

**EXPLORING ONLINE TEACHING STRATEGIES USED BY HIGH SCHOOL
TEACHERS IN TEACHING SESOTHO DURING COVID-19.**

BY

'MAKANANELO MAKHASANE

(2019508742)

**A THESIS SUBMITTED IN FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE
DEGREE OF MASTER'S IN EDUCATION**

AT THE

UNIVERSITY OF THE FREE STATE

2023

SUPERVISOR: DR. TAFIRENYIKA MAFUGU

CO-SUPERVISOR: DR. MOSEBETSI MOKOENA

DECLARATION ON PLAGIARISM

I, 'Makananelo Makhasane, student number 2019508742, hereby declare that I am fully aware of the University of the Free State Policy on Plagiarism, and that I have taken every possible precaution to comply with the regulations pertaining to this policy.

Signed: M. Makhasane

Date: January 2023

DECLARATION ON RESEARCH ETHICS CLEARANCE

I, 'Makananelo Makhasane, student number 2019508742, hereby declare that I am fully aware of the University of the Free State policy of Research Ethics, and I have taken every possible precaution to comply with every regulation pertaining it. I have obtained an ethical clearance certificate from the University of Free State Ethics Committee, for which the reference number is UFS-HSD2022/0197/22.

Signed: M. Makhasane

Date: January 2023

ABSTRACT

COVID-19 is a global crisis that has affected many aspects of society, including education. Due to the restrictions imposed by COVID-19, teachers had to reconsider their teaching strategies. Therefore, this study, aimed to explore online teaching strategies used by high school teachers to teach Sesotho during COVID-19 pandemic in Lesotho. This study used the interpretive paradigm. Through this paradigm, the researcher identified the online teaching strategies used by Sesotho teachers through the interpretations informed by the social constructivism theory and The Unified Theory of Acceptance and use of Technology (UTAUT). The qualitative research approach was used in this study. A case study research design was also employed. The case in this study was a group of Sesotho high school teachers in Qacha's Nek district, Lesotho; teaching Sesotho during the COVID-19 pandemic using different online teaching strategies. This study employed purposive sampling to select the participants with requisite characteristics. Two Sesotho high school teachers were selected per school, in the three chosen high schools in Qacha's Nek district, Lesotho.

Two data collection methods were used in this study, individual semi-structured face-to-face interviews and document analysis. Following the collection of data, there was data transcription, presentation, analysis, and interpretation of the major findings. The findings revealed that the Sesotho teachers in the three high schools used traditional face-to-face teaching strategies such as discussions, question and answer, and group work to teach Sesotho before COVID-19. The researcher also found out that the Sesotho teachers used WhatsApp facilitated teaching strategies such as question-and-answer and discussions to teach Sesotho during COVID-19. Several challenges and opportunities posed by those WhatsApp facilitated teaching strategies were also found. This study recommended policies for application online teaching and learning, provision of full network connectivity and electricity coverage for teachers and learners and low data costs for learners, provision of workshops that equip teachers with knowledge about online teaching.

KEYWORDS: COVID-19, Teaching strategies, Online learning, Online teaching strategies

DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to these people that I love so dearly:

My husband Ntate Sekitla Makhasane

My daughter Rethabile Makhasane

My son Kananelo Makhasane

My late daughter

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I thank my God for giving me strength, good health, and wisdom to conduct this study. I would also like to thank the University of the Free State management for giving me an opportunity to study at this institution.

I also like to thank the following people:

1. My supervisor, Doctor Tafirenyika Mafugu, for his patience, guidance and supervision that helped me to conduct and complete this study.
2. My co-supervisor, Doctor Mosebetsi Mokoena, for his guidance and expert supervision that assisted me to finish this study.
3. The government of Lesotho, through the Ministry of Education and Training, in Qacha's Nek district, that gave me an opportunity to conduct the study in the selected high schools in the district.
4. The principals of the three high schools, for giving me access to interview their teachers.
5. The six Sesotho high school teachers, for their kindness and whole-hearted participation in this study.
6. My husband, ntate Sekitla Daniel Makhasane, for always being there for me throughout this study. His full support and guidance gave me strength to complete this study.
7. My daughter, Rethabile Makhasane, and my son, Kananelo Makhasane, for their support and encouragement when I needed them during the time I was stressed by this study.
8. Myself for keeping up and not quitting during hard and stressful times.

LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

CAPS- Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement

COVID-19- Coronavirus disease of 2019

DBE - Department of Basic Education

DoE - Department of Education

FAL – First Additional Language

ICT – Information and Communications Technology

LGCSE – Lesotho General Certificate of Secondary Education

LTV – Lesotho Television

MOET- Ministry of Education and Training

RSA- Republic of South Africa

UN- United Nations

UNESCO- United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation

UNICEF- United Nations Children's Fund

UTAUT - The Unified Theory of Acceptance and use of Technology

WHO- World Health Organisation

TABLE OF CONTENTS

DECLARATION ON PLAGIARISM	i
DECLARATION ON RESEARCH ETHICS CLEARANCE	ii
ABSTRACT	iii
DEDICATION	iv
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	v
LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS	vi
TABLE OF CONTENTS	vii
LIST OF TABLES	xi
LIST OF FIGURES	xii
CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND	1
1.1 Introduction of the study	1
1.2 Background to the study	1
1.3 Statement of the problem	2
1.4 Main Research question	3
1.4.1 Sub-research questions.....	3
1.5 Research Aim	3
1.5.1 Research Objectives.....	4
1.6 Significance of the Study	4
1.7 Research Methodology	4
1.8 Delimitation of the study	5
1.9 Definition of key terms	5
1.10 Chapter Outline.....	6
1.11 Summary	7
CHAPTER TWO: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND LITERATURE REVIEW	8
2.1 Introduction	8
2.2 Theoretical Framework	9
2.2.1 Social constructivism.....	9
2.2.2The Unified Theory of Acceptance and use of Technology (UTAUT).....	13
2.3. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE	16
2.3.1. Review of literature related to home language teaching	16
2.4. Review of literature related to the objectives of the study.....	18
2.4.1 Teaching strategies used to teach home languages before COVID-19 pandemic.....	18
2.4.2 Strategies used to teach home languages online	27

2.4.3 Challenges of online teaching strategies	33
2.4.4 Opportunities of online teaching strategies	37
2.5 Summary	39
CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY.....	40
3.1 Introduction	40
3.2 Research Paradigm	40
3.2.1 Interpretive paradigm	40
3.3 Research Approach	42
3.3.1 Qualitative Approach	42
3.4 Research Design	43
3.4.1 Case study research design	43
3.5 Sampling.....	44
3.6 Data collection instruments.....	45
3.6.1 Face-to-face semi-structured interviews.....	47
3.6.2 Document Analysis.....	49
3.7 Data Trustworthiness.....	49
3.8 Data collection procedures	52
3.9 Data analysis	52
3.10 Summary	53
CHAPTER 4: PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA.....	54
4.1 Introduction	55
4.1.1 THEME 1: The teaching strategies used by high school teachers to teach Sesotho before the COVID-19 pandemic.....	55
4.1.1.1 Sub-theme 1: Discussions	56
4.1.1.2 Sub-theme 2: Question and answer	58
4.1.1.3 Sub-theme 3: Group work.....	60
4.1.2 THEME 2: The online teaching strategies used to teach Sesotho during COVID-19 pandemic... 64	
4.1.2.1 Sub-theme 1: WhatsApp groups.....	64
4.1.3 THEME 3: The limitations posed by the online instructional strategies used to teach Sesotho by high school teachers during COVID-19 pandemic.	70
4.1.3.1 Sub-theme 1: Lack of data and mobile phones	71
4.1.3.2 Sub-theme 2: Lack of electricity and network connectivity.....	73
4.1.3.3 Sub-theme 3: Learners’ lack of participation and ignorance of class activities.....	75
4.1.3.4 Sub-theme 4: Lack of knowledge about online teaching strategies.....	76
4.1.3.5 Sub-theme 5: Lack of government involvement on teaching through WhatsApp	77

4.1.4 THEME 4: The opportunities presented by the online instructional strategies used to teach Sesotho by high school teachers during the COVID-19 pandemic.	79
4.1.4.1 Sub-theme 1: Opportunity to practice the four language skills.	79
4.1.5 Summary	80
CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS	82
5.1 Introduction	82
5.2 Summary of the study.....	82
5.3 Discussion of the major findings.....	83
5.3.1 Traditional face-to-face teaching strategies used to teach Sesotho prior to COVID-19.....	84
5.3.2 WhatsApp group as an online teaching strategy.....	92
5.3.3 The challenges and opportunities posed by WhatsApp-facilitated teaching strategies.	96
5.4 Limitations of the study	104
5.5 Recommendations	104
5.6 Conclusions of the study.....	106
5.7 Implications of the study	107
REFERENCES	109
APPENDIX A	132
APPENDIX B	133
APPENDIX C	138
APPENDIX D	141
APPENDIX E	142
APPENDIX F – Language Editing CERTIFICATE	145
APPENDIX G – Turnitin report	146
APPENDIX H.....	147
INTERVIEW QUESTIONS	147
APPENDIX I	149

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1- The link between data collection instruments	46
Table 2-Theme 1: The teaching strategies used by high school teachers to teach Sesotho before the COVID-19 pandemic.	56
Table 3-Theme 2: The online teaching strategies used to teach Sesotho during the COVID-19 pandemic.....	64
Table 4-Theme 3: The limitations posed by the online instructional strategies used to teach Sesotho by high school teachers during COVID-19 pandemic.....	70
Table 5-Theme 4: The opportunities posed by the online instructional strategies used to teach Sesotho by high school teachers during the COVID-19 pandemic	79

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1-Lesson plan 1 abstract	62
Figure 2-Lesson plan 2 abstract	63

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

Introduction of the study

COVID-19 is a global crisis that has affected many aspects of society, including education. Due to the impact of COVID-19, teachers had to reconsider their teaching strategies. This study explores online teaching strategies high school teachers used to teach Sesotho during the COVID-19 pandemic in Lesotho. This chapter presents the study's background, statement of the problem, research questions, purpose of the study, research objectives, significance of the study, research methodology, delimitation of the study, definition of terms, chapter outline, and chapter summary.

Background to the study

Before March 2020, most education institutions worldwide delivered teaching and learning through face-to-face teaching strategies (George, 2020:24). Some of the face-to-face teaching strategies used prior to COVID-19 included brainstorming, group discussions, demonstrations, and games (Saputra & Aziz, 2014). Senthamarai (2018:S36) states that teaching strategies aim to help learners effectively collaborate as a team. World Health Organisation (WHO) declared COVID-19 a pandemic in March 2020 and announced social distancing, later the schools were closed to curb the spread of this pandemic (Adedoyin & Soykan, 2020:1). This necessitated a reconsideration of instructional strategies teachers used to teach in different subjects (Aliyyah, Rachmadtullah, Samsudin, Syaodih, Nurtanto & Tambunan, 2020:103). Traditional face-to-face modality had to give way to virtual teaching and learning. Teachers had to opt for teaching strategies that would not allow social contact among teachers and learners. Several learning institutions responded to the academic disruptions by turning to online learning (Mhlanga & Moloji, 2020:11). In Hong Kong, online teaching, through various platforms such as Zoom, was widely used for teaching English as a Second Language (Cheung, 2021:1).

Through online learning, education is acquired using technological devices, tools and the internet (Adedoyin & Soykan, 2020:2). Belay (2020:2) states that during COVID-19, many countries adopted various ways of teaching, which included online

libraries, online channels, TV broadcasts, as well as developing guidelines, resources and video lectures, for teaching and learning to continue. In Indonesian junior high schools during the COVID-19 outbreak, all teaching and learning activities continued online from home, and its success was the responsibility of the school manager and the principals (Futra & Primahardani, 2021:371). Henaku (2020:55) comments that some African countries such as Morocco, Senegal, Rwanda, Kenya and Cote d'Ivoire capitalised on online teaching and learning to ensure that learners' academic work progressed. Belay (2020:2) also adds that UNICEF assisted the Ethiopian government in establishing a coasted distance learning plan, radio and television programmes for primary education, television programme for secondary schools, and online teaching for higher education.

Mhlanga and Moloi (2020:8) explain that, in South Africa, universities and the Department of Basic Education issued study materials on their websites for learners to continue with their studies while schools were still closed. The Lesotho Ministry of Education and Training (MOET) and UNICEF set up online platforms for three months, utilising radio and television materials to ensure continued education during school closures (MOET Government of Lesotho, 2020:11).

Being a Sesotho high school teacher for the past ten years, the researcher had applied several teaching strategies to ensure that Sesotho is done well in schools. Now that the teaching strategies had to be reconsidered due to COVID-19, the researcher was interested in establishing online teaching strategies used by high school teachers to teach Sesotho during this pandemic. The researcher focused on Sesotho, an official language spoken and taught in all Lesotho schools.

1.3 Statement of the problem

The COVID-19 was a world crisis that negatively hit many sectors in various countries, and necessitated teaching through virtual platforms. Lesotho was not spared this transition. These virtual or online teaching strategies, which involved the application of technological devices, came unexpected to Lesotho education, and this led to several challenges as it was not catered for. In Lesotho, only about half of the learners can listen to radio, and a third watch television programmes provided by the government (United Nations Lesotho, 2020). However, learners in rural areas

hardly benefit from the lessons (United Nations Lesotho, 2020). Electricity connection was a challenge to learners in rural areas when they were supposed to do homework assigned through WhatsApp, because there was nowhere to charge their phones (LTV News, 2021).

Although it was indicated that the Lesotho government, with the support of UNICEF, taught through radio and television programmes during school closures, the researcher sought to explore whether there were guidelines provided by the government in terms of teaching Sesotho during the COVID-19 pandemic, or whether Sesotho teachers were left to fend for themselves. This includes during school closures and reopening during this pandemic. It was realised that during COVID-19 language teachers, specifically Sesotho teachers, changed the face-to-face teaching strategies to online teaching strategies. The changes brought by COVID-19 triggered this exploration of the online teaching strategies used by high school teachers to teach Sesotho during COVID-19 in Lesotho. The researcher also sought to understand the limitations and opportunities posed by these online instructional strategies used for teaching Sesotho during the COVID-19 pandemic.

1.4 Main Research question

What were online teaching strategies used by high school teachers to teach Sesotho during COVID-19 in Lesotho?

1.4.1 Sub-research questions

- a) How did Sesotho high school teachers teach Sesotho before COVID-19 pandemic?
- b) What online strategies were used to teach Sesotho during COVID-19?
- c) What limitations were posed by the online instructional strategies used to teach Sesotho by high school teachers during the COVID-19 pandemic?
- d) What opportunities were presented by the online instructional strategies used to teach Sesotho by high school teachers during the COVID-19 pandemic?

1.5 Research Aim

This study's aim was to explore online teaching strategies used by high school teachers to teach Sesotho during COVID-19 pandemic in Lesotho.

1.5.1 Research Objectives

- a) To explore the teaching strategies used to teach Sesotho by high school teachers before the COVID-19 pandemic.
- b) To identify the online teaching strategies used to teach Sesotho during COVID-19 pandemic.
- c) To highlight the limitations posed by the online instructional strategies used to teach Sesotho by high school teachers during COVID-19 pandemic.
- d) To highlight the opportunities presented by the online instructional strategies used to teach Sesotho by high school teachers during COVID-19 pandemic.

1.6 Significance of the Study

This study's findings would benefit Sesotho high school teachers, as they will recognise other face-to-face and online teaching strategies that they can use to teach Sesotho during COVID-19.

The study is beneficial to the curriculum planners as they may be more enlightened about the subject content and teaching and learning strategies that will not require physical contact.

The government, through the ministry of education, would be able to cater for emergencies like COVID-19 in future, when preparing their financial budget.

1.7 Research Methodology

In this study, the interpretive paradigm was used. The qualitative research approach was also used. The researcher collected data from the selected schools and interviewed Sesotho high school teachers on online teaching strategies they used to teach Sesotho during the COVID-19 pandemic. A case study research design was employed. The case in this study was a group of six Sesotho high school teachers in Qacha's Nek district teaching Sesotho during the COVID-19 pandemic. These Sesotho teachers taught in Qacha's Nek district high schools, Lesotho. Two data

collection methods were used in this study, namely; individual semi-structured face-to-face interviews and document analysis. Both the interviews and document analysis of lesson plans were used to collect data about research question (a). For research questions (b), (c) and (d), the researcher used interviews only. Purposive sampling was employed where two Sesotho teachers were selected per school, in the three chosen high schools in Qacha's Nek district, Lesotho. Data yielded in this study was then analysed using content analysis.

1.8 Delimitation of the study

In this study, the researcher's focus was exploring online teaching strategies used by high school teachers to teach Sesotho during COVID-19, and understanding the limitations of the online instructional strategies used in teaching Sesotho during the COVID-19 pandemic. This study was conducted in the three schools in the mountainous district of Lesotho, Qacha's Nek. The selected schools are located in the outskirts of this district's town.

1.9 Definition of key terms

Below is a brief definition of key terms used in this study. The detailed conceptualisation of some of the terms is undertaken later in the study.

1. COVID-19

COVID-19 is a novel corona virus discovered in December 2019 in Wuhan, China that rapidly transmit from one person to another (Adedoyin & Soykan, 2020:1). This is an infectious disease caused by a novel severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2) (Yang, Liu, Liu, Zhang, Wan, Huang, Chen & Zhang, 2020:1).

2. Teaching strategies

Teaching strategies are global ideas of a lesson, which entail formation of instructional objectives, and an outline of planned methods, essential to employ the approaches (Saputra & Aziz, 2014:1).

3. Online learning

Online learning is education that occurs over the internet (Mpungose, 2020:2). Online learning involves the use of various technologies like the worldwide web, email, chat, new groups and texts, audio and video conferencing conveyed over computer system to transfer education between teachers and learners (Dhull & Sakshi, 2019:32).

4. Online teaching strategies

Online teaching strategies are strategies that rely on the application of technological devices such as internet, computers, and mobile phones when teaching (Moser, Wei & Brenner, 2021:2).

[1.10 Chapter Outline](#)

Chapter One

Chapter one covered the introduction and background of the study, the problem statement, research questions, aims and objectives, the value of the study, definition of key terms, and chapter outline.

Chapter Two

Chapter two explains theoretical frameworks employed and reviews the literature that relevant to the aims and objectives of the study.

Chapter Three

Chapter three discusses the research design and methodology, and covers research approach, research design, research paradigm, sampling procedure, data collection, validity and reliability, and ethical considerations.

Chapter Four

Chapter four presents and analyses the findings of the study.

Chapter Five

Chapter five consists of three sections; discussion of findings, conclusion, and recommendations.

1.11 Summary

This chapter introduced online learning teaching strategies used to teach languages in other countries. It discussed the background to the study, focusing on the international, African, and South African context. The chapter identified the aims, objectives and research questions that guided the study. It also briefly stated the methodology utilised in terms of the research paradigm, approach, design and sampling. In the delimitation section the chapter drew the boundaries of the study in terms of the geographical context. The chapter ends by definition of key terms, chapter outline and summary of the study.

CHAPTER TWO: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

The previous chapter introduced the study, and this chapter explains the theoretical framework that guided this study, and how it was used for interpreting the findings of this study. Literature related to the objectives of the study and research aim is reviewed. Related international and national literature on the teaching of languages is reviewed. The focus is on the following themes: teaching strategies before COVID-19, online teaching strategies during COVID-19, challenges presented by online teaching strategies, and opportunities presented by online teaching strategies.

2.1.1 Previous Empirical Studies

This section identified several studies conducted to investigate the continuity of education during COVID-19. In a study conducted in the Indian schools in Maharashtra State, it was discovered that due to COVID-19 pandemic, 81.3% of the interviewees adopted new online teaching strategies and moved from face-to-face teaching to online teaching (Gurung, 2021:16). In Estonia, teachers were provided with various guidelines about teaching by the Ministry of Education and Research when they switched to distance learning due to COVID-19 (Lepp, Aaviku, Leijen, Pedaste & Saks, 2021:4). In New Zealand, it has been discovered that the schools closed on 25 March 2020 and teachers were given time to prepare for online teaching and learning, which was supported with the resources by the Ministry of Education, to make it a success (Yates, Starkey, Egerton & Flueggen, 2021:61).

In a study carried out in Iran during COVID-19, it was discovered that, although online teaching was declared a necessity during school closures, there were no precise instructions and training programmes for schoolteachers on how to handle online teaching (Askari & Chen, 2021:33). To save the school year in Ghana, the Ministry of Education and Ghana Education Service developed digital content through television, radio and online learning for the basic school and junior high school levels (Henaku, 2020:55). A study conducted in Zimbabwe secondary schools found that the government announced radio broadcasts as the main tool to be used

for teaching and learning during the pandemic because disadvantaged and rural learners could easily access them owing to the low cost involved (Maphosa, 2021:2).

2.2 Theoretical Framework

This study used a two-pronged theoretical framework made up of social constructivism and the Unified Theory of Acceptance and use of Technology (UTAUT). The discussion of social constructivism focused on its origins, objectives, nature of reality, the relationship between the researcher and the participants, the role of the researcher, rhetoric used in social constructivism, and reflection on the choice of social constructivism theory over positivism. Thereafter, the four variables of the UTAUT, namely; performance expectancy, effort expectancy, social influence, and facilitating conditions, are discussed.

2.2.1 Social constructivism

a) Origins of Social constructivism

In 1968, Lev Vygotsky proposed social constructivism as a learning theory (Saleem, Kausar & Deeba, 2021:406). He developed this theory on the premise that children's cognitive development is aided by socialisation and collaboration from adults and knowledgeable peers (Devi, 2019:8). Social constructivism is a theory of knowledge, of social interrelations that explores the establishment cooperatively about knowing the environment (Galbin, 2014:82).

Constructivists understand the value of social connections in language development (Ardiansyah & Ujihanti, 2017:134). Vygotsky posits that language plays a crucial part in the teaching and learning process, as children learn and adopt social skills, values, rules and beliefs that describe their role in society (Hebe, 2017:1532). Vygotsky's social constructivist principle states that learners work in groups and socially interact to construct new ideas and enrich their intellectual capacity (Ardiansyah & Ujihanti, 2017:118). According to social constructivism, meanings are socially constructed through individual interrelations based on different experiences (Galbin, 2014:89). The more the learners interact with each other, the more they become fluent in the language skills such as listening, speaking, reading and writing that are taught at school. A teacher should act as a facilitator and assist learners to actively participate in their study, and make concrete links between prior knowledge,

new knowledge, and the learning processes (Bada & Olusegun, 2015:67). This theory assisted the researcher to explore the online teaching strategies that Sesotho teachers used to teach Sesotho during COVID-19, and to determine whether they (online teaching strategies) engaged learners more in order to enhance the development of various language skills.

b) Objectives of Social constructivism

The social constructivist theory concentrates more on social groups where learners interact with their peers, teachers and parents, and small groups (Davis, Witcraft, Baird & Smits, 2017). Bada and Olusegun (2015:67) state that one of social constructivism's tenet is that learners remain active throughout the learning process. Vygotsky recommends learning as experiencing and stresses the creation of a conducive learning environment for learners to actively participate and generate their own knowledge integrating new information with what they already know (Schreiber & Valle, 2013:397). The researcher found the teaching strategies (face-to-face and online) that Sesotho teachers used to teach Sesotho during the pandemic. In relation to this study, the Sesotho teachers can use teaching strategies that grant learners an option to be more active in the groups where they socialise with each other and their teachers to develop their language skills. In line with this theory, in using these teaching strategies, Sesotho teachers can create conditions where learners actively participate in their learning by discovering information on the Sesotho concepts and connecting it to the one they already know so that their four Sesotho Language skills are improved.

Vygotsky proposes that individuals actively participate in creating their own knowledge primarily in social and cultural settings (Davis *et al.*, 2017). Even in online teaching, teachers can still create conditions or platforms where they allow their learners to socialise with each other while learning the four language skills. By stating the online teaching strategies that they can use, teacher participants create more knowledge about various online teaching strategies suitable for Sesotho teaching. In this study, schools are important places where learners interact with other learners from different cultural backgrounds and improve their language skills through socialisation.

Social constructivism provides learners with the opportunity to cooperate and collaborate during their learning (Ardiansyah & Ujihanti, 2017:119). The more collaboration and cooperation occur among learners, the more they learn and develop their Sesotho language skills, as they assist each other where they encounter difficulties. Aligned to study, the Sesotho teachers provided their learners an opportunity to collaborate with each other, in lesson group discussions, and helped each other to develop their four language skills while they taught face-to-face and online.

c) Nature of reality

Research guided by social constructivism is defined by multiple viewpoints and plurality (Yilmaz, 2008:163). In this study, participants' various viewpoints about the online teaching strategies that they used to teach Sesotho during COVID-19 were considered. Teacher participants and the researcher came up with various teaching strategies that were and could be used to teach Sesotho online during COVID-19. In this case, the social reality was co-constructed by both the researcher and the participants. They both created and constructed knowledge related to the online teaching strategies that could be used during COVID-19. In creating this knowledge and space for multiple realities, semi-structured interviews were conducted to gain insights from the Sesotho teachers.

Furthermore, Akpan, Igwe, Mpamah, and Okoro (2020:50) state that social constructivism regards language and culture as frameworks by which individuals experience, communicate and understand reality. According to social constructivism, reality is constructed through human interaction and active participation (Kim, 2001:4). Language and culture play an important part in the way Sesotho learners experience and understand Sesotho as a language and subject and communicate with each other.

d) The relationship between the researcher and the participants.

One of the characteristics of social constructivism anchored research as the balanced relationship between the researcher and the participants (Bada & Olusegun, 2015:69). In this study, the researcher and the participants worked together in the creation of knowledge about online teaching strategies that used in the teaching of Sesotho. In other words, the researcher and the participants had

equal power relations as the views of both parties were considered. The production of knowledge in this study was the responsibility of the researcher and the participants. This enabled multiple perspectives to emerge. In other words, this neutral power relationship ensured common ownership of the research process and the findings thereof.

e) The role of the researcher

In this study, the researcher facilitated the process of knowledge creation. In this case, knowledge was created through semi-structured interviews of the Sesotho Language high school teachers. More broadly, the researcher ensured that there was collaboration, interaction and active participation among the participants in this study so that information about online teaching strategies and their challenges and opportunities in the teaching of Sesotho during COVID-19 are known. This was in sharp contrast to the researcher providing solutions to the participants.

f) The rhetoric used in Social Constructivism

In a study anchored by social constructivism, each person (participant) creates their own meanings and understandings, and this process involves combining prior knowledge and beliefs with new information and experiences (Yilmaz, 2008:162). In this study, the researcher and the Sesotho teachers (participants) created their own meanings and understanding of the online teaching strategies used to teach Sesotho during COVID-19. The participants' experiences in using the online teaching strategies were communicated. This occurred through active participation in the face-to-face semi-structured interviews. Social constructivists see learning as a social process which takes place when individuals participate in social activities (Kim, 2001:4). According to social constructivism, people connect through social interaction using language (Galbin, 2014:84), and develop the four language skills. In this study, the learning of Sesotho proved effective when the teacher participants allowed their learners to participate in various social activities where they learnt the four language skills.

g) Reflection on the choice of Social Constructivism Theory over positivism

The researcher chose social constructivism theory over positivism for various reasons. The purpose of social constructivism is to increase total understanding of a

phenomenon while positivism explanations demonstrate cause and effect (Ramanathan, 2008). With the use of social constructivism, the researcher and the participants can have an understanding of the online teaching strategies that are more relevant for teaching Sesotho and assisting the learners to perform those skills better.

When collecting data through semi-structured interviews and document analysis (lesson plans and policy documents), the researcher and the participants worked together. According to social constructivists, knowledge is socially constructed by the people who actively participate in a study, whereas positivists believe that knowledge can only be verified through scientific methods such as experiments or logical proof (Ryan, 2018:5). During the interviews, the researcher probed the participants so that data related to the online teaching strategies was collected.

In positivism, knowledge must be developed objectively, free from the standards of the researcher or participants (Park, Konge, & Artino, 2020:691). However, the researcher chose social constructivism so that knowledge about online teaching strategies used to teach Sesotho during COVID-19 was collectively constructed by both the researcher and the participants. In a positivist research, absolute isolation between the researcher and the participant is required for truth to be developed in an effective manner while collecting data. The researcher must maintain objectivity and not interact with participants (Park *et al.*, 2020:692).

2.2.2 The Unified Theory of Acceptance and use of Technology (UTAUT)

In this study, the researcher also used UTAUT as a theoretical framework to analyse and explain the online teaching strategies used by Sesotho teachers during COVID-19 in the selected schools. The aim of the UTAUT model is to interpret technology acceptance (Thomas, Singh & Gaffar, 2013:72). This study's data was collected using semi-structured interviews and analysed using this theoretical framework.

This theory is connected with the study's paradigm as it helped the researcher to understand how the Sesotho high school teachers applied technology in the online teaching strategies when teaching the four Sesotho Language skills. This understanding is constructed by different views and explanations from the differently interviewed teacher participants.

UTAUT was developed in 2003 by Venkatesh and his research group, through a synthesis of eight theories of technology acceptance (Momani, 2000:81). These theories are used in studies that examine barriers to the acceptance and use of technologies, with the goal of fostering innovation adoption (Dulle & Minishi-Majanja, 2011:33). The essence of technology acceptance theories rests in their application to “the individuals’ behaviour and their acceptance ability to adopt new technologies according to some constructs and variables” (Momani, 2000:82). COVID-19 forced Sesotho teachers to adapt and adopt teaching in the new context, which required them to accept the use of available technologies hence, the relevance of UTAUT in this study. This theory assisted the researcher to identify the challenges experienced by the Sesotho teachers while using technologies to teach the four Sesotho language skills during the pandemic.

