AN INVESTIGATION OF MOTIVATIONAL STRATEGY USE BY FL SWAHILI AND ZULU
INSTRUCTORS IN THE UNITED STATES

By

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ABSTRACT

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Second language (L2) teachers' practices in the classroom can influence their students' motivation for learning the L2. However, most of the research in this area has been conducted with students learning English as L2. Guilloteaux and Dörnyei (2008) recommended that more research be conducted on the use of motivational teaching practices in different languages, cultures, and instructional contexts to enrich the literature on this topic. In line with that recommendation, I had three goals with the current study: first, to investigate which motivational teaching practices are used by four teachers of two African languages in the United States; secondly, to investigate learners' perceptions of the impacts of those motivational teaching practices on their motivated behaviour; and thirdly, to find out the impact of select factors on teachers' implementation of those teaching practices.

I employed a case study methodology (Duff, 2014) and collected classroom-based data from the four teachers of Swahili and Zulu and their students. Data were collected by means of classroom observations, stimulated recall sessions, and semi-structured interviews. The descriptive qualitative data allowed for the teaching and learning contexts of the participants to be captured in an in-depth manner.

Findings revealed that the implementation of motivational teaching practices by the four teachers varied, with some using more motivational strategies than others. While learners' perceptions about those strategies were mostly positive, results also revealed instances where students did not perceive some practices as motivational despite their teachers thinking that they

were. Factors such as the teachers' cultural backgrounds and training were found to influence the teachers' motivational strategy use. Additionally, teachers' preparedness to teach remotely, the challenges of remote teaching, and institutional support were found to affect their implementation of motivational teaching practices. I discuss these results in particular in light of the time of data collection, which was during the COVID-19 pandemic. Overall, the findings revealed that the four teachers implemented motivational teaching practices from all four stages of Dörnyei's (2001) process-oriented model of L2 motivation, and that the teachers with more communicative orientations to teaching tended to use materials and teaching strategies in the classroom that also further promoted motivation within their students. These findings contribute to the literature on motivational teaching practices and highlight how teachers of African languages may have unique challenges in implementing motivational teaching practices, but that they as a collective work hard to foster motivation in ways that they believe will be most impactful to learners, especially in the virtual teaching environment of the times.

I dedicate this dissertation to my parents, Michael Dennis Oguti and Paskalia Amachilang Irukan, and my lovely son, Nolan Emaase Otucho. Mom and Dad, thank you for believing in me all through, for all the sacrifices you made to nurture my potential, and for always supporting my academic dreams. I love you both very much. I know this achievement will make you happy and that makes me happier. To my son, Nolan, you were so gentle with me as I wrote this dissertation. I love you so much

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CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

What is the role of the teacher in increasing learners' motivated behavior in language learning? This question has been of interest to second language (L2) motivation researchers since the 1990s, as the classroom increasingly became the context of study within second or foreign language learning motivation research (Dörnyei, 2001). Some L2 motivation researchers saw the need to extend research beyond investigating the nature of motivation among language learners to understanding the practical benefits of motivation and ways of increasing and sustaining it in language classrooms (e.g., Clément, Dörnyei & Noels, 1994). Previous researchers suggested that the teacher plays a pivotal role in motivating learners, which then leads to more success in language learning (Dörnyei, 1996; Dörnyei & Csizér, 1998; Dörnyei, 2001). Dörnyei and Csizér (1998) and Dörnyei (2001) proposed a set of motivational teaching practices that language teachers can implement in their classrooms to activate and maintain learners' motivated behavior. Numerous researchers have investigated the implementation of those strategies in various language learning settings since then (e.g., Cheng & Dörnyei, 2007; Guilloteaux & Dörnyei, 2008; Hennebry-Leung & Xiao, 2020; Papi & Abdollahzadeh, 2012; Wong, 2014). This current research is in the same vein, and with it I examined the implementation of motivational teaching practices by instructors of two African languages, Swahili and Zulu, in university classrooms in the United States.

1.1 Significance of the Study

Motivation contributes to success in language learning. Guilloteaux and Dörnyei (2008) wrote that a sufficient level of motivation is crucial in language learning and that "without sufficient motivation, individuals with the most remarkable abilities cannot accomplish long-term goals" (p. 56). They added that in language instruction, "appropriate curricula and good

teaching are not enough on their own to ensure student achievement. Students also need to have a modicum of motivation" (p. 56). In another instance, Dörnyei and Csizér (1998) wrote that "high motivation can make up for considerable deficiencies both in one's language aptitude and learning conditions" (p. 204). Within an appropriate, positive context, a student can engage more in learning tasks, and such engagement can lead to further success in learning. Dörnyei (2001) problematized the fact that since the advent of motivation research in the 1950s to date, researchers have focused more of their attention on developing L2 motivation theories and explaining the nature of motivation among L2 learners than on means of increasing learners' motivated behavior in the classroom. Dörnyei emphasized the importance of understanding which practices motivate or demotivate learners in the classroom as one way to improve their L2 learning experiences and, thus, achievement. Guilloteaux and Dörnyei (2008) advocated for more research on the use of motivational strategies, especially in different languages, cultures, and instructional contexts, which could highlight and account for any possible nuances. My current study is in line with that recommendation as I considered an under-researched population: the teachers and learners of African languages in the United States.

1.2 Research Context: African Languages in the United States

African languages have been offered in United States universities for many decades as courses during the regular school year and in intensive summer programs. Students enroll in these languages for reasons such as to fulfill degree requirements, to learn about the language and culture of a particular region of Africa, or to equip themselves with advanced language skills that would enable them to conduct research or work in an African country.

Also, some students enroll in these foreign languages in preparation to work with the United States National Security Agency (NSA) (Wiley & García, 2016). Swahili, for instance,

has been a language of interest to the United States Government regarding national security and, until recently, it was categorized as a *critical language* (Wiley & García, 2016). Critical languages, as an official government categorization or status of certain languages of national security interest, are offered to American students under government-funded programs like the African Flagship Languages Initiative (AFLI), STARTALK, the Foreign Language Area Studies (FLAS) fellowship, and the Critical Language Scholarship (CLS). Languages move on and off the critical languages list as United States needs for persons fluent in the languages shift. Other African languages that are offered under government-funded programs include Zulu, Yoruba, Twi, Wolof, Igbo, and Amharic. In this study, I aimed to investigate the motivational teaching practices of instructors of Swahili and Zulu in the regular school year programs at the college level.

1.3 Statement of the Problem

Research on language learning motivation has suggested that when teachers employ motivational strategies during language instruction, they can enhance learners' motivated behavior, which in turn facilitates success in language learning (e.g., Guilloteaux & Dörnyei, 2008). However, empirical evidence to support this argument is limited. First, research on the implementation of motivational strategies in language classrooms has mostly been conducted with L2 learners of English (e.g., Alrabai, 2010; Astuti, 2015; Cheng & Dörnyei, 2007; Guilloteaux & Dörnyei, 2008; Papi & Abdollahzadeh, 2012). Published research on this topic is nonexistent for African languages taught in the United States. Boo, Dörnyei, and Ryan (2015) found that the majority of L2 motivation research over the last two decades focused on learners of L2 English and that learners of Languages Other Than English (LOTEs) were mostly under-researched. Ushioda (2017) recommended that L2 motivation research should address LOTEs as

much as English because the dominance of English as the target L2 in motivation research could skew the understanding of L2 motivation. For that reason, it is essential to extend research on motivational teaching practices to African languages.

African languages belong to the Less Commonly Taught Languages (LCTLs) category. Brown (2009) pointed out some of the challenges that LCTLs face, and among them is limited research. That situation is still true today for some LCTLs, especially African languages. The limited research on factors affecting the instruction and acquisition of African languages is disadvantageous to this group of languages because it is through such research that more effective instructional resources and methods are developed. Less effective instructional resources and methods, by extension, could contribute to a decline in enrollment or student retention rates in these languages. Advancing research on matters affecting the instruction of any language can highlight the challenges and thus form a basis for devising improvements. With that in mind, my goal in the current study was to address an existing gap in the literature on the implementation of motivational teaching practices in African language classrooms.

Secondly, most of the existing research on the use of motivational strategies is quantitative, and data were mainly collected by means of self-report questionnaires (e.g., Cheng & Dörnyei, 2007; Dörnyei & Csizér, 1998; Sugita et al., 2014). Self-report questionnaires, as well as other purely quantitative methods, have been termed insufficient in capturing learners' motivated behaviors (Guilloteaux & Dörnyei, 2008; Loewen & Plonsky, 2015; Ushioda, 2013, 2017). Ushioda (2013) argued that incorporating qualitative methods in motivation research would yield more descriptive and thus, richer data on motivational practices, perspectives, or behaviors of those being studied. In the current study, I used a qualitative research design to obtain a more in-depth understanding of the research problem. The following were my overall

research aims, which align with my research questions, which are presented later in this dissertation (after a more thorough review of the literature) in Chapter 2 (Literature Review) section 3.

1.4 Research Aims

1. To examine how four instructors of Swahili and Zulu in the United States universities implement motivational strategies in their language classrooms.

2. To investigate the perspectives of learners of those languages about motivational teaching practice and its impact on their motivated behavior.

3. a) To find out if the teaching experiences and cultural backgrounds of those teachers influenced their implementation of motivational strategies in their classrooms.

   b) To find out if there are effects of the virtual medium of instruction on those teachers' motivational teaching practices.

1.5 Definition of Terms

In this section, I present a list of terms that I will use throughout my dissertation, terms that readers should be aware of as they read.

1. *African languages* – languages that are used and are recognized nationally in various African countries.

2. *African language instructor/teacher* – An instructor who teachers an African language.

3. *American students* – students who were raised and educated in the United States at least from high school level.

4. *Second language (L2)* – A language that is learned after the person has acquired a first/native language. In this study, the African languages are generally L2s to American students.

5. *Foreign language (FL)* – A language that is learned in the environment where it is not used for daily interaction in the community. In this study, the African languages are generally foreign languages to American students.

6. *Motivational strategies* – "instructional interventions applied by the teacher to elicit and stimulate student motivation" (Guilloteaux & Dörnyei, 2008, p. 57)

7. *Less Commonly Taught Languages (LCTLs)* – languages other than the most commonly taught ones in the United States such as English, German, French, and Spanish.

Note:

- *Motivational strategies* and *motivational teaching practices* are used interchangeably in this study to mean the same thing, as they have been used in previous research as well (e.g., Guilloteaux & Dörnyei, 2008).

CHAPTER 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter is divided into six sections. First, I discuss the history of L2 motivation research, including the different phases of L2 motivation research from the 1950s to date. Then, I present literature on factors that affect L2 learning and teaching. Next, I discuss the instruction of African languages in the United States, factors that surround foreign language instruction in general, and the challenges faced by the Less Commonly Taught Languages (LCTLs). The section that follows introduces L2 motivation research in more detail, that is, the development of motivational strategies and the studies that have empirically investigated their use in language classrooms. I also review some data collection instruments from previous research that will be relevant in the current study. The chapter concludes by restating the gap that I aimed to fill with my current study, followed by my research questions.

2.1 History of L2 Motivation Research

Motivation research originated from the field of psychology and was later adopted in second language (L2) research because of the important role it plays in learning (Dörnyei, 2001). L2 motivation research is categorized into four main periods, namely, the socio-educational period; the cognitive-situated period; the process-oriented period; and the socio-dynamic period (Ushioda & Dörnyei, 2012). These periods are briefly reviewed below for the purpose of positioning the current study.

