

**The Use of Translation as a Teaching Method in Second Language**

**Teaching:**

**A Case Study with Second Language Learners of IsiXhosa at the**

**University of Cape Town**

By

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A thesis presented in fulfilment of the requirements for the Degree of Master of  
Arts in African Languages and Literatures

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## **DECLARATION**

This work has never been submitted before, in any form for the award of any degree. This is all my own work. Each significant contribution to, and quotation in this dissertation from the work, or works of other people has been acknowledged, cited and referenced.

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AIDS Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome

AS Academic Selection

FL First Language

HIV Human Immunodeficiency Virus

MPS Mixed Pair Selection

RS Random Selection

SA South Africa

SL Source Language

SS Student Self-Selection

TL Target Language

UCT University of Cape Town

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## ABSTRACT

This research topic came about during my honours research project. The honours project studied strategies that are used by second language learners in acquiring vocabulary. One of the strategies that were used was direct translation. Upon further research into the subject, it was we discovered that no work has been done on the use of translation as a teaching method in isiXhosa. This study attempts to bridge the information gap in the area of second language learning and teaching in African languages.

The current study followed two classes at University of Cape Town where isiXhosa literature is taught as a second language. Given that the students do not speak any isiXhosa at entry level, they rely heavily on their first language for making sense of the second language. In the case of literature, where terminology is not carefully selected to accommodate second language learners, students rely heavily on translation. This study therefore investigates the role and process of translation as a teaching method. The lack of research in this area made it very difficult to follow a particular theoretical framework, therefore the study followed a mixture of qualitative and quantitative approaches. Students were given activities that would require translation in order for the task to be completed. This forms part of their normal learning process. These activities were analysed. The second part consisted of a questionnaire that surveyed the student's views regarding the use of translation.

Findings based on the qualitative data analysis revealed heavy reliance on translation as a learning strategy. Students also indicated that prior knowledge of vocabulary as well as an understanding of morphology were both very beneficial.

# CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

## 1.0 Introduction

The idea of this topic all came about during an honours research project, as I was analysing the data it was evident that there was a gap somewhere and that students really rely on translation when studying a language, and translation plays a major role in the learning and the teaching of vocabulary. Given the little teaching encounters I have had with second language learners, I discovered that using translation in learning and teaching as a strategy at all different levels made it possible for me as a teacher to pass information to the students. Translation does not only play a huge role in the classroom, but as people who live in South Africa in this day and age it is vital for us to be able to communicate with one another, to some extent.

This study takes a qualitative and quantitative approach. The reason for this choice is because of the time limitations associated with access to the students. The students involved in this project are 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> year Xhosa Communication students, at university level, during 2014 and 2015. The reason for the selection of these students was in order to assess the different levels and improvements across the different years, some form of cross-sectional study. The students are separated in the levels of proficiency. For example the *first* years are total beginners and need to learn all basics of the language, second years are a level higher than 1<sup>st</sup> years because they have had the first year training or other training to the same affect, in their *third* year the students should be able to communicate and have a higher understanding than those in 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> year.

The learners in the isiXhosa lectures come from different departments and faculties within the university. In this study, I am looking at both second and third year students. In the second year classes the study involves:

- 2 mother tongue isiXhosa speakers, who have not studied isiXhosa language in school or in any other form
- 2 isiZulu speakers, who also did not study isiXhosa, but because they speak isiZulu have a better understanding of the language
- one student who studied isiXhosa in high school for five years, and
- the rest of the class had started isiXhosa at university level last year

These students range from the age of 20-22 years. There are 2 male students and 7 female students. One of the students is a German national and the rest are South Africans.

In the *third year class* there were a total of:

- 2 students who are isiXhosa first language speakers. These students also did not study the isiXhosa language in high school
- the rest of the students (6) are not mother tongue speakers and
- 3 students studied isiXhosa at high school.

All these students are from South Africa and their ages range from 21-23 years. As we can see from the different proficiency and linguistic backgrounds, one needs to think of different ways in order to challenge the students with low levels of proficiency. While at the same time ensuring that the advanced ones are not bored or under-challenged.

### **1.1 Area of Investigation**

In terms of general observation, the value of translation has already been established. This leads to the main question of whether learners perceive translation as playing a positive role in their learning. The importance of this question has to do with the limited number of studies that recorded the use of translation as a teaching method within the context of isiXhosa, particularly the teaching of isiXhosa literature as a second language. In particular, this study investigates the following areas:

1. How important do the students think translation is to them?
2. What types of activities require translation?
3. If translation is not used, what other methods/ tools can be used?

These questions are further broken down into smaller questions as discussed in Chapter 3.

## **1.2 Rationale**

A few preliminary words need to be said regarding the particular assumptions we make about translation itself. There are many different theories of translation and the term translation covers a number of different kinds of activities. It will be useful to clarify which activities we have in mind, and which assumptions we make. To some extent these assumptions are made only to reduce the problem to a scale at which we can address it with cognitive methods.

Translation has been approached as both a practical problem and a theoretical problem by people interested in language. Within either approach there are a number of alternative characterizations of just what the problem is (Lewandowska-Tomaszczyk and Thelen, 1993:43).

The recent urgency to learn African languages can be equated to the post-Second World War scurry to learn minority languages (Lewandowska-Tomaszczyk and Thelen, 1993:44). Now there appears to be an interest in indigenous languages, or African languages of South Africa (SA). These African languages are also official languages as deemed by the SA Constitution. Because of this new requirement, many books and documents are now translated into the many indigenous languages. As a scholar and a second language teacher, I saw this area as a knowledge gap as no studies particularly in isiXhosa, has looked at how translation resources can be used as a teaching tools. Secondly, very few studies have looked at learning and teaching strategies in the teaching of African languages as second languages. When one is presented with a classroom with students from various linguistic backgrounds as well as different levels of proficiency, some guide on how to approach language teaching would be

useful. Thirdly, in terms of literature, none of the studies I have come across discuss the teaching of literature in a second language classroom. This is unexplored territory. It is for these reasons that this study is significant, as I will show in the next section, translation as a teaching method has a very long history.

### **1.3 Brief Background**

The traditional Grammar-Translation method has been replaced in recent decades by the communicative method, which focuses on the importance of the students' oral skills and their ability to be understood by native speakers of the language they are studying (Valdeon Garcfa, 1995:238). However, this method has now come under scrutiny, as more teachers become aware of the need for combining the ability to communicate with a more traditional approach because this enables students to attain a good command of the second language (L2) (Valdeon Garcfa, 1995:239).

Translation has been used as a method for teaching language acquisition for over two thousand years (Rivers, 1964:28). It is still widely used in the teaching of classical languages, Latin and Greek, and it was also used in the teaching of modern languages, as Larsen-Freeman points out. Kelly (1969: 151) and Titone (1968: 27) provide us with a historical account of the use of translation as a teaching method. Larsen-Freeman (1986) examines eight different approaches to the teaching of second languages and starts with the so-called "grammar-translation method" (Titone, 1968:27). Translation has been associated with being uncommunicative, boring, pointless, difficult, irrelevant etc. and has been compared too often with its cousin -grammar. Also it has been compared with its other cousins: literature, dictation, vocabulary and reading aloud etc. (Kelly, 1969: 151-59).

Rivers (1964) is equally dismissive and some of her assertions might correspond to the traditional use of translation. It would be correct to say that advanced students of L2 would benefit from the use of this exercise more than beginners. However, short translation

exercises could be introduced at an early stage so that students become familiar with notions of correctness and propriety rather than avoid them altogether in an attempt to encourage a communicative approach which obviously tends to boost communicative competence, but obliterates other aspects of the learning process (Larsen-Freeman, 1989: 30). Some of the drawbacks in using the translation exercise mentioned by Rivers (1964) are that the students are given little chance to practice the target language they are learning. Another negative point she makes is that translating “is not too demanding on the teachers; when they are tired, they can always set the class a written exercise” (Larsen-Freeman, 1989: 31).

Other authors have given similar views in favour of a more communicative approach, which would rely more on the students output and the necessary given situations to obtain the message than on notions of correctness (Richards and Rodgers, 1986: 4). As a result, the translation exercise might be discouraging for students as Rivers and Tempeley observed. As previously stated, it might be argued that it makes few demands on teachers (Richards and Rodgers (1986: 4). The ability to communicate is prized over the acquisition of linguistic structures or vocabulary. Therefore, the focus is placed on communicative activities and the advocates of this method merely concentrate on the language as a means of communication (Richards and Rodgers, 1986: 4). As Harmer (1991: 41) says “its aims are overtly communicative and great emphasis is placed on training students to use language for communication.”

After dominating the language teaching scene for well over a century (from the 1840s to the 1940s) translation has played a secondary role in recent decades, although it has still been used despite the communicative trend. In recent years there have been some signs that translation could be making a come-back. Duff’s (1989) textbook on translation is a case in point. Duff (1989) strongly supports the view that translation is an excellent means of improving one’s language because it invites speculation and discussion. Other advantages of

translation are that it helps students develop three essential qualities: accuracy, clarity and flexibility, that means that students can see the link between grammar and usage (Duff, 1989:7). Furthermore, translation can also be an appropriate technique to introduce new words (Harmer, 1991:162).

A few scholars highlight the disadvantages. Firstly, according to these scholars, translation encourages thinking in one language and transference into another with interference.

Interference is often seen as a negative thing especially in instances where the structures of the two languages are different. Secondly it deprives students from learning within only one language. Thirdly, it gives false credence of word-to-word equivalence, and lastly it does not allow achievement of generally accepted teaching aims: which is emphasis on spoken fluency (Malkmjaer, 1998: 63).

Having pointed out the disadvantages, the benefits of translation can be very useful as a class activity “if taken as a tool among others to help in the learning and not as the only possible approach” (Godayol,1998). Godayol (1998) supports the validity of translation because:

1. Students become aware of both L1 and L2 patterns and the correspondence between them.
2. Structures are placed within the cognitive frame of *L2*. So *L1* as well as FL (first language) structures are studied.
3. Problems of transfer may be diminished, mental agility, flexibility and memorisation are favoured.
4. Translation forms a natural part of the learning process and is something that students probably do often outside the classroom.

Godoyol (1998) specifies some of the points on these above mentioned lists and adds other benefits of using translation in the foreign language classroom translation. According to Godoyol (1998) translation develops basic mental abilities such as agility, memory, linguistic precision and clarity. Also, translation is said to promote speculation, arguing as well as defending such thoughts. Since translation contrasts two languages, it highlights comprehension, grammar, semantics as well as an awareness of socio-cultural meanings hidden in words (Godoyol,1998).

Translation should be taught firstly by having an understanding of the text, then a sight translation (a few words are translated) would help to check understanding and preparing the written reformulation. The third step would be to write the translated text in a context where the text is translated. Finally and very importantly, it is only when translations are contrasted that learning takes place because there is not just one translation. When a student explains how the choices were made and how essential it was to weigh up the choices to help them develop linguistic and cultural awareness (Hurtado, 1995:63-64), that is when the learning process starts.

#### **1.4 Theoretical Framework and Research Design**

This research was conducted by collecting student's translation activities in literature as part of their normal teaching. Each student was assigned a page from the literature book. For many students that was not their first activity in translation. From their first year, some activities were done as translation activities as part of the first year programme. Also, at the early stages, translated paragraphs are given to them in advance. This means that students have an opportunity to work on the translation of a certain page, and compile some questions. Students are requested to compile a minimum of three questions based on that particular page. In this way the students' understanding of what they are reading is being assessed. This, in turn encourages peer work as students also help each other in the process. The work is the

submitted, assessed and corrected at the same time. These are kept as samples for further analysis.

In order to ensure that students still gain from the process, a number of steps are followed:

- Each student's questions and translation are shared with the whole class in the form of a worksheet
- The student is also given an opportunity to record the answers on the whiteboard
- The answers that the student has prepared are analysed to determine the level of understanding and comprehension.

Students' independent learning is encouraged by guiding them, to ensure that their understanding of the literature becomes the main aim of this exercise. This process is to see whether translation as a teaching method is successful, is important and also know that many of the vocabulary in the literature is being repeated for the students. In many cases the students should be able to identify the familiar words.

#### **1.4.1 The learning process and building a theory of translation as a method of teaching**

This research does not have a control group as it is conducted in a classroom space in the context of a learning environment. The analysis of the students' work is informed by some of the translation theories, which will be unpacked during the process. The first theory is the textual, which is the writing and the reading of the information given. The second theory is the cognitive, which looks at the students understanding of isiXhosa and whether when they translate from isiXhosa to English the text is comprehensible, or whether they translate the text directly. The last theory I will be looking at is the socio-cultural theory, which looks at how the students are able to explain things from isiXhosa to English, which do not necessarily have a direct translation due to cultural differences. The research consists of a pre-test with the students, where they are given a paragraph. They are then expected to

translate and create questions. Their skills linked to awareness of the socio-cultural theory in literature are also tested because the emphasis is on translation but also drawing on cognitive and socio-cultural theory. Post-tests are conducted for signs of improved knowledge of the topic.

### **1.5 Organisation of Study**

This study has been divided into five chapters. Chapter 1 is an introduction of the area of investigation and provides a brief background to the study. Chapter 2 reviews the literature on the subject of translation in general and translation as a teaching method in other languages. In chapter 3 the methodology is discussed. The reader is introduced to the participants, their level of study and how they differ from each other. Chapter 3 also highlights the different methods that are used in the classroom and how the study was carried out in the classroom. Chapter 4 reports the results of each level of study for the different activities. Chapter 5 is the discussion of the results as well as the conclusion. The recommendations also form part of this chapter.

## CHAPTER 2 LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.0 Introduction

According to the Oxford English Dictionary, translation is the process of changing into another language retaining the sense, or “to turn from one language into another” (Stevenson, 2010:677). Although linguists, philologists and anthropologists are still battling with the problem of what language is, there is far less disagreement on what it does. Without language, the expression of culture as we know it is impossible, and without language, it would be impossible for people’s to share experiences and thereby pass on knowledge.

Translation, then, is most generally conceived as cultural transference, that is to say, when one translates from one language into another, one is translating in however subtle way the historical, geographic, climatic, religious, emotional experience of one group of people for the benefit of another group; one is, in other words, translating from one culture into another (Lewandowska-Tomaszczyk and Thelen, 1993: 207). This chapter therefore reviews some of the literature on translation in particular its relation to teaching. The chapter discusses the literature on grammar-translation as a method followed by a section on translation in general and its application in the learning context.

### 2.1 Grammar Translation Method

The grammar- translation method as a method of teaching foreign languages derive from the classical (sometimes called traditional) method of teaching Greek and Latin. In grammar-translation classes, students’ learn grammatical rules and then apply those rules by translating sentences between the source language and their native language (Dryden, 1637-1700:1).

Advanced language students’ may be required to translate the whole texts word-for-word.

The method has two main goals: to enable students to read and translate literature written in the target language, and to further students’ general intellectual development. Strictly speaking the concept of metaphrase (literal translation) - of word-for-word for translation- is

an imperfect concept. In a given word in a given language one word often carries more than one meaning, and because a similar given meaning may often carry more than one connotation, “metaphrase” and “paraphrase” may be useful as the ideal concepts that mark the extremes in the spectrum of possible approaches to translation. The use of metaphrase in this context is when one makes a literal translation from one language into another. To paraphrase is the preservation of meaning when an idea is expressed using different words in the same language. Discussions of theory and practice of translation reach back into antiquity and show remarkable continuities. The ancient Greeks distinguished between metaphrase and paraphrase. This distinction was adopted by the English poet and translator John Dryden (1631-1700), who describe translation as the judicious blending of these two modes of phrasing when selecting, in the target language.

Despite occasional theoretical diversity, the actual practice of translation has hardly changed since antiquity. Except for some extreme metaphrasers in the early Christian period and the Middle Ages, and adapters in various periods (especially pre-Classical Rome, and the 18<sup>th</sup> century) (Dryden, 1631-1700: 2) , translators have generally shown prudent flexibility in seeking equivalents- “literal” where possible, paraphrastic where necessary- for the original meaning and other crucial “values” (e.g. style, verse form, concordance with musical accompaniment or, in films, with speech articulatory movements) (Dryden, 1631-1700: 2) .

As mentioned, historically the grammar-translation method originated from the practice of teaching Latin. In the early 1500s Latin was the most widely-studied foreign language due to its prominence in government, academia, and business. During the course of the century the use of Latin dwindled, and it was gradually replaced by English, French, and Italian. After the decline of the use of Latin in translation, the purpose of learning it in schools changed. Previously students had learned Latin for the purpose of communication, it was now taught as a purely academic subject (Dryden, 1631-1700: 2).

Throughout Europe in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, the education system was formed primarily around the concept called faculty psychology (Garcia, 1995: 236). This system proposed that the body and mind were separate and the mind consisted of three parts: the will, emotion, and intellect. It was believed that the intellect could be sharpened enough to eventually control the will and emotions. The way to do this was through learning the classical literature of the Greeks and Romans, as well as mathematics from the relevant scholars. According to (Valdeon Garcia, 1995: 236) an adult with this educational approach was considered mentally prepared for the world and its challenges. Valdeon Garcia, (1995: 237) notes that at first it was believed that teaching modern languages was not useful for the development of mental discipline and thus left out of the curriculum. When modern languages appeared in school curricula in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, teachers taught them with the same grammar-translation method as was used for classical Latin and Greek. As a result, textbooks were essentially written for the modern language classroom. Grammar-translation classes are usually conducted in the students' native language. Grammar rules are learned deductively, students learn grammar rules by rote, and then practice the rules by doing grammar drills and translating sentences to and from the target language. More attention is paid to the form of the sentences being translated than their content. When students reached more advanced levels of language achievement, they may translate entire texts from the target language. Therefore, assessments often consist of the translation of classical text (Valdeon Garcia, 1995: 237).