There are four variables that UTAUT consists of. These are; performance expectancy, effort expectancy, social influence, and facilitating conditions (Im, Hong & Kang, 2011:1). These variables are the forces that drive a person to use technology to improve performance (Maphalala & Adigun, 2021:4).

These variables will help the researcher in data analysis, to realise how technology implementation may be relevant to Sesotho high school teachers in the teaching of Sesotho during COVID-19. It can be helpful in improving their teaching of the four Sesotho language skills using online teaching strategies. The UTAUT variables are further explained below:

a) Performance expectancy

Performance expectancy is described as the point at which an individual feels that application of the system will assist him or her in obtaining good job performance (Attuquayefio & Addo, 2014b:76). In addition, performance expectancy is referred to as the extent to which application of technology will bring assistance to clients in performing specific activities (Venkatesh, Thong & Xu, 2012:159). This variable assisted the researcher during the interviews, to discover if the Sesotho high school teachers believed that the application of technology was beneficial in the teaching of Sesotho language skills during COVID-19.

b) Effort expectancy

Effort expectancy is described as the degree of simplicity linked with the utilisation of the system (Attuquayefio & Addo, 2014b:76). Venkatesh *et al.* (2012:159) explain that this degree is connected to consumers' application of technology. With effort expectancy, the researcher would recognise if the Sesotho high school teachers believed that the use of technology such as computers, mobile phones and internet, was easy and simple to use in the teaching of Sesotho during COVID-19. This would be revealed through the interviews.

c) Social influence

Social influence is defined as the point at which individuals perceive that important people such as family and friends believe they should use certain technology (Attuquayefio & Addo, 2014b:76; Venkatesh *et al.*, 2012:159). Knowing the beliefs and views of others, such as colleagues, about the application of technology assists Sesotho teachers to come to a beneficial conclusion about incorporating it to the teaching of Sesotho language skills during COVID-19. The semi-structured interviews enabled the researcher to get the Sesotho teachers' views on whether their colleagues believe that their application of online teaching strategies in the teaching of Sesotho is valuable.

Maphosa, Dube and Jita, (2020:87) note that various studies projected that performance expectancy, effort expectancy, and social influence were main constructs in conditioning learners' desire to use mobile phones, and facilitating conditions predicted the real application of the mobile phones in their learning. In this study, these constructs assisted the researcher to identify if the participants' willingness to incorporate technology in the teaching of Sesotho is derived from their own views or from other people's.

d) Facilitating conditions

Facilitating conditions variable is defined as the degree to which one trusts that the technical equipment belonging to the organisation is there to support the application of the system (Attuquayefio & Addo, 2014b:76). Venkatesh *et al.* (2012:159) also defines facilitating conditions as clients' perceptions on the available resources and support for the use of technology. In this study, the researcher found out if the Sesotho high school teachers believed that the technical equipment like computers

and internet in their schools were there to support them in the teaching of Sesotho language skills during the COVID-19 crisis.

2.3. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.3.1. Review of literature related to home language teaching.

This section reviews literature related to teaching home languages in different countries, Lesotho included. The studies cited for this study were conducted in international countries published in different article journals. The studies were conducted among the schools that taught home languages in schools. As this study had employed qualitative research method, the studies cited were also those that had similar characteristics to those of this study.

Department of Basic Education Republic of South Africa (DBE RSA) (2010:5) defines language as ways that people develop to arrange their thoughts and experiences. Each ethnic group has its own language to express and define itself, and the language shapes the cultural trappings that make up that ethnic group (Carter & Sealey, 2007:5). Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) defines home language as the first language that learners learn to speak (Department of Education Republic of South Africa (DoE RSA), 2011:9). In other instances, home language has been described as the language that learners frequently speak at their homes (Department of Basic Education Republic of South Africa (DBE RSA, 2010:12).

Being taught in a home language can be beneficial to learners. Home language is valuable to children as it connects them to their culture, improves their cognitive development and assist them while learning other languages (Nishanthi, 2020:78). Learning in home language also makes children learn better and faster, actively participate in the classroom, as well as build their self-confidence (Smits, Huisman, & Kruijff, 2008:8). As a starting point for bilingual and multilingual education, studies show that children learn most effectively in their mother tongue (Ball, 2010:3). In a study conducted in India, it was noticed that children reading in their home languages in their early ages develop strong literacy skills in other languages (Nishanthi, 2020:78). This may be relevant to this study if children are taught how to read using their mother-tongue, Sesotho, at very early stage. Tavoosy and Jelveh (2019:78) emphasise the importance of home languages that “[l]earners who are

learning in a language other than their mother tongue will often have a wealth of knowledge in a language other than that of the classroom". This shows that learners who are not taught in their home language will only have knowledge of the language acquired from lessons at school and not learnt from home. In relation to this study, teaching using Sesotho fully equipped learners with Sesotho knowledge.

Considering the above benefits, many schools across the African continent teach learners' home languages at different levels of education. For instance, South Africa has eleven official languages taught at different levels. In Grades 10, 11 and 12, Sesotho is taught as a home language, first additional or second language to produce learners who listen, speak, read and write efficiently and critically (Department of Education Republic of South Africa DoE RSA, 2011:11).

CAPS recommends that when teaching home language, more emphasis should be put on the four language skills: listening, speaking, reading and writing (Department of Education Republic of South Africa DoE RSA, 2011:9). In Botswana it has been revealed that in all government schools, Setswana is regarded as the medium of instruction in lower Grades and is taught as a subject from Grade 5 up to tertiary level. It has been proposed that reading be taught as a subject not as part of the language curriculum (UNICEF Botswana, 2017a:4). In Namibia, it emerged that the Namibian schools' efforts to allow mother tongue language to be used in teaching from Grade 3 were in vain, but it is taught as a subject from Grade 4 (UNICEF Namibia, 2017:2).

In Lesotho, though there are other languages spoken in the country, Sesotho and English are the languages considered official in every aspect. This is stated in the country's constitution, Government of Lesotho (1993: Chapter 1:3(1) that "[t]he official languages of Lesotho shall be Sesotho and English and, accordingly, no instrument or transaction shall be invalid by reason only that it is expressed or conducted in one of those languages". Therefore, the teaching of these two languages in all Lesotho schools is compulsory for every learner so that the learners' communication skills are strong enough, and they can be able to use the languages at every situation need be. Lesotho General Certificate of Secondary Education (LGCSE) Sesotho syllabus emphasises that Sesotho is an official and compulsory language that is taught in schools to develop a Mosotho child physically, mentally

and intellectually (MOET Government. of Lesotho, 2019:1). Though the learners learn Sesotho from their homes, it is also taught in schools in order to improve the knowledge that they already have and the four language skills of speaking, listening, reading and writing.

In Lesotho high schools, Sesotho is taught to fulfil the aims of the syllabus. The LGCSE Sesotho syllabus aims to equip a learner with basic language skills such as: to listen carefully, to speak using great choice of words and building sentences that convey a clear message, to read news that is written, to write clear and related news, to watch pictures and symbols in such a way that they can be able to turn their message into words by speaking or writing, and to use their bodies to show their different opinions (MOET Government. of Lesotho, 2019:3). Fully equipped with these skills, Sesotho learners become competent in their language.

[2.4. Review of literature related to the objectives of the study.](#)

[2.4.1 Teaching strategies used to teach home languages before COVID-19 pandemic.](#)

This section reviews various strategies that were used to teach home languages in different countries prior to the COVID-19 pandemic. As one of the objectives of this study is to explore the teaching strategies used to teach Sesotho by high school teachers before the COVID-19 pandemic, the literature reviewed in this study was cited from the studies with similar objectives, that explored the teaching strategies used to teach home languages before COVID-19. Then the discussion is narrowed into teaching of Sesotho in both South Africa and Lesotho. There are various strategies that teachers used to teach languages, even before COVID-19. In South Africa, Department of Education Republic of South Africa (DoE RSA) (2011:13) states that language teachers, while teaching languages, should teach reading and writing skills by giving learners more texts to read and giving them more writing activities for practice. CAPS also suggests that Sesotho teachers should use debates, group discussions and other facilitated discussions when teaching speaking and listening skills (Department of Education Republic of South Africa (DoE RSA), 2011:18).

The LGCSE Sesotho 2021 Grades 10 and 11 syllabus states that during the teaching of reading and writing skills, the Sesotho teacher can give learners a reading comprehension where they identify spelling and punctuation mistakes and then re-write them correctly (MOET Government of Lesotho, 2019:10). By using

these teaching strategies that allow learners' involvement and participation, Sesotho teachers will be engaging learners in their learning. It is also expected that Sesotho teachers employ various learner-centred strategies for a holistic development of a Mosotho learner, as envisioned by the country's education system (MOET Government of Lesotho, 2019:1).

In line with the South African CAPS, the LGCSE syllabus also suggests teaching strategies that the Sesotho teachers must use to teach Sesotho as the use of group work, research, drama and debates (MOET Government of Lesotho, 2021:5). International studies identify pair work, group work, collaborative learning environments (Moeller & Catalano, 2015:330) as being incorporated into foreign language teaching and learning. These teaching strategies align with the ones recommended by Sesotho syllabi in South Africa and in Lesotho for Sesotho home language. Literature further reveals asking questions and co-operating with other learners as language learning strategies (Lessard-Clouston, 1997:4) that can assist in the improvement of learners' language skills. In a study conducted in selected primary schools in the Vhembe District of Limpopo Province in South Africa, teachers pointed out that they frequently translated to their learners' home language when teaching English so that their learners understand what is being taught (Lie, Tamah, Gozali, Triwidayati, Utami, Jemadi, Madima, & Makananise, 2020:15278).

Some of these teaching strategies teachers used to teach languages, especially the four language skills, are explained thereafter.

2.4.1.1. Cooperative learning as a strategy

2.4.1.1.1. Group work as a strategy

In teaching languages face-to-face, teachers found dividing learners into groups to be effective. Scholars have found that teachers divide learners into groups where each learner participates and contributes his or her ideas and learning from the other group members at the same time (Senthamarai, 2018:S38). Though there may be dominant learners in a group, there is also more information gained from group discussions that stimulates creativity (Burke, 2011:88). In a study conducted in Iran among the children who did not speak English or the language of instruction, it was found that language teachers gave learners chances to work in groups so that they learn language from each other (Tavoosy & Jelveh, 2019:85).

Research shows that in groups, learners can engage in discussions that are valuable for constructing knowledge and forming new concepts (Kohler, 2010:6). According to the Sesotho Grade 10 and 11 syllabus, the Sesotho teacher should ensure that there are not more than five learners in a group, for the group to be effective, as too many learners in a group may lead to other learners hiding behind others (MOET Government of Lesotho, 2021:4). Similarly, in South Africa, where Sesotho is taught as a home language, CAPS aims to produce learners who work individually and in groups in improving their Sesotho knowledge (Department of Education Republic of South Africa (DoE RSA), 2011:5). For instance, in teaching how to write a friendly letter, the Sesotho teacher can discuss with the learners, the language that is used and then let the learners to write parts of a letter in groups (MOET Government of Lesotho, 2021:30). This improves learners' speaking, listening and writing skills.

This teaching strategy aligns with one of Vygotsky's principles that learners learn better through interaction with other peers (Brau, 2020), thereby gaining more knowledge about the topic under study. A study conducted by Schreiber and Valle (2013:397) states that during social interactions in group discussions, learners bring various ideas on the subject content and create their own knowledge and meanings.

2.4.1.1.2. Debate as a teaching strategy

Apart from group work, language teachers have been using debate as a strategy to teach home language before COVID-19. Debates offer learners a chance to practice communication skills (Darby, 2007:1). A classroom debate features two teams, one arguing for and the other arguing against the motion (Fernando & Marikar, 2017:114). Apart from debates assisting learners to improve the four language skills, Zare and Othman (2013:1507) add that they also encourage participatory learning. This aligns with social constructivism's principles as learners contribute towards their knowledge creation and come up with different ideas.

Moreover, literature states that the four language skills are practiced when debate is used as a teaching strategy to teach English as a foreign language (Alasmari & Ahmed, 2013:148). Previous studies add that the use of debates as a method of delivering instructional material has drawn attention because it is a strategy for improving student engagement, learning motivation, and academic accomplishment (Korniienko, 2020:321). In a study in Italian schools, where debate was used as a teaching strategy to teach English as a foreign language, it was found that teachers

saw it as a powerful teaching strategy to improve their language skills (Cinganotto, 2019:114). Literature continues to clarify that teachers in several subjects used debate in their classrooms to encourage learners to be active learners and critical thinkers (Mitchell, 2019:22).

In South Africa, CAPS requires that Sesotho teachers for Grades 10,11 and 12 use debates to teach Sesotho for learners to become independent in listening, speaking, reading and writing (Department of Education Republic of South Africa (DoE RSA), 2011:9). The LGCSE Sesotho syllabus also recommends the use of debates in response to the need to improve learners' Sesotho language skills where Sesotho teachers choose a topic for learners to debate about (MOET Government of Lesotho, 2021:5). This indicates that debate has been trusted as a teaching strategy in many Sesotho classrooms.

The Sesotho syllabus further explains that debate is an efficient teaching strategy used to check whether the learner is fluent and independent in the use of Sesotho language skills (MOET Government of Lesotho, 2021:5). These debates also helps learners to broadly understand Sesotho topics and improve their speaking and listening skills.

2.4.1.1.3. Games as a teaching strategy

Games have been used by language teachers as a teaching strategy to teach home languages before COVID-19. Previous studies note that games are used to improve learners' various communicative skills, and motivate learners to learn the language (Zhu, 2012:802). Literature also states that when learners learn through play, their communication skills, social life, creative thinking, critical thinking and problem-solving skills improve (Ventsekamy & Sibanda, 2021:256). Saputra and Aziz (2014:4) also note that games can also be used as a teaching strategy to make learners actively involved in their learning as well as attaining team learning and collaborative skills.

The findings of a study conducted in Turkish high school among Grade ten foreign language students revealed that learners showed their appreciation of games in their learning of English, showing that games have a motivating effect (Bush, 2015:27). In a study conducted in Sudan Basic Schools, it was also found that games are useful in languages teaching as they relieve stress, entertain, improve learners' language

skills and knowledge, create collaborative learning, and assist learners to participate in the classrooms (Ibrahim, 2017:148).

Sesotho Language teachers can use games more as a teaching strategy than as a recreation. As learners have fun and learn at the same time, their listening and speaking skills also develop better. This may also boost their love for Sesotho being involved in games.

2.4.1.1.4. Role-play as a teaching strategy

Role-play has been used as a strategy to teach home languages before COVID-19. In a role play, learners share information while collaborating and interacting with each other, thereby improving their language skills (Rashid & Qaisar, 2017:198). Role play assists learners to improve their language skills and understand what they have learnt related to the topic (Zhu, 2012:804). In a role-play, learners can creatively play out a real-life event related to the subject or topic being taught (Fernando & Marikar, 2017:114).

The LGCSE syllabus recommends role-play as a teaching strategy because it creates a real picture in the memory of a learner about what has been learnt (MOET Government of Lesotho, 2021:5). The syllabus suggests that Sesotho teachers give their learners different situations in groups, where they write speeches and then dramatize them in the classroom (MOET Government of Lesotho, 2021:35). They may choose some topics for their learners to role-play, which can make learning of a certain Sesotho topic being role-played simpler and more fun. Learners' Sesotho speaking and listening skills improve as they role-play.

2.4.1.1.5. Brainstorming as a teaching strategy

In some cases, brainstorming has been used as a teaching strategy for teaching home languages before COVID-19. Brainstorming is used so that learners generate new ideas about a given topic and come up with solutions (Rianingsih, 2015:116). It has been discovered that learners can generate ideas in small groups or as a whole class (Fernando & Marikar, 2017:114).

While brainstorming may be ineffective in large groups, it can help learners to solve their problems and build on the ideas of their fellow learners, as well as promote critical thinking (Saputra & Aziz, 2014:2). In learning the four language skills,

learners can be allowed, by their teachers to brainstorm in their different groups so that they develop the Sesotho Language skills and other critical skills.

For learners to come up with various ideas about a certain topic, the Sesotho teacher may allow them to brainstorm. This can make Sesotho topics to be simpler to the learners and improve their language skills of speaking and listening when they exchange and share ideas with each other. Through brainstorming, learners can come up with different ideas about Sesotho concepts, which can help them to develop their Sesotho knowledge.

2.4.1.1.6. Evidence-based teaching strategy

Before COVID-19, home languages were sometimes taught using evidence-based teaching strategy. Through this strategy, learners take part in a dialogue about literary concepts when they are being taught literacy skills (Ventsekamy & Sibanda, 2021:255). In addition, the teacher and learners can read aloud words written on wall charts as a way of helping them with pronunciation (Larsen-Freeman & Anderson, 2013:97). Sesotho high school teachers may as well use evidence-based teaching strategy to teach the four Sesotho language skills. This can equip Sesotho learners with more knowledge about Sesotho language concepts and activities that develop their language skills. If learners get involved in various dialogues with each other with the purpose of developing their Sesotho language skills, it could be very beneficial to them.

2.4.1.1.7. Reciprocal teaching as a strategy

Language teachers used the reciprocal teaching strategy to teach home languages before COVID-19. This teaching approach was discovered to be producing active learners who fully participate in their learning up to a point where they become independent readers and writers (Ventsekamy & Sibanda, 2021:256). It was found out that as a way of getting learners more involved in their learning, teachers can ask them to read bilingual books and then summarise them or discuss them with others so that their literacy skills develop (Szilágyi, Giambo & Szecsi, 2013:118).

In a study on the use of reciprocal teaching strategies to teach English as a first language in high schools, it emerged that dialogues between teachers and learners involved training learners on how to ask relevant questions and write suitable summaries (Ahmadi & Gilakjani, 2012:2054) that assist them to improve their

language skills. Literature also indicates that learners' verbal language can be developed when their teachers or parents read books to them (Chien, 2020:1), which helps them to become independent readers.

Reciprocal teaching is one of the teaching strategies that the Sesotho high school teachers can use to teach the four Sesotho language skills. With this teaching strategy, the Sesotho high school teachers can give learners reading comprehension or passages from different Sesotho books, which encourage them to independently expand their reading, writing, speaking and listening skills.

2.4.1.1.8. Problem-based learning as a strategy

Problem-based learning is one of the teaching strategies that language teachers used to teach home languages before COVID-19. With this strategy teachers guide learners throughout their learning activities, in trying to find a solution to the problem at hand and being independent (Ventsekamy & Sibanda, 2021:256). Previous researchers present this teaching strategy as a constructivist application as it requires the collaboration of learners in solving problems while applying various technologies (Tuncer, 2009:68).

Research recommends that language teachers establish situations for real activities in accordance with learners' daily life, to guide their learners into understanding, grasping and using correct grammar in those situations (Mondal, 2012:23). Research shows that this strategy is convenient for teaching English as a first language as the learners have an opportunity to communicate, interact and collaborate, motivate and assist those with poor language skills (Kassem, 2018:848). This is also compatible to the teaching of Sesotho as a first language. Literature also points that discussions are beneficial because learners become actively stimulated and involved in their learning, as they explore the knowledge that they already have, share ideas with others, and improve their language and thinking skills (Saputra & Aziz, 2014:3).

Problem-based learning can be used by the Sesotho high school teachers to teach the four Sesotho language skills, providing learners with problems so that they solve them independently. This also assists learners to build confidence and independence when they face language challenges outside their classrooms, thereby developing their own problem-solving strategies.

2.4.1.1.9. Research as a strategy

In some cases, language teachers used research as a teaching strategy before COVID-19. Scholars say that research, as a teaching strategy, encourages learners to develop an investigative attitude, which provides opportunities for them to acquire knowledge consistently and develop basic skills (Granjeiro, 2019:553).

With research as a teaching strategy, Sesotho high school teachers can give learners a chance to go and find out solutions to certain Sesotho concepts that they experience difficulties in, and further improve their Sesotho Language skills. The LGCSE Sesotho syllabus states that this teaching strategy equips learners with skills to rephrase quotations and use quotation marks for direct quotations (MOET Government of Lesotho, 2021:5). The Sesotho teachers can ask learners to go and find out about the work of written punctuation marks, find Sesotho books that have punctuation mistakes and then present their findings to the other learners in class, and give the correct punctuation (MOET Government of Lesotho, 2021:12). If the Sesotho high school teachers use this strategy, their learners will be more equipped with the research skills and develop their speaking, listening, reading and writing skills.

2.4.1.1.10. Question-and-answer as a strategy

Before COVID-19, language teachers used question-and-answer teaching strategies to teach home languages. Effective application of questioning skills by teachers boost student performance and make the teaching and learning environment more engaging and motivating (Shanmugavelu, Ariffin, Vadivelu, Mahayudin & Sundaram, 2020:45). A study conducted among International Baccalaureate (IB) programme students in the European region revealed that learners' language skills can be improved when teachers are directly asking individual questions that request a more in-depth answer (Tavoosy & Jelveh, 2019:81). Research shows that a successful way of implementing social constructivism in a lesson is through cooperative learning (Brau, 2020) where learners attain knowledge by asking and answering questions from each other.

In a study conducted in Malawi, it was recommended that teachers employ higher level questions that force students to "apply, synthesize, and analyse knowledge or information" to help evaluation (Fernando & Marikar, 2017:112). Sesotho teachers can use this strategy to give learners questions that require them to apply the

Sesotho concepts they have learned, and their speaking and writing skills will improve. The Sesotho teachers can also allow learners to ask and answer questions amongst themselves to develop the four Sesotho language skills. A study on teaching multilingual learners in Spanish schools discovered that learners read the Spanish text, then the teachers and learners formulate questions on that text which in turn gives them an opportunity to practice speaking and listening skills (Escamilla, Hopewell & Slavick, 2021:366).

Sesotho Language skills can improve if Sesotho teachers make a habit of asking questions to be answered verbally or in writing. The more they practice this, the more they become more fluent in Sesotho Language. Additionally, question and answer teaching strategy is regarded as essential in building relations among teachers and learners (Kapur, 2019:4). Sesotho teachers can use this strategy to establish good relations with their learners, which will result in good performance in the four Sesotho language skills. Literature also shows that questions encourage learners to participate in the learning, especially of new topics (Shanmugavelu *et al.*, 2020:47).

2.4.1.1.11. Presentation as a strategy

Presentation is also one of the teaching strategies that the language teachers used to teach home languages before COVID-19. Previous scholars found out that oral presentations are beneficial as they require learners to apply all four language skills; reading and writing skills to research and write presentations and speaking and listening skills during presentations (Wilson & Brooks, 2014:512-513). In various forms of presentations, the question-answer sessions are encouraged to convey the learners to ask and answer questions (Kapur, 2019:4). This improves their speaking and listening skills and allows them to become more engaging throughout the lesson. Wilson and Brooks (2014:512-513) further explain that teachers can also use oral presentations to give learners opportunities to communicate in their lessons. This can in turn be applied to Sesotho lessons to improve their language skills.

The LGCSE syllabus suggests that, during presentations, Sesotho teachers should encourage their learners to face their audience, raise their voices, to emphasise their main points, to speak firmly, and to stand straight (MOET Government of Lesotho, 2021:34). For starters, the Sesotho teachers can let their learners present about themselves, sharing their hobbies and interests to improve their language skills.

Through presentations, Sesotho teachers can give their learners different topics to go and read about, so that they present their findings to the others. The Grade 10 and 11 syllabus suggestion is that Sesotho teachers instruct their learners to go and research about the knowledge and acceptable ways that a Mosotho child learns from home, from peers and from the community, and then present their findings to others in the classroom (MOET Government of Lesotho, 2021:12). If Sesotho teachers allow their learners to do presentations during their lessons more often, that could assist to build learners' independence and confidence in speaking and listening to each other, and in reading and writing.

2.4.1.1.12. Demonstration as a strategy

Demonstrations are teaching strategies that the language teachers used to teach home languages before COVID-19. In using demonstration as a teaching strategy, teachers perform an activity and let the learners observe so that they can reproduce what has been done and said (Saputra & Aziz, 2014:4). A study on teaching multilingual learners in Spanish schools also found that, in a Spanish environment, language teachers let the learners imitate the language that they had to apply in their dialogues (Escamilla *et al.*, 2021:366).

Sesotho teachers can use demonstrations to teach the four Sesotho language skills, showing the learners how they should speak and listen to each other, and read and write some activities. Once the learners observe and imitate what their teacher demonstrates to them, they cannot easily forget.

2.4.2 Strategies used to teach home languages online.

Though COVID-19 forced immediate school closures, education had to proceed. Teachers turned to online teaching strategies. This section reviews literature on the online teaching strategies used to teach home languages in various countries. Literature on the application of these online strategies in South Africa and Lesotho is also reviewed. Obloberdiyevna and Odilkhonovna (2022:109) point out that multimedia sources such as songs, movies and newspapers can improve learners' language.

Online teaching strategies are different from during face-to-face ones (Compton, 2009:73). There are two ways in which online learning can be provided; in synchronous or asynchronous environments (Panigrahi, Srivastava & Sharma,

2018:1). E-learning denotes virtual classrooms through networks that emphasize the use of informational tools and applications by learners (Agbenyegah & Dlamini, 2019:84). The emergence of COVID-19 strengthened the use of technology and virtual learning in education (Kamble, Gauba, Desai & Golhar, 2021:200). At present, teaching and learning activities occur on virtual platforms, with the assistance of applications such as weblog, social networking and video-sharing sites (Matee, Motlohi & Nkiwane, 2021:2). As COVID-19 forced some schools to move to online teaching, the Ministry of Education in Chile advised schools to use online teaching strategies for learners to continue with teaching and learning (Sepulveda-Escobar & Morrison, 2020:587).

2.4.2.1. Tools and software used for teaching online

Research shows that effective online teaching and learning depends on the use of various online tools and software such as audio-recording and videos, for both teachers and learners to communicate successfully (Jabeen & Thomas, 2015:2). The use of platforms particularly designed to accommodate the needs of the curriculum can ensure elimination of various administrative and organisational issues (Tsvetkova & Borodzhieva, 2021:144).

Video platforms can be used to teach language skills without learners physically coming to one place to be taught. It was discovered that in Hong Kong, English Language teachers used video conferencing platforms such as Zoom to teach English as a second language (Cheung, 2021:1). The same can be used to teach the various learners' home language skills. In a study conducted in Ghana colleges, online learning was done on Whatsapp, Telegram, Zoom, Google meet and Google Classroom (Henaku, 2020:56). Since the introduction of e-learning in Malaysia in 2012, there was the adoption of various virtual learning environments, such as Blackboard, Moodle, Edmodo and Frog from the United Kingdom (UK) (Awang, Aji, Yaakob, Osman, Mukminin & Habibi, 2018:441).

In a study conducted in Iran among high school English teachers during COVID-19, the Ministry of Education launched a proprietary software product known as Shad for online education delivery on mobile phones, and later on personal computers (Askari & Chen, 2021:37). In a study conducted among Iranian English Language teachers, Microsoft PowerPoint presentations, in combination with other software, were

considered effective for teaching learners during the COVID-19 crisis (Khatoony & Nezhadmehr, 2020:91).

In a study conducted in Bulgarian secondary schools, it was identified that the use of mobile devices during lessons assisted learners to share information and check the meanings of some concepts from the internet using their phones (Nikolova, Georgiev, & Gachev, 2008:8). According to a study conducted in South African schools, virtual platforms like WhatsApp, Google Hangouts, Microsoft Teams, Zoom, YouTube, and Blackboard, which were efficient and only needed a little quantity of data, were utilized in schools to connect with students and exchange information with them (Maree, 2022:251). Basar, Mansor, Jamaludin and Alias (2021:120) consider online learning to be functional as it facilitates the implementation of several online platforms such as 'WhatsApp', 'Zoom' and 'Google Classroom'. Literature shows that digital learning platforms can provide learners with equal access to online content like digital textbooks, virtual classrooms, and other cutting-edge methods for accessing online learning resources. (Monareng, Ramraj & Mashau, 2020:16745). Literature reveals that, in order for online classes to be effective, a computer and internet connectivity is requisite (Kamble *et al.*, 2021:204).

During COVID-19, language teachers used the above-mentioned online platforms to teach. Through these online teaching platforms, several teaching strategies were used.

2.4.2.1.1. Online Discussions

Discussions can be used by language teachers as an online teaching strategy to teach the four language skills during the COVID-19 pandemic. The use of online platforms such as Skype can be used by language teachers to schedule a time where they and their learners engage in real online discussions to guide the learners (Chou, 2012:27).

In a study conducted on the use of Facebook (FB) groups as a learning platform, online discussions were found to be of assistance to learners in improving their reading, their critical thinking skills, and their vocabulary and grammar. They had to read more to build their knowledge and exchange their findings with the other discussion members (Omar, Embi & Yunus, 2012:70).

Literature indicates that online discussions promote interactive learning as they encourage learners to work in groups (Anderson, Goode, Mitchell & Thompson, 2013:131). The findings of a study on the implementation of social media platforms in teaching and learning revealed that learners' active participation in discussions on a Facebook page were encouraged by awarding learners grades for their participation (Churcher, Downs & Tewksbury, 2014:37).

In relation to Vygotsky's (1978) social constructivism which advocates for social interaction, the findings of a study in New Zealand schools showed that collaborative activities between teachers and learners were mediated through technology, which had a positive impact on learning (Yates *et al.*, 2021:69-70).

