before registering for Sesotho sa Lebowa as a subject. The following must be taken into consideration during the interview:
  - (1) Learners must be interested in Sesotho sa Lebowa as a subject.
  - (2) They must not be allowed to start Sesotho sa Lebowa at grade 10 because they lack foundation.

- (3) Those who cannot read or write Sesotho sa Lebowa should be referred to other languages.
- (4) Tsotsitaal should be discouraged around the school as it destroys the learners knowledge of the first language.

## TEACHER 2

Question: Are all learners in your class good Sesotho sa Lebowa speakers?

Answer: No.

Question: If not explain.

Answer: Most of the parents force their children to study Sesotho sa Lebowa e.g. Tsonga parents force their children to study Sesotho sa Lebowa, because they are ashamed of their mother tongue.

Question: How do you rate learners' interest in African languages?

Answer: Poor.

Question: If poor explain.

Answer: To learners, Sesotho sa Lebowa is just an ordinary subject which is passable. It is just there to add to their grand total marks. Non-Sesotho sa Lebowa teachers usually tell them that all vernaculars are useless because they only end up within the borders of SA and they will never use Sesotho sa Lebowa to pass any course at a university level. Learners are also told that.

Question: When teaching Sesotho sa Lebowa do you switch to other languages?

Answer: Yes.

Question: If yes which language do you usually switch to and why?

Answer: To English because I want to show learners that grammar of English and grammar of Sesotho sa Lebowa are the same. The do not understand the similarity.

Question: When marking learners' essays do you come across words that are not standard Sesotho sa Lebowa?

Answer: yes

Question: What is your response if learners in their essays write non-standard Sesotho sa Lebowa?

Answer: I write all non-standard words used by all the classes I marked and discuss them with the learners of Sesotho sa Lebowa. I then give them the right words.

Question: What do you do if borrowed words, which exist in Sesotho sa Lebowa, are found in learners' essays?

Answer: I also underline those words and correct them but tell them that they are allowed to be used in Sesotho sa Lebowa. E.g. a Sesotho sa Lebowa word for cold drink which is "senwamaphodi" is never used by Sesotho sa Lebowa speakers.

Question: When communicating with learners outside the classroom, do you speak standard Sesotho sa Lebowa?

Answer: No, I use township language. When I go to class, I start to speak standard NS.

Question: How do you allocate marks to learners who use other languages including Tsotstaal in their essays? If your response is "poor" explain.

Answer: Poor because they must write proper Sesotho sa Lebowa in their books. Even if they do not speak Sesotho sa Lebowa at home they must write pure Sesotho sa Lebowa in class.

Question: Do you encourage learners to read unprescribed library books?

Answer: No.

Question: Do you give learners projects and assignments that require the use of a library?

Answer: No.

Question: In your opinion, what can be done to maintain the standard of Sesotho sa Lebowa and improve its pass rate?

Answer: Teachers must be work-shopped about the importance of first languages. They must be advised to motivate learners to study them.

- Learners must not read one prescribed book per year per grade.
- The library must be equipped with Sesotho sa Lebowa books which are unprescribed books.
- Learners must be given tasks that require research.

#### **4.4 Interpretation of the findings from educators' questionnaires**

Educators who teach Sesotho sa Lebowa at Kgadime Matsepe are not pure Sesotho sa Lebowa speakers. They live in the township areas and they are far away from the source language. They live far away from Mpumalanga and Limpopo where the language is most commonly spoken in its standard form. They encourage codeswitching during Sesotho sa Lebowa lessons. Teachers do not give learners adequate tasks to go and research in the library in order to increase their vocabulary.

#### **4.5 Findings from parents' questionnaires**

Only 40 questionnaires were distributed to parents because most parents in this area are illiterate. 26 questionnaires were completed and returned to the researcher while 4 were spoiled. 10 questionnaires were not returned to the researcher despite all efforts made to make a follow up. Parents were asked to complete these questionnaires at home. Learners took them and then brought them back the following day. It was difficult to trace the missing questionnaires because parents completed them at home. The questions related to gender, home language, language preference, and learners' reading ability.



#### 4.5.1 Gender of learners' parents

Figure 2 shows gender of parents who participated in this research.

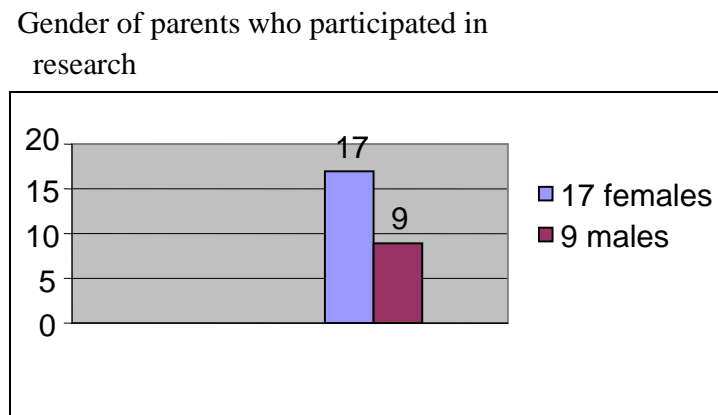


Figure 2

Seventeen females agreed to take part in the research. Nine male parents also agreed to participate in the investigation. In total 26 questionnaires were returned to the researcher. The number of parents who agreed to fill in the questionnaire was limited because most of the parents of learners in chosen classes are illiterate.

#### 4.5.2 Where learners live around Soshanguve

Figure 3 gives results of residential area of respondents.

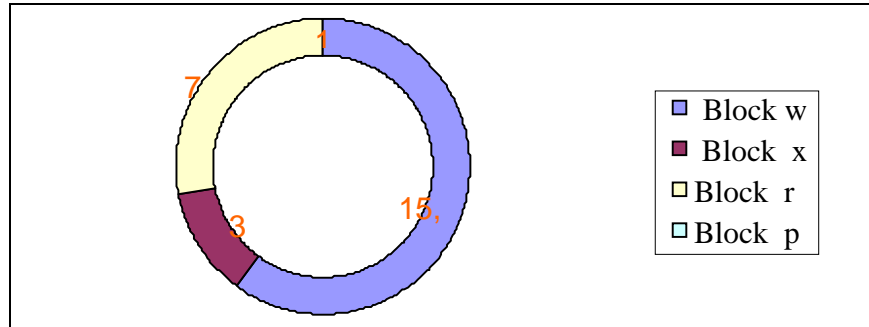


Figure 3

Fifteen parents who agreed to take part in the research live near the school in block W. The school is situated in block W at Soshanguve. Seven live in block R, one in block P and three in block X. the nearest block is block W as the school is situated within that block. This does not nullify the existence of parents who did not take part in the research, it only indicates the residential area of parents who agreed to participate and this is not representative of the whole school. If all parents participated, the figure would be different. The problem of poor participation in this study is mainly caused by illiteracy and time to gather parents and communicate with them collectively.

#### 4.5.3 Home languages of parents whose children registered Sesotho sa Lebowa at Kgadime Matsepe

Table 6 shows the home language of parents whose children are learners at Kgadime Matsepe.

Home languages of parents who register their children at	Number of parents

<b>Kgadime Matsepe</b>	
Sesotho sa Lebowa	10
Setswana	7
IsiXhosa	1
Swahili	1
Tshivenda	1
Siswati	2
Sindebele	1
Xitsonga	3
Total =	26

Table 6

Parents who registered their children at Kgadime Matsepe reflected that they use a different home language to the language their children learn at school. Ten parents out of 26 indicated that their home language is Sesotho sa Lebowa. Seven parents indicated that Setswana is their home language and yet they registered their children for Sesotho sa Lebowa as first language. Setswana is also one of the languages offered at Kgadime Matsepe but parents still register their children to learn a language, which is not their mother tongue. One per parent out of 26 registered that their home language is IsiXhosa, Swahili, Tshivenda and Sindebele. Two indicated that they are Swazi speaking people and three Xitsonga. Parents who speak Sesotho sa Lebowa with their children at home comprise 26.9% which is 7 parents out of 26 respondents. The number is equivalent to the number of parents whose children speak Xitsonga but register their children to study Sesotho sa Lebowa as first language. Setswana parents are also dominant but Setswana is offered as a subject at Kadime Matsepe. Other languages are not dominant but the fact that they are there indicates that their parents speak with learners a different language from the one they are registered for at school.

#### 4.5.4 Language parents prefer

Figure 4 shows the language preferred by parents for their children.

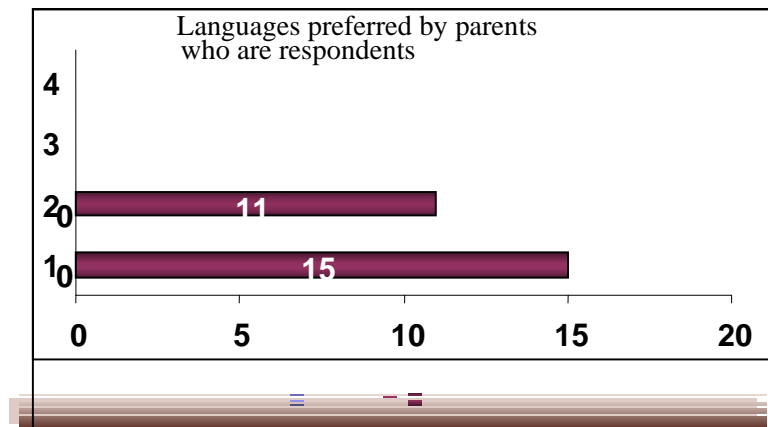


Figure 4

Fifteen parents preferred their children to study all their subjects in Sesotho sa Lebowa. They indicated that they preferred their children to know and understand Sesotho sa Lebowa more than any other language.

Figure 5 presents languages which parents think their children prefer to speak at home outside the classroom.

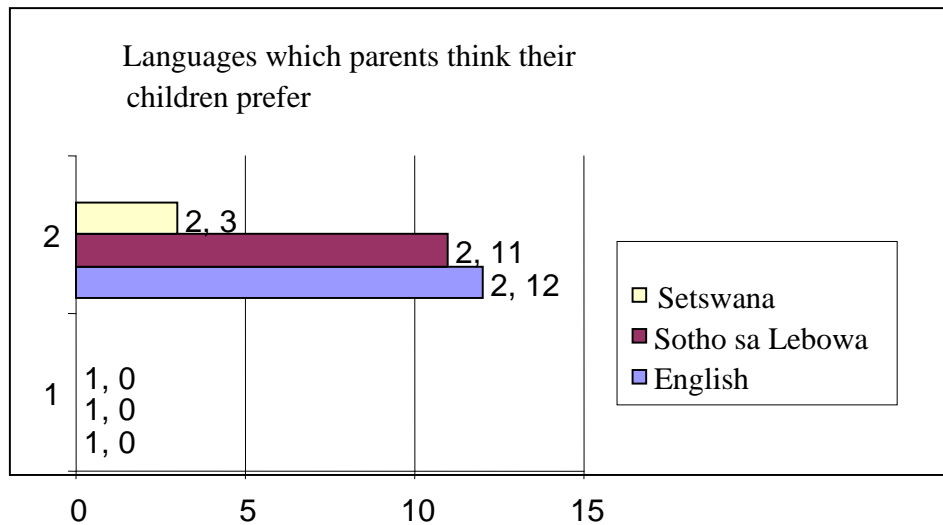


Figure 5

Parents suggested that their children preferred English to any other language in the school. Twelve out of 26 parents said their children preferred to have English as a medium of instruction. Three parents whose children registered for Sesotho sa Lebowa indicated that their children preferred Setswana more than any other language in the school. Their children wanted Setswana to be used as a medium of instruction in the school. Eleven parents suggested that they wanted their children to use Sesotho sa Lebowa as a medium of instruction.

Figure 6 indicates the reading ability of learners according to the observations of their parents.