2.1.1 The Socio-Educational Period

This period embodies the initial research on L2 motivation from the 1950s to 1990s. It was mainly the work of Wallace Lambert and Robert Gardner (e.g., Gardner & Lambert, 1959; 1972; Gardner, 1985) who investigated L2 motivation among English learners in Canada. Those learners were mainly immigrants from Spanish-speaking countries. Based on their findings, the

researchers proposed the socio-educational model, which classified motivation as either integrative or instrumental. Gardner defined integrative motivation as that which arises from the desire to integrate into the target language community. He explained that integratively motivated learners possess positive attitudes toward the target language community. On the other hand, instrumental motivation refers to learners' desire to master the language for an ultimate reward such as being able to get a good job and earn a high salary. What these early researchers may not have foreseen at the time was that their outcomes were quite dependent on the study context, as later research by Dörnyei (e.g., 2001, 2005, 2009) and others on foreign language learning would suggest.

2.1.2 The Cognitive-Situated Period

The cognitive-situated period was established in the 1990s after some researchers observed limitations in the socio-educational model. For instance, Crookes and Schmidt (1991) termed Gardner's research in the Canadian context narrow and insufficient in explaining the motivation of language learners beyond that context. Together with Oxford and Shearin (1994), they pointed out that integrative and instrumental motivations were some of the driving forces for L2 learners, but not all. The main tenet for the cognitive-situated period was that learners' L2 motivation also stemmed from within. For instance, learners' own choice to engage in learning and their persistence in the process. These researchers argued that L2 motivation theories should be able to encompass the wider context of L2 learning in general rather than being narrowly focused on specific contexts. In Gardner's research in Canada, for instance, it was concluded that the L2 English learners possessed high levels of integrative motivation because they needed English to communicate with the Canadian locals in search for jobs (Dörnyei, 2001; Oxford &

Shearin, 1994). In contrast to that, Oxford and Shearin (1994) argued that other factors such as a general interest in understanding a foreign culture could also contribute to L2 motivation.

2.1.3 The Process-Oriented Period

The third phase, the process-oriented model of L2 motivation research, was pioneered by Dörnyei and Otto (1998). The goal behind the process-oriented model was to create "classroom interventions to motivate language learners" (p. 43). Dörnyei and Otto explained that there was no model at the time which allowed them to implement motivational strategies in the classroom. They created a model in which they categorized L2 motivation into three stages: namely, the pre-actional, actional and post-actional stages. In the pre-actional stage, motivation should be generated among learners. In the actional stage, motivation should be maintained and protected such as by providing learners with enjoyable and interesting learning activities. The teachers can also maintain this motivation by supporting learners and ensuring a conducive learning atmosphere. Finally, in the post-actional stage, learners should be encouraged to engage in retrospective self-evaluation such as assessing how successful the lesson had been to them.

The process-oriented period gave birth to new research on motivational strategies (e.g., Dörnyei & Csizér, 1998; Dörnyei, 2001; Guilloteaux & Dörnyei, 2008; Papi & Abdollahzadeh, 2012). A more detailed review on motivational strategies is presented in section 2.4 of this chapter, as it sets the foundation for the current study.

2.1.4 The Socio-Dynamic Period

A socio-dynamic phase of motivation research started around 2005 as Dörnyei expanded his research to address the sources of L2 learners' motivation. Dörnyei (2005) argued that the process of language learning is influenced by factors both internal and external to the learner. He proposed the L2 Motivational Self System (L2MSS) framework in which he outlined three main

sources of L2 motivation for language learners: *the ideal L2 self, the ought-to L2 self,* and *the L2 learning experience* (Dörnyei, 2005, 2009). The ideal L2 self refers to the motivation which stems from the desire to close the gap between the present actual self and the future imagined self (Dörnyei, 2014). The ought-to self refers to the desire to do well to fulfill the expectations of other people and to avoid negative evaluation from them. Such people could be, for example, learners' parents or teachers (Dörnyei, 2005). The L2 learning experience focuses on the effects of the context and the process of language learning on the learners' motivation (Dörnyei, 2005). Some learners may be motivated by previous positive experiences with language learning such as from interactions with the teacher or peers. More recently, Thompson and Vásquez (2015) proposed the anti-ought-to self as another source of motivation especially for learners of Languages Other Than English (LOTEs). The L2MSS framework has been tested with a variety of L2 learners, and the overarching finding is that the ideal L2 self is the strongest source of motivation (e.g., Papi, 2010; Wong, 2018).

While the socio-dynamic model addresses language learning motivation from the perspective of the learner, the process-oriented model addresses motivation both from the perspective of the learner and from the point of the teacher's motivational teaching practices. Thus, my current study is aligned with the teacher's side of the process-oriented model as I investigated the use of motivational teaching practices in language classrooms as spurred by teachers and the motivational teaching practices' effects on learners' motivated behavior.

2.2 Second Language Learning and Teaching

A second language (L2) refers to any language that is learned after the person has fully acquired a first or native language (L1) (Lightbown & Spada, 2021). As such, the L2 learning process is often affected by the already established L1 system, especially for adult L2 learners

who have already reached cognitive maturity (Lightbown & Spada, 2021). Learners' L1 can have both positive and negative effects on the L2 acquisition process. For instance, adult L2 learners have been found to struggle to acquire those L2 features which are either absent in their L1 or are structured differently (Franceschina, 2001, 2005; Spinner, 2013). At the same time, Lightbown and Spada (2021) pointed out that adult L2 learners can rely on their already existing L1 knowledge and their fully developed problem-solving and metalinguistic abilities to facilitate L2 acquisition.

L2 learning is affected by both internal and external factors. Learners' internal abilities and characteristics such as aptitude, motivation, learning styles, and anxiety levels influence how fast they can master the target language (Douglas Fir Group, 2016; Hummel, 2013; Lightbown & Spada, 2021). Also, external factors such as learners' own experiences, their social and cultural environments, the classroom atmosphere including the teacher's conduct and practices, availability of language learning resources, and opportunities to interact with speakers of the target language affect the L2 learning process (De Costa et al., 2017; Douglas Fir Group, 2016; Lightbown & Spada, 2021). The Douglas Fir Group (2016) summarized that interconnection by writing that language learning in the classroom (meso-level) is influenced by the learners' own cognitive processes (micro-level) as well as the wider social environment (macro-level).

The type of L2 learning being referred to in the current study is *instructed second language acquisition* (ISLA) whose "prototypical context is the classroom" (Loewen, 2015, p. 5). This context is distinguished from that of naturalistic L2 acquisition which occurs primarily through immersion in the L2 speaking community. Loewen (2015) noted that the main goal of instructed SLA is "to manipulate the mechanisms of learning or the conditions under which they occur to enable or facilitate the development and acquisition of a language other than one's own"

(p. 3). Such manipulation could include, among other things, the implementation of motivational strategies in the classroom to increase and sustain learners' L2 motivation. For instance, a teacher can do so by selecting teaching methods that suit the context and goals of learners (Hummel, 2013; Lightbown & Spada, 2021).

In instructed SLA, the teacher plays a significant role as the facilitator of the language learning process. At the same time, some of the internal and external factors affecting the L2 learning process may be beyond the teacher's control (Chang & Goswami, 2011). For instance, at the institutional level, a university may have a predetermined program of how many lessons a foreign language teacher can teach in a week and for how long. Also, some universities may focus on goals other than increasing learners' oral proficiency. Some teachers may have extremely large classes that make it difficult for the teacher to attend to individual learners. And some teachers may have inadequate instructional resources for certain foreign language programs which then make it difficult for learners to practice the target language. Another challenge could be that the community within which the foreign language is being learned lacks native speakers of the target language with which learners can practice the L2 (Chang &Goswami, 2011). All these challenges could impact the L2 acquisition process. Therefore, in investigating the effects of motivational practices on learners' motivated behavior, it is important to acknowledge and account for the variety of factors that may simultaneously impact the learning process.

The classroom practices of L2 teachers are also shaped by their own personal characteristics as well as their social environment (De Costa et al., 2017). It is fundamental to establish the roles played by these factors, e.g., the teacher's cultural background and level of

teaching experience, in influencing their motivational teaching practices. That was one of the goals with this study.

2.3 Instruction of African Languages in the United States

Several African languages are taught in the United States as *foreign languages* to American students. This normally means that students are exposed to these languages only in the classroom and that their interaction with the target language in their daily lives is limited. These learners are not usually expected to use the target languages in their day-to-day communication, neither do all of them require proficiency in these languages for their future careers. Lie (2007), who investigated motivation to learn English as a Foreign Language (EFL) in Indonesia, found that when there is no strong incentive from learners' social and cultural environment to learn or use a foreign language, it is easy for learners to have low motivation to learn the language. In such cases where L2 motivation is weak or lacking, Astuti (2015) noted that it needs to be carefully nurtured and motivation needs to be sustained for successful learning to occur.

Marcellino (2008) wrote that foreign language learners can display lower levels of motivation and engagement in the classroom compared to second language learners. He added that the limited exposure to the foreign language outside of the classroom can lead to a slower growth of vocabulary for FL learners and the ability to express themselves in the target language. As a result, learners may be reluctant to participate in the classroom and the teacher may need to specifically motivate them to speak. Lamb and Coleman (2008) wrote that the teacher is one of the factors that can either motivate or demotivate language learners.

The goal of foreign language instruction in the United States universities is to increase the number of Americans who are proficient in foreign languages (Wiley & García, 2016). As such, foreign language programs in the United States are often focused on developing learners'

oral skills. For instance, the Communicative Approach to language teaching is recommended for most African language instructors with the goal to get students speaking the target language from early on. The National African Language Resource Center (NALRC) in Indiana University, Bloomington, is dedicated to offering trainings to teachers of African languages in the United States on, among other topics, how to teach following the Communicative Approach. This approach emphasizes language teaching and learning that includes interaction, conversation, and language use rather than restrictively learning the grammar rules of the language (Lightbown & Spada, 2021). For a teacher to successfully implement the Communicative Approach in their language classroom, they have to get students fully engaged in the lesson. That would require that students are highly motivated and that their motivation is sustained throughout the lesson (Astuti, 2015).

2.4 Research on Motivational Strategies

A major paradigm shift occurred in L2 motivation research in the 1990s whereby researchers became more interested in exploring the influence of the learning environment on learners' motivation (Guilloteaux & Dörnyei, 2008). Researchers saw the need to reform the understanding of L2 motivation beyond Gardner's concept of integrativeness "to adopt a more pragmatic, education-centred approach to motivation research which would be consistent with the perceptions of practising teachers and, thus, be more directly relevant to classroom application" (Dörnyei & Csizér, 1998, p. 204). According to those researchers, Gardner's concept of integrativeness left out the classroom dimension of L2 motivation and therefore, did not explain specific student behaviors nor provide practical guidelines on how teachers could motivate learners (Clément et al., 1994). Clément and colleagues hypothesized that learners'

situation-specific motivation significantly influenced the L2 learning process and that it was worth further investigation.

Clément et al., (1994) conducted a study with learners of EFL in Hungary to test their hypotheses on learners' situation-specific motivation in the classroom. They collected data by means of students' questionnaires which contained items on orientations, motivation, attitudes and anxiety, and teachers' questionnaires in which they evaluated their learners. The results of the study revealed three sources of motivation for learners: *integrative motivation, linguistic self-confidence* and *the appraisal of the classroom environment*. The component of integrative motivation was in agreement with Gardner's earlier findings (Dörnyei & Csizér, 1998). Further, the results indicated two more sources of L2 motivation. The component of linguistics self-confidence had also been observed as a source of FL motivation in earlier studies (e.g., Clément & Kruidenier, 1985; Labrie & Clément, 1986). However, the third component, *the appraisal of the classroom environment* as a source of FL motivation, was a new finding (Clément et al., 1994).

Dörnyei (1994) conducted a follow-up study and investigated further how the classroom environment influenced learners' motivation. Based on the previous findings, he developed a list of motivational components for the foreign language classroom and categorized them into three main areas, namely, *the language level, the learner level,* and *the learning situation level* (Dörnyei, 1994; Dörnyei & Csizér, 1998).