In previous studies, it was recognised that through computer-assisted discussions, learners practice writing, participate and collaborate, and learn how to carry out research on the internet (Warschauer & Meskill, 2000:303). This can improve the learners' language skills as they become active and participate in the discussions on various Sesotho topics. It has also been stated by previous researchers that learners engage in critical discussions to improve their reasoning abilities through their interaction with their teachers and other learners (Pilkington & Walker, 2003:60).

2.4.2.1.2. Online Question and Answer

One of the online teaching strategies that can also be used to teach the four languages skills is question and answer. Research revealed that teachers can engage learners in lessons through asking questions so that learners think about the content of a lesson (Shanmugavelu *et al.*, 2020:45). Literature shows that during online lessons, teachers must ask their learners challenging questions to keep learners focused throughout the lesson (Mahmood, 2021:201). The findings of a study conducted in one Indonesian high school showed that this teaching strategy had a positive impact in enhancing learners' achievement (Widodo, 2020:139). Tambak and Sukenti, (2019:126), in their research in an Islamic school, also found out that the application of question and answer as a teaching strategy arouses and challenges learners to read and research subject material.

The findings of a study in India showed that there was interaction of teachers and learners through asking questions, answering and sharing academic information on the WhatsApp groups created (Gon & Rawekar, 2017:23). In teaching the four

Sesotho Language skills online, the Sesotho teachers can ask learners questions with the expectation that they will give verbal and written answers, which will improve their speaking and writing skills. This will make the learners actively engaged in their learning of Sesotho concepts and their Sesotho Language skills.

2.4.2.1.3. Online Power Point Presentations

During online teaching and learning, language teachers can use presentation to teach the four language skills. Among Iranian English Language teachers, Microsoft PowerPoint presentations had an important role in improving learners' vocabulary of English as a foreign Language (Khatoony & Nezhadmehr, 2020:91). The Sesotho high school teachers may make use of Microsoft PowerPoint presentations to teach the Sesotho language skills and improving their learners' Sesotho vocabulary. Literature observes that this teaching strategy gives learners an opportunity to learn and understand the subject content deeply and allows them to practice speaking publicly online (Bennett, 2019) as they present more often. This teaching strategy was found to be efficient for teaching the speaking skill as the learners get a chance to speak online during the discussion of their presentation with their colleagues before presenting (Sakkir, Dollah & Ahmad, 2022:256). Sakkir *et al.* (2022:258) found out, in Indonesian schools, that online presentations can increase learners' motivation and improve their speaking skills. This strategy can also be helpful to Sesotho learners as their reading, writing, speaking and listening skills can equally develop. Their teachers can also give them topics to go and read more and research about, so that they present their findings to others and improve their research skills.

2.4.2.1.4. Online Debates

Language teachers can use debates as an online teaching strategy to teach the four language skills. An online platform where learners can be given an opportunity to argue about different topics can be valuable as learners' speaking and listening skills improves through debates. Social constructivist learning theory serves as the foundation for online interactive and collaborative features as the learners assist each other in the creation of knowledge of the topic being discussed (Hodgkinson-Williams & Mostert, 2005:95). Literature finds online debates allowing learners to read and write critically (Park, Kier & Jugdev, 2011:4) as they read more while preparing for debates. There is improvement of learners' participation and critical

thinking skills during online debate (Mitchell, 2019:23) when they critique each other's ideas.

Although online debates assist learners to critically learn to read and write, which leads to improved research and writing skills, incorporation of technology can be a challenge as it lacks non-verbal cues and can be a time-consuming process (Park *et al.*, 2011:4). Online debate may also be particularly suitable for assisting English language learners in picking up academic discourse in an asynchronous setting (Hodgkinson-Williams & Mostert, 2005:95). Previous researchers found out that application of this teaching strategy reinforces the skills of research, teamwork and collaboration (Bennett, 2019). The Sesotho teachers can use debate to teach Sesotho language skills online, so that their learners' research and language skills improves.

One of Sesotho syllabus' aims is to develop learners who can efficiently use technology (Republic of South Africa Department of Education (RSA DoE), 2011:5). The use of technology in the teaching of Sesotho in South African schools is recommended and can be incorporated anytime not only in crises such as COVID-19.

In South Africa, on 8 September 2020, the Minister of Basic Education launched E³ (Entrepreneurship, Employability and Education) WhatsApp TeacherConnect Platform that was created to empower and assist teachers during the teaching and learning in the COVID-19 era (Republic of South Africa Department of Basic Education (RSA DoE), 2020). In the speech, it was not stated that this tool was open to use for all the subjects.

Furthermore, the Minister of Basic Education made a speech on 28 September 2020, where the Embassy of Portugal officially donated 25 laptops to support education during COVID-19 (Republic of South Africa Department of Basic Education (RSA DoE), 2020). The donation of these laptops was not for specific subjects but were meant to support teaching and learning of all the subjects, including Sesotho.

CAPS recommends the incorporation of technology in the teaching and learning of Sesotho all the time, not only during crises. These speeches from the Minister of Education also indicate that, during the COVID-19 pandemic, the government

supported the teaching and learning of all the subjects with technology tools. It was expected that all the subjects, including Sesotho, be taught using technology like the launched WhatsApp platform.

2.4.3 Challenges of online teaching strategies

In the teaching and learning process, whether in face-to-face or online, there are challenges that teachers and/or learners may encounter. These may hinder the progress of education for learners.

2.4.3.1 *Loneliness and lack of participation*

Learners may feel lonely when they study online, without physical interaction with others. This may negatively affect their learning (Kebritchi, Lipschuetz & Santiague 2017:9). They can also experience low self-esteem and feel isolated from their learning community (Sepulveda-Escobar & Morrison, 2020:591). In online teaching, the teacher must implement new methods for carrying out online classes for learners to understand the concepts being taught (Gurung, 2021:11). This also puts more work for teachers to employ more teaching strategies that would simplify concepts for learners.

Lack of participation in online lessons can also be a major challenge for learning among learners. As social constructivism encourages learners, through their experiences and reflections on those experiences, to create their understanding and knowledge (Bada, & Olusegun, 2015:67); it is necessary for learners to be more engaged with activities that will keep them motivated and not lonely in their learning. Learners' attitude can be a challenge for effective use of online learning (Basar *et al.*, 2021:120) as it may lead to lack of participation in an online lesson.

In a study conducted on online teaching challenges faced by schools in North America, Europe, South America, Asia, Asia-Pacific, and Africa, learners faced difficulties in asking questions immediately or asking for clarification if the teacher recorded the lesson (Hassan, 2021:44). This led to poor participation of learners. In a study on the challenges of online learning, literature shows that learners' participation in the online lessons was affected by personal factors such as household chores or a baby crying which disrupted attendance of the lessons (Gillett-Swan, 2017:27). Literature from previous studies also shows that, during the pandemic, though learners united and connected with their families, they were

actually lonely, away from their peers, and depressed, which affected their online academic performance (Ellis, Dumas & Forbes, 2020:178).

Because of poor participation, it has been found out in a study on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on rural English FAL teachers' lesson planning, that the learners' absenteeism negatively affected their learning, and compelled teachers to repeat the same content and delay starting a new one (Mokoena, 2022:386). In a study where WhatsApp was applied in teaching and learning, it was found that, for learners to be active and fully participate in WhatsApp activities, the monitoring and support of the community members was vital (Moodley, 2019:8).

2.4.3.2 Network and connectivity problems

The other challenge that may hinder online teaching is network problems encountered by either the teacher or the learners. In a study conducted at Lesotho university amidst the COVID-19 pandemic, the establishment of online teaching and learning was compromised by lack of access of the internet, poor connectivity, unreasonable data costs, and recurring power cessation (Makumane, 2021:2).

It has also been discovered, in previous studies, that in South Africa's KwaZulu Natal rural areas lack connectivity, which has a negative impact on education, preventing learners from accessing information for their studies (Dube, 2020:145). In a study conducted in Malaysian public secondary schools. Poor internet connection blocked online teaching and learning (Izhar, Al-dheleai, & Na, 2021:1299). In Iran, when teaching English Language online, an English teacher discovered low class attendance during her first session because she and her learners could hardly log onto the system and attend sessions (Shahnama, Yazdanmehr & Shirvan, 2021:12). In a study conducted among Iranian English Language teachers, it was revealed that the main challenge experienced in implementing online classes was the speed of internet in their country (Khatoony & Nezhadmehr, 2020:102). Mukuna and Aloba (2020:145) found that in one rural school in South Africa, lack of internet connectivity was an obstacle for learners to access study materials online.

As online learning requires both teachers and learners to use internet, costs of internet bundles and connectivity may hinder online teaching and learning. As much as it is challenging to college students, it is also equally a challenge even to high

school learners learning online from their different homes. Various South African primary, secondary, and tertiary schools are located in poor and resource-scarce areas. Learners in these areas are also come from poor households who either do not own smart phones, access to internet or no navigation skills for available online resources (Maree, 2022:252). UNICEF 2020 Report (2020:2) also points out that during COVID-19, learners from just 20% of families could afford to continuously access online education, despite the Lesotho government's efforts to continue with education through radio and television programmes during school closures.

2.4.3.3. Lack of technical equipment and knowledge

Shortage of technical equipment and knowledge on how to operate such equipment can be a challenge for teachers to teach online. In a study conducted in India on challenges faced by developed and developing countries, it was found that there was lack of technical tools and lack of training about using those tools to teach online in some developing countries (Naresh & Reddy, 2015:260). In Malaysian public secondary schools, teachers stated that they were not knowledgeable enough and lacked technological skills to change hardcopy information into softcopy information and share to learners using online platforms (Izhar *et al.*, 2021:1299). The findings of a study conducted among English teachers in an Independent Chinese secondary school in Malaysia further confirmed that poor ICT skills for teachers posed problems in the incorporation of ICT equipment in English Language teaching (Raman & Yamat, 2014:17).

A study conducted in Riyadh showed that learner commitment in online learning can be affected negatively by technology glitches or lack of support services (Gangwani & Alfryan, 2020:4). Sesotho high school teachers may face a challenge in online teaching if their learners experience technology cliches or lack of support services such as loss of signal during online classes, leading to learners losing participation in online lessons.

According to a study in Pekanbaru schools, instructors' knowledge, attitudes, and confidence in technical abilities, as well as insufficient training in technology and technical assistance, were obstacles to online teaching (Zulkifli & Hayati, 2021:16). Literature also shows that lack of technological equipment is considered a challenge to the efficacy of online learning (Basar *et al.*, 2021:120). Although there may be

technological equipment for Sesotho teachers to use for teaching online, their attitude, confidence and inadequate technical knowledge may be an obstacle for effective online teaching.

2.4.3.4. Lack of data

Lack of data can also be a problem for teachers and learners when conducting online teaching and learning. In a study conducted in Malaysian public secondary schools, it was noticed that one of the challenges that mobile data users experienced in online teaching and learning was inadequate data (Izhar *et al.*, 2021:1299). A study among rural learners in South Africa discovered that costly data obstructs online learning (Dube, 2020:148). Another study conducted in a South African rural school revealed that data costs and lack of devices were a challenge to online teaching and learning (Mukuna & Aloka, 2020:145), and hindered online teaching and learning of Sesotho.

2.4.3.5. No specific guidelines about teaching strategies to be used from the government

No specific guidelines on how online teaching should be done could be a challenge to both teachers and learners during COVID-19. Literature indicates that English FAL instructors did not get Department of Basic Education guidance for planning their classes in accordance with the curricula that had been cut in response to the COVID-19 outbreak in a number of rural schools in the country (Mokoena, 2022:380).

Mokenela (2019:167) found, in a study conducted in Lesotho, that there was no straightforward policy on ICT and its integration in Lesotho education from primary school level to higher learning. Although these findings are located in higher learning, similar findings may apply to the high schools.

In a 41st session of the general conference of the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) conference in France, the Lesotho Minister of Education stated that, despite the COVID-19 challenges, the government successfully ensured that teaching and learning continues in schools through the use of online teaching and learning resources for both teachers and learners (MOET Government of Lesotho, 2021:3). However, this was not the case among the Sesotho teachers and learners of the participant schools.

2.4.4 Opportunities of online teaching strategies

Though there may be several challenges encountered during the use of online teaching strategies, there may also be opportunities and benefits of using online teaching strategies. Online learning provides several learning opportunities to many learners at a cheaper cost (Lie *et al.*, 2020:806).

2.4.4.1. *Clarification of concepts*

A concept is explained as details of a certain subject (Cambridge dictionary, 2022). A study conducted in Hong Kong found that language teachers used Zoom to interact with learners and check their understanding (Cheung, 2021:11). This gave teachers an opportunity to meet with the learners online and discuss concepts and questions together. The use of this platform creates an environment where teachers can clarify difficult concepts for slow learners.

In Bulgarian secondary schools, it was found that an e-learning platform was used in English language lessons to improve the learners' English language skills. This was helpful in creating teams and group work in which the learners clarified tasks (Nikolova *et al.*, 2008:8). If e-learning platform was used to improve learners' English language skills, the Sesotho teachers can also use these online platforms to teach Sesotho language skills.

The Sesotho high school teachers may also use platforms such as this one, during COVID-19 and other similar crises, to connect with learners and continue with teaching and learning. By using such platform as Zoom, Sesotho teachers can give clarifications of some Sesotho concepts to the learners in the same way they used to during face-to-face lessons.

2.4.4.2 *Different platforms of obtaining knowledge*

Through different technological devices and use of various platforms, can also assist in the learning of new language concepts. Learners are also able to search for information about the difficult concepts in their subjects from various sources using WebURL (Oliver, 1999:244). In a study conducted in Bulgarian secondary schools, it was found that application of mobile devices during lessons greatly assisted learners as they shared information and checked the meanings of some concepts from the internet using their phones (Nikolova *et al.*, 2008:8). This gives learners an opportunity to explore information relevant to their studies. It can also be relevant to

this study if the Sesotho teachers provide different online platforms for learners to get knowledge about difficult Sesotho concepts.

Online teaching offers teachers an opportunity to learn broadly about various online platforms, and how they can be used to teach and simplify concepts for learners (Sepulveda-Escobar & Morrison, 2020:596). This can make Sesotho teaching and learning more enjoyable and fruitful as the youth enjoy using technological devices, especially their cell phones, all the time. In a study conducted in Iran among high school English teachers, it was found out that the online system used for delivering education during COVID-19 allowed flow of information between teachers and learners, which let teachers keep track of their learners' performance (Askari & Chen, 2021:37).

2.4.4.3. Accessible online tools and software

In online teaching, there are various online tools and software that language teachers can use to teach the four language skills to their learners. It was found in a study conducted in various institutes and study centres in the United Arab Emirates, that a language learning programme founded on web-based instruction (WBI) offers practice in the four language skills of reading, writing, listening and speaking, by exposing learners to a real learning environment, where they interact and become lively (Jabeen, & Thomas, 2015:2). Through the application of various software products in online learning, learners can attain knowledge and develop important skills (Tsvetkova, & Borodzhieva, 2021:146). The studies in Hong Kong have also confirmed that during synchronous online teaching, learners can attain knowledge from intensified inspiration, linguistic output, participation and interaction (Kohnke & Moorhouse, 2022:297). This may also enhance the learning of Sesotho in high schools.

2.4.4.4. Flexible time and pace study

Online teaching and learning gives both teachers and learners an opportunity to get to lessons at their own convenient time and place. In a study on the online learning in institutions of higher learning in the United States, it was found that, in online learning, the choice of sequence, pace and amount of content that learners have to study at a certain time led to good performance of learners (Kebritchi *et al.*, 2017:9). This can also apply to online lessons in Sesotho high schools if Sesotho content lessons are put online for learners to access and study at their own rate, space and

time. That can lead to improvement in the Sesotho Language skills as the learners will have more time to practice.

Virtual learning is user friendly as it can be accessed from any place at any time, and the learners can have online discussions among each other (Younesi, 2021:16). Sesotho learners can discuss with others in online learning, at the time and place that they find convenient for them. That interaction with others can also improve their speaking and listening skills.

2.5 Summary

This chapter covered the theoretical frameworks; social constructivism and the Unified Theory of Acceptance and use of Technology and reviewed related international and national literature on the online teaching strategies used to teach languages. The focus was on the following aspects: teaching strategies used to teach Sesotho before COVID-19, online teaching strategies used to teach languages, challenges of online teaching strategies used during COVID-19, and opportunities of online teaching strategies. In the following chapter, the research methodology is discussed.

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction In the previous chapter, the researcher reviewed literature related to the objectives of the study, and expanded on the two theoretical frameworks; social constructivism and UTAUT model. In this chapter, the researcher explains and discusses the underlying research paradigm, research approach, research design, the data collection instruments, sampling methods and the data analysis methods applied in this study. The measures that the researcher applied to ensure that there was data trustworthiness, and ethical conduct are also explained.

3.2 Research Paradigm

According to Maree (2010:47), a paradigm is defined as “a set of assumptions or beliefs about fundamental aspects of reality which gives rise to a particular world-view”. Paradigm in educational research is a researcher’s perspective that informs the explanation of research data (Kivunja & Kuyini, 2017:26). “Paradigms serve as the lens or organising principles by which reality is interpreted” (Maree, 2010:48).

Paradigms are founded on epistemology, ontology and methodology (Khan, 2014a:225). Epistemology is more focused on how people know reality or how people get to see reality (Maree, 2010:55). Khan (2014b:300) further explains epistemology as relating to the way knowledge is obtained determined by the connection between the researcher and participants. Ontology is defined as the study of the nature of reality (Maree, 2010:48). According to Khan (2014b:300), methodology covers the process and the method of acquiring knowledge through various sources like face-to-face interviews and document analysis.

3.2.1 Interpretive paradigm

This study used the interpretive paradigm. Maree (2010:59) see interpretive studies as attempting to identify experiences through meanings that individuals give to phenomenon. One characteristic of the interpretive paradigm is that it is concerned with individuals (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2007:21). According to Bertram and Christiansen (2014:26), an interpretive paradigm aims to better understand how people make sense of the circumstances around them. The researcher used this

paradigm to identify the experiences of the Sesotho high school teachers when using online teaching strategies to teach Sesotho during the COVID-19 crisis.

The interpretive paradigm allows the researcher to interpret the meanings participants have about the phenomenon being explored (Creswell, 2007:21), in this case, online teaching strategies that they use to teach Sesotho during COVID-19.

The interpretive paradigm further recognises various interpretations informed by theory as equally correct (Bertram, & Christiansen, 2014:26). Through this paradigm, the researcher identifies the online teaching strategies used by Sesotho teachers through the interpretations informed by the social constructivist theory and UTAUT as valid. Henning (2004:20) observes that the interpretive paradigm aims to create descriptive analyses that emphasise deep, explanatory understanding of societal occurrences. This aligns with the aim of this research project meant to yield in-depth understanding of the online teaching strategies used by high school teachers to teach Sesotho during COVID-19.

From the epistemological view, interpretivists see knowledge as constructed by both the researcher and the participants (Khan, 2014b:299). In this study, the researcher and the participants both created knowledge, through semi-structured interviews and document analysis, on the online teaching strategies that the participants used to teach Sesotho during COVID-19. The interviews were conducted with the six Sesotho teachers assisted the researcher to determine their understanding and experiences of online teaching strategies that they used to teach Sesotho during the COVID-19 pandemic. The documents collected from the participants and analysed were also helpful with identifying the teaching strategies that the participants used to teach Sesotho before COVID-19.

In terms of ontology in interpretivism, multiple realities are collectively created by the researcher and participants (Khan, 2014b:299). The collection of data through semi-structured interviews and document analysis provided multiple realities with various experiences and meanings of different participants. These realities were also necessary as they assisted in the identification of teaching strategies participants used before COVID-19, and the online teaching strategies they used during COVID-19. The researcher was able to compare the data from the interviews and the documents as they had multiple truths. These multiple sources assisted the

researcher to answer the study's research questions to understand the online teaching strategies from different Sesotho teachers during COVID-19.

3.3 Research Approach

Research approaches are study plans and procedures that cover anything from general assumptions to specific data gathering and analysis methodologies. It involves the intersection of philosophical assumptions, designs, and specific methods (Creswell & Creswell, 2017:295). They entail bringing philosophical concepts, designs, and specific methodologies together (Creswell & Creswell, 2017:295).

There are three different research approaches namely; qualitative, quantitative and mixed methods, but this study employed the qualitative research approach.

3.3.1 Qualitative Approach

The qualitative research approach was used in this study. Qualitative research is an approach of studying and interpreting the meaning that individuals or groups attach to a social or human issue (Creswell & Creswell, 2017:32). It is used to explore a problem that involves a group of people (Creswell, 2007:39-40). Qualitative research in education aims to better understand how people learn by focusing on the individual and studying small groups of people (Sullivan & Sargeant, 2011:449). As COVID-19 brought the online teaching and learning which was new to the teaching of Sesotho, this approach relates with this study as it assists the researcher to interpret meanings of the online teaching strategies that the Sesotho high school teachers use to teach Sesotho during COVID-19.

Qualitative researchers must focus on important, meaningful, and stable occurrences while also maintaining a balance between academic realism and contextual information (Pearse, 2021:96). The researcher understood how Sesotho high school teachers taught Sesotho during COVID-19 through the online platform. Hammarberg, Kirkman and de Lacey (2016:499) note that qualitative methods are employed to respond to research questions about experience, meaning and perspectives; especially from the participant's viewpoint. Data in the form of words and sentences, which often represent perceptions of something, is collected using interviews (Kabir, 2016:202). The focus of this study was to address the research questions from Sesotho high school teachers' point of view, with regard to their

experiences on using online teaching strategies. The interviews probed teachers' experiences on the teaching strategies that they used before COVID-19, online teaching strategies that they used during COVID-19, and the challenges and opportunities. The participants freely expressed their experiences and challenges about teaching during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Qualitative research is also appropriate for examining attitudes and behaviours that are best understood in their natural environment (Babbie, Mouton, Vorster, & Prozesky, 2004:47). The researcher and the participants engage face to face in a natural environment (Creswell, 2007:59). The researcher collected data in the chosen schools using face-to-face interviews and examined the participants' attitudes and behaviours.

3.4 Research Design

A research design is an investigation plan, structure, and strategy created to find solutions to a research problem (Kumar, 1999:94). It specifies how respondents will be chosen, how data will be collected, and how it will be analysed after it has been collected (Maree, 2010:70). In this study, the researcher used a case study research design.

3.4.1 Case study research design

A case study research design was employed in this study. Bertram and Christiansen (2014:42) say "a case study is a systematic and in-depth study of one particular case in its context, where the case may be a person or a group of people". The case in this study was a group of Sesotho high school teachers in Qacha's Nek district of Lesotho, teaching Sesotho during the COVID-19 pandemic using different online teaching strategies. Bertram and Christiansen (2014:42) observe that researchers employ case study with the "aim of capturing the reality of the participants' lived experiences of and thoughts about a particular situation". This research design aligns with the current study as it enables the researcher to explore the Sesotho high school teachers' existing teaching experiences and challenges of using online teaching strategies during COVID-19 pandemic. Maree (2010:75) adds that researchers have applied case studies to respond to "how" questions for decades. This case study sought to find out how Sesotho teachers taught Sesotho using the online teaching strategies during the COVID-19 pandemic.

A case study may include one or multiple cases (Gustafsson, 2017:8). One of the purposes of conducting a multiple case study is to explore various circumstances in order to recognise similarities and differences between them (Baxter & Jack, 2008:550). In this study, multiple case studies allowed for an understanding of the similarities and differences of online teaching strategies used by six Sesotho teachers from three different high schools while teaching Sesotho during COVID-19.

The researcher conducted a multiple case study to acquire knowledge about special situations, and clearly define their uniqueness (Crowe, Creswell, Robertson, Huby, Avery & Sheikh, 2011:1). In this study, the researcher interviewed six Sesotho high school teachers to attain knowledge on their online teaching strategies, and their diversity from the teaching strategies they used before COVID-19.

3.5 Sampling

This study employed purposive sampling. Purposive sampling is applied to get in-depth knowledge from information-rich sources on specific concerns (Cohen *et al.*, 2007:115). In-depth knowledge about online teaching strategies used to teach Sesotho during COVID-19 was collected from the Sesotho high school teachers qualified to teach Sesotho at high school before and during COVID-19. Purposive sampling implies that participants are chosen based on a distinguishing characteristic that qualifies them as data providers for the study (Maree, 2010:79). The researcher purposively selects the participants with the specific characteristics. Two Sesotho high school teachers were selected per school, in the three chosen high schools in Qacha's Nek district, Lesotho. These teachers should have taught Sesotho before the advent of COVID-19 pandemic and during COVID-19. In that way, they would possess rich knowledge about the phenomenon under the investigation. When using purposive sampling, the targeted participants represent themselves, not the broader population (Bertram & Christiansen, 2014:60). Hence, the Sesotho high school teachers selected were not a representation of all the Sesotho high school teachers in Lesotho.

3.5.1 Description of the research site

The three high schools, where data was collected, are located in the outskirts of Qacha's Nek town. Learners who attend these schools come from the rural villages of the district. Some learners reside in the schools' boarding houses while others

reside in their homes and in small, rented houses. The same goes for the teachers at these schools who lived either in schools' campuses or in their houses outside the school. The interviewed six Sesotho teachers, two per three schools, were all females as they were selected by the head of the department in languages and was informed that there were no male Sesotho teacher in those schools.

In Lesotho, Sesotho is taught as a compulsory subject in all high schools. Therefore, data collected for this study were used to respond to the main research question on the Sesotho online teaching strategies used to teach Sesotho by six Sesotho teachers in three high schools of Qacha's Nek district. The data were collected through the face-to-face individual semi-structured interviews and document analysis. Before the interviews, the researcher enquired from the participants the choice of language that they would like to use during interviews, between Sesotho and English. All the participants chose to be interviewed in Sesotho. All the interviews were recorded and then translated from Sesotho to English during transcription. The lesson plans were collected after the interviews to verify the stated teaching strategies used to teach Sesotho before COVID-19. The required lesson plans were handed by the participants to the researcher, no middlemen were involved in the process. The data collection for this study was done after hard lockdown, when the schools had already re-opened. The researcher was also informed that there were no lesson plans made for the teaching that was done while the schools were closed though there was teaching and learning that occurred during that period. The lesson plans collected were the ones used prior to COVID-19 while the teaching and learning platform was face-to face. The three schools were selected for data collection of this study as they taught their learners before and during COVID-19, so the Sesotho teachers were suitable participants for the collection of data.

[3.6 Data collection instruments](#)

Two data collection methods were used in this study, namely; individual semi-structured face-to-face interviews, and document analysis. The researcher would also have wanted to use observations but was not able to, due to COVID-19. The interviews were used to collect data about research questions (a), (b), (c) and (d); while the documents, lesson plans, were used to collect data for research question (a) only to ensure that the findings are reliable.

Table 1- The link between data collection instruments

Data collection instruments	Research questions	Unit of analysis
Individual semi-structured interviews and document analysis (lesson plans).	a) How did Sesotho high school teachers teach Sesotho before COVID-19 pandemic?	The participants, during the interviews, explained the teaching strategies that they used to teach Sesotho before COVID-19. The lesson plans that were used before COVID-19 supplemented the interviews as they verified the application of face-to-face teaching strategies.
Individual semi-structured interviews	b) What online strategies were used to teach Sesotho during COVID-19?	Through the interviews, the Sesotho high school teachers explained the online teaching strategies that they used to teach Sesotho during COVID-19. The participants informed the researcher that no lesson plans were prepared during COVID-19 as they volunteered to teach.
Individual semi-structured interviews	c) What are the limitations posed by the online instructional strategies used to teach	As the researcher conducted the interviews, the participants revealed the limitations posed by online teaching strategies they used to teach Sesotho during COVID-19.

	Sesotho by high school teachers during the COVID-19 pandemic?	
Individual semi-structured interviews	d) What opportunities were presented by the online instructional strategies used to teach Sesotho by high school teachers during the COVID-19 pandemic?	The Sesotho high school teachers talked about the opportunities presented by the online teaching strategies that they used to teach Sesotho during COVID-19.

3.6.1 Face-to-face semi-structured interviews

An interview is a conversation between the researcher and the participant, where the researcher asks questions (Bertram, & Christiansen, 2014:80). In this study, the researcher designed interview questions related to the research questions.

In an individual semi-structured interview, the interviewer draws information from the interviewee by asking questions that allow participants to explore matters they feel are essential (Longhurst, 2003:143). The researcher collected data by asking questions that allowed Sesotho teachers to give their views on their overall experiences with online teaching strategies they used to teach Sesotho during this pandemic.

Interviews are used in interpretivist research with the intention of exploring and characterising people's distinct views and understandings (Bertram & Christiansen, 2014:82). The researcher used interviews to explore Sesotho teachers' different opinions and meanings of online teaching strategies they used to teach during the pandemic. Interviews are also known for their flexibility in data collection as they allow verbal and non-verbal communication and permit the interviewer to dig deeper

for explanations (Cohen *et al.*, 2007:349). Roulston and Choi (2018:233) add that “[I]n semi-structured interviews, follow-up questions – also referred to as probes – are formulated relative to what interviewees have already said”. The researcher structured interviews in a way that allowed probing to get data that answered the research questions.

Advantages of interviews

1. A researcher can ask the participants more questions to acquire information if the one initially given is not sufficient.
2. The researcher can clarify questions.
3. The participants find it easier to talk to the researcher rather than writing answers in questionnaires.
4. This data collection method is good for obtaining in-depth data from few people (Bertram & Christiansen, 2014:83).

The researcher was able to probe to get information about online teaching strategies they used to teach Sesotho during COVID-19. Where participants did not understand the questions, the researcher clarified the questions on the spot. This method of data collection was also convenient for the participants as they preferred talking over writing answers on the experiences that they encountered using the online teaching strategies to teach Sesotho during COVID-19.