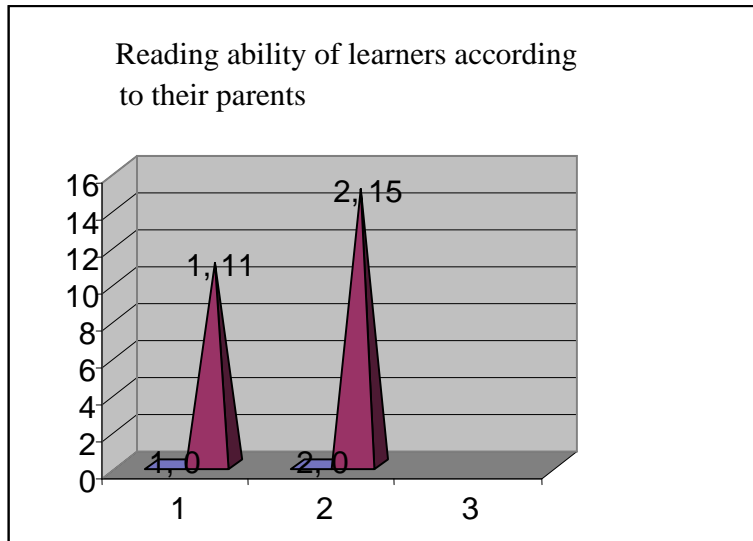


Figure 6

According to 15 parents, their children read Sesotho sa Lebowa better than English. On the other hand, 11 parents indicated that their children read English better than Sesotho sa Lebowa. The results of this question indicate that most learners were able to read English better than Sesotho sa Lebowa. The main reason why this happens is because learners are more exposed to English than Sesotho sa Lebowa. English has more interesting programmes which educate learners at home than Sesotho sa Lebowa. Of course this is also a perception that the parents have and there may well be a degree of wishfulness rather than fact in the responses.

Figure 7 shows learners' pass rate in Sesotho sa Lebowa.

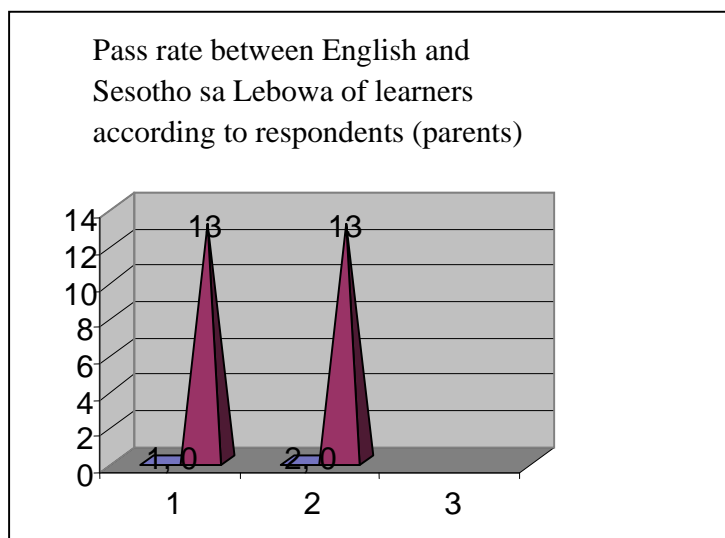


Figure 7

Thirteen parents said their children passed English well and thirteen parents said their children passed Sesotho sa Lebowa very well.

Figure 8 shows the results of the question that asked if the parents encourage their children to use the library.

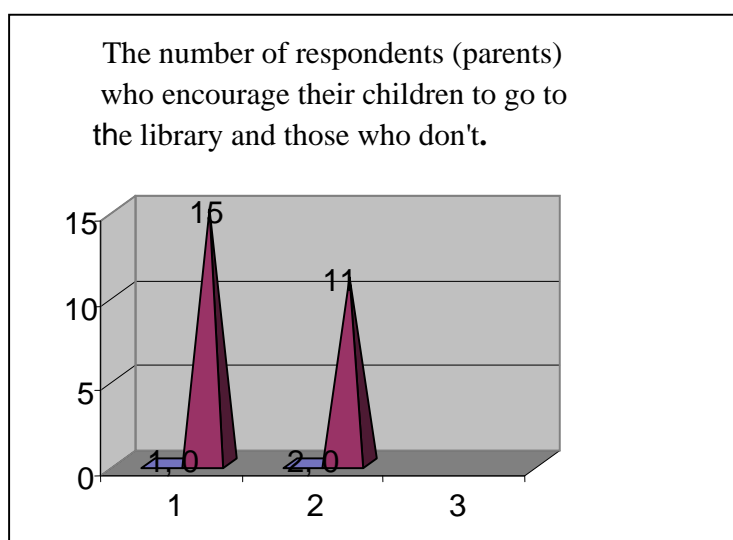


Figure 8

The information shows that parents did not assist their children to read widely. Fifteen parents admitted that they did not encourage their children to read widely. There is a community library which is accessible to every child. However, only 11 out of 26 agreed that they encouraged their children to visit the library and read.

Figure 9 shows why parents registered their children for Sesotho sa Lebowa at Kgadime Matsepe.

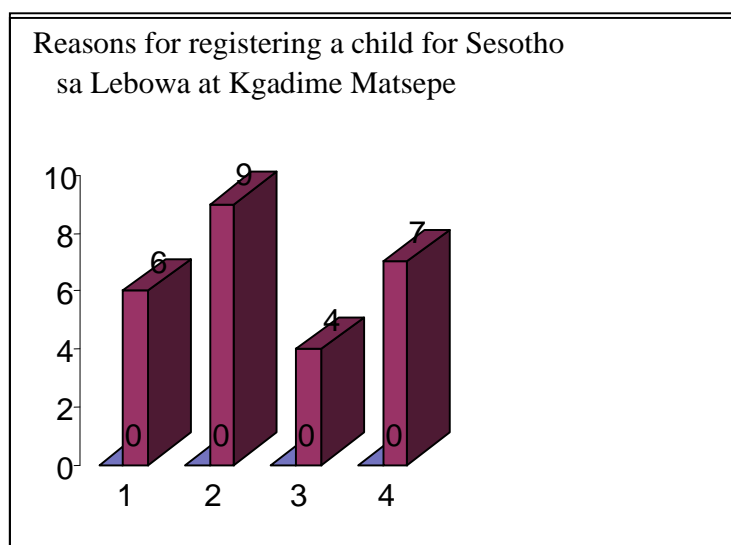


Figure 9

Parents had different opinions as to why they registered their children to study Sesotho sa Lebowa at Kgadime Matsepe. The following are the summarized reasons for registering their children:

- Six parents indicated that they registered their children for the subject because the school offers Sesotho sa Lebowa only and not Sesotho sa Borwa.
- Nine indicated that their children are interested and prefer to study Sesotho sa Lebowa as a subject.



- Four parents indicated that schools that offer the mother tongue of their children as a subject are far from their homes and so that is why they have to choose Sesotho sa Lebowa for their children to study.
- Seven parents indicated that it is just a continuation from middle school.

The reasons given by parents indicate that their children are not really first language Sesotho sa Lebowa speakers. They register them for this language only because the school is nearer to where they stay. Therefore it can be concluded that learners continue with studying their primary school vernacular whose foundation is not necessarily traceable at high school level.

Question 11 of the questionnaire differs from the other ten because parents are now asked to give their opinions as to how to maintain the standard form of Sesotho sa Lebowa.

#### 11. Opinions parents gave on how to maintain Sesotho sa Lebowa.

Parents suggested that the following facts would improve the results of their children in Sesotho sa Lebowa.

1. Trips to Limpopo regularly will improve and increase the standard vocabulary of Sesotho sa Lebowa in learners.
2. They also suggested that learners must be encouraged to listen to radio dramas, which will help to increase their vocabulary.
3. Teachers should encourage learners to study their own language and be proud of it.
4. Learners should start school at grade one learning their mother tongue up until grade 12.
5. Parents should speak Sesotho sa Lebowa with their children at home.

6. Learners should have extra classes.
7. Learners should have many cultural activities at school as this will encourage them to speak their languages.
8. The number of prescribed books should be increased at least from one to five.
9. Teachers who teach Sesotho sa Lebowa should be able to speak it clearly.

#### **4.6 Interpretation of the findings from parents' questionnaires**

The results from the parents' questionnaires indicate that parents register their children languages only because of the geographical location of the school. They do not consider the ability of their children to speak the language of the area fluently.

Parents also look at the availability of specific languages offered at that school. Figure 10 demonstrates this very well. It shows the number of parents who register their children for Sesotho sa Lebowa simply because Kgadime Matsepe High School offers it as a subject. Ten out of 26 parents indicated that they only registered their children for what is offered at that school.

Nearly half of the parents think that English is better than Sesotho sa Lebowa. Eleven parents think that English is the best medium of instruction.

Further, the information confirms that parents do not assist their children to read widely to increase the vocabulary of Sesotho sa Lebowa. Figure 9 shows that out of 26 only 11 encourage their children to use the library.

## 4.7. Findings from the learners' questionnaires

### 4.7.1 Personal Details

#### 4.7.1.1 Age of respondents per class and per grade.

The following table presents the ages of grade 10 learners who took part in this research as respondents.

Age	Frequency	Percentage
15	8	40
16	3	15
17	1	5
18	5	25
19	3	15
Total	20	100

Table 7

The table indicates that 40% of grade 10 respondents are 15 years old while 60% of the other respondents range between 16 and 19 years old. Hence, the learners who are 15 years old dominate the grade 10 groups.

#### 4.7.1.2 Age of grade 11 respondents

Table 8 summarizes different age groups of grade 11 learners who are respondents.

Age	Frequency	Percentage
15	2	10
16	6	30

17	4	20
18	6	30
19	2	10
Total	20	100

Table 8

The table shows that the respondents in grade 11 are 16 or 18 years old. This would appear to indicate that learners of 15 years in grade 10 started school earlier than their required age and they did not repeat any phase.

#### 4.7.1.3 Age of grade 12 respondents

Table 9 shows the age of grade 12 respondents

<b>Age</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
17	2	10%
18	7	35%
19	10	50%
20	1	5%
Total	20	100

Table 9

The information demonstrates that 50% of the respondents in grade 12 are 19 years old. Learners in grade 12 are supposed to be 18 years old if they did not repeat a grade. From the research undertaken it emerges that 55% of the respondents have repeated their grades. They have spent more than three years in one phase.

#### 4.7.2 Gender of respondents

The following table shows the gender of respondents in all grades of learners as respondents

<b>Grade</b>	10	11	12
<b>Boys</b>	9	7	12
<b>Girls</b>	11	13	8

Table 10

Table 10 gives an indication of the number of boys and girls who responded to this research. 46% of the respondents are male while 54% are female. Respondents were chosen at random and that is why the numbers of the respondents fluctuated. Class lists were used to randomly choose which learners were going to take part in this research.

#### 4.7.3 Home Languages

Table 11 shows the home languages of the learners.

<b>Home language</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Sesotho sa Lebowa	24	40%
Sesotho sa Borwa	9	15%
Sindebele	9	15%
Siswati	4	7%
Xitsonga	2	3%

Swahili	1	2%
IsiZulu	8	13%
Tshivenda	1	2%
Setswana	3	5%
Total	60	100%

Table 11

Respondents in all classes from grades ( 9, 10 and 11) indicated nine home languages. Of the 9 home languages that they indicated they only learn one in class which is Sesotho sa Lebowa. The languages reflected above are the respondents' first languages, which might not necessarily be used in class or at home. Most of these languages are reflected in the learners' identity books but they are neither spoken at home nor in class. Sesotho sa Lebowa is home language to only 40% of the respondents.

#### 4.7.4 Language used by the learners as respondents to communicate with their friends

Figure 10 shows the language learners speak with their friends outside the classroom after contact hours.

Languages respondents use to communicate with their friends

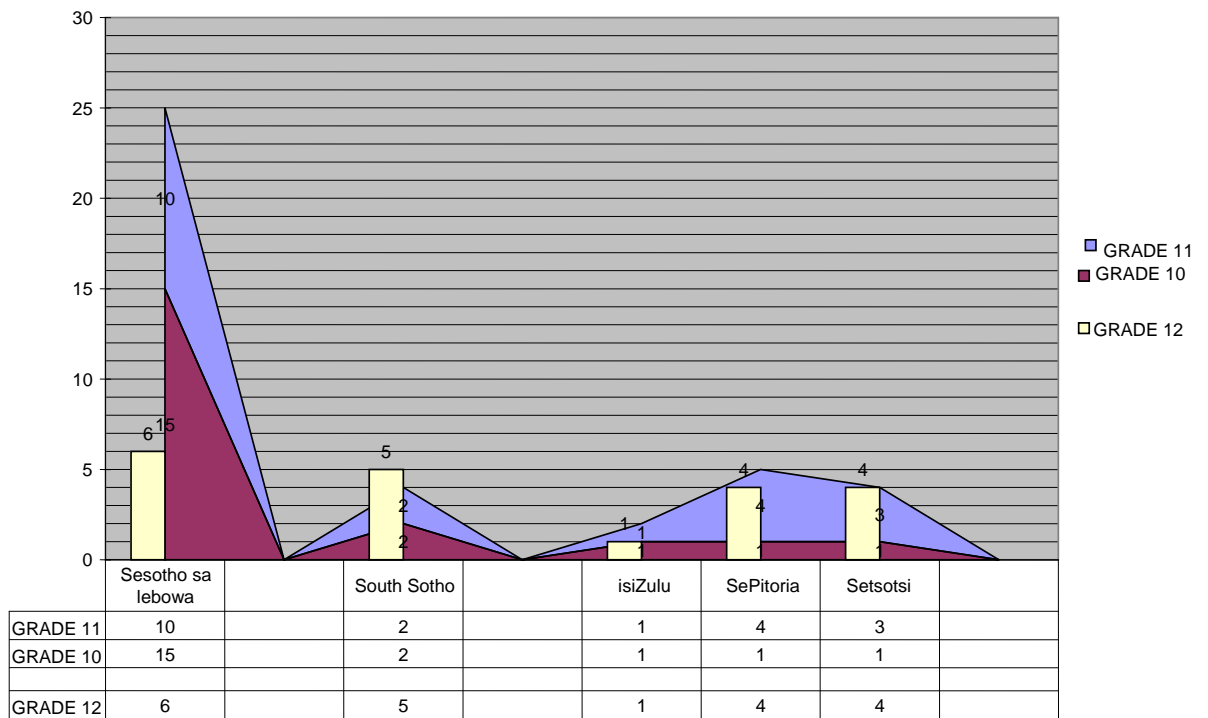


Figure 10

Figure 10 shows that 31 respondents indicated that they spoke Sesotho sa Lebowa while 9 indicated that they spoke South Sotho. 3 indicated that they spoke Isi Zulu with their friends while registering Sesotho sa Lebowa as their first language. 9 learners spoke Sepitoria while 8 of the respondents spoke Setsotsi, which is more commonly referred to as Tsotsitaal.