Though it may be true to say that the Grammar-Translation Method is still widely practiced, it has no advocates. It is a method for which there is no theory. There is no literature that offers a rationale or justification for it or that attempts to relate the issues in linguistics, psychology, or education. The traditional Grammar-Translation method has been replaced in recent decades by the communicative method, which focuses on the importance of the students' oral skills and their ability to be understood by native speakers of the language they are studying. However, this method has now come under scrutiny as more teachers become

aware of the need of combining the ability to communicate with a more traditional approach, which enables students to attain a good command of the second language (L2) (Valdeon Garcia, 1995:239).

Translation has thus been used as a method to teach languages for over two thousand years (Rivers, 1981: 28). It is still widely used in the teaching of classical languages, Latin and Greek, and it was also used in the teaching of modern languages, as Larsen-Freeman (1986) points out. Kelly (1969) and Titone (1968) provide us with a historic account of the use of translation as a teaching method. Larsen-Freeman (1986) examines eight different approaches to the teaching of second languages and starts with the “grammar-translation method” (Gracia, 1995:239).

River (1981) is equally dismissive and some of her assertions might correspond to the traditional use of translation. It would be correct to say that advanced students of L2 would benefit from the use of this exercise more than beginners. However, short translation exercises could be introduced at an early stage so that students become familiar with notions of correctness and propriety rather than avoid them altogether in an attempt to encourage a communicative approach which obviously tends to boost communicative competence, but obliterates other aspects of the learning process. Some of the drawbacks in using the translation exercise mentioned by Rivers (1981) are that the students are given little chance to practice the target language, and this results in confusion when the students are addressed in the language they are learning. Another negative point she makes is that translating “is not too demanding on the teachers, when they are tired, they can always set a written exercise for the class”. Some of these points are open for discussion and we will attempt to provide a new dimension to this biased account of the translation exercise (Rivers, 1964: 30).

## 2.2 A Fresh Look at Translation

After dominating the language teaching scene for well over a century (from the 1840s to the 1940s) translation has played a secondary role in recent decades, although it has still been used despite the communicative trend. In recent years there have been some signs that translation could be making a come-back. Duff's (1982) book on translation is one of them. Duff (1982) strongly supports the view that translation is an excellent means of improving one's language because it invites speculation and discussion. Other advantages of translation are that it helps students develop three essential qualities: accuracy, clarity and flexibility and that students can see the link between grammar and usage (Duff, 1982:7). Furthermore translation can also be an appropriate technique to introduce new words (Harmer 1991) or even to explore the obscure nuances between terms (Valdeon Gracia, 1995:241).

In general translators have sought to preserve the context itself by reproducing the original order of sentence, and hence word order, when necessary, reinterpreting the actual grammatical structure, for example, by shifting from active to passive voice, vice versa. The grammatical differences between "fixed-word-order" languages (e.g. English, French, German) and "free-word-order" languages (e.g. Greek, Latin, Polish, Russian, isiXhosa) have been no impediment in this regards. The particular syntax (sentence-structure) characteristics of a text's source language are adjusted to the syntactic requirements of the target language. When a target language lacked terms that are found in a source language, translators have borrowed those terms, thereby enriching the target language (Hurtado, 1995:29). Great measure to the exchange calques and loanwords between languages, and to their importation from other languages, there are few concepts that are "untranslatable" among the modern European languages. Generally, the greater the contact and exchange that have existed between two languages, or between those languages and a third one, the greater is the ratio of metaphrase and paraphrase that may be used in translating among them (Hurtado,

1995:39). However, due to shifts in ecological niches of words, a common etymology is sometimes misleading as a guide to current meaning in one or the other language (Hurtado, 1995: 40).

Western translation traditions have largely replaced other traditions due to Western colonialism and cultural dominance in recent centuries. The Western traditions draw on both ancient and medieval traditions, and on more recent European innovations. Though earlier approaches to translation are less commonly used today, they retain this importance when dealing with their products, as when historians view ancient or medieval records to piece together events which took place in non-Western environments. Although heavily influenced by Western traditions and practiced by translators taught in Western-style educational systems, Chinese and related translation traditions retain some theories and philosophies unique to the Chinese tradition (Hawatt, 1984).

In Duff (1992) he takes a look at advantages and disadvantages of using translation in the classroom. The the widespread disadvantages are:

- Translation encourages thinking in one language and transference into another with interference.
- It deprives from learning within only one language.
- It gives false credence of word-to-word equivalence
- It also does not allow achievement of generally accepted teaching aims: emphasis on spoken fluency.

Duff (1992) explains why translation has been out of favour with language teaching community because it is:

- Text-bound and only implies two skills: reading and writing
- It is time-consuming

- It is associated with specific types of language, e.g scientific. Not suited to the general needs.
- It is not desirable as it uses the mother tongue and is, a lonely and pointless activity.

Even though some of the disadvantages of using translation are not really drawbacks, it is true that translation used too often in a classroom creates some weaknesses on the learner. Thus, translation should not be taken as a methodology but as a useful task not done for its own sake, but for the process it entails, which is a very rich one. According to Hawatt (1984), translation is not as bad as it appears to be and Duff (1992) also gives reasons why he thinks translation is useful, he looks at the influence of the mother tongue. People's first language (L1) shapes their thinking and translation helps them to understand better the influences among languages. He also looks at the naturalness of the activity. It is a natural and necessary activity that is going on all the time, and that will always be needed, which develops mainly two skills aspects. Language competence is a two way system that communicates into and from the second language. The reality of language is another important aspect. It is authentic material.

### **2.3 Translation in the Classroom**

This invites speculation and discussion. It also develops 3 qualities essential to all languages, which are accuracy, clarity and flexibility. The teacher can select material to illustrate particular aspects of language, and students see links between language usage and grammar. This therefore gives practices of a variety of styles and registers (Duff, 1992).

The translation validity is supposed, because evidence shows that students become aware of both L1 and L2 patterns and the correspondence between them. There are structures that are placed within the cognitive frame of L2. Problems of transfer may be diminished; mental agility, flexibility and memorisation are favoured. Translation forms a natural part of the

learning process and is something that students probably do often outside the classroom (Duff, 1992).

Translation activities introduced purposefully and imaginatively in the language learning class contribute to improving two languages. According to Hurtado (1995: 43), translation embraces two aspects, translation of texts (direct and reverse translation and translation as a way of understanding the foreign language (internal: based on the learners' mother tongue, and explanatory: checking the comprehension). The translation process can be divided into three phases: understanding, de-verbalising, and re-expressing. This process helped students to be precise, fluent and accurate (Hurtado, 1995: 43).

Hurtado (1995) also looks at how translation should be taught and points out that there are several phases of text work. First of all one should understand the text completely, then a sight translation would help to check understanding and prepare the written reformulation. The third step would be to write it down (given, obviously, a situation in which one should translate that text). Finally, and very importantly is the fact that when contrasting translations one can learn a lot as, again, there is not just one translation and explaining one's own choices is essential to help students' develop linguistic and cultural awareness (Hurtado, 1995: 63). However, Vermeer gives another viewpoint and states that to train literary translators they should first understand the text, then appreciate the style of the original author and finally produce a text that can function in the target language (Vermeer in Baker, 1998:117).

According to Duff (1992) there are steps that one has to follow in a translation activity. These activities are firstly looking at pre-reading, this is a pivotal process to go through, looking at things like the title, subtitles, and knowledge of what is happening in the world. "Then it moves on to the text processing, when one encounters the first elements: words, phrases, the

translator assesses initial elements in terms of their relevance to the progression of a text and the requirements of context”.

The following step is looking at hypothesis testing, which is the establishment of relevance for the hypothesis testing exercise. However, this is not entirely open-ended. Then one looks at the Unit “text” which is the ultimate linguistic unit in any activity to do with communicating in language. There are also other units to bear in mind apart from text, for example discourse and genre. From Global to local, the focus gradually narrows and the attention becomes more concrete, but local patterning and global organisation are not two separate activities. Then you take a look at text structure, a structure format begins to emerge. These will feature most prominently in the analysis of the way texts are put together and are made operational. Also looking at the texture, the analysis of structure becomes more relevant in the process of reworking a text, that of negotiating texture or the devices which together lend the text its basic quality of being both cohesive and coherent (Hatim, 1990: 2).

The principles of translation according to Duff (1992) have some basic guidelines an translator or person wanting to translate should know. Duff (1992) identifies the following aspects:

1. Meaning: the translator should accurately reflect the meaning of the original.
2. Form: the ordering of words and ideas in the translation should match the original as closely as possible
3. Register: languages differ greatly in their levels of formality in a given context.
4. Source language influence: it should sound natural, natural patterns should be suggested
5. Style and clarity: the translator should not change the style of the original.
6. Idiom: idiomatic expressions should be adapted.

All these principles should be taken into consideration before translating any text as we can learn from these principles. Translation can be used as a language learning tool and as a learning activity. What has been fully demonstrated is that both practices are useful and necessary. A lot of different factors influence a translation and this is a very important point to start with when dealing with translation experiences (Newmark, 1991:42).

## **2.4 Translation as an Importation of Culture**

Another viewpoint is Riccardi (2002:17) who notes

Translation is of interest as a cultural phenomenon precisely because of its lack of neutrality or innocence, because of its density, its specific weight and added value. The practice of translation comprises the selection and importation of cultural goods from outside a given circuit, and their transformation into terms which the receiving community can understand, if only in linguistic terms, and which it thus recognizes, to some extent at least, as its own. And because each translation offers its own, over determined, distinct construction of the 'otherness' of the imported text, we can learn a great deal from these cultural constructions- and from the construction of self which accompanies them. The paradigms and templates which a culture uses to build images of the foreign offer privileged insight into self-definition. So what happens when we decide to pay sustained attention to translation for these reasons, when we want to investigate both the practice and the discourse about translation across a wide cultural spectrum, historically and geographically?

Frequently we encounter the claim that every translation is an interpretation. As a matter of fact, to say that every translation is an interpretation is completely trivial because interpreting is any activity aiming at bringing about comprehension and translating has the same aim but normally involves a different language in which comprehension is to take place (Riccardi, 2002: 55). Thus 'every translation is an interpretation' merely says that a certain activity aiming at comprehension, is an activity aiming at comprehension. In this connection it also ought to be noted that the word 'interpret' is extremely ambiguous and denotes numerous very heterogeneous things (Riccardi, 2002: 55). So surely translation cannot be considered to be an interpretation of an arbitrary kind. We are therefore confronted with the task of determining which kinds of interpretations are involved in translation, and which are not (Riccardi, 2002:56).

Naturally the term 'translation' is employed in different ways as well, and this multiplicity of uses can be made the subject of an investigation in its own right. Furthermore, there are different kinds of translation, the difference depending mainly on the audience of the translations. It would be possible to relate different kinds of interpretation to different kinds of translation singled out so far. Such an investigation would of course result in a more fine-grained analysis than the one undertaken. The transposition involved in translation employs information about the morphology of the source language and the syntax of the source language, as well as semantic information from dictionaries of the source language (Riccardi, 2002:58). From interpretation as the activity of interpreting, one must distinguish interpretation as a finished object resulting from the interpreting activity. This object is a text which is presented orally or in written form. Analogously, there exists a distinction between translation as an activity and translation as the result of the activity of translating (Riccardi, 2002:61).

The basic aims of translating can be clearly discerned in elementary social situations where speakers of different languages encounter one another and try to make themselves mutually understood. Such situations, for example, the exchange of goods between persons to different cultures or societies require the use of translation. In situations of this kind it is paramount to be able to explain and predict the behaviour of the persons speaking the other language. In such situations mutual comprehension may be possible by non-verbal means; that is, through gesticulation or by facial expressions. On most occasions the comprehension of linguistic utterance reached through translating greatly enlarges the realm of possible mutual understanding, thus enabling speakers of different languages to explain and more accurately predict each other's behaviour (Riccardi, 2002:65). Particularly in those situations just described, were we want to explain and predict the behaviour of the source language speakers, communicative intentions need to be identified. Furthermore, information which these speakers possess and communicate has to be obtained. Communication partners have to

have recourse to the activity of translating in order to fulfil these tasks. Translating utterances made in a source language into utterances of a target language is supposed to make it possible to infer the communicative intentions of an interaction partner and to obtain the information he or she wishes to communicate (Riccardi, 2002:64).

In social situations of the kind considered translating fills the task of facilitating the interaction between speakers of different languages. Once the interaction in elementary social situations is made easier by translating, further objectives of translating come into view (Riccardi, 2002:65). Speakers of a target language may be interested in information which up to this point has been accessible only to speakers of the source language. Moreover, they may simply be curious to know more about specific aspects of the culture to which speakers of the other language belong, or they may want to be able to enjoy entertainment as yet accessible only to speakers of the other language (Riccardi, 2002:65). Such interests and pursuits are enticements to translate linguistic utterances of the source language e.g. in literature or in films, into another language (Riccardi, 2002:65). Persons speaking the source language may vice versa be interested in influencing people speaking the target language in various ways, and for this reason have translations made into a target language, this may in particular be the case with legal provisions and religious texts (Riccardi, 2002:65).

A translation is always performed after the original has been written or published, it may last several weeks or months and is generally bound to the times imposed by the contract, and, even then, a delay may be granted. As Riccardi (2002:85) notes a difficult passage or expression may be thoroughly examined, corrected and revised, decisions can be made consciously to obtain a certain effect. Specific lexical, syntactic and stylistic choices are the result of careful reflection or consultation of dictionaries or specialized texts on a certain subject. Translations may be read even hundreds of years after they have been written.

Translators rarely meet the author of the text or the readers of their translation. Sometimes

they may contact the writer, they may consult previous translations and they may know to whom the translation is directed (Riccardi, 2002:85).

A text to be translated was originally written for people and readers of the same country. The translated text is well anchored in the target culture and, in transposing the original; the translator will often be confronted with culture-bound expressions or situations. Translation may greatly influence the way in which a culture is transmitted and perceived in a target culture. Translation always implies an unstable balance between the power one culture can exert over another (Riccardi, 2002:87). Translation is not the production of one text equivalent to another text, “but rather a complex process of rewriting that runs parallel to the overall view of language and of the “other” people have throughout history, and to the influences and the balances of power that exists between one culture and another” (Alvarez and Vidal, 1996:4).

The text to be translated is a complete text, it is a finished product, it can be read prior to starting. Lexical and syntactical choices or restructuring can be decided upon after an overview of the whole text. Translators can orientate their translational decisions knowing exactly on what kind of text they are working, and exploiting the impressions they received from the text as a whole (Riccardi, 2002:88). Besides advertisements, instructions, handbooks and essays or all the pragmatic texts translated to establish communication between political, economic and legal institutions, business firms and industrial enterprises, many translations are literary, philosophical, historical and cultural works (Riccardi, 2002:88). They may subsequently have a great impact on the target culture, they may signal a new idea, a different point of view or innovation because “translation creates an image of the original” (Alvarez and Vidal, 1996:5). Because of this creation of the image, translation is intimately related to knowledge and especially to the manner in which that information becomes conveyed (Riccardi, 2002:88).

If a maximal translation is one in which equivalence in respect of all types of meaning is maximised, the first suggestion towards a characterisation of minimal translation is that it is one in which equivalence is achieved only in respect of fully engaged meaning. It is important to that this means that if all the meaning of a text is fully engaged, as may be the case with some literary text although the maximum may fall short of the minimum, which gives us a convenient criterion for untranslatability. As it happens, there is a convenient way of isolating propositional meaning: two texts are equivalent in respect of propositional meaning if their truth-conditions are the same. The suggestion is then that a minimal translation of an informative text is one which has the same truth-conditions as the original text. This is concurred by Lewandowska-Tomaszczyk and Thelen, (1993:29) who note

Now as a way of modelling the intuitive notion of the lower limit of a rough translation this is surely too strong: to count as rough translations, texts do not have to have full truth-conditional equivalence with their originals

Lewandowska-Tomaszczyk and Thelen, 1993:29

The problem is how to specify the ways in which they may fall short of this requirement. Nevertheless, there is a parallel of the distinction between a rough translation and a mistranslation in the distinction between words which are near-synonyms (but not exact synonyms), and words which merely contrast. I tried, not entirely successfully, to give an account of this distinction (Lewandowska-Tomaszczyk and Thelen, 1993:29).

The essence of language is meaning (Brown, 1994:70). If that is so, no language learning is meaningful nor complete without tapping into the culture of the native speakers. Scholars, Jordan, Jackson and Davids (2005:251) argued that the best source of information about another ethnic group is experience. Jessner (2008:249) elaborated on this by saying that acquiring a new language means a lot more than the manipulation of syntax and lexicon. She

further noted that culture classes have a humanising and motivating effect on the language learner and the learning process. They help learners observe similarities and differences among various cultural group, hence, teaching language is also teaching culture. A fusion of culture into language classes improves one's understanding of the language as well as the people who speak it, and cultural competence falls in the category of the pragmatic aspect of communicative competence (Jessner, 2008:78).

## **2.5 The Role of Dictionaries**

The process of translation consists in principle of two main steps: the analysis of the given source-language text and the synthesis of the adequate target-language text. Therefore we need at least two types of dictionaries: first, those which can help us to analyse the source-language text and second, and those which can help us to produce the text in the target-language. The dictionaries of the second type (that is a thesaurus) are so far very rare.

The structure of the most known dictionaries is based upon the principle "from sign to concept" (for one-language dictionaries) or "from sign to sign" (for two-language dictionaries). What is often missing are dictionaries of different types and lexicon parts which are organised "from concept to sign" and can be used for the synthesis. Such thesaurus would make it possible to find – as in this case - all idioms of certain language which express the concept under consideration. There is a need to produce thesauruses with linguistic entities of idioms of two and more languages which would enable the use such a dictionary in two ways at the same time: "from concept to sign" and "from sign to sign" (within one concept) (Lewandowska-Tomaszczyk and Thelen, 1993:35).