Disadvantages of interviews

1. In interviews, power relations for the researcher may influence the kind of information that the participants give.
2. Huge amounts of data are generated during the transcription of interviews.
3. Data generated during interviews needs to be verified by observation in case the information given by the respondent does not resemble the one given in the interviews. (Bertram, & Christiansen, 2014:83).

These disadvantages did not affect collection of data as the power relations for the researcher had no influence on the data that the participants gave. Data generated, through semi-structured interviews and documents, did not need to be verified by

observation as the participants did not use online teaching strategies during the time of data collection. Data that was verified by lesson plans was the one that concerned the teaching strategies used before COVID-19. The researcher compared the data collected from the semi-structured interviews and the one collected from the syllabus and the lesson plans used before COVID-19. This was done by checking if the teaching strategies mentioned during the interviews aligned with the ones stated in the lesson plans, and those recommended by the Sesotho high school syllabus.

3.6.2 Document Analysis

The utilisation of documents can also aid in the answering of research questions (Dalglish, Khalid & McMahon, 2020:1425).

Advantages of document analysis

1. Document analysis is more efficient as compared to other research methods.
2. This method of data collection is less costly as data in the documents is already available for analysis (Bowen, 2009:32).

This method was convenient as the data in the lesson plans and Sesotho high school syllabus was ready to be analysed, and for verifying the data collected with interview.

Disadvantage of document analysis

There may be biased selection of documents if the chosen documents in an organisational environment are likely to be in line with corporate policies and procedures as well as the objectives of the organization's principals (Bowen, 2009:32). The selection of the documents, lesson plans, that the researcher required was done by the participants. The lesson plans that were collected answered the research questions of this study as they consisted of the teachers' activities and learners' activities. Some of those lesson plans abstracts are attached in this study to show their validity.

3.7 Data Trustworthiness

Trustworthiness was ensured in this study. The research findings' credibility is determined by whether they reflect plausible knowledge derived from the participants' original data, and whether they accurately represent the participants' original viewpoints (Korstjens & Moser, 2018:121). In this study, the researcher used

an audio-recording device and note-writing to collect data during interviews to ensure credibility. After collecting data, transcripts were sent to the participants to verify whether it was a reflection of what they said during the interviews.

Telephonic pilot testing was conducted before collection of data, to ensure its credibility. Pilot testing assists in conducting research, as it determines the flaws and limitations that might be there in the design of interviews and allows the researcher to revise the data collection instruments before implementing the study (Turner, 2010:757). The researcher conducted pilot testing through telephonic interview with two Sesotho high school teachers in two schools in the Qacha's Nek district, who shares the same characteristics with the study sample. This was done after attaining ethical clearance, but before collecting data for the study. In this study, pilot testing was helpful as the researcher was able to correct and revise the weaknesses in the interview questions though data collected from it was not analysed and interpreted. By so doing, the credibility of collected data was ensured.

To ensure credibility of data collected through document analysis, the researcher took photos, using mobile phone camera, of participants' lesson plans, and downloaded the Sesotho high school syllabus from the MOET website. Those photos were taken with permission from the participants. The data from the lesson plans was analysed referring to those photos.

Lincoln and Guba discussed credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability as the four principles of trustworthiness, which various qualitative researchers have accepted and considered as important (Nassaji, 2020:428).

Credibility

Credibility refers to the accuracy of the data or participant perspectives, as well as the researcher's interpretation and representation of them (Cope, 2014:89). This means that the researcher maintains the accuracy of data collected from the participants and its interpretation and representation. Credibility in qualitative research relates to the degree to which the research findings and conclusions can reflect the reality of the phenomenon being studied (Nassaji, 2020:428).

Member checking: In a case where a tape recorder is used, respondents may be required to see transcripts of any conversations in which they took part to check

whether they believe their statements reflect what they truly intended (Shenton, 2004:68). Nassaji (2020:428) adds that the researcher can ensure credibility of data by sharing data and interpretations of the study with the respondents to check if they agree with them. After transcribing data from the voice recorder, the researcher sent transcripts to the participants for verification of data collected during the interviews.

Multiple sources of data collection: To make data more authentic and credible, multiple sources of data collection; individual face-to-face interviews and document analysis were used in this study.

Pilot testing of instruments: Before collecting data, the researcher telephonically interviewed two Sesotho high school teachers, who shared the same characteristics as the sample, to pilot test the interview questions. This was done so that interview questions with flaws are revised before collection of data for the study.

Transferability:

Transferability is referred to as researcher's findings and interpretations that can be applied to various situations that are similar, through the use of verbatim quotations of participants, detailed description of research context (Cope, 2014:89, Nassaji, 2020:428). In this study, the researcher's findings and interpretations can be applied in online teaching of Sesotho during similar crises such as COVID-19.

Dependability:

Data consistency under identical situations is referred to as dependability (Cope, 2014:89).

coding and re-coding of data: In qualitative research, the peer examination of the project by academics and peers is welcomed, so that their views help the researcher redesign and strengthen the arguments in the research (Shenton, 2004:67). After collection of data, the researcher coded and re-coded it.

Confirmability:

Confirmability refers to the researcher's capacity to establish that the data accurately reflects the participants' responses rather than the researcher's perspectives (Cope, 2014:89). The researcher confirmed that the participants' responses on the teaching

strategies reflected lesson plan data, and also related to the teaching strategies recommended in the Sesotho high school syllabus.

data audit: In establishing data audit, the researcher needs to provide all research decisions and activities proceedings of the study (Carcary, 2009:15). Carcary (2009:16) further states that data audit enables a researcher to review the development of a study. In qualitative research, data audit of detailed notes are kept and reviewed by other researchers to prevent biases (Connelly, 2016:435). In this study, data was audited by other researchers to prevent biases.

Triangulation: In a qualitative research, triangulation includes various methods of collection of data such as individual interviews, and document analysis (Shenton, 2004:65). In this study, there was triangulation as the researcher used individual face-to-face semi-structured interviews and document analysis to collect data.

3.8 Data collection procedures

The procedures of data collection are discussed in this section. The researcher discussed how data for this study was collected through face-to-face semi-structured interviews and document analysis. The ethical considerations of informed consent, anonymity, confidentiality, voluntariness and how permission to collect data from the Qacha's Nek District Education Manager, the schools' principals and the participants was asked, are discussed in this section.

3.9 Data analysis

Data yielded in this study was analysed using content qualitative analysis. Maree (2010:101) defines content analysis as an analysis of written documents, focusing on the similarities and differences in the content. Basically, qualitative content analysis is interpreting, speculating, or making sense of data by breaking it down into segments that can be classified and tagged, and then developing a model for the full data set by linking the categories (Jackson, Drummond & Camara, 2007:24). To examine the quality of responses to open-ended interview questions, content analysis is performed (Maree (2010:101).

In this study, the researcher analysed interview transcripts and notes, paying attention to the similarities and differences of the teaching strategies used to teach Sesotho before COVID-19 and the online teaching strategies used to teach Sesotho during COVID-19, and to those of the international studies. Hsieh and Shannon

(2005:1278) note that the focus of content analysis is on the features of language as communication, with an emphasis on the text's content obtained from interviews, which may be print or electronic. The researcher's focus, when analysing data, was on the recorded participants' experiences on the teaching strategies, face-to-face and online, that were used to teach the Sesotho language skills.

Creswell and Poth (2018) say that, in analysing qualitative data, the researcher follows the steps of managing and organising the data; reading and memoing emergent ideas; "describing and classifying codes into themes; developing and assessing interpretations and representing and visualising the data" (Babchuk, 2019:4). The researcher started with the transcription of the interviews. The researcher then read transcripts, sent them to the participants for verification, and later created themes, sub-themes and categories. Later, the researcher reported and interpreted data collected, and discussed the findings of the study.

3.10 Ethical considerations Before collecting data in this study, the researcher applied for ethical clearance from the University of the Free State Ethics committee and was granted. The permission to collect data was sought from and granted by the Lesotho Ministry of Education and Training, and from the principals of the three Qacha's Nek high schools. Before being interviewed, the participants were informed of the purpose of this study and requested to participate in the study. They were informed of their voluntary participation in this study. Maree (2010:41) asserts that "an essential ethical aspect is the issue of the confidentiality of the results and findings of the study and the protection of the participants' identities". The researcher ensured that there was no disclosure of the results and findings of this study. The schools' and teachers' identities remained confidential and anonymous. For confidentiality reasons, the researcher used these pseudonyms for the participants interviewed: T1SA (Teacher 1 for School A); T2SA (Teacher 2 for School A); T1SB (Teacher 1 for School B); T2SB (Teacher B for School B); T1SC (Teacher 1 for School C); T2SC (Teacher 2 for School C).

3.10 Summary

In this chapter, the researcher explained and discussed the underlying research paradigm, research approach, research design, the data collection instruments, sampling methods and the data analysis methods employed in this study. The

measures that the researcher applied to ensure data trustworthiness and ethical conduct of the research were explained.

CHAPTER 4: PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA

Introduction

This study sought to explore the online teaching strategies used by high school teachers to teach Sesotho during COVID-19. This chapter therefore, presents, analyses and interprets data generated in an attempt to achieve the objectives of this study. The objectives of this study were as follows:

- a) To explore the teaching strategies used to teach Sesotho by high school teachers before the COVID-19 pandemic.
- b) To identify the online teaching strategies used to teach Sesotho during COVID-19 pandemic.
- c) To highlight the limitations posed by the online instructional strategies used to teach Sesotho by high school teachers during COVID-19 pandemic.
- d) To highlight the opportunities posed by the online instructional strategies used to teach Sesotho by high school teachers during COVID-19 pandemic.

The data generated through individual face-to-face semi-structured interviews in this study was transcribed, and then structured into themes, sub-themes and categories, before it was analysed. Data collected through lesson plans were also analysed. These themes relate to the four sub-research questions on online teaching strategies Sesotho high school teachers used to teach Sesotho during COVID-19. The themes were as follows: the teaching strategies used by high school teachers to teach Sesotho before the COVID-19 pandemic; the online teaching strategies used to teach Sesotho during COVID-19 pandemic; the limitations posed by the online instructional strategies used by high school teachers to teach Sesotho during COVID-19 pandemic; and the opportunities presented by the online instructional strategies used by high school teachers to teach Sesotho during COVID-19 pandemic.

4.1.1 THEME 1: The teaching strategies used by high school teachers to teach Sesotho before the COVID-19 pandemic.

This theme is related to sub-research question one that covers the strategies used by high school teachers to teach Sesotho before the COVID-19 pandemic. The Sesotho high school teachers indicated that they used traditional face-to-face

teaching strategies before COVID-19. The following strategies emerged: Discussions, Question and answer, and Group work.

Table 2-Theme 1: The teaching strategies used by high school teachers to teach Sesotho before the COVID-19 pandemic.

Sub-research question	Theme 1	Sub-themes	Categories
What teaching strategies were used by high school teachers to teach Sesotho before the COVID-19 pandemic?	The teaching strategies used by high school teachers to teach Sesotho before the COVID-19 pandemic.	Discussions	Group discussions
			Classroom discussions
		Question and answer	Questions from the teacher to the learners
			Questions from the learners to the teacher and to other learners
Group work	Discussion of ideas and presenting them to the whole class.		

4.1.1.1 Sub-theme 1: Discussions

Through the semi-structured interviews conducted in the three schools, the researcher captured strategies Sesotho teachers used to teach Sesotho before COVID-19. This sub-theme comprises group discussions and classroom discussions.

The participants stated that they used discussions as teaching strategies to teach Sesotho before COVID-19. They used both group discussions and classroom discussions. The participants stated that they used discussions to improve the learners' Sesotho language skills, especially speaking and listening skills.

T1SA shared that she used discussions in teaching Sesotho literature to improve the Sesotho language skills before COVID-19.

Before COVID, learners read on their own and when we get in class we would ask them questions and then discuss what they have read.

Similar to participants' responses, Alzahrani and Woollard (2013:4) note that, in a collaborative learning classroom, the teacher is a facilitator that provides learning experiences and activities through the integration of chances for collaborative work and problem solving. The Sesotho high school teachers created time for their learners to practice reading, speaking and listening skills during the discussions. This also improved their knowledge of Sesotho and helped them solve some Sesotho problems as they shared ideas among each other. Discussions were used as a teaching strategy before COVID-19, where learners socially interacted and discussed what they had already read on their own.

4.1.1.1.1 Classroom discussions

The Sesotho teachers used classroom discussions involving the whole class, in the construction of knowledge as learners shared their ideas with others. T1SC stated that she would choose a picture relevant to the topic being taught so that learners discuss it and improve their language skills. She said:

Like I told you about discussions, sometimes I give them a picture and tell them to discuss about it. As for reading, we tell them to read...they have books that they are given, we choose a paragraph for one learner to read and sometimes one learner reads one line and the other reads the next line and the other the following line so that we spot those with reading problems.

Ardiansyah and Ujihanti, (2017:118) stress that in a constructivist learning, learners become actively engaged in the teaching and learning process through various activities.

4.1.1.1.2 Group discussions

The use of group discussions to teach Sesotho was a category of discussion Sesotho teachers used to develop their learners' language skills. T2SB had this to say:

We also taught using group discussions and presentations, and classwork and homework...For reading to be performed well, I used to choose one learner to go to the front of the classroom and read for the whole class while those seated will be listening.

In a constructivist approach, a teacher helps learners to construct knowledge through activities where they interact with others and become actively involved in their learning (Ardiansyah & Ujihanti, 2017:118). T2SB highlighted that group discussions help learners to improve their Sesotho speaking, reading and listening skills. In these discussions, Sesotho teachers assist their learners to be active in their learning and create knowledge by discussing different ideas. In focused discussions, learners are intellectually stimulated as they are forced to evaluate their thoughts and views (Tofade, Elsner & Haines, 2013:4). The Sesotho learners are able to think of ideas that help them improve their Sesotho knowledge.

4.1.1.2 Sub-theme 2: Question and answer

Previous research states that teachers ask questions to encourage learners to uncover prior knowledge, develop critical thinking skills, and create discussion and peer-to-peer interaction (Tofade *et al.*, 2013:1). Sesotho teachers used the question-and-answer technique to teach Sesotho language skills before COVID-19, where questions were asked by either the teacher or the learners. T1SB noted that:

We were using class interaction where the teacher and the learners meet face-to-face; and question and answer.

The Sesotho teacher and learners met face-to-face in the classrooms where they interacted, asking questions related to the topics being discussed, so that the learners recall the knowledge they already had. As stated by Vygotsky, learners

learn through direct involvement in important activities with intelligent people (Suhendi, Purwarno & Chairani, 2021:82). By doing this, the Sesotho learners improved their language skills and knowledge of Sesotho.

4.1.1.2.1 Questions from the teacher to the learners

Sesotho teachers asked their learners questions during the teaching of Sesotho. Through asking questions, Sesotho teachers could identify whether the learners had learnt all that was supposed to be learnt that day. T2SB had this to share:

For reading to be performed well, I used to choose one learner to go to the front of the classroom and read for the whole class while those seated will be listening. They will then make a summary of what has been read or answer the questions that are related to what has been read, maybe a comprehension or a passage from the book. That is where I will recognise whether they have been listening when they answer the questions by speaking and writing.

On this point, T1SB added that:

They will read, one learner at a time. Then I give them a passage to read where each learner will read individually then I come with questions for them to answer by writing.

As a way to improve learners' language skills through asking questions, T2SA also stated that:

Even when we get to the second comprehension of meanings, one learner reads in class then we answer the questions together so that they know how to answer questions that require them to give answer to a clear and to a hidden meaning.

T1SC also said:

As for listening, I go to class and read something for them and after that I ask them questions so that I get to see if they were listening or not.

Teachers can ask lower or higher-order questions that examine learners' cognitive level (Tofade *et al.*, 2013:4). The participants asked learners questions based on

what had been read, individually or as a class, so that they can examine their level of thinking and reasoning. The participants then noted if their learners could speak, listen, read and write properly. Some questions were answered verbally while others were answered in writing.

4.1.1.2.2 Questions from the learners to the teacher and to other learners

Sesotho teachers stated that they allowed their learners to generate questions that help them perfect the Sesotho concepts and the four Sesotho Language skills. These questions were directed to their teachers and/or their fellow learners. Research shows that if learners generate their questions, they can deeply understand the subject content being taught and learn in the overall subject (Tofade *et al.*, 2013:6).

T1SA had this to say:

Before COVID, learners read on their own and when we get in class we would ask them question and then discuss what they have read.

The learners asked questions to gain more knowledge about what they had read. By so doing, the learners' language skills of speaking, listening, reading and writing improve. According to Vygotsky, social interactions and language learning are crucial for a student's cognitive growth because they help them build more systematic, logical, and reasonable conceptions through conversation with knowledgeable teachers (Suhendi *et al.*, 2021:83).

4.1.1.3 Sub-theme 3: Group work

Group work involves students cooperating in small teams or groups to complete a task and get an opportunity to use or practice the language (Karim, 2015:99). Vygotsky asserts that social interaction is a key component of learning (Mohammed & Kinyo, 2020:96). Sesotho teachers found it relevant to divide their learners in groups and give them activities in which they participated and learnt Sesotho language skills.

T2SA had this to say:

In other times, I divided them into groups and give each group a different chapter title of a book to deal with.

The Sesotho teachers also found that dividing learners into groups assisted in building good relationships among them. This aligns with the social constructivism theory, which requires learners to collaborate in groups and engage in social interactions (Ardiansyah & Ujihanti, 2017:118).

4.1.1.3.1 Discussion of ideas and presenting them to the whole class

In the different groups that the Sesotho teachers formed, learners discussed various ideas related to the topic while improving their language skills.

T2SA said:

In other times, I divided them into groups and give each group a different chapter title of a book to deal with. They then presented what they discussed in class, for example, presentation about the of a book. They would then ask each other questions where they did not understand and explain difficult words that they came across. They also gave clarity to each other on the points where they understood.

The Sesotho teachers found these group discussions helpful to their learners as they performed better in the four Sesotho language skills. Previous studies also note that discussion and class presentations benefit learners as they require them to use the four language skills. They will have read before discussions and write down the points discussed to be presented (Wilson & Brooks, 2014:513).

In addition, T1SA said:

From there, there were classroom discussions relating to the questions asked. After those group discussions... we would then go to individual learners and see whether they still understand even when they work individually apart from their group work.

Before COVID-19 during the discussions, learners collectively created knowledge by sharing different ideas among themselves as social constructivism suggests. Constructivists advocate guided interaction by the teacher, as it provides room for learners to improve their communication skills and discover things for themselves

(Akpan *et al.*, 2020:52). The improvement of their Sesotho language skills while working individually was a good sign that the discussions were beneficial.

Data collected from the lesson plans on the teaching strategies used to teach Sesotho before the closure of the schools due to COVID-19, indicates that the classroom discussions and facilitated question and answer sessions were used to teach Sesotho during this period. The lesson plans provided by the participants showed the teaching strategies such as dividing learners in groups and discussions. According to these lesson plans, the teacher let the learners practice the Sesotho language skills, especially the writing skill. The lesson plan also indicated the learners' writing practice on the chalkboard. This was also in line with the learners' activities stipulated in Grade 9 syllabus, where learners should write nouns on the chalkboard (MOET,2020:30). On top of the mentioned teaching strategies, the given lesson plan abstract shows that there were other teaching strategies, such as lecturing, that Sesotho teachers used to teach Sesotho. These lesson plans align with the principles of social constructivism where the role of the teacher is to assist learners to create knowledge. The teacher merely facilitates the learning process during the lesson (Alzahrani & Woollard, 2013:4), involving learners more in their learning of Sesotho concepts and language skills.

Figure 1 - Lesson plan 1 abstract

Sesotho - leikemisa
Subtopic Leroo

- Barutswana ba ba ba ka tse bolala mofuta ea leikemisa
- Barutswana ba ba ba hhalosa leikemisa lo set-leroo ba ba le sebelise.
- Mekhoa ea ho ruta le ho ruta: Puisano ka sehlopheng, lipotso tse tataisang
- Selekela: Kahata marello-puo a tseletseng se na le leikemisa. Ka tria leikemisa re na le leroo le seemeli, kahoo mofuta es'meli ea leikemisa ka leroo le seemeli.

Mtsetso-pele

Sebetso ea tichere	Sebetso ea barutwana	Motha e ka hhaloseng Ba a ngola	Motha e ka hhaloseng Mongolo
o se bana ba ngole hhaloso ea leroo ka lihlopha tsa bona	- leroo ke lebitso la ntho eohle efe kapa efe / engoe le engoe.	Ba a ngola	Mongolo
o se bana ba fane ka hhaloso ea leikemisa ho na lihlopheng tseo	leikemisa ke mofuta oa lerello puo le ikhethetseng polelong, lona le kengelletsa leroo le seemeli.	Ba hlaisa lefapheng	Mongolo
o lalla bana ho			

Figure 2 - Lesson plan 2 abstract

Teaching Methods: Puisano, Phetelo, Lipotso le Lihlopheng.

Teaching and Learning Materials
Lesotho lea ea Mokheba-puo, Khetso ea Sesotho le Mokheba o tsoa Maroleng.

Assessment Methods: Verbal, written
Lead-in-statement (oral)

Development:

4.1.2 THEME 2: The online teaching strategies used to teach Sesotho during COVID-19 pandemic.

This theme is connected to sub-research question two, which sought to establish the online teaching strategies used to teach Sesotho during the COVID-19 pandemic. The researcher divided this theme into sub-theme: WhatsApp groups and the sub-theme was categorised into question and answer and discussions.

Table 3-Theme 2: The online teaching strategies used to teach Sesotho during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Sub-research question	Theme	Sub-themes	Categories
What online teaching strategies were used to teach Sesotho during COVID-19?	The online teaching strategies used to teach Sesotho during the COVID-19 pandemic.	WhatsApp groups	Question and answer
			Discussions

4.1.2.1 Sub-theme 1: WhatsApp groups

This sub-theme captures data on the use of WhatsApp groups as an online platform, that Sesotho high school teachers created and used to teach Sesotho during COVID-19. On this platform, question and answer and discussion were used as online teaching strategies. These WhatsApp groups were created during the COVID-19 crisis when the schools were closed, to ensure contact with the learners and that the learners are not left behind the syllabus by the time the schools re-opened. Ujakpa, Heukelman, Lazarus, Neiss and Rukanda (2018:2) observe that academic information can be shared through conversations between learners using WhatsApp.

In a study on the use of WhatsApp among high school students, it was found that the interpersonal relationships between teachers and learners improved through the use of WhatsApp, as learners became more comfortable and open to their teachers

(Bouhnik & Deshen, 2014:227). Literature also shows that message Applications can help students remember course material, and positively impact discussions, group projects, and writing (Sayan, 2016:89). According to the UTAUT constructs, learners believe that incorporating technology into their studies is valuable in the improvement their studies (Kissi, Nat & Armah, 2018:1551). This could also assist Sesotho learners if they believe incorporating technology, especially WhatsApp, is important in improving their knowledge.

T2SA said:

During COVID lockdown, I taught the Form Cs and Form Es. I usually took questions and put them in a WhatsApp group that I formed with them. That was in 2020 when we couldn't go to school if I remember well.

T2SB also said:

We created WhatsApp groups during that period.

T2SC said:

At that time of COVID-19, when we were still at home, we tried teaching and learning through WhatsApp. That was what we thought was the easy method of online learning and teaching.

Though the Ministry of Education did not prescribe the use of WhatsApp for teachers during this pandemic, data shows that the Sesotho teachers used the application as it was accessible to them and learners, so that there was teaching and learning for learners.

T1SB added that:

We used our own personal equipment to see how we contact our learners. As for Ministry of Education, did not make any involvement in that matter. If we didn't do anything and just ignored the learners, it would be a problem.

Although the Ministry of Education did not get involved in the teaching of Sesotho during COVID-19 lockdown, interviewed Sesotho teachers showed dedication to the

learners' education by going all out to interact with learners during school closures using their personal mobile phones and data.

Not denying that the Lesotho government, through the Ministry of Education, made efforts to teach learners other subjects through television and radio programmes, T2SA said:

But there were television programmes which were broadcasted, as for us, there were no guidelines that we were supposed to follow.

T1SB also commented that:

But one thing that they did was the preparation of television programmes. There were people, who we thought they were hired to teach learners through television. They provided those programmes teaching different subjects but without us.

Although the Lesotho Ministry of Education organised television and radio programmes, the interviewed Sesotho teachers made it clear that no inclusion of Sesotho was made in these programmes. So, for that reason, they sought their measures of teaching Sesotho. They believed their little involvement in teaching through the WhatsApp platform would help learners improve their Sesotho language skills at home. As much as online interaction suggests that social media gives people a place to connect, socialise, and cooperatively share content (Sokhulu, 2021:4), that could not happen as expected by the interviewed Sesotho teachers because the Ministry of Education failed to give them the support they needed.

T2SA also mentioned that she realised that online teaching strategies that they used could be more valuable in the teaching and learning of Sesotho when integrated with the traditional ways of teaching. She said:

Yes mme, they can be used but they need to be supplemented with our traditional face-to-face teaching. Because, like I have stated, some of our learners do not have phones and some do not have internet connections from their homes. So, such learners will be side-lined all the time.

Sesotho teachers added that as much as they felt that the use of online teaching strategies could be helpful in the teaching of Sesotho, but they still believed that the traditional face-to-face teaching strategies were better as all the learners benefit without any cost.

4.1.2.1.1 Question-and-answer

Question-and-answer was an online teaching strategy Sesotho teachers used to teach Sesotho during COVID-19, through the WhatsApp groups they formed. They indicated that they posted questions in the WhatsApp groups, and the learners posted answers and questions on the same platform.

T2SA said:

I used to give them work in that WhatsApp group, that is while I was at home. Then, I would instruct them to individually answer the questions by writing down those answers because in the exam room everyone is going to write for him/herself.

T2SC added that:

We gave them questions and they would answer them. Where clarification of questions was required, we made voice notes.

T1SB also said:

So, each learner worked on his/her own, giving answers. I just gave them questions and they would respond and submit their answers in my inbox.

T2SA also had to say:

...in those lessons, they wrote. So, they practiced writing as I asked them questions, which they, in turn, answered and sometimes, they were the ones asking questions and we answered them together.

While teaching through WhatsApp groups, Sesotho teachers asked learners questions with the expectation that they answer individually, and their reading, writing, and listening skills continue to develop. Literature shows that language teachers can let their learners practice writing, listening and speaking skills by

sending voice messages and written messages (Ferreira-Meyers & Martins, 2020:2). Syarif and Zaim (2021:83) note that WhatsApp audio messages can develop the learners' listening and speaking skills, while video messages can help to improve their listening and vocabulary. Text messages assist in expanding their vocabulary and writing skills. By using these online teaching strategies, the Sesotho teachers agreed with the social constructivism principles and UTAUT.

Previous studies also revealed that the application of Instant Messaging (IM) services, academically assisted high school learners to participate in their learning by asking their teachers questions after school hours (Bouhnik & Deshen, 2014:218). This shows that both teachers and learners believed that the use of technology in the teaching and learning could help learners improve their Sesotho language skills by seeking clarifications from their teachers, even while they are a distance away from them. The Sesotho teachers believed that the more learners created their knowledge by socialising through online platforms, the more they became knowledgeable about the four Sesotho language skills.

4.1.2.1.2 Discussions

In this category, the researcher captured data on discussions as an online teaching strategy used by teachers to teach the four Sesotho language skills through WhatsApp groups formed during COVID-19.

On this point, T2SA said:

Sometimes, I gave them time to discuss among themselves and after some time I come to their rescue showing them where they are correct and where they are wrong.

This is the basis of social constructivism where there should be discussion and sharing of information among learners (Akpan *et al.*, 2020:51). WhatsApp social networking makes it simple for students to create and share knowledge (Amry, 2014:132). The Sesotho teachers believed that their learners' performance level in Sesotho would improve if they let their learners discuss ideas through WhatsApp. In a study about the usage of the UTAUT model to understand students' usage of e-learning systems in developing countries, Abbad (2021:7219) noted that performance expectancy was important in determining learners' behaviour, and that

learners showed their desire to use Moodle as it improved their performance academically. The sharing of knowledge through mobile applications, where learners can use discussion forums to socially interact online, incorporated collaborative activities (Amry, 2014:117).

Among the interviewed, some Sesotho teachers explained that they also let their learners use the phones for other learning purposes, apart from those WhatsApp groups. T1SA mentioned that:

That is where I am saying that when the schools have re-opened, that is where I said during Sesotho literature lessons, the learners captured photos from my book, due to lack of books, so that they could read at home. When we got to class the next day we would discuss what they have read, without reading first. They then presented for others who do not have books and phones... Every day we made sure that they take photos with their phones and we discuss them the following day or at any time that I choose.

T1SA also mentioned that the lack of Sesotho textbooks in their schools forced them to look for measures where all learners can benefit from the few books they had in class. The Sesotho teachers realised that the use of technology in teaching Sesotho could assist learners to improve their Sesotho Language skills as they read daily, speak during the presentations and discussions, and listen to each other. According to social constructivism, knowledge is a shared experience that emerges from social interaction rather than a personal possession (Akpan *et al.*, 2020:51). Sesotho learners gain knowledge by socially interacting with each other in the classroom discussions. These social interactions through technological devices, can also occur according to the willingness of the teachers and learners, and the way they perceive others' opinions towards their use, as the UTAUT model suggests (Attuquayefio & Addo, 2014b:80).