#### 4.7.5. Educational details

##### 4.7.5.1 How learners regard their knowledge of mother tongue

Figure 11 indicates how respondents regarded their knowledge of mother tongue

### Knowledge of learners' mother tongue

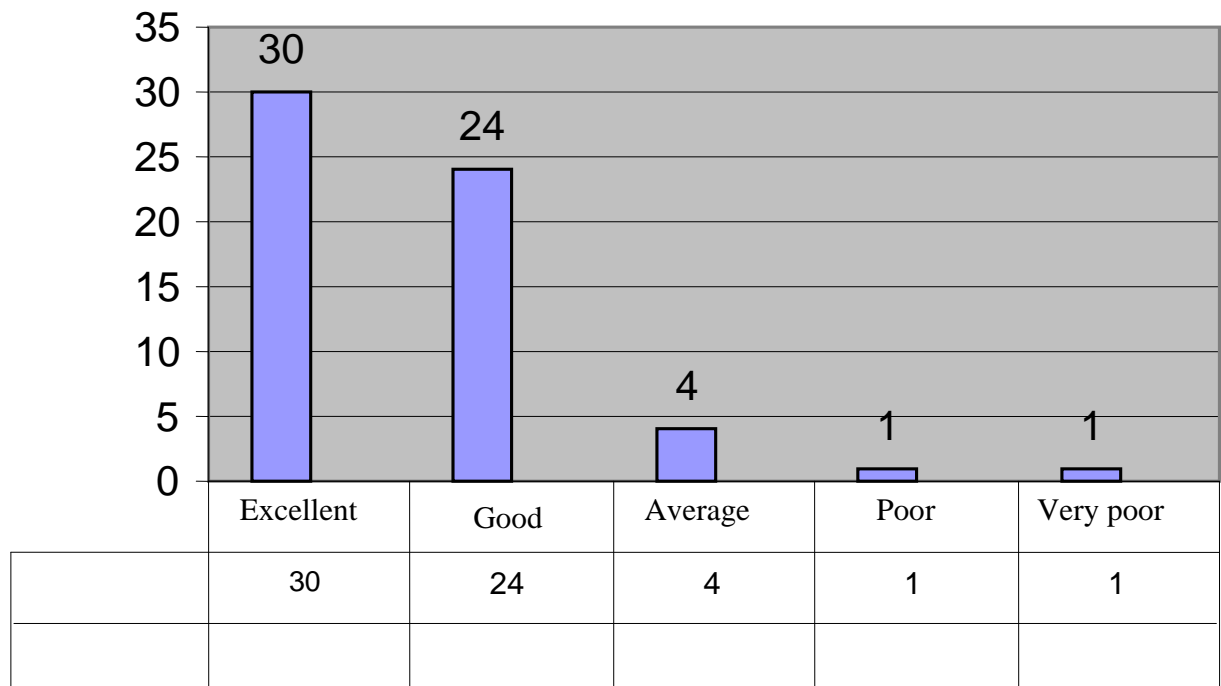


Figure 11

Figure 11 indicates how well the respondents know their mother tongue. 30 learners, which is 50% of respondents, indicate that they regard their knowledge of their mother tongue as excellent, and 24, which comprises 40% of the respondents, indicate that they are very good speakers of their mother tongue. Four, which is about 6.6% of them, are average speakers of their own mother tongue. The last one responded that he/she is a very poor speaker of the mother tongue. The fact that some learners cannot master their own mother tongue could be an indicator as to why they have achieved poor scholastic results.

#### 4.7.5.2 How learners regard their level of knowledge of Sesotho sa Lebowa

Figure 12 shows how the learners regard their level of knowledge of Sesotho sa Lebowa.



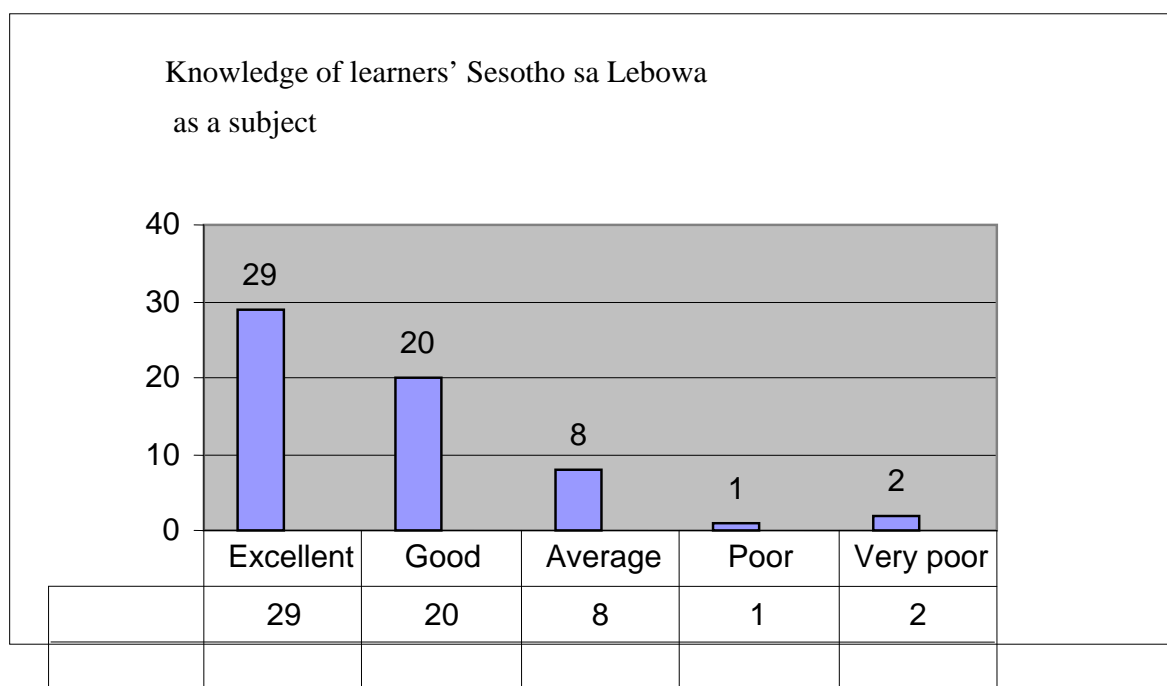


Figure 12

Figure 12 indicates that 29 respondents who constitute 48.3% are excellent speakers of Sesotho sa Lebowa. 20, which is about 33.3% also indicate that they are good speakers of Sesotho sa Lebowa. Eight respondents who represent 13.3% also indicate that they are good speakers of Sesotho sa Lebowa. About eight respondents who represent 13.3% indicate that their knowledge of Sesotho sa Lebowa is average. These respondents register for Sesotho sa Lebowa as one of their learning areas. The remaining 5% said their knowledge was poor or very poor.

#### 4.7.5.3 How learners think Sesotho sa Lebowa as a subject benefits them educationally

The following table illustrates how learners as respondents think that studying Sesotho sa Lebowa has benefited them educationally.

<b>RESPONSE</b>	<b>FREQUENCY: the actual number of learners</b>	<b>PERCENTAGE</b>
Definitely Agree	23	38.3
Agree	27	45
Partially agree	2	3.3
Definitely disagree	1	1.6
Disagree	5	8.3
Partially	2	3.3

Table 12

Table 12 indicates that most respondents strongly agree that Sesotho sa Lebowa benefits them educationally. 38.3% definitely agree that Sesotho so Lebowa which is one of the vernaculars studied in schools benefits them educationally while 45% partially agree and 3.3% partially agree. 13.2% of the respondents do not see the value of Sesotho sa Lebowa as a subject that benefits their education.

#### 4.7.5.4 How often the learners visit the school library to read the books written in Sesotho sa Lebowa that are not prescribed

Figure13 shows how often learners visited the library to read books that have not been prescribed in order to increase their vocabulary.

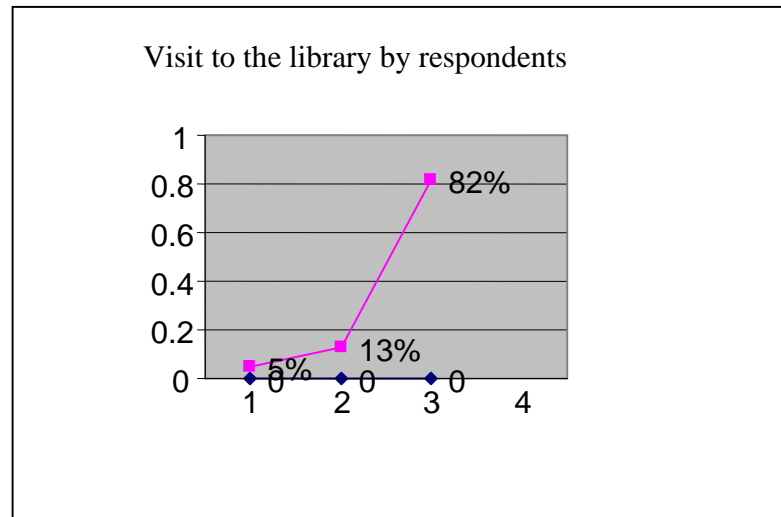


Figure 13

There is a school library in the setting of this research but 82% of respondents indicate that they never bother to visit that library. 5% are undecided about their visit to the school library to read non-prescribed books. Only 13% indicate that they do in fact visit the library.

#### 4.7.5.5 The languages the learners prefer as medium of instruction

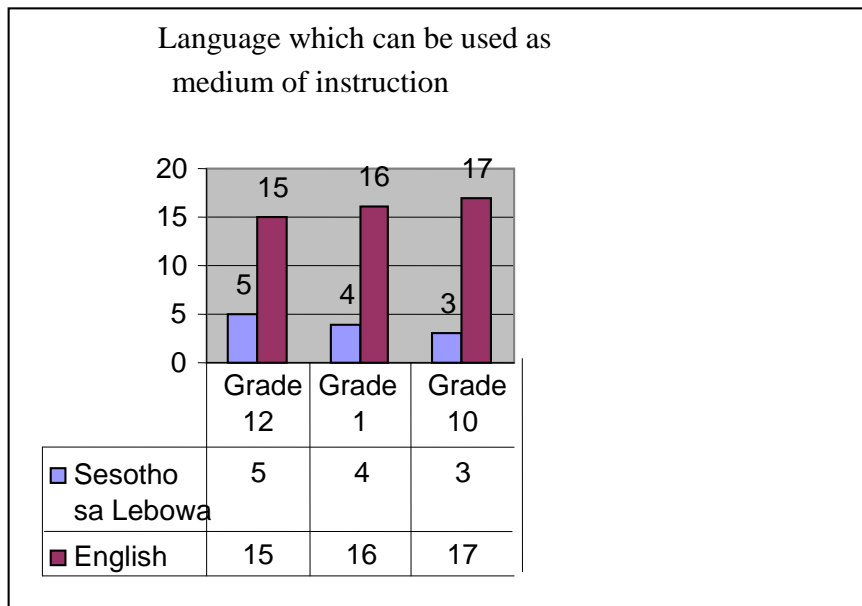


Figure 14

The figure indicates that the language the learners prefer to have as a medium of instruction is English rather than Sesotho sa Lebowa. 80% of the learners indicate that they prefer to study all the other content subjects in English. This suggests that learners do not consider Sesotho sa Lebowa as developed enough to be used as a medium of instruction.