The *language level* of motivation concerned the values and attitudes that learners and those people around them attached to the target language. Those values and attitudes "are to a large extent determined by the social milieu in which the learning takes place" (Dörnyei & Csizér, 1998, p. 205). In other words, learners, and even their communities and support networks

around them, must attach importance to the foreign language being learned for both integrative and instrumental reasons to develop in the learner.

The *learner level* concerned the personality traits of the learner. According to Dörnyei (1994), there are two motivational components at the learner level: the need for achievement, and self-confidence. On the need for achievement, learners' own goals for learning the language become the driving force for them to desire to excel in the language. For instance, if the learner wants to achieve high proficiency to be able to engage in deep conversations with other speakers of the language, then that reason drives the learner to achieve more in the learning process. On the other hand, self-confidence encompasses aspects such as "language anxiety, perceived L2 competence, attributions about past experiences, and self-efficacy" (p. 206) all of which influence success in language learning. Dörnyei and Csizér (1998) and Clément et.al., (1994) noted that learners who are more self-confident are often more motivated to learn and can therefore achieve higher success compared to the less confident learners.

The *learning situation level* "was associated with situation-specific motives rooted in various aspects of language learning in a classroom setting" (Dörnyei & Csizér, 1998, p. 206). This level has three categories of motivational sources: The course-specific, teacher-specific, and group-specific motivational components. *Course-specific motivational components* related to the way the syllabus, teaching materials, and learning tasks are designed, the teaching methods used, the relevance of course content to the needs and goals of learners, and the extent to which the course heightens learners' satisfaction and expectancy of success (Dörnyei & Csizér, 1998). *Teacher-specific motivational components* concerned the behavior of the teacher, their personality, and style of teaching. For instance, the way the teacher socializes with students may impact their motivation to learn the language. Similarly, student motivation may be impacted by

the way the teacher presents instructional materials in the classroom. *Group-specific motivational components* involved the kind of interactions that occur in learner groups. The study found that a more cohesive learner group in which learners have shared goals may be more motivating than the one that is not.

Dörnyei (1994) compiled the first set of L2 motivational strategies, which consisted of 30 macro-strategies. He further broke them down to 100 micro-strategies and recommended them for use by language teachers. The long list of strategies turned out to be cumbersome for language teachers to implement in their classrooms. There was a need to reduce the strategies to a manageable number to be meaningful. Thus, Dörnyei (1996) condensed them to ten strategies which he labelled "the commandments for motivating language learners" (Dörnyei & Csizér, 1998, p. 209). Dörnyei and Csizér wrote that the term "commandments" was purposefully used to indicate that these strategies were recommendations and not rules that teachers were required to follow strictly in order to motivate their learners. (Plus, the terminology was catchy, which served the purpose of making the 10 recommendations popular, salient, and interesting to share among teachers.)

Dörnyei's (1996) new list of motivational strategies was received positively and eagerly by language teachers (Dörnyei & Csizér, 1998). However, one major weakness of the proposed strategies was that they were not backed by empirical data and, therefore, could only be treated as hypotheses for motivating language learners (Gardner & Tremblay, 1994). Gardner and Tremblay (1994) recommended that motivational strategies be investigated in actual language classrooms to confirm if they indeed impacted learners' motivated behavior in positive ways. In line with that, Dörnyei and Csizér's (1998) study had two goals: to provide empirical support to the claim that motivational strategies are crucial in language learning; and to find out the

relationship between the importance that teachers placed on each strategy and how frequently that particular strategy was used in the classroom. The two researchers compiled a new list of 51 strategies that seemed potentially useful and relevant to language classrooms and assigned them to 200 language teachers from various institutions ranging from elementary school to the university level in Hungary. Half of the participating teachers rated the importance they placed on each of those strategies and the other half rated how frequently they used those strategies in their language classrooms. In the end, the researchers obtained a rank scale of the strategies, which they then used "to form the basis of the modified set of the ten commandments" for motivating language learners (p. 209). The ten motivational strategies are as follows: (1) Set a personal example with your own behavior. (2) Create a pleasant, relaxed atmosphere in the classroom. (3) Present the tasks properly. (4) Develop a good relationship with the learners. (5) Increase the learner's linguistic self-confidence. (6) Make the language classes interesting. (7) Promote learner autonomy. (8) Personalize the learning process. (9) Increase the learners' goal-orientedness. (10) Familiarize learners with the target language culture (Dörnyei & Csizér, 1998, p. 215).

2.4.1 The Motivational Teaching Practice (MTP) Framework

Other researchers besides Dörnyei published lists of motivational strategies that L2 teachers could use in their classrooms to increase and sustain learners' motivation (e.g., Oxford & Shearin, 1994). However, Dörnyei (2001) observed that there was no theory-based framework that had been put forward to support the implementation of those strategies. Therefore, he proposed the Motivational Teaching Practice (MTP) framework which was informed by the process-oriented model of L2 motivation, theories from educational psychology, and the findings of Dörnyei and Csizér's (1998) study. The framework consisted of 102 micro-strategies which

were grouped into 35 macro-strategies. Those macro-strategies were further categorized following the stages of the process-oriented model of motivation. That is, the stages in the teaching process where these strategies occurred. The four components of the framework are rather linear in fashion, but cycle around in an iterative fashion, and are summarized as follows (Guilloteaux & Dörnyei, 2008, p. 58).

1. Creating basic motivational conditions by establishing a good teacher-student rapport, creating a pleasant and supportive classroom atmosphere, and generating a cohesive learner group with appropriate group norms.

2. Generating initial motivation, that is, "whetting the students' appetite" by using strategies designed to (a) increase the learners' expectancy of success and (b) develop positive attitudes toward the language course and language learning in general.

3. Maintaining and protecting motivation by promoting situation-specific task motivation (e.g., through the use of stimulating, enjoyable, and relevant tasks), providing learners with experiences of success, allowing them to maintain a positive social image even during the often face-threatening task of having to communicate with a severely limited language code, and promoting learner autonomy.

4. Encouraging positive retrospective self-evaluation by promoting adaptive attributions, providing effective and encouraging feedback, increasing learner satisfaction, and offering grades in a motivational manner.

Dörnyei (2001) developed a schematic representation of the MTP framework which outlines the motivational strategies that teachers can employ at each stage of language teaching. Please see the original publication (Dörnyei, 2001, p. 29) for a visual representation of the framework.

Numerous studies have investigated the use and effects of motivational strategies in L2 learning from the time the strategies were put forward. I have categorized those studies which are relevant to the current study according to the topics they address. The categories include the use of motivational strategies in different cultures, learning contexts, and by teachers with varying levels of training and teaching experience.

2.4.2 Motivational Strategies in Different Cultures and Learning Contexts

Dörnyei's own doctoral students were among the first researchers to empirically investigate the validity of the MTP framework in different cultures and learning contexts (e.g., Cheng & Dörnyei, 2007; Guilloteaux & Dörnyei, 2008). Cheng and Dörnyei (2007) conducted a study in Taiwan with 387 EFL teachers from elementary to university levels of teaching. The goal of the study was to find out teachers' perceptions of the importance of motivational strategies in language teaching and to examine their frequency of use of those strategies. Data was collected by means of self-report questionnaires which contained 48 motivational strategies. Findings revealed that some motivational strategies seemed universally applicable, for instance, *displaying appropriate teacher behaviors*, while some were culture specific, e.g., *creating learner autonomy*. Further, that the culture specific strategies were determined by the preferences of individual teachers as well as the nature of the school's curriculum and the educational culture.

Another study was conducted by Guilloteaux and Dörnyei (2008), wherein they observed 40 junior high school classes of English to Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) in South Korea. Their goals were to investigate teachers' motivational teaching practices and the relationship between those practices and students' motivated behavior. The researchers developed three instruments for data collection: The Motivational Orientation of Language Teaching (MOLT)

classroom observation scheme, the post-lesson teacher evaluation scale, and the learners'

motivational state questionnaire (these instruments are discussed in detail in section 2.4.6).

Results showed that teachers' use of motivational strategies correlated rather highly with

learners' motivated behavior (Pearson's r = .61). Also, they found differences in motivational

teaching practices among teachers, even within the same school indicating that the use of

motivational strategies may significantly be determined by individual teacher characteristics.

Many other researchers have since investigated the implementation of motivational

teaching practices in various cultures and contexts (Lamb, 2017). Papi and Abdollahzadeh

(2012) replicated the study by Guilloteaux and Dörnyei (2008) in an Iranian high school context.

Beyond replication, they also investigated the relationship between learners' motivated behavior

and their L2 selves as outlined in the L2 Motivational Self System (L2MSS) framework

(Dörnyei, 2005; 2009). Data was collected by means of the MOLT observation scheme and the

post-lesson teacher evaluation scale as in Guilloteaux and Dörnyei (2008), but the learners'

motivational state questionnaire was replaced with one that inquired on learners' motivation

based on the L2MSS framework. Their results revealed a strong relationship between teachers'

motivational teaching practices and learners' motivated behavior. No significant relationship was

found between learners' sources of motivation (e.g., ideal L2 self) and their motivated behavior

in the classroom.

Another study was conducted in Iran by Tavakoli et al. (2018). They investigated the

perceived importance and frequency of use of motivational strategies in the Iranian EFL context.

They aimed to find out if indeed culture affected strategy choice and use among the Iranian EFL

teachers. The researchers collected data by means of questionnaires and follow-up interviews.

Results also revealed that some strategies are universal while some are culture specific, a finding

similar to Cheng and Dörnyei (2007). Through interviews with participants, it was revealed that the Iranian culture exalted the teacher and that, therefore, classroom instruction was teacher centered. For instance, the low implementation of the *creating learner autonomy* strategy was attributed to the country's culture. Similarly, some teachers ranked some strategies as important but implemented them less in class because the culture simply didn't reinforce such practices. Interview data also revealed that limited resources, large classrooms, and other external institutional factors also affected implementation of motivational strategies. The researchers concluded that culture indeed influenced teachers' use of motivational strategies.

In a similar vein, Wong (2014) investigated the use of motivational strategies by secondary school EFL teachers in Hong Kong. Their goals were to find out what strategies the teachers mainly used and how effective their teaching practices were in motivating language learners. Wong collected data in two phases using teacher surveys and interviews, lesson observations using a MOLT-like scale, and a learner survey. Wong found that only 6 of the 25 strategies outlined in the MOLT scheme were valued by the teachers and considered effective by learners. Wong also found a variation in which strategies individual teachers preferred.

Sugita et al. (2014) investigated the use of motivational strategies in EFL classes in a university in Japan. Their goal was to investigate the relationship between frequency of use of certain motivational strategies and learners' motivated behavior during one semester. The researchers selected five classes taught by the same teacher and they compared the motivation levels of learners in different proficiency levels. Data were collected from teachers' self-reporting of how much they used the 17 targeted motivational strategies and learners' evaluation of the effects of each motivational strategy on their own motivation. Results revealed that strategies such as *starting the class on time* correlated significantly and consistently with

learners' motivation throughout the semester, while some strategies only correlated at certain times and some did not at all correlate with learners' motivated behavior, suggesting that learners' goals may determine which strategies they value in each instance. Further, their study found that the effectiveness of motivational strategies in impacting upon learners' motivated behavior depended on learners' proficiency levels and their pre-existing motivation.

Studies of the same kind have also been conducted in Saudi Arabia. Moskovsky et al. (2012) examined impact of motivational strategies on learners' trait and state motivation. The researchers purposefully selected strategies that they thought were contextually appropriate such as *being kind and caring to learners, selecting learning tasks of varying structures and modes,* and *using the target L2 more in class*. Participants were teenage and young adult male students and their EFL teachers. The researchers used a quasi-experimental design where the experimental groups were exposed to motivational teaching practices for eight weeks while the control group was taught following traditional methods. Results revealed that the use of motivational strategies indeed increased learners' motivated behavior (state motivation) as observed in the experimental group.