Still on the other teaching strategies used to teach Sesotho, T2SA also said:

I think the one that I have tried is that one of the audios. Sometimes when I teach poems, one learner would read the poem and I would play it in class, maybe a Form C learner reads a poem that I am going to teach the Form As or Form Bs. When I get to that

particular class, I just play the audio and afterwards, the learners just pick up the points about the poem, without me or them reading it from the book. We just refer for small things from the book.

Other than WhatsApp, which encourages three different sorts of interaction: student-student, student-content, and student-instructor (Alamer & Al Khateeb, 2021:6); the Sesotho teachers invented their own audios of teaching the Sesotho concepts and Sesotho Language skills. They used the audios for discussions and interacting with learners as they learnt and developed their language skills. Additionally, a study conducted in senior high schools in Ghana found that learners retained knowledge better in a classroom setting that offered many forms of interaction and audio-visual aid. (Agyei & Razi, 2022:1876).

Literature also reveals that successful online learning in developed countries depends on technology acceptance by users, and how it influences learning and education (Abbad, 2021:7206). Concerning the teaching and learning of Sesotho through technology, acceptance of technology by the Sesotho teachers and learners, and its influence can improve discussions and make learning online a success.

When teaching through the WhatsApp groups, participants stated that there were no lesson plans prepared.

4.1.3 THEME 3: The limitations posed by the online instructional strategies used to teach Sesotho by high school teachers during COVID-19 pandemic.

This theme captures data related to sub-question three that focuses on challenges Sesotho teachers encountered while using online teaching strategies to teach Sesotho. The theme is divided into sub-themes: lack of data and phones; lack of electricity and network connectivity; lack of participation and ignorance of assignments; lack of knowledge about online teaching strategies; and lack of government involvement on teaching through WhatsApp. Though Sesotho high school teachers tried using online teaching strategies through WhatsApp, they encountered challenges, which led them to end online teaching before the schools re-opened.

Table 4-Theme 3: The limitations posed by the online instructional strategies used to teach Sesotho by high school teachers during COVID-19 pandemic

Sub-research	Theme	Sub-themes
--------------	-------	------------

question		
What limitations are posed by the online instructional strategies used to teach Sesotho by high school teachers during the COVID-19 pandemic?	The limitations posed by the online instructional strategies used to teach Sesotho by high school teachers during the COVID-19 pandemic	Lack of data and phones.
		Lack of electricity and network connectivity.
		Learners' lack of participation and ignorance of assignments.
		Lack of knowledge about online teaching strategies.
		Lack of government involvement on teaching through WhatsApp

4.1.3.1 Sub-theme 1: Lack of data and mobile phones

Despite teachers' efforts of teaching Sesotho during COVID-19 on WhatsApp, Sesotho teachers mentioned that they still experienced the challenges of lack of data and phones. They pointed out that these challenges hindered the effective teaching of Sesotho during this pandemic, and they could not finish the syllabus on time.

On this point, T2SA said:

But there were those learners who could not do the work because they said that they did not have phones, others said that they did not have data.

T1SC also said:

Not specifically many of them but some of them come from poor families and they could not afford to buy data even if they could find the way of charging their cell phones.

T2SB also said:

That was not very effective because only few learners participated in that WhatsApp group and some do not have data, some do not have phones...

As a result of this challenge, T1SC added and said:

We ended up stopping the WhatsApp groups because we realised that what we were doing was not beneficial because we will have to start from the beginning when the schools re-opened.

On whether the schools or the Ministry of Education provided the mobile devices for teaching and learning to continue, for both teachers and learners, T2SA said:

Truly speaking, the school has the computers but at home, I did not have internet access, I had to fend for myself. I had to recharge my personal phone and buy data, it was not the same as when I was here at school using the school computer and internet....

The Sesotho teachers stated that such challenges hindered the progress of teaching and learning of Sesotho during COVID-19 as sharing of information between teachers and their learners was hard. The learners did not have much chance to practice the four Sesotho Language skills while sitting at home, as they had no phones, or steady data connection to communicate with their teachers and other learners. One of UTAUT variables states the level at which a person trusts that adopting technology will assist in the improvement of job performance (Marikyan & Papagiannidis, 2021:3). At this point it is different as the Sesotho teachers see the online teaching and learning as impoverishing them and not assisting them to improve their teaching.

According to the constructivist theory, learners must actively participate in the learning process (Fernando & Marikar, 2017:110), lack of data and mobile phones

was an obstacle as the learners did not have the chance of being active in their learning of Sesotho Language skills during the closure of schools.

When asked if teaching of Sesotho through the WhatsApp groups still progresses after the re-opening of the schools, T1SB said:

Yes, some of the learners used their parents' phones or their friends' phones. When the schools re-opened, they (learners) had to leave those phones behind with their owners.

Due to this challenge, WhatsApp lessons had to stop as soon as the schools re-opened.

T2SA also said:

When the schools re-opened, I sometimes put some things on WhatsApp groups but I also taught them using face-to-face lessons.

T2SB admitted that, when schools had re-opened, they did not have a challenge regarding data as there was WI-FI for the school, but it was restricted to the learners. She said:

Wi-Fi is present in school but if every learner can be allowed access to use it... that will be a problem.

Even though Sesotho teachers easily accessed the school's WI-FI, the same did not apply to their learners. Khechine, Lakhal, Pascot & Bytha, (2014:39) point out that the extent to which learners accept that the system supported by an administrative and technical structure available in school can help them in their learning is important. It is a different situation at this school as the technological equipment present is not allowed to be used for Sesotho teaching and learning development. Although social constructivism provides support for the creation of chances for students to work in groups to create knowledge and understanding with their teachers and peers (Akpan *et al.*,2020:51), the accessibility of data, WI-FI, compromised this creation of knowledge on WhatsApp groups.

4.1.3.2 Sub-theme 2: Lack of electricity and network connectivity

As Qacha's Nek district is located in the mountainous region of Lesotho, some areas lack electricity and network connectivity for online teaching and learning. The

Sesotho teachers indicated that these were the challenges they experienced while teaching Sesotho using the WhatsApp platform during COVID-19.

T1SC pointed out that this was one of the challenges that led them to end the WhatsApp groups and said:

Because we realised that many learners could not attend as many of our learners come from very far rural areas. There is no electricity back in the rural villages, they charge their cellphones after a long time using solar systems, and by the time they get into the group they find that a lot has been taught.

The Sesotho teachers pointed that the problem of not having electricity in some rural villages where the learners resided during COVID-19 obstructed smooth communication between them and their learners, as learners struggled to charge their mobile phones' batteries. Therefore, teaching and learning of Sesotho at this period was inefficient.

Literature notes that one of the main ideas of the constructivist approach is that learners should not be passive in the construction of knowledge. Their participation is critical (Fernando & Marikar, 2017:110). This challenge led to learners becoming passive and unable to actively participate in their learning of Sesotho during the WhatsApp group lessons. Literature also points out that good access to online learning materials allows learning to occur at the learners' convenient place and time (Ujakpa *et al.*, 2018:2). This was contrary to what happened in Sesotho teaching and learning as lack of electricity and poor connectivity obstructed learners' access to WhatsApp group lessons any time. Though the teachers and learners were willing to continue online teaching and learning of Sesotho, technological instruments failed them.

T2SC stated that online teaching and learning was not possible for her and her learners, and said:

...our learners here come from very far rural areas that do not have electricity and network connectivity. It is really difficult for us here to use online teaching.

4.1.3.3 Sub-theme 3: Learners' lack of participation and ignorance of class activities

During the interviews, Sesotho teachers said they identified that learners' lack of participation and ignorance of class activities challenged the teaching and learning of Sesotho through WhatsApp platform during schools closure.

On the issue of ignorance of activities given to the learners in the WhatsApp groups, T2SB said:

That's the problem, they didn't do it at the same time. Like we said, there were those dedicated learners who were ready for questions and answered them at once. There were also those that did not even bother answering those questions. They only do the work maybe if they heard others talking about the assignment given, that is when they will do it and submit.

T2SA also noted that:

....Some did not even answer the questions that I gave them. Let's say if I have 70 learners in a WhatsApp group, only 5 actively participated in the work given to them. That depresses because....I was making voice note messages and sending them to them in a group, that was not effective because it reached a very small group of learners.

T2SA further said:

The communication with the learners was really a problem because even in that WhatsApp group, I would communicate with about 5 learners, and it was so depressing that I ended the lessons because there was no use of teaching such number of learners as I would have to start teaching every topic I taught in the WhatsApp groups when the schools re-opens.

T1SC also said:

I think some of them had problems because even when we set time of meeting in a WhatsApp group they would not always attend, you will find that you are talking to one or two persons at some days. Some did not enter in that discussion at all!

T2SB pointed out that the WhatsApp groups she formed progressed even when the schools re-opened, but still had challenges of learners' slow participation. She said:

You see, during Easter holidays, I gave my learners work to do while at home, which they had to submit on the first day of arrival at school when the school reopens. Only three learners submitted, the rest submitted only when I asked them to submit. They were negligent.

Although the learners showed poor participation and negligence of activities given through WhatsApp, Sesotho teachers still felt that it was vital for them to keep their learners' minds busy while schools were closed. Contrary to UTAUT model's level at which a person's believes that the using technology will assist in attaining good results (Attuquayefio & Addo, 2014a:250), learners' participation showed their lack of belief in learning through WhatsApp.

4.1.3.4 Sub-theme 4: Lack of knowledge about online teaching strategies

In the teaching and learning of Sesotho through the WhatsApp platform during COVID-19, Sesotho teachers mentioned lack of knowledge and information about online teaching strategies as a challenge. The Sesotho teachers explained that they lacked information about online teaching strategies that could be used to teach during COVID-19. They stated that the only online teaching that they thought was easy and available for them and their learners, was teaching through WhatsApp. They said that lack of information about other online platforms and knowledge using technology that is available at their schools was a challenge. Bouhnik and Deshen (2014:219) state that some teachers apply Facebook-Groups in their lessons so that their learners learn and collaborate as a group. If the Sesotho teachers knew about this platform, they would have used it with WhatsApp platforms as learners like to use social media, especially Facebook.

On whether they found the technological equipment in the school useful in the teaching and learning of Sesotho, T2SA said:

No. Truly speaking, the school has the computers but at home, I did not have internet access, I had to fend for myself.

When talking about an overhead projector available in their school, T1SB said:

They are there but not for us as teachers. I have never seen any teacher using it. I think it is the lack of knowledge for using it. We are way behind this technology. That is the main reason that we are not using it because we don't even know how to operate it.

T2SA mentioned confusion that the teachers experienced due to the use of the school's technological equipment, and said:

It is there, but I have not used it... As for the PowerPoint I personally haven't used or tried it because I have realised that the time is very limited because you have to set up the equipment first, and sometimes it is some other teacher's lesson in that classroom where there is PowerPoint, mmm... I think it causes confusions because it does not have a time-table that states times for different departments, for example, the time allocated for Languages Department. Every teacher just goes when she/he wants to go and teach using the PowerPoint so that is where comes confusions. There was a time when the time-table issue was raised so that different subject teachers should know when they can use the PowerPoint, but that has not been done. I think that is why I haven't bothered using it.

In relation to the UTAUT model, the Sesotho teachers agreed with (Attuquayefio & Addo, 2014a:250) that the technical equipment in their school could assist them in teaching Sesotho efficiently if they become accessible to every teacher, and if training on how to use them in their teaching is provided.

4.1.3.5 Sub-theme 5: Lack of government involvement on teaching through WhatsApp

The Sesotho teachers also noted that the government of Lesotho, through the Ministry of Education, was not involved in the online teaching and learning on the WhatsApp platform provided. They explained that they were on their own. The government did not provide any guidelines on how teaching and learning of Sesotho should be done or assisted during COVID-19.

T1SB said:

Nothing at all. It is something that came abruptly without any kind of preparations of how we are going to interact with the learners.

T1SC also said:

Not at all mme; we were on our own.

T2SA had this to say:

No, they did not provide us with anything. But there were television programmes, which were broadcasted. As for us, there were no guidelines that we were supposed to follow.

In addition to the radio and television programmes offered on radio Lesotho and Lesotho television, T1SA said:

They allocated different times for different Grade lessons. Those that have televisions and radios would then be ready, and attended those lessons, and they were provided by the Ministry of Education. There was nothing sent to the teachers, to the schools saying that they should follow these ways at that time. We were just left like that.

T1SB continued and said:

But one thing that they did was the preparation of television programmes. There were people, who we thought they were hired to teach learners through television. They provided those programmes teaching different subjects but without us.

For those that did not have access to radio and television stations, teaching and learning of Sesotho during COVID-19 was impossible. The Sesotho teachers also added that they used their personal equipment at home when the schools were closed to ensure that the teaching and learning of Sesotho continued. They believe that if their schools or the government provided any form of support in the online teaching that they had invented, then the teaching of Sesotho during COVID-19 would have been a success.

4.1.4 THEME 4: The opportunities presented by the online instructional strategies used to teach Sesotho by high school teachers during the COVID-19 pandemic.

In this theme, data related to the sub-research question four is presented. The theme is divided into sub-themes.

Table 5-Theme 4: The opportunities posed by the online instructional strategies used to teach Sesotho by high school teachers during the COVID-19 pandemic

Sub-research question	Theme	Sub-theme
What are the opportunities posed by the online instructional strategies used to teach Sesotho by high school teachers during COVID-19 pandemic	The opportunities posed by the online instructional strategies used to teach Sesotho by high school teachers during COVID-19 pandemic	Opportunity to practice the four language skills

The Sesotho teachers mentioned that they found teaching through the WhatsApp platform the easiest and simplest way of teaching Sesotho during COVID-19. They also stated that, although they experienced many challenges, there were several opportunities presented by online teaching. They also pointed out that their learners benefited from these online lessons, although they (Sesotho teachers) somehow found it not beneficial due to the poor attendance of learners. T1SC said:

We ended up stopping the WhatsApp groups because we realised that what we were doing was not beneficial because we will have to start from the beginning when the schools reopened.

4.1.4.1 Sub-theme 1: Opportunity to practice the four language skills.

This sub-theme captures opportunities that the Sesotho teachers identified while teaching Sesotho online, using the WhatsApp platform. They mentioned that the platform gave their learners an opportunity to practice the four language skills when the schools were closed due to the pandemic.

T2SA stated that her learners practised the four language skills. She said:

...in those lessons they wrote, so they practiced writing as I asked them questions, which they in turn answered; and sometimes, they were the ones asking questions and we answered them together. Sometimes, I gave them time to discuss among themselves and after some time I come to their rescue showing them where they are correct and where they are wrong. There were some learners that really gained because I could see that they were very eager to do the work really.; but there were those learners who could not do the work because they said that they did not have phones. Others said that they did not have data.

T2SB also said:

Yes, for those learners who were willing to learn, they really benefited. You will find that even when you give them notes on WhatsApp group, those dedicated learners wrote them and those who don't care do not have them.

During that time, when they were taught online, the learners practised reading and writing as they answered questions; speaking and listening as they discussed Sesotho concepts among themselves through voice messages. The Sesotho teachers explained how online teaching benefitted their learners as it provided them with opportunities where they openly discussed Sesotho concepts amongst each other. This aligns with the constructivist approach that provides learners with time to explore as they learn different concepts, while the teacher facilitates and guides their learning by asking questions and clarifying some concepts (Devi, 2019:6).

4.1.5 Summary

This chapter presented the findings of a qualitative research multiple case study. This research design allowed for an in-depth exploration of the main research question. The four themes that answered the sub-research questions were discussed. This study aimed to explore the online teaching strategies that the Sesotho high school teachers used to teach Sesotho during COVID-19.

The main findings of this study revealed that the Sesotho high school teachers used traditional face-to-face teaching strategies such as discussions, question and answer and group work before COVID-19. The WhatsApp facilitated teaching strategies,

such as discussions and question and answer, were also applied by the Sesotho high school teachers to teach Sesotho during COVID-19. It was also found out that there were several challenges and opportunities that the Sesotho high school teachers experienced when using those WhatsApp facilitated teaching strategies. Challenges included lack of data and phones to both teachers and learners; lack of electricity and network connectivity; poor learners' participation in the scheduled WhatsApp lessons; lack of knowledge about online teaching strategies; and lack of government involvement on teaching through WhatsApp. The WhatsApp facilitated teaching strategies were also found to present opportunities for learners who fully participated, as their Sesotho language skills improved.

Chapter five presents the summary and discussions of the findings in relation to some of the literature presented in chapter two. The limitations of the study are explained, and conclusions and recommendations for further study made.

CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

5.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter, the researcher presented the findings of this study. Data generated through interviews was complemented with the data from the documents. Following those findings, this chapter presents a summary of the study, a discussion of the major findings, limitations, recommendations, and conclusions. The interpretation and discussion of the findings of this study is made in relation to the two theoretical frameworks: social constructivism and UTAUT, and the literature review made in chapter two.

5.2 Summary of the study

Chapter one discussed the introduction and background to the study, where the researcher expressed an interest in the online teaching strategies used to teach Sesotho during COVID-19, and how they were applied in the three high schools in Qacha's Nek district in Lesotho. The statement of the problem, the purpose of the study, the significance of the study, research questions, research objectives, research methodology, delimitation of the study, definition of key terms and chapter outline were also explained.

In chapter two, the researcher employed social constructivism and the UTAUT model as theoretical frameworks for this study. Social constructivism allowed the researcher to explore the online teaching strategies that allow learners to interact socially in creating knowledge and learning the four language skills. UTAUT model assisted the researcher in exploring the technological equipment that can be used to teach online and the urgency of the Sesotho teachers to use them to teach the four language skills online. The researcher also reviewed local and international literature related to the topic. This literature includes the teaching strategies used to teach languages before COVID-19, online teaching strategies used to teach languages during COVID-19, and limitations and opportunities presented by those online teaching strategies.

Chapter three discussed the research paradigm, approach, design and methodology employed in the study. The interpretive research paradigm was employed. The interpretations informed by social constructivism theory and the UTAUT model assisted the researcher in identifying the online teaching strategies Sesotho teachers

used to teach Sesotho, and their experiences in using these strategies. The qualitative research approach assisted the researcher in interpreting the meanings of online teaching strategies in the teaching of Sesotho during the COVID-19 pandemic. The multiple case study comprised six Sesotho teachers from three high schools in Qacha's Nek district, Lesotho. These teachers were purposively selected as they taught Sesotho before COVID-19 using face-to-face teaching strategies, and during COVID-19 using different online teaching strategies through the WhatsApp platform. Individual face-to-face semi-structured interviews were used to collect data, as they allowed the participants to give their views and experiences about online teaching strategies that they used to teach Sesotho during COVID-19. The data from the lesson plans complemented the teaching strategies noted by the participants in the interviews. The four principles of data trustworthiness: credibility, transferability, dependability, confirmability, data collection procedures, data analysis, and ethical considerations were also discussed.

In chapter four, the researcher presented and interpreted the major themes of this study. The traditional face-to-face teaching strategies that the interviewed Sesotho teachers used before COVID-19, the WhatsApp-facilitated teaching strategies that they used during COVID-19, and the challenges and opportunities posed by these WhatsApp-facilitated teaching strategies, were analysed and interpreted. The traditional face-to-face teaching strategies that these participants indicated they applied in the lesson plans, were also analysed and interpreted.

In chapter five, the researcher discussed the major findings of the study. The researcher discussed the traditional face-to-face teaching strategies: discussions, question and answer and group work; the WhatsApp-facilitated teaching strategies: discussions, and question and answer; the challenges and opportunities presented by these WhatsApp-facilitated teaching strategies. These findings were compared and contrasted related literature reviewed in chapter two, then explained using the two theoretical frameworks; social constructivism and the UTAUT model. The limitations, recommendations and conclusions of the study were also presented in this chapter.

5.3 Discussion of the major findings

This section discusses the major findings of the study. In doing so, the researcher compares the current study findings with the previous studies reviewed in chapter

two. As indicated in the introduction, the theoretical frameworks are also used to explain the findings.

5.3.1 Traditional face-to-face teaching strategies used to teach Sesotho prior to COVID-19.

The findings indicated that Sesotho high school teachers used traditional face-to-face teaching strategies before the advent of the COVID-19 pandemic. These were question and answer, group work and discussions (both classroom and group discussions) to teach the four Sesotho language skills. The teaching strategies were identified in the interviews with the participants and the analysis of documents. The analysed Sesotho lesson plans from the participants also confirmed that the teaching strategies mentioned were used to teach the four Sesotho Language skills. These and other teaching strategies were recommended and applied in teaching language skills in Lesotho and other countries. Consistent with the findings of the current study, Lesotho's Grade 10 and 11 Sesotho syllabus suggests teaching strategies that teachers must use to teach Sesotho, such as group work, research, drama and debates (MOET Government of Lesotho, 2021:5). The current study's findings on teaching strategies use were in line with the recommended teaching strategies by the South African curriculum. In South Africa, CAPS also suggests that Sesotho teachers use debates, group discussions and other facilitated discussions when teaching speaking and listening skills (Department of Education Republic of South Africa (DoE RSA), 2011:18). As compared to the Sesotho teaching strategies identified in this study, literature from international studies reports the following as being incorporated into foreign language teaching and learning: pair work, group work, collaborative learning environments, and interactive tasks with a cognitive focus (Moeller & Catalano, 2015:330). The literature further revealed asking questions and co-operating with other learners as language learning strategies (Lessard-Clouston, 1997:4) that could improve learners' language skills. It seems that the teaching strategies participants used were similar to teaching strategies recommended by curriculum policies and literature in Sesotho, in South Africa and in the teaching of foreign languages internationally.

The findings indicate that participants used traditional face-to-face teaching strategies in teaching the four Sesotho language skills. South Africa CAPS states that language teachers should teach reading and writing skills by giving learners more texts to read and give them more writing activities for practice (Department of

Education Republic of South Africa (DoE RSA, 2011:13). In Lesotho, the LGCSE Sesotho Grades 10 and 11 syllabus mentions that a Sesotho teacher should give learners a passage to read and identify some parts of speech, and then discuss among themselves (MOET Government of Lesotho, 2019:10). This syllabus further suggests that the Sesotho teacher can give learners a reading comprehension where they identify spelling and punctuation mistakes, and then re-write them correctly when teaching the reading and writing skills (MOET Government of Lesotho, 2019:10). These various learner-centred strategies are applied for a holistic development of a Mosotho learner, as embraced by the country's education system (MOET Government of Lesotho, 2019:1). By comparing the teaching strategies used in the teaching of Sesotho in both South Africa and Lesotho, participants are doing what is recommended.

The findings of this study showed how participants involved their learners in improving their Sesotho language skills through reading comprehension and writing passages and letters. These aligned with social constructivism principles where learners should be allowed to cooperate and collaborate during their learning (Ardiansyah & Ujihanti, 2017:119). This is what the language teachers were doing while teaching Sesotho before COVID-19. They used these face-to-face teaching strategies to ensure that their learners' Sesotho language skills were well-developed.

It was also found that learners were given opportunities for discussions where they practised the language skills until they mastered them. During these discussions, learners collaborated and interacted with each other and with their teachers, sharing ideas and constructing knowledge about Sesotho concepts. In these discussions, the Sesotho teachers identified their learners' ability to use the four Sesotho language skills. Literature also points that discussions are beneficial because learners become actively stimulated and explore the knowledge they already have, share ideas with others and improve their language and thinking skills (Saputra & Aziz, 2014:3).

In line with these findings, literature indicates that discussion is one of the social constructivism teaching strategies that gives learners an option to exchange ideas and to improve their communication skills through teacher facilitated learning (Akpan *et al.*, 2020:52). Social constructivist theory emphasises participation in learning activities because it improves learners' collaborative skills, equips them with choices,

and assists them to acquire new information (Alzahrani & Woollard, 2013:4). These align well with the way the Sesotho teachers involved their learners while teaching them the Sesotho language skills by allowing them to contribute different ideas on a given topic, speaking and listening to each other carefully.

The findings also show that question and answer teaching strategy was used to teach Sesotho language skills before COVID-19. The Sesotho teachers asked learners questions to test their knowledge of a particular Sesotho concept, and their potential to apply the four Sesotho language skills. The learners also asked their teachers and other learners questions to learn more about Sesotho concepts and improve their Sesotho language skills. Effective application of questioning skills by the teachers boosts student performance and makes the teaching and learning environment more engaging and motivating (Shanmugavelu *et al.*, 2020:45). This teaching strategy was recommended in Malawian schools for teachers to conduct higher-level questions that force students to "apply, synthesize, and analyse information" in order to help evaluation (Fernando & Marikar, 2017:112). In addition, Tavoosy and Jelveh (2019:81) found that among International Baccalaureate (IB) programmes in the European region, language skills can be improved when teachers directly ask individual questions that request a more in-depth answer. In relation to these findings, research also shows that a successful way of implementing social constructivism in a lesson is through cooperative learning (Brau, 2020), where learners cooperatively attain knowledge by asking and answering each other questions. This is similar to what the Sesotho teachers had been doing, involving learners in their learning of Sesotho concepts and language skills, allowing them to ask questions so that their language skills develop.

Contrary to the findings in this study about the use question and answer teaching strategy, a study on teaching multilingual learners in Spanish schools found that learners read the Spanish text, then the teachers and learners collectively formulated questions on that text, which in turn, allowed them to practice speaking and listening skills (Escamilla *et al.*, 2021:366). In this way, the Spanish teachers and learners co-constructed the questions used to facilitate teaching and learning, unlike the Sesotho teachers who taught Sesotho by reading Sesotho passages and formulating questions on that passage.

The other teaching strategy used by the Sesotho high school teachers was group work in which learners were divided into small groups. In these groups, learners discussed different ideas on a given topic and then presented them to others in the classroom. By doing so, their four Sesotho Language skills and concepts improved. Scholars have also found that teachers divide learners into groups where each learner participates and contributes his or her ideas and learning from the other group members simultaneously (Senthamarai, 2018:S38). Kohler (2010:6) says in these groups, learners can also engage in discussions in the classrooms, where they construct knowledge that can be applied to form new concepts. This is similar to what the Sesotho teachers did in the participating schools. They allowed learners to create group discussions where they constructed knowledge and improved their Sesotho language skills at the same time.

The Sesotho Grade 10 and 11 syllabus stipulates that Sesotho teachers may have more than five learners in a group for the group to be effective, as many learners in a group may lead to other learners hiding behind others, loafing (MOET Government of Lesotho, 2021:4). Similarly, in South Africa, where Sesotho is taught as a home language, CAPS aims to produce learners who work individually and in groups in improving their Sesotho knowledge (Department of Education Republic of South Africa (DoE RSA), 2011:5). For instance, in teaching how to write a friendly letter, the Sesotho teacher can discuss with the learners the language that is used in writing a friendly letter, and then let the learners write parts of a letter in groups (MOET Government of Lesotho, 2021:30). Although there is more information gained from group discussions that stimulates creativity, there may be dominant learners in a group (Burke, 2011:88) that a teacher should discourage. This study found that participants followed the Sesotho syllabus quite well and were in line with the way language teachers from other countries are using groups to teach the language skills.

Vygotsky suggests that learners can learn better by interacting with peers (Brau, 2020), thereby gaining more knowledge and development on the language skills. A study conducted by Schreiber and Valle (2013:397) states that during these social interactions in group discussions, learners bring various ideas on the subject content, as suggested by Vygotsky. Then they later create their own knowledge and meanings on the content. It was also discovered that social groups, where learners

interact with their peers, teachers and parents, and small groups, are advocated by the social constructivism theory (Davis *et al.*, 2017: Online), in line with the teaching of Sesotho before COVID-19.

The data from the lesson plans also showed that research was utilised as a teaching strategy in teaching Sesotho. According to the data, there were Sesotho concepts that Sesotho teachers gave learners to go and discover new information about. The LGCSE Sesotho syllabus recommends this teaching strategy as it equips learners with skills on how to rephrase quotations and use quotation marks for direct quotations (MOET Government of Lesotho, 2021:5). This syllabus further recommends that the Sesotho teachers give learners an activity to go and find out about the work of written punctuation marks, find the books that have punctuation mistakes, and then present their findings to the other learners in the class and give the correct way of how the punctuation marks were supposed to be written (MOET Government of Lesotho, 2021:12). This could benefit the learners as they become knowledgeable and improved with Sesotho grammar and language skills.

Participants indicated that they used these teaching strategies in their day-to-day teaching before COVID-19. The Sesotho teachers' lesson plans showed that some of the teaching strategies stated in the Grade 10 and 11 Sesotho syllabus were used in the teaching of Sesotho before COVID-19. The lesson plan analysis also confirmed that the participants mostly used discussions and question-and-answer as teaching strategies to teach Sesotho before COVID-19.

Although the various teaching strategies were reported to have been used to teach the four Sesotho language skills before COVID-19, there were other teaching strategies that were not stated, either during the interviews or in the lesson plans. The teaching strategies were debates, games, role-play, brainstorming, evidence-based, reciprocal, and problem-based teaching strategies.

In Italian schools, debates were found to be a powerful teaching strategy that assisted learners to improve their language skills (Cinganotto, 2019:114). This teaching strategy also encouraged participatory learning (Zare and Othman, 2013:1507) as learners learnt the language concepts and skills through active participation. Debates have been proven, in previous studies, as effective for delivering instructional material and improving student engagement, learning

motivation, and academic accomplishment (Korniienko, 2020:321). This teaching strategy can also be used in the teaching and learning of Sesotho as the participants did not identify its use in the teaching of Sesotho, despite it being stipulated in the Sesotho syllabus.

