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Technological Challenges and Opportunities in Trilingual Pedagogy in Teaching Grade 10 Dramatic Arts: Insights from Educators Using Nearpod

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Received: 11 January 2026; **Revised:** 13 February 2026; **Accepted:** 18 March 2026; **Published:** 1 June 2026

Abstract: Languages can be intertwined in the dramatic arts. Language is a vital human tool for communication. The study explored the challenges and opportunities of trilingual pedagogy, which bridges English, isiXhosa, and isiZulu, in Grade 10 dramatic arts education through Nearpod. By employing a mixed-methods approach, qualitative through a case study of one school and quantitative through a survey of the same school, this investigation provides rich insights into the experiences and perspectives of three educators and eighteen students, as captured through comprehensive focus group interviews. The study aims to uncover both the hurdles and the prospects of implementing multilingual teaching strategies in the dramatic arts. The study was grounded in an interpretive paradigm and underpinned by Vygotsky's theory. The research highlights Nearpod's role in coordinating multilingual instruction, including scaffolded activities, virtual rehearsals, and real-time polls for language switching during dramatic exercises. Data collection was carried out through focus group interviews and a survey. The collected responses were analysed using ATLAS.ti and thematically. The analysis facilitated the identification and extraction of key themes from participants' insights. Study findings revealed that challenges included developing trilingual resources and ensuring device access. The study concluded that proactive, collaborative strategies can help educators leverage trilingualism. To utilise trilingual pedagogy on Nearpod, recommendations include teacher training on platform features like Matching Pairs for vocabulary and Time to Climb gamification. The study recommends funding for multilingual content creation and devices. Collaboration among curriculum developers and educators is critical. By proactively leveraging Nearpod, educators could transform trilingual dramatic arts education.

Keywords: Challenges; Dramatic Arts Education; Multilingual; Nearpod; Technology; Translanguaging; Trilingual Pedagogy

1. Introduction

Language is a vital tool for communication and education among people. Therefore, exploring trilingual teaching methods in dramatic arts education is important. South Africa boasts over 11 official languages. As individuals migrate in search of better job opportunities, they often bring their families, including school-aged children. These children may come with a mix of languages; for example, a parent moving from KwaZulu-Natal to the Eastern Cape might speak isiZulu and encounter isiXhosa in their new environment. It is essential to create a harmonious classroom that accommodates these languages, as well as English, which is commonly used for educational purposes. This approach is crucial for embracing the linguistic diversity present in South Africa. By incorporating isiXhosa, isiZulu, and English, educators can cultivate a more inclusive atmosphere that reflects the nation's cultural diversity.

The trilingual approach in teaching grade 10 not only enhances language proficiency but also promotes empathy and cultural understanding among students. However, implementing such a multifaceted educational model of trilingual pedagogy can present challenges. Some challenges include resource constraints and varying language proficiency. Addressing these challenges requires innovative strategies that engage educators. There is a critical need to inspire collaboration among stakeholders to ensure the effective implementation and sustainability of trilingual pedagogy in the classroom, which is an advantage for teaching dramatic arts in grade 10.

Trilingual pedagogy in the dramatic arts, particularly in IsiXhosa, IsiZulu, and English, offers educational institutions a rich tapestry of challenges and opportunities. As South Africa becomes increasingly interconnected, integrating multiple languages such as isiXhosa, isiZulu, and English into the curriculum for teaching dramatic arts is necessary. However, the gateway to deeper cultural understanding and enhanced linguistic proficiency is a critical need [1]. It has to be noted that, in the South African context, specifically in the Eastern Cape, a trilingual approach to the dramatic arts may be especially pertinent when languages such as isiXhosa, isiZulu, and English are the primary mediums of expression. These languages are creativity and communication [2]. By embracing a trilingual framework, educators could cultivate a more inclusive learning environment in the teaching space. They can also foster empathy, cultural competence, and a broader worldview among dramatic arts grade 10 students [3]. However, implementing such a multifaceted educational model can be challenging [4]. Some of the challenges may include resource constraints, disparities in language proficiency among students. The intricate task of seamlessly integrating three languages into a cohesive learning experience is a significant hurdle [5]. Nevertheless, some of these challenges present an opportunity for educators to devise and implement innovative strategies in their classrooms. These initiatives help to ensure that the benefits of trilingual pedagogy are accessible to all students [3]. The need for innovation could engage and inspire educators, making them feel more connected to the process in the teaching space [1].

By drawing insights from diverse educational settings, the current study explored strategies that effectively balance the challenges and opportunities of trilingual pedagogy in the dramatic arts [5]. By examining successful models and identifying best practices, the current study seeks to provide valuable lessons and recommendations for educators and policymakers in the innovative pedagogy of teaching dramatic arts in grade 10. It highlights the crucial role of collaboration among curriculum developers, educators, and community members, asserting that such cooperation should be essential for the success of trilingual pedagogy [1]. It is important to note that policymakers play a vital role in fostering this collaboration. They help ensure the success of trilingual pedagogy in the dramatic arts [2]. Implementing a multifaceted educational model can present several challenges, including resource constraints and varying language proficiency levels. Emerging technologies, such as Nearpod, present unique opportunities to address these challenges. Nearpod enhances engagement and facilitates language learning in a trilingual context. Nevertheless, leveraging these technological tools effectively requires overcoming barriers that are related to access and familiarity [5]. This research, grounded in insights from diverse educational settings, explores strategies that balance the challenges and opportunities of trilingual pedagogy in the dramatic arts, particularly through innovative platforms such as Nearpod [5,6]. Addressing these issues requires innovative strategies that engage educators and inspire collaboration among stakeholders to ensure the effective implementation and sustainability of trilingual pedagogy in the classroom, which could be particularly advantageous for teaching dramatic arts in Grade 10.

The following questions guided the current study:

1. What are the technological, pedagogical, and contextual challenges Grade 10 dramatic-arts educators experience when implementing trilingual pedagogy using Nearpod, and how do these challenges vary across different linguistic and cultural contexts?
2. How can educators effectively leverage Nearpod to realise the opportunities of trilingual pedagogy in Grade 10 dramatic arts, specifically to enhance cultural understanding, linguistic proficiency, and artistic expression?

2. Literature Review

The integration of trilingual pedagogy in dramatic arts education has gained attention for fostering cultural understanding and linguistic proficiency [7]. The literature emphasises the potential benefits and challenges of trilingual pedagogy in the dramatic arts [8]. While trilingualism may foster linguistic and cultural diversity, edu-

cational institutions can address practical barriers. By addressing these barriers, it may be helpful to tackle linguistic challenges to effectively implement this approach [8]. A growing body of research evidence highlights recurrent implementation barriers. These barriers include unequal access to devices and connectivity, as well as limited digital pedagogical skills among educators. The barriers include unequal access to devices and connectivity and limited digital pedagogical skills among educators. Other barriers include curriculum time pressures and misaligned assessment systems that privilege monolingual performance. In trilingual contexts, these challenges are compounded by the need for multilingual resources. These trilingual contexts may call for mentor capacity to design linguistically responsive dramatic arts tasks [9]. However, there could be conversational opportunities that might include a broader student voice through multimodal artefacts. Culturally sustaining pedagogy and enhanced formative assessment could be accomplished via platform analytics. It is critical to understand that policy contexts, such as South Africa's Curriculum Assessment Policy Statements (CAPS), call for curriculum alignment and assessment literacy. Literature recommends robust university-school partnerships. Therefore, scaffolding in-service training and practitioner communities of practice are meant to build capacity [10]. Studies also emphasised the importance of localised resource development. The call for co-design with educators to ensure cultural and linguistic relevance is a need. The importance of continued research and innovation in this field cannot be overstated. Localised resources are essential for developing effective strategies and best teaching practices [11]. Trilingual pedagogy in dramatic arts presents unique challenges and opportunities, particularly in multilingual classrooms. One significant challenge is the language demands embedded in drama and theatre arts curricula, which can hinder or facilitate engagement for multilingual students [12]. Effective instruction must address these demands to support students' engagement with dramatic arts activities [13].

Additionally, translanguaging, or using multiple languages in the classroom, poses pedagogical challenges. Some of the challenges could include goal formulation, learning the language of schooling, and managing student confusion [14]. Despite these challenges, drama-based pedagogy (DBP) has positively impacted educational outcomes [15]. Meta-analyses indicate that DBP significantly enhances achievement. It also helps to build positive learning attitudes and motivation, especially when integrated into the curriculum by classroom educators over multiple lessons [16]. Furthermore, engaging educators in art practice, such as theatre, can shift their self-perception and pedagogic practices. It can foster a more dynamic and inclusive learning environment [17]. These insights emphasize the potential of trilingual pedagogy in dramatic arts. This is achieved so as to enrich educational experiences, provided that educators are equipped with the necessary strategies and support [18].

2.1. Comparative Perspective for Nearpod as a Cloud-Based Teaching Tool

The current literature highlights the growing adoption of cloud-based tools, such as Nearpod, in multilingual education. Nearpod and other technological tools are particularly useful for enhancing engagement in language-heavy subjects such as Dramatic Arts. Similarly, the 11th Workshop on Cloud Technologies in Education (CTE 2023), as discussed by Papadakis et al. [19], Semerikov et al. [20], provided a well-thought-out contribution across educational technologies and cloud-based learning tools. It was noted that platforms, paradigms, and models are widely seen as increasing, which may lead to a significant rise in their use in teaching and learning in the educational space. The workshop proceedings revealed a key conclusion. The critical conclusion demonstrated a commitment to fostering emerging researchers. It necessitated the provision of a platform for exchanging innovative technological teaching tool ideas and early findings for use in teaching and learning. It also highlighted the critical potential of cloud technologies. The workshop showed a positive, transformative educational experience in learning and teaching. The workshop showcased a diversity of innovative approaches and applications across various disciplines in the educational space. Challenges such as lack of relevant resources, network connectivity and other potential barriers were discussed [6]. The identified challenges were seen as hindrances by educators. There was a strong outcry about the need for physical resources and accessibility, which educators reported as being a challenge. There was a need for flexible learning environments, and the growing importance of soft skills development among researchers, as Papadakis et al. [19] stated.