#### 4.7.5.6 Whether learners think they can pass all the content subjects if they study them in Sesotho sa Lebowa

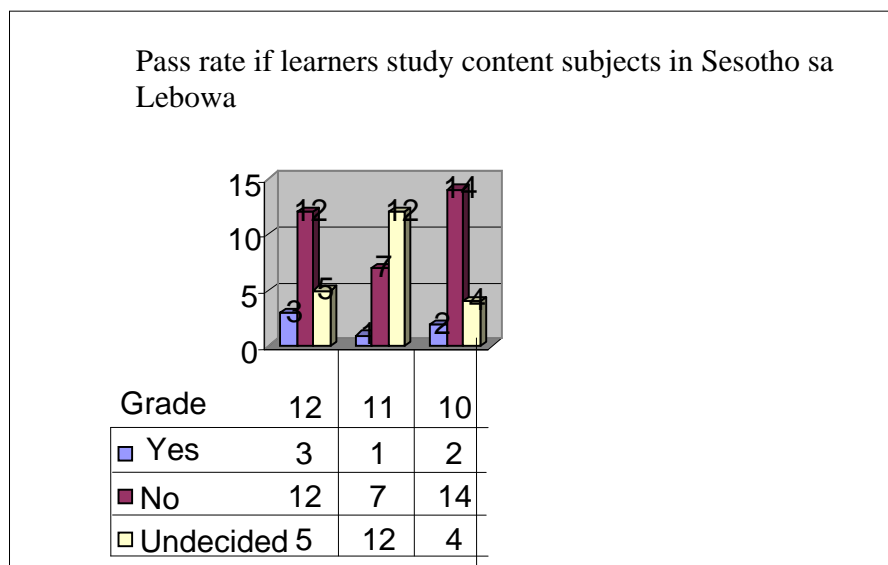


Figure 15

Figure 15 confirms the findings of figure 14, which indicates that 80% of the learners prefer English to be used as a medium of instruction. In figure 15 above, 55% of the respondents indicate that Sesotho sa Lebowa as a subject cannot increase their pass rate if they study content subjects in Sesotho sa Lebowa. Only 10% of the respondents indicate that learning all the subjects in Sesotho sa Lebowa could increase the pass rate in other subjects. 35% indicated that they are undecided.

#### 4.7.5.7 What learners think can be done to maintain the standard of Sesotho sa Lebowa and to improve the pass rate

The suggestions of respondents (learners) as to how to maintain the standard of Sesotho sa Lebowa and improve the pass rate were extracted from all learners' questionnaires. The following is a summary of these suggestions.

Learners suggested that teachers should avoid speaking in English during Sesotho sa Lebowa classes. Respondents also suggested that they must start to speak Sesotho sa Lebowa with their parents at home even if it is not their home language. They emphasised that school trips should be organized so that they can visit Limpopo and other areas where Sesotho sa Lebowa

is the dominant language. Respondents suggested that all languages should be given a chance in all school gatherings e.g. debate, morning devotion and not only English. They suggested that there should be fewer learners in Sesotho sa Lebowa classes.

#### **4.8 Interpretation of the findings from the learners' questionnaires**

Figure 12 illustrates that only 29 out of 60 indicated that they had an excellent knowledge of Sesotho sa Lebowa. The other 29 still registered to study Sesotho sa Lebowa even if they did not have an excellent command of the language. These findings suggest that learners registered to study a vernacular that is not their home language.

The findings also confirm that learners lack practice in Sesotho sa Lebowa as they do not speak the language frequently enough with their friends and parents at home and during school hours with their friends. This adds to poor vocabulary in Sesotho sa Lebowa; hence the poor scholastic results at Kgadime Matsepe. These findings call for further research to understand why learners undermine the languages they speak daily and understand better.

The information in Figure 13 shows that 82% of the learners do not use the library facilities to read further. Teachers do not give them tasks that encourage further reading and the learners also do not show interest in the library facilities offered by the school. These findings suggest that learners do not take Sesotho sa Lebowa seriously or the library is not equipped or the learners are not given tasks that encourage wider reading. This is a contradiction because the function of a library in a school is to encourage reading.

#### **4.9 Findings obtained by interviewing learners as respondents**

Analysis of data obtained by interviewing learners is presented in this section. The data are presented qualitatively and quantitatively.

##### **4.9.1 Where learners live around Soshanguve**

Figure 16 indicates the residential area of learners as respondents.

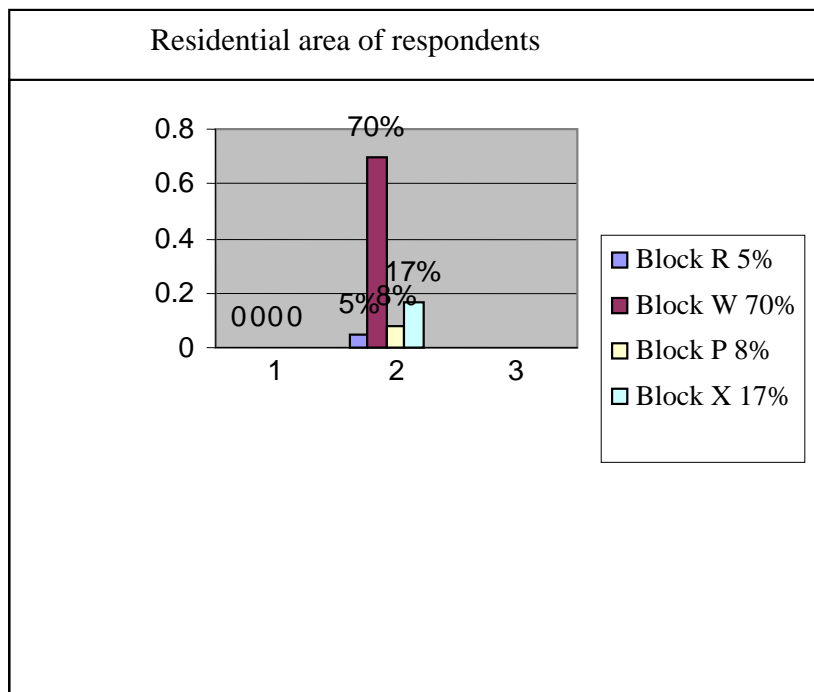


Figure 16

Most of the respondents (70%) live at block W which is nearer to the school. 30% of them live within the nearby blocks, which are block R, P and X. This means that most learners obviously speak Pretoria Sotho because it is a geographical variety and they live around Pretoria. This figure proves that most of the learners study Sesotho sa Lebowa because it is one of the languages offered at a school nearer to their homes.

#### 4.9.2 The language that the learners use when they are with their classmates in a Sesotho sa Lebowa class

Figure 17 gives results of the languages used by learners as respondents when they communicate with their classmates.

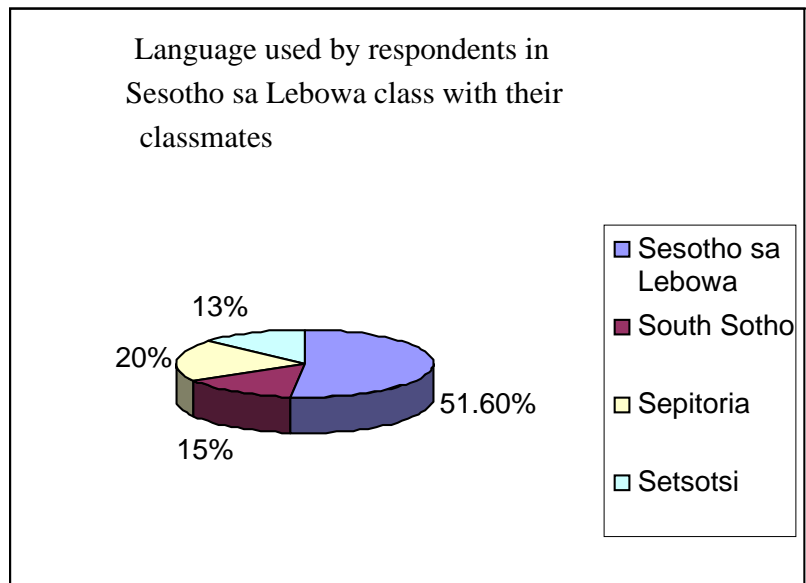


Figure 17

The figure indicates that 51.6% of the respondents speak Sesotho sa Lebowa during Sesotho sa Lebowa lessons with their classmates. 15% speak South Sotho during the lessons with their classmates in a Sesotho sa Lebowa class. 20% of the respondents communicate in Sepitoria with their classmates in a Sesotho sa Lebowa class. 13,3% communicate in Setsotsi.

#### 4.9.3 Languages learners can speak apart from English and Sesotho sa Lebowa

Table 13 indicates the ability of learners to speak other languages apart from English and Sesotho sa Lebowa.

Number of respondents	Number of languages they can speak	Percentage
24	4	40%
24	3	40%
12	5	20%
Total	12	100

Table 13



Table 13 indicates that 40% of the respondents say that they can speak four languages while 40% can speak three languages. 20% of respondents indicate that they can speak five languages. This table shows that 100% of these respondents are multilingual. Because of their multilingual status, they borrow many words from other languages and mix them with Sesotho sa Lebowa.

#### 4.9.4 The language learners prefer

Figure.18 shows the languages learners prefer.

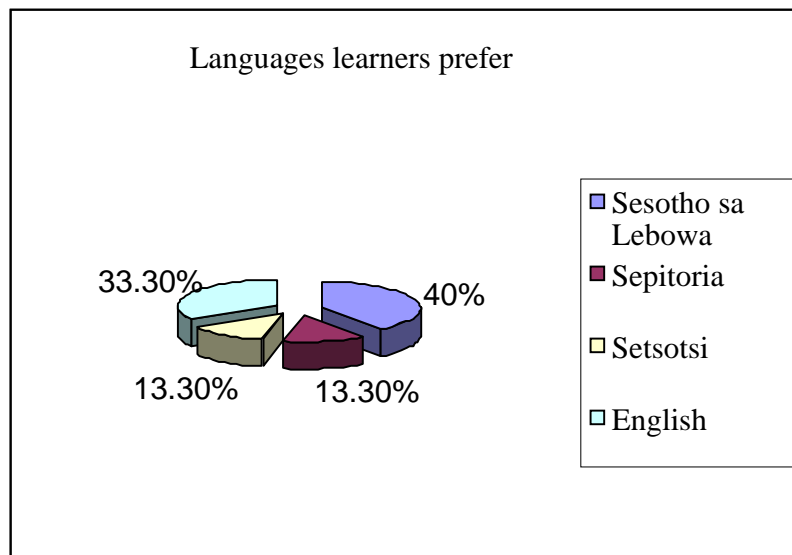


Figure 18

In figure 18, 24 respondents, which is 40%, prefer Sesotho sa Lebowa. Eight, which comprises 13.3% of the respondents, indicate that they prefer Setsotsi. Another eight, which is also 13.3%, indicate that they prefer Sepitoria. The last 20, which is 33.3 percent, prefer English.

#### 4.9.5 The language that the learners use when talking to Sesotho sa Lebowa teachers outside the classroom

Figure 19 shows the language spoken by learners as respondents with teachers who teach them Sesotho sa Lebowa outside the classroom.

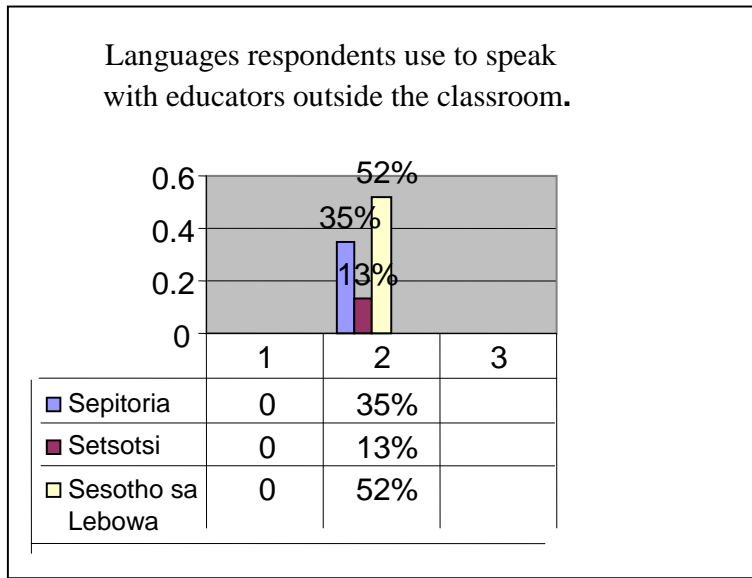


Figure 19

Figure 19 shows that outside the classroom 48% of the learners switch to other varieties of Sesotho sa Lebowa. 13% speak Setsotsi with their educators while 35% speak Sepitoria. 52% speak Sesotho sa Lebowa with their educators outside the classroom.