Another study of a similar kind was conducted by Alrabai (2016). He investigated which motivational strategies were commonly used by EFL teachers in Saudi Arabia and whether the use of those strategies increased learners' motivated behavior and L2 achievement. Alrabai also used a quasi-experimental design where teachers in the experimental groups were trained to implement six motivational strategies and those in the control group used traditional teaching methods. Classes were then observed over a 10-week course and data were collected using a MOLT-like scale. Learners in both groups also completed motivation surveys at the beginning and the end of the course. Results showed a notable increase in motivation levels of learners in

the experimental group but not in the control group. Additionally, that increased learner motivation led to higher L2 achievement.

In summary, the findings of these studies revealed the following three points. First, motivational teaching practices indeed increase learners' motivated behavior. Secondly, the use of motivational strategies can vary across individual teachers and across cultures such that teachers in various cultures value or utilize certain strategies more than others. And third, factors external to the classroom such as the availability of resources can also affect the implementation of strategies in the classroom. In the current study, I aimed to highlight which strategies the four African teachers used, and why. That is, I investigated whether the teachers' cultures influenced their teaching practices and by extension, their students' motivation levels. Even though these teachers are currently residing in the United States, which is home to most of their learners, they were all born, raised, and educated in cultures and contexts different from those of their foreign language learners, and that could mean that they each value different motivational strategies.

2.4.3 Motivational Strategies, Teacher Training, and Teaching Experience

Researchers have pointed out that the level of training and teaching experience of a teacher affects their teaching practices in the classroom. Dörnyei and Guilloteaux (2008) maintained that the implementation of motivational strategies is directly tied to teaching practices and thus, teacher training. They proposed that teacher training workshops should incorporate training on how to implement motivational strategies in the classroom as that could bear fruit in increasing and sustaining learners' motivation.

Saydee (2014) also found that appropriate teacher training impacts positively upon teacher beliefs and practices in the classroom. He found that a well-structured teacher training workshop was able to overpower some preconceived beliefs and practices about language

teaching that some teachers held onto strongly prior to training. Two other studies reviewed in the previous section (Alrabai, 2016; Moskovsky et al., 2012), which followed quasi-experimental designs to investigate motivational strategy use in Saudi Arabia, also found positive results of teacher training. Teachers in the experimental groups who were trained briefly on how to use motivational strategies in the classroom increased learners' motivated behavior significantly. In that vein, with the current study, I aimed to investigate whether the implementation of motivational strategies by teachers of African languages varied with their levels of training or experience teaching foreign languages in the United States.

2.4.4 Training of LCTL Teachers in the United States

African languages taught in the United States belong to the category of the Less Commonly Taught Languages (LCTLs). Enrollments in LCTLs in the United States have shown remarkable growth since 2001 (MLA report, 2009). However, this increase in enrollment in LCTLs was not met by adequately trained and qualified teachers and this has adversely affected LCTL enrollment and retention nationwide (Sanatullova-Allison, 2008). As Palmer (2005) argued, an increase in enrollment in any foreign language should go hand in hand with an increase in teacher training to offer quality instruction. Failure to do that impacts negatively on the language programs. Brown (2009) found that LCTL learners dropped out in large numbers and that poor the retention of learners meant very few students reached the advanced levels in these languages.

Research is scarce on the professional development and training needs of teachers of the Less Commonly Taught languages (LCTLs) in the United States. Since the survey by Johnston and Janus (2003), there seems to be no other published study of a similar scope that has assessed the needs of LCTL teachers. Yet, identifying those needs should be the first step towards

addressing them. Johnston and Janus found in-service teacher training on pedagogy to be the largest professional need among LCTL teachers then. Other issues included outdated instructional materials and limited advocacy for LCTL teachers in the workplace. They wrote that one commonality among LCTLs was marginalization and lack of resources and support, a finding similar to that of Brown (2009). More recent studies (e.g., Kim, 2017; Wang, 2014) pointed out that those issues were still unresolved.

As new teaching approaches are proposed, the need for technology use in language classrooms is increasing, and the contexts and needs of language learners are changing, von Hoene (2017) asserted that it is paramount that LCTL teachers keep up with these dynamics by staying up to date in their pedagogical skills. Besides, research findings have shown that teacher performance and language learning experience directly impact students' motivation to learn a language (Dörnyei, 2009). That implies that teacher training is indispensable in nurturing learner motivation and consequently, success in language learning. When students lack or lose the motivation to learn a language, the enrollment and retention rates in that language could drop as seems to be the case with most LCTLs. Sanatullova-Allison (2008) wrote that one of the reasons for low enrollment and retention rates among many LCTLs is because "the expansion of course offerings in LCTLs is not matched by an accompanying acceleration in the amount or quality of LCTL teacher preparation" (p. 89).

Some LCTL teachers hardly use pedagogical technologies in their classrooms even as technology is continually becoming a necessity in language classes. Winke et al. (2010) conducted a comparative study investigating technology use among LCTL and CTLs in the United States. They found that LCTL instructors used less technology in their instruction and that as a result, LCTL learners were also underprepared to use technology in language learning

compared to learners of the CTLs. Teachers of LCTLs have also been found to possess varying levels of knowledge regarding online language instruction, with some having very limited knowledge on the medium (Van Gorp et al., 2019). Since language resources are becoming more digitized in the current world, especially since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic (see Gacs et al., 2020) limited ability to use technology in language learning could place teachers and, thus, learners at a disadvantage to explore the available digital language resources out of necessity by themselves. In the current study, I investigated the effects of the virtual medium of instruction on the teachers' use of motivational teaching practices. This was important to the research generally, and specifically because—as I explain in more detail next—this research study occurred during the COVID-19 pandemic.

2.4.5 Teaching Remotely During the COVID-19 Pandemic

> In Spring 2020, teachers around the globe were suddenly forced to teach online, learners forced to learn online. Emotions ran high, lawsuits were filed. Yet, it is important to acknowledge that this crisis-prompted remote language teaching is not comparable to well-designed and carefully planned online language education. (Gacs et al., 2020)

This quote by Gacs and colleagues succinctly stated the situation in which the COVID-19 pandemic thrust teachers, learners, and their institutions. They noted that many language teachers were caught unawares by the change. "At some institutions, faculty were given just a few hours' notice, at other institutions they had a few weeks to prepare to move all instruction remotely" (p.381). Gacs and colleagues warned that the sudden switch to the virtual platform of teaching should not be confused with online teaching which is often well planned and designed. Instead, they referred to it as "crisis-prompted remote teaching" (p. 380).

Gacs and colleagues listed some of the difficulties that most teachers experienced with the switch to remote teaching such as "limited capacity for training, minimal, if any, access to appropriate technological resources for instructors and teaching assistants, no access to campus facilities, increased fully online workload with limited personal learning spaces, and the emotional and financial trauma of this pandemic" (p. 381). They said that the reason why they as a department were able to switch to remote teaching quite easily at Michigan State University was because they had received significant institutional support through their college dean earlier and already had established online language courses. Regardless, they said, their newly transitioned courses due to the pandemic were not as organized as the online courses they had built earlier, thus pointing out the difference between hastily created remote courses and the well-designed online courses. Therefore, they felt the need to lessen their expectations of what they themselves and their students could achieve.

The key takeaways from Gacs et al., (2020) were that (1) the virtual environment in which most teachers have been teaching since March 2020, although often referred to as "online," should be distinguished from the planned online teaching. (2) Institutional support is necessary for teachers to be prepared to teach in online or virtual platforms, and (3) the levels of success from the pandemic-prompted remote classes may be lower than those of face-to-face classes or the well-designed online classes. These findings are relevant to the current study whose participants engaged in teaching and learning in the pandemic-prompted remote classes. It should be noted that the participants in this study also referred to their virtual classes as "online," so the three words "remote," "virtual," and "online" have been used interchangeably.

2.4.6 Data Collection Methods in Previous Studies on Motivational Strategies.

It is evident from the peer-reviewed studies included in this literature review that quantitative research methods are more common in research on motivational strategies. In those studies, data collection was mainly done through self-report questionnaires and classroom observations aimed to collect numerical data. Yet, purely quantitative methods have been termed insufficient in addressing the complexity of the motivation construct (Ushioda, 2013). Ushioda recommended the use of qualitative methods in investigating motivation but at the same time, the distinct epistemological stances behind quantitative and qualitative methods may be a reason for some researchers to be unwilling to switch from their preferred epistemology. For instance, a quantitative researcher may be reluctant to conduct qualitative research if they do not believe in the validity of qualitative research. Guilloteaux and Dörnyei (2008) attempted to bridge the existing gap between qualitative and quantitative methods by developing the MOLT scheme that allowed for collection of quantitative data during classroom observation, which is reviewed in detail in the following section.

2.4.7 The Motivational Orientation of Language Teaching (MOLT) Observation Scheme

Guilloteaux and Dörnyei (2008) developed the Motivational Orientation of Language Teaching (MOLT) classroom observation scheme to assess the motivational teaching practices of South Korean EFL teachers and learners' motivational behaviors. The MOLT scheme borrows from the Communicative Orientation of Language Teaching (COLT) framework by Spada and Fröhlich (1995) and the Motivational Teaching Practices (MTP) framework by Dörnyei (2001). To develop the MOLT scheme, these researchers selected 25 observable motivational strategies from Dörnyei's (2001) MTP framework (see Guilloteaux & Dörnyei, 2008, p. 62). Also, these researchers included in the MOLT scheme three observable learner motivational behaviors.

These included learners' level of *attention*, *participation,* and *volunteering* in class (see

Guilloteaux & Dörnyei, 2008, p. 76).

The MOLT observation scheme was used to collect numerical data by tallying the

frequency of occurrence of motivational teaching practices and learner motivated behaviors in

the classroom. According to Guilloteaux and Dörnyei (2008), the scheme allowed for a live

documentation of data on a minute-by-minute basis as a lesson progressed (see Guilloteaux &

Dörnyei, 2008, p. 76).

In addition to the MOLT scheme, Guilloteaux and Dörnyei (2008) developed the post-

lesson teacher evaluation scale to collect additional data that would boost the reliability of the

MOLT scheme data. The scale consisted of nine "semantic-differential items" (see Guilloteaux

& Dörnyei, 2008, p. 77) which were expressed using bi-polar adjectives such as *radiates*

enthusiasm – unenthusiastic. According to them, this scale was useful in capturing the less

concrete teacher behaviors such as clarity of expression, or levels of kindness or enthusiasm. She

used the scale to collect quantitative data on teacher motivation-related behaviors. For the

descriptions of the components of the scale as well as the actual scale, please see the original

paper (Guilloteaux & Dörnyei, 2008).

Since the development of these classroom observation instruments, many other

researchers have adapted and used them to investigate motivational strategies in various contexts

(e.g., Alrabai, 2016; Papi & Abdollahzadeh, 2012; Wong, 2014). While Guilloteaux and Dörnyei

(2008) prepared these instruments for the collection of quantitative data, the instruments have

been adapted in qualitative research as well (e.g., Astuti, 2015). Astuti used the MOLT scheme

and the post-lesson teacher evaluation scale as guides when collecting qualitative data on the use

of motivational strategies by EFL teachers in Indonesia. According to her, these schemes clearly

highlighted which motivational teaching practices, teacher behaviors, and learner motivated behaviors to look for during classroom observations and in taking field notes. She added that the schemes helped to keep the observations structured which increased accuracy and minimized any possible bias in data collection.