An important issue concerns the relationship between form and meaning. According to Hockett (1963) and Saussure (1966), this relationship is simply arbitrary. However, we can see that while the form-meaning correspondence is certainly arbitrary in the limit. There are several phenomena that speak of the need to examine the role of form as a conveyor of

meaning in its own right (Lewandowska-Tomaszczyk and Thelen, 1993:43). Were the relationship just arbitrary, a theory of translation would not need to take the mere form of expression into account. To the extent that form pursued does contribute to interpretation, the translation theory must carry formal constraints from the source language string and propagate them to the target language string it generates. It will not be sufficient just to convey the message. Particular devices demanding such attention include rhyme and sound symbolism (Lewandowska-Tomaszczyk and Thelen, 1993:43). In practice, some translators argue that this double constraint on the target encoding is impossible to satisfy and that in such circumstances it is judicious to go for a free and perhaps “creative” translation. As a pragmatic step of problem reduction, the model presented here does not address the problem of encoding formal constraints (constraints derived from the form of expression of the source language string) other than in a rather limited way. In short, while we might describe our ultimate objective as the rendering of a linguistic structure in the target language, for the moment we only tackle the rendering of the message conveyed by the source-language string in the target language (Lewandowska-Tomaszczyk and Thelen, 1993:43).

Languages used for special purposes and thereby associated with particular semantic domain are known as sublanguages. One thing we know about sublanguages is that they are not properly contained in general language with which they are associated. Sublanguages have a number of characteristics that distinguish them from social or geographical dialects of a language as a whole. Sublanguages transcend linguistic and geopolitical dialects of a language as a whole. Sublanguages transcend linguistic and geopolitical boundaries: plenty of scientists understand technical English, but are at a loss to make their way in an English-speaking country. Sublanguages are explicitly instructed: you must go to school, or at least follow some apprenticeship, to learn a sublanguage. Sublanguages are “mutually exclusive”: an expression from one sublanguage, though referentially equivalent to an expression from

another, is held by its speakers to be “truer” or more accurate in relation to the “facts” (Dungworth and McDonald, 1980:63-69).

The need to be sensitive to the full range of possibilities of the sublanguage is especially important for translation because the quality of a translation is not a simple function of accuracy and fidelity (Lewandowska-Tomaszczyk and Thelen, 1993:323). Certainly, we want our translations to be correct, but we must also be concerned with what is called inferential productivity. It is possible to produce a completely accurate and faithful translation- one that respects the denotations and forms of the original text, but which nonetheless fails to give the reader access to the full range of inference made by an individual who comprehends the text. All translated expressions are embedded in a network of inference and textual relations, and these are at least as important as the fidelity and accuracy of the overt expressions themselves (Lewandowska-Tomaszczyk and Thelen, 1993:323).

## **2.6 Translation Theories and Translation Practice**

Instructors and trainers sometimes assume that translators who know about different theories will be better informed than one who knows nothing about them (Pym, 2010:4). There is no empirical evidence for that claim and there are good reasons to doubt its validity. All translators theorise, not just the ones who can express their theories in technical terms. Untrained translators may work faster and more efficiently because they know less about complex theories. They have fewer doubts and do not waste time reflecting on the obvious. On the other hand, some awareness of different theories might be of practical benefit when confronting problems for which there are no established solutions and where significant creativity is required. The theories can also be significant agents of change, especially when moved from one professional culture to another, or when they are made to challenge endemic thought. And public theories can help foster awareness of the complexities of translation, thus enhancing the public image of translators (Pym, 2010:4).

Benjamin and Hiedegger (2013), along with many others, write in the tradition of German Romanticism and post-Romanticism. One line of that tradition has been particularly concerned with the idea that texts are not immediately meaningful and need to be actively interpreted. This general field is known as hermeneutics, from the Greek *hermeneuō*, meaning “to interpret” or indeed “to translate.” The nineteenth-century development of hermeneutics was closely linked to ways of making sense of the Bible, especially in view of the growing scientific knowledge that contested literal readings of what was supposed to be God’s word. The way you interpret a text is obviously connected with the way you would translate it, so it is not surprising to find thinkers like Schleiermacher intimately concerned with both hermeneutics and translation (Pym, 2010: 103).

According to Graaff (n.d.: 9-12) hermeneutic interpretation helps uncover deeper meaning and enables the translators to obtain a sensitive understanding of explicit themes uncovered through thematic analysis. Hermeneutics focuses primarily on the meaning of qualitative data, especially textual data. The purpose of using hermeneutics is to aid human understanding. Furthermore,

..interpretation, in the sense relevant to hermeneutics, is an attempt to make clear, to make sense of an object of study. This object must, therefore, be a text, or a text-analogue, which in some way is confused, incomplete, cloudy, seemingly contradictory - in one way or another - unclear. Moreover the interpretation aims to bring to light an underlying coherence or sense.

Benjamin and Hiedegger, 2013:205

Hermeneutics in sociology is influenced by German philosopher Han-Georg Gadamer (1900-2002). In sociological hermeneutics the meaning of a statement, an act or a text is dependent on the context of the discourse and the underlying the worldview from which it originates. Hermeneutics involves interpretation and interpretation includes using one's own preconceptions so that the meaning of the object can become clear (Gadamer, 1975: 358). Understanding the meaning conveyed in a text always involves some prior knowledge or expectation of what the text is about. In fact we cannot understand these texts unless we have

a deep understanding of the language in which they are written and culture associated with the language.

## **2.7 Brief History of IsiXhosa Literary System**

AmaXhosa had their own literary system long before the arrival of the missionaries in South Africa. This system consisted of folktales, riddles and praise poetry. Through the folktales and riddles the young generations were taught tradition, norms and values of the society. Such traditional literature was passed on orally from generation. After the arrival of the missionaries isiXhosa literature was reduced to writing. This is acknowledged by Jordan, cited by Satyo in his paper published in Gerard (1971:70) when he claims that “the history of Xhosa literature started long before the Xhosas knew anything about writing and long before their encounter with Western civilization”.

It was John Bennie, a missionary, who successfully made isiXhosa a written language. The history of isiXhosa as a written language began with Bennie’s publication of *A Systematic Sketch of the Kaffrarian Language* (1826). After that Bible and the different catechisms were translated into isiXhosa. Pioneers like Tiyo Soga and Dr. WB Rubusana contributed a great deal to make isiXhosa idiomatic. Tiyo Soga, a renowned translator and respected authority on the Xhosa language, published the first part of his translation of John Bunyan’s *Pilgrim’s progress* in 1866 under the title *Uhambo lomhambi*. The translation of Bunyan’s book was for many Africans their first encounter with a novel as a literary genre. This had enormous influence on the Xhosa literature because quite a number of works appeared after it. The second part was translated by his son, John Henderson Soga in 1929. Soga also published *Intlalo kaXhosa* (1937), which is mainly about the customs and beliefs of amaXhosa. Rubusana published *Zemk’iinkomo magwalandini* (1906), which gives information about

early unwritten literature. As we see as mentioned here translation plays a significant role in the development of Xhosa literature.

Knowledge of how oral isiXhosa was codified was an important factor when establishing what kinds of academic and literary processes were needed to assist students. I was familiar with the contents of the book students were reading. There was an emphasis on culture in the literature “Ityala lamawele,” when the literature was studied. The book was challenging to the students, as they struggled but continued to read the literature. However this group of students concluded that the literature was too challenging. The group concluded that the study would be discontinued, and there should be a change in the type of literature that the students read.

## **2.8 Summary**

It is crucial to acknowledge that in the literature review there are many vital aspects discussed, from different scholars perspectives. In this literature review the different aspects of translation and the relevant information needed for translation is discussed. For many scholars/practitioners translation means writing something in a language and then explaining the text in another language. That is the easiest way of considering the role of translation and as discussed the different elements that go into translation are highlighted and introduced to ideas like hermeneutics, These are not factors that translators consider when translating. This technique of translation will be visible to many practitioners because the process is not translating words into another language, but much more which includes the cultural and socio-economic. It is essential that translators do more than just interpret words and examine the different elements which are highlighted and integrated into the chapters that follow.

The evidence which integrates culture as a bearer of meaning is a gap in the field of translation studies. Moreover, there are not many studies on the isiXhosa language. In fact

there are no studies that were specific to this topic which means, that this study will identify the different gaps and highlight the new techniques being suggested in the research being conducted. This study contributes to the knowledge in the teaching and the learning of isiXhosa as a second language.

## CHAPTER 3 METHODOLOGY

### 3.0 Introduction

The aim of this research project is to examine how translation can be used as a tool for teaching and learning a second language. The research focus straddles a number of disciplines including education and language acquisition. The students in this study are second language learners of isiXhosa, and a review of the literature indicates that a study of this nature has not been conducted. It was very difficult to find one framework that can account for all the questions being asked. It is for this reason that the project employs a number of research methods and required a mixture of analytical frameworks.

This chapter aims to (1) provide a description of the methodology used in this study (2) describe the sample and the selection criteria (3) outline the instrument design and how data was collected and finally (4) describe the analytical frameworks used in the study. The areas that are described above are informed by the following research questions:

1. To what extent does translation promote learning in a second language?
2. What are some of the classroom translation activities that encourage learning?
3. What role does prior knowledge of vocabulary play?
4. What are some of the techniques that learners employ when doing translation activities?
5. Does the level of proficiency matter in terms of written work?

### 3.1 Research Design

An understanding of the differences between qualitative and quantitative research methods is important in making the selection that is best for the purposes of the research project.

According to Thomas (2003) the simplest way to distinguish between qualitative and quantitative may be to say that qualitative methods involve a researcher describing kinds of characteristics of people and events without comparing events in terms of measurements or amounts. Quantitative methods, on the other hand, focus attention on measurements or amounts (more and less, larger and smaller, often and seldom, similar and different) of the characteristics displayed by the people and events that the researcher studies (Thomas, 2003).

Qualitative research is multimethod in focus, involving an interpretive, naturalistic approach to its subject matter. This means that qualitative researchers, in many instances, study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or interpret phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them. Qualitative research involves the studied use and collection of a variety of empirical materials, case study, personal experience, introspective, life story, interview, observational, historical, interactional, and visual texts, which describe routine and problematic moments and meanings in people's lives (Denzin and Lincoln, 1994:2).

Quantitative research uses numbers and statistical methods. It tends to be based on numerical measurements of specific aspects of phenomena, it abstracts from particular instances to seek general description or to test casual hypotheses, and it seeks measurements and analyses that are easily replicable by other researchers (King, Keohane and Verba, 1994:3).

There are some basic differences between quantitative and qualitative research methods and these are:

- Their analytical objectives
- The types of questions they pose
- The types of data collection instruments they use
- The forms of data they produce
- The degree of flexibility built into the study design

Looking at the nature of the current research project, qualitative research methods, are most suitable. In particular, classroom observations and classroom activities, which are in written form, form the basis of the research project. The qualitative methods seem more appropriate for the aims of this project, (however I will also make use of quantitative research methods as I will include graphs etc.) which are amongst others:

- to seek answers to the questions raised above
- to systematically use predefined set of procedures to answer these questions
- to collect evidence in support in favour of using translation as a teaching method
- to produce findings that were not predetermined
- to produce findings that can be generalized to other areas.

These are some of the characteristics that qualitative research shares. Additionally, qualitative methods seeks to understand a given research problem or topic from the perspective of the local population it involves. Qualitative research is therefore especially effective in obtaining culturally specific information about the values, opinions, behaviours and social contexts of particular population (Qualitative Research Methods; A Data Collector's Field Guide, 2002).

The question of culture is a very important one because activities that involve language also embody the culture of the people who speak that language. Since the learners in this instance are second language learners, it is very important that we obtain culture-specific information and how translation may or may not facilitate the learning process. Qualitative research method is therefore very relevant for this study, however I also make use of quantitative research methods where it is relevant. The research tools used are explained further in the sections below.

## **3.2 Sample and Selection Criteria**

There are a number of sampling criteria that one can choose from. Unfortunately for this study, a sample of convenience was considered as well as purposeful sampling. Starting with the convenience sample, because the study looks at the use of translation as a research method, there was a need to access a second language classroom where this method is used. Given that the researcher is also a second language teacher, employing this method as a teaching tool was a convenient way of accessing data by observing the current learners. (Morse, 1991) calls this method a sample of convenience.

The research also employs purposeful sampling. Purposeful sampling is defined as a sample within a sample (Patton, 2001). This means that within the sample of convenience, the learners are stratified based on their mother-tongue (i) whether it is closely related or not to isiXhosa), (ii) prior exposure to the language and (iii) student motivation for taking the course (whether this is an elective, a major or a required course). There are some limitations since one cannot generalise especially when the sample size is small. However, given that this is only part of the sample of convenience, generalisations can still be made. In the next section the sampling method is explained.

### **3.2.1 Demographics**

This section describes the types of learners that are selected for this project. In order to fully understand why there has to be distinctions between learners, there is a need to start off by briefly describe the role played by literature in the language lectures followed by the learner sampling.

#### **3.2.1.1 Literature in Second Language**

The study looks at a certain level of second language isiXhosa learner. Students who enrol for this course at a first year level, need to have little or no knowledge of isiXhosa, They beginners, who proceed to their second year, and in their third year isiXhosa is taken as a

major subject. At the first year level the learners do not have any knowledge and are being taught the basics in learning how to communicate. During their first year of study, students are introduced to grammar and basic communication terms. They read simple story books, and are given the opportunity to create their own story book from the vocabulary they learn (see appendix 1). During their second year of study, when the foundations in grammar and basic communication skills have been laid, they are introduced to literature. This means students expected to read a book which is written in isiXhosa. The titles of the books are *Akusayi kuphinda* by Sonwabiso Ngcowa and *Uphuziwe uWhitney* by Onne Vegter translated by SZ Zotwana . The book is read in class with an explanation of the story and exercises completed to ensure, that the students are aware of contents of the book and whether they are also able to make connections between what they read and their everyday lives. During the third year of study, learners read a book entitled *Akusayi kuphinda* by Sonwabiso Ngcowa) which is intended for advanced language learners. The language is a bit more complex because these are books that are not written specifically for second language speakers. This is difficult for the students but, provides a challenge that increases vocabulary and allows the use of grammar to decipher the new words. As an illustrative point, the knowledge of the various tenses in isiXhosa becomes crucial as tenses in isiXhosa are used slightly different from English.

### **3.2.1.2 The Learners and Geographical Location**

The learners in the isiXhosa lectures come from different departments and faculties within the university. In this study, both second and third year students participate. In the second year classes there are 2 mother tongue isiXhosa speakers, who had not done isiXhosa in school and another 2 isiZulu speakers, who did not study the isiXhosa language, but because they speak isiZulu they appear to have a better understanding of the language. One student studied isiXhosa in high school for five years, and the rest of the class started isiXhosa

lessons at university level in 2015. These students range from the age of 20-22 years; there are 2 male students and 7 female students, one of the students in this class is from Germany the rest are from South Africa.

In the third year class I have 6 students. These are as follows: 2 students which are isiXhosa first language speakers, these students also did not do isiXhosa in high school, the rest of the students are not mother tongue speakers and 3 students had done isiXhosa at high school level. All these students are from South Africa, and their ages range from 21-23 years.

The fieldwork was conducted at the University of Cape Town (UCT) where the researcher is employed as an assistant lecturer, because it is one of the universities in the Western Cape that offers isiXhosa for second language learners.

The classes are held once a week, for 45 minutes. However in other classes that they have, there is integration of the vocabulary and different tenses which they see in their literature lessons. Most of the students are native isiXhosa speakers and if they are not, this means they are students that are first language speakers but have not had the opportunity to learn how to read and write in isiXhosa.

### **3.3 Research Instruments**

This section outlines the types of instruments chosen for the study and outlines the questions and why those questions were selected. A qualitative questionnaire was chosen because there are many things to be learnt from qualitative research. The strength of qualitative research is its ability to provide complex textual descriptions of how people experience a given research issue (Newman, 2006:3). The qualitative method provides information from the “human” side of an issue, that is, the often contradictory behaviours, beliefs, opinions, emotions, and relationships of individuals (Neuman, 2006:3). This method is effective in identifying intangible factors, such as social norms, socioeconomic status, gender roles, ethnicity and religion whose role in the research issue may not be readily apparent.

There are three most common qualitative methods, explained in detail in their respective modules. (Thomas,2003:2) notes that each method is particularly suited for obtaining a specific type of data. These methods are:

- *Participant observation* which is appropriate for collecting data on naturally occurring behaviours in their usual contexts.
- *In-depth interviews* are optimal for collecting data on individuals' personal histories, perspectives, and experiences, particularly when sensitive topics are being explored.

*Focus groups* are effective in eliciting data on the cultural norms of a group and in generating broad overviews of issues of concern to the cultural groups and subgroups represent

Examining the strengths of qualitative research methods, Neuman (2006) states that qualitative research begins with self-assessment and reflections about themselves as situated in social-historical context. It is a highly self-aware acknowledgement of social self, or of a researcher's position in society. This approach does not narrowly focus on a specific question but ponders the theoretical philosophical paradigm in an inquisitive, open-ended settling in proves as they adopt a perspective (Neuman, 2006:15). Qualitative methods typically refer to a range of data collection and analysis techniques that use purposive sampling and semi-structured, open-ended interviews (Dudwick, Kuehnast, Jones and Woolcock, 2006:3).

Therefore the study draws on existing theory as well as build new theory. According to Neuman, (2006: 15) the interpretation of data creates new concepts and emphasise constructing theoretical interpretations.