In another conference proceeding from Ukraine [20–22] from the 6th International Workshop on Augmented Reality in Education [22] the findings revealed an ongoing discussion on AR applications. Another key finding highlights the potential to enhance science education through immersive, interactive experiences. At the same time, Kramarenko et al. [23] in their article “Enhancing Mathematics Education with GeoGebra and augmented reality”,

they examined the potential of integrating GeoGebra with Augmented Reality (AR) technology to improve mathematics education. It included GeoGebra, a dynamic mathematics tool, which was reported on those findings as having enabled interactive exploration of concepts through visualisations [22]. The findings revealed that AR applications offered innovative ways to engage students with mathematical ideas in a positive interactive manner. The findings underscored the need for technological enhancement in the educational space. If technological platforms such as Nearpod can be used in teaching dramatic arts then teaching and learning may be enjoyable in today's dynamic technological era [24].

Furthermore, another research study from Indonesia demonstrated Nearpod's efficacy in dramatic arts education. The findings revealed that using the Nearpod tool had interactive materials that improved student outcomes in literature and performance skills by fostering collaboration and critical thinking. The research findings showed an average score increasing from 67.9 in the pre-test to 86 in the post-test, indicating substantial improvement and the tool's effectiveness as an instructional aide [23].

2.2. Technology-Mediated Instruction and Nearpod's Pedagogical Affordances

From an educational framework perspective, TPACK (Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge) and TAM (Technology Acceptance Model) are commonly used to understand how educators integrate digital tools into subject teaching, as stated by Olsen [11] and supported by Ramadhan et al. [6]. Interactive platforms, such as Nearpod and Pear Deck, combine multimedia and formative assessment. They help with student-response features that support multimodal dramatic arts activities. These features include embedded audio/video for language models, collaborative boards for script co-creation. Live polls for formative checks and virtual reality for immersive scenography are evident in these teaching platforms [13,24]. Emerging empirical studies report increased engagement, formative feedback cycles. The studies additionally indicate differentiated access to resources when such platforms are used thoughtfully in education. Importantly, technology may enable asynchronous rehearsal. This may include evidence collection, evidence collection, such as video and audio artefacts as well as analytics that positively inform learning and teaching [5]. However, effective integration requires that pedagogical goals are aligned with the affordances of the tools [24,25]. In particular, the availability of technological resources can be a powerful aid to teaching. These technological resources can enhance the multimodal learning tasks in Dramatic Arts rather than replace the core embodied practices [11]. When used appropriately within the educational space, technology can strengthen learning experiences and support creative engagement.

A study by Uğraş et al. [26] on primary school educators' perceptions found that most view ChatGPT as suitable for primary education, contributing to Sustainable Development Goal [21] 4 by enriching teaching processes and offering user-friendliness. Educators highlighted its potential for SDG 4.1 (free quality education) and SDG 4.2 (early childhood development), particularly in mathematics, Turkish, and English courses. However, concerns persist about its risk of providing false information, potentially undermining SDG 4.7 (education for sustainable development and global citizenship) [26].

2.3. Challenges and Opportunities in Trilingual Pedagogy in Teaching Grade 10 for Dramatic Arts

Integrating trilingual pedagogy in teaching dramatic arts to Grade 10 students presented challenges and opportunities. Such challenges included language demands and multilingual learning [8,27]. The primary challenges in trilingual pedagogy can be in addressing the language demands inherent in dramatic arts and theatre arts [27]. Language demands could be negative barriers that create teaching and learning challenges for facilitators of multilingual students [28]. It is worth noting that the complexity of language in dramatic arts often requires careful instructional strategies. To ensure that students can engage meaningfully, there is a need to engage meaningfully with the content expressed in dramatic arts [28,29]. Additionally, it is important to understand that implementing translanguaging strategies in multilingual classrooms involves negotiating among different stakeholders. The negotiation can include different cultural barriers, strong political gatekeepers, educators and students, which can also be challenging [29]. Practical and pedagogical issues such as side effects, goal formulation, and confusion can arise, making it challenging to establish effective translanguaging practices [30].

It could be possible that the teacher is prepared in more than two languages, such as isiXhosa, isiZulu and English. The capacity of educators to develop the necessary teaching skills in dramatic arts could be the subject of discussion if learning in a natural context is viewed through a critical lens in the education of a child enrolled in

dramatic arts in the Eastern Cape, as stated by Rebihi and Guidoum [28]. Educators' engagement with arts practices, particularly theatre [28] can shape their subjectivity in the pedagogical practices they use in the classroom [30,31]. The transition from rehearsal room techniques to classroom settings can create tensions among educators and students and require accommodations for others, impacting the effectiveness of trilingual pedagogy in dramatic arts [31].

2.4. Opportunities in Trilingual Pedagogy

Some studies indicated that Drama-based pedagogy (DBP) should offer positive academic opportunities when utilised effectively in teaching dramatic arts [32]. It should be noted that DBP has shown significant positive impacts on student academic outcomes. These include students' achievement, attitudes, and motivation to learn [32]. When integrated into the curriculum by classroom educators, DBP possibly could enhance literacy and other educational outcomes, providing a robust framework for trilingual pedagogy [33]. When applied to drama and theatre arts teaching, Trilingual pedagogy offers many positive opportunities that enhance learning experiences [3]. This approach allows students to leverage their knowledge of multiple languages and helps make learning more inclusive and accessible [34]. Educators can create principled practices that support multilingual students. The learning approach focuses on the specific language demands inherent in drama [35]. These practices can be tailored to highlight and address the unique linguistic challenges posed by theatrical texts and performances [36,37]. Consequently, activities designed under this framework can emphasise critical language skills, providing students with meaningful, engaging instruction as suggested by Dima et al. [34] who concurred with Sandstead [38], Lehtonen [39] and Hurst and Mona [40] who concluded. This enriches their learning journey, improves engagement, and fosters better learning outcomes [37]. Such an environment celebrates linguistic diversity. The trilingual approach encourages active participation and helps students develop a deeper understanding of dramatic arts across languages [35].

Active and dramatic approaches to teaching could help teach dramatic arts [34]. Utilising active and dramatic approaches in teaching can demystify creative drama and place it within an educational context [34,41]. The method could help students overcome misconceptions about dramatic arts [34, 36, 39, 42, 43]. Students can understand the academic side of the subject, that dramatic arts is not just for entertainment but recognises its value in learning [44]. Students need to know that enhancing subject engagement and participation becomes a critical need in the educational space as expressed by Bsharat and Barahmeh [36]. Trilingual pedagogy in teaching dramatic arts to Grade 10 students presents several challenges, such as language demands, translanguaging issues, and teacher preparedness; it also offers significant opportunities through drama-based pedagogy and principled practices [39]. By addressing these challenges and emphasising the opportunities, educators in dramatic arts could create a more inclusive and effective learning environment for multilingual students [40]. Implementing a trilingual education system is undeniably complex. Even if trilingual pedagogy offers unparalleled opportunities for students to gain a deep understanding and appreciation for educational diversity, challenges still prevail [39]. Dramatic arts viewed as a subject that encourages the development of advanced cognitive skills in students. Additionally, the subject enhances students' problem-solving and critical thinking skills by requiring them to navigate multiple languages [45]. The trilingual approach in dramatic arts was reported to help prepare students to excel in a globalised world. Trilingualism helps students by equipping them with the ability to communicate effectively and express empathy across cultural boundaries, as they would be able to do, as stated by Bsharat and Barahmeh [36]. It is important to note that the key to success lies in carefully structured programs that support each student's unique learning journey. Trilingualism fosters an inclusive environment where every language and culture is valued equally [33]. Through commitment and innovative strategies, trilingual education could be viewed as a way to turn challenges into stepping stones toward a more interconnected and empathetic world [46].

2.5. Integration of IsiXhosa, IsiZulu, and English in Dramatic Arts

The Eastern Cape is primarily characterised by isiXhosa, while isiZulu predominates in KwaZulu-Natal. Given that South Africa has eleven official languages, many parents can seek a flexible language schooling system that accommodates their children's language preferences. Incorporating IsiXhosa, IsiZulu, and English within the framework of dramatic arts education necessitates further investigation and represents a progressive step toward embracing multiculturalism in academic settings [33]. By integrating these languages, educators can offer a more inclusive and representative curriculum that reflects South Africa's linguistic diversity. The approach could facilitate

students' [47] deeper understanding and appreciation of the country's rich cultural tapestry. Moreover, it would enable students from different linguistic backgrounds to engage more fully with the dramatic arts. The approach can help enhance students' educational experience [8]. Through such educational practices, the aim is to foster a sense of unity and national identity while respecting and celebrating cultural differences [42,48]. This perspective aligns with the broader educational goals of promoting social cohesion and preparing students to navigate a diverse and interconnected world [45]. Integrating isiXhosa, isiZulu, and English in dramatic arts education presents both challenges and opportunities for educators. The trilingual approach enhances cultural inclusivity and linguistic proficiency, allowing students to engage deeply with diverse narratives [47]. However, practical challenges arise, such as resource constraints and varying levels of language proficiency among students, which can complicate the effective implementation of this pedagogical model [49]. Research indicates that while using multiple languages in dramatic arts can enrich learning experiences, innovative strategies are required to address these barriers [5,8]. Moreover, integrating these languages fosters creative expression and critical thinking, enabling students to explore complex themes through various linguistic lenses as highlighted by Zhang and Chan [50]. Ongoing research is crucial for developing best practices that support educators in maximising the educational benefits of trilingual pedagogy in dramatic arts as stated by Sincuba and Buka [8].