#### 4.9.6 Description of how well learners can speak Sesotho sa Lebowa

Figure 20 shows how well respondents think they can speak Sesotho sa Lebowa.

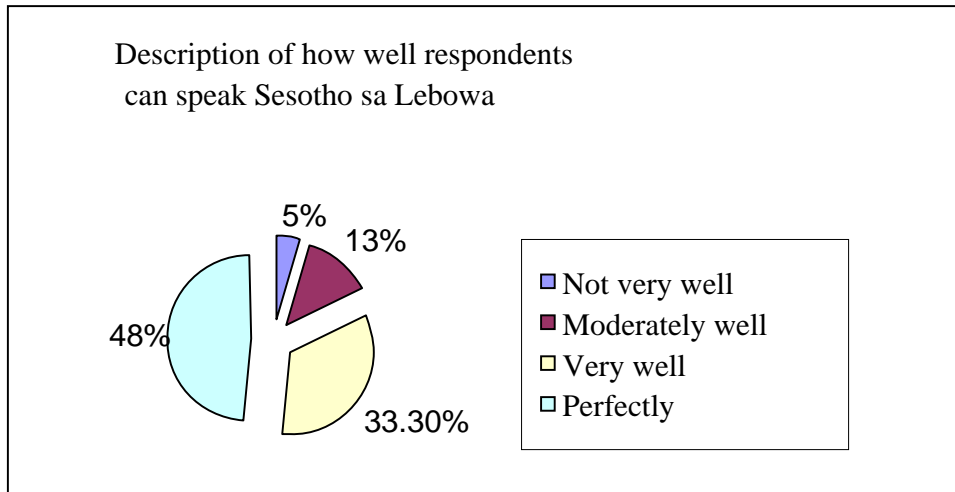


Figure 20

Figure 20 supports figure 12 which shows the knowledge of Sesotho sa Lebowa by learners. Figure 12 was mainly concerned with the theoretical knowledge of learners. Here, Figure 20 describes the way respondents speak Sesotho sa Lebowa. 5 % indicate that they speak poor Sesotho sa Lebowa. 13.3% indicate that they speak Sesotho sa Lebowa moderately well. 33.3% indicate that they speak Sesotho sa Lebowa very well. 48.3% indicate that they speak Sesotho sa Lebowa perfectly.

#### 4.9.7 Whether learners pass Sesotho sa Lebowa better than other languages

Figure 24 shows how respondents evaluate themselves about their own pass or failure rate in Sesotho sa Lebowa as compared to English and Afrikaans.

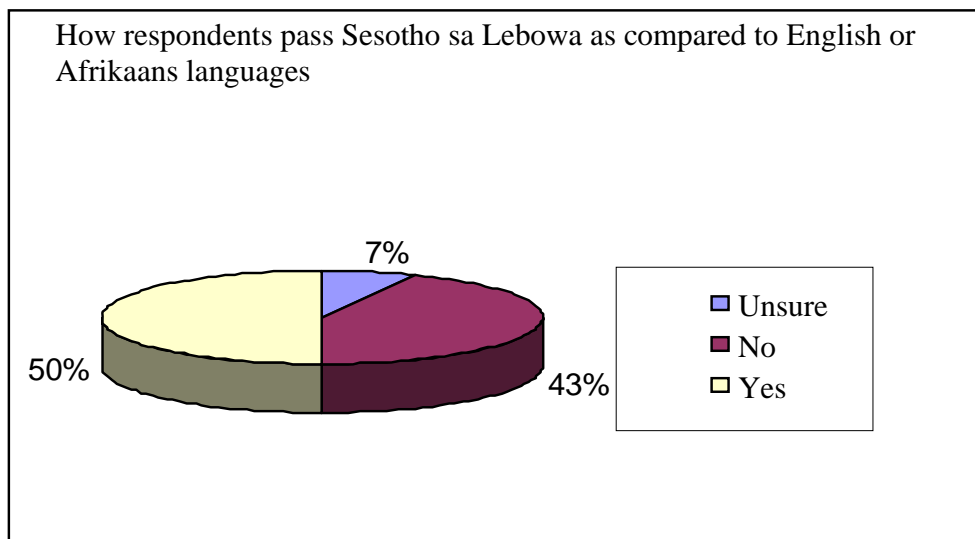


Figure 21

In the above figure, 50% of the learners indicate that they pass Sesotho sa Lebowa better than other languages while 43% of the respondents indicate that they do not pass Sesotho sa Lebowa better than other subjects. 7% of the respondents are unsure.

#### 4.9.8 Whether teachers use other languages to explain concepts during a Sesotho sa Lebowa class

Figure 22 shows what learners said about how teachers use other languages during Sesotho sa Lebowa classes.

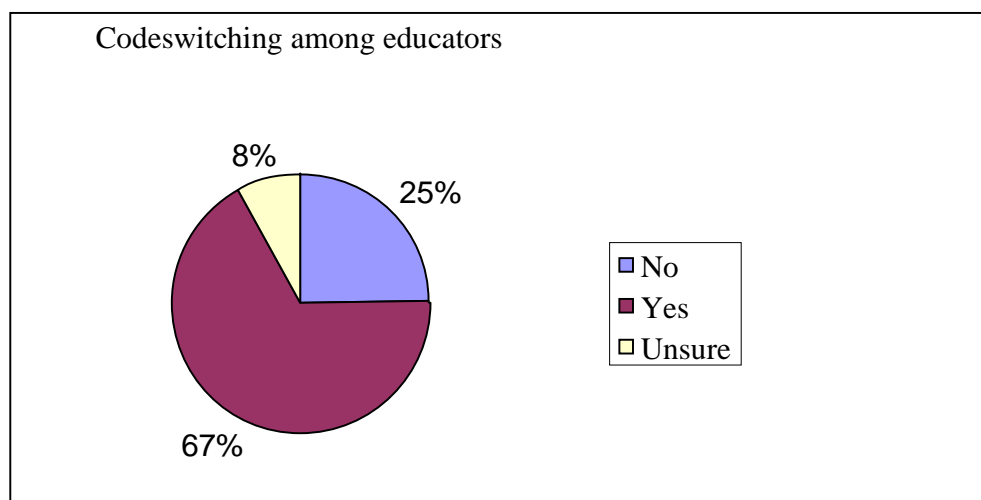


Figure 22

Figure 22 indicates that 67% of the respondents say that educators switch to other languages during the Sesotho sa Lebowa class. 25% are not sure and 8% do not know if teachers speak more than one Sesotho sa Lebowa language during a Sesotho sa Lebowa class.

#### 4.9.9 Languages which teachers usually use according to the learners

The results are that 67% of respondents say that educators usually switch to English during Sesotho sa Lebowa lessons. The learners said this is done to explain and clarify certain concepts.

#### **4.10 Interpretation of the findings from learners' interview questions**

70% of the learners who have registered for Sesotho sa Lebowa at Kgadime Matsepe live near the school. This proves that geographical location contributes a lot towards the subject they choose to study at school. Out of 60 learners, only 24, which represents 40% of them communicate in Sesotho sa Lebowa with friends and neighbours. This indicates lack of practice and therefore a lower vocabulary in Sesotho sa Lebowa. When learners are in class with their class mates, only 51.60% speak Sesotho sa Lebowa. This also contributes towards a diminishing of the status of this language.

There is lack of interest and commitment by both educators and learners because outside the classroom they forget that they are Sesotho sa Lebowa speakers. Learners indicate that they communicate in other languages with teachers who teach them Sesotho sa Lebowa outside the classroom. During Sesotho sa Lebowa, teachers codeswitch using English when there is an integration of other subjects within Sesotho sa Lebowa. Above all, learners think that Sesotho sa Lebowa has a limited vocabulary. However, this study concludes that explaining concepts in English to learners during Sesotho sa Lebowa lessons lowers the value and status of Sesotho sa Lebowa. It is therefore an obstacle to learning Sesotho sa Lebowa

#### **4.11 Findings obtained qualitatively from learners' essays**

This section concentrates on the data that were collected qualitatively. It is divided into two parts. 4.11.1 Morphological analysis of language according to gender and 4.11.2 constitutes Codemixing and Codeswitching. The learners' essays as well as the speeches they presented in class have been used in analysing these data.

##### **4.11.1 Morphological analysis of language according to gender.**

There is a clear difference between the language used by boys and the one used by girls at Kgadime Matsepe. Boys use borrowed words more than girls do. These words are used in a

form of Tsotsitaal and they are borrowed from Setswana, IsiZulu and other source languages, which in the main are Afrikaans and English. Mathumba 1993 distinguishes between two forms of borrowing, cultural and intimate borrowing as cited in Calteaux (1994:21). He says:

Cultural borrowing refers to the adoption of features from a different language and usually involves introduction of new elements into the adopting languages e.g. learners as respondents use words like “ke a waaia” meaning I am leaving.

Different varieties exist at Kgadime Matsepe High School because of the number of languages learners speak at home and with their friends. The varieties are formed because respondents live in townships with other people. Geographical variation exists because people live in different areas and they do not speak the same language variety. Rapeane (1996:10) refers to these different varieties’ peculiarity by saying:

Groups of speakers of a language may have different varieties peculiar to their locality. Urban-dwellers use varieties that differ from those of rural-dwellers.

Learners reflect all these variations in their speech because the school is situated next to the Northwest Province and by and large Setswana is spoken in that area. Respondents use the variety that is formed in an urban area and not a rural area. Social variation is not going to be discussed in this essay because the setting of this research is not among the whole community. Gender variation is discussed because boys appear to have a different language from girls. Age variation means that languages differ according to age. Language spoken by people who range between 15 and 20 years differs from a language of that spoken by older people.

Mathumba (1993:177) describes intimate borrowing as adoption between languages spoken in the same geographical area by a single speech community. In the case of the school where this research has been conducted, learners mainly adopt Setswana words because the school is situated next to Northwest Province where Setswana dominates. Mathumba (1993:178) indicates that many words have been adopted into Xitsonga from Tshivenda, Siswati, Sesotho sa Lebowa and IsiZulu.

Even in the case of this researched school, a number of other languages are spoken and play a role in language mix but Setswana dominates. Setswana words dominate the girls' language while the boys' language is dominated by SeTsotsi. There are a few words, which will be discussed later to indicate interference from other languages used by the learners. Rapeane (1996:11) argues that "an observation of Sotho indicates that the language of women is more polite than of men." This justifies the fact that language in every society has gender differences.

The list of words in this section will be divided into two main groups. There are two varieties: boys and girls language, which means that there are words that are mainly used by boys and those that are predominantly used by girls. Most of the girls use a lot of Setswana and English while boys are inclined to use Afrikaans and IsiZulu. These words are taken from the learners' essays as well as interviews conducted in class. Learners use different languages because of peer pressure. They are able to identify themselves as groups with the language they use.

Trudgill (1974:74) notes that language is an important symbol of group membership and learners conform in the form of dress as well as language. Language is one of the best instruments to conform. Trudgill states:

The pressures of group identification and peer group solidarity are very strong. Linguistic research has shown that the adolescent peer-group is in many cases the most important linguistic influence. Children do not grow up speaking like their parents and they certainly do not grow up speaking like their teachers.

Morphological analysis of language according to gender is divided into nouns and verbs. There are nouns commonly used by girls and those that are commonly used by boys. The same thing applies to verbs and idioms.

#### 4.11.1.1 Nouns

- (a) Most girls call their mothers mama while most boys call their mothers ou-lady which means an old woman in Afrikaans. The word has been adopted into Sesotho sa Lebowa.



The standard word for mother in Sesotho sa Lebowa is “mma” and it has an additional “a” as the language shifts and it becomes mama.

- b) Girls use the word papa to refer to their fathers. Papa is derived from an Afrikaans word called *pa* which refers to father.

Boys use the word tyma and toppie to refer to their fathers or any grown man.

The word tyma cannot be traced to any source language and may thus be referred to as a form used in modern language. But the word toppie can be traced back to an English word *top*. *Top* in this case refers to somebody who is superior to everybody at home.

Tate is the standard word used in Sesotho sa Lebowa. Learners rarely use the word tate in any class activity especially when they write their essays or during class discussions.

- c) The word Ausie is used to show respect to older girls. Sesi is also a commonly used word which originated from an English word *sister*. The standard word for *sister* in standard Sesotho sa Lebowa is kgaetsedi.