Examining some weaknesses or problems of using qualitative data is that it often relies on interpretive or critical social science. This approach applies "logic in practice" and follows a nonlinear research path (Neuman, 2006; 151). Qualitative approaches emphasize conducting detailed examinations of cases that arise in the natural flow of social life (Neuman, 2006:151). One of the differences between the two styles comes from the nature of the data.

Soft data, in the form of impressions, words, sentences, photos, symbols and so forth, dictate different assumptions about social life and different objectives. The differences can make tools used by quantitative approaches inappropriate or irrelevant. People who judge qualitative research by standards of quantitative research are often disappointed, and vice-versa (Neuman, 2006:151).

According to Neuman, (2006:151) “the researchers who use one style alone do not always communicate well with those using the other, but the languages and orientations of the are mutually intelligible because it takes time and effort to understand both research methods and to see how they can be complementary.” Consideration is given The issues of sampling, the relationship between the researcher and subject, methodologies and collated data, validity, reliability, and ethical dilemmas must be considered when embarking on qualitative methods (Carr, 1994:716). The potential biases in data collection procedures may not be an advantage to either qualitative or quantitative approaches, although qualitative research methods have the advantage that they may be able to identify response bias as it occurs, rather than afterwards. For example, biases due to the respondent’s ‘mental set’ refer to the way that perceptions based on previous items influence replies to later ones (Mcdowell and Maclean, 1998: 19) . In the social desirability bias, a respondent replies so as to appear socially acceptable in eyes of interviewer. Acquiescence bias, similarly, covers responses that are influenced by the respondent’ perception of what would be desirable to the researcher, especially to an influential one (Mcdowell and Maclean, 1998: 19).

### **3.4 Ethical Issues**

Research ethics deals primarily with the interaction between researcher and the people they study. Professional ethics deals with additional issues such as collaboration relationships among researchers, mentoring relationships, intellectual property, fabrication of data, and plagiarism, among others. While professional ethics is not discussed, this is obviously as

important for research as for any other endeavour (Qualitative Research Methods; A Data Collector's Field Guide, 2002:8). A number of factors influenced the research study, namely

1. Informed consent as a mechanism for ensuring that people understand what it means to participate in a particular research study so they can decide in a conscious, deliberate way whether they want to participate. Informed consent is one of the most important tools for ensuring respect for persons during research (Qualitative Research Methods; A Data Collector's Field Guide, 2002:9).

Many people think of informed consent primarily as a form, that is, a piece of paper that describes in detail what the research is about, including the risks and benefits. The completed form generally goes through ethics committee approval procedures and includes legalistic language and is signed by the participants, the researcher, and possibly a witness. Such informed consent forms are appropriate for biomedical and other research, including qualitative, when the risks faced by participants may be substantial. They may also be necessary for minimal risk research when the foundation for trust between researcher and participants is weak (Weijer, Goldsand and Emanuel, 1999: 9).

2. In keeping with the statements above, when working with students, it is essential that their permission to use their work is sought and granted. Firstly ethical clearance was obtained from the Humanities Faculty, via the School of Languages and Literatures ethics committee. Written permission to conduct the study was granted
3. Respect the confidentiality of the students which is an important consideration when undertaking research. An important consideration is that that the year during which the data was collected is not revealed in the study as this may

compromise this confidentiality. Moreover, all the student's names and identities will be kept confidential as they are not important in this research.

4. Permission to use students' work was also sought, in the form of written consent. Before being able to use the work of the students, it was essential to make sure that other staff members who are also teaching in class are aware of the study. It is also very important to make sure that the students understand that they are not be forced to participate this study. Permission to use their work

In the next section I briefly discuss the instruments used for collecting data for this project.

### **3.4.1 The Questionnaires**

The aim of this study is to find out if translation works as a teaching method for second language speakers. It is essential to get the point of view of the students as they would be the reliable source to test whether translation method is a productive and successful teaching method.

Most surveys are based on questionnaires. These may be answered either in written form or orally in a face-to-face interrogation with a researcher noting the answers (Flick, 2001:105).

A characteristic of questionnaires is their extensive standardisation. The researchers determine the formulation and sequencing of questions and possible answers. Sometimes a number of open or free text questions, which the respondents may answer in their own words, are included. Questionnaire studies aim at receiving comparable answers from all participants. Therefore, the questions as well as the interview situation are designed in an identical way for all participants. When one is constructing a questionnaire, rules for formulating questions and arranging their sequence should be applied (Flick, 2001:106).

In designing the questions for this study, we adhered to the guidelines provided by (Flick, 2001:106).

The process of questioning the students began before the study started to gauge some ideas on their views on translation. The questionnaires were administered to each class member after each class. Each class member was questioned about the text that they read, so everyone would get a chance to answer. This process was followed because as one student is given an instruction on the specific page to be translated as homework but the rest of the class members only start translating while they are in class. While the text is being translated there was a need to ensure that the students were getting the information.

### **3.4.2 Types of Questions**

There are several steps involved in developing a questionnaire. The first is identifying what topics will be covered in the questionnaire. Thinking about what is happening in our nation and the world and also what will be relevant to the public, but also what is relevant to the people whom you are conducting the questionnaire for.

Many people who conduct questionnaires want to track changes over time in people's attitudes, opinions and behaviours. To measure change, questions are asked at two or more points in time. When measuring change over time, it is important to use the same question wording and to be sensitive to where the question is asked in the questionnaire to maintain a similar context as when the question was asked previously.<sup>1</sup>

The choice of words and phrases in a question is critical in expressing the meaning and intent of the question to the respondent and ensuring that all respondents interpret the question the same way. Even small wording differences can substantially affect the answers people provide. It is important to ask questions that are clear and specific and that each respondent will be able to answer. If a question is open-ended, it should be evident to respondents that they can answer in their own words and what type of response they should provide (an issue

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<sup>1</sup> (<http://pewresearch.org/methodology/u-s-survey-research/questionnaire-design/#question-wording>)

or problem, a month, number of days, etc.). Closed-ended questions should include all reasonable responses (i.e. the list of options is exhaustive) and the response categories should not overlap i.e. response options should be mutually exclusive.

Once the survey questions are developed, particular attention should be paid to how they are ordered in the questionnaire. The placement of a question can have a greater impact on the result than the particular choice of words used in the question. When determining the order of questionnaire, surveyors must be attentive to how questions early in a questionnaire may have unintended effects on how respondents answer subsequent questions.<sup>2</sup>

### **3.4.3 Class Observation**

In class, an activity where the students were asked to write about their views on the book which they were reading, each student was asked to write a story or a letter to a friend. In this way I was able to gauge if they are able to use words out of the context that they have learnt them in. Especially, since a lot of these words are used in their literature lessons. All the vocabulary the students have used and in the literature they are reading and check which words are problematic and the reasons why students experience these difficulties. Most of the time this is due to the different tenses that the students use that make it difficult to use the word. Therefore, if a word has been taught to them in the present form, for many students it is difficult to comprehend it in a different tense.

In class, students had to prepare an oral presentation and this approach revealed whether students were able to translate these words but also to comprehend them in different contexts. This also assists in gauging how much more work is prepared out of the learning area. This is because students are repeatedly told that language is an everyday learning subject and it helps to do some learning out of the learning environment just to familiarise yourself with the

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<sup>2</sup> (<http://pewresearch.org/methodology/u-s-survey-research/questionnaire-design/#question-wording>)

language. This process, allows the language learner's ear to become familiar with the vocabulary of the language .

#### **3.4.4 In-depth Interview/Focus Group**

The interviews with the students were conducted outside the classroom environment. This approach was adopted because I wanted the students to be as honest as possible and not to think that they were being evaluated in some sort of a way. During the interview I kept repeating that their answers would not affect their progression in class. Many of the students found it easier to talk about their problematic areas.

With the focus groups, I did this as class discussions. Many times you find some students will let others talk which prevented me from getting a full idea of who exactly is having problems. I had difficulty gauging, if the study is relevant or not. I took the liberty of changing the focus groups into interviews with the students, where I would listen and write down some key points whilst conversing.

#### **3.4.5 Written Samples**

One activity which the students needed to do every day was to give each student a page to translate, and this would be a page which is to be read the following day in class. In this way, students would not be getting assistance from me but would make use of their language book, dictionaries and other language speakers. Many students asked a friend to translate for them, but any question on the text discussed in that class, or while students were translating they would have to answer themselves. In the beginning I would translate and take them step by step on how I would like them to complete the exercise. While students were going through the translation, I would give some feedback or even make corrections as the lesson proceeded. At the end of the lecture, there was time for any feedback or additional questions, which students never really had, because they got so used to the exercise and the level of the

language. As they progressed I would increase the amount of pages that they would take home and translate.

The process of translation in class was time consuming and because time is essential in trying to get them to learn, this learning process could not be repeated too many times. The exercise of practising vocabulary took even longer if students did not know their vocabulary. The focus on the problematic words was highlighted when a text was being translated incorrectly. The language classes were vitally important because it was necessary to understand why certain words are in a particular form (tense) in order to translate them properly. It became very useful to the students once the vocabulary classes were linked to literature. Students would use examples from their literature in their language classes and it became easier to grasp new words whilst they did their exercises in the learning environment.

### **3.5 Analysis Procedures**

The vocabulary was collected and was placed on a spreadsheet and the words were placed in different forms which they can be used. I would tick the words which were used in the correct form and the ones that were written in an incorrect form and would write down how the student used it. Once this process was complete, I would look at the words which were commonly used incorrectly and what the translation process was that made these students use it incorrectly. Two alternatives were examined. Firstly, was it the understanding of the word, or secondly, the linguistic form of the word which students used incorrectly.

The report back was essential for the students and I would reuse these words to raise awareness of the incorrect use of the word. When translating it was essential to go to the root of many of the words, because there are many isiXhosa words and the suffix could change the whole meaning of the word, thus changing the meaning of a sentence and paragraph.

There were many occasions when a word was problematic I would recall the origin of the

word and then discuss the different forms that one can use the word, and also reasons why certain words cannot be used in certain ways.

### **3.5.1 Capturing Qualitative Data**

Qualitative evidence extracts depth and adds body to the conclusions drawn. Therefore as James (2007: 66) notes data collection analysis tools are employed when practitioners need to delve deeply into circumstances and understand the human motivations involved. This data is particularly informative to answer questions of meaning, the significance of situations (held in peoples' minds as meanings) are subjective and often vary, depending upon personal experience. The context also influences understanding of the evidence. This is true whether it is a personal context for example: age, gender, or cultural background - or in the community context where members are wealthy or poor; rural, suburban, or urban; stable or changing demographics economically stable or unstable. There is also the process of understanding, in order for the conclusions to be replicable in other contexts and the background knowledge that led to the situation and the actions that resulted need to be understood and reported. Lastly, looking at the causal relationships; how to understand the complex situations that cause people to take action is key to understanding the cultural and societal mechanisms that make up the fabric of life within a community or school.

Qualitative evidence collection is subject to the biases of the people involved, both in collecting the evidence and in providing it. Researchers may have a preconceived notion about the evidence they are likely to find in their investigation. Unconsciously, researchers may ask questions phrased in such a way as to heighten the chance the respondent will provide the expected answer. Likewise, the respondent may have biases about either the researchers or their topic and may not be willing to disclose personal ideas or feelings, or cultural values enter the topic under study (James, 2007: 68).

Qualitative evidence can be words or pictures. Whether collected from individuals, throughout a process of change or during an event. When conducting research, there is a reliance on strategies that balance time and resource constraints while collecting enough evidence which ensures the research process rises above the subjective nature of understanding. To overcome bias, the strongest strategy is to collect data from multiple sources and then compare results (James, 2007:84).

### **3.6 Summary**

The research methodology is designed in such a way that it could help in the gathering of the information that is needed for the topic of this research. The research tools were designed to gain data that will provide some knowledge into the research questions that are posed. The questions are to get information on whether or not; translation can work as a teaching method for second language students. This data was collected from two sample sizes, from the University of Cape Town; one set of data was from second year students and the second set of data from students in their third year.

No names were used for ethical reasons and the data collected was taken from the students as I observed in the classroom. A letter of consent was given to the students, which was approved by the supervisor in charge of the research process. The students are second language speakers and a few are first language speakers, but have not participated in isiXhosa language classes. The age of the students is not of importance in this research. The research identified challenges and difficulties in understanding vocabulary by the students.

## CHAPTER 4 RESULTS

### 4.0 Introduction

In the previous chapter there was a discussion on how data was collected and the procedures for analysis, because there no studies to reference on the teaching and learning of African languages, particularly the use of translation as a teaching method the research process was experimental. The results were presented under certain categories, it was also necessary to break away from this format and provide some qualitative descriptions of the results. This chapter is structured as follows: Section 4.1.1 discusses information about the students and also looks at some of the challenges that were faced. *Section 4.1.2.* Analysis an activity that was done in the classroom. Section 4.1.3 looks at Translation and Grammar for 2<sup>nd</sup> year students. Grammar means the way of writing and sentence structure. Section 4.1.4 discussed translation and vocabulary of 2<sup>nd</sup> year students and the relevance of vocabulary in translation, In Section 4.1.5 this looks at the oral exercises that we did in class. In Section 4.2 the profile of the 3<sup>rd</sup> year students is analysed to explain the roles of the practitioner and that of the students. Section 4.2.1 looks at the importance of vocabulary in translation practices and activities in 3<sup>rd</sup> year. Section 4.2.2 discusses the impact of culture on the process of translation. Section 4.2.3 talks about translation and vocabulary in the 3<sup>rd</sup> year class, looking at the literature book which they did, called *Akusayi kuphinda* by Sonwabiso Ngcowa. Section 4.2.4 looks at the culture in the literature. Lastly Section 4.2.5 looks at the oral presentations that were conducted in class.

### 4.1 Participants

The participants for this study were sourced from University of Cape Town. The reason for this area is because of the availability of isiXhosa L2 classes as well as easy access to these students.

### **4.1.1 Student Profile and Challenges**

The study of isiXhosa at University of Cape Town falls into a number of categories. First, there are isiXhosa lectures for mother-tongue speakers of the Nguni languages. These lectures exclude all other learners. The second group comprises second language speaker where the emphasis is on communication especially during the first year of study. Since the entry requirements for this group are a bit relaxed, students with multiple linguistic backgrounds as well as different levels of competency in isiXhosa are in this category. There are also students who have never studied the isiXhosa language. There is also a category of the students who studied isiXhosa as a second additional language at high school. These students are often encouraged to start at second year level, which means that they are new to language studies at university level.

There is third group of students whose home languages are of the siSotho group. Although the language families are significantly different, especially semantics these students often find learning new words less challenging.

Finally, since the teaching of isiXhosa literature at UCT starts during the second level of isiXhosa, the focus of the study is on the second and third year literature lectures. However, constant reference to work done during the first year is made because the teaching model is such that each year provides stepping stones to the higher levels of language learning. Given this mixed class with different language competencies, we are faced with some challenges.

### **4.1.2 The Design of Classroom Activities**

When I started doing this study the aim of this study was to keep it as *natural* as possible. I did not want to make students feel like this was an assessment as that seemed to intimidate them. This is because it is important to get the best results which are not fabricated because an assessment atmosphere will encourage students to provide the response they think you want to hear. There were many instances where students asked *what the right answer is*.

Therefore there was a need to emphasise that the interest was in their process of arriving at the answer and the reasons why they gave certain answers. In short, we were trying to figure out what they are thinking and what types of skills and background assisted in arriving at a particular answer.

They had to be reminded that it is not about getting everything right but rather understanding their process of thought even if they get something wrong. This is particularly difficult because these students often gain high marks in their grammar assessments but it becomes difficult for many of them to understand why they encounter challenges in the literature classes and why learning is not as straight forward as before. To ensure that students did the activities without thinking about it as an assessment, they were often told that every activity that they do is important because it prepares them for the formal assessment. More importantly, they were also told that learning literature is a form of learning the language and not necessarily learning to acquire good grades.

As mentioned, students worked in groups and sometimes did individual activities. This depended on the size of the class. Also, the time constraints prevented access to individual students. This is because students are given classwork which needs to be reported immediately and with time constraints not everyone is able to present their work. This means the students who did not have a chance to present have extra time to prepare and think through their answers.

Working in groups offered the students the best opportunity for learning as they had enough time to share with each other and present their new learning to the group. However, group work presented certain problems for students. First, in grouping students, the groups were according to the different levels of competency which were mostly determined by test marks and active participation in class. There would be a strong, an average and weak student in each group. This was to create some kind of balance. The problem with this type of grouping

was that stronger students would take over all the discussion and do all the work. This disadvantaged the more challenged students as they were not allowed to learn anything new. This makes it very difficult for them to work alone, because they depend on the other people.

The second option was to put all the strong students together, the average students together and the weak students together. At this point the quality of work that they produce is totally different, and when grading the students it is clear that a certain group did better than another. This was most revealing as it allowed for an analysis of the different processes employed by the different groups. In the next couple of paragraphs I provide a brief description of groupings as attested in the literature.

While all of this issue of allocating groups was becoming challenging different ways of grouping students was researched. This was to learn from other scholars writing on group work. Anecdotally, and with support from literature, there are several practical problems associated with group work, including students' dissatisfaction with working in groups and poor performance of groups (Seethamraju & Borman, 2009:4). Furthermore, academics consider the management of group work demanding, and supporting students to attain the intended learning outcomes difficult to achieve (Huxham & Land, 2011:5). Research suggests that some of these problems may arise due to the way groups are formed and structured (Tu & Lu, 2005:4). In particular, the high levels of frustration and anxiety associated with academics' effort to structure group work because academics must determine how to structure and form the groups without supporting evidence on learning outcomes from the literature (Huxham & Land, 2001: 5). While the benefits of group work are compelling, the problems with group work appear to work against the use of this method in tertiary education (Huxham & Land, 2011: 5). Despite the recognition of the value of group work and its associated teaching and learning opportunities, there are no set recommendations for the

formation of groups. Therefore, there is a need for evidence-based recommendations, or at the very least, practical guidelines related to the rationales for selecting students and allocating them to groups. These would be essential “to inform academics of a) the range of group selection strategies available, b) the rationales which underpin each strategy and c) the likely outcomes of their group selection process that they employ” (Mantzioris, 2014:4).