In South Africa, CAPS requires that, in Grades 10, 11 and 12, Sesotho teachers use debates to teach Sesotho so that learners become independent in listening, speaking, reading and writing (Department of Education Republic of South Africa (DoE RSA), 2011:9). The Sesotho Grade 10 and 11 syllabus also recommends the improvement of the learners' Sesotho language skills (MOET Government of Lesotho, 2021:5) where the Sesotho teachers choose a topic for the learners to debate on it. Debates were recommended as a teaching strategy to be used to teach Sesotho in many Sesotho classrooms, though the participants never mentioned its use in their teaching of Sesotho language skills. In addition, the syllabus recommends the efficient use of this teaching strategy to check whether the learner is fluent and independent in the use of Sesotho Language skills (MOET Government of Lesotho, 2021:5). Sesotho language teachers may organise debates more often for learners to expand their speaking and listening skills. This also helps them to broadly understand Sesotho topics being taught at that time by sharing ideas with each other.

Additionally, previous studies see games as important teaching strategies that improve learners' various communicative skills, participatory and collaborative skills and motivates learners to learn the language (Zhu, 2012:802; Ventsekamy & Sibanda, 2021:256; Saputra & Aziz, 2014:4). This strategy has been found useful in the teaching of languages in Sudan Basic Schools, as they relieve stress, entertain, improve the learners' language skills and knowledge, create collaborative learning, and assist learners to participate in the classrooms (Ibrahim, 2017:148). A study conducted in a Turkish high school, among Grade ten foreign language classes, also found that learners appreciate the use of games in their English learning as they feel motivated (Bush, 2015:27) to learn the language. As a result, this teaching strategy can efficiently be used to teach the Sesotho Language skills.

The Sesotho Grade 10 and 11 syllabus suggests the use of role-play which creates a real picture in the memory of a learner, about what he/she has learned (MOET

Government of Lesotho, 2021:5). This syllabus further encourages the use of this teaching strategy in groups, where learners write speeches and then dramatize them in the classroom (MOET Government of Lesotho, 2021:35). In a role play, learners share information while collaborating and interacting with each other, and improve their language skills as they exchange dialogues with each other (Rashid & Qaisar, 2017:198). Role play can assist learners to improve their language skills and understand what they have learnt in that play, related to the topic (Zhu, 2012:804).

In addition, a study conducted by Fernando and Marikar (2017:114) confirmed that this is where learners creatively play out a real-life event related to the subject or topic being taught, with others and the teacher watching. Though this teaching strategy was mentioned as being used by one teacher to teach Sesotho language skills, the Sesotho teachers, who never mentioned it, could use it to make learning of some Sesotho topics simpler and more fun. Their Sesotho Language speaking and listening skills would improve as they role-play.

The researcher has also found, in the literature review, that brainstorming is one of the teaching strategies that can be used to teach languages. Previous studies show that this strategy is used so that learners generate new ideas about a given topic (Rianingsih, 2015:116) in groups or in class (Fernando & Marikar, 2017:114), and improve their speaking and listening skills.

The findings of this study did not show the application of evidence-based approaches as a teaching strategy for teaching languages as found in literature. Literature points out that, with this strategy, learners participate in a dialogue about literary concepts when they are taught literacy skills (Ventsekamy & Sibanda, 2021:255). Larsen-Freeman and Anderson (2013:97) also discovered that both the teacher and the learners could read aloud words written on wall charts, and later form sentences from them as a way of helping learners with pronunciation. If the Sesotho teachers can apply this strategy in teaching Sesotho language skills, they can efficiently develop these skills.

Though the Sesotho teachers never mentioned that they used a reciprocal teaching strategy to teach the Sesotho Language skills, some features of this strategy were revealed when they described how they taught. They stated that they chose passages and chapters for their learners to go and read, summarise and present to

the whole class. Literature explains that teachers involve learners in their learning by asking them to read bilingual books and then summarise them or discuss them with others so that their literacy skills develop (Szilágyi *et al.*, 2013:118).

Research also shows that this teaching strategy produces active learners who fully participate in their learning up to a point where they become independent readers and writers (Ventsekamy & Sibanda, 2021:256). In a study on using reciprocal teaching strategies to teach English as a first language in high schools, it emerged that dialogues between teachers and learners involved training learners how to ask relevant questions and write suitable summaries (Ahmadi & Gilakjani, 2012:2054) so that their language skills develop. As stated in literature, learners' verbal language can be developed when their teachers or parents read books to them (Chien, 2020:1) and help them to become independent readers.

Problem-based teaching strategies that language teachers used to teach home languages before COVID-19 but was not revealed in the findings of this study. With this approach, teachers guide learners throughout their learning activities to solve the existing problems and be independent (Ventsekamy & Sibanda, 2021:256). Literature presents this teaching strategy as a constructivist application, as it requires the collaboration of learners in solving problems, while applying various technologies (Tuncer, 2009:68).

Research recommends that language teachers establish situations for real activities in accordance with learners' daily life, where they guide their learners into understanding, grasping, and using correct grammar in those situations (Mondal, 2012:23). Research further revealed that this strategy was convenient for teaching English as a first language, as learners had an opportunity to communicate, interact and collaborate, motivate, and assist those with poor language skills (Kassem, 2018:848). This makes it compatible with the teaching of Sesotho as a first language.

Problem-based learning can be used by the Sesotho high school teachers to teach the four Sesotho language skills, where they provide learners with problems to solve independently. This also assists learners to build confidence and independence when they face language challenges outside their classrooms, thereby developing their own problem-solving strategies.

Although demonstration as teaching strategies was not mentioned in the findings of this study, the literature review presented it as being used by the language teachers to teach home languages before COVID-19. In using the demonstration teaching strategy, teachers perform an activity and let the learners observe so that they can reproduce what has been done and said (Saputra & Aziz, 2014:4). A study on teaching multilingual learners in Spanish schools also found that in a Spanish environment, language teachers let the learners imitate the language they must apply in their dialogues (Escamilla *et al.*, 2021:366).

Sesotho teachers can therefore, use demonstrations to teach the four Sesotho language skills, showing the learners how they should speak and listen to each other, and read and write some activities. Once the learners observe and imitate what their teacher demonstrates to them, and how some Sesotho words are pronounced and written, they cannot easily forget.

The findings on these traditional face-to-face teaching strategies align with the social constructivism theory, as the theory values the importance of social interrelations and collaboration in assisting learners' language development (Devi, 2019:8; Galbin, 2014:82; Ardiansyah & Ujihanti, 2017:134). While teaching Sesotho before COVID-19, it was found that learners were active in their learning of Sesotho language skills, which led to their improvement.

5.3.2 WhatsApp group as an online teaching strategy

It was found that Sesotho high school teachers resorted to WhatsApp-facilitated teaching strategies to teach Sesotho during the Covid-19 crisis. The participants stated that WhatsApp provided an affordable online platform. It was revealed that there were no guidelines or policies from either the participating schools or the MOET, on how the teaching and learning of Sesotho should be conducted during this crisis. COVID-19 came unexpectedly to the whole world, leading to school closures and strengthening the significance of technology and online learning in education (Kamble *et al.*, 2021:200),

Contrary to this study, international literature indicates that during this pandemic, teaching and learning activities occur on various virtual platforms such as weblog, social networking and video-sharing sites (Matee *et al.*, 2021:2). It was found that the

Ministry of Education in Chile advised schools to use online teaching for learners to continue with teaching and learning (Sepulveda-Escobar & Morrison, 2020:587). A study conducted in Hong Kong revealed that English language teachers used video conferencing platforms such as Zoom to teach English as a second language (Cheung, 2021:1). It appears that the participating Sesotho teachers demonstrated resilience and the ability to think out of the box by using the available platform to teach without guidance from the Lesotho Ministry of Education and Training.

A study conducted in North West pointed out that teachers and officials from District B started a WhatsApp group to address the COVID-19 challenge (Moodley, 2019:8), this seemed to be the opposite with the teaching of Sesotho in the three high schools, as teaching through WhatsApp was initiated by participants without the government intervention. Maphosa *et al.* (2020:87) confirm that WhatsApp was easy to use because of the unlimited instant messages and could be used and accessed at low costs. WhatsApp's ease of use was one of the reasons for the choice of the platform to teach Sesotho during this pandemic. Unfortunately, the underprivileged and rural area Sesotho learners could still not access the Sesotho lessons at low costs.

Findings of a study on the utilisation of the WhatsApp platform showed effective use of the platform in addressing and resolving software challenges together with the curriculum and assessment-related matters (Moodley, 2019:8). These findings are also relevant to the teaching of Sesotho.

Contrary to this study's findings, it was found that in Hong Kong, English language teachers used video conferencing platforms such as Zoom to teach English as a second language (Cheung, 2021:1). In Malaysia in 2012, it was found that various forms of virtual learning environments, such as Blackboard, Moodle, Edmodo and Frog adopted from the United Kingdom (UK), and mostly used in schools (Awang, *et al.*, 2018:441). A study conducted in Iran among high school English teachers during COVID-19, confirmed that the Ministry of Education launched a proprietary software product known as Shad for online education delivery (Askari & Chen, 2021:37). If online platforms such as these ones were applied in the teaching of Sesotho during COVID-19, it would be helpful to Sesotho language teachers for developing the learners' listening and speaking skills.

Khatoony and Nezhadmehr (2020:91) found that teachers played a key role in designing classes and connecting with students; and that text, video, and voice resources had become reasonably less expensive and easier to use for teachers. According to a study conducted in South African schools, virtual platforms like WhatsApp, Google Hangouts, Microsoft Teams, Zoom, YouTube, and Blackboard, were utilized in schools, to connect with students and exchange information with them (Maree, 2022:251). Basar *et al.*, 2021:120) consider online learning to be functional as it facilitates the incorporation of several online platforms such as 'WhatsApp', 'Zoom' and 'Google Classroom'.

Among the six Sesotho high school teachers interviewed, only five indicated that they formed WhatsApp groups to teach Sesotho using various online teaching strategies during the school closures as a result of COVID-19, and one stated that she just relaxed at home during this period. They pointed out that the teaching strategies they used to teach Sesotho before COVID-19 differed from those they used during COVID-19. It was found that technology that included internet use was never implemented in the teaching of Sesotho before COVID-19.

The participants stated that they used question-and-answer teaching strategies to teach Sesotho through WhatsApp groups. They posted written or voice messages as questions in these WhatsApp groups, and the learners answered either by writing or making voice messages. These assisted them to realise if their learners' language skills and general Sesotho knowledge was improving. It also encouraged learners to stay actively engaged in Sesotho learning while the schools were closed.

Similar findings on a study in India showed that there was interaction of teachers and learners through asking questions, answering and sharing academic information on the WhatsApp groups created (Gon & Rawekar, 2017:23).

Literature shows that during online lessons, teachers must ask their learners challenging questions so that they (teachers) establish suitable learning abilities for learners, and keep learners focused throughout the lesson (Mahmood, 2021:201). The findings of a study conducted in one Indonesian high school demonstrated that this teaching strategy had a positive impact in developing the way learners learnt (Widodo, 2020:139). In their research in an Islamic school, Tambak and Sukenti

(2019:126) found that question and answer teaching strategy aroused and challenged learners to read and research the subject material.

In teaching the four Sesotho language skills online, the Sesotho teachers asked learners questions, giving verbal and written answers that improved their speaking and writing skills. This strategy made the learners actively engaged in their learning of Sesotho concepts, and in their improvement of Sesotho Language skills.

In the WhatsApp groups, discussions were also conducted to teach the four Sesotho language skills. The discussions were facilitated by Sesotho teachers in those WhatsApp lessons. Improving these learners' language skills was important for them to communicate effectively in the classrooms and outside.

Apart from the use of WhatsApp platform, literature state that language teachers can also use online platforms such as Skype to schedule a time where they and their learners engage in real online discussions to guide the learners (Chou, 2012:27). A study conducted on the use of Facebook(FB) groups as the online platform found online discussions to be of assistance to learners in improving their reading and critical skills and their vocabulary and grammar, as they had to read more to build their knowledge and exchange their findings with the other discussion members (Omar *et al.*, 2012:70). Literature indicates that online discussions promote interactive learning as it encourages learners to work in groups (Anderson *et al.*, 2013:131).

Previous studies have also recognised that, through computer-assisted discussions, learners practice writing, participate and collaborate, and learn how to research on the internet (Warschauer & Meskill, 2000:303). The various online teaching strategies used by Sesotho teachers align with Vygotsky's (1978) social constructivism, which advocates social interaction.

Even though the participants never mentioned using presentations as an online teaching strategy, research shows that it can also be used to teach the four language skills. Literature shows that this teaching strategy allows learners to learn and understand the subject content and practice speaking publicly (Bennett, 2019) as they present more often. This teaching strategy has also been found to be efficient for teaching speaking, as the learners get a chance to speak during the discussion of their presentation with their colleagues before presenting (Sakkir *et al.*,

2022:256). Sakkir *et al.* (2022:258) found out that, in Indonesian schools, online presentation increased learners' motivation and improved their speaking skills. This strategy can also be helpful to Sesotho learners, as their reading, writing, speaking and listening skills would develop. The Sesotho teachers can give learners topics to go and read more and research about, so that they present their findings to others and improve their research skills.

Although literature indicates that online debates assist learners to read and write critically (Park *et al.*, 2011:4), according to this study's findings, debates were not used as an online teaching strategy to teach the four Sesotho during COVID-19. Previous studies confirm that social constructivist learning theory serves as the foundation for online interactive and collaborative features, as the learners assist each other in the creation of knowledge of the topic being discussed (Hodgkinson-Williams & Mostert, 2005:95).

5.3.3 The challenges and opportunities posed by WhatsApp-facilitated teaching strategies.

This study's findings showed that WhatsApp-facilitated teaching strategies posed challenges and presented opportunities to both Sesotho teachers and learners.

Although the findings of this study confirm that Lesotho government ensured continued education through radio and television programmes during COVID-19 school closures, UNICEF Report (2020:2) explains that just 20% of families could continuously afford access to the kind of education offered. This meant that learners failed to practice the four language skills with perfection while the schools were closed.

In Ghana, the same applied where the Ministry of Education and Ghana Education Service developed digital content through television, radio and online learning for the basic school and junior high school levels to continue with education (Henaku, 2020:55). A study conducted in Zimbabwe secondary schools also found that the government announced radio programmes as the main instrument to be used for teaching and learning during COVID-19 pandemic, as disadvantaged and rural learners can easily access it as it is the cheapest way to provide education content (Maphosa, 2021:2). These findings were similar to those of this study, with the exceptions of Sesotho subject.

This study found lack of data and mobile phones by teachers and learners as a challenge to teaching and learning of Sesotho through WhatsApp. Though the Sesotho teachers, who initiated the WhatsApp groups, could afford data, the challenge was with learners whose parents could not afford the cost of data.

Similarly, in a study conducted in Malaysian public secondary schools, inadequate data was one of the challenges experienced during online teaching and learning was inadequate data (Izhar *et al.*, 2021:1299). A study among rural learners in South Africa, Dube (2020:148) discovered that costly data compromised online learning. In a study conducted in a South African rural school, Mukuna and Aloka (2020:145) found that data costs and lack of devices challenged online teaching and learning. These studies' findings align with the present study's findings, which revealed lack of mobile data and connectivity for smooth online teaching and learning of Sesotho during COVID-19.

Although the participating schools had WI-FI provisions when the schools re-opened, there were no clear rules and regulations on how both teachers and learners should use it for teaching and learning Sesotho. According to UTAUT's construct of performance expectancy (Attuquayefio & Addo, 2014b:76), the Sesotho teachers believed that the application of WhatsApp facilitated strategies in the teaching of Sesotho assisted them to impart knowledge to their learners during COVID-19 pandemic though not to the perfection they desired.

The challenge that faced learners who did not own mobile phones is not unique to Sesotho learners. Maree (2022:252) found that some learners located in poor and resource-scarce areas in South African schools did not own smart phones and had neither access to internet nor navigation skills for available online resources. A study conducted in India on challenges faced by developed and developing countries, revealed lack of technical tools and preparation for online teaching in some developing countries (Naresh & Reddy, 2015:260). Literature also shows that lack of technological equipment was a challenge to effective online learning (Basar *et al.*, 2021:120), which applied to the teaching of Sesotho during COVID-19.

Contrary to the findings of this study on lack of mobile phones challenge, a case study in Uruguay schools found that the country had provided all students in public primary schools with laptops (Kozma & Isaacs, 2011:139). A study conducted in

Bulgarian secondary schools noted that the use of mobile devices during lessons assisted learners as they shared information and checked meanings of some concepts from the internet using their phones (Nikolova *et al.*, 2008:8). Some learners in developing countries, including Lesotho, do not have access to online platforms, whereas their counterparts in developed countries enjoy the benefits of online teaching and learning.

This study found lack of electricity and poor network connectivity as obstacles that hindered the progress of WhatsApp facilitated teaching strategies. These were problems as the learners needed stable network and internet connection at home for smooth access of WhatsApp lessons. Some of these learners' homes were in the rural areas where electricity was a challenge. The involvement of the government and the network providers was needed so that teaching and learning progressed smoothly during this pandemic.

Despite Lesotho envisioning that by the year 2020, access to electricity, communication and development technology would reach ninety percent of Basotho (Lesotho Vision 2020 Government of Lesotho, 2000:7), this study found that in 2020 during schools' closures, learners still struggled to connect to WhatsApp lessons due to lack electricity to charge their phones. This negatively affected their learning.

In a study conducted on rural online learning in South Africa, it was revealed that education during COVID-19 could not reach every learner, particularly those in rural areas, due to a lack of connectivity in those areas (Dube, 2020:145). Similar to the findings of this study, a study in Lesotho university indicated that in the Sub-Saharan countries, the establishment of online teaching and learning was problematic because low access to the internet, poor connectivity, unreasonable data costs and recurring power cessation (Makumane, 2021:2).

In relation to this study's findings, a study conducted in Riyadh also showed that learner involvement in online learning can be affected negatively by technology glitches or lack of support services (Gangwani & Alfryan, 2020:4). Although their study was conducted at tertiary level conditions, the same was true for the participating high school learners using WhatsApp. Literature revealed that, for online classes to be effective, a computer and internet connectivity are necessary (Kamble *et al.*, 2021:204), which was not the case with the participants of this study.

It was also found that some of the learners' participation was very poor. Participants explained that in a WhatsApp lesson, few learners attended. Some learners did not even bother to do the activities given in a WhatsApp group despite attending the lessons. They just ignored those activities.

In a similar study where teaching and learning was done using WhatsApp, it was found that learners' active and full participation in WhatsApp activities was based on the monitoring and support that the members of the community offered (Moodley, 2019:8). This could have worked perfectly in relation to the Sesotho lessons if the families and communities offered more support for Sesotho learners while studying through WhatsApp.

Furthermore, researchers found that learners who frequently experience loneliness and low self-esteem during online lessons might feel isolated from their learning community (Sepulveda-Escobar & Morrison, 2020:591), and do not participate fully in the lessons. Learners' attitude is also revealed as a challenge towards the effective use of online learning (Basar *et al.*, 2021:120) as it may lead to lack of participation in an online lesson. Kebritchi *et al.* (2017:9) comment that isolation and loneliness during online lessons may negatively affect learning and lead to learners' lack of participation. In addition, literature shows that learners' participation in online lessons can also be affected by personal factors such as household chores or a baby crying (Gillett-Swan, 17:27). This may lead to learners' poor attendance in online lessons.

Previous studies also show that, loneliness and depression during the pandemic, affected learners' online academic performance (Ellis *et al.*, 2020:178) and led to poor participation. The reasons behind the lack of participation and poor attendance in the previous studies was related to the findings of this study. Lack of participation compromised full engagement of learners during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Unlike this study's findings where learners' poor participation in WhatsApp was identified, Gon and Rawekar (2017:23) state that the college learners who were taught through found it easy to use and simply accessible.

The lack of knowledge about online teaching strategies was also found to be a challenge to the Sesotho teaching during COVID-19. The Sesotho teachers did not have knowledge about other online platforms to use to teach other than the

WhatsApp platform. Similar findings in Malaysian public secondary schools revealed that teachers were not knowledgeable enough and lacked technological skills to change hardcopy information into softcopy information and share to learners using online platforms (Izhar *et al.*, 2021:1299). In Iran, Malaysia and Pekanbaru similar findings on lack of technological skills when teaching languages online were revealed (Shahnama, Yazdanmehr & Shirvan, 2021:12, Raman & Yamat, 2014:17 & Zulkifli & Hayati, 2021:16). This was in line with the findings of this study, where similar challenges affected Sesotho's online teaching and learning during the pandemic.

Contrary to this study's findings, a study in Iran found that language teachers relied more on online classes as they made learning easier and assisted them to improve their skills and knowledge in technology application (Khatoony & Nezhadmehr, 2020:100). These teachers, unlike Sesotho teachers, found integration of technology into teaching exciting to use. They did not recognise it as a negative challenge but rather an uplifting challenge that developed their technical skills. If the Sesotho high school teachers had received all kind of support from the government and the parents, on the usage of WhatsApp lessons, Sesotho teaching would have been much enjoyable to them and the learners. In Bangladesh, English language listening and reading skills were taught using interactive audio, mobile technology and other ICT-based substances (Wagner *et al.*, 2014:123). If the Sesotho learners could also be taught the four Sesotho language skills through various technological devices, their language skills would improve.

Lack of government involvement on teaching through WhatsApp was also a challenge to the teaching and learning of Sesotho during COVID-19. Participants indicated that the Ministry of Education and Training did not bother to give any kind of assistance to those who had already started teaching on WhatsApp platforms to continue teaching during COVID-19 crisis. If the Ministry of Education and Training had initiated the teaching and learning of Sesotho through these WhatsApp groups, the teachers and learners would have taken them seriously. Teaching without support from the schools and the MOET was a hassle for Sesotho teachers at this period. Though the government did not support teaching of Sesotho through WhatsApp, the findings revealed that other subjects were aired on radios and televisions. Similar to the findings of this study, literature indicates that English First

Additional Language (FAL) instructors did not get Department of Basic Education guidance in planning their classes in accordance with the curricula that had been cut due to the COVID-19 outbreak in South Africa (Mokoena, 2022:380).

The findings of a study conducted in Lesotho showed that there was no straightforward policy on ICT and its integration into Lesotho education from primary school level to higher learning (Mokenela, 2019:167). Although these findings were for higher learning, they were similar to this study's finding, where no clear frameworks on the incorporation of technology should be done while teaching during COVID-19.

In Lesotho, the Minister of Education and Training speech in a 41st session of the general conference of the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) conference in France noted that, despite the COVID-19 challenges, the government successfully ensured that teaching and learning continued in schools through the use of online teaching and learning resources for both teachers and learners (MOET Government of Lesotho, 2021:3). However, this was not the case among the Sesotho teachers and learners in the participating schools. In these schools, it was found that there had never been any resources provided by the government to either the teachers or learners during school closures and re-opening, to assist in online teaching and learning.

Similarly, a study carried out in Iran during COVID-19, showed that, though online teaching was declared to be a necessity during school closures, there were no precise instructions and training plans for preparedness for schoolteachers on how to handle online teaching (Askari & Chen, 2021:33). This is the same with what was discovered in the participant schools.

Contrary to what happened to participating schools in Lesotho, literature revealed the opposite occurred in other countries. The study conducted in Estonia discovered that teachers were provided with various guidelines about teaching and backing by the Ministry of Education and Research, when switching to distance learning due to COVID-19 (Lepp *et al.*, 2021:4). A study conducted in New Zealand also found that when schools closed on 25 March 2020 and teachers were allocated time to prepare for online teaching and learning, which was supported by the country's Ministry of Education with the resources to make it a success (Yates *et al.*, 2021:61). In this

study, it was found that schools closures occurred abruptly with no direction of what to do next.

Regardless of the challenges experienced by the application of WhatsApp facilitated teaching strategies, there were still benefits gained out of its usage. It was found out that learners who fully participated in the WhatsApp lessons gained a lot of knowledge as there was difference between them and those that participated less and did not do the activities. The participants stated that learners' Sesotho language skills had improved when the schools re-opened.

Also, the use of WhatsApp facilitated teaching strategies opened opportunities for Sesotho to have technology incorporated in its teaching as the Sesotho teachers seem to continue using these strategies even after the schools re-opened. Literature observes that online learning provides several learning opportunities to many learners at cheaper costs (Lie *et al.*, (2020:806). The Sesotho learners could have grabbed the same opportunity of studying Sesotho at cheaper costs.

Similar to the findings of this study, a study conducted in Bulgarian secondary schools found that the use of mobile devices during lessons assisted learners as they shared information and checked the meanings of some concepts using their phones (Nikolova *et al.*, 2008:8). The WhatsApp facilitated teaching strategies were also beneficial as the Sesotho learners were able to share Sesotho concepts with their teachers and other learners to improve their Sesotho language skills at the same time.

Apart from teaching through the WhatsApp platform, a study conducted in Hong Kong found that language teachers used Zoom to interact with learners and check their understanding (Cheung, 2021:11). A study conducted in Bulgarian secondary schools also showed that an e-learning platform was used in English language lessons to improve the learners' English language skills and helpful in creating teams and group works in which the learners clarified tasks through its use (Nikolova *et al.*, 2008:8). These findings revealed that learners had the opportunity to improve their language skills while being taught through different online platforms other than WhatsApp, which could also be used in the improvement of Sesotho Language skills.

Previous studies reveal that learners are also able to search for information about the difficult concepts in their subjects from various sources using WebURL (Oliver, 1999:244). This could also be beneficial if the Sesotho teachers allowed learners to use mobile phones to check meanings of Sesotho concepts and practice the Sesotho Language skills while at school.

Literature further states that online teaching offers teachers an opportunity to learn broadly about various online platforms, and how they can be used to teach and simplify concepts for learners (Sepulveda-Escobar & Morrison, 2020:596). This can make Sesotho teaching and learning more enjoyable and fruitful as the youth nowadays enjoy using technological devices, especially their cell phones, all the time.

This study's findings further state that writing skills for learners improved while taught through WhatsApp groups. Similarly, literature puts it that, through the application of various software products in online learning, learners have the opportunity to attain knowledge and improve important skills (Tsvetkova, & Borodzhieva, 2021:146). These findings could be of importance if online teaching and learning strategies are included in day-to-day teaching of Sesotho.

Unlike the findings of this study, a study on the online learning in institutions in United States revealed that, in online learning, the choice of sequence, pace and amount of content that learners have to study at a certain time, leads to good performance of learners (Kebritchi *et al.*, 2017:9). Virtual learning is beneficial as it can be accessed from any place at any time, and the learners can have online discussions among each other (Younesi, 2021:16). This can also apply to online lessons in Lesotho high schools if Sesotho content lessons are put online for learners to access and learn at their own rate, space, and time. That can lead to the improvement in Sesotho language skills as the learners will have more time to practice.

The findings of this study show that opportunities for further research on integrating online teaching strategies in the Sesotho syllabus, at basic education level, using WhatsApp and other online platforms, were created.

5.4 Limitations of the study

It was hard to identify high schools with Sesotho teachers that taught during that period. In one high school, there was no teaching at all during that period as there were no instructions from the government on how they should teach. In other high schools, teaching through WhatsApp was started but later stopped as several challenges surfaced. This made it hard to recognise all the opportunities that could have been gained by teaching and learning during this time. As these WhatsApp groups were teacher-initiated, the problem the researcher encountered was that of not having lesson plans related to them. However, this did not mean all the high schools in the district and in the country teaching during COVID-19 experienced similar challenges while teaching through WhatsApp platform or other online platforms. This study's findings only represented the concerned participants.

5.5 Recommendations

The researcher recommends the development of policies that allow for the inclusion of technology and online teaching in the teaching and learning of Sesotho. The schools are also recommended to establish their own online platforms which can easily be operated and accessed by teachers and learners during the times when they could not meet physically. This would not be a challenge for effective teaching and learning during crises such as COVID-19. This will help the teachers when they are to teach online using other technological devices and online platforms. For these to run smoothly, the researcher recommends that computers be provided in schools so that their absence does not hinder the process of teaching and learning of Sesotho online. Those learners who do not have technological devices to learn Sesotho online can use school computers while at school.

The development of network connectivity and electricity coverage, which include even far away rural villages for the learners and the teachers to be able to access online lessons even when the schools are closed, is also recommended. While at school, the learners should be accorded access to the school WI-FI but restricted to use it for their personal reasons. This can make online teaching and learning easier when the learners are at school. If online teaching strategies are integrated into the teaching of Sesotho, learners may find learning Sesotho language interesting and enjoyable. As network operators offered South African universities learners free 30GB of data to encourage online learning during the COVID-19 lockdown (Maphosa

et al., 2020:87), similar support from Lesotho network operators at the time of crises such as COVID-19, can be requested by the MOET to encourage online learning.

The researcher also recommends that the learners be encouraged, by the teachers, the school management, and the parents, to fully participate in online learning of Sesotho. By fully participating in online classes while at school and at home, the learners can become interested in learning Sesotho online and improve their language skills.

The researcher further recommends that the government through MOET and the schools provide workshops that enlighten and equip Sesotho teachers with the knowledge on online teaching strategies that can be used to teach Sesotho, and the skills on operating various technological devices that can assist in making online teaching and learning of Sesotho a success.

In addition, the researcher recommends that the government be involved in the online teaching and learning of Sesotho, by providing teachers with the recommended online teaching and learning strategies and platforms that can be used to teach Sesotho. The involvement of the government can be a huge encouragement to both Sesotho and their learners in online teaching and learning of Sesotho.