2.5 The Current Study

With the current study, I investigated the motivational teaching practices of teachers of two African languages in the United States and their learners' motivated behavior in the classroom. Previous researchers on this topic have found generally positive effects of motivational teaching practices on learners' motivated behavior (e.g., Guilloteaux & Dörnyei, 2008; Papi & Abdollahzadeh, 2012; Sugita et al., 2014). These researchers conducted their studies in different contexts, cultures, and with learners of different L1s, and results have converged to indicate that indeed variations exist based on these factors. It was not known yet how exactly these findings applied to the context of African languages taught in the United States. As evident in the literature reviewed above, all of the researchers whose work I overviewed investigated L2 English learners. In most cases, teachers of African languages belong to different cultural backgrounds from their learners, which may be a novel situation in research on the implementation of motivational strategies. It is insightful to find out how these African language teachers implement motivational strategies in their classrooms, how the strategies they use impact their learners' motivated behavior, and most importantly, whether teachers' cultures and teaching experiences play a role in influencing their strategy choice and use. This current qualitative study makes a significant contribution to the research on motivational strategy use, which has previously been mostly explored using quantitative methods

that often leave out important details such as the perspectives of the participants on this construct.

2.6 Research Questions

1. What motivational teaching practices do select instructors of two African languages is the United States implement in their classrooms?

2. What are the perspectives of learners on those motivational teaching practices and their impact on their motivated behavior?

3. a) Do the teaching experiences and cultural backgrounds of the instructors influence their motivational teaching practices in their classrooms?

   b) What are the effects of the virtual medium of instruction on teachers' motivational teaching practices?

CHAPTER 3. METHODOLOGY

I begin this chapter with a discussion of various research paradigms. Next, I present the

research design for the current study and the reasons why it is appropriate for answering the research

questions. Then, I present information about the research context, participants, and data collection

and analysis procedures. Lastly, I discuss my role as a researcher, the validity of the study, and

ethical considerations.

3.1 Research Paradigm

A research paradigm characterizes a researcher's views and understanding of the world

surrounding the research problem. "It is a set of basic beliefs that guide a researcher in

conducting research" (Guba & Lincoln, 1994 as cited in Astuti, 2015, p. 52). Two main types of

research paradigms guide research in education and social research: positivism and

constructivism or interpretivism (Lincoln et al., 2011).

3.1.1 The Positivist Paradigm

This paradigm is based on the belief that reality is objective and that knowledge and truth

are absolute (Creswell, 2009; Lincoln et al., 2011). As such, positivists opt for quantitative

research methods which are minimally affected by human bias (Lincoln et al., 2011). In

quantitative research, hypotheses are proposed beforehand, and the researcher sets out to test

those hypotheses using pre-designed instruments (Creswell, 2009). Numerical data are obtained.

Quantitative methods are commonly used in Second Language Acquisition (SLA)

research (Gass, 2009). They allow for investigation of large learner samples and production of

statistically generalizable results and theories. However, the dominance of quantitative methods

in SLA research has been criticised by researchers who argue that some SLA concepts are too

complex to be reduced to mere numerical answers (e.g., Creswell, 2009; De Costa et al., 2017;

Loewen & Plonsky, 2015). Loewen and Plonsky (2015) note that "there is nothing inherently

numerical about motivation" (p. 117), implying the insufficiency of quantitative methods in measuring the construct. Guilloteaux and Dörnyei (2008) also wrote that quantitative data on L2 motivation, often obtained by means of surveys, may not be rich enough to adequately explain learners' motivational behaviors.

3.1.2 The Constructivist Paradigm

This paradigm is based on the belief that knowledge and truth are socially constructed (Richards, 2003) and that reality changes over time and across contexts (Bryman, 2008). As such, constructivists focus their attention to the multiple perspectives and experiences that research participants bring to the phenomenon being studied. The goal for constructivists is to address a research problem from the participants' point of view (Lincoln et al., 2011). Such research is qualitative in nature and collects non-numerical data such as through observations or interviews with participants (Loewen & Plonsky, 2015).

The fact that qualitative research prioritizes the viewpoints of participants is one main reason why it is largely advocated for in SLA research (De Costa et al., 2017). It allows the researcher to capture more accurately the experiences, perspectives and behaviors of participants compared to quantitative methods (De Costa et al., 2017; Lincoln et al., 2011; Ushioda, 2013). Qualitative research methods also strongly capture contextual differences (Lincoln et al., 2011). Unlike quantitative methods which focus on numerical data, qualitative data are often in descriptive text. Analysis of qualitative data involves identifying themes from the descriptive texts which then allows the researcher to obtain an in-depth understanding of the construct being studied.

One disadvantage that is mainly associated with qualitative research is that it often involves a small number of participants and that therefore, its results are hardly generalizable to

other contexts (Guilloteaux, 2007). Duff (2014) and Yin (2014) argued that this limitation can be overcome through proper sampling methods where a researcher carefully selects participants that are representative of a population.

3.1.3 Mixed Methods Research

Mixed methods research falls between the positivist and constructivist paradigms. According to Loewen and Plonsky (2015), mixed methods research "combines different paradigms and research traditions in an effort to arrive at a more complete understanding of the object under investigation" (p. 117). They added that through mixed methods research, a researcher is able to objectively analyze quantitative data and to obtain natural data, which allows for an in-depth understanding of the phenomena being studied.

Mixed methods research has recently gained popularity in applied linguistics and SLA research because of its ability to utilize the positive attributes from both quantitative and qualitative methods (De Costa et al., 2017). However, Loewen and Plonsky (2015) pointed out one major challenge with mixed methods research: that it combines quantitative and qualitative approaches which belong to "distinct epistemological stances that may be difficult to reconcile" (p. 118). Loewen and Plonsky also highlighted the possible challenge of integrating quantitative and qualitative results in a study noting that it "may even lead to findings that are opaque compared to those that are based on just one type of data" (p.118).

3.2 The Research Design of This Study

In the current study, I examined the practices, behaviors, and perspectives of language teachers and learners with regard to motivation in the language classroom. A qualitative research design was best-suited to answer the research questions because, as De Costa et al. (2017) noted, qualitative research allows the researcher to obtain a deeper understanding of the factors which affect

language learning in the classroom including the surrounding dynamics. A case study methodology adequately addresses the research questions for the reasons outlined in the section that follows.

3.2.1 Case Study Methodology

Case study research involves studying a case in-depth "to provide an understanding of individuals' experiences, issues, insights, developmental pathways, or performance within a particular linguistic, social, or educational context" (Duff, 2014, p. 233). Case study research provides a contextualized understanding of the phenomenon being studied (De Costa et al., 2019). It allows for collection of varied forms of data that can then be triangulated for a more accurate understanding of the research problem (Duff, 2012, 2014). Case study research in applied linguistics has contributed to theory development as well as generation of new perspectives regarding language learning (Duff, 2014). It is a suitable methodology for the current study in which I seek to examine the practices and perspectives of language teachers and learners with regard to motivation in the language classroom.

The current study is a multiple, interpretive case study. That is, it involved several cases which were examined qualitatively (Creswell, 2007, 2009; Duff, 2014). Following an interpretive approach allowed me to collect descriptive data which I used to give a thick description of each case and their teaching context. Stake (2008) wrote that such thick descriptions are essential in the interpretation of the results. I included multiple cases to collect a rich variety of data to address each research question. Besides, a case study methodology allowed me to collect multiple forms of data, to perform triangulation, and single case as well as cross-case analysis of data. Creswell (2009) wrote that these attributes of case study research allow for a variety of ways of addressing the research problem.

There are various types of case study research and the type of research questions to be answered determine the type of case study to use (Yin, 2014). For instance, an exploratory case study seeks to uncover novel information while a descriptive case study aims to describe a phenomenon. The current study aimed to explain the practices and perspectives of participants and is therefore an explanatory case study (Yin, 2014). It aimed to answer "how" and "why" research questions. For instance, *how* instructors implement motivational strategies and *why* they use them.

This study adheres to the social-constructivist and sociocultural orientations (Duff, 2014), as through it I sought to examine the connection between teaching practices and learning behaviors. Duff (2014) noted that a social-constructivist orientation recognizes that meaning is co-constructed through person-to-person interactions as well as through interacting with "the wider social, material, and symbolic world" (p. 236). In the current study, I examined the practices of language teachers and the behaviors of language learners in the classroom, and the factors that influenced those practices and behaviors as revealed through the perspectives of the participants themselves.

As mentioned earlier, case study research allows for collection of various forms of data. I collected data by means of classroom observations, stimulated recalls, and semi-structured interviews, in order to address each research question sufficiently. Those data collection methods are described in detail in section 3.4.

3.3 Context and Participants

3.3.1 Research Context

The research context for qualitative research should be purposefully selected to ensure relevance to the research problem at hand (Duff, 2014). The research context for the current

study was public universities in the United States which offer African language courses. A description of each teacher participant's school is included in this study.

3.3.2 Selection of Cases (Teacher Participants)

Duff (2014) recommended between four and six cases for doctoral research noting that it allows room for adequate description of each case. I recruited four instructors of two African languages guided by the following two criteria. First, the African language taught by the instructor. My initial goal was to have each case teaching a different African language. However, it appeared that narrowing down to two African languages and selecting two teachers of each language would yield stronger results as that allowed for comparison. I therefore settled on two African languages: Swahili and Zulu and selected two teachers of each language to participate in the study.

My second goal was to recruit teachers with varying lengths of experience teaching an African language in the United States as information on that was key in answering the third research question on the effects of teaching experience on strategy use. In line with that criterion, two of the four teacher participants have taught an African language in the United States for more than a decade, while the other two have taught for less than that. All four of them were full-time employees in their institutions. The teachers were all born, raised, and partly educated in different African countries, and had moved to the United States as adults to pursue graduate education. A thick description of each case is given in the results section.

The procedure for recruiting these participants was as follows. I reached out to potential teacher participants by means of an email sent through the president of the African Language Teachers Association (ALTA). In the email, I asked the interested instructors to email me directly and indicate their willingness to participate. My plan was to then select participants that

met the case selection criteria outlined earlier. However, I only received one response. Therefore, I reached out to some instructors whom I knew personally to seek their help in recruiting suitable participants, and they linked me with three more participants. Table 1 shows a summary of the teacher participants' demographics.

Table 1. A summary of the teacher participants' demographics

	Case 1: Sebi	**Case 2: George**	**Case 3: Frank**	**Case 4: Joshua**
FL taught	Zulu	Zulu	Swahili	Swahili
Class level	Year 2 (intermediate)	Year 1 (beginners)	Year 1 (beginners)	Year 1 (beginners)
Lesson length	1 hour	50 minutes	55 minutes	50 minutes
FL teaching experience in the U.S.	3 years	Over 10 years	6 years	Over 10 years
Age	Unknown	51 years	35 years	57 years
Home country	South Africa	Zimbabwe	Tanzania	Kenya

3.3.3 Student Participants

I recruited willing student participants from the classes of the participating instructors. Since none of the four instructors had more than six students in their class, I accepted all willing students. The minimum I got was one student from one class and the maximum was three students from each of the other three classes. The student participants are from the beginning and intermediate instructional levels. Table 2 shows a summary of the student participants' demographics.

Table 2. A Summary of the student participants' demographics

Student	Age (years)	FL Teacher	Reason for taking FL
Lindah	20	Sebi	To do summer study abroad in South Africa.
Lenny	21	Sebi	To connect more with their South African heritage.
Marion	21	Sebi	To communicate with people in South Africa, where half of their family is.
Claire	21	George	To study and pursue African American and African related research in her graduate degree
Eve	21	Frank	Fun
Serah	25	Frank	To get the African Studies certificate and they would also like to travel to East Africa.
Meghan	20	Frank	They would like to travel to East Africa someday.
Timothy	20	Joshua	To use it when working on clean energy development and wildlife conservation in East Africa.
Amanda	20	Joshua	To be more connected and knowledgeable about the continent of Africa.
Jacinta	21	Joshua	Unknown

3.4 Data Collection

A case study methodology allows for collection of multiple forms of data from each case. As mentioned previously, I collected data for this study by means of classroom observations, stimulated recall, and semi-structured interviews with teachers and learners.