2.6. Educational Institutions' Strategies

Research shows that educational institutions have adopted various strategies to address the challenges of trilingual pedagogy [50]. These include professional development programs for educators to enhance their linguistic capabilities and pedagogical strategies for teaching in multiple languages [14]. Furthermore, collaborative curriculum design involves stakeholders from different linguistic backgrounds to ensure the curriculum is inclusive and accessible to all students [51]. Creating multilingual teaching resources is another critical strategy, which involves developing textbooks, digital content and other learning materials in all three languages to support students' learning [8]. Additionally, case studies from institutions implementing trilingual education highlight the importance of community involvement. The Trilingualism approach includes engaging parents and local communities to support language learning outside the classroom [37]. Institutional support is also crucial, as it provides the necessary resources and infrastructure for implementing trilingual programs [5]. These can encompass language labs and trained language specialists [52]. These comprehensive approaches demonstrate a commitment to overcoming the complexities of trilingual education and highlight the significance of a supportive learning environment in achieving successful outcomes [53].

2.7. Cultural and Linguistic Benefits of Trilingual Use in Dramatic Arts

A few studies indicate that building on the foundational insights provided by trilingualism has linguistic benefits [54,55]. It is clear that integrating multilingual dramatic traditions into educational curricula is a powerful tool for fostering not only linguistic proficiency but also deepening academic understanding of the subject. Trilingualism, also deepens academic understanding of the subject. This provides a more nuanced understanding of global cultures with a rich cultural and linguistic use in dramatic arts. The multidisciplinary approach broadens students' horizons and equips them with vital skills for navigating the complexities of our increasingly global society [56]. The trilingual use in dramatic arts offers significant cultural and linguistic benefits. Integrating multiple languages in theatre can enhance engagement and accessibility for multilingual students. It helps both the teacher and students connect more deeply with the material [27]. For example, drama and theatre arts curricula could be tailored to address the language demands of multilingual students, thereby supporting their engagement and learning [37]. Additionally, multilingual productions could foster cultural diversity and comprises of access, as seen in Berlin's contemporary theatre scene. It was where various languages on stage reflect and embrace the city's linguistic diversity [37]. The approach enriches the cultural experience. It raised important ethical questions about intercultural encounters and language hierarchies [38]. Furthermore, the use of drama in second language learning has been shown to improve communicative competence. This was through the enhancement of psychological factors such as self-esteem, motivation, and empathy [27]. Bilingual performances with subtitles have demonstrated how linguistic duality can be creatively integrated into the theatre. Bilingual performance would make language accessible to a broader audience while preserving cultural specificity [28]. These examples illustrate the multifaceted benefits of trilingualism in dramatic arts. The examples highlight its potential to bridge cultural gaps and enhance linguistic

skills [38].

Further exploration into this educational strategy reveals its potential to cultivate critical thinking and analytical skills [14]. By engaging with a variety of dramatic texts and performances from different cultures, students could develop a more critical perspective on the world. Students can learn to question and analyse the societal norms and values presented to them at any learning space [52]. The critical engagement encourages students to become more thoughtful and informed local community citizens [14]. Moreover, the collaborative nature of dramatic arts and a multilingual approach offer unique opportunities for students to work together across linguistic and cultural boundaries [8]. Such collaboration fosters a sense of community and understanding among students. Being trilingual helps break down barriers and challenge any form of stereotypes at all levels of learning [51]. Trilingualism is an effective way to promote intercultural dialogue and respect which is indispensable in today's local communities, which should be diverse [57]. Additionally, the practical applications of this educational approach extend beyond the classroom. It can be noted that where cross-cultural communication and multilingual abilities are highly prized, students who are exposed to and proficient in multiple languages and cultural expressions are significantly advantaged [56]. Integrating multiple languages in teaching dramatic arts and changing the traditions into the curriculum is not just an enrichment of the educational experience. But it is a necessity for preparing students to thrive in multicultural and local interconnected communities [39]. The benefits range from enhanced cultural insights and communicative skills to improved empathy and value for awareness. Multilingual highlights the importance of an inclusive and comprehensive approach to trilingual education in dramatic arts [57].

2.8. Strategies for Effective Implementation of Trilingual Pedagogy

Recent studies show that adopting trilingual pedagogy in educational settings emphasises education's evolving highlighting [58]. The approach addresses the need for linguistic diversity. It also fosters a deeper intercultural understanding among students [59]. By incorporating multiple languages into the curriculum, educators aim to equip students with the tools necessary for effective communication [60]. These challenges could be associated with implementing trilingual pedagogy in the dramatic arts include lack of a comprehensive trilingual language program. Some of these include resource constraints at varying levels of students' language proficiency, which can be significant [27]. However, the hurdles cannot be insurmountable. With the strategic use of technology, such as language learning apps and online collaborative platforms. Educators can enhance the learning experience and mitigate some of these challenges if they wish to include isiXhosa, isiZulu and English language [61]. Moreover, emphasising collaborative learning strategies, including group projects and performances, encourages active participation and peer-to-peer interaction. This not only aids in language acquisition but also in developing soft skills such as teamwork and problem-solving. As educational institutions refine their approaches, the potential for creating more inclusive and culturally rich learning environments becomes increasingly attainable [5].

The literature suggests strong theoretical and practical reasons for exploring how platforms such as Nearpod supports trilingual Dramatic Arts pedagogy; however, empirical work remains limited, especially research that centres on educators' lived experiences in Grade 10 dramatic arts classrooms. The gap highlights the need for this study to focus on educators' insights regarding technological challenges and opportunities. It examines the tri-lingual gap and explores how implementation can be designed to promote equitable, culturally sustaining, and pedagogically sound practices.

3. Theoretical Framework

Theoretical Foundations: Multilingual Pedagogy, Identity and the Dramatic Arts

One of the critical theories draws on the sociocultural and language-education literatures to emphasise language learning. The theory helps explain artistic expression as socially situated processes [62]. For example, Vygotskian perspectives foreground mediated learning. Vygotsky's theory emphasises the positive impact of human tools, including language [10]. He argues that language enables higher cognitive and creative functions, positioning classroom interaction among students as central to both linguistic and artistic development [63]. On the other hand, Cummins and García contend that maintaining students' home languages strengthens identity, promotes cognitive transfer, and fosters deeper conceptual understanding. They assert that using home language in arts education enhances students' performance in their primary languages and often leads to richer emotional nuance and cul-

tural authenticity [64]. Dramatic arts pedagogy specifically encourages multimodality, including students' voices, movement, gesture, and text. When used effectively, dramatic arts pedagogy is well-suited to trilingual approaches that emphasised code-switching, translanguaging, and cultural storytelling. Furthermore, the literature suggests that deliberately scaffolding linguistic choices in dramatic arts tasks is beneficial [10]. Scaffolding activities such as bilingual scriptwriting and multilingual role-plays can enhance both language proficiency and aesthetic competence while supporting student identity and inclusion [58].

The study adopted a socio-cultural theoretical framework, emphasising the role of social interactions and cultural context in learning dramatic arts grade at 10. In Vygotsky's theory, this framework posits that knowledge is constructed through social interactions and mediated by language and culture [10,65], which makes it more suitable for the current study.

The theory helps explain artistic expression as a socially situated process. For example, Vygotskian perspectives highlight the role of mediated learning. In the context of trilingual education for the dramatic arts, this framework emphasises the importance of integrating IsiXhosa, IsiZulu, and English as tools for cognitive and cultural development. It also considers the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), which differentiates between what students can accomplish independently and what they can achieve with guidance [10]. Notably, using multiple languages in dramatic arts education can enhance students' understanding and provide a richer, more inclusive learning experience [64]. Additionally, the framework supports the idea that learning is a dynamic, socially situated process. Recognising students' diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds as valuable assets in the educational environment is a critical aspect that warrants further investigation [66]. The study adopted a sociocultural theoretical framework, which emphasises the role of social interactions and cultural context in learning dramatic arts at the grade 10 level. According to Vygotsky's theory, knowledge is constructed through social interactions and is mediated by language and culture, which makes it particularly suitable for the current study.

4. Methodology

Every research study needs a method it has to follow. The current study employed a mixed-methods approach. The current study employed a more rigorous qualitative method than the quantitative method. It was an integration of a qualitative case study with a quantitative survey to understand the challenges and opportunities of trilingual pedagogy in dramatic arts, utilising Nearpod as an educational technology [8]. The current study was underpinned by an interpretive paradigm [67,68]. The paradigm posits that the research design utilised participants who had enrolled in dramatic arts from grades 10 to 12 to understand their subject experiences and perspectives as Lehtone [39] expressed. The case study method enabled an in-depth analysis of educational dynamics in real-life grade 10 contexts, as stated by Sincuba and Buka [8]. At the same time, the survey provided quantitative insights into students' experiences using the Nearpod technology tool for dramatic arts instruction.

4.1. Qualitative Component

The qualitative component, a single case study of one school that offered dramatic arts from grades 10 to 12 in the district, yielded rich, contextual insights that illuminated the critical challenges and opportunities of trilingual teaching using the Nearpod technological tool in dramatic arts [15]. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews, enabling a deep exploration of subjective meanings and lived experiences in authentic educational settings in dramatic arts [42].