5.5.1 Section that articulate how each of the objectives were achieved.

The objectives of this study were achieved through the collection of data using individual semi-structured interviews and lesson plans. The researcher also achieved the objectives by using the interpretive paradigm to interpret collected data. This paradigm assisted the researcher to interpret the meanings of the teaching strategies used to teach Sesotho by high school teachers before the COVID-19 pandemic, the online teaching strategies used to teach Sesotho during COVID-19 pandemic, the limitations posed by those online instructional strategies, and the opportunities presented by the online instructional strategies provided by the participants. The researcher has used this paradigm in conjunction with Creswell (2007:21) who states that the interpretive paradigm allows the researcher to interpret the meanings participants have about the phenomenon being explored.

The first objective; to explore the teaching strategies used to teach Sesotho by high school teachers before the COVID-19 pandemic, was achieved through collecting data on the various teaching strategies that the Sesotho teachers used to teach Sesotho before COVID-19 using interviews and lesson plans.

The second objective; to identify the online teaching strategies used to teach Sesotho during COVID-19 pandemic, was achieved through collecting data on the online teaching strategies that the Sesotho teachers used to teach Sesotho online during COVID-19. This was done through the individual semi-structured interviews as the participants did not have online lesson plans during the pandemic.

The third objective; to highlight the limitations posed by the online instructional strategies used to teach Sesotho by high school teachers during COVID-19 pandemic, was achieved by interviewing Sesotho teachers on the challenges that they experienced while teaching Sesotho during COVID-19.

Finally, the fourth objective; to highlight the opportunities presented by the online instructional strategies used to teach Sesotho by high school teachers during COVID-19 pandemic, was achieved by interviewing Sesotho teachers. In those interviews, the participants provided the opportunities that they came across while teaching Sesotho online.

5.6 Conclusions of the study

As this study explored the online teaching strategies used by Sesotho high school teachers to teach Sesotho during COVID-19, its focus was on three high schools where two Sesotho teachers per school were interviewed and documents analysed.

The study concluded that, before COVID-19, Sesotho teachers used the traditional face-to-face teaching strategies to teach Sesotho. These teaching strategies were discussions, question and answer, and group work.

The study further concluded that during COVID-19 the Sesotho teachers used online teaching strategies used to teach Sesotho. These were the WhatsApp-facilitated teaching strategies of discussions and question and answer.

In using these WhatsApp-facilitated teaching strategies to teach Sesotho during COVID-19, it was concluded that the Sesotho teachers and learners experienced challenges of lack of mobile phones and data, poor network and electricity

connectivity, lack of participation by the learners, lack of knowledge on online platforms by teachers, and lack of government involvement.

Though there were challenges encountered, the study concluded that there were opportunities presented by these WhatsApp-facilitated teaching strategies. These included opportunities to incorporate technology into the teaching of Sesotho and a chance for learners to share information among themselves and improve their Sesotho language skills.

5.7 Implications of the study

The findings of this study align with the findings of other researchers as there is an indication of positive use of online teaching strategies during COVID-19. It has been indicated that among the schools that taught online, using online platforms, there was development in teaching and learning. There are chances that the online teaching of Sesotho could be a success, and greatly assist in the learning of the four Sesotho Language skills if the government and the schools could implement the mentioned recommendations in relation to the findings of this study.

As a result of the findings of this study, the traditional face-to-face teaching strategies and the online teaching strategies could be incorporated to the teaching and learning of Sesotho. That could assist in improving the learners' performance of Sesotho Language skill. Though there may be challenges of using online teaching strategies, that could be overcome by joint assistance of the government and the schools. The Sesotho teachers could get deeper knowledge on the use of traditional face-to-face teaching strategies and online teaching strategies that could be used to teach Sesotho. They (Sesotho teachers) could also learn about the challenges brought by the online teaching strategies and device ways of overcoming them. This study could also enlighten the Sesotho teachers with the opportunities that could be derived from using online teaching strategies in making the teaching and learning of Sesotho successful and enjoyable to the learners.

REFERENCES

- Abbad, M.M. 2021. Using the UTAUT model to understand students' usage of e-learning systems in developing countries. *Education and Information Technologies*, 26(6):7205-7224.
- Adedoyin, O.B. and Soykan, E. 2020. Covid-19 pandemic and online learning: the challenges and opportunities. *Interactive Learning Environments*, 1-13. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10494820.2020.1813180>
- Agbenyegah, A.T. and Dlamini, B.I. 2019. Investigating the Challenges of E-Learning in a Developing Institution of Higher Learning: A Hypothetical Approach. *Journal of Applied Business Research (JABR)*, 35(3):83-96.
- Agyei, C. and Razi, Ö. 2022. The effect of extended UTAUT model on EFLs' adaptation to flipped classroom. *Education and Information Technologies*, 27(2):1865-1882.
- Ahmadi, M.R. and Gilakjani, A.P. 2012. Reciprocal Teaching Strategies and Their Impacts on English Reading Comprehension. *Theory & Practice in Language Studies*, 2(10):2053-2060.
- Akpan, V. I., Igwe, U. A., Mpamah, I. B.I. and Okoro, C.O. 2020. SOCIAL CONSTRUCTIVISM: IMPLICATIONS ON TEACHING AND LEARNING. *British Journal of Education*, 8(8):49-56.
- Alamer, A. and Al Khateeb, A. 2021. Effects of using the WhatsApp application on language learners motivation: A controlled investigation using structural equation modelling. *Computer Assisted Language Learning*, 1-27. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09588221.2021.1903042>
- Alasmari, A. and Ahmed, S.S. 2013. Using debate in EFL classes. *English language teaching*, 6(1):147-152.
- Aliyyah, R.R., Rachmadtullah, R., Samsudin, A., Syaodih, E., Nurtanto, M. and

Tambunan, A.R.S. 2020. The perceptions of primary school teachers of online learning during the COVID-19 pandemic period: A case study in Indonesia. *Journal of Ethnic and Cultural Studies*, 7(2):90-109.

Alzahrani, I. and Woollard, J. 2013. The Role of the Constructivist Learning Theory and Collaborative Learning Environment on Wiki Classroom, and the Relationship between Them.

https://scholar.google.com/scholar?hl=en&as_sdt=0%2C5&q=Alzahrani%2C+I.+and+Woollard%2C+J.+2013.+The+Role+of+the+Constructivist+Learning+Theory+and+Collaborative+Learning+Environment+on+Wiki+Classroom%2C+and+the+Relationship+between+Them.+Online+Submission.+&btnG=

Amry, A.B., 2014. The impact of WhatsApp mobile social learning on the achievement and attitudes of female students compared with face to face learning in the classroom. *European Scientific Journal*, 10(22):116-136.

Anderson, R.S., Goode, G.S., Mitchell, J.S. and Thompson, R.F. 2013. Four online discussion strategies: Perceptions of seven doctoral students. *Learning Space: Perspectives on Technology and Literacy in a Changing Educational Landscape* _ 2 Effects of Reading Formats on the Comprehension of New Independent Readers _ 24 iPad Intervention with At-Risk Preschoolers: Mobile Technology in the Classroom _ 56 Critical Participation in Literacy Research through New and Emerging Technologies: A Study *Journal of Literacy and Technology*, 14(2):116. http://www.literacyandtechnology.org/uploads/1/3/6/8/136889/jlt_v14_2.pdf#page=116

Ardiansyah, W. and Ujihanti, M. 2017. Constructivism and Its Perspectives Related to Teaching and Learning Process in the Classroom: A Conceptual Framework. *Tarbawy: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam*, 4(1):117-143.

Askari, H. and Chen, L. 2021. Challenges and Opportunities of Teaching Online in

- an Iranian EFL High School Context during the Covid-19 Pandemic. *The Reading Matrix: An International Online Journal*, 21(2):32-46.
- Attuquayefio, S. and Addo, H. 2014a. Review of studies with UTAUT as conceptual framework. *European scientific journal*, 10(8):249-258.
- Attuquayefio, S. and Addo, H. 2014b. Using the UTAUT model to analyze students' ICT adoption. *International Journal of Education and Development using ICT*, 10(3):75-86.
- Awang, H., Aji, Z.M., Yaakob, M.F.M., Osman, W.R.S., Mukminin, A. and Habibi, A. 2018. Teachers' intention to continue using Virtual Learning Environment (VLE): Malaysian context. *JOTSE*, 8(4):439-452.
- Babchuk, W.A. 2019. Fundamentals of qualitative analysis in family medicine. *Family medicine and community health*, 7(2):1-10.
- Babbie, E., Mouton, J., Vorster, P., and Prozesky, B. 2004. *The practice of social research*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Bada, S.O. and Olusegun, S. 2015. Constructivism learning theory: A paradigm for teaching and learning. *Journal of Research & Method in Education*, 5(6):66-70.
- Ball, J. 2010. Educational equity for children from diverse language backgrounds: mother tongue-based bilingual or multilingual education in the early years: summary.
<http://dspace.library.uvic.ca/bitstream/handle/1828/2457/UNESCO%20Summary%202010.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y>
- Basar, Z.M., Mansor, A.N., Jamaludin, K.A. and Alias, B.S. 2021. The Effectiveness and Challenges of Online Learning for Secondary School Students: A Case Study. *Asian Journal of University Education*, 17(3):119-129.
- Baxter, P. and Jack, S. 2008. Qualitative case study methodology: Study design and implementation for novice researchers. *The qualitative report*, 13(4):544-559.

- Belay, D.G. 2020. COVID-19, Distance Learning and Educational Inequality in Rural Ethiopia. *Pedagogical Research*, 5(4):1-11. em0082. <https://doi.org/10.29333/pr/9133>
- Bennett, C. 2019. Methods for presenting subject matter. https://scholar.google.com/scholar?hl=en&as_sdt=0%2C5&q=Bennett%2C+C.+2019.+Methods+for+presenting+subject+matter.+&btnG=
- Bertram, C. and Christiansen, I. 2014. *Understanding research: An introduction to reading research*. Pretoria: Van Schaik Publishers.
- Bowen, G. A. 2009. Document Analysis as a Qualitative Research Method. *Qualitative Research Journal*, 9(2):27-40. DOI 10.3316/QRJ0902027.
- Bouhnik, D. and Deshen, M. 2014. WhatsApp goes to school: Mobile instant messaging between teachers and students. *Journal of Information Technology Education Research*, 13:217:231.
- Brau, B. 2020. Constructivism. *The Students' Guide to Learning Design and Research*. <https://edtechbooks.org/studentguide/constructivism/simple>
- Burke, A. 2011. Group work: How to use groups effectively. *Journal of Effective Teaching*, 11(2):87-95.
- Bush, J. 2015. The impact of classroom games on the acquisition of second language grammar. *LIF—Language in Focus Journal*, 1(2):17-29.
- Cambridge Dictionary. 2022. [Cambridge Academic Content Dictionary](https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/concept). Cambridge University Press. <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/concept>
- Carcary, M. 2009. The research audit trial—enhancing trustworthiness in qualitative inquiry. *Electronic journal of business research methods*, 7(1):11-24.
- Carter, B. and Sealey, A. 2007. Languages, nations and identities. *Methodological Innovations Online*, 2(2):20-31.

- Chien, H.Y. 2020. Effects of two teaching strategies on pre-schoolers' Oral language skills: repeated read-aloud with question-and-answer teaching embedded and repeated read-aloud with executive function activities embedded. *Frontiers in psychology*, 10(2932):1-11.
<https://www.frontiersin.org/journals/psychology#editorial-board>
- Cheung, A. 2021. Language teaching during a pandemic: A case study of zoom use by a secondary ESL teacher in Hong Kong. *RELC Journal*, Online:1-16.
<https://uk.sagepub.com/en-gb/journals-permissions>
- Chou, P.N. 2012. Teaching strategies in online discussion board: A framework in higher education. *Higher Education Studies*, 2(2):25-30.
- Churcher, K., Downs, E. and Tewksbury, D. 2014. "Friending" Vygotsky: A Social Constructivist Pedagogy of Knowledge Building through Classroom Social Media Use. *Journal of Effective Teaching*, 14(1):33-50.
- Cinganotto, L. 2019. Debate as a teaching strategy for language learning. *Lingue e Linguaggi*, 30:107-125.
- Cohen, L., Manion, L. and Morrison, K. 2007. *Research methods in education*. London: Routledge.
- Compton, L.K. 2009. Preparing language teachers to teach language online: a look at skills, roles, and responsibilities. *Computer Assisted Language Learning*, 22(1):73-99.
- Connelly, L.M. 2016. Trustworthiness in qualitative research. *Medsurg Nursing*, 25(6):435.
- Cope, D.G. 2014. Methods and meanings: credibility and trustworthiness of qualitative research. In *Oncology nursing forum*, 41(1):89-91.
- Creswell, J. W. 2007. *Qualitative Inquiry & Research Design: Choosing Among Five Approaches*. London: SAGE Publications.

- Creswell, J.W. and Creswell, J.D. 2017. *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches*. London: SAGE publications.
- Creswell, J.W. and Poth, C.N. 2018. *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Crowe, S., Cresswell, K., Robertson, A., Huby, G., Avery, A. and Sheikh, A. 2011. The case study approach. *BMC medical research methodology*, 11(1):1-9.
- Davis, M.L., Witcraft, S.M., Baird, S.O. and Smits, J.A. 2017. Learning principles in CBT. *In The science of cognitive behavioural therapy*, 51-76. Academic Press. <https://doi.org/10.1016/B978-0-12-803457-6.00003-9>
- Dalglis, S.L., Khalid, H. and McMahon, S.A. 2020. Document analysis in health policy research: the READ approach. *Health policy and planning*, 35(10):1424-1431.
- Darby, M. 2007. Debate: A teaching-learning strategy for developing competence in communication and critical thinking. *American Dental Hygienists' Association*, 81(4):1-10
- Devi, K.S. 2019. Constructivist Approach to Learning based on the Concepts of Jean Piaget and Lev Vygotsky: an Analytical Overview, *Journal of Indian Education* 44(4):5-19.
- Dhull, I. and MS. Sakshi, M.S. 2019. Online Learning. *International Education & Research Journal [IERJ]*, 3(8):32-34.
- Dube, B. 2020. Rural online learning in the context of COVID 19 in South Africa: Evoking an inclusive education approach. *Multidisciplinary Journal of Educational Research*, 10(2):135-157.
- Dulle, F.W. and Minishi-Majanja, M.K. 2011. The suitability of the Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT) model in open access adoption studies. *Information development*, 27(1):32-45.

- Ellis, W.E., Dumas, T.M. and Forbes, L.M. 2020. Physically isolated but socially connected: Psychological adjustment and stress among adolescents during the initial COVID-19 crisis. *Canadian Journal of Behavioural Science/Revue canadienne des sciences du comportement*, 52(3):177-187.
- Escamilla, K., Hopewell, S. and Slavick, J. 2021. Teaching (bi) multilingual learners: Connecting languages. *The Reading Teacher*, 75(3):363-371.
- Fernando, S.Y. and Marikar, F.M. 2017. Constructivist Teaching/Learning Theory and Participatory Teaching Methods. *Journal of Curriculum and Teaching*, 6(1):110-122.
- Ferreira-Meyers, K. and Martins, J. 2020. The use of Whatsapp in today's mobile language teaching and learning. In *ITM Web of Conferences*. 33(03007):1-6. EDP Sciences. <https://doi.org/10.1051/itmconf /20203303007>
- Futra, D. and Primahardani, I. 2021. Online Learning Management in the Era of Covid-19 Pandemic at Junior High Schools in Indonesia. *Journal of Information Technology Education: Research*, 20(1):351-383.
- Galbin, A. 2014. An introduction to social constructionism. *Social research reports*, 6(26):82-92.
- George, M.L. 2020. Effective teaching and examination strategies for undergraduate learning during COVID-19 school restrictions. *Journal of Educational Technology Systems*, 49(1): 23-48.
- Gillett-Swan, J. 2017. The challenges of online learning: Supporting and engaging the isolated learner. *Journal of Learning Design*, 10(1):20-30.
- Gon, S. and Rawekar, A. 2017. Effectivity of e-learning through WhatsApp as a teaching learning tool. *MVP Journal of Medical Sciences*, 4(1):19-25.
- Granjeiro, É.M. 2019. based teaching-learning method: a strategy to motivate and

- engage students in human physiology classes. *Advances in Physiology Education*, 43(4):553-556.
- Gurung, S. 2021. Challenges Faced By Teachers in Online Teaching during Covid-19 Pandemic. *The Online Journal of Distance Education and e-Learning*, 9(1):8-18.
- Gustafsson, J. 2017. Single case studies vs. multiple case studies: A comparative study. <https://www.diva-portal.org/smash/get/diva2:1064378/FULLTEXT01.pdf>
- Hammarberg, K., Kirkman, M. and de Lacey, S. 2016. Qualitative research methods: when to use them and how to judge them. *Human Reproduction*, (31)3:498–501.
- Hassan, M. 2021. Online Teaching Challenges during COVID-19 Pandemic. *International Journal of Information and Education Technology*, 11(1):41-46.
- Hebe, H.N. 2017. Towards a theory–driven integration of environmental education: The application of Piaget and Vygotsky in Grade R. *International Journal of Environmental and Science Education*, 12(6):1525-1545.
- Henaku, E.A. 2020. COVID-19 online learning experience of college students: The case of Ghana. *International Journal of Multidisciplinary Sciences and Advanced Technology*, 1(2):54-62.
- Henning, E. 2004. *Finding your way in qualitative research*. Pretoria: Van Schaik Publishers.
- Hodgkinson-Williams, C. and Mostert, M. 2005. Online debating to encourage student participation in online learning environments: A qualitative case study at a South African university. *International Journal of Education and Development using ICT*, 1(2):94-104.
- Hsieh, H.F. and Shannon, S.E. 2005. Three approaches to qualitative content analysis. *Qualitative health research*, 15(9):1277-1288.

- Ibrahim, A. 2017. Advantages of using language games in teaching English as a foreign language in Sudan basic schools. *American Academic Scientific Research Journal for Engineering, Technology, and Sciences*, 37(1):140-150.
- Im, I., Hong, S. and Kang, M.S. 2011. An international comparison of technology adoption: Testing the UTAUT model. *Information & management*, 48(1):1-8.
- Izhar, N.A., Al-dheleai, Y.M. and Na, K.S. 2021. Teaching in the Time of Covid-19: The Challenges Faced By Teachers in Initiating Online Class Sessions. *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences*, 11(2):1294-1306.
- Jabeen, S.S. and Thomas, A.J. 2015. Effectiveness of online language learning. In *World Congress on Engineering and Computer Science* (1):1-5.
- Jackson, R.L., Drummond, D.K. and Camara, S. 2007. What is qualitative research? *Qualitative research reports in communication*, 8(1):21-28.
- Jemadi, F. 2020. Secondary school language teachers' online learning engagement during the Covid-19 pandemic in Indonesia. *Journal of Information Technology Education: Research*, 19, 803-832.
- Kabir, S.M.S. 2016. Basic guidelines for research. An introductory approach for all disciplines, 4(2):168-180.
<https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Syed-Muhammad->
- Kamble, A., Gauba, R., Desai, S. and Golhar, D. 2021. Learners' perception of the transition to instructor-led online learning environments: Facilitators and barriers during the COVID-19 pandemic. *International Review of Research in Open and Distributed Learning*, 22(1):199-215.
- Kapur, R. 2019. Inequality in Educational Opportunities. *International Journal of Transformations in Business Management*, 9:13-18.

- Karim, U. 2015. Implementation of group work in the classroom. *LINGUA: Jurnal Bahasa, Sastra, dan Pengajarannya*, 12(1):97-106.
- Kassem, M.A.M. 2018. Improving EFL Students' Speaking Proficiency and Motivation: A Hybrid Problem-based Learning Approach. *Theory & Practice in Language Studies*, 8(7):848-859,.
- Kebritchi, M., Lipschuetz, A. and Santiago, L. 2017. Issues and challenges for teaching successful online courses in higher education: A literature review. *Journal of Educational Technology Systems*, 46(1):4-29.
- Khan, S.N. 2014a. Qualitative research method: Grounded theory. *International journal of business and management*, 9(11):224-233.
- Khan, S.N. 2014b. Qualitative research method-phenomenology. *Asian Social Science*, 10(21):298-310.
- Khatoony, S. and Nezhadmehr, M. 2020. EFL teachers' challenges in integration of technology for online classrooms during Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic in Iran. *AJELP: Asian Journal of English Language and Pedagogy*, 8(2):89-104.
- Khechine, H., Lakhal, S., Pascot, D. and Bytha, A. 2014. UTAUT model for blended learning: The role of gender and age in the intention to use webinars. *Interdisciplinary journal of E-Learning and Learning objects*, 10(1):33-52.
- Kim, B. 2001. Social constructivism. Emerging perspectives on learning, teaching, and technology, 1(1):1-16. <http://projects.coe.uga.edu/epltt/>
- Kingdom of Lesotho. 1993. *The Constitution of Lesotho*. Maseru: Government Printer.
- Kingdom of Lesotho. 2000. *Lesotho Vision 2020*. Maseru: Government Printer.

- Kingdom of Lesotho MOET. 2020. *Education Sector Response Plan for Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19)*. Maseru: Government Printing.
- Kingdom of Lesotho. 2021. 16 May. *LTV News*. Lesotho Minister of Energy, Honourable Mohapi Mohapinyane, LTV News-19:30.
- Kingdom of Lesotho MOET. 2021. Statement by the Minister of Education and Training Honourable 'Mamookho Gladys Phiri to the 41st session of the general conference of the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO), Paris France.
- Kingdom of Lesotho MOET. *LGCSE Sesotho*. 2021. National Curriculum Development Centre (NCDC) Maseru: Government Printer.
- Kissi, P.S., Nat, M. and Armah, R.B. 2018. The effects of learning–family conflict, perceived control over time and task-fit technology factors on urban–rural high school students' acceptance of video-based instruction in flipped learning approach. *Educational Technology Research and Development*, 66(6):1547-1569.
- Kivunja, C. and Kuyini, A.B. 2017. Understanding and applying research paradigms in educational contexts. *International Journal of higher education*, 6(5):26-41.
- Kohler, Debbie M. 2010. "An Application of Vygotsky's Social Learning Theory on Calculator Self-Efficacy and Calculator Achievement by Gender". *Dissertations, Theses and Capstone Projects*. Paper 413.
- Kohnke, L. and Moorhouse, B.L. 2022. Facilitating synchronous online language learning through Zoom. *RELC Journal*, 53(1):296-301.
- Kolobe, M. and Matsoso, L. 2020. Effects of Language Status on Assessment and Educational Development of Basotho Learners from Minority Languages' Backgrounds. *International Journal of Language Education*, 4(3):378-388.

- Korniienko, A.Y. 2020. The Use of Debates as an Approach to Deliver the Course Entitled "The Impact of US Policy on Integration Processes in Europe in the Post-Bipolar Era". *International Journal of Higher Education*, 9(2):321-329.
- Korstjens, I. and Moser, A. 2018. Series: Practical guidance to qualitative research. Part 4: Trustworthiness and publishing. *European Journal of General Practice*, 24(1):120-124.
- Kozma, R.B. and Isaacs, S. eds. 2011. *Transforming education: The power of ICT policies*. UNESCO.
- Kumar, R. 1999. *Research Methodology: A step-by-step guide for beginners*. London: SAGE.
- Larsen-Freeman, D. and Anderson, M. 2011. *Techniques and principles in language teaching 3rd edition-Oxford handbooks for language teachers*. Oxford university press: New York.
- Lepp, L., Aaviku, T., Leijen, Ä., Pedaste, M. and Saks, K. 2021. Teaching during COVID-19: The Decisions Made in Teaching. *Education Sciences*, 11(2):1-21. <https://doi.org/10.3390/educsci11020047>
- Lessard-Clouston, M. 1997. Language learning strategies: An overview for L2 teachers. *The internet TESL journal*, 3(12):69-80.
- Lie, A., Tamah, S. M., Gozali, I., Triwidayati, K. R., Utami, T. S. D., Madima, S.E. and Makananise, F.O. 2020. The accessibility to English as a Language of teaching and learning by learners of different gender in public primary schools of the Vhembe district, South Africa. *Gender & Behaviour*, 18(2):15274 - 15281.
- Longhurst, R., 2003. Semi-structured interviews and focus groups. *Key methods in Geography*, 3(2):143-156.
- Mahmood, S. 2021. Instructional strategies for online teaching in COVID-19

- pandemic. *Human behavior and emerging technologies*, 3(1):199-203.
- Makumane, M.A. 2021. Students' perceptions on the use of LMS at a Lesotho university amidst the COVID-19 pandemic. *African Identities*,1-18.
- Maphalala, M.C. and Adigun, O.T. 2021. Academics' Experience of Implementing E-Learning in a South African Higher Education Institution. *International Journal of Higher Education*, 10(1):1-13.
- Maphosa, V. 2021. Teachers' Perspectives on Remote-based Teaching and Learning in the COVID-19 Era: Rethinking Technology Availability and Suitability in Zimbabwe. *European Journal of Interactive Multimedia and Education*, 2(1),e02105. <https://doi.org/10.30935/ejimed/9684>
- Maphosa, V., Dube, B. and Jita, T. 2020. A UTAUT Evaluation of WhatsApp as a Tool for Lecture Delivery during the COVID-19 Lockdown at a Zimbabwean University. *International Journal of Higher Education*, 9(5):84-93.
- Maree, K. 2010. *First steps in research (Revised ed.)*. Pretoria, South Africa: Van Schaik.
- Maree, J.G. 2022. Managing the Covid-19 pandemic in South African Schools: turning challenge into opportunity. *South African Journal of Psychology*, 52(2):249-261.
- Marikyan, D. & Papagiannidis, S. 2021. Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology: A review. In S. Papagiannidis (Ed), *TheoryHub Book*. <http://open.ncl.ac.uk>
- Matee, G.L., Motlohi, N. and Nkiwane, P. 2022. Emerging perspectives and challenges for virtual collaborative learning in an institution of higher education: A case of Lesotho. *Interactive Technology and Smart Education*. United Kingdom: Emerald Publishing Limited.
- <https://www.emerald.com/insight/1741-5659.htm>
- Merriam, S.B. 2002. Introduction to qualitative research. *Qualitative research in*

practice: Examples for discussion and analysis. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass A Willey Co.

Mhlanga, D. and Moloi, T. 2020. COVID-19 and the Digital Transformation of Education: What Are We Learning on 4IR in South Africa? *Education Sciences*, 10(7):1-11.

Mitchell, E.T. 2019. Using Debate in an Online Asynchronous Social Policy Course. *Online Learning*, 23(3):21-33.

Moeller, A.K. and Catalano, T. 2015. Foreign language teaching and learning. *International Encyclopedia of the Social & Behavioral Sciences, Second Edition*, 327–33 <https://digitalcommons.unl.edu/teachlearnfacpub/200/>

Mohammed, S. and Kinyo, L. 2020. Constructivist theory as a foundation for the utilization of digital technology in the lifelong learning process. *Turkish Online Journal of Distance Education*, 21(4):90-109.

Mokenela, P.J. 2019. *Developing a pedagogical framework for blended distance learning at the National University of Lesotho*. Nottingham Trent University (United Kingdom).

Mokoena, M. 2022. Exploring the Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Rural English FAL Teachers' Lesson Planning. *Arab World English Journal (AWEJ) 2nd Special Issue on Covid 19 Challenges (2)* 479- 491.

Momani, A.M. 2020. The Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology: A New Approach in Technology Acceptance. *International Journal of Sociotechnology and Knowledge Development (IJSKD)*, 12(3):79-98.

Monareng, J., Ramraj, A.B. & Mashau, P. 2020. The Rise in Online learning in South African schools due to the Coronavirus Pandemic. *Gender & Behaviour*, 18(4):16753-16762.

Mondal, K.N. 2012. English language learning through the combination of grammar

- translation method and communicative language teaching. *Academia Arena*, 4(6):20-24.
- Moodley, M. 2019. WhatsApp: Creating a virtual teacher community for supporting and monitoring after a professional development programme. *South African Journal of Education*, 39(2):1-10.
- Moser, K.M., Wei, T. and Brenner, D. 2021. Remote teaching during COVID-19: Implications from a national survey of language educators. *System*, 97, 102431.
- Mpungose, C.B. 2020. Emergent transition from face-to-face to online learning in a South African University in the context of the Coronavirus pandemic. *Humanities and Social Sciences Communications*, 7(1):1-9.
- Mukuna, K.R. and Aloka, P.J. 2020. Exploring educators' challenges of online learning in COVID-19 at a rural school, South Africa. *International Journal of Learning, Teaching and Educational Research*, 19(10):134-149.
- Naresh, B. and Reddy, B.S. 2015. Challenges and opportunity of E-learning in developed and developing countries-a review. *International Journal of Emerging Research in Management & Technology*, 4(6):259-262.
- Nassaji, H., 2020. Good qualitative research. *Language Teaching Research*, 24(4): 427-431.
- Nikolova, N., Georgiev, A. and Gachev, G. 2008. The challenges in the secondary school e-learning process. In *Proceedings of the 7th European Conference on e-learning ECEL* (2):205-213.
- Nishanthi, R. 2020. Understanding of the importance of mother tongue learning. *International Journal of Trend in Scientific Research and Development (IJTSRD)*, 5(1):77-80.
- Obloberdiyevna, D.S. and Odilkhonovna, K.U. 2022. Teaching languages

- using modern educational methods. *International Journal of Intellectual Cultural Heritage*, 2(3):105-111.
- Oliver, R. 1999. Exploring strategies for online teaching and learning. *Distance Education*, 20(2):240-254.
- Omar, H., Embi, M.A. and Yunus, M.M. 2012. ESL learners' interaction in an online discussion via Facebook. *Asian Social Science*, 8(11):67-74.
- Panigrahi, R., Srivastava, P.R. and Sharma, D. 2018. Online learning: Adoption, continuance, and learning outcome—A review of literature. *International Journal of Information Management*, 43:1-14.
- Park, C., Kier, C. and Jugdev, K. 2011. Debate as a teaching strategy in online education: A case study. *Canadian Journal of Learning and Technology/La revue canadienne de l'apprentissage et de la technologie*, 37(3):1-17.
- Park, Y.S., Konge, L. and Artino, A.R. 2020. The positivism paradigm of research. *Academic Medicine*, 95(5):690-694.
- Pearse, N. 2021. Guidelines for Theory Development using Qualitative Research Approaches. *Electronic Journal of Business Research Methods*, 19(2):95–103.
- Pilkington, R.M. and Walker, S.A. 2003. Facilitating debate in networked learning: Reflecting on online synchronous discussion in higher education. *Instructional science*, 31(1):41-63.
- Raman, K. and Yamat, H. 2014. Barriers teachers face in integrating ICT during lessons: A case study. *Malaysian Online journal of educational technology*, 2(3):11-19.
- Rambe, P. and Chipunza, C. 2013. Using mobile devices to leverage student access to collaboratively-generated resources: A case of WhatsApp instant messaging at a South African University. In 2013 *International*

Conference on Advanced ICT and Education (ICAICTE-13) (314-320). Atlantis Press.