Boys call their sister or other older girls sustere which could be derived from either *sussie/suster* in Afrikaans or *sister* in English. These words refer to all those in their age group as well as older sisters at home. It could also be considered that it is used as a diminutive to undermine girls and also as a gesture to mock and ridicule girls.

- d) Malome is *uncle* in Sesotho sa Lebowa.

Boys use the word unkele meaning *uncle* to refer to their own uncles as well as any middle aged man. Younger boys use it to show respect to those men.

- e) Abuti is derived from an Afrikaans word *boet* which means *brother* in English.

Boys use the Afrikaans word *boet* to mean *brother* in English. The word abuti is also used to refer to older boys. They also refer to any man as a bra meaning a brother. Young boys are called klein laetikies (little boys).

- f) Girls use the word antie to respect older girls as well as their aunts from both sides of their parents. Sesotho sa Lebowa words that are used to refer to an aunt are rakgadi and mmane. Rakgadi means an *aunt* who is the sister of the girl's father. Mmane on the other hand is the sister of the girl's mother.
- g) Girls call bread borotho a word adopted from Afrikaans *brood*. Most boys call bread "dough" which is an English word used without any alteration. Dough is a mixture of flour and other ingredients used to bake bread.

#### 4.11.1.2 Verbs

- a) To greet older people girls always use dumelang. They also use the word "hi" to greet each other. Dumelang is not a standard Sesotho sa Lebowa word. Re a lotsha\thobela are standard words used to greet adults.

Boys use "is waar" to say "hallo" and to say "it is true". The words "is waar" are Afrikaans words, which mean "it is true" in English. The word heita is also commonly used among boys. It is a word that is part of seTsotsi and cannot be traced back to any source language.

- b) The word "eating" is often used differently by boys and girls. Most boys use the word gaula/zoza to refer to eating. The standard Sesotho sa Lebowa word is go ja and it is the word mainly used by everybody. The word food in tsotsi language is called "zozo" by boys in their daily speech.
- c) Girls use standard Sesotho sa Lebowa words when they talk about sleeping or going to sleep which is go robala. Boys use go gitla as the phrase which refers to sleeping. They use these words when talking to their peers. As the observation was done at school during the day and not at home, it was difficult to know if these words were even used at home.

- d) The word “play” is normally used as raloka by both boys and girls, but the commonly used word is dlala which is an IsiZulu word meaning to play. Both boys and girls use same type of words to refer to play.
- e) When going somewhere boys usually say: “ke a waaia”. The word waaia is derived from an Afrikaans word *waai* meaning “to leave”. Girls use a Setswana word tsamaya instead of standard Sesotho sa Lebowa sepela.
- f) Boys use atshuse to refer to their best friends while girls use words such as “chummy” or “chomma” or “chomzana” to refer to their friends. The standard words for a friend are mokgotse or mogwera in Sesotho sa Lebowa.

#### 4.11.1.3 Idioms

The following table shows new words which are used in another form.

Non-standard idioms	Standard idioms	Meaning
<i>Idioms used by girls</i>		
Go topa	Go gerula	To have a dirty look
Go miza	Go gerula	To have a dirty look
<i>Idioms used by boys</i>		
Go sayela motho di rounds	Go hlola motho	To pay someone a visit
Go betha katara	Go laola	To be too controlling

Table 14

Some of the words in the table cannot be traced to any African language.

#### 4.11.2 Codemixing and Codeswitching

Data that were collected from observations indicate that there is a difference between the language used by girls and the language used by boys. It is very clear that most of the time outside the classroom milieu learners' language starts to differ between that of boys and girls. Trudgill (1974:94), points out that linguistic sex variation arises because language as a social phenomenon is closely related to social attitudes. Men and women are socially different in that society lays down different social roles for them and expects different behavioural patterns from them. Language reflects this social fact.

The researcher observed how learners as respondents switched and mixed codes. Codemixing and codeswitching are processes that occur among people who are bilingual. A monolingual person does not have the ability to switch codes because he/she can speak only one language. Sesotho sa Lebowa learners at Kgadime Matsepe are multilingual because they come from a multilingual community.

Codeswitching according to Saville-Troike (1982) occurs in a single situation, but adds meaning to such components as role relationships, which are being expressed.

Learners mostly used codeswitching during their speech in class. The use of mixing languages was observed according to the gender of learners. Most of the girls switch codes like English and Sesotho sa Lebowa and Sepitoria while boys mix Afrikaans and Sepitoria. The mixing of Afrikaans by boys creates a tsotsitaal variety. Codemixing creates another language variety. Certain words are permanently used in Sesotho sa Lebowa while nevertheless coming from English and Afrikaans.

##### 4.11.2.1 Codeswitching by boys with reference to language change and variation

Codeswitching is rare among boys because it makes them less masculine. Boys who codeswitch to English are usually viewed as gay by girls and the community. The dominant use of other languages in boys is when they mix Afrikaans, Zulu, Sesotho sa Lebowa and Sepitoria. e.g.

Table 15 shows mixed sentences used by boys as respondents as well as the sentences translated.

<b>Mixed Sentences</b>	<b>Translated Sentences</b>
Autie ela ga ena verstaan	That guy does not understand
Ke ya town	I am going to town
O seke wa warra	Do not worry
My bra jy moenie so maak nie	My brother don't do that.

Table 15

#### 4.11.2.2 Codeswitching by girls with reference to language change and variation.

Table 16 shows mixed sentences used by girls as respondents as well as the sentences translated.

<b>Mixed sentences</b>	<b>Translated sentences</b>
Ke rata ngwana o, o cute.	I like this child she is cute.
O nice bjang	You are nice
O apere roko e smart	You are wearing a beautiful dress
Maara ke eng e?	What is it
Why o le snaaks so	Why are you so funny
Today o kwaatile	Today you are angry

Table 16

Most of the words indicated below are words which are adopted from other African languages and source languages which are English and Afrikaans. Nevertheless, there are words which cannot be traced back to any African or source language like English or Afrikaans. The words used in these learners' language especially boys cannot be traced to any known language. For the sake of this research they will be referred to as strange words. Trudgill (1974:72) adds more information about boys' language by saying: "The boys are much more likely than girls to use non standard local pronunciations".

Table 17 shows some of the non-standard versions used by both boys and girls

New words used by both boys and girls

Sentences and words	Standard sentences	Meaning
Go jesa madopies	Go kitimisa motho o sa mo sware	To chase a person you cannot catch
Go apara banana	Go apara mabatha	To wear shoes on a wrong foot
Charmer	Motho o mobotse	A handsome man
Cheese boy	Monna o mobotse	A handsome man
Stabane	Mosimane wa go itira mosadi	A gay man
Achuse	Mokgotse	Friend
Mpinge	Mokgotse	Friend
Mabeqane	Banyana ba ba nnyane.	Little girls of between 12-16 who are short and thin.

Table 17

Certain usages of language which are normally not so pleasant to the ears of many speakers of the language would more often be heard spoken by men rather than women (Rapeane, 1996:11). Most of the boys use strange words when communicating with their friends. These strange words are used to communicate as groups. In schools learners enjoy sitting and eating with in-groups. That is when Tsotsitaal is heard. Malefo (as cited by Ngwenya 1992: 23) claims:

In play groups, for instance when children play together, they often use the gangster language. These childhood companions ridicule others into learning this language. Some of their conversation, particularly ones including jokes, adventuring are so much juicier when this language codes is used. Therefore a

newcomer fearing to be the butt of a joke will learn this language in self-defence (Malefo, 1986:43).

#### 4.11.3 Language changes found in words used by respondents

##### Interference

Different types of interference form language change, which in turn creates a variety. Weinreich (1953) distinguishes two types of interference which are phonic interference and lexical interference. These interferences are also found in learners' essays as well as in their speech during the interviews that were conducted. Malimabe (1990:15-23) indicates that interference found in standard language usage by pupils in high schools includes adoptives, codeswitching and grammatical errors.

##### 4.11.3.1 Phonological interference

Phonology has to do with phones which produce language. When the phones of another language form part of the sound system of a receiving language interference occurs. In other words, interference occurs when phones of another language disturb the order of phones in a particular language. According to Calteaux (1994), phonological interference happens when the sound system of the language is changed. Weinreich (1953:14) says the problem of phonic interference concerns the manner in which a speaker perceives and produces the sound of one language, which might be in one designated to be secondary, while in terms of another, to be called primary.

Phonological interference is brought about by shifts in the language due to phonological processes. The following paragraph will explain how interference can create change, which leads to variations that ultimately creates dialects. Only plosivation will be discussed in this study because changes that dominate in the respondents' written and spoken language are from this phonological process.

Changes that dominated learners' essays and speeches during the interviews and class activities come mainly from the use of plosives. Plosivation refers to the change from continuants to stops or plosives. The incidences of plosivation will be discussed in the following paragraph. Respondents use continuants where they are supposed to use stops or plosives e.g. where 'r' in the case of ruta (teach) should be '*th*' used in thuto for example, the respondents continue to use '*r*' which is a continuant.

The following table shows the use of verbs.

Verb	Incorrect verb	Standards verb	Meaning
<b>Ruta</b>	<b>Nruta:</b> bomma ba nruta	<b>Nthuta:</b> bomma ba nthuta	Teach:mother teaches me
<b>Rata</b>	<b>Nrata:</b> Selina oa nrata	<b>Nthuta:</b> Selina oa nthata	Selina loves me
<b>Fetola</b>	<b>Nfetola:</b> bana baka ba nfetola.	<b>Mphetola:</b> bana baka ba mphetola	My children answer me.
<b>Fetela</b>	<b>Nfetela:</b> mokgohlane o tla nfetela.	<b>Mphetela:</b> mokghlone o tla mphetela	I will be infected by flu.
<b>Lora</b>	<b>Nlora:</b> Matome are oa nlor.	<b>Ntora:</b> Matome are oa ntora	Matome dreams about me
<b>Seba</b>	<b>Nseba:</b> ba hlwa ba nseba.	<b>Ntsheba:</b> ba hlwa ba ntsheba.	They always gossip about me.
<b>Godisa</b>	<b>Ngodisa:</b> Koko o ngodisitse.	<b>Nkgodisa:</b> koko o nkgodisitse.	Grandmother raised me.

Table 18



The above words are divided into three columns the first column identifies the verb while the second column shows the incorrect version used by the respondents. The third column is the standard Sesotho sa Lebowa version. Learners used the above-mentioned words when interviewed and in their essays. Instead of using standard verbs in the third column, they use incorrect verbs.

#### 4.11.3.2 Morphological interference

Koopman, (1994:217) as cited in Calteaux, (1994:106) explains “morphological interference as a process that takes place when a non-morphemic syllable in the source language is perceived as a morpheme in the receiving language, or vice-verse, when a morpheme in the source language is not perceived as a morpheme in the receiver language. Such interference causes considerable distortion in the morphological structure of an adoptive.”

Prefixal interference and suffixical interference will be discussed in the following paragraphs. Prefixal interference creates a morpheme gain /*ma*/ on the source words.

#### **Prefixal interference**

Prefixal interference occurs when the basic prefix /*ma*/, which is from class group 6, and /*di*/ which is from class group 10 appears in front of source words.

#### **Prefix: Ma**

*Ma-* from class 6 includes the semantic category of groups of people. It is that used to create new Sesotho sa Lebowa words if added in front of an adopted word.

<u>Maphodisa</u>	police
<u>Madiese</u>	dice
<u>Masole</u>	soldiers
<u>Mathichere</u>	teachers

**Prefix: *Di***

*Di-* is class prefix 8 or 10 and if it is added in front of a source word it changes the source word into a borrowed word.e.g.

<u>Diring</u>	rings
<u>Diroko</u>	rokke
<u>Dikuku</u>	cakes
<u>Dirice</u>	rice
<u>Dibuse</u>	busses
<u>Dipilare</u>	pillars
<u>Digarteine</u>	gordyne

**Suffix interference**

Koopman (1994:223) distinguishes between two types of suffixal interference: that where the English (and Afrikaans) plural suffix is considered non–morphemic in Zulu adoptives, and that where a source final syllable contains a nasal, which is perceived as a locative suffix. The last one will be used in the following paragraphs, as it is relevant to our discussion.

Interference in this case occurs when nouns from source languages which are mainly English and Afrikaans add a locative morpheme “*ng*” to the end of an adopted noun. After a locative morpheme is added at the end of an adopted noun a locative noun occurs and they are called mahlathi a felo in Sesotho sa Lebowa.