The group selection processes that have been identified from this review can be classified into four types. The selection processes that are available to the academic are random selection (RS), student self-selection (SS), academic selection (AS) and mixed pair selection (MPS) (Mantzioris, 2014:5).

Random selection (RS) involves students being randomly (or arbitrarily) assigned into groups with no consideration of criteria sets; that is, students have equal chance of being placed in a particular group. While this method has been argued to give the impression of fairness (Strauss, U & Young, 2011:5), some researchers are critical of random selection stating that it is “not far off from a game of roulette in casting players onto winning and losing teams” (Bacon, Stewart, & Anderson, 2001:9). In RS groups, there are no apparent rationales for the allocation of students to groups. This is expressed by Bacon, Stewart & Anderson (2001) where they point out that:

(n)otably, there are variations of RS group selection in which the randomness of selection is limited according to one or two variables such as location (e.g. co-located students must be in the same group), experience (students are randomly allocated within professional or educational experience groupings) or interest (as with random selection within pools of students who have nominated one of several topics as their preference.

Bacon, Stewart & Anderson, 2001: 9

These quasi-random selection processes foreshadow group selection processes which are driven by clearer rationales for group allocation, whether the rationales are pragmatic (as in

the case of location-based criteria) or pedagogical (as with ability or motivation related criteria) as part of academic-groups (below) (Mantzioris, 2014: 5).

The Student Self-selection (SS) involves students self-selecting into given grouping structures. From the point of view of the teaching staff, this approach seems to lack a clear rationale for group student choices and so may appear to be random. However, when students are allowed to form their own groups they do so with intentionality and a range of rationales for choosing to work with particular other students in particular groupings. Indeed, it has been argued that students may be in a better position to engineer groups than academics, as they may have greater knowledge and insight into their colleagues' skills and attributes than the academics (Huxham & Land, 2001:5). In this scenario, students often select colleagues with similar abilities and motivation levels, and invariably students who have a track record of higher performance attain better than average grades in the group work and likewise poorer performing students attain lower ones (Bacon, Stewart & Anderson, 2001:10).

In Academic Selection (AS) groups, the academic applies a set of abilities or criteria to the formation of groups. The criteria used for group formation can be associated with a rationale for not only choosing academic group selection processes, but also the basis for such selections. The rationale may be tacit or explicit and may be based on practical considerations (e.g. grouping students according to session times), pedagogical considerations (e.g. groupings based on complementary skill sets) or combinations of factors. For example, the importance of having complementary skills within a group to maximise the success of the project have been widely argued (Kelly 2008; Muller, 1989: 5). As such, AS groups based on different abilities/criteria to either achieve similar abilities/criteria to achieve a balance between strengths and weaknesses in balanced groups. This selection process may be facilitated with learning style questionnaires (Huxham & Land, 2001: 5). This process requires the academic to decide on the criteria to be used, for example; learning styles,

academic performance, age, gender, life experiences, cultural backgrounds, skills and knowledge sets (Mantzioris, 2014: 5).

The Mixed Pair Selection (MPS) model proposed by Mahenthiran and Rouse (2000) allows students to self-select pairs, and then the academic randomly places 2 or 3 groups of pairs together to form groups (Mahenthiran and Rouse, 2000: 6). Alternatively, the pairs can be combined by the academic to form semi-balanced groups. The authors hypothesize that this may provide the combined advantages of RS and SS groups, encouraging students to discover that anyone in their class can contribute to their learning, and allowing students to select someone that they feel compatible with and thereby giving them some control in the process (Mantzioris, 2014: 6).

This is the first systematic review of the literature to determine the impact of different group selection methods on students' satisfaction and teaching and learning outcomes (Barfield, 2003: 7). While there has been extensive reviews of student satisfaction on group projects (Barfield, 2003: 7), the impact of group selection on student satisfaction has not been considered. The question "which group formation method provides higher levels of student satisfaction and the best affective and cognitive learning outcomes?" has produced clear and definitive findings. This review was able to identify eleven studies which had directly compared two or more group selection processes in face-to-face teaching in tertiary institutions. Nine of these studies were prospective studies in which they had placed the students into groups and then assessed the teaching and learning outcomes, while the other two were retrospective, exploring student experience after the fact. The studies all varied in regards to the demographics of students, subject areas, number of students in groups and the length of group project. Therefore, making comparisons between studies is difficult; however, the synthesis provided by this review has demonstrated consistent findings from both the semi-quantitative and qualitative studies. The overwhelming finding from this

review is that students do not favour RS, it leads to lower levels of student satisfaction and that it is linked with poorer teaching and learning outcomes. Notably, these findings based on affective outcomes may be linked to the notion of the 'rationales' associated with the group selection processes (Hillyard, Gillespie, & Littig, 2010: 7). According to the research, students prefer to see clear rationales for decision making and the random group allocation process has no apparent rationale. Interestingly, students are more concerned with instructor clarity on why the groups were used in the teaching and learning activities, rather than how they formed the groups (Hillyard, Gillespie, & Littig, 2010: 7). This review has demonstrated that SS groups are highly favoured by students, with better affective and cognitive outcomes, improved satisfaction with group work and students' preferred allocation system for future group projects. Only two studies did not report favourable outcomes for SS groups in this review compared to MPS (Cronholm & Melin, 2006:7) and AS, and these were the only two studies in this review in which the group task was to develop an information system. Whether the project task influences the group process is another interesting question, which deserves further attention. As groups have seemingly been favoured by academics, it is believed that the academic has some understanding of the students as well as the needs of the project, and that students may form groups based on friendship (Muller, 1989:8). However one study demonstrated that students did consider the skills and the knowledge of fellow students when forming groups. This study discussed below was conducted with postgraduate students who are generally more self-directed compared to undergraduate students. Furthermore, this study was conducted in a large classes where it is more difficult for academics to know their students, in contrast to smaller teaching groups where academics may have a better understanding of students' skills sets and knowledge than other students. Additionally, academic staff may have a more complete global understanding of the attributes that are required for the group work (Seethamraju & Borman, 2009: 8).

Two papers considered the impact MPS groups have on teaching and learning outcomes. While one showed similar outcomes compared with SS (Cronholm & Melin, 2006: 8), the demonstrated favourable outcomes against RS (Mahenthiran & Rouse, 2000: 8). More importantly, this latter study also demonstrated that the presence of a friend in a group significantly improved satisfaction and project grades. While there are only two studies that have evaluated the impact of MPS, this group selection process does exhibit potential benefits as a suitable group selection process, coming out equal to SS, and preferential over RS in this review. Group cohesiveness is defined by group solidarity and a sense of community and belonging, and is recognised as an important factor to consider in group selection processes, as students are more likely to communicate with each other and collaborate (Kelly, 2008: 8). Group cohesiveness has been posited as an important contributor to the academic performance outcome of the group (Levine & Moreland, 1990:8), “and such, groups with poor group cohesiveness that exhibit conflict (leading to interpersonal hostility) also have reduced academic performance outcomes” (Applebaum, Shapiro & Elbaz, 1998:8). The importance of fostering conditions in which each group member has a therapeutic or learning influence on one another has been highly regarded, as has the importance of student compatibility within group (Mahenthiran & Rouse, 2000:8). It can be posited that SS group allow students to choose members who they know they are able to work with in a cohesiveness and non-disruptive manner. There is limited evidence that MPS may also foster group cohesiveness (Mahenthiran & Rouse, 2000:8).

<b>Author</b>	<b>Outcomes</b>	<b>Group Selection Methods</b>	<b>Results Favoured</b>
Muller 1989	Affective, satisfaction	AS vs RS	AS

Bacon et al. 1999	Affective, satisfaction	SS vaRS	SS
Mahenthiran and Rouse 2000	Affective, satisfaction, cognitive	MPS va RS	MPS
Connerley and Mael 2001	Affective	SS vs AS	SS
Huxham and Land 2001	Preference for future groupings	AS vs RS	Similar
Chapman et al 2006	Affective	SS vs RS	SS
Cronholm and Melin 2006	Affective	MPS vs SS	Neither
Ciani et al. 2008	Affective	SS vs AS	SS
Borges et al. 2009	Affective and cognitive	AS vs SS	AS
Bosco et al. 2009	Affective and cognitive	AS vs SS	SS
Strauss et al. 2011	Preference for future groupings	RS vs AS vs SS	SS

**Figure 1 Summary of Group Selections**

Student satisfaction has become increasingly important measure of the quality of teaching and learning in higher education. This review of the literature has presented some evidence that indicates that if academics want improved student satisfaction coupled with improved cognitive and affective outcomes of group work they should adopt SS groups for group work. While the review has demonstrated that MS groups also provided beneficial outcomes. There is limited evidence for this with only two reported studies to date examining the benefits of MS groups. The use of AS groups appears to be substantiated only if the academic has a logical and clear rationale behind the composition of the group that will assist in the desired outcome from the group work. However this review clearly indicates that the use of RS groups should not be adopted by academics in tertiary settings (Mantzioris, 2014:9).

Group work is a learning process and requires all programs at tertiary level should provide instruction and guidance as part of the teaching and learning curriculum, preferentially in the

undergraduate years as most universities have it inscribed in their Graduate Qualities. Thus it is essential that research is also required to determine how to best facilitate teaching the process of group work. This notion is supported by Hillyard et al. (2010) who argue that successful group work is no longer just limited to the instruction and effort of the academic but requires initiatives that are coordinated and supported both by the university as well as within the departments (Hillyard, et al., 2010:9).

#### **4.1.3 Translation and Grammar (the writing process): Year 2 Students**

The second year class are reading the book called *Uphuziwe uWhitney* by Onne Vegter. This book can be classified as a 'simple' book because of the language structure. The book is considered an easy read because it is based on a basic examination of the terminology and the length of the book as well as the complexity of the grammar. The book can be regarded as a book that the majority of the class can read and understand.

The content of the books involves a story of a girl whose mother does not work and whose father worked, but has come back home because of his health. This girl is now stuck in making a choice of whether or not to pursue a relationship with a boy from the high school. This was after she was found by her teacher in a store room with this boy. Her teacher who she is very close with her is now advising her about older boys and being in relationships. This story helps young girls in advising them on love and the role young boys in this process. This girl was raised by her grandmother who subsequently has passed away. Her grandmother was one of the people that would advise her. She is not close to her mother and cannot talk to her about issues of the heart. She cannot discuss these issues with her mother she has become close to her teacher who provides advice. Her father used to work but is at home because he is sick. As the story unfolds, the reader later discovers that he is HIV positive because he helped a fellow worker who was bleeding and became infected because he had a cut on his hand. Later in the book the father becomes very sick and is hospitalised

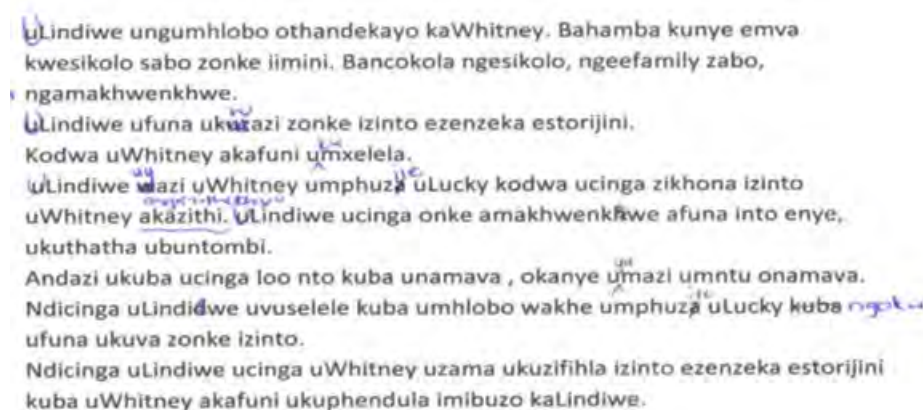
and while he is very sick and weak his daughter finds out the nature of his illness which, her parents have been keeping secret for a long time. She is very upset and her mother realized that she will not be able to survive financially. The mother does not work, and is totally depended on her husband's income.

One of the main problems the students faced was getting used to the new vocabulary introduced in this book. For those students who studied the isiXhosa language during the previous year learning new words was less challenging. This is because students often struggle with reading when faced with too many new words. In preparation for this, some of the vocabulary from the literature books is incorporated into their vocabulary activities during their grammar lessons. This process is easier because the words are familiar for students who studied first year at UCT. There has always been a challenge for students who are unfamiliar with the isiXhosa language because siSotho is their home language and for students who learnt isiXhosa at high school but not at UCT. Therefore most of the vocabulary has been incorporated with some of the language teaching. The new words are used in the literature class as well as in the grammars lectures to help the students grasp an in depth meaning of the words, but also to provide them with the visual and oral repetition that is required in order for them to retain the meaning.

### **The Assignment**

The students had one literature lecture a week where they had to translate literature *UPhuziwe uWhitney*. Students were asked to choose a character in the book and write up what the purpose of the character in the book, and why this particular character was chosen. Many students seem to choose the easiest characters to talk about. I made sure that no one talked about the main characters. This was to insure students come out of their comfort zones, and challenge themselves a bit. In the assignmet below, it was easy to see if the students where grasping the vocabulary and understood the translations that they were doing. In the

assignment they were able to write about the translation instead of giving an exact copy of what is written in the book.



uLindiwe ungumhlobo othandekayo kaWhitney. Bahamba kunye emva kwesikolo sabo zonke iimini. Bancokola ngesikolo, ngeefamily zabo, ngamakhwenkhe.

uLindiwe ufuna ukwazi zonke izinto ezenzeka estorijini. Kodwa uWhitney akafuni umxelela.

uLindiwe uazi uWhitney umphuzi uLucky kodwa ucinga zikhona izinto uWhitney akazithi. uLindiwe ucinga onke amakhwenkhe afuna into enye, ukuthatha ubuntombi.

Andazi ukuba ucinga loo nto kuba unamava, okanye umazi umntu onamava. Ndinga uLindiwe uvuselele kuba umhlobo wakhe umphuzi uLucky kuba ufuna ukuva zonke izinto.

Ndinga uLindiwe ucinga uWhitney uzama ukuzifihla izinto ezenzeka estorijini kuba uWhitney akafuni ukuphendula imibuzo kaLindiwe.

Figure 2 Sample Student Assignment

At the beginning it becomes quite difficult for the students as they had not done literature before. Secondly, now they had a whole book which they had to read, which is also new to them. When students started the isiXhosa programme, the language in the book was a challenge. A decision was made to accommodate students' needs that their language classes would use the vocabulary which students learnt in their literature books. This helped students get a better understanding on ways of using the same vocabulary. Students were, also provided with a vocabulary book to assist them with the translation. This is attached as Appendix 2 which was used.

This integration of literature vocabulary and grammar was observed when students were writing some creative writing activities such as writing a letter or preparing a dialogue. This was an improvement in student understanding of the basic vocabulary was noticed. It was also noted that these activities allow the students to practice using the vocabulary, therefore improving not only their writing, but communication as well. As an illustrative point, one of the students' work was chosen for closer examination. This student's work indicated that there was a great improvement in the work being produced. This example is particularly

interesting because the learning trend is that students score higher grades at the beginning of the programme and there is a decline in grades towards the end of the year as the workload becomes greater and requires a wider knowledge of vocabulary and grammar.

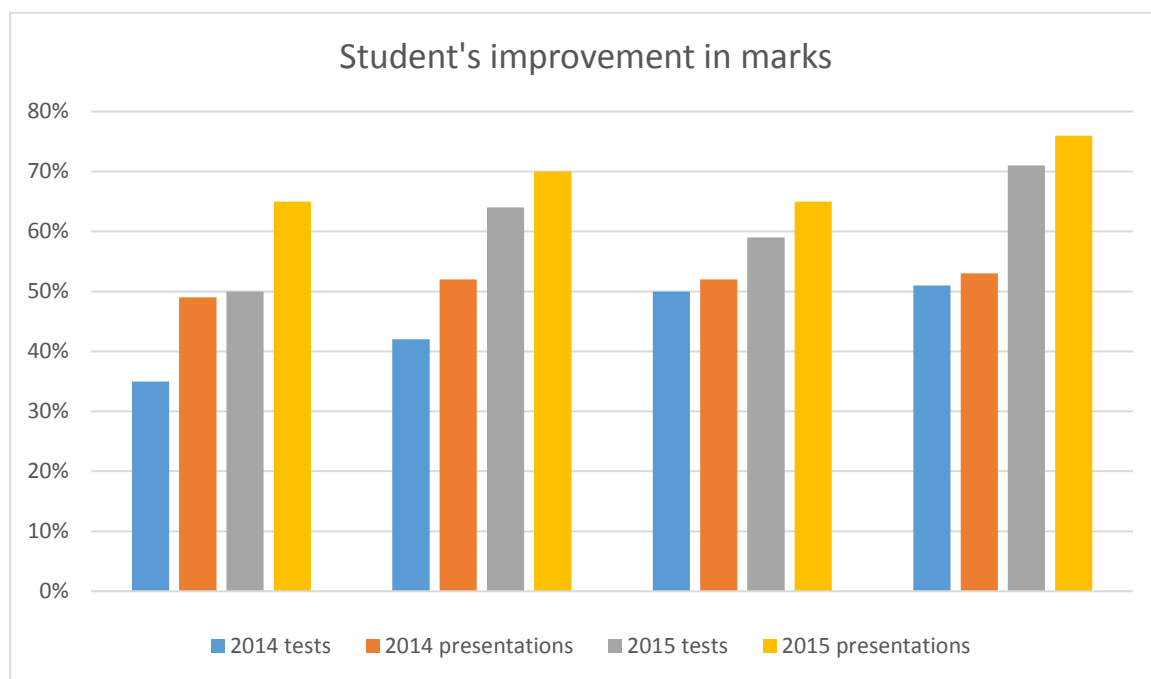


Figure 3 Students Improvement

Tests 2014	Presentation 2014	Tests 2015	Presentation 2015
Test 1= 35 %	Presentation 1 = 48%	Test 1= 50%	Presentation 1= 64%
Test 2= 42%	Presentation 2= 52%	Test 2= 63%	Presentation 2= 70%
Test 3 = 50%	Presentation 3= 53%	Test 3=58%	Presentation 3=65%
Test 4 = 52%	Presentation 4= 53%	Test 4=70%	Presentation 4= 87%

Figure 4 Students' Marks in Percentages

Figure 4 shows that this particular student was not doing well in most of her performances. In many instances the student's grades were below the average of the class. In the focus group, the student pointed out that in former classes they did not get much assistance in the translation of their work. Also, the student stated that using translation makes work much

better to understand and makes learning that much easier. The student also stated that once the language lectures began to incorporate the literature work, it made a huge difference as they no longer had to look at literature and language as different components, but as complementing each other.