4.2. Quantitative Component

The quantitative component involved a structured survey administered to a sample of students via Nearpod, an interactive digital platform. The approach yielded measurable data on engagement levels, perceived effectiveness of trilingual strategies, and technology integration in dramatic arts learning, enabling statistical analysis using graphs to identify thematic patterns and generalisable trends [68]. The quantitative component of the study employed a structured survey administered through Nearpod to a purposive sample of Grade 10 Dramatic Arts students. Where relevant, survey data were cross-referenced with cohort information provided by educators. To complement the quantitative findings, ATLAS.ti was used to manage and analyse open-ended survey responses as well as excerpts from educator interviews, thereby strengthening the mixed-methods integration in examining technological chal-

lenges and opportunities in trilingual pedagogy using Nearpod [24]. Open-ended responses were imported into ATLAS.ti, and a codebook was developed based on survey domains such as student engagement, the effectiveness of trilingual strategies, and technology affordances and barriers [69]. The codebook guided both inductive and deductive coding. Multiple coders applied the codes, and interrater agreement was calculated to enhance reliability [15]. Analytic decisions were documented through memoing, and emergent subthemes including code-switching strategies, platform-specific affordances, and connectivity-related disengagement were recorded as they arose.

To strengthen transparency, **Table 1** illustrates a sample of the coding framework used in ATLAS.ti. ATLAS.ti's network and co-occurrence tools were employed to visualise relationships among codes, linking qualitative themes to quantitative patterns. For example, higher reported engagement was associated with specific Nearpod features. Representative quotations were extracted to illustrate statistical trends, enabling explanatory mixed-methods analysis and a richer interpretation of the findings [63]. Graphical representations, such as bar charts, were used to present categorical distributions of quantitative data alongside supporting qualitative insights [64]. The use of ATLAS.ti deepened an understanding of how technological factors shape trilingual Dramatic Arts instruction and informed actionable recommendations for integrating Nearpod as a dynamic teaching tool in contemporary educational contexts [69,70]. However, the study faced limitations as was explained by Hawari et al. [17]. The sample size was small, consisting only of Grade 10–12 students enrolled in Dramatic Arts within a single district, which restricts the generalizability of the findings. Furthermore, the results were framed to inform scalable trilingual pedagogical practices using interactive technology in Dramatic Arts, but broader application requires further research with larger and more diverse cohorts [25].

Table 1. Codes from the Framework.

Code Category	Description	Example of Quotation from Students/Educators
Engagement	Indicators of student participation and interest	"Nearpod made lessons more interactive", (Student).
Trilingual Strategy Effectiveness	Perceived success of multilingual teaching methods	"Switching between isiXhosa and English helped me understand better", (Student).
Technology Affordability	Positive features of Nearpod	"The polls kept students focused", (Teacher).
Barriers	Challenges in technology use	"Connectivity issues disrupted the lesson", (Teacher).

4.3. Justification for the Mixed-Methods Approach

A mixed-methods design was justified by its capacity to provide a comprehensive understanding of trilingual pedagogy's complexities, where qualitative depth complements quantitative breadth [68]. The qualitative case study captured participants' nuanced perspectives and contextual realities, while the quantitative survey offered empirical validation and generalisability. The pragmatic convergence approach of the current study facilitated a mixed methodological approach. The qualitative approach was used to enhance the validity and robustness of findings on challenges such as language barriers and opportunities utilising a technological tool, Nearpod in dramatic arts education [65].

4.4. Research Design

The current study was underpinned by the case study research design. It is critical to note that, building on the foundation laid by Yilmaz [71], it became evident that adopting a case study design was instrumental for the current study. The research design was used to uncover the nuanced dynamics of trilingual pedagogy within Dramatic Arts education. The approach allowed for an in-depth exploration of specific educational practices. The design facilitated a comprehensive understanding of the complexities involved in implementing a trilingual curriculum in such a specialised context [12]. The choice of a case study design was particularly relevant for examining the intricacies of language use in the Grade 10 dramatic arts classroom. Grade 10 Dramatic Arts is where the interplay between different languages significantly shaped students' learning experiences and outcomes [43]. By focusing on a specific Grade 10 Dramatic Arts setting, the researcher was able to investigate how trilingual pedagogy was applied in practice, identifying both the challenges and opportunities it presented for educators and students alike [72].

The current study gathered rich contextualised data through the suggested method. This approach provided valuable insights into how trilingual education (isiXhosa, isiZulu, and English) could enhance the learning of dramatic arts [66]. The method illuminated effective pedagogical strategies for students' linguistic and artistic devel-

opment, while also identifying potential barriers to implementing trilingual teaching in dramatic arts in the Eastern Cape of South Africa. The case study illuminated the significant impact of language proficiency levels, cultural differences, and institutional support on the effectiveness of trilingual pedagogy in the context of teaching dramatic arts to Grade 10 students using isiXhosa, isiZulu, and English. Employing a case study design, this research highlights the critical roles these factors play in shaping educational outcomes. Vanicek and Popelka [68] with added information from Creswell and Inoue [66] represents a powerful tool for understanding the multifaceted relationship between language education and the dramatic arts [34] additionally supported by Gibson and Ewing [12]. This approach made a substantial contribution to educational research by providing a comprehensive analysis of educational practices within the Grade 10 dramatic arts context. It focused on language learning and arts education, specifically the use of isiXhosa, isiZulu, and English in teaching dramatic arts for Grade 10 in the Eastern Cape of South Africa [73]. Further employing the design was essential for advancing the knowledge of trilingual pedagogy and its application in dramatic arts educational settings [74].

4.5. Data Collection

The current study gathered data through focus group interviews with three educators and 18 students from a single school. These interviews aimed to obtain detailed responses from participants regarding their experiences and perceptions [75]. The focus groups created a space for lively discussions, allowing students to share different opinions and gain a better understanding of trilingual education practices [76]. Each focus group consisted of six students, and the interviews were conducted in isiXhosa, isiZulu, and English. The sessions were audio-recorded and later transcribed into English by the researcher. Each interview lasted approximately 10–15 min, and participants were informed of their right to withdraw from the study at any stage should they wish to do so. Data collection involved focus group interviews with both educators and students enrolled in Dramatic Arts. The student participants were drawn from Grades 10 to 12, while the educator participants were actively teaching the subject. Focus groups were selected as the primary method of data collection because they encourage discussion, allow for diverse perspectives, and provide rich insights into participants' experiences, as the students were enrolled in Dramatic Arts from Grade 10 to 12 [8]. Semi-structured interviews allowed for flexibility while ensuring that critical topics related to trilingual pedagogy were covered as participants used their home languages, which were isiXhosa, isiZulu and the learning and teaching language, English [75].

Survey as a Data Collection Tool

In addition to structured interviews, the study employed a survey as a complementary data collection instrument [68]. The survey was administered to the participants, providing a systematic means of gathering statistical data on their experiences and perceptions. The tool was particularly valuable for quantifying aspects such as engagement, the effectiveness of trilingual strategies, and the affordances and barriers of technology in the classroom. The survey responses were analysed using ATLAS.ti [77], which enabled both numerical representation through graphs and tables and thematic exploration of open-ended responses [65]. Rigorous qualitative analysis was employed for the coded data in the current study. The use of a survey broadened the study, allowing measurable patterns to be identified across participants. While the interviews provided depth through detailed narratives, together, the semi-structured interviews and the survey data collection tools strengthened the mixed-methods design. The data collection tool was meant to ensure that qualitative insights were supported by quantitative evidence. The justification for employing both methods lay in their complementarity. The survey allowed for statistical generalisation, within the sample, while interviews captured the nuanced perspectives and lived experiences of students and educators. The integration enhanced the reliability and richness of the findings [25]. The data collection tools offered a more comprehensive understanding of the challenges and opportunities associated with trilingual pedagogy in Dramatic Arts education.

4.6. Data Analysis

For the current study, the collected data were analysed using ATLAS.ti, a qualitative data analysis software and thematically [69]. The data analysis tool facilitated systematic coding and theme extraction from the focus group interviews. Organising the data into themes allowed the researchers to identify common patterns and significant insights, thereby constructing a coherent understanding of the participants' experiences [71]. The data analysis

process began with transcribing the focus group interviews verbatim to ensure accuracy and completeness [12]. Using ATLAS.ti, a qualitative data analysis software, the transcripts were coded to identify emerging themes [78]. The software facilitated the organisation and analysis of the data, enabling the researcher to extract themes from the respondents' insights systematically [79]. The study was conducted in several stages, including familiarising the data, generating initial codes, searching for themes, reviewing themes, and defining and naming themes [69].

4.7. Population and Sampling

The study focused on a specific cohort within the dramatic arts education landscape, comprising students and educators engaged in Grade 10 Dramatic Arts. The selected sample included three educators and eighteen students from a single school in the Eastern Cape of South Africa, known for implementing trilingual pedagogy in its dramatic arts curriculum [8]. The purposeful sampling approach aimed to capture a diverse set of perspectives from those directly involved in Grade 10 Dramatic Arts. education, thereby offering a holistic understanding of the opportunities and challenges inherent in the educational practice [79]. By targeting institutions that prioritise trilingual instruction, the research ensured that participants had relevant firsthand experience, thereby enhancing the richness and applicability of the collected data [68].

4.8. Data Presentation and Treatment

The data collected from focus group interviews were carefully transcribed and imported into ATLAS.ti for thorough thematic analysis [80]. The themes and patterns were identified through open coding, with initial codes derived from the raw data as evidenced by Smit and Scherman [69]. The codes were subsequently organised into broader categories that reflected the key themes and insights shared by the participants [80]. The findings were presented in a narrative format, accompanied by direct quotes from the interviewees to highlight key points [81]. The approach ensured that the findings were grounded in participants' actual words and experiences. This data analysis aimed to enhance the study's credibility and authenticity [70]. The findings from the data analysis were presented in a narrative format, supported by direct quotes from participants. The purpose was to illustrate the main themes and subthemes [82]. Tables and figures were condensed to appropriately represent the findings, provide a meaningful summary, and highlight key points [83]. The data presentation aimed to clarify the challenges and opportunities faced by educators and students, along with the strategies they used to address these issues [84].