Ramanathan, R. 2008. *The role of organisational change management in offshore outsourcing of information technology services*. Florida: Universal Publishers.

Rashid, S. and Qaisar, S. 2017. Role Play: A Productive Teaching Strategy to Promote Critical Thinking. *Bulletin of Education and Research*, 39(2):197-213.

Rianingsih, R. 2015. *The teacher strategies in overcoming students' difficulties in speaking at English intensive program of Ma An-Nur Cirebon* (Doctoral dissertation, IAIN Syekh Nurjati Cirebon).

Roulston, K. and Choi, M. 2018. Qualitative interviews. *The SAGE handbook of qualitative data collection*, 233-249.

RSA DoE (Republic of South Africa Department of Education). 2011.

National Curriculum Statement: Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS). Pretoria: Department of Education.

RSA DBE (Republic of South Africa Department of Basic Education). 2010. *The status of the language of learning and teaching (LOLT) in South African public schools: A quantitative overview*. Pretoria: Department of Education.

RSA DoE (Republic of South Africa Department of Basic Education) .2020. Keynote Address by the Minister of Basic Education, Mrs. Angie Motshekga, MP, Delivered at the Launch of the E³ (Entrepreneurship, Employability and Education) WhatsApp TeacherConnect Platform. <https://www.education.gov.za/Newsroom/Speeches.aspx>

RSA DoE (Republic of South Africa Department of Basic Education). 2020. Speech by the Minister of Basic Education, Mrs. Angie Motshekga, MP, at the Official Handover of Laptops and COVID-19 Essentials Donated by the Embassy of Portugal. Soweto: Gauteng. <https://www.education.gov.za/Newsroom/Speeches.aspx>

- Ryan, G. 2018. Introduction to positivism, interpretivism and critical theory. *Nurse researcher*, 25(4):41-49.
- Sakkir, G., Dollah, S. and Ahmad, J. 2022. Students' Perception of the Presentation Activities in Online Speaking Class. *EduLine: Journal of Education and Learning Innovation*, 2(3):255-260.
- Saleem, A., Kausar, H. and Deebea, F. 2021. Social Constructivism: A New Paradigm in Teaching and Learning Environment. *Perennial Journal of History*, 2(2):403-421.
- Saputra, J.B. and Aziz, M.S.A. 2014. Teaching strategies. *Research Gate Accessed on October, 2. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/327433965_TEACHING_STRATEGIES*
- Sayan, H. 2016. Affecting higher students learning activity by using WhatsApp. *European Journal of Research and Reflection in Educational Sciences*, 4(3):88-93.
- Senthamarai, S. 2018. Interactive teaching strategies. *Journal of Applied and Advanced Research*, 3(1):S36-S38.
- Sepulveda-Escobar, P. and Morrison, A. 2020. Online teaching placement during the COVID-19 pandemic in Chile: challenges and opportunities. *European Journal of Teacher Education*, 43(4):587-607.
- Schreiber, L.M. and Valle, B.E. 2013. Social constructivist teaching strategies in the small group classroom. *Small Group Research*, 44(4):395-411.
- Scruggs, B. 2009. Constructivist practices to increase student engagement in the orchestra classroom. *Music Educators Journal*, 95(4):53-59.
- Shahnama, M., Yazdanmehr, E. and Elahi Shirvan, M. 2021. Challenges of Online

Language Teaching during the COVID-19 Pandemic: A Process Tracing Approach. *Teaching English as a Second Language (Formerly Journal of Teaching Language Skills)*, 40(3):159-195.

Shanmugavelu, G., Ariffin, K., Vadivelu, M., Mahayudin, Z. and Sundaram, M.A.R.

2020. Questioning Techniques and Teachers' Role in the Classroom. *Shanlax International Journal of Education*, 8(4):45-49.

Shenton, A.K. 2004. Strategies for ensuring trustworthiness in qualitative research projects. *Education for information*, 22(2):63-75.

Smits, J.P.J.M., Huisman, A.H.M. and Kruijff, K. 2008. Home language and education in the developing world. <https://repository.ubn.ru.nl/bitstream/handle/2066/68722/68722.pdf>

Sokhulu, L.H. 2021. Students' experiences of using digital technologies to address their personal research needs during the COVID-19 lockdown. *African Identities*, 19(4):436-452.

Suhendi, A., Purwarno, P. and Chairani, S. 2021. Constructivism-Based Teaching and Learning in Indonesian Education. *KnE Social Sciences*, 5(4): 76-89.

Sullivan, G.M. and Sargeant, J. 2011. Qualities of qualitative research: part I. *Journal of graduate medical education*, 3(4):449-452.

Syarif, M. and Zaim, M. 2021. The Use of Whatsapp Messaging as Mobile Learning in Developing Writing Skills. In *Eighth International Conference on English Language and Teaching (ICOELT-8 2020)* 83-87. Atlantis Press.

Szilágyi, J., Giambo, D. and Szecsi, T. 2013. Teaching Strategies: "What If I Don't Speak It?" Classroom Strategies to Nurture Students' Heritage Languages: Tunde Szecsi, Editor. *Childhood Education*, 89(2):117-121.

Tambak, S. and Sukenti, D. 2019. Strengthening linguistic and emotional

- intelligence of madrasah teachers in developing the question-and-answer methods. *MIQOT: Jurnal Ilmu-ilmu Keislaman*, 43(1):111-129.
- Tavoosy, Y. and Jelveh, R. 2019. Language teaching strategies and techniques used to support students learning in a language other than their mother tongue. *International Journal of Learning and Teaching*, 11(2):77-88.
- Thomas, T., Singh, L. and Gaffar, K. 2013. The utility of the UTAUT model in explaining mobile learning adoption in higher education in Guyana. *International Journal of Education and Development using ICT*, 9(3):71-85.
- Tofade, T., Elsner, J. and Haines, S.T. 2013. Best practice strategies for effective use of questions as a teaching tool. *American journal of pharmaceutical education*, 77(7):1-9.
- Tsvetkova, I. and Borodzhieva, A. 2021. Application of Software for the Purpose of Enhancing Online Education. In *2021 IEEE 27th International Symposium for Design and Technology in Electronic Packaging (SIITME)* 143-146. IEEE.
- Tuncer, C.A.N. 2009. Learning and teaching languages online: A constructivist approach. *Novitas-ROYAL (Research on Youth and Language)*, 3(1):60-74.
- Turner, D. W. 2010. Qualitative Interview Design: A Practical Guide for Novice Investigators. *The Qualitative Report*, 15(3):754-760.
- Ujakpa, M.M., Heukelman, D., Lazarus, V.K., Neiss, P. and Rukanda, G.D. 2018. Using WhatsApp to support communication in teaching and learning. In *2018 IST-Africa Week Conference (IST-Africa)* 1. IEEE.
- UNICEF. 2017a. Botswana The impact of language policy and practice on children's learning: Evidence from Eastern and Southern Africa 2017. *Country review*. <https://www.unicef.org/esa/sites/unicef.org.esa/files/2018-09/UNICEF-2017-Language-and-Learning-Botswana.pdf>

- UNICEF. 2017. Namibia The impact of language policy and practice on children's learning: Evidence from Eastern and Southern Africa. *Country Review*. <https://www.unicef.org/esa/sites/unicef.org/esa/files/2018-09/UNICEF-2017-Language-and-Learning-Namibia.pdf>
- UNICEF. 2020. Country Office Annual Report 2020. <https://www.unicef.org/media/100361/file/Lesotho-2020-COAR.pdf>
- UNESCO. 2020. Education in the time of COVID-19. COVID-19 Report ECLAC-UNESCO. https://repositorio.cepal.org/bitstream/handle/11362/45905/1/S2000509_en.pdf
- United Nation Lesotho. 2020. Keep Learning Alive: how to prevent a national education crisis. <https://lesotho.un.org/en/88439-keep-learning-alive-how-prevent-national-education-crisis>
- United Nations. 2020. Policy Brief: Education during COVID-19 and Beyond. *United Nations*. (Accessed 2020, at <https://www.un.org/development/desa/dspd/2020/04/social-impact-of-covid-19/>).
- Venkatesh, V., Thong, J.Y. and Xu, X. 2012. Consumer acceptance and use of information technology: extending the unified theory of acceptance and use of technology. *MIS quarterly*. 157-178.
- Venketsamy, T.R. and Sibanda, S.D. 2021. Exploring strategies teachers use to develop literacy skills among English first additional language learners in the foundation phase. 39(2):253-266. <http://journals.ufs.ac.za/index.php/pie>
- Wagner, D.A., Castillo, N.M., Murphy, K.M., Crofton, M. and Zahra, F.T. 2014. mobiles for literacy in developing countries: An effectiveness framework. *Prospects*, 44(1):119-132.
- Warschauer, M. and Meskill, C. 2000. Technology and second language

teaching. *Handbook of undergraduate second language education*, 15,303-318.

- Widodo, H. 2020. Application of guided question and answer method to improve Pai learning achievement of State Junior high school 1 Sei Rampah. *Jurnal Tarbiyah*, 27(1):121-141.
- Williams, M.D., Rana, N.P. and Dwivedi, Y.K. 2015. The unified theory of acceptance and use of technology (UTAUT): A literature review. *Journal of enterprise information management*, 28(3):444-488.
- Wilson, J. and Brooks, G. 2014. Teaching presentation: Improving oral output with more structure. *Proceedings of CLaSIC*, 512-524.
- Yang, L., Liu, S., Liu, J., Zhang, Z., Wan, X., Huang, B., Chen, Y. and Zhang, Y. 2020. COVID-19: immunopathogenesis and Immunotherapeutics. *Signal transduction and targeted therapy*, 5(1):1-8.
- Yates, A., Starkey, L., Egerton, B. and Flueggen, F. 2021. High school students' experience of online learning during Covid-19: the influence of technology and pedagogy. *Technology, Pedagogy and Education*, 30(1):59-73.
- Yilmaz, K. 2008. Constructivism: Its theoretical underpinnings, variations, and implications for classroom instruction. *Educational horizons*, 86(3):161-172.
- Younesi, M. 2021. Virtual teaching of English language during COVID-19 pandemic in Iran: Views and attitudes. *NOVYI MIR Research Journal*, 6(2):15-21.
- Zare, P. and Othman, M. 2013. Classroom debate as a systematic teaching/learning approach. *World Applied Sciences Journal*, 28(11):1506-1513.
- Zhu, D. 2012. Using Games to Improve Students' Communicative Ability. *Journal of Language Teaching & Research*, 3(4):801-805.
- Zulkifli, N.A. and Hayati, M. 2021. Teacher Challenge and Tech Issues

in Online Schools. In *Eighth International Conference on English Language and Teaching (ICOELT-8 2020)* (14-18). Atlantis Press.

APPENDIX A

**GENERAL/HUMAN RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE (GHREC)**

21-Apr-2022

Dear Mrs Makananelo Makhasane

Application Approved

Research Project Title:

Exploring online teaching strategies used by high school teachers in teaching Sesotho during COVID-19.Ethical Clearance number: **UFS-HSD2022/0197/22**

We are pleased to inform you that your application for ethical clearance has been approved. Your ethical clearance is valid for twelve (12) months from the date of issue. We request that any changes that may take place during the course of your study/research project be submitted to the ethics office to ensure ethical transparency. Furthermore, you are requested to submit the final report of your study/research project to the ethics office. Should you require more time to complete this research, please apply for an extension. Thank you for submitting your proposal for ethical clearance; we wish you the best of luck and success with your research.

Yours sincerely

Dr Adri Du Plessis**Chairperson: General/Human Research Ethics Committee**

P.O. Box 339
Bloemfontein 9300
Tel: +27 (0)51 401 9337 duplessisA@ufs.ac.za www.ufs.ac.za

205 Nelson Mandela
Drive
Park West
Bloemfontein 9301 South Africa



APPENDIX B

RESEARCH STUDY INFORMATION LEAFLET AND CONSENT FORM

DATE

TITLE OF THE RESEARCH PROJECT

Exploring online teaching strategies used by high school teachers in teaching Sesotho during COVID-19.

PRINCIPLE INVESTIGATOR / RESEARCHER(S) NAME(S) AND CONTACT NUMBER(S):

Makananelo Makhasane 2019508742 +27604273906

FACULTY AND DEPARTMENT:

Faculty of Education

STUDY LEADER(S) NAME AND CONTACT NUMBER:

'Makananelo Makhasane

Email: 2019508742@ufs4life.ac.za

Contact number: +27604273906

WHAT IS THE AIM / PURPOSE OF THE STUDY?

The aim of this study is to explore online teaching strategies used by high school teachers to teach Sesotho during COVID-19 pandemic in Lesotho.

WHO IS DOING THE RESEARCH?

My name is 'Makananelo Makhasane. I am a second year Masters in Education (Curriculum Studies) student in the Faculty of Education, University of the Free State.

HAS THE STUDY RECEIVED ETHICAL APPROVAL?

Yes

Approval number: UFS-HSD2022/0197/22

WHY ARE YOU INVITED TO TAKE PART IN THIS RESEARCH PROJECT?

You are invited to participate in this study because your school has been selected for participation, and you have taught Sesotho before the advent of COVID-19 pandemic and during COVID-19. In that way, you possess rich knowledge about the phenomenon under the investigation.

WHAT IS THE NATURE OF PARTICIPATION IN THIS STUDY?

You will be asked to participate in a semi-structured face-to-face interview. The duration of the interview will be 30-45 minutes. You will be free to answer questions that you feel comfortable to answer. Your lesson plan copies, that were used during COVID-19 about Sesotho teaching strategies, will be kindly requested by the researcher, as the documents need to be accessed in your schools.

CAN THE PARTICIPANT WITHDRAW FROM THE STUDY?

You will voluntarily participate in this study. You will not be forced to participate against your will. If you decide to participate, you will be given this form to keep and be asked to sign. During the interview, if you want to withdraw, you are free to do so without giving a reason.

WHAT ARE THE POTENTIAL BENEFITS OF TAKING PART IN THIS STUDY?

This study will benefit Sesotho high school teachers, as they will reflect on the teaching strategies that they use to teach the Sesotho Language during COVID-19. The study will again be beneficial to the curriculum planners as they will be more enlightened about the subject content and teaching and learning strategies that will not require physical contact. The government, through the ministry of education, will be able to cater for emergencies like COVID-19 in future, when preparing their financial budget. Your participation will be kept confidential.

WHAT IS THE ANTICIPATED INCONVENIENCE OF TAKING PART IN THIS STUDY?

You will be asked to participate in this study when you are free, after working hours. The interviews will be conducted at the time that will be suitable for you. You will not be forced to answer that you feel uncomfortable to answer.

WILL WHAT I SAY BE KEPT CONFIDENTIAL?

Confidentiality, of data collected in this study, will be highly maintained throughout the research. Your names and other personal details will not be recorded, and no one will connect you to your answers. Pseudonyms will be used when reporting the findings of the study. Your answers may be reviewed by the people responsible for ensuring that the research is done properly, including the transcriber and the members of the Research Ethics Committee. Records that identify you will be available to people working on the study only with your permission. Your anonymous data may be used for other purposes such as research report, journal articles, conference presentations and others. In the submission of a report of the study, no participants will be identified in such a report.

HOW WILL THE INFORMATION BE STORED AND ULTIMATELY DESTROYED?

The researcher will store hard copies of your answers for five years in the safe for future research. Soft copies will be stored on a password-protected computer. After five years, the researcher will delete soft copies and burn hard copies.

WILL I RECEIVE PAYMENT OR ANY INCENTIVES FOR PARTICIPATING IN THIS STUDY?

There will be no payment or incentives offered for participating in this study.

HOW WILL THE PARTICIPANT BE INFORMED OF THE FINDINGS / RESULTS OF THE STUDY?

If you would like to be informed of the research findings, please contact 'Makananelo Makhasane on +27604273906 or email addresses 2019508742@ufs4life.ac.za or mnpelesa@gmail.com. Should you have concerns about the way in which the research has been conducted, you may contact my supervisors: Dr. Tafirenyika Mafugu on MafuguT@ufs.ac.za.

Thank you for taking the time to read this information sheet and for participating in this study.

CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS STUDY

I, the undersigned,

_____ (*participant's full names to be included*), (the **"Participant"**)

confirm that I voluntarily agree to participate in the research study referred to as the

_____ (the **"Study"**) in relation to

and which Study is being conducted by

(*insert the name of the researcher*), (the **"Researcher"**).

I, the undersigned Participant, further confirm that–

1. the Researcher has explained the nature, procedure, potential benefits and anticipated inconvenience of my participation in the Study;
2. I have read (or had explained to me) and understood the Study as explained in the attached information sheet;
3. I have had sufficient opportunity to ask questions and am prepared to participate in the Study;
4. I understand that my participation in the Study is entirely voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without penalty (if applicable);
5. I voluntarily provide the UFS and the Researcher with my personal information and consent to the UFS and the Researcher collecting, disclosing and processing my personal information in order to conduct the Study and any related activities in relation thereto;
6. I hereby acknowledge and confirm that I understand the purpose for which the UFS and the Researcher may collect, store, use, delete, destroy, outsource, transfer or otherwise process, as the context and circumstances may require and as contemplated in terms of POPIA, my personal information as set out herein;
7. I am aware that the findings of the Study will be anonymously processed into a research report, journal publications and/or conference proceedings and that my personal information will be aggregated and identified at such stage;
8. I also give the UFS permission to share, without notification, the collected data with other researchers at the UFS or other Higher Education Institutions. This permission is dependent on the same principles of ethical research practices, anonymity/confidentiality, safekeeping of information, and other issues listed above applying.

I, the Participant, agree to the recording of the interviews.

Full Name of Participant: _____

Signature of Participant: _____ Date: _____

Full Name(s) of Researcher(s): _____

Signature of Researcher: _____ Date: _____

APPENDIX C

To: The District Education Manager

Ministry of Education and Training

Qacha's Nek Lesotho

12/02/2022

My name is 'Makananelo Makhasane. I am a second year Masters student specialising in Curriculum Studies at the University of the Free State. My research title is: **Exploring online teaching strategies used by high school teachers in teaching Sesotho during COVID-19.** I am therefore, kindly requesting permission to conduct research in high schools located in the district of Qacha's nek, Lesotho.

The researcher will treat all the data collected for this study with confidentiality. Pseudonyms will be used to protect the identity of the schools and the participants, they will remain anonymous. The results and findings of this study will not be disclosed.

Two data collection methods; interviews and document analysis will be used in this study. Sesotho high school teachers will be asked to participate in this study through interviews. They will be contacted in advance in order to prepare for the interviews. Before being interviewed, the participants will be informed of the purpose of this study. They will also be informed of their voluntary participation in this study. The lesson plans, where different online teaching strategies are used, will also be photocopied. This will be done with the permission of the participants. The collection of data for this study will not disrupt the teaching and learning process in the schools.

This study will benefit Sesotho high school teachers, as they will recognise other teaching strategies that they can use to teach the Sesotho Language during COVID-19. The study will again be beneficial to the curriculum planners as they will be more enlightened about the subject content and teaching and learning strategies that will not require physical contact. The government, through the ministry of education, will

be able to cater for emergencies like COVID-19 in future, when preparing their financial budget. Your participation will be kept confidential.

Please contact me here if there are any problems encountered in this research: email address: mnpelesa@gmail.com , contact number: +27604273906.

Thank you in advance.

Permission to contact the study

I, _____ (District Education Manager), confirm that 'Makananelo Makhasane, who is asking my permission to conduct a research in schools located in the Qacha's Nek district of Lesotho in which I am the District Education Manager, has informed me about the nature, procedure and potential benefits and the study.

I have read (or had explained to me) and understood the study as explained in the information sheet. I understand that the participation of the selected teachers is voluntary and that they are free to withdraw at any time without penalty (if applicable). I am aware that the findings of this study will be anonymously processed into a research report, journal publications and/or conference proceedings. The district education department may invite the researcher to share the findings of the study with relevant stakeholders.

Signature_____

Stamp

APPENDIX D

Permission to conduct the study

LEBETRYA MOITHIBELI (District Education Manager), confirm that 'Makananelo Makhasane, who is asking my permission to conduct research in schools located in the Qacha's Nek district of Lesotho in which I am the District Education Manager has informed me about the nature, procedure and potential benefits and the study.

I have read (or had explained to me) and understood the study as explained in the information sheet. I understand that the participation of the selected teachers is voluntary and that they are free to withdraw at any time without penalty (if applicable). I am aware that the findings of this study will be anonymously processed into a research report, journal publications and/or conference proceedings. The district education department may invite the researcher to share the findings of the study with relevant stakeholders.

Signature

Stamp



APPENDIX E

To School Principals

RE: Request for the permission to conduct research

My name is Makananelo Makhasane. I am a second year Masters student specialising in Curriculum Studies at the University of the Free State. My research title is: **Exploring online teaching strategies used by high school teachers in teaching Sesotho during COVID-19**. I am therefore, kindly requesting permission to conduct research in your school.

All data produced in this study will be treated with confidentiality. To protect the identities of the participants, the teachers and the schools; their real names will not be used in this study, they will remain anonymous.

Sesotho high school teachers will be asked to participate in this study by being interviewed. They will be contacted in advance in order to prepare for the interviews. Before being interviewed, the participants will be informed of the purpose of this study. They will also be informed of their voluntary participation in this study. The lesson plans, where different online teaching strategies are used, will also be photocopied. This will be done with the permission from the participants.

The study will not be conducted during working hours.

Please contact me on this email address if there are any problems encountered in this research: 2019508742@ufs4life.ac.za or mnpelesa@gmail.com. You may also contact my supervisor Dr. Mafugu at this email address MafuguT@ufs.ac.za or telephone numbers +27 58 718 5395.

Thank you in advance.

Permission to conduct the study

I, _____ (Principal' s name), confirm that 'Makananelo Makhasane, who is asking my permission to conduct research in the school in which I am a principal, has told me about the nature, procedure, potential benefits and anticipated inconvenience of participation.

I have read (or had explained to me) and understood the study as explained in the information sheet. I have had sufficient opportunity to ask questions and am prepared to grant permission. I understand that the participation of the selected teachers is voluntary and that they are free to withdraw at any time without penalty (if applicable). I am aware that the findings of this study will be anonymously processed into a research report, journal publications and/or conference proceedings.

I agree to the recording of the insert specific data collection method.

Full Name of the Principal:

Signature of the Principal: _____ Date:

Full Name(s) of Researcher: 'Makananelo Makhasane _____

Signature of Researcher: M. Makhasane Date: 12/02/2022_____

APPENDIX F – Language Editing CERTIFICATE



Dr Jabulani Sibanda
 Senior Lecturer: English Education
 School of Education
 Tel: (053) 491-0142
 Email: Jabulani.Sibanda@spu.ac.za
 Alternate e-mail: jabusbnd@gmail.com
 Website: www.spu.ac.za
 Cell: 0845282087

14 January 2023

RE: CERTIFICATE OF LANGUAGE EDITING

To whom it may concern

I hereby confirm that I have proof read and edited the following **dissertation** using Windows 'Tracking' System to reflect my comments and suggested corrections for the author(s) to action:

Exploring Online Teaching Strategies used by High School Teachers in Teaching Sesotho during Covid-19.

Reference

- **Author(s):** Makananelo Makhasane
- **Student Number:** 2019508742
- **Affiliation:** University of the Free State

Although the greatest care was taken in the editing of this document, the final responsibility for the product rests with the author(s).

Sincerely

14. 01. 2023

SIGNATURE

APPENDIX G – Turnitin report

M.Ed Thesis for Makananelo Makhasane

ORIGINALITY REPORT

10% SIMILARITY INDEX	9% INTERNET SOURCES	5% PUBLICATIONS	3% STUDENT PAPERS
--------------------------------	-------------------------------	---------------------------	-----------------------------

PRIMARY SOURCES

1	uir.unisa.ac.za Internet Source	1%
2	researchspace.ukzn.ac.za Internet Source	1%
3	vital.seals.ac.za:8080 Internet Source	1%
4	Submitted to University of Witwatersrand Student Paper	<1%
5	scholar.ufs.ac.za Internet Source	<1%
6	hdl.handle.net Internet Source	<1%
7	dergipark.org.tr Internet Source	<1%
8	www.researchgate.net Internet Source	<1%
9	"Mathematics Education in Africa", Springer Science and Business Media LLC, 2022 Publication	<1%

APPENDIX H

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Which teaching strategies did you use to teach Sesotho before the existence of COVID-19?
 - i) How did you teach the four Sesotho Language skills: reading, listening, speaking and writing, before COVID-19?
 - ii) Did the teaching strategies that you use to teach these Language skills involve learners more in their learning? How was your learners' participation during your lessons?
 - iii) How different are these teaching strategies from the ones that you are using now? How similar are they?
2. What are the online teaching strategies that you used to teach Sesotho during COVID-19 pandemic?
3. What are online teaching strategies that you as a Sesotho high school teacher use to teach Sesotho during the COVID-19 pandemic?
 - e) Using these online teaching strategies to teach Sesotho during COVID-19, how did you teach the four Sesotho Language skills? How did you ensure that your learners fully participate in their learning of these skills? How did you ensure that your learners interact with each other and construct knowledge during online learning?
 - f) Which online teaching strategies did you use to teach Sesotho during hard lockdown? Do you still use them? Did you find these teaching strategies effective? Were the learners active during the lessons where online teaching strategies were used?
 - g) How do you evaluate the four Language skills while using the online teaching strategies?
 - h) Which tools did you use to facilitate online teaching of Sesotho during lockdown?

- i) Who provided those tools? You, the school, the government? Did the learners have access to the online tools also?
 - j) How effective are those online teaching strategies?
 - k) What did you do to ensure that your learners perfect the four Language skills during online learning?
 - l) How did the school or the Ministry of Education assist with online teaching during lockdown?
 - m) What are your views about the online teaching strategies that you used during COVID-19 as compared to those teaching strategies that you used before COVID-19?
4. What are the limitations posed by the online instructional strategies used to teach Sesotho by high school teachers during the COVID-19 pandemic?
- a) What are the challenges of the online teaching strategies that you use during COVID-19?
 - b) Did these online teaching strategies still allow the learning of reading, listening, speaking and writing skills?
5. What are the opportunities posed by the online instructional strategies used to teach Sesotho by high school teachers during the COVID-19 pandemic?
- a) How interesting are the online instructional strategies that you use during COVID-19?
 - b) What are the opportunities of using online teaching strategies while teaching Sesotho?

APPENDIX I

Grade 9A
 Sesotho - leikemisa
 Subtopic Leroo

- Barutuoana ba ba ba ka tse bolela mefuta ea leikemisa
- Barutuoana ba be ba hlalosa leikemisa le set-leroo ba be ba le sebetise.
- Mekhoa ea ho ruta le ho ruta; Puisoana ka sehlopheng, lipotso tse tataisang
- Setetelela i Kahata maretlo-puo a tseletseng se na le Leikemisa. Ka hata leikemisa se na le leroo le seemeli. Kahao Mefuta e'meli ea leikemisa ke leroo le seemeli.

Mtsotso-pele			
Masebetsi ea tichere	Masebetsi ea bandara	Methati ea ho hlalosa Ba a ngola Bona	Mekhoa ea thahlelisa Mongolo
0 se bana ba ngole thaloso ea leroo ka lihlopha tsa bona	- Leroo ke lebitso la ntho eohle/efe kapa efe/engoe le engoe.		Mongolo
0 se bana ba fane ka thaloso ea leikemisa hona lihlopheng tseo	Leikemisa ke mefuta ea leretlo puo le ikemetseng polelong. Lona le Kenyetso leroo le Seemeli.	Ba a ngola	Mongolo
0 lalla bana ho ngola lathabana thaloso		Ba hlalosa lefapheng	Mongolo

O tsōaea mosebetsi oo ea lihlotsoana kettafeng moo	Ba ngela thhaloso tse nqafatseng libukeng tsa mosebetsi
--	--

Tlhalojana

- Bolela mefuta e meli ea mareo
- Bolela mosebetsi e meli ea lereo
- lereo le seemeli li pela thasa lentlo-puo lefe?
- Polelong tse peli bontra more lereo e kaba moetsi le moetsua.

Mathetho

- Re bone me ra hlalosa lereo
- Re bone me ra hlalosa leikemiso.
- Re bolele mosebetsi ea lereo
- Re sebelisetse lereo e le moetsi le moetsua polelong.

Boithahlolo

Ha bava qeta mosebetsi ke taba ea nako kaheo
shuto ena ke teo e pheta.