<u>Toropong</u>	dorp
<u>Kerekeng</u>	kerk
<u>Tereneng</u>	train
<u>Merekong</u>	werk
<u>Shopong</u>	shops
<u>Dokteng</u>	doctor

#### **4.12 Interpretation of qualitatively acquired findings from learners' essays**

This section presents the differences that are found in lexical items in the discourse of boys and girls in the research study. The interferences are found in nouns, verbs and idioms. The information in Table 17 supports this view through exemplification in sentences which cannot be traced back to source languages. These words are used by learners permanently and due to their lack of further reading within a broader context the words are constantly found into their essays and their speech during oral lessons. These data demonstrate that boys and girls use these parts of speech differently. The changes found in learners' essays prove that languages do change and that the Sesotho sa Lebowa that is used by the learners cannot be assumed to be the standard form.

#### **4.13 Conclusion**

Chapter 4 contains analyzed and interpreted data. The data analyzed quantitatively are presented in the form of tables, graphs and pie charts. The data collected qualitatively were analyzed by narrating the findings. Both qualitative and quantitative results have proved that there is language change which has resulted in language variations in the high school of Kgadime Matsepe. From this chapter we can deduce that language change cannot be prevented in any way. Rapeane (1996:9) categorically states:

The fact that language changes seems inevitable; therefore efforts to stop it from changing or criticizing speakers who use such changes are as impossible as trying to stop rain from falling.

Although the results attained from these 60 respondents are too limited to be representative of all Sesotho sa Lebowa learners not only of Kgadime Matsepe High School but also nationally, these results are indicative of the situation affecting other Sesotho sa Lebowa learners. Similarly, although only one school has been used as a case study, the findings here can still be useful to other high schools in similar situations in South Africa.

In the next chapter, the summary, conclusions and recommendations are finally presented.

## **CHAPTER 5**

### **SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **5.1 Introduction**

This section contains concluding remarks of this research. The chapter consists of the initial aim of the study, the summary of the study findings, the conclusions, the recommendations and finally some suggestions for further research.

#### **5.2 The aim of the study**

The aim of this research was to investigate the effects of interference from other languages that precipitate language change and variation in Sesotho sa Lebowa at Kgadime Matsepe High School. The research study involved the gathering of information on both language change and language varieties. It investigated whether Sesotho sa Lebowa is in fact the mother tongue or a language clearly understood by learners who registered for it as a subject. The study considered the value learners and educators attached to African languages, specifically to Sesotho sa Lebowa. Efforts taken by educators to purify Sesotho sa Lebowa were also investigated. The study further investigated whether and how educators in the school motivated learners to read more books in order to improve their vocabulary and to enhance an understanding of the language.

#### **5.3 Summary of the findings**

The summary of the research questions and answers is as follows:

- Question: Is there a difference between a spoken and a written Sesotho sa Lebowa?
- Answer: Yes there is a slight difference because learners try to write standard Sesotho sa Lebowa but they speak non-standard varieties.

- Question: Does the attitude learners have towards Sesotho sa Lebowa cause the most language variations and do educators have a negative attitude towards Sesotho sa Lebowa?
- Answer: From the research it emerged that learners and teachers do not take the subject Sesotho sa Lebowa seriously. Teachers also codeswitch during lessons and learners speak other languages with their parents, friends and classmates.
- Question: Do changes and variation in the language contribute to the poor pass rate in Sesotho sa Lebowa?
- Answer: Yes, markers of grade 12 scripts are different from teachers who teach and mark learners' scripts. They are even from different provinces; so the use of languages like Setsotsi and Sepitoria can really disadvantage learners.
- Question: Do teachers also speak varieties of Sesotho sa Lebowa that contribute to changes in the teaching and learning of the first language?
- Answer: The research found that most of the Sesotho sa Lebowa teachers are from within and near townships and they also speak varieties other than standard Sesotho sa Lebowa. They contribute a lot to changes affecting teaching and learning of Sesotho sa Lebowa as a first language.
- Question: Is Sesotho sa Lebowa in fact the mother tongue of learners who study it as a first language?
- Answer: Learners mainly register for Sesotho sa Lebowa because they live nearer to the school that offers the subject. Sesotho sa Lebowa is therefore in fact not the mother tongue of all learners who take it as a first language subject.

The findings can be summarised as follows:

- There are changes in standard Sesotho sa Lebowa in Kgadime Matsepe High School. The changes are mainly caused by many languages being spoken by learners outside the classes as well as inside Sesotho sa Lebowa classes.

- Teachers continuously use English to explain concepts of other learning areas in a Sesotho sa Lebowa class. Integration of other learning areas in Sesotho sa Lebowa classes must be explained in Sesotho sa Lebowa.
- Tables 7, 8 and 9 in Chapter 4 of this study indicate the ages of respondents. The information suggests that respondents are over age. It demonstrates that they have repeated grades at more than one phase. A poor foundation in a specific language affects cognitive development. This is the reason why there are 17 year olds in grade 10 and some aged 20 in grade 12.
- In one Sesotho sa Lebowa class learners speak many languages. Due to their multilingualism, they are not specialists of any language. They are like a person who has acquired Sesotho sa Lebowa through classroom study and not naturally at home. Teachers also contribute a lot to the formation of Sesotho sa Lebowa as they regularly revert to other languages. They do not show learners that they have confidence in Sesotho sa Lebowa as they regularly revert to other languages especially English. In so doing they are boosting the status of English as a superior language.
- The research has also shown that efforts are not made to maintain and improve the standard form of Sesotho sa Lebowa for example by encouraging extra reading. Learners are not encouraged to visit the library and to read further.

## **5.4 Conclusions**

Based on the interpretation of the findings, the following conclusions can be drawn:

There is a need for varieties of Sesotho sa Lebowa to be accepted in the educational system. Accepting the existence of language varieties can minimize failure rate. Learners are affected by regional varieties and are disadvantaged. Two teachers who are respondents to the research study have indicated that they give poor marks to learners who write non-standard forms in their essays.

The study has also proved that learners have a negative attitude towards Sesotho sa Lebowa. That is why other languages continue to interfere with this language.

Although the findings suggest that variations cannot be ignored, doing the following can encourage language purity:

- Encouraging learners to read widely and visit their nearest libraries if the school library is not well equipped;
- Visiting the regions where the purer form of the language is spoken;
- Teachers should avoid codeswitching during Sesotho sa Lebowa lessons.

The findings also demonstrate that the educators who teach Sesotho sa Lebowa are themselves not good speakers of Sesotho sa Lebowa. Three of the educators in Kgadime Matsepe High School were born and raised in Atteridgeville, which is on the western side of Pretoria. In Atteridgeville the dominant language is a Kikongo language which was researched thoroughly by Gerard Schuring (1988). Because this language is only a variety of Sesotho sa Lebowa, it affects standard Sesotho sa Lebowa negatively.

Admixtures, codemixing, codeswitching, bilingualism and multilingualism cause interference. While it is considered that bilingualism and multilingualism are assets in that they enable people to communicate better they can have a negative effect on learners. Bilingualism and multilingualism have been considered negatively if introduced to a child at too early an age. This of course depends on the child's natural abilities.

In support of this Weinreich (1953:119) states that

A bilingual child, especially one that is away from his native land becomes subject to inner split and starts a fight of clarification, and struggle for becoming whole which in turn leads to intellectual and moral deterioration.

This statement suggests that knowledge of many languages is good but it should at least start later in life. Children should master one language before they attempt others. Languages like English should be introduced to learners at grade 5 when they are 11 years old depending on when they started school. A proper foundation will permanently create the ability to master most of their learning areas. Learners whose mother tongue

is well established in their early years are more confident during oral class activities. They manifest fewer speech and grammatical errors.

The study has shown a number of variations that have been formed in learners' speech due to the languages they speak at home and outside the classrooms. Many girls indicated that they used Sepitoria to communicate with their friends. Pretoria language refers to a regional dialect which Schuring has researched and called Pretoria Sotho. Boys on the other hand indicated that they used Tsotsitaal that they called Setsotsi. This research attempts to provide proof that learners in townships do not have a proper foundation of their mother tongue

### **5.5 Recommendations**

Based on the findings the following recommendations can be offered:

- (1) Educators, language planners and people who draw up syllabuses should acknowledge that change is continually taking place in languages. Failure of learners can be minimized if language planners accept in their planning the varieties brought about by language change.
- (2) Learners should not be disadvantaged by being given poor marks because they use Sesotho sa Lebowa varieties such as Sepitoria and Tsotsitaal. These varieties are regional in that they are spoken around Pretoria where respondents live.
- (3) Teachers should avoid codeswitching during Sesotho sa Lebowa lessons as this affects the quality of the first language. Codeswitching and codemixing have been more beneficial to English than the African languages.
- (3) Learners should be screened before registering for Sesotho sa Lebowa at the beginning of each year and those who are not first language speakers should be advised to register for the subject Sesotho sa Lebowa as a second language. If learners who do not have a foundation in Sesotho sa Lebowa continue to register for it the school results will be affected and the image of the school will be dented. Parents who bring children to be



admitted at the foundation phase need to be advised to allow their children if possible to learn their home language as a first language, not an acquired language.

- (4) Teachers who teach Sesotho sa Lebowa should speak the standard form of Sesotho sa Lebowa inside and outside the classroom. They should encourage language growth instead of gradual language death.
- (5) This study agrees with the journalist Max Du Preez, who wrote in The Star newspaper of March 17 2005 about losing the language of our soul. The writer indicated that South Africa is on its way to becoming a unilingual country. He encouraged the country to strive to keep their mother tongue while not ignoring the importance of English.
- (6) Since heterogeneous languages that are found in grade 12 classes started in grade one, prescribed books used by grade one teachers need to be monitored.
- (7) In primary schools at foundation phase, all subjects should be learned in the mother tongue. Language plays an important role in the learner's education. The introduction of second language learning needs an immediate investigation. To minimize interference caused by bilinguals, parents should be encouraged to consider their children remaining monolingual for a longer period in neighbouring primary schools.
- (8) All the languages should be learned in primary schools before learners come to junior secondary schools since learners study any language offered at the secondary school even if it is not their mother tongue. Teachers can play a pivotal role in supporting the use of all African languages.

## **5.6 Suggestions for further research**

Further research should be undertaken in the areas involving admission and teaching of learners at the foundation phase. Other studies should be carried out to check the effect of language change and varieties on the foundation of the first language. Since this study has only involved a

limited number of grades, learners, parents and educators, further research covering a wider area with more schools should be embarked on to ascertain the validity of certain claims that have been made in this study.

As the value of African languages is negatively affected in general since learners do not see the reason why they must study their mother tongue, further research needs to be carried out so that the country can find ways of preserving the indigenous languages.

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## **APPENDICES**

### **APPENDIX 1: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR THE LEARNERS**

To all respondents

Dear learners

You are kindly requested to fill in this questionnaire, the purpose of which is to investigate language variation at a Soshanguve high school. Indicate your response by putting an “X” in the appropriate box.

The questionnaire is divided into two sections. Section A requests personal details while Section B requires details of level of education. You will be assisted by the researcher who will clarify anything you do not understand.

Thank you

#### **PERSONAL DETAILS**

##### **1. AGE**

-15

-16

-17

-18

-19

##### **2. GENDER**

-MALE

-FEMALE

##### **3. HOME LANGUAGE**



- AFRIKAANS
- S. SOTHO
- N. SOTHO
- NDEBELE
- ZULU
- SWATI
- SWAHILI

4. INDICATE THE LANGUAGE YOU USE TO COMMUNICATE WITH YOUR FRIENDS

- ENGLISH
- AFRIKAANS
- N. SOTHO
- S. SOTHO
- NDEBELE
- SWATI
- TSONGA
- VENDA
- XHOSA
- ZULU
- SE-PITORIA
- SE-TSOTSI

A. EDUCATIONAL DETAILS
------------------------

1. DO YOU REGARD YOUR KNOWLEDGE OF MOTHER TONGUE AS:

- EXCELLENT
- GOOD
- AVERAGE
- POOR
- VERY POOR

2. DO YOU REGARD YOUR KNOWLEDGE OF SESOTHO SA LEBOWA AS:

- EXCELLENT
- GOOD
- AVERAGE
- POOR
- VERY POOR

3. DOES N.SOTHO AS A SUBJECT BENEFIT YOUR EDUCATION?

INDICATE WHETHER YOU AGREE OR DISAGREE

- DEFINITELY AGREE
- PARTIALLY AGREE
- DISAGREE
- PARTIALLY DISAGREE

4. DO YOU VISIT THE SCHOOL LIBRARY TO READ N.SOTHO UNPRESCRIBED BOOKS?

- YES
- NO

5. CHOOSE THE LANGUAGES ACCORDING TO PREFERENCE WHICH YOU THINK COULD BE USED AS MEDIUM OF INSTRUCTION (e.g. Biology is taught in English) WRITE ( a-c) IN EACH BLOCK [a] WILL INDICATE THE MOST APPROPRIATE LANGUAGE [b] WILL INDICATE A VERY SUITABLE LANGUAGE [c] A SUITABLE LANGUAGE.