4.9. Ethical Considerations

The current study involved students in Grade 10 who were enrolled in Dramatic Arts. Consequently, ethical considerations were of utmost importance. All parents and guardians were asked to sign informed consent forms. Informed consent was obtained from all participants, ensuring they understood the research objectives and their right to withdraw from the study at any time [75]. Confidentiality was maintained by anonymising the data, and the study adhered to ethical guidelines to safeguard the rights and well-being of participants [67]. The approach ensured that the research was conducted with respect and integrity, fostering a trustworthy and ethical research environment [84]. Ethical considerations were paramount throughout the research [85]. Before data collection, ethical approval was obtained from the relevant institutional review board. Participants were informed about the study's purpose, including the voluntary nature of their participation, and the confidentiality of their responses [65,67]. Informed consent was obtained from all participants, with signatures provided by parents or guardians. They were assured that their data would be anonymised during analysis and presentation to protect their privacy [66].

4.10. Trustworthiness

Establishing trustworthiness in this study required careful attention to the four key qualitative criteria: credibility, dependability, confirmability, and transferability. Credibility was ensured by drawing on the voices of both students and educators. The inclusion of 15 students enrolled in Dramatic Arts from Grades 10 to 12, alongside 3 (three) educators (18 participants) actively teaching the subject, provided a balanced perspective. This combination allowed the findings to reflect both lived classroom experiences and professional pedagogical insights. Triangulation between survey data and interview responses further strengthened credibility, as patterns identified in one source were cross-checked against the other [68]. Dependability was achieved by maintaining a clear and sys-

tematic record of the research process. The steps taken in participant selection, data collection, and coding were documented in detail, ensuring that the study could be followed or replicated by other researchers, even though exact repetition in qualitative contexts remained challenging [63]. The use of ATLAS.ti, to manage and analyse data added consistency, as coding procedures were guided by a codebook developed from survey domains and applied by multiple coders [19]. Confirmability was addressed by ensuring that the findings were grounded in the data rather than researcher bias [68]. Utilising ATLAS.ti, data analysis and rigorous thematical codes, analytic decisions were documented, while interrater agreement calculations enhanced objectivity. Quotations from both students and educators were used to illustrate themes, making the interpretations verifiable by others. Transferability was demonstrated by situating the findings within the broader context of trilingual pedagogy in Dramatic Arts [24].

4.11. Limitations

The current study had limitations that need to be acknowledged. The study consisted of a purposive sample from one school with Grade 10 Dramatic Arts in the Eastern Cape District of South Africa, and the findings cannot be generalised to a larger population. The study utilised only one technological platform, Nearpod; as such, other platforms can yield different results if utilised. Although the study was limited to one school in the district, the smaller sample can have limitations, where findings of the current study cannot be generalised to a bigger population, but the insights into language use, engagement, and technological challenges can be applicable to similar educational settings where trilingual instruction and digital tools could be employed. By providing detailed descriptions of the participants and the educational context, the study offered readers only a limited basis for judging the relevance of the findings to their own settings.

5. Findings

Table 2 presents the demographic profile of the study participants. The sample consisted of 18 individuals, including 15 students and 3 educators. The students were drawn from Grade 10 Dramatic Arts classes, with ages ranging between 14 and 16 years. Nine students were between 14 and 15 years old, while six were 16 years old. The educators, in contrast, were older, ranging from 30 to 45 years. This age distribution highlighted the generational differences between students and educators, which may have influenced their perspectives on trilingual pedagogy and the integration of technology in Dramatic Arts education. In terms of gender, the student group comprised five males and ten females, while the teacher group included two males and one female. This distribution reflected a predominance of female participants overall, which may have shaped the dynamics of the focus group discussions and survey responses. To ensure confidentiality and anonymity, pseudonyms were assigned to all participants (A, B, C, D, E, F, and variations such as A¹, B², C³, D⁴, E⁵, F⁶, and extended forms such as A^{1A}, B^{2B}, C^{3C}, D^{4D}, E^{5E}, F^{6F}). This practice allowed participants to share their views openly without concern for personal identification.

Table 2. Biographic Data.

Age	Gender	Pseudonyms
14 Years to 15 Years 9 Students	Male 5 Student	A, B, C, D, E, F
16 Years 6 Students	Females 10 Students	A ¹ , B ² , C ³ , D ⁴ , F ⁵ , F ⁶
30 Years to 45 Years 3 Educators	Male 2 Educators	A ^{1A} , B ^{2B} , C ^{3C} , D ^{4D} , E ^{5E} , F ^{6F}
	Females 1 Teacher	
15 Students	10 Students	
3 Educators	3 Educators	18 Participants
Total 18 Participants	Total 18 Participants	

The demographic data provided important context for interpreting the findings. The predominance of younger students ensured that the survey captured the perspectives of those directly experiencing trilingual instruction in Dramatic Arts, while the inclusion of educators added professional insights into pedagogical practices. The balance between student and teacher voices strengthened the mixed-methods design, as it allowed for comparison between student experiences and educator strategies. The demographic profile underscored the diversity of the sample and highlighted the relevance of age and gender in shaping the study’s outcomes. **Table 3** shows the research questions, theme and sub-themes of the current study.

Table 3. Research questions, themes and sub-themes.

Research Question	Theme	Sub-Theme
1. What are the technological, pedagogical, and contextual challenges do Grade 10 dramatic-arts educators experience when implementing trilingual pedagogy using Nearpod, and how do these challenges vary across different linguistic and cultural contexts?	Cultural and Linguistic Diversity using technology	Culturally Responsive Pedagogy in Multilingual Classrooms
2. How can educators effectively leverage Nearpod to realise the opportunities of trilingual pedagogy in Grade 10 dramatic arts—specifically to enhance cultural understanding, linguistic proficiency, and artistic expression?	Integrating Multilingual Curriculum in Dramatic Arts to Foster Cultural Understanding and Artistic Expression	Utilising Trilingual Dramatic Arts Projects to Promote Cross-Cultural Dialogue and Collaboration

5.1. Theme 1: Cultural and Linguistic Diversity Using Technology

When Trilingual pedagogy was used by integrating isiXhosa, isiZulu, and English in teaching dramatic arts, it was reported to build community collaborative needs.

When asked, some of the participants described it by saying:

Participant A: *“We had the need to include stories from our grade 10 dramatic arts students, as we had to incorporate cultures into the curriculum to make learning more relatable to technology.”*

Participant B: *“As a dramatic arts teacher, we need to be given development on cultural workshops and training on how to use technology like this one, Nearpod.”*

Participant C: *“I saw that all the dramatic arts students, after seeing themselves on the technology platform, became more engaged and motivated to learn.”*

Participant A¹: *“In order to gain more information about different cultures, as a school, I propose that we invite the community, as community involvement is crucial. Some of the traditions can be learned from sharing with parents about their culture, and then I would teach them in the classroom.”*

Participant B²: *“As educators, we need to create a curriculum that would be acceptable in a celebration of multilingualism, and that curriculum should encourage students to use their home languages and the technology of today, specifically Nearpod.”*

Participant C³: *“We fully understand that today’s youth utilise technology, as such, we saw the diverse experiences our students brought and how fast they adapted to the use of Nearpod as we were teaching them.”*

Participant A^{1A}: *“If we can have workshops or trainings, teacher training should include strategies for addressing cultural biases and for promoting inclusivity.”*

Participant B^{2B}: *“Here we have a greater need for open discussions, as I think we should have more discussions about how cultural backgrounds influence learning styles in a dramatic arts classroom.”*

Participant C^{3C}: *“One of the most important and critical issues is to have great inclusivity in every student’s culture. The situation is serious enough to create a safe space where students feel comfortable sharing their cultural identities.”*

Participant A^{2A}: *“There is a need and a great need. We can improve positive learning outcomes by incorporating culturally relevant materials into our lessons.”*

Participant B^{2B}: *“All we need is so simple, we need to work together. I want more teamwork between educators and community leaders to support our multilingual students using Nearpod.”*

Participant C^{2C}: *“As dramatic arts educators, we have to understand our students’ cultural contexts, which can help us tailor our teaching methods effectively using Nearpod.”*

Participant AA: *“If we engage in dramatic arts well. We should celebrate cultural diversity through events such as Heritage Day and have activities highlighting different traditions.”*

Participant BB: *“Dramatic arts activities and our assessments must be fair and consider the varied backgrounds of our students.”*

Participant CC: *“By adapting our curriculum, we honour our students’ identities and enrich everyone’s learning experience through Nearpod.”*

Figure 1: Participants commented on dramatic arts as a language tool. Some reported that it fostered appreciation of different cultures, was fun for self-expression, empowered language learning, and provided linguistic growth. However, some expressed concerns about language barriers. Others reported that online platforms help in teaching multiple languages, that learning was exciting and more dynamic, and that it facilitated collaboration on bilingual projects in dramatic arts. Additionally, some reported the use of different media platforms due to dramatic arts.

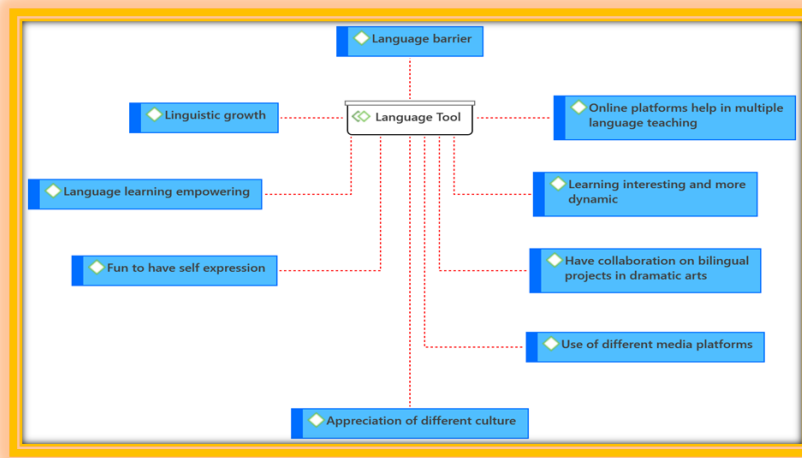


Figure 1. Language tool.