Sentence formation for this particular student also used to be a challenge, Therefore reading of questions was something that was a challenge. Therefore this particular student was prevented from getting good marks in tests as there was a challenge of understanding basic words. From the interview, this student said that before 2015, translation was not incorporated into the learning process. Nor were words used to form sentences or to illustrate how sentences should be used. The reason was that, before 2015, students did not have literature lessons assigned to them, so there was no focus on any particular vocabulary associated with literature (or a particular text). Now students read the literature and the language uses the examples of the literature and this process makes it easy for the students to grasp the different grammatical constructions since they are already familiar with the vocabulary.

This particular student also went on to say that the importance of practising language daily helps in a great way, because otherwise many times one would find that the last time they went through something new is on Thursday and expected to do the activity on Monday. This means that by then one has already forgotten about the new words. Whereas if you keep reminding and practicing the work that makes it easier and it is not easy to forget the work, or the vocabulary, in these instances remembering vocabulary is vital because it gets used over and over again.

#### **4.1.4 Translation and Vocabulary: Year 2 Students**

In second language classes, vocabulary plays a very important role. Students can study grammar and master the rules. However, they need to demonstrate by using the “words” that

they have mastered the grammar. In the case of vocabulary however, we need to make a distinction between remembering a word, knowing a word and the ability to use it in context. In this regard it becomes a rather pointless activity for students to learn and memorise the meaning of words without demonstrating the usage in a wide variety of grammatical contexts. This becomes a serious challenge because isiXhosa is highly inflectional (adds prefixes and suffixes to add or change meaning altogether).

Some of the challenges confronting students are remembering the item of vocabulary. However, using this vocabulary item in a meaningful sentence is problematic. Students do not stick to the grammar they know, but rather try to form sentences with grammatical structures they have not yet learnt. Most of their sentences suggest that certain words have high frequency in particular grammatical contexts, such as with the object concord+ command with the verb such as “tell” *xelela*. Thus it might be advisable, when teaching vocabulary, to give students the most common occurrence of that verb as examples, and not wait until the grammar is taught to them. The following sentence serves to illustrate this point:

1. \***ndixelela ngomama wakho** = I tell about your mother.
2. **ndixelele ngomam wakho**= Tell me about your mother

This word is particularly challenging for a number of reasons. First, the verb in its bare form often conveys a different meaning than when it is used with additional morphological additions. The bare form, *xela*, means “report”. However, when used with a verbal suffix *-el-* it now means ‘tell’. Consider examples 3 and 4:

3. Ndiza kuku-*xela* kumama wakho ‘ I will report you to your mother’
4. Ndiza ku-xel-el-a umama wakho ‘ I will tell your mother’

When looking at some of the results in one particular test, that was done at the beginning of the programme and as the students started reading their literature there was a section where they had to create sentences to show that they understood the meaning of certain words. The results indicate that the students did not challenge themselves because they preferred to stick to the sentences that were familiar and were used in activities in class, or they preferred to directly translate and did not bother to think of other ways in which the vocabulary may be used. One of the main points the students learnt while translating, is that when you directly translate this leads to getting things wrong. However, class test results indicate that students still make use of directly translating sentences. When examining the short sentences in the test, students make use of direct translation because it is the safest way and they hope that the translation is not incorrect. In common cases of directly translating, students seem to think that each item of English vocabulary can be directly translated by an item of isiXhosa vocabulary. This would suggest that the way they are taught vocabulary possibly needs restructuring by having words taught with more than one example. This is what the students learnt with translating, they were able to learn the word in the context of the literature and then, come up with different ways to use that one specific word in a grammar class. As the students became familiar with forming sentences, unlike reading the literature, students started using other forms of sentences, whereas formerly, at least 70% of the class was using the same sentence for one word.

Some of the responses to the whether or not the use of translation is important in the teaching of second language classes were as follows: “..... *it was at first when I saw that this was just useless because we would sit in class and just have a book translated to us, however when we started translating it was great and I can say I learnt a lot and as a result there was some kind of change it made in my own results*” -2<sup>nd</sup> year student.

- *“I think this idea of translating a book was thought of a bit late, because if this was thought of, or done on first year there is a lot that I would have learnt and known at this stage, because first year made it seem like, Xhosa is easy, until you are told there is literature, then you learn the challenge of many things.”- 2<sup>nd</sup> year students*
- *“ Translating helped me a lot, and I find that the main problem I had was forming sentences that made sense, and to actually speak to people, but when I could understand more this grew my confidence level, and helped me even challenge myself.”- 2<sup>nd</sup> year student*

From the results received, there appears to be a difference in vocabulary from the time that they started working on translation. There is a difference in the quality of work that students produced before and after the translation method was introduced. For this particular class, it was important that the students did translation. For many of these students their challenges of constructing sentences and of communicating was a challenge, and many of the students did not feel confident in communicating for fear that they were getting things incorrect. When they were provided with the vocabulary and they did some translation they knew what kinds of words could be used and how to use these particular words.

#### **4.1.5 Oral Presentation: 2<sup>nd</sup> years**

This class had both written and oral assignments. In the oral assignments the class was divided into two groups and each group had a mixed learning members. This ensured that the students had different learning competencies. Each group was given a topic and was told that they could choose any sections or parts in the book which they felt were important and highlighted the essence of what this story was about.

For their final oral assignment, both groups chose parts within the book that were different and, had different ways of showing their understanding. One group used some reading

material, which was not problematic, because the students had researched their own synonyms and included new vocabulary to make it easier to understand.

These were students that did not have to look at reading material and just went with the flow of conversation. When the students made mistakes they corrected themselves which is also vital because at times when the students do presentations like these, you are not sure whether they know they made that mistake or not, until they correct themselves.

In this class oral assignments have always been a strong area for many of the students, because for some of them they are able to get assistance and it is also easy for many of them to memorise words and texts, which then counts in their favour. This particular oral assignment was interesting because students made mistakes but could quickly adjust the conversation to make sense. This demonstrates the amount of growth and knowledge that many of them have grasped in the few months of reading literature, and the advantage of translating the literature as well.

#### **4.2 Student Profile: Year 3 of Study**

These students are third year students, who started doing isiXhosa from their first year. The literature book they studied was *Ityala lamawele* by M.E.K Mqayi. This book can be considered very complex for various reasons. First, the language is very complex: The tenses used are mainly complex tenses. Secondly, this book consists of many idioms that require knowledge of the context in order to understand them. Thirdly, there are lots of culture-bound terms that need to be explained in-depth. In 2016 the book was abandoned as a set work for 3<sup>rd</sup> year students because it was very challenging. Nevertheless, this book was used during the time of data collection.

This story is based on a story of twins who are fighting for heirdom in their family, because their father passed away and they are both the men of the house, and because they are twins, there is no one that is there to make decisions for the home. We find the twins Babini and

Wele having a feud about who is older than the other, because they find that there is no one to make rules and no one to follow them. They talk about problems that arise in the family and different issues that need the man of the house to sort out. These two men are twins and born on the same time, and even though one of the twins has the *inqgithi* (the custom of the cut finger, which determines the eldest), that was not the first twin to see the light. Now they are trying to establish who the older twin is. This battle between the twins is also causing strife and separating the family because members have to choose whom they think is the eldest one. One of the twins has the cut finger and the other twin first saw the light, this is where the discussion and the arguments start. The court case goes on for a while, and different elder people are called to come and help but this court case is something different and unusual. In the end the twins start trying to work together, in order to make sure the processes of the home operate efficiently. The important issue being discussed in court is what are the attributes that makes one of the twins the elder. Many interesting facts are raised.

The students went through the process of reading and translating the literature page by page, but because the language was very complex, the students found it difficult to grasp some of the ideas being conveyed. The book was based on cultural aspects and it was difficult for students to to understand the message being conveyed in the book.

At the bottom of each page in the book there was vocabulary provided for the students but the language was too complex for them. Sometimes the students did not understand what was being said or the message being conveyed. After numerous attempts of trying to make the students understand and even rereading of the book, it was clear that they were still experiencing problems with the understanding of the book. The course convenors decided that a new the literature book should be chosen.

A different literature book called *Akusayi kuphinda* by Sonwabiso Ngcowa, was introduced. This book has simple language and is very straight forward and some vocabulary supplied for the students when the workbook was created.

This story tells us of a family a mother and her two sons who struggle financially because the father is working in Cape Town and does not send them money. The mother tries to make sure they have food on the table and the author describes how poor they are and there is no food. The author also explains how the family sometimes go to bed hungry. The eldest son goes out to steal oranges to ensure that they have food and the brother is arrested when he goes hunting. The mother also tells her sons how she was nearly raped while going to beg for food in another village at night. At the beginning of the story the younger son is alone at home in the dark because there is no electricity to light up the house.

Later in the book the father returns home with a girl child who is his daughter. As the story unfolds, readers are told that the father abuses the mother and also raped the daughter while they were in Cape Town. The father is arrested for his assault on the two women. The younger son tells the readers that when he grows up he wants to be a lawyer so that this sexual assault will never again happen to her mother. That is how the book gets its title.

#### **4.2.1 Translation and Vocabulary: 3<sup>rd</sup> Year**

When looking at some of the challenges that the students' experienced, I realised that these are challenges that writers have seen before and examined. When teaching vocabulary to the learners, it is given in a form of the word and an English translation of that word. Therefore, at times students find it difficult to form the sentences especially if they do not know the linguistic form of the word. As part of their language learning, they learn how to construct sentences and the reasons why certain words are formed in a certain way. When the students

read a new word it is difficult to construct that specific word in a sentence because it is an unfamiliar word.

The problem of trying to directly translate a word is problematic because students fall into the trap of wanting to translate sentences from English to isiXhosa, even though they are aware that the sentence construction does not apply in the same way. This is because there are two procedures of translating: direct or literal translation and the oblique translation. Literal translation occurs when there is an exact structural, lexical and even morphological equivalence between two languages. According to Vinay and Darbelnet (1999), this is only possible when two languages are very close to each other. The literal translation (direct) procedures are borrowing, calque and literal translation. While oblique translation occurs when word for word translation is impossible. According to Vinay & Darbelnet (1999: 25), the oblique procedures are transposition, modulation and equivalence.

At the beginning of the programme the students attempt translating word for word. The assumption is that they will get a sentence of translation of a quote that will make sense to them. However, it is often clear to students that, translating word for word does not make a sentence that is comprehensible. The sentence becomes complex, when translated from isiXhosa to English. After giving the students an example of the type of work that you require from them when translating, they are given the opportunity to translate. For many students it becomes a challenge to translate because they do not have most of the vocabulary. Therefore students feel they will not be able to translate the words needed. Students could use a dictionary but not many use it as it is much easier and quicker for them to ask someone or to the facilitator's assistance.

### **The role of the translator**

After completing the translation, the readers of the translation text, means that the 'result' has been read by the translator. In other words the 'product' of translation has been read. As the

reader the product is read without knowing the process that the translator has applied. It is very important to understand the differences between the product and process in translation. Nababan (1999: 9) states “product is the result of translator’s work. If we see the translation as a process, it means that the step in translation as discussed in the methods or procedures section on page 7 is applied by the translator to get a good product of translation.”

It is important to remember the status of the translator’s work in this instance where second language speakers translate literature, so that the other students’ in the class are able to understand the content of what has been read; more importantly, how is the literature that they are reading being interpreted. It is essential for second language speakers to read literature, because their vocabulary is widened and this process helps with their speaking and writing in the language being learnt. As an educational activity, translation is considered a learning device or a convenient means of verifying comprehension and accuracy. Unlike this kind of activity is the work of the professional who no longer translates to understand, but to make the reader understand. Another area of concern, namely linguistic research, is based on the notion of translation as an instrument of linguistic analysis which involves the comparative study of two languages and how one language functions with respect to the other. Furthermore, translation sheds light on certain linguistic phenomena which otherwise would remain unknown (Vinay and Darbelnet, 1958: 24-25). During the last three decades translation has been a controversial element in the teaching of foreign languages. It is still associated with the learning and testing process of the grammar-translation approach. Since the prevailing objectives and teaching preferences of earlier decades were based on the audio-lingual approach, direct-method followers banned translation as a learning device from the classroom (Cordero, 1984:351).

While the participants of the debate disagreed on the exact place of translation within the curriculum of higher education and the extent to which translating can be taught. Most of

them agreed on the legitimacy of translation as an academic discipline that can be taught and learned. In general, theorists and educators also agree on the need for a codification of translation techniques and a text-typology oriented towards translation for the purpose of facilitating the teaching of translation within the curriculum of higher education. At the beginning of the course it is best to select an article of a general scientific nature, since such a text is normally written in a descriptive, factual style the structure of which lends itself well to a study of distinctions of syntax and of the contrastive aspects of sentence and paragraph formation. This type of translation is basically concerned with transmitting information. Consequently, the students have to first decode and then to “re-encode” the sources text correctly and exactly without incurring a loss that affect the interpretation of important data (Cordero, 1984: 352).

The literary translation is the object of a specific concern since it is considered the most difficult of all. Its purpose is not to verify understanding, as in the case of the pedagogical exercise, but on the contrary, to provide it. The goal is simply to pass on information as is the case in a scientific or commercial translation (Cordero, 1984:352).

### **The translation exercise**

When the students looked at the vocabulary in the book, even though at the end of each page it was provided, it became a challenge, because they found that there were many of the words that they did not understand or could not understand the context in which the words were being placed.

When explained to the students that there are certain words or phrases that could not be directly translated, for example:

1. “*A! Zanzolo!*” (Pg 7- 63)

This is a greeting used to greet the chief when he enters the court. In this case the students want to know things like is that the translation on *greetings chief*, and also wanting to know which word translated the phrase because they had come to understand or have to translate greetings, as *molo*, when told that sometimes there are things that they cannot directly translate, this is where they were challenged because then they cannot translate things to their understanding.

2. “*Usingise*” (pg9- 63)

This means he turned to, as in he turned and looked at whomever he was speaking to. At this point the students wanted to know if people even talk in this way, because they have learnt the work *jika* which many of them said they would rather use, because it is a way that people speak and not the way that was being spoken in the book.

3. “*ngongcwalazi*” (pg15- 63)

The meaning of this is “at dusk”. The argument of the necessity of using such a word was debated by the students, because they would have to elaborate on their vocabulary for words they do not use in their daily speaking.

4. “.....*Uwandulele uMxhuma wabuza kundimangele esithi* (pg9)- 63 ‘he spoke first before Mxhuma and asked the plaintiff and said’.

This sentence (4 above) raised some questions of simplicity and whether the writer was just using these words because he was trying to make the book difficult. This was explained to the students that it was necessary that the author writes in this way to insure that the meaning behind this story was not lost.

5. “.....*ndibe yinci uWele abe yinkulu.* (pg11)”- 63 I being the younger one and Wele being the older one.

For the word *yinci*, the students had alternative words which they thought could have been used like saying, *ndibe ngomncinci* also meaning being the younger one. Simplicity was very important for the students.

6. "...*kuhle kuhle, Siphendu, inkundla ibisaphulaphuka...* (pg 11)"- 63 steady now, Siphendu, the court was still listening.

It was questioned whether or not *kuhle kuhle*, it is well/good, when you are trying to give someone a message that everything is good etc.

When analysing these few words, students were being challenged and not willing to learn new things. Another challenge was that learning a new language was considered too great a task for them to undertake. This approach is more challenging because students learn the culture and history at the same time. When the vocabulary became a problem to the extent that students saw no way forward in learning this literature, they were challenged with the task of finding different ways in which this vocabulary can be used. It was also important to the students to understand their task and which sections of the task would be graded for marks etc. We had started reading the literature and it was only after they had written a test that I found that the students did not understand the literature and that is when the students started panicking and protesting because they were not coping the difficulties the new vocabulary presented to them. However, the book was read a second time and a decision was made to change the book.

#### **4.2.2 Translation and Culture: 3<sup>rd</sup> Year**

The prescribed reader described a lot of everyday issues, in particular HIV/AIDS. The contemporary topics made it easy for the students to understand and there were no problems of understanding any cultural aspects of the literature. Because the book has a contemporary setting, it was really easy to follow and there was little difficulty in translating certain idioms. This literature looked at minimal idioms and these were not very challenging because it was

straight forward and easy to understand. The author of the book did not focus a on any cultural aspects and that is why it was simple to follow the literature.