- 1.ENGLISH
- 2.AFRIKAANS
- 3.N.SOTHO

6. DO YOU THINK YOU WOULD DO BETTER IN CONTENT SUBJECTS IF YOU STUDIED THEM IN SESOTHO SA LEBOWA?

1. YES
2. NO
3. UNDECIDED

7. WHAT DO YOU THINK COULD BE DONE TO MAINTAIN THE STANDARD OF N. SOTHO AND TO IMPROVE ITS PASS RATE?

WRITE YOUR SUGGESTIONS IN TWO TO THREE LINES.

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## **APPENDIX 2: INTERVIEW OF THE LEARNERS**

### **INTERVIEW QUESTIONS OF LEARNERS AS RESPONDENTS**

1. Where do you live around Soshanguve?  
E.g. block W, block X, block R or block P.
2. Which language do you speak at home with your parents, relatives and neighbours?
3. Which language do you use when you are with your classmates in a Sesotho sa Lebowa class?
4. How many languages do you speak?
5. Which language do you prefer?
6. Which language do you use when talking to Sesotho sa Lebowa teachers outside the classroom?
7. Describe how well you can speak Sesotho sa Lebowa.
  - = Perfectly
  - = Very well
  - = Moderately well
  - = Not very well
8. Do you pass Sesotho sa Lebowa with higher marks than other languages?
9. Do teachers use another language to explain concepts during a Sesotho sa Lebowa class? Answer yes or no.
10. If yes, name the languages which are used most often.

### **APPENDIX 3: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR EDUCATORS**

To all respondents (educators)

Dear Sir/Madam

You are requested to fill in this questionnaire, which investigates language change and variation. The questionnaire is designed for research purposes. The topic for this research study is Language Change and Variation in a Soshanguve High School.

Every response given will be treated confidentially. You are not required to write your name anywhere on the questionnaire. Indicate your response by putting an “X” or by making a tick in the appropriate box.

The questionnaire will be divided into two sections. Section A requires personal details while section B requires general information about learners. You are requested to fill both sections in detail. If you experience any problem while answering this questionnaire, you can contact the researcher for clarification.

Thank you

#### **PERSONAL DETAILS OF EDUCATORS**

1. AGE
2. GENDER
3. YEARS OF EXPERIENCE
4. HOME LANGUAGE:

SESOTHO SA LEBOWA

SETSWANA

TSONGA

ZULU

VENDA

NDEBELE

XHOSA

5. WHERE DO YOU LIVE IN PRETORIA?:

SOSHANGUVE

MAMELODI

ATTRIDGEVILLE

MABOPANE

OTHER

#### GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT LEARNERS

1. Are all learners in your class fluent Sesotho sa Lebowa speakers?

YES

NO

UNCERTAIN

2. If not, explain.

3. How do you rate learners' interest in African languages?

EXCELLENT

GOOD

POOR

4. If poor, explain.

5. When teaching Sesotho sa Lebowa do you switch to other languages?

YES

NO

UNCERTAIN

6. If yes, which of these languages do you usually switch to and why?

ENGLISH

AFRIKAANS

ZULU

XHOSA

VENDA

SOUTH SOTHO

SWATI

7. When marking learners' essays, do you come across words that are standard Sesotho sa Lebowa?

YES

NO

UNCERTAIN

8. What is your response if learners write non-standard words in their essays?

9. What do you do if borrowed words, which exist in Sesotho sa Lebowa, are found in learners' essays?

10. When communicating with learners outside the classroom do you speak standard Sesotho sa Lebowa?

YES

NO

UNCERTAIN

11. How do you allocate marks to learners who use other languages including tsotsitaal in their essays?  
If your response is poor, explain.

EXCELLENT

GOOD

BAD

12. Do you encourage learners to read UNPRESCRIBED library books?

YES

NO

UNCERTAIN

13. Do you give learners projects and assignments that require the use of a library?

YES

NO

UNCERTAIN

14. In your opinion, what can be done to maintain the standard of Sesotho sa Lebowa and to improve its pass rate?



#### **APPENDIX 4: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR PARENTS**

To all respondents

Dear Parents

You are requested to fill in this questionnaire, which investigates language change and variation. The questionnaire is designed for research purposes. The topic for this research is Language Change and Variation in A Soshanguve High School

Every response will given will be treated with confidentiality. You may not write your name anywhere on the questionnaire. Indicate your response by putting an “x” or by making a tick in the appropriate box.

The questionnaire will be divided into two sections. Section A is for personal details while section B is for general information about learners. You are requested to fill both sections in detail. If you experience any problem while answering this questionnaire, you can contact the researcher for clarification.

Thank you,

1.GENDER	MALE	
	FEMALE	
2.HOME LANGUAGE	SESOTHO SA LEBOWA	
	ENGLISH	
	AFRIKAANS	
	SETSWANA	
	SESOTHO SA LEBOWA	
	XHOSA	

	SWAHILI	
	SWATI	
	TSONGA	
	VENDA	
	TSOTSITAAL	
3.WHICH LANGUAGE DO YOU SPEAK AT HOME	SESOTHO SA LEBOWA	
	ENGLISH	
	AFRIKAANS	
	SETSWANA	
	SESOTHO SA LEBOWA	
	XHOSA	
	SWAHILI	
	SWATI	
	TSONGA	
	VENDA	
	TSOTSITAAL	
3.WHERE DO YOU LIVE AROUND SOSHANGVE	BLOCK X	
	BLOCK Y	
	BLOCK P	
	BLOCK R	
	BLOCK W	
	BLOCK V	
	EESTERUS	
	NORTH WEST	

4.DO YOU HAVE		
CHILDREN WITHIN THE		
SCHOOL.		
	YES	
	NO	
5.WHICH LANGUAGE		
DO YOU PREFER.		
	SESOTHO SA LEBOWA	
	ENGLISH	
	AFRIKAANS	
	SESOTHO SA BORWA	
	XHOSA	
	SWAHILI	
	SWATI	
	TSONGA	
	VENDA	
	TSOTSITAAL	
6. WHICH LANGUAGE		
DOES YOUR CHILD		
PREFER.		
	SESOTHO SA LEBOWA	
	ENGLISH	
	AFRIKAANS	
	SETSWANA	
	SESOTHO	
	XHOSA	
	SWAHILI	

	SWATI	
	TSONGA	
	VENDA	
	TSOTSITAAL	
7.CAN YOUR CHILD READ SESOTHO SA LEBOWA BETTER THAN ENGLISH		
	YES	
	NO	
8.DOES YOUR CHILD PASS SESOTHO SA LEBOWA BETTER THAN ENGLISH		
	YES	
	NO	
9.DO YOU ENCOURAGE YOUR CHILD TO GO TO THE LIBRARY TO READ SESOTHO SA LEBOWA UNPRESCRIBED BOOKS		
	YES	
	NO	
10.GIVE REASONS FOR REGISTERING YOUR CHILD TO STUDY		

SESTHO SA LEBOWA.		
	1. THE SCHOOL OFFERS SESOTHO SA LEBOWA ONLY.	
	2. THE CHILD PREFERS SESOTHO SA LEBOWA.	
	3. SCHOOLS THAT OFFER THE CHILD'S LANGUAGE IS FAR	
	4. IT IS A CONTINUATION FROM MIDDLE SCHOOL.	
11.DO YOU SPEAK THE		
SAME LANGUAGE		
YOUR CHILD IS		
REGISTERED FOR AT		
HOME AND AT		
SCHOOL.		
	YES	
	NO	
12.IF YOUR ANSWER IS		
NO, GIVE REASONS.		
13. IN YOUR OPINION		

WHAT CAN BE DONE		
TO MAINTAIN THE		
STANDARD OF		
SESOTHO SA LEBOWA.		

**APPENDIX 5: WRITTEN CONSENT FORM FOR THE RESEARCH PROJECT FOR LEARNERS**

PARTICIPANT'S NAME:

DATE:

PARENT OF PARTICIPANT'S  
NAME:

INVESTIGATOR:

D.M.NKOSI

SETTING:

KGADIME MATSEPE

TITLE OF STUDY:

LANGUAGE VARIATION  
AND CHANGE IN A  
SOSHANGUVE HIGH  
SCHOOL.

PROCEDURES:

My child will be asked to  
complete a questionnaire and  
hand it to the researcher.  
The questionnaire will be completed after  
contact time.

PARTICIPANT'S RIGHTS:

My child may withdraw from participating  
in the study at any time.

I allow my child who is a learner at Kgadime Matsepe to take part in this study

PARENT'S SIGNATURE:.....

LEARNER'S SIGNATURE: .....

SIGNATURE OF THE RESEARCHER:.....

**APPENDIX 6: WRITTEN CONSENT FORM FOR THE RESEARCH PROJECT FOR TEACHERS**

PARTICIPANT'S NAME:

DATE:

INVESTIGATOR:

D.M.NKOSI

SETTING:

KGADIME MATSEPE

TITLE OF STUDY:

LANGUAGE  
VARIATION  
AND CHANGE IN A  
SOSHANGUVE HIGH  
SCHOOL.

PROCEDURES:

I will be asked to complete a  
questionnaire and hand it to  
researcher. The  
questionnaire will be  
completed after contact time.

PARTICIPANT'S RIGHTS:

I may withdraw from  
participating in the study at  
any time.

I give my consent to take part in this study

PARTICIPANT'S SIGNATURE

DATE:

SIGNATURE OF THE RESEARCHER:



## **APPENDIX 7: WRITTEN CONSENT FORM FOR THE RESEARCH PROJECT FOR PARENTS**

PARTICIPANT'S NAME

DATE:

INVESTIGATOR:

D.M.NKOSI

SETTING

KGADIME MATSEPE

TITLE OF STUDY:

LANGUAGE  
VARIATION  
AND CHANGE IN A  
SOSHANGUVE HIGH  
SCHOOL.

PROCEDURES:

I will be asked to complete a  
questionnaire and hand it to  
researcher. The  
questionnaire will be  
completed by me at home. I will

give it to my child as soon as it is finished.

PARTICIPANT'S RIGHTS

I may withdraw from  
participating in the study at  
any time.

I give my consent to take part in this study

PARTICIPANT'S SIGNATURE:

DATE:

SIGNATURE OF THE RESEARCHER:

## APPENDIX 8: SAMPLES OF THE LEARNERS' ESSAYS

An example of a learner who can not combine vowels and consonants at grade 10 due to poor foundation of mother tongue

Sample 1

Johanna Mathevula

19.January 2004

Grade 10 A

Mosompo wa gae

H.I.V AIDS AND T.B.

*Ka gae wa moso banad ma ga wa kamesana ye. Ma baka e sana buama bigs arstiaak nani avaba teenarrole farse e lie saula tse thana band. Bana Thabo tse wheise ye ka keg a ba we wars ga ba wa matheT.B. AIDS and we ga. Painma ba Neresad gae wa masabe sana ba mathe tse ye k eke anan band than aba band wars ganga ka balt ke se tse bamthe we watla baung theve. Wweve whasa ba whesa ba ye tse ga ge band we lile vamunetseu.*

*Matho tse a ma band porinin basuess areslage ba we se maba tse u naba tse unaba we sheve Band uamun Batho ive yogana Baswa moth ounce whey maba band gana boswa matho unce Have matho ke ba ka batho band there keis pirsand blwana ka ba ke ye thorom kais pirsand blwanaka ba ke ye thorom she erith banad motho babaye se gana.*

Sample 2

Mpho Mkhabela Grade 10 A

10 January 2005

Bohlokwa goba kotsi ya dinwitagi le diokobatsi

*Biri e bohlokwa kudu ka gore ka December e **nwiwa blind**. Di bottle- store di dira **nyoko** ka lebakeng la **biri**. Mabjala a go swana le black label ,stout, Redds, Spin, Hunters dry , Savanna. Gape le klip drift .biri kento e sharpo e tswarisa rena majita plakia gontle le biri ga gona monate.*

#### *Patse*

*Dipatse mayita ba di bitsa gore ke non-dose. Gona le batho babangwe ge basa tsuba patse ga ba ikutlwe pila ka gobane patse eba tsene mading. Patse e dira gore mojita a gafe. Babangwe e ba dire gore babe mejojo.*

#### *Patse la biri*

*Biri le patse ge ba kadi tlosa bare gaba sa di nyoka ko msanzi Africa baetapele ba ka swela dibe tsa bona, ka gobane majita a ko msanzi a basa kgona go phela ntle le tsona.*