3.4.1 Classroom Observations

Nunan and Bailey (2009) described classroom observation as a technique for data collection where the researcher watches, listens, or records activities in the classroom and documents them for analysis. It was a suitable technique for the current study because it allowed me to observe participants' practices and behavior in a naturalistic classroom setting. Through classroom observations, a researcher is able to capture any discrepancy between the practices that teachers say they implement in class and what they actually do (Astuti, 2015). In the current

study, I was able to capture through observations how these African language instructors implement motivational strategies when teaching, and the extent to which learners display motivated behaviors in the classroom.

I conducted classroom observations using the following two tools as guides: The Motivational Orientation of Language Teaching (MOLT) scheme and the post-lesson teacher evaluation form (Guilloteaux, 2007; Guilloteaux & Dörnyei, 2008). The MOLT scheme is important in this study because it outlines which motivational strategies and motivated behaviors to look for in the classroom. Guilloteaux (2007) used the MOLT scheme to collect numerical data by tallying the frequency of occurrence of motivational strategies and motivated behaviors in the classroom. In contrast, I used the MOLT scheme as a guide for recording observational notes.

In addition to the MOLT scheme, Guilloteaux (2007) developed the post-lesson teacher evaluation scale which they used to collect numerical data on the less concrete teacher motivation-related behaviors. I used the scale in the current study as a guide for which teacher behaviors to look for during the observation. For instance, I took notes on whether the teacher was enthusiastic in class and whether they were kind and friendly to the students. Descriptions and images of the MOLT scheme and the post-lesson teacher evaluation scale are included in the appendix section, Appendices A, B, C, D, and E.

I observed each class thrice and videotaped all but the lessons of one instructor (Frank) whose university had prohibited the recording of lessons. For that one instructor, I took extensive observational notes during the classroom observations. Then, I reviewed and annotated the notes immediately after each observation to ensure I captured all the important information. I coded the notes from all three observations soon after the final observation. I analyzed all three

observations of each case to maximize the capturing of motivational teaching practices. I observed each lesson from the beginning to the end. I used the video recordings from the other three classes in the stimulated recall sessions (but not with the one teacher). Where possible, videotaping the lessons allowed me to actively focus on what was happening in the classroom and then take detailed field notes later.

3.4.2 Stimulated Recall with Teachers

Stimulated recall is a data gathering technique in which the participant reviews a recorded event of themselves engaged in a task and explains what their thought process was at the time of the task (Loewen & Plonsky, 2015; Nunan & Bailey, 2009). This technique captures the unobservable internal thoughts of the participant that could have influenced their behavior. As the participant recounts the event, the researcher can access their inner thoughts and gain insight as to why they acted in those particular ways (Gass & Mackey, 2000). In the current study, I intended to capture teachers' reasoning behind their actions relating to motivational strategy use. I conducted these sessions with each case individually. For the three teachers whose classes I videotaped, I played pre-selected sections of the video recording to the teacher and had them explain what their thoughts were at those outstanding instances. For Frank, whose class I did not record, I prepared a list of questions for him from the observation notes and emailed them to him. He responded and requested to answer the questions orally. Therefore, we met via Zoom where I asked him the questions and he responded orally. I recorded the session as with the other teachers. The stimulated recall data supplemented the observational notes by providing a deeper insight into the teacher's actions in the lesson including factors that influenced their practices. The data were useful in interpreting the teacher's practices in class and in making more accurate conclusions about it.

Nunan and Bailey (2009) recommended that stimulated recalls be conducted immediately after the observation to capture the participants' thoughts effectively. In line with that, I conducted the stimulated recall sessions soon after observing the classroom, within the range of one week. I recorded the stimulated recall sessions for analysis.

3.4.3 Stimulated Recall with Learners

I conducted stimulated recall sessions with learners within one week after the classroom observations as well. I conducted the sessions with individual students and, as with the three teachers, I played preselected sections of the video recordings to their students and asked them to describe what their thought processes were at that time. For Frank's students, I prepared a separate list of questions for each of them from my observation notes. I emailed them on the day of the final observation and asked them to respond to the questions and send the document back to me. I received all responses by the fourth day since the first observation. The goal was to obtain in-depth information regarding learners' reasoning behind their behaviors in the recorded lesson. For example, if a learner was not actively engaged in a part of the recorded lesson, I asked them why they were not engaged at that particular moment. Through their description of their thoughts back then, I was able to gain an understanding of what was distracting the student. That is, whether the distractor was within the realm of the classroom and thus, something that the teacher could have controlled with a certain strategy, or whether it was something beyond the teacher's control (such as a learner being unwell and thus unable to stay focused in class). As the Douglas Fir Group (2016) noted, language learning is affected by both internal and external factors, some of which are beyond the teacher's control. The sessions were audio recorded for analysis.

3.4.4 Semi-Structured Interviews

Semi-structured interviews are a common technique of data collection in qualitative research (De Costa et al., 2017). This technique requires that the researcher asks open ended questions that allow the participant to freely explain their perspectives on the phenomenon under study (Johnson & Christensen, 2014). Semi-structured interviews are guided by predetermined questions and the researcher can ask follow-up questions to probe further on specific aspects (Loewen & Plonsky, 2015). I conducted semi-structured interviews with teachers to elicit information on their teaching experiences and cultural backgrounds and whether those have any influence on their motivational teaching practices. I developed interview questions specifically for this study basing on the existing literature on factors that affect the implementation of motivational strategies (see Appendix A). Previous studies found that the context (e.g., Guilloteaux & Dörnyei, 2008), culture (e.g., Tavakoli et al, 2018), and the level of training or teaching experience (Saydee, 2014) affect teacher practices in the classroom including their use of motivational strategies. In the current study, teacher interview data addressed the research question on the roles of teaching experiences and cultural backgrounds in the implementation of motivational strategies. The semi-structured interview took place immediately after the stimulated recall session with each teacher. The semi-structured interviews and the stimulated recall sessions both took place in one sitting for three teachers. For the fourth one, there was a break in between, but both sessions took place in one day. The semi-structured interview sessions took between one to one and a half hours each. The sessions were audio-recorded.

Also, I conducted semi-structured interviews with students to seek an in-depth understanding of their motivation-related behaviors and their perspectives about a motivating

language classroom (see Appendix B for questions). However, those data were not used in this study as the stimulated recall data were sufficient to answer the research questions.

3.5 Data Collection Procedure

The status of restrictions on travel and physical interaction due to the COVID-19 pandemic influenced my data collection procedure. I collected all data for this study through Zoom, an online video conferencing platform. Before I began data collection, each case filled out a brief online background questionnaire in which I gathered their demographic information and details about their classes (see Appendix C). Then, I briefed each of them about the study and sought their help to announce to their students about the study and to ask them to participate. Thereafter, we scheduled the times to observe the classes. I also used that time to schedule times to conduct stimulated recall sessions and semi-structured interviews. Consent forms for each form of data that were to be collected were included in the demographics survey and participants signed them prior to data collection.

I briefed student participants as well before collecting data on what the study was about. I assured them of the confidentiality of their data and that it would be used only for the purpose of this study. They all completed a background questionnaire (see Appendix D) in which they also indicated consent to participate in the study. For those students who did not agree to participate in this study, their teachers informed them about the study as well, including the fact that I would visit and observe their classrooms, and the need to record the lessons for later analyses. Those students were assured that their data would not be used in the study.

I used English to communicate with all participants because other than the Swahili-speaking participants, English was the only common language between me and the participants.

Besides, all the cases were proficient English speakers as that is usually a requirement for foreign language teachers in the United States.

3.6 Data Analysis Procedure

First, I prepared and coded the field notes from each classroom observation. I identified instances of motivational strategy use by the teacher and motivational behaviors displayed by learners. Next, I transcribed and coded the stimulated recall recordings for each teacher and their learners, and I triangulated that with the observation data. Then, I transcribed individual teacher interviews and coded them to identify emerging themes. In presenting the data, I first analyzed data for each single case and connected that with their learners' data. Then, I performed cross-case analysis to connect all the data.

I used Otter (https://otter.ai), an online transcribing tool to initially transcribe the data, which I then reviewed and corrected. Then, I used the MAXQDA (https://www.maxqda.com) software to code the data. Data coding and analysis involved a multi-step process (Creswell 2002; Ivankova, 2004; Saldaña, 2015). First, I segmented and labelled each transcript by assigning descriptive codes to all relevant information. Then, I reviewed the codes, regrouped them, and assigned new labels as necessary. In the third step, I organized the codes in each transcript into themes guided by the research questions. After single case analyses, I performed cross-case analyses for teachers and learners. Cross-case analysis involves "the comparison of commonalities and difference in the events, activities, and processes that are the units of analyses in case studies" (Khan & VanWynsberghe, 2008, p. 2). Therefore, I connected all the data in a discussion of findings. Table 3 presents a summary of the forms of data that addressed each research question.

Table 3. Research questions and the data that addresses them

Research Question	Form of Data Collected
1. What motivational teaching practices do select instructors of two African languages is the United States implement in their classrooms?	• Classroom observations • Stimulated recalls with teachers
2. What are the perspectives of learners on those motivational teaching practices and their impact on their motivated behavior?	• Classroom observations • Stimulated recalls with learners
3. a) Do the teaching experiences and cultural backgrounds of the instructors influence their motivational teaching practices in their classrooms?	• Semi-structured interviews with teachers
3. b) What are the effects of the virtual medium of instruction on teachers' motivational teaching practices?	• Classroom observations • Semi-structured interviews with teachers

3.7 Researcher Reflexivity and Positionality

Creswell (2009) wrote that the researcher is the instrument of the study in qualitative research and that they must acknowledge their own biases when collecting and analyzing data in order to present an accurate final product. I am a teacher of an African language in the United States myself. This means that I am somewhat aware of some of the practices and experiences of African language teachers in that context. It is possible that this knowledge could have led to me being biased in interpreting and presenting data in the current study. Creswell recommended that researchers should make purposeful decisions at each stage to address the actual research problem. In line with that, I explained in the earlier sections of this study the criteria and procedures for case selection and data collection. To further limit bias in this study, I performed member checking (Creswell, 2009) wherein I asked participants to review their various transcripts and make any comments or suggest changes. I incorporated their feedback in the final interpretations of the data.

3.8 Ethical Considerations

Every study should be conducted in an ethical manner for results to be valid and reliable. Before conducting the current study, I sought permission from Michigan State University's Institutional Review Board (IRB). I prepared consent forms for each form of data that I intended to collect, and I asked willing participants to sign the forms before I collected data from them. Those students who chose not to participate in this study were not coerced or penalized in any way. Participants were also informed of their right to withdraw from the study at any point before data analysis began. I explained to all participants what this study was about and that their data would be used only for the study and not to evaluate them. I also informed them ahead of time about the amount of time required of them to complete the data collection procedures. That information was included in the consent forms as well. Lastly, I omitted in the data any information that could have identified participants and used pseudonyms instead.

3.9 Validity of the Study

Creswell (2009) wrote that any study whether qualitative or quantitative should address the concept of validity. He noted that validity is achieved through a sound research design that uses appropriate methods to collect and analyze data. Data should address the research questions. Also, Creswell noted that the research design should present adequate details about the procedures followed in each step such that the study is easily replicable. Creswell (2009) proposed three strategies for ensuring validity in qualitative studies. They include thick descriptions, triangulation of data, and member checking. In the current study, I selected data collection methods that result in a thick description of each case. Thick descriptions are suitable for addressing the research questions in this study because the questions inquire on participants' practices, behaviors and perspectives. Secondly, I performed triangulation of the different forms

of data. Triangulation refers to connecting multiple forms of data and using it to answer a research question (Creswell, 2009). For instance, I triangulated stimulated recall data with observational data to boost the accuracy of the interpretations. Lastly, in performing member checking, participants were allowed to make comments and suggest changes, further increasing the accuracy and validity of the data.