Since translation of culture is a specific element, it is only appropriate that the issue of translation and culture be highlighted. Translation is not only about transferring meaning from one language to another, it involves transferring cultural elements too. It is a cultural phenomenon and the issue of culture is a complex one because it involves “a collection of features which have to be minutely examined in each translation situation” (Hewson and Martin, 1991:123). This is due to the fact that the culture of the source language (SL) is not the same as that of the target language (TL). Another fact is that culture makes demands on translations. Tymoczko in Bassnett and Trivedi (1999:24-5), discuss these demands because she maintains that the source texts to be translated are presented with aspects of source culture that are unfamiliar to the receiving audience. These are elements of material culture (such as food, tools and garments), social structures (including customs ad law) , features of the natural world (weather conditions, plants and animals) etc. She also asserts that such features are often encoded in specific lexical items for which there are no equivalents in the receiving culture. Because all texts are, to a certain extent, culture specific, the translator has to look at the general type of discourse to which the text belongs. As a mediator, s/he stands at the centre of the communication process, seeking to overcome such incompatibilities which make the transfer of meaning impossible (Hatim and Mason, 1990:223).

The culture of amaXhosa, which is the culture which this specific literature class of students considers in the book *Ityala lamawele*, there are aspects of culture which are unfamiliar to the English reader. This unfamiliarity refers to 83% of the students in this particular class. This presents the translator with the challenge of reconciling the source culture with the target culture.

The practitioner has to advise strategies that would enable the student to transfer such elements in a way that is meaningful to the target reader. This suggests that the practitioner must possess the knowledge of the language systems and cultures. It is this knowledge and skill that the practitioner possesses that will enable him/her to bring the author and the target reader closer together. In other words the practitioner has to create a relationship between the different language cultures. It is therefore, the translator's responsibility, as a communicator, to produce a text that will enable the target readers to participate in the production (Leppihalme, 1997:56).

There is consensus among translation theorists that the definition of translation is the transfer of meaning from one language to another. Initially the focus was on producing a text that was linguistically equivalent to the source text. Later translation scholars shifted their focus "away from looking at translation as a linguistic phenomenon, to looking at translations as a cultural phenomenon" (Gentzler, 1993: 185). Translation began to be viewed "less as an interlinguistic process and more as an intracultural activity" (Lambert and Robins in Gentzler, 1993:186). From this background it can be argued that translation is instrumental in transmitting culture. This study falls squarely with this area of translation research.

This means that language and culture are inextricably linked. Newmark (1988: 94) defines culture as "the way of life and its manifestations that are peculiar to a community that uses a particular language as its means of expression." He also mentions that where there is a cultural focus, there is a translation problem which stems from cultural 'gap' or 'distance' between the source and the target languages. Nord (1991:159) agrees with this when she comments that these problems are a result of the difference in culture specific (verbal) habits, expectations and conventions. This emphasises the viewpoint that a relationship of equivalence on a lexical level of the source and target language is rarely possible because the

languages are different. The translator's aim, therefore, is to produce a text relatively equivalent in the target language (Nonkele, 2005:4).

It is also important to note that translation is also viewed as an interpretation, which reconstitutes and transforms foreign text (Venuti, 2000:11). The target reader is brought to the foreign text. Venuti (1995) discusses translation in terms of foreignisation and domestication arguing that domestication of the SL deprives the target reader of the understanding of the SL and that foreignisation is a strategy that brings that target reader closer to the source culture or system. The foreignising strategy makes the reader realize that they are reading a translation of a work from a foreign culture.

There were many cultural concepts that the students did not understand and made things difficult for them when they were translating their work, like these are some of the cultures which challenged them:

*"...lithe liphuma ilanga, labe elinye iwele selivelise isandla. Ndafumana ndathatha ingadla ndawutsheca umnwe ucikicane. Ndithe ndakuyenza loo nto, saphinda satshona isandla..."*

(pg13)-63

The English translation is as follows:

*By the time the sun was coming out, by that time one of the twins had shown its hand. And I found and took a sharp instrument, and cut the baby finger. When I did that the hand disappeared back in again.*

What is being explained here is the process of doing *ingqithi*. The importance being explained is that this process made it easier to find out which twin was the eldest, and could carry the responsibilities of the home. The students did not understand why it was important that just one of the twin men is the eldest and why only one man is in charge of the home.

They felt it would be reasonable that they both shared the responsibilities and that would end the familial argument about who is the eldest. Because some students are isiXhosa speakers in this class, it is easy for them to understand. The non-speaking isiXhosa speakers in the class did not understand, and leaves the rest of the lesson was spent explaining why and how it is important in that particular context and especially in the Xhosa culture that there is an elder male in the homestead to do take on particular responsibilities.

“...*Ubale ukwala kukaBabini nenxaxheba ngentonjane kaNozici udadewabo...*” (pg25- 63)

He counted the refusal of Babini’s contribution to the girls’ ceremony of Nozici, *intonjane* – which is a ceremony whereby girls’ are initiated by being secluded in a hut under supervision of an elderly woman. They are taught about life, which includes sexual behaviour before and after marriage, household duties, general rules of behaviour, etc. This too is something that one has to explain in detail so that the students’ can have an understanding of what it is the author is writing about.

“...*UVuyisile umNzothwa, uRholoma umCethe, uMganu umDala, uNdlombose*

*umNtakwenda, uDaliwe umThembu...*”(pg6- 63). Vuyisile of the Nzothwa clan, Rholoma of the Cethe clan, Mganu of the Dala clan, Ndlombose of the Ntakwenda clan, Daliwe of the Thembu clan. The characters in the literature were spoken to by their names and their clan names, which also had the students wondering if that therefore meant that the surname does not matter, and was it important that one uses the clan name. Students questioned whether there a great importance in remembering one’s clan name and their name and the relevance of this practice for contemporary society.

In most of the instances I would have to explain to the students that the importance of culture will help them in the process of understanding many practices. Clan names that might not seem to be important in contemporary, urban society are important in the Xhosa culture. I explained that the clan name is one way family members indicate they are relatives, because

there are many people that may share the same surname, but have different clan names.

Therefore this means they are not related because there are people who have different surnames but the same clan name, and consider themselves as related.

When it came to the cultural aspects of this book, they were very deep and needed to be more than just translated. There are many times where I found myself having to explain to them the different cultural aspects, so translation was not just enough I had to explain these concepts and try make them understand. Most of the students did not see the importance or relevance in t learning the language and culture. They had to be reminded that isiXhosa is not just the language but also a culture, which both go hand in hand. Here is what some of the students had to say about their experience reading the book:

*“... I am not sure I will ever understand this book, it is very hard to follow and the language is so difficult, I do not think it is the language for people at our level.”- 3<sup>rd</sup> year student*

*“...I had great difficulty in understanding this book I am not sure what was going on at most of the time, is it relevant that we know this, I think it is a book maybe that is meant for people whom are learning a first language, because the language is at another level.”- 3<sup>rd</sup> year student*

*“Yes this book was challenging but I think it is great to learn the different customs and also to widen our vocabulary, because even though some of the words are old and not used in everyday speech when you listen to umhlobo wenene radio and you listen to older people speak you do pick up some of the words, and it is interesting that we got to learn some of the cultural ways. It is a pity that we had to stop reading this book.”- 3<sup>rd</sup> year student*

*“...I feel we had a challenge here, and because many of us are graduating we did not want to accept it, because it would be like we are taking chances and marks are very relevant to us at this time in our life.”- 3<sup>rd</sup> year student*

After one semester of reading the literature, and after numerous student meetings and complaints another book was chosen that had simple language and was straight forward to understand.

The short story called *Akusayi Kuphinda* was chosen as a reader. This is a short story and the language level was much easier for the students. Therefore this meant there was not much of a challenge that the students had with this literature. Students had been given a whole lot of vocabulary which was translated for them. Each day they had to translate a page, which each student had a chance to do so and would do activities to demonstrate the understanding of that particular section that was being translated on that particular day. Each page was also supplied with a summary of the story to help the students. The language lecture used the same vocabulary which helped them to understand the vocabulary as well as some kind of understanding on different ways in which they can write the vocabulary. The students also had language labs where they listened to tape recordings of the book and then had to transcribe and translate them. This also helps with translation activities in class, because when students' hear the words being pronounced its better than just reading the words Both these exercises served well in the development of learning a language, when listening and reading this familiarises one with different vocabulary.

#### **4.2.3 Translation and Vocabulary: 3<sup>rd</sup> Year (Akusayi kuphinda)**

The students did not have that much of a challenge in the translating of this literature, especially that they had come from translating literature which was much more challenge than this one. Each chapter was supplied with a summary, which can be seen in Appendix 3. Each page was supplied with a vocabulary list (Seen in Appendix 4) of words which were new to the students and that could also challenge them. This vocabulary work found the students less confused. The way in which they formed sentences and answering of question in tests was never a challenge for the students.

In a questionnaire about how challenging the students found this particular vocabulary this was the response that we received:

*“...vocabulary was not a challenge and it really helped that we had some of the vocabulary translated, it made things simple.”- 3<sup>rd</sup> year student*

*“ The vocabulary we got helped us a lot, reading and translating was very simple, we really appreciated it.”- 3<sup>rd</sup> year student*

*“...not much of a challenge which made it very easy, but I am not complaining.” -3<sup>rd</sup> year student*

The language and the literature were both working hand in hand, this helped in the forming of sentences and allowing to understand vocabulary in different contexts, and managing to write it in different sentences and because at the end of the term the students have to do an oral, this also helps to see that they can actually communicate, the orals which they did, was them giving a summary of the book in their own words but acting it all out. This helped me to see that the students really knew what it is that is going on and that they can use their own words to communicate.

#### **4.2.4 Culture in literature: 3<sup>rd</sup> Year**

There were not much cultural aspects in this book, and the concepts that did need understanding are concepts that are easy to understand and straightforward. This literature deals with everyday problems and even though the setting is in the rural areas there are not much cultural aspects that are looked at.

At the end of the book there are lessons to be learnt and this helps the students to talk about these problems, for example the problem of abuse in the home because in this book there are a lot of relevant topics which allow the students to engage in conversation. The contemporary

topics really helped with the communication where everyone had the chance to talk about these various topics.

From looking at translation as a teaching method, it is very crucial that translation be part of the learning process, because without translation there becomes some kind of lack of understanding, it is something that is needed, and it helps the students in all aspects.

#### **4.2.5 Oral presentation: 3<sup>rd</sup> years Akusayi kuphinda**

Once students have read the book they do a group presentation and an oral activity where the group has to interpret the book and allow questions from students so that everyone has an understanding of the book. At the end of the course students were given this task and given two weeks to prepare with the instructions that they should interpret the book to a friend who had no idea of the story, by using their newly learnt vocabulary they had to relate the story to a friend.

What I noticed with this group of learners is that the moment they had been told that this particular exercise would count a certain percentage of their grade mark that is when they took the activity seriously. As I had given them time in class to practice, some of the students did not participate and thought it was the responsibility of someone else to translate for them or tell them what to say. As soon as one of the students asked the question “is this for marks?” and “how much does it count?” this is when there was a total transition and interest in the take home exercise. Maybe it was because most of these students were in their final year and marks are something that this class in particular are very alert about.

This exercise went very well, I could see all the efforts that the students had made, to prepare the presentation. They were well prepared and also spoke without using pieces of paper to prompt or help themselves. It was important and interesting that they used simple language that they all could understand. This which means they did not parrot learn things because they also allowed it to make sense to themselves. Often the students parrot-learn their words and

repeat a presentation written by someone else. This defeats the point of the exercise because the assessment is to find out if there is any understanding in what they have read and how much of the content was understood.

### **4.3 Questionnaire Results**

At the end of the study there was a questionnaire that was issued to the students. The reason for the issuing of the questionnaire was to assess students' opinion of this topic. The questionnaire was set in a way that some of the questions asked exactly the same question, but in different wording. This was done so that we could get the students true feeling about the answer they were giving and not an answer which they thought I wanted to hear.

#### **4.3.1 Questions 1 and 7**

*Question 1: How important do you think translation was in this lecture and why?*

*Question 7: Do you think translation is a vital teaching tool for second language teaching, why?*

All the students came to the conclusion that translation is a vital tool for teaching especially in the work which they were doing. Students, said that they would struggle if there was no translation because then they would not understand the story line and, translation makes comprehension much easier for the students. Because the translation assisted students understand the content of the book, they were able to learn more and expand their knowledge.

#### **4.3.2 Questions 2 and 6**

*Question 2: How often did you use translation whilst using your literature book?*

*Question 6: How often did you use translation in your everyday life?*

The students tend to rely on translation for their literature learning because they say unless they have learnt the word and have practiced to use the words several times, they tend to use translation all of the time because they need to know what it is that they are reading. Some of the vocabulary was used in the literature and there were some words that were easy to understand as they were 'drilled' into them in their process of learning. Students appreciated learning in this way because the literature and language used the same vocabulary and this method increased the chance of remembering the vocabulary.

### **4.3.3 Question 3**

*Question 3: How did you deal with words that you have never seen before?*

All of the students had said that with the questions that they had not seen before first they would try and break them down grammatically, in case the root of the word was something that they had learnt before, but in many cases the students would use a dictionary to look up the word, as they expressed that it was often that they saw words which were new to them.

### **4.3.4 Questions 4 and 5**

*Question 4: What types of activities did you use besides translating literature?*

*Question 5: Are there any other learning methods/strategies that you used e.g. grammar, e.g. identifying roots of words, and decoding meaning from that?*

As mentioned, the students had their language classes which taught them different skills in word formulation, which in translation exercises seemed to help the students with translating of certain words. This helped them with identifying different words in different contexts and this also helps with the understanding of words. There were a range of activities but the one students really enjoyed was the use of a collage. Students learnt how to express the literature and had the opportunity to use some of their own vocabulary to talk about the literature.

### 4.3.5 Question 8

*Question 8: Did the use of translation improve your understanding of the language at all?*

This question played a major role in the actual key function of the research, because we found that all the students found that translation improved their understanding, but even the mother tongue speakers found that it helped them at times to understand, because they were times were they actually had a challenge to understand some things, but then with the help of translation things become much easier for them. Their language improved it such a way that they could use different vocabulary in their everyday lives.

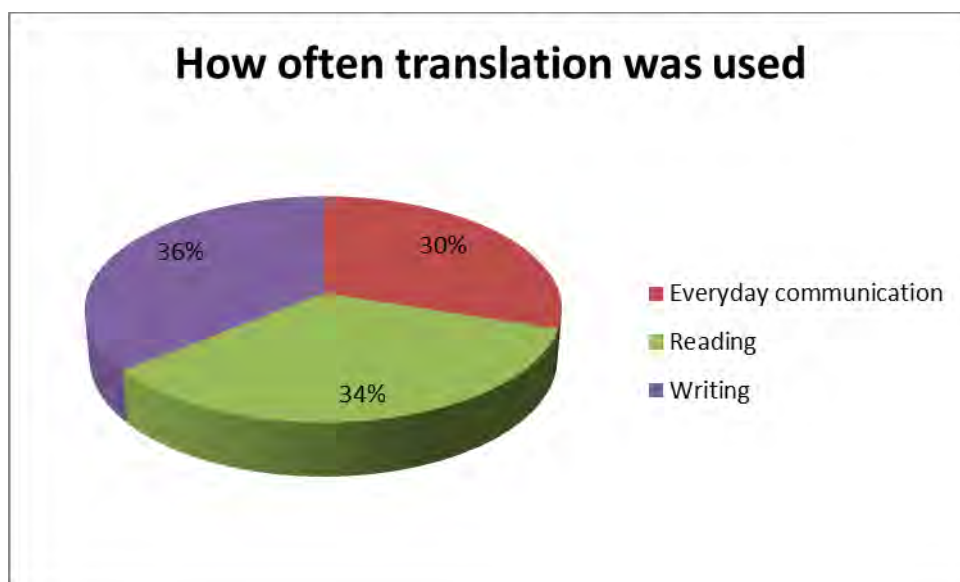


Figure 5 Frequency of Translation Use

### 3.4 Summary

The questionnaire helped me get a better understanding of how the students felt about the topic which I was looking at, it also helps to inform me whether or not this is something that is relevant to the students, or is it just something that they see no relevance. It was also interesting to know the views of the students as many times, things are done in class, because it is how in the years the teaching process has been done, forgetting that with time a lot has changed.

From the information that I received from the questionnaires and the results that are stated on the graph, it is clear to state that the students do rely heavily on translation, in all their aspects of learning. It is also a way that helps the students to understand better, we can also see that even those students who are mother tongue speakers do see the importance of translation in the work which they do.

# CHAPTER 5 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

## 5.0 Introduction

This section seeks to provide a summary of the findings as well as the discussion of these results. The chapter starts off with a discussion of the textual analysis as well as observations from classroom activities. The second part of the chapter is a discussion of the questionnaire responses and a conclusion. The final part of this chapter is on the significance of this study for language teaching in general, the shortcomings of the study as well as recommendations for future research.

The aim of this research project was to examine how translation can be used as a tool for teaching and learning a second language. Secondly, the study highlighted the importance of translation to students as a way of facilitating comprehension. Students see translation as a vital tool for both facilitating comprehension and improving grammatical awareness which in turn facilitates comprehension. The study demonstrates that both translation and morphology/syntax teaching are useful and necessary practices.

As Newmark 1991 states

Translation is beneficial for students learning a foreign language. People should understand that the methodologies change in order to adapt themselves to the students' needs. Then, it is worth saying that like other activities, translation has adapted itself to the present day. Translation tasks should attain a communicative target.

Newmark, 1991:80

The success of the study was demonstrated by students' ability to communicate and do so in such a way that they are confident in their talking. The suggestion of doing more talking and communicating activities seems to be relevant as that should be part of the product that is produced after doing the translation activities.