Sub-Theme 1: Culturally Responsive Pedagogy in Multilingual Classrooms

Figure 2 shows that Nearpod provided a platform for collaboration with different cultural aspects of isiXhosa and isiZulu. The use of isiXhosa and isiZulu demonstrated fairness in teaching dramatic arts, improved cultural diversity, and helped students feel comfortable with what they were learning. The language used for instruction was isiXhosa, and students enjoyed the cultural aspects incorporated into it. Even though the primary language of instruction was English, they appreciated the cultural elements that connected with isiZulu, the language used in teaching.

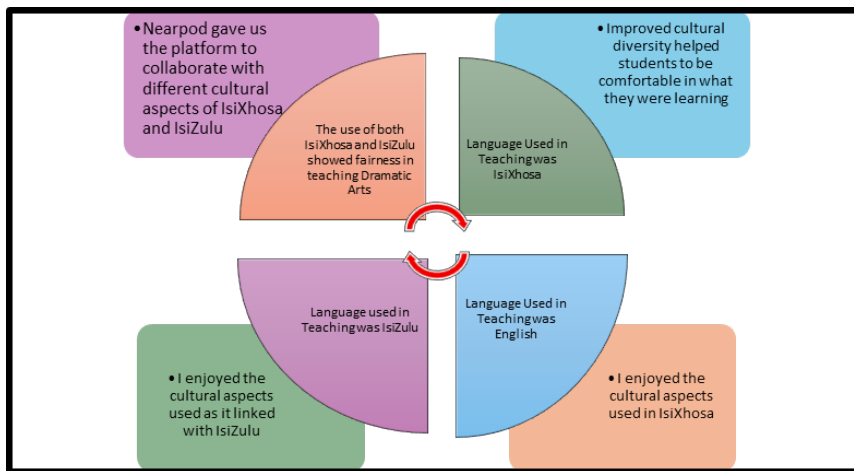


Figure 2. Positive aspects presented by trilingual pedagogy.

5.2. Theme 2: Integrating Multilingual Curriculum in Dramatic Arts to Foster Cultural Understanding and Artistic Expression

Some of the participants gave a report on cultural learning in the dramatic arts, which was reported as shared learning and collaboration; some noted language disparities. However, some highlighted its flexibility and creativity,

others described it as an emotional connection, some perceived it as a culture behind language learning, others viewed bilingualism as a character portrayal from different languages, and still others reported that it provided a better understanding when a learner engages with more than two languages. Below are the reports by some participants:

Participant A^{1A}: *“Using more than one language motivated me, and it showed flexibility of today in language use”.*

Participant A^{2A}: *“I was too emotional when all we performed was in my language, and I felt so much included for the first time in my life”.*

Participant A^{3A}: *“When my language was used, I was proud, but above all, I fully understood; to me, that mattered a lot, and it made me share my cultural secrets with others in my class, which I was told never to share”.*

Participant A^{4A}: *“From my personal point of view, the teachers these days in the technological era are trying to show flexibility, empathy, and that shows that all cultures matter in life. I enjoyed it a lot when more than one language was used in our dramatic arts class”.*

Participant A^{5A}: *“In my view, it made me see the need to work together even if our languages are different. It helped us a lot, as my teacher always told us the word, “collaborate””.*

Participant A^{6A}: *“Yes, I enjoyed it, but some other languages, like IsiZulu, were difficult for me; it felt so foreign to learn in another language, hence, it was challenging for me, I don’t know about others”.*

Below are the educators’ responses from a focus group interview on the challenges and opportunities of implementing trilingual pedagogy within the dramatic arts curriculum. Each response reflects their insights on the primary challenges faced by educational institutions and how these challenges vary across different linguistic and cultural contexts.

Figure 3 indicates that when educators used isiXhosa, isiZulu, and English, it removed the inferiority of indigenous languages. Dramatic arts teaching using Nearpod promoted social justice and equity in language use. Nearpod promoted collaboration when we used isiXhosa, isiZulu, and English to teach different cultural content in dramatic arts. The trilingual approach created interconnectivity rather than silos. The teaching method was perceived as useful in teaching dramatic arts. The pedagogical activities established cultural connections among students in dramatic arts. The creation of language flexibility was encouraged through the use of isiXhosa, isiZulu and English in teaching dramatic arts. It is true that language promotes cognitive development as it fosters critical thinking via dramatic arts. Dramatic arts teaching using Nearpod promoted social justice and equity in language use.

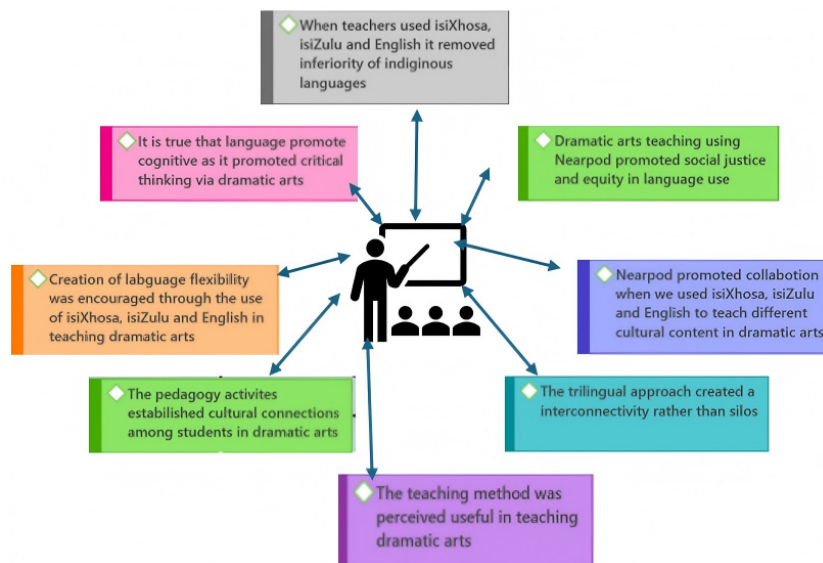


Figure 3. Culture sensitivity due to being trilingual.

Participants responded to the challenges they faced while teaching dramatic arts while using isiXhosa, isiZulu, and English by saying:

Teacher A: *“One of the primary challenges we face is the lack of resources in all three languages. Many dramatic arts materials are only available in one or two languages, which limits our ability to create a truly trilingual environment. Additionally, educators often feel unprepared to teach multiple languages, especially if they are not fluent in all three. This can lead to inconsistencies in how the curriculum is delivered.”*

Teacher B: *“I agree with Teacher A, but I would add that cultural differences also play a significant role. In some contexts, certain themes or expressions in dramatic arts can not translate well across languages. This can create misunderstandings among students and hinder their ability to engage with the material fully. We must be sensitive to these cultural nuances when designing our curriculum.”*

Teacher C: *“Another challenge is the varying levels of language proficiency among students. In a trilingual setting, some students can be more proficient in one language than others, creating disparities in participation and understanding. This requires us to differentiate our instruction, which can be time-consuming and complex.”*

Students’ responses based on the context of the discussion about bilingual and trilingual performances, empowerment through language learning, and the role of Nearpod technology:

Participant A: *“It is a cool idea to put on shows in different languages! It sounds fun to share our ideas and learn new stuff.”*

Participant B: *“Using technology to look for resources in different languages is an excellent idea! Sometimes, finding resources that help me improve at the languages I am learning is challenging.”*

Participant C: *“I believe it is essential that everyone gets to use technology equally. It is wrong if some of us cannot join in or do the same things because we do not have the same stuff.”*

Participant A¹: *“I would love to collaborate on a bilingual project with my classmates. It would help us learn from each other and appreciate our diverse cultures.”*

Participant B²: *“Performing in multiple languages can boost confidence and highlight what we have learned to others.”*

Participant C³: *“I think technology can help us find diverse materials, but we also need guidance from educators to use it effectively.”*

Figure 4: Trilingual difficulties in teaching dramatic arts. Some reported a need for cultural pedagogy in multilingual teaching, while others indicated a lack of home support for certain students. Some parents were seen as a challenge because they did not wish to use multiple languages at home. Additionally, there was a reported need for professional development. Some educators found the use of different technological media platforms to be too expensive, while others noted that teaching in more than three languages was time-consuming. Furthermore, some struggled with resources in multiple languages. There is a significant need for cultural sensitivity in teaching dramatic arts.

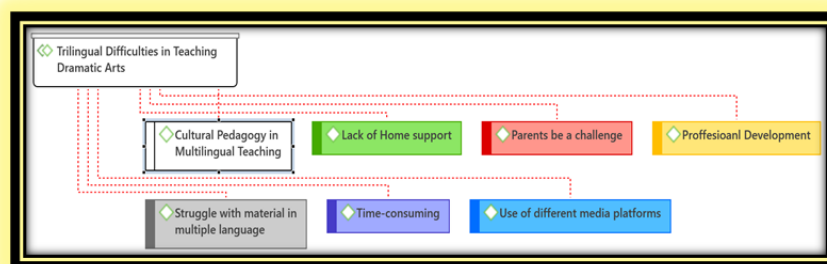


Figure 4. Cultural Pedagogy in Multilingual Teaching and Cultural Sensitivity.