3.10 Chapter Summary

I started this chapter by discussing the research paradigms and establishing that the current study is qualitative. I then justified why a qualitative design was the most suitable for this study and I presented details about the case study methodology which I followed in this study. Next, I presented information about the research context and participants. Then, I discussed the various forms of data collection that I used and why each was suitable for the current study. Then, I presented the data collection procedure, data analysis procedure, and information about researcher positionality, ethical considerations, and validity of the study.

CHAPTER 4. RESULTS

In this chapter, I present the results of the four case studies that I examined to answer the following research questions:

1. What motivational teaching practices do select instructors of two African languages in the United States implement in their classrooms?

2. What are the perspectives of learners on those motivational teaching practices and their impacts on their motivated behaviors?

3. a) Do the teaching experiences and cultural backgrounds of the instructors influence their motivational teaching practices in their classrooms?

   b) What are the effects of the virtual medium of instruction on teachers' motivational teaching practices?

This chapter is divided into four sections, one for each case. All four sections follow the same format. For each case, I first present a brief description of the institution in which they were teaching at the time of data collection. Next, I present information on the teacher's background which includes their educational background, cultural background, and learning experience. Then, information on the teacher's training history is followed by their teaching experience. Thereafter, I present the teacher's attributes and practices as observed in the classroom. Lastly, I present other factors that affected the teacher's practices in the classroom. Each section ends with a table summary of the teacher's attributes, teaching practices, and the other factors affecting their teaching practices.

4.1 Case Study 1: Sebi

4.1.1 The School

Sebi teaches Zulu as a foreign language at a large university in the East Coast of the United States. She teaches students from three different universities through a course-sharing program hosted by her institution. Sebi was teaching her courses partly online even before the COVID-19 pandemic forced the universities to switch to virtual teaching. She was relatively new at her university as a newly hired Zulu instructor, and this was her first semester of teaching at the institution. At the time of this interview, Sebi was teaching remotely from South Africa.

4.1.2 Teacher Background

4.1.2.1 Educational Background

Sebi was born and raised in South Africa. She received elementary and high school education in the Eastern Cape, and her undergraduate education in Pretoria, South Africa. She pursued an undergraduate degree in education where she double majored in Zulu and business economics.

She explained that despite being a native speaker of Zulu herself, she chose to major in Zulu in college because she believed that she was destined to be a language teacher. She said that even though her family spoke Zulu at home, she "just felt the need to study it and get the proper structure about the morphology behind it, the lexicon behind it," because she wanted to pursue teaching it.

After completing her undergraduate degree in Pretoria, Sebi received a Fulbright award and joined one university in the United States as a Fulbright Language Teaching Assistant (FLTA) for one year. Thereafter, she received admission to the same university where she taught Zulu while pursuing a master's degree in African languages and literature. After completing her

master's degree in the United States, she returned to South Africa and taught courses in her second major, business economics, until she was hired at the university where she is currently teaching Zulu in the United States.

4.1.2.2 Cultural Background and Learning Experience

Sebi grew up in a multilingual environment. Besides English, she speaks five other languages which are Zulu, Xhosa Sotho, Tswana, and Afrikaans. She said that she learned English and Afrikaans in school as part of the curriculum, and the rest of the languages from home or from interacting with people from different parts of her linguistically diverse country. The linguistic diversity in her country meant that different languages were used for instruction in various parts of the country. The main language of instruction in her part of the country was Xhosa.

Sebi decided to take Zulu classes in college mainly to observe how it was taught. She described those classes as primarily teacher centered with limited interaction between the teacher and students, and between students themselves. She attributed some of those characteristics to school conditions in her country, such as large classes.

> Classes are usually bigger than normal, maybe there are thirty students in a classroom. In the university, even a bigger number than thirty. So, the interaction is there directly with the teacher, but it doesn't cover everyone. So not everybody in that lecture or in that classroom gets to really communicate or practice. (Interview)

She added that her language teachers preferred grammar centered teaching which limited the opportunities for learners to practice speaking in class. Students had to put in their own extra effort if they wanted to communicate in the language.

Here at home, a lot of language classes are just grammar focused. So, if you do get to

learn how to speak, it's through you trying other initiatives, maybe you watch a drama

series, or you watch a TV show, or you watch movies, or you are around people that

speak that language, then you then learn how to communicate. (Interview)

She explained that she was intrigued to learn of other methods of language teaching such as the

Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) approach when she went to study in the United

States. She said, "the first time I learned Communicative Language Teaching was in my post

grad in the United States. That was when I was like, "Oh, so here we don't teach, 'the' is an

article, subject, verb, object." She compared the CLT approach to her Afrikaans classes in South

Africa where grammar instruction guided even their speaking of the language. She said that they

had a structure of how to learn Afrikaans and how to speak Afrikaans properly, that "you start

with the subject, verb, object, time, and all of that."

Sebi cited her culture as another contributing factor to the limited interactions in language

classrooms in South Africa. She explained that interpersonal interactions in her culture were to

an extent guided by age differences.

There is a huge gap when it comes to how the young relate to the old or how the old

relate to the young. And I guess it speaks to a whole lot of other African countries, but we

just have that sense of, "you are older, so I should address you in this way." And when I

speak to you, this is how I should address you. I don't make eye contact, or I do it in such

a subtle way. (Interview)

She added that courteous language such as "yes ma'am," and gestures of respect such as making

a short bend with one knee when saying "thank you" are expected when one is addressing older

people. Even though the expectations and the actions of showing respect varied across the races

and generations in South Africa, she believed that they generally influenced interaction between students and teachers in the school environment. Sebi explained that these kinds of interactions between the young and the old would be transferred to the classroom as well, wherein teachers would expect students to behave in a particular way, and failure to do that could get one in trouble.

> So, the same thing that would happen in your community at home, is the same kind of behavior that you're experiencing in that learning environment, that this person is older than you, so you address them in a certain way, or you do not look at them in a certain way. (Interview)

She added that even though at the university level the age gap restrictions were not as tight and students could be somewhat freer with their professors, that there still were tight boundaries to be observed. She said, "It doesn't get as comfortable as, let's go and have a drink, and maybe we can talk about your thesis or let's go and have pizza. It never gets there." She said that she only observed that extended form of 'liberty' between students and their professors in the United States. According to Sebi, these age-gap differences limited teacher-student interaction because the classroom environment was not conducive enough to allow students to express themselves freely. She shared her own experience, noting that she was scared to go to some classes as a student because she feared her teacher.

> I even remember cases when I've been scared of certain teachers, like even going to their classroom, it just makes me uncomfortable. Like, my heart is racing because I'm just scared of that person. (Interview)

In summary, Sebi questioned the teaching methods and approaches that were embraced by her language teachers in South Africa because she felt that they limited interaction and thus, slowed down the process of language learning.

4.1.3 Teacher Training

Sebi first received practical training to teach Zulu when she studied in the United States. She said that in South Africa, the demand for Zulu instructors was limited and that, therefore, when she did her teaching practicum for her undergraduate degree, she only taught courses in business economics, her second major. When she came to the United States for graduate studies, that was when she started practicing her Zulu teaching skills through the training sessions that her institution offered to language teachers.

> We would have mock lessons, we would do lessons before we even start teaching our classes, whether you are a new lecturer, or you are a TA, then you get to practice, you get to show others, you get to just keep learning. (Interview)

Sebi said that the nice thing about the training sessions she underwent was that she got to see how other people taught other languages. She added that she would learn a new skill every time she attended those training workshops.

> I was learning this whole thing of Communicative Language Teaching. It was the first time I had learned that. Some of the workshops that I attended were very educational with teaching methodologies. (Interview)

Besides the internal training workshops at her university, Sebi shared that the university would also pay part of the fee for its language instructors to attend external training workshops. She said, "I used to jump on those opportunities by all means necessary. I used to attend those a lot."

Sebi mentioned that she also attended language teacher conferences like the National Council for Less Commonly Taught Languages (NCOLCTL) while in the United States, and that those also sharpened her teaching skills. Besides, she received additional training at a larger university in the southeast on how to teach and assess learners in an intensive language course. She said, "I was learning how to teach an intensive syllabus, how to merge work that can be done in two semesters into two months."

Sebi emphasized how each training workshop she attended equipped her with different skills. In her current university, she said the workshops she has attended have focused on quite different areas because of the prevailing circumstances.

> When I got to [University], now the pandemic hit us and our workshops that we were having were online, Zoom, like learning how to annotate, learning that you can use videos and put them here. And if you can't show them on your screen, maybe you could time learners, how to do discussion groups, and all those things.

Finally, Sebi shared that she had taken her own initiative during the COVID-19 lockdown in her country to receive some teaching-related training from an online platform which offered free certificates on a variety of courses. She said she took those courses to prepare to teach online.

> I was doing that to learn more of like, how can I teach online? What are the challenges and how can we adapt as teachers? What platforms? Are they Zoom? Teams? And how to use all of that, PlayPosit, there are so many to choose. (Interview)

She pointed out that the courses prepared her well for her current Zulu teaching job by exposing her to some of the technologies that were being taught at the teacher training workshops in her university. She said, "when I got to [University], and we were having our workshops, I could really remember the stuff from the online course that I took."

In summary, Sebi's training consisted of both internal and external training from her institutions, and her own initiative to better her teaching skills. Through them, she said she gained skills on teaching methodologies, learner assessment, and preparation of curricular and syllabi among other things.

4.1.4 Teaching Experience

Sebi's undergraduate degree was in education, and she double majored in Zulu and business economics. She has since then taught courses in both her majors, mostly teaching business economics in South Africa and Zulu in the United States. She said, "when I'm here in South Africa, people know me as a business studies teacher, but when I'm in the States, people know me as the language teacher, Zulu teacher." Sebi said that overall, she has been teaching since 2015.

> I'd say two and a half years of teaching language in the US. And right now, it's my third
> year because I took a break, came this side and taught something totally different, then
> now I teach Zulu again. (Interview)

She has taught Zulu at three different universities in the United States including her current university where she is employed as a full-time lecturer. She teaches Zulu from the beginning to the advanced level. Part of her teaching is through the shared course initiative in which learners from other institutions learn Zulu through her university.

The context of her teaching has primarily been at the university level, teaching graduate and undergraduate students from diverse backgrounds. She described her students' goals with learning Zulu as general interest or research oriented. Sebi also mentioned that her classes have mostly been small with the maximum number of students that she has ever had being six. She

described her experience with small classes as "a breeze" and "really nice" because she could attend to the needs of individual students.

> The classes that I usually have, it's like three learners in this group, or two learners in that group, at the most is six. And it's really nice. I really enjoy that experience, because I can give everybody attention. Our objectives are achieved much quicker, because I'm able to give each student equal attention, proper attention. (Interview)

In summary, Sebi's language teaching experience has mostly been to university students in the undergraduate and graduate levels, and her classes have mostly been small.

4.1.5 Teacher Attributes

In this section, I present Sebi's motivation-related behaviors as a teacher as per my observations in the classroom. The observation notes are enhanced by what Sebi and her students shared with me during the stimulated recall and interview sessions about their own beliefs and perspectives regarding motivational teaching practices.

4.1.5.1 Maintaining a Friendly Classroom Atmosphere

Sebi maintained a warm and friendly atmosphere in her classroom. Her students interacted with her freely in talking about both academic and non-academic topics. Sebi commented that she was determined to break the cycle of the gap between the instructor and students as is the case in South Africa, to allow her students to be free with her. She believed that her own energy as a teacher impacted her students' motivation in the classroom.

> We've got a saying in Xhosa that, *ukuhamba, kukubona*. That means that the more you travel, you see things from a different perspective. So, I guess that experience on its own has changed me as an educator in the classroom. And I've tried to really break that

labeling of like, no, you are a lecturer, I must not look you in the eye, or I can't talk to you like this. (Interview)

Sebi, from her own experiences as a student, believed that students tended to refrain from participating freely in the classroom when there existed a large gap between them and their instructor. She believed that students could feel scared of expressing themselves in such an environment but that when the classroom atmosphere was friendly and the professor was approachable, that reduced the tension and students could express themselves more freely.