In the light of the recent research on the use of literature for learning a language, this project is experimental and trailblazing because it examines the links between teaching a language and using literature to achieve this. Although this project focuses on translation as a tool for teaching because it analysis the integrated approach to language learning makes a significant contribution to the field. These are small steps along this journey in language learning but we believe it is baby steps in the right direction.

## **5.1 Classroom Activities**

### **Translation promotes second language speaking**

The findings of the study confirm that translation promotes second language speaking and comprehension in a class room setting. According to the participants, translation is a core part of teaching a second language. Without translation comprehension is very limited.

### **Classroom translation activities encourage learning**

Some of the activities that the students worked on are activities where the students made collages and these included collages that summarises a particular chapter in the book. The collage assisted students to engage with the translation process. It is very important to understand that collages are summaries of a number of plots in a book. Given that students only access literature through translation, it forms a very important part of the learning process. There are also activities where the students act out the summary of what they are reading which assists in their understanding, and also allows the students to use their own vocabulary and also the vocabulary that they have learnt through looking at the literature.

### **The role prior knowledge of vocabulary plays in facilitating learning**

Prior knowledge played a huge role. The more vocabulary students have the better their understanding when they read new works. In the case of the isiXhosa language, the ability to recognise morphologically complex words and how they relate to new.

### **Assessing the different strategies that students use when dealing with literature**

The study confirmed that repetition is a means of facilitating memorisation of vocabulary. Repetition makes it very difficult to forget. However this requires that vocabulary is used in a different context because in the language lectures the students would use examples of the vocabulary which they learnt in their literature. This made learning easier because they were able to make connections and link words to certain sentence structures. The learning of language using vocabulary from literature is the one technique that makes learning a language a bit broad. Students also made use of videos and answering questions related to those videos. This facilitated understanding as well as pronunciation of these words.

## **5.2 Questionnaires**

At the end of the second year of the projects, questionnaires were administered.

Unfortunately, the 3<sup>rd</sup> year students from the previous year had already graduated and left.

This means that students had to recall some of the activities from the previous year in order to complete the questionnaire. Some of the courses were also discontinued which meant they were no longer part of the courses. The reason this questionnaire was done at such a late time, is because of the disruptions that occurred last year which resulted in disruptions of courses, and this formed some changes in the collection of data. In total we received a response rate of 25 % of students. Many of the student responses are highlighted as good practice.

- IsiXhosa is morphologically more complex than their first languages, translation was much more beneficial especially for those students who are not strong when it comes

to grammar. Most students also cited that translation aided with comprehension, something that would be very challenging if the only way of understanding was unpacking the morphology.

- Frequency of translation: This was important to the students because many thought that they first think in their mother tongue and then process their work. Also, because English is most of the students' mother tongue, if things were not translated there would be a gap, and some lack of understanding.
  
- Strategies of dealing with new words: Students indicated that there are many times where students came across new words, in this case many of the students made use of the dictionary. Also, many times they would have to break them down grammatically, and this assisted them because their literature classes worked hand in hand with language lessons, and once they are able to break down things grammatically this assists in their understanding. As for some of the isiZulu speakers, they found that the words were not new to them, the words always seemed familiar.
  
- Reading procedures: The students felt that the learning of language rules and structure were part of procedures which worked well for them, trying to find the root of words which allows them to get a better understanding of the words which are being learnt, this also helped the students with being able to use the words, or vocabulary in different contexts.
  
- Translation improved the understanding of language: The students found this very crucial in trying to learn a language, even the isiXhosa first language speakers found it vital as this helped them to learn new words and to use them in different contexts. Translation was seen to give the students a clearer context of the literature which they

were looking at. Learning the contexts was very vital especially that the students could see how it is used by mother tongue speakers, which also forces the students to engage with what they had been taught in their grammar classes in a realistic context other than grammar formulae.

In summary, the questionnaire was a very useful tool in understanding the usefulness of translation in teaching literature. It also helped me understand the processes that students go through as they try to understand this morphologically complex language.

### **5.3 Limitations of the Study**

Every study has limitations as did my study. Their responses to the questionnaire only had a 25% response rate because in this study some of the students had graduated and were no longer in the research project. Some students did not return the questionnaire. Some of the students had already moved to other courses. When a study is conducted over different years the sample size does change.

The biggest challenge was that this was an experimental study with no precedents on my particular topic. Therefore the decisions on analysis procedures had no precedents or anything to compare the study. In other languages there is a lot that has been done, however it is very hard to compare isiXhosa to any other language, especially if the language is not an African language because linguistically the forms and word formation are totally different to each other. It also challenges me in a way that I am not sure what is relevant to look at and what not to look at, but at the same time I think what I have looked at is very relevant to my study.

Another challenge that I collected data and this is very challenging to try and balance teaching and researching at the same time. At times the students feel they need more time on teaching, but then that particular time would be set aside for research purposes, and the students' needs are a priority. It is also quite challenging in that there is no way one can have a focus group because the class numbers do not allow for this, but also at the same time the students have teaching each and every day, there is no time to schedule these. You also do not want to overload the students, because then they become tired and can no longer focus on what is at hand.

Since I did classroom observations, it is not possible to replicate my study, and sometimes there are certain things you want the students to revisit but obviously the results will not be the same, so there is no time to miss anything, you have to be vigilant at all times, but there are certain students that need you to focus on them at times, therefore you are missing out on what other students are doing. So in my observations, at all times one has to be alert, even though there is so much going on at the same time, and it is impossible to be that alert at all times if at all.

At times some of my challenges are things like students just taking a course for one semester, that affects my study because I look at that particular student and count all their work etc. and from them as part of my data, but then you find that in the next semester there is no longer that one or more students and there are new students, which makes analysing the data quite a challenge because you are not sure as to when one student will start or stop doing the course.

## 5.4 Concluding Remarks

I would recommend that in the future, rather near future that a researcher, looks at the importance of literature in the teaching of isiXhosa as a second language, and in that look at the types of books that would be relevant for teaching. Looking at what the difference is between a learner that has done literature, and that which has not done literature.

In our courses, literature is introduced after first year, now the transition for many can be a bit difficult but it is something that the students just bear with, however you do find that the students do perform better than they did in first year, but this could also be because they know that they want to take on this course as a major, and they are interested in it.

It would be an interesting topic to look at, from as early as in first year level, it would be assuring to the teachers of the course to find out whether looking at literature is just a waste of time, or what kind of literature works when one is learning a second language, do you look at simple books like *Isipho sikaSisanda* or do you look at older literature such as *Ityala lamawele*, and what is the difference in whatever literature that is used. As students in communication does it matter that the language relates to communicating, or not. For me this is a vital topic to look at, as it could assist me too in my teachings, do we start literature at first or second year? Or can we just do away with it totally, and focus on random vocabulary.

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## APPENDIX 1

**Ngenye imini indlovu yayihamba  
isiya emlanjeni yadibana  
nehippopotamus ezininzi.**



1

*Yayoyika*  
**Yayoyika ungena emlanjeni kuba  
babesithi utyebile kwaye umbi.**



2

**Ibali  
Lendlovu  
Etyebileyo**



*MELCHIAOZ  
SL11025  
Amanda Ngwendu.*

7/10

**Yahamba yayohlala kwelinye  
ilitye elikhulu kwakudala de  
yanesibindi.**



3

**Yaphakama yaya emlanjeni  
yaselaamanzi ngetrunki yakhe.**



4

**Yaze yawa jula yonke  
indawoyayonwabe kakhulu  
ngokwenza lonto.**



5

**Yabona uba ingathi kuyahlwa  
yagoduka yaya endlini kwabazali  
yakhe.**



6

APPENDIX 2

**UPHUZIWE**

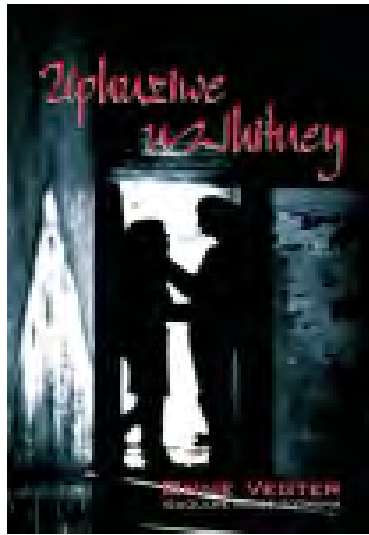
**UWHITNEY**

**INCWADI EBHALWE NGU-ONNE VEGTER**

**IGUQULWE NGUS.Z. ZOTWANA**

ISIGAMA

**XHOSA COMMUNICATION IIB**



Isigama (vocabulary)

<b>PAGE 35</b>	
ngathi ikobunzulu bona ubuthongo	as if in the depth of sleep
yaba ngacofwa	it was stuck (it could not be pressed down)
nkqi ukuvuka	no way it would work [wake up]
bada bancama	they eventually gave up
umgangatho wesibini	second floor/stage
yayinde kakhulu	it was very long
ithe gabalala	it was broad [big and long]
kwakukho nembinana yabantu	there were a few people
-bengezela	glitter, shine
-qhwayizela	clop
-xilonga	examine
-lusizi	sorry
okwangoku	as of now
-qhawula	interrupt
<b>PAGE 36</b>	
ndikhe ndithethe [khe + subjunctive]	could I just speak
-xolela	forgive
wayithi chu ngengalo	he touched her lightly on the arm

kuqhubeka ntoni?	what's going on?
-tshela engalweni	-drag/hold on the arm
awayengayazi [indirect relative in remote past continuous tense: a-waye-nga-yi-azi]	that she didn't know
igumbi langasese	toilet [literally: room of secret]
amanenekazi	ladies
-tsala [tsalela = pull in a direction]	pull/attract
-susa	remove
besikade singakuxeleli	we didn't tell you
kunokuba bhetele	it would be better
-thi xha	pause, wait a little
ngokwakhe ezithulele ethe tu	and she also kept quiet [literally: by herself she kept quiet for herself]
-thi ntsho emehlweni	opened eyes wide/stare
angekhe	it can't be so
izandla zozibini	both hands
-gwantya	well up with (e.g. tears)
<b>PAGE 37</b>	
isithuba	space of time

-qandusela	develop into
impilo isiba mandundu ngokuba mandundu	health became worse and worse
-khawuleza	to be quick, hurry in doing
ngaphezu kohlobo	more than what (the way: uhlobo)
ebesilulindele	that we were expecting
gxebe	by the way; what do you say? well now! rather! how?!!
-kholelwa	believe
-xabana	argue
-thembekile	faithful
-sindisa ekufeni	save from death
-opha	bleed
ngelishwa	unfortunately
-sikekile [from: sika] emnweni	be cut on the finger
-bopha	tie
kwakunyanzelekile	it was imperative
ekunqamleni ukopha [note locative of ukunqamla → ekunqamleni]	in stopping the bleeding
ukuyiqaphela kwakhe [note the use of the infinitive + possessive to indicate when]	when he noticed it
akukho nto ingako	there is nothing much

ukuzivavanyisela	to have himself tested
yambi loo nto!	that's terrible!
angekhe ihl' int' enjalo	something like that could never happen [-hl-befall, happen]
lilishwa lantoni	what kind of bad luck [it is bad luck of what]
<b>PAGE 38</b>	
-ngqukruleka	sob
isingqala	sighing, heaving sob
-yama	lean
kukulungele	it is good for you [ku-ku-lung-el-e]
nanikuthini ukundifihlela	what were you doing hiding from me
yayimpethe	that was wrong with him [literally: that was holding him]
akwazi [aku-azi]	you don't know
-qhambuka umsindo	break out in anger
-thibaza	calm down
isizathu (class 7/8)	reason
singakwazisi [si-nga-ku-azisi-i]	that we should not inform you
okokuqala	firstly
ukukothusa [uku-k-othus-a]	to shock you

kuthiwa	it is said
ubusemncinane	you were still small
-gqibezelela	finishing off for
ilizwi lizolile	the voice is calm
ube mdalana	you would be a little older
ndandisoloko ndihleli ngokuzithembisa	i was always promising myself
sisuke sivuke	we would just wake up
-fumanisa	discover

## APPENDIX 3

### AKUSAYI KUPHINDA – ISISHWANKATHELO (SUMMARY)

Kweli bali sibona umntwana, uMphumeleli, ezama ukuqonda izinto ezenzeka ekhaya. Ikhaya lakhe liselalini- uMphumeleli uhlala khona nomama wakhe, nomkhuluwa (older brother) wakhe, uLuxolo. Utata akekho – useKapa. Umama wekhaya ngumfazi okhuthuleyo (diligent) nozimiseleyo (determined) kakhulu kodwa umyeni wakhe akondli kakuhle ifemeli yakhe. Imali ayithumelayo incinci. Bayasokola – akukho kutya okwaneleyo. Akubuya utata izinto azihambi kakuhle.

\*\*\*\*\*

Page 1: Kuchazwa indlu ikhangeleka njani ngaphandle nangaphakathi. Ikalikwe mhlophe. Kuhonjisiwe [hombisa = decorate] ngumama eludongeni. Umama ebeyityabeka ngodaka. Ngaphakathi endlini kukho umbhalo othi “True Love Never dies.” Ikhona ifoto yabazali bakaMphumeleli phantsi kwala magama.



*Uyasinda.*

Umbhali (uMphumeleli) ucinga ukuba mhlawumbi uthando lwabazali bakhe luphelile.

Siva le nto yokuba umkhuluwa wakhe uba ama-orenji kuba ayikho imali ekhaya. ULuxolo ulindele umsebenzi kamasipala kufakelo mbane ezilalini. (electricity installations in the villages).



Page 3

ULuxolo uxelela uMphumeleli ukuba uBongeka (intombi ayithandayo uMphumeleli) ebekhona. UMphumeleli uyamthanda kakhulu uBongeka.

Ilanga liyatshona – umama akakabuyi. UMphumeleli ulambile kwaye unexhala. Wondlula ibhedi azame ukulala kodwa kunzima ngenxa yendlala nalixhala ngomama wakhe.



Page 4

UMphumeleli uva izinja zikhonkotha. Umama uyafika. Kumnyama tshu. UMphumeleli uvulela umama wakhe.

Page 5

Umama ucela uMphumeleli agcwalise isibane ngamafutha (fill up the lights with oil) alande iipasile. UMphumeleli ubona amaqanda, ivatala, ifish oil, umili-mili namasi.



UMphumeleli uqala ukulungiselela ukutya amsele umama wakhe egumbini. Ubona umama wakhe ephethe ngezandla ubuso bakhe. UMphumeleli uyambuza umama ukuba yintoni ingxaki, kodwa akaphenduli. Emva kokumbuza kwakhona umama uphendula esithi indoda imhlasele.

## APPENDIX 4

### VOCABULARY

PAGE 1			
-phepha	avoid	ukusuka ... ukuyokutsho	from ... till
izicithi	tufts of grass	iinduli	hills
-kalika	cover with lime	-tyabeka	plaster a wall
udaka	mud	izangqa	circles
-jula	throw	ingxowa	bag
umbhalo	writing	-jinga	hang
ndaqabuka ulapha	ever since I have been aware/reached consciousness it [the <i>umbhalo</i> ] was here	-othula/-thula  -othulwa	take down\be taken  down
irhoqololo	lousy/useless  thing	ikhulu/amakhulu	hundred/s
ivumba	smell	usathana	the devil
umane eyokuba	he had gone to steal [them, the oranges]		

-sebeza	whisper	amatyeli	times
umbono	vision/aim	icebo	plan
isicelo sokusebenzela	job application	umasipala	municipality
PAGE 2			
wayezicelele	he asked for himself to be [he applied for]	-grumba iipeki	dig holes
ufakelo-mbane	electricity supply	umphokoqo	crumbly maize meal seasoned with sour milk
isitiya	garden	umondlalo	bed
lo msebenzi <b>wokuba</b> efama	this job <b>of</b> <b>stealing</b> from the farm	ngowasebusuku	it is a night time [job]
-dinisa	tire/make tiring	ukuthi tshe	to glimpse/glance/look around
ithetha ukuthini	what it means	ndisitsholo phantsi	I am let down

abacuntsuli kushiyeke nto	they live from hand to mouth [ukucuntsa = to take a little of]	kuntswempu, ikati ilele eziko	it is financially bad - the cat sleeps in our cooking place.) figuratively: it is poverty-stricken
PAGE 3			
izidlele	cheeks	uncumo	smile (cl.11)
-leqa	chase	-rhalela	long for
amashwamshwam	maize snacks	-sithela	disappear
imitha	rays of sun	imitya yesibane yomile	the wicks of the light are dry [there is no paraffin for the wick]
-nkqonkqoza	knock	andisokuze ndibhude negama	I won't breathe a word
ndazithi tshwa	I slide myself in	-bawela	long for
ubuthongo	sleep (cl.14)		
PAGE 4			
amazwi	voices	imilozi	whistles
xhashi xhashi	commotion, confusion	izingqi	prolonged sounds
-ncwina	whine	-ngqengqa	lie
-gabha	vomit	indlala	hunger
rhetshe	hint	ingcinga e-ndi-vuyis-a- yo	a thought making me happy

-khama	squeeze	uvalo	nervous anxiety
-qwalasela	look at intently	-phaca	walk or travel without carrying or bearing what one is expected to carry
ukhophe/iinkophe	eyelid/s	-krazuka [usually – krazukile]	in this context “strike” but usually in stative, “be torn”
umcinga	match	-tyheli	yellow
amafutha	oil/fat		
PAGE 5			
-phuthaphutha	grope about	ebumnyameni	in the dark
-qhwitha	strike	ukuthi khwasu	to stand up quickly
igobhoza	container	izixwexwe	slabs
ivatala	watermelon	khinxi uvalo	heart-beating anxiety
-hesha	signal with hands	-khwiniza	sob
-fixiza	sniff repeatedly as when crying	folokoty	collapse
-vuza izinkcwe	literally: leak saliva/salivate	-hlasela	attack