Report on language tools. Some educators reported that trilingual pedagogy in teaching dramatic arts in grade 10 presents challenges due to language barriers for those who cannot fully understand one subject. Online platforms such as Nearpod assist in multilingual teaching, making learning exciting and more dynamic. Collaboration on bilingual projects in dramatic arts may be necessary. Educators and students can utilize different media platforms, such as Nearpod, specifically videos. Exposure to trilingual pedagogy can foster an appreciation of different cultures and encourage self-expression. Language learning is empowering, and the benefits of linguistic growth were reported by the participants.

Some of the participants reported that in the dynamic technological era one platform which was viewed as helping a lot in teaching dramatic arts was Nearpod. Nearpod is helping in trilingual pedagogy in dramatic arts through the expression of a language tool.

Teacher A: "I saw it that technology is now key, when we used Nearpod, teaching dramatic arts became more flexible and enjoyable. *All I had to do was to understand the media platform and use it with the my teaching as I did while teaching dramatic arts in isiXhosa and isiZulu, but English was never left out as a medium of communication in teaching and learning*".

Teacher B: "In todays teaching one has to be willing to learn new technology as a teacher myself I had to be flexible and learn. After which the use of Nearpod helped me a lot specifically in teaching dramatic arts which was difficult for me as a teacher, but I enjoy it now".

Teacher C: "A person will never go wrong in learning new ideas in the academic space, Nearpod helped a lot. I want to be clear in that, without it I would not have any learner passing dramatic arts as it is new to me as a subject and I was never trained for it. Nearpod helped me a lot. It is good to have these young, technologically knowledgeable teachers".

Integrating Multilingual Curriculum in Dramatic Arts to Foster Cultural Understanding and Artistic Expression.

Figure 5 shows that cultural inclusion is fostered by integrating multilingual use in the dramatic arts; it explores different cultures, helps in the use of various media platforms, fosters an appreciation of diverse cultures, enhances cultural competence, supports cultural identity, facilitates cultural exchange, bridges existing cultural gaps, boosts confidence in learning multiple languages, sparks curiosity and eagerness, and promotes cultural sensitivity.

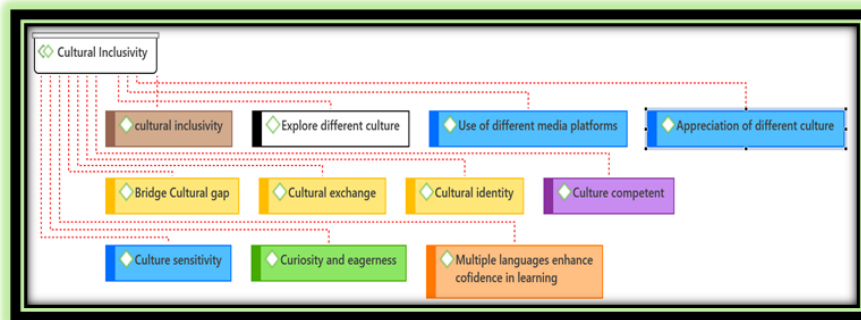


Figure 5. Exploring difficulties of culture in trilingual pedagogy.

Teacher A: "Using more than one language in drama classes can help students learn more about diverse cultures."

Teacher B: "Incorporating different languages into our performances can significantly expand our understanding and appreciation of diverse cultures. This practice enriches our artistic expression and broadens our perspective, allowing us to connect with a broader audience. This approach enhances our abilities and fosters greater inclusivity and understanding among our audience. It is a powerful reminder of how art can transcend linguistic barriers and unite people."

Teacher C: "Using multilingual scripts in drama can make the lessons more engaging and relevant to students from diverse backgrounds."

Figure 6: Participants reported that trilingual pedagogy in teaching dramatic arts helps students better understand character portrayal from different languages, understand the culture behind language learning, establish an emotional connection to what is being learned, foster flexibility and creativity in learning dramatic arts, close the gap on language disparities, and promote shared learning and collaboration.

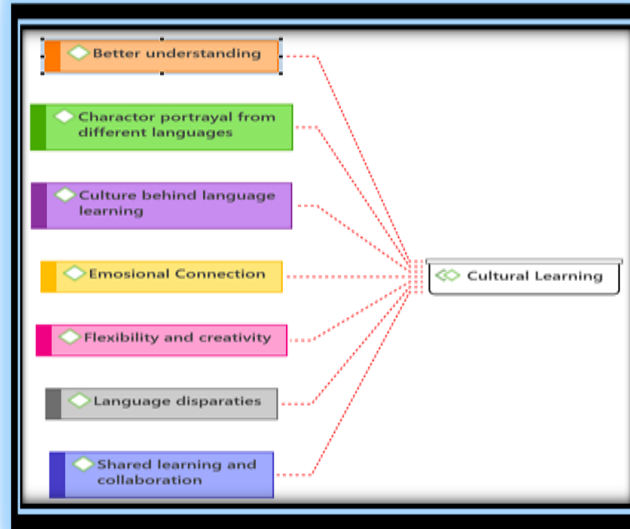


Figure 6. Cultural Learning.

Sub-Theme 2: Utilising Trilingual Drama Projects to Promote Cross-Cultural Dialogue and Collaboration

Figure 7: Participants reported that challenges faced by educators included time constraints, difficulties with material in multiple languages, and a lack of interest from parents in languages other than their own. Some educators had resources for students, while others faced challenges in ensuring equal access to internet connections. Additionally, some reported a lack of home support, the need for language professional development, and the requirement for technological tools to address issues in trilingual pedagogy for dramatic arts. Others indicated that curriculum planners needed to collaborate with them on what to include in trilingual pedagogy for teaching dramatic arts in Grade 10.

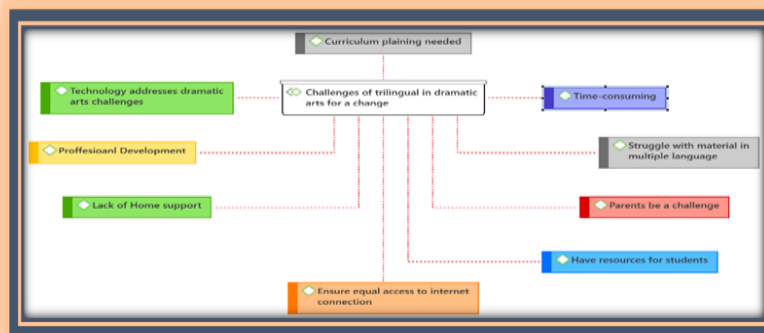


Figure 7. Challenges of trilingualism in dramatic arts for a change.

Figure 8 shows challenges of culture, proficiency gaps with struggles to achieve easy mastery access in isiXhosa, isiZulu, and English; articulation strains with technical difficulties of shifting intonation between isiXhosa, isiZulu, and English; script mastery with hurdles in reading and internalizing between isiXhosa, isiZulu, and English; difficulties of trilingualism in dramatic arts; cultural overload with mental exhaustion from processing isiXhosa, isiZulu, and English; and semiotic overload: difficulties in managing non-verbal cues.

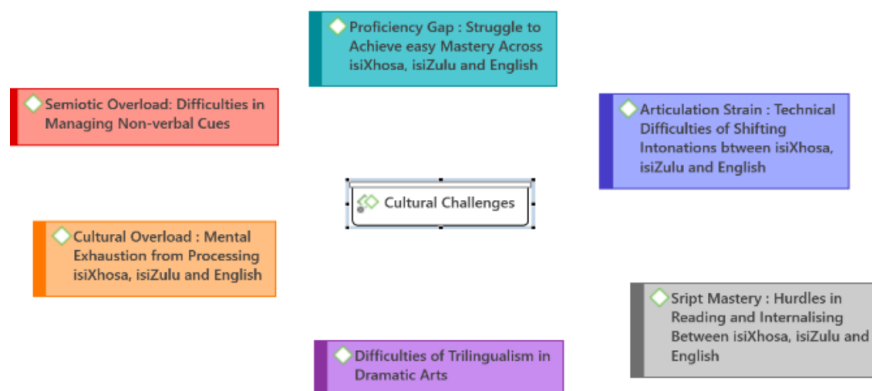


Figure 8. Language Proficiency Challenge Faced by Educators and Students.

6. Discussion

There is a critical need to adopt technological tools such as Nearpod in teaching grade 10 dramatic arts in today’s dynamic technological era. The greatest need is in administrative support to overcome the hurdles of trilingual pedagogy in teaching dramatic arts in grade 10 [38]. When educators, students, curriculum planners, school managers, and other stakeholders, including school leaders, work collaboratively and recognise the unique demands of trilingual teaching, providing additional planning time or access to language specialists can significantly alleviate these challenges [1]. Ultimately, engaging students in dramatic arts across three languages, thus in isiXhosa, isiZulu and English, requires creativity and enthusiasm as revealed by the findings in **Figure 1**. There is a critical need for educators in the Eastern Cape of South Africa teaching dramatic arts to find innovative ways to make the subject exciting and relevant, encouraging participation across all three languages, as shown in **Figures 2–4**, despite varying levels of confidence [2]. If educators and curriculum planners work together with thoughtful planning, collaboration, and integrated ongoing professional development, trilingual dramatic arts teaching can be incredibly enriching as stated by Bsharat and Barahmeh [36]. It is worth noting that educators play a pivotal role in the successful implementation of trilingual pedagogy, as revealed by the current study findings in **Figure 6** in dramatic arts education [28]. Strategies such as professional development for educators, collaborative curriculum design, and the creation of multilingual resources are essential to support a trilingual pedagogical approach [41].

The findings as expressed Teacher A, B and C also illustrated in **Figure 8** highlighted the role of Nearpod in supporting trilingual pedagogy within Dramatic Arts education. Educators reported that language barriers often posed challenges for students who did not fully grasp the language used in instruction. However, integrating Nearpod as an online platform provided opportunities to overcome these barriers by facilitating multilingual teaching. Participants emphasised that Nearpod’s multimedia features, particularly videos, made learning more dynamic and engaging [6]. Students expressed that trilingual pedagogy, when supported by technology, fostered self-expression, cultural appreciation, and linguistic growth. The dynamic engagement aligns with Hutagalung et al. [24], who demonstrated that Nearpod’s interactive tools transformed drama education by making lessons more participatory and accessible.

From the findings revealed on Theme 1, Cultural and Linguistic Diversity Using Technology, further showing the importance of embedding cultural relevance into trilingual pedagogy. Participants consistently highlighted the need for community collaboration, professional development in cultural competence, and the inclusion of students’ home languages in the curriculum. For example, students noted that seeing their cultural identities reflected in learning materials increased motivation and engagement. Educators also stressed the importance of creating safe spaces for

students to share their cultural backgrounds, as indicated by **Figure 1**, while advocating for curricula that celebrated multilingualism. These findings resonate with what was stated by Olsen [11] who argued that effective language teaching requires alignment between technological tools and pedagogical strategies, particularly in diverse classrooms.

The emphasis on multimodal learning through Nearpod also reflects [6,22] perspective on media arts education as expressed by Teacher A, B and C, where technology enables holistic and embodied learning experiences [25]. By integrating culturally relevant materials and encouraging collaboration between schools and communities, trilingual pedagogy was seen as both inclusive and empowering as shown by Participants A^{1A} to A^{7A}. Furthermore, the findings support [26], who noted that technology-enhanced learning environments can promote sustainable educational practices by addressing diverse student needs. The findings of the current study demonstrate that Nearpod not only addressed language barriers but also enriched Dramatic Arts education, as revealed by **Figure 2**, by fostering cultural inclusivity, linguistic empowerment, and collaborative learning, as supported by Hutagalung et al. [24].

The challenges of trilingual pedagogy are multifaceted, encompassing language demands, teacher preparedness, and resource availability, which were revealed by the current study findings in **Figure 8** as supported by Jackman et al. [74]. Educators often struggle to coordinate instruction across multiple languages while ensuring students engage meaningfully with dramatic arts content [27]. Trilingual pedagogy in dramatic arts poses challenges that require careful consideration and strategic management [12,47]. One major issue is variability in students' language competency, proficiency, and fluency [8]. Students can exhibit varying proficiency levels in isiXhosa, isiZulu, and English, leading to differential comfort levels as shown in **Figures 7 and 8** in expressing themselves in each language [8,47]. Educators must devise methods to effectively bridge these gaps, emphasising tools such as code-switching and code-mixing to enhance creativity while managing the complexities they entail [5]. Another significant challenge is accessing quality teaching materials in all three languages: isiXhosa, isiZulu, and English [14]. Educators often struggle to obtain suitable resources, prompting them to create or adapt materials themselves a time-intensive endeavour [5]. Cultural relevance becomes paramount in selecting teaching materials that resonate with students' cultural backgrounds [10]. However, sourcing culturally relevant content in all three languages can be daunting, as shown in **Figure 8** and the findings concurred with Bsharat and Barahmeh [36]. Additionally, inadequate teacher training in multilingual settings could hinder effective teaching practices [84]. Addressing these challenges necessitates comprehensive professional development programs that equip educators with the necessary skills and strategies to navigate the complexities of trilingual instruction [38]. Furthermore, collaboration among curriculum developers, educators, and community members is crucial for effectively creating a supportive framework that addresses these challenges [8].

Even with challenges, implementing trilingual pedagogy offers significant opportunities to enhance student learning outcomes in dramatic arts education [8,34]. By emphasising students' linguistic knowledge, educators can create engaging and meaningful learning experiences, as revealed by the findings in the Figures, that promote critical thinking and creativity [72]. Drama-based pedagogy (DBP) showed evidence of having positively impacted student motivation and achievement, particularly when integrated into a cohesive curriculum [15]. Dramatic arts lessons must foster an environment that celebrates linguistic diversity by encouraging active participation from students from various backgrounds [39]. By focusing on tailored practices that address specific language demands in the dramatic arts as expressed by participants A^{1A} to A^{7A} and as shown in **Figure 4**, educators can enhance students' cultural understanding and artistic expression [36]. Professional development and training are essential components of addressing these challenges. Educators need continuous training on effective trilingual teaching strategies, including scaffolding learning across languages and integrating them seamlessly into dramatic arts curricula [35]. Moreover, assessing students' understanding and performance in three languages, isiXhosa, isiZulu and English, requires specialised knowledge, posing a challenge unless educators undergo ongoing professional development to enhance their assessment practices [15]. However, it should be noted that time constraints are another critical factor that needs to be addressed. Dividing instructional time among three languages while maintaining depth in each can be tricky [14]. Lesson plans must strike a delicate balance to comprehensively cover the curriculum without compromising language instruction [46].

7. Conclusion

The current study investigated technological challenges and opportunities in trilingual pedagogy for teaching Grade 10 Dramatic Arts, drawing on educators' insights from Nearpod. The purposive sample was selected for a

case study research design of a school that enrolled students in dramatic arts from grades 10 to 12. The use of isiXhosa, isiZulu, and English in teaching dramatic arts by educators using Nearpod resulted in positive academic outcomes. However, it should be noted that every new idea or phenomenon has its own challenges, as was the case with Nearpod. Some of the challenges educators faced in teaching Grade 10 Dramatic Arts included fostering linguistic diversity and cultural understanding among students. The current study concluded that by embracing isiXhosa, isiZulu, and English in teaching practices, educators can create inclusive environments that enhance student engagement and learning outcomes. Another challenge was a lack of resources. The current study concluded that there is a critical need for language inclusivity in teaching grade 10 dramatic arts in the Eastern Cape. An introduction to varying language proficiencies needs to be addressed through workshops and teacher training. The introduction of teaching pedagogies using Nearpod could be one of the innovative strategies and collaborative efforts among educators, curriculum planners, and community members that need to be addressed without fail. The study, however, made a significant contribution by revealing the successful implementation of trilingual pedagogy in isiXhosa, isiZulu, and English, which enriched students' educational experiences in dramatic arts. Dramatic arts prepares students for better academic and effective local language use. Ultimately, prioritising professional development and institutional support was seen as vital to harness the transformative potential of multilingual education in Grade 10 Dramatic Arts.

8. Recommendations

The study presented the following recommendations to create a more supportive environment for implementing trilingual pedagogy in dramatic arts and ultimately enhance student learning outcomes. Enhancing teacher training programs is a significant need. Implementing specialised training for educators that focuses on effective trilingual teaching strategies can help dramatic arts educators. This training should include methods for integrating isiXhosa, isiZulu, and English that respect each language's unique characteristics while fostering student engagement. Developing culturally relevant resources designed in isiXhosa, isiZulu and English to teach dramatic arts can be essential to trilingual pedagogy. Thus, a repository of culturally relevant teaching materials in all three languages should be created. Additionally, collaborating with local artists and educators can help ensure that resources resonate with students' backgrounds and experiences, making learning more relatable. Facilitating collaborative teaching models designed in isiXhosa, isiZulu, and English, and encouraging collaboration among educators across different subjects who are also teaching in isiXhosa, isiZulu, and English, can be beneficial. Trilingual pedagogy could lead to shared resources and strategies that enhance the overall effectiveness of instruction.

Implementing multilingual assessment techniques is also recommended. The findings pointed to the importance of embedding cultural and linguistic diversity into trilingual pedagogy through technology. A practical recommendation is to design professional development programs for educators that focus on cultural competence and multilingual strategies using platforms such as Nearpod. Training could equip educators with methods to integrate students' home languages into Dramatic Arts lessons, while also addressing cultural biases and promoting inclusivity. This would ensure that educators are not only confident in using digital tools but also sensitive to the diverse cultural contexts of their students. Such preparation would enhance student engagement and foster a classroom environment where students feel represented and empowered.

The study noted that assessment tools are being developed in this dynamic era; as such, the current study recommends the development of technological tools to evaluate student performance across all three languages: isiXhosa, isiZulu, and English. This will require professional development for educators to ensure they have the skills to implement these assessments effectively. Allocating time for planning is a key recommendation. School administrations should recognise the challenges of trilingual instruction and allocate additional planning time for educators in dramatic arts. This time could be used to develop lesson plans that effectively balance instruction in all three languages without sacrificing depth or quality. Engaging parents and local communities in the learning process can further enrich students' educational experiences and reinforce language acquisition outside the classroom. Institutional support is vital for providing the infrastructure and resources needed to implement trilingual pedagogy effectively. Educational institutions can create an environment conducive to successful multilingual instruction by prioritising funding for language immersion programs and supportive technologies. The study recommends future research that can conduct longitudinal studies on different technological tools in teaching and learning, such as Nearpod, ChatGPT and other Cloud Technologies, in different home languages, for the teaching

and learning of different subjects.

Funding

This research did not receive any funding or support from any person or company.

Institutional Review Board Statement

The study was approved by iYunivesithi Walter Sisulu, Eastern Cape, South Africa, 29/01/2019, Protocol Number: EREC31-01-19, CODE: 5099.

Informed Consent Statement

Informed consent was obtained from all subjects involved in the study. All the participants had parents'/guardians' signed consent forms.

Data Availability Statement

The research data is available upon request from the Research Office at iYunivesithi Walter Sisulu.

Conflicts of Interest

The author declares no conflict of interest.

AI Use Statement

The author used the Copilot AI Tool for the corrective structuring of the written sentences solely for grammar checking, sentence structure refinement, and improving the readability of the English text in this manuscript. The author takes full responsibility for all academic content, including all ideas, data, analyses, conclusions, and recommendations presented herein. The use of AI was thoroughly reviewed and supervised by the authors.

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