As a student, you hold back sometimes, even in the language classroom, you can tend to hold back. But when it's more liberating, and you laugh, and you know, like, you are relatable, and you are also just a human being, then it makes class fun. Like it makes people free. And it's nice to learn in an environment like that. Because now you're not scared of anything. (Interview)

Sebi believed that building strong relationships with her students boosted their motivation and effort in learning Zulu. She added that when students enjoyed the process of learning the language, they would retain it for a longer period. She said, "I don't want them to just learn the language because it's a prerequisite for something that they need to get into. I actually want them to love it." She noted that the strong relationships she built with her students lasted long even after some students had completed their Zulu classes, and that some even requested to visit her classes when they were done. Her students confirmed her views by sharing how their relationship with the teacher impacted their learning. Marion noted that she felt more connected to Sebi than she felt in other classes, while Lindah shared that she would not want to miss class or do poorly in assignments and classroom tasks just because she did not want to disappoint her teacher.

4.1.5.2 Encouraging learners to participate

Sebi encouraged her students to participate in the lesson especially when they seemed hesitant. She provided them with vocabulary where necessary so they could formulate their sentences correctly. Also, she would allow students some thinking time before speaking (e.g., Observation 1). She said that she did that so that students didn't feel rushed and thus, nervous.

Sebi also acknowledged her student's effort whenever a student gave a correct answer. She would nod, smile, and say the Zulu equivalents of "yes" or "good" to praise the student's effort. Students shared that they liked it when the teacher praised their responses. Marion said it gave her confidence to participate more in the lesson.

As another way to encourage learners to speak, Sebi also took part in some of the activities she assigned them, especially when an activity needed pair work. For instance, on Day 3, during the paired phone call simulation activity, a call happened between the teacher and a student where the student explained that he was hosting a barbecue in his apartment complex. Sebi asked questions such as what food they were eating at the barbecue, and the student responded. When the student seemed to struggle with vocabulary or formulating sentences, Sebi helped him out by simplifying her question or providing the necessary vocabulary. She also allowed him more time to think before responding.

4.1.5.3 Unpredictability

Sebi planned her lessons on PowerPoint, as presentations. Her students did not always know what content they would be covering in class until the lesson started. Sebi said that even though she was trained to write lesson plans separate from the presentations, she did not feel the need to do so for her classes. She said that she simply structured her lessons in her mind and knew when to transition from one activity or section to the next. She believed that being

unpredictable with the kind of content she was going to cover in class every day was a motivator for students. She said that she did not like to have a regular pattern where students knew exactly what type of content they would be covering each day of the week.

> Students get bored with the same thing. So, if it's like, on Thursdays, we're going to be reading this, then they know like, ah, on Thursdays we do this, on Monday, we do this. It's nice when you just surprise them. And you say okay, so today, we are not going to have class and we're going to play hangman in Zulu. (Interview)

Sebi added that she did not always follow the same pattern of instruction in all her lessons. She said, "I don't always follow that pattern of introduction, drill, check, practice, and all of that. She said that sometimes she would "just focus on an unknown objective" such as "learning about birthdays, or how to read." She said she then did her formative evaluation as the lesson progressed and revisited areas that she felt students did not understand.

> In my head, I know when I'm going to be checking, I know when I'm going to be making them practice, and then that's when I know that okay, that such an objective has been achieved. And if it hasn't been, I go back. (Stimulated recall)

Her students shared their views too and while they all enjoyed the variety in the activities they covered in class, Marion raised concern about their teacher's unpredictability. She noted that she would prefer to know ahead of time what kind of content they would be covering in class on a particular day so she could prepare.

4.1.6 Teacher Practices

In this section, I present Sebi's teaching practices as observed in the classroom. The observation notes are boosted by quotes from the stimulated recall sessions and interviews with Sebi and her students.

4.1.6.1 Greetings and Small Talk with Students

Sebi greeted her students individually as they joined the virtual classroom and engaged them in small talk at the beginning of her lessons (e.g., Observation 2). She and the students spoke about random topics, some relating to the lessons. For instance, during Observation 1, Lindah was the first to join class and she greeted the teacher in Zulu. Sebi responded and the two chatted for more than a minute. The teacher told Lindah how her day had been, and Lindah told her that she was feeling quite tired.

When another student (Lenny) joined class, the teacher greeted him as well and asked him whether he had received and reviewed the materials she had sent him to prepare for the lesson. She informed me that Lenny had recently moved into a new apartment and was experiencing internet problems. Thus, she felt the need to check on him and inquire if he was up to date with class work. "I was just making sure that he got the material. He had been absent the day before," she said.

On Day 2, small talk involved the teacher and students addressing some of the problems that occurred on their Learning Management System. Sebi explained to students that she would sometimes forget to press the "Publish" button on Canvas when she uploaded content, and that was why some students couldn't find the content on Canvas. On Day 3, small talk involved students talking about their fall break plans and what they would do for Thanksgiving. Lenny, who was a student from a different university and was taking the Zulu course through the shared course initiative, informed the teacher that his fall break would start before that of his classmates. In another instance of small talk, the teacher announced that the midterm exam would start next week.

Sebi said that small talk allowed her to learn more about her students and to understand them deeply. Besides, she would also share with her students about herself. She said that her students would tell her how they were feeling or what had happened in their lives during small talk. She said that sometimes, her students shared very personal things with her and that she was okay with that. She said, "that [small talk] is beautiful, because I also am learning to know them. Because I just started at [University]. So, they can relate to me in that way." She added that through small talk, she can build "a system of trust" and to get "a nice, free flowing feeling before class."

Sebi's students appreciated small talk with their teacher. Marion said that it was especially important to her considering the effects of the pandemic and the 2020 presidential election between Biden and Trump, which was ongoing at the time this data was collected.

> I think the fact that you're going to a class every day, and getting asked everyday by your professor, "how you're doing?" I think I've appreciated those things even more being in the space of the United States right now, with everything happening politically, as well as with the pandemic happening globally. (Stimulated recall)

Another student, Lenny, said he enjoyed small talk with his teacher because "the relationship that I find myself forming with my teachers is always better when I can have casual conversations with them." He added that besides, small talk allowed him to "brush up on basics that I might be forgetting every now and then" before the lesson of the day started.

4.1.6.2 Lesson Organization

Sebi introduced each of her lessons with a brief explanation of what students would do, and she would display a slide with the lesson's outline. She said, "before I really get into a lesson, I just always like to do a schedule like, "these are the three things that we're going to be

covering in this lesson" (stimulated recall). During this time, she explained to her students the goals of the main activities of each lesson. Lindah said that she liked it when the teacher displayed these outlines because "even when she's talking really fast, if I didn't exactly hear her then I can read it from the slide." (Stimulated recall).

On Observation Day 1, the main task of the lesson was reading a storybook out loud. Sebi told her students that the goal for that activity was to get them to practice reading aloud and asking questions about the story. She said, "I wanted them to be able to read thoroughly, out loud as well. And I wanted them to be able to ask questions instead of me as the teacher always asking questions about what they're reading," (stimulated recall). She commented that she was happy when her students achieved the goals at the end of the lesson.

> They actually were able to come up with questions of things that were happening in the book. So that was my main aim, to allow them to read out loud and so that I hear how they pronounce the words and all of that. And also, just to test their comprehension immediately, without having to give it for homework, and having a dictionary to help you translate. That was my objective, and it was achieved. (Stimulated recall)

On Observation Day 2, the focus of the lesson was on how to say birthdays in Zulu. Sebi explained that the goal of the lesson was for students to learn how to report dates. She added that she had noticed from previous lessons that it was an area that her students were struggling with. On Day 3, the main activity was engaging in spontaneous dialogue with a friend on a variety of topics. Before starting the activity, the teacher informed students that she wanted to see their ability to formulate and ask questions correctly. She later reinforced the same point in the stimulated recall session. She said, "the main objective for this lesson was spontaneous communication. I just give you pictures, and you just go ahead and communicate."

Sebi displayed lesson outlines and explained lesson goals to students orally. She did not state the lesson objectives in the common written format of what students should be able to do by the end of each lesson. She commented that while she did not always write down the specific lesson objectives, that she constantly assessed her students formatively as the lesson progressed.

4.1.6.3 Balancing Learner Participation

Sebi often called on her students by name to participate in the lesson. For instance, on Observation Day 1, she called on each student to read one page and the same order was repeated to the end of the book. Similarly, on Day 2, Sebi assigned her students specific roles in each task that was performed, e.g., who would present first, second or third on a task to research on birthday presents for a five-year-old child, and who would answer which grammar question on the annotation task. On Day 3, the bulk of the lesson involved a dialogue task. The teacher had prepared slides prior to the lesson and added students' names on them so that each student would converse with another on a topic based on common daily activities. That way, each student got to speak when their name showed up on the slide.

In relation to calling students by name, Sebi would sometimes let students volunteer to speak. The three students volunteered at different rates such that while one readily volunteered every single time, there was one who hardly ever volunteered. The latter student would respond, often correctly, though when called upon to speak (Observation 3). Sebi's students attributed their varying rates of volunteering in class to their levels of preparedness as well as their own personalities. Lindah, for instance, commented that she has always been an active volunteer in class. "Whenever she [the teacher] says who wants to read first? I'm always like, I'll do it. I think I've always been like that," she said. Marion said that sometimes, even though she knew the

answer, she preferred to let someone else respond if there was anyone who was ready and willing to do so.

4.1.6.4 Giving Simplified Summaries of Content

On Observation Day 1, when the main task was reading a children's book, Sebi gave a summary of the information and explained the difficult vocabulary in the text at the end of every page. She said that she gave her summary in more simplified language using the vocabulary that was familiar to her students so that they would understand the page well before they moved on to the next. That way, she said, students wouldn't get stuck for not understanding some previous information.

> Sometimes I'm afraid that they can read the words, but maybe they don't really get everything that's happening. So, to just help them make connections. So that by the time we are asking questions, or I probe them to have answers or discussions about a certain page, they don't go back and ask me, what does this word mean? (Stimulated recall)

Her students confirmed her assumption and indicated that they indeed needed help understanding some of the authentic materials they used in class. Lindah said that a lot of times, the book used unfamiliar grammar and keywords.

> So, even though we might know a word, there's so much grammar in it that we might not have learned yet that it's kind of hard to figure out like that. Sometimes you just don't recognize it. So, by going over it with the words that we do know makes it easier to kind of fill in the blanks. (Stimulated recall)

Marion shared that she liked their teacher's simplified summaries because "by using simpler vocabulary and simpler grammar, it helps to either confirm what I was unsure that the passage was about, or to make clear something that maybe I didn't understand the first time." Lenny also

commented that he appreciated that Sebi summarized each page using the vocabulary that they had encountered in class and were thus familiar with.

4.1.6.5 Delayed Correction of Learners' Errors

Sebi did not always jump in to correct learner errors when they occurred. She would instead allow students ample time to correct themselves especially if a student seemed like they wanted to try and correct the error. For instance, Lindah at some point realized on her own that she had mispronounced a click sound as she was reading a passage and she repeated the word several times, eventually pronouncing it correctly. Sebi acknowledged her effort and smiled (Observation 1). Sebi later said:

> I did not try to disturb her because in the back of my mind, it's like I know she knows. And she also knows that she knows the word. So, I tried to just back off, and also just like, allow learning to happen on its own. (Stimulated recall)

In another instance, students were performing a grammar activity using the Annotate feature of Zoom. Sebi noticed some errors in their answers and instead of correcting the errors right away, she simply pointed the errors out and let students correct them themselves. She explained further that she held back from intervening because she did not want to make the student nervous about making errors.

> I don't always intervene because I might discourage them every time or maybe make them feel uncomfortable. Because she knows the word hence, she corrected herself. So sometimes it's good to just hold back and not really say it because they also know, right? I was just afraid that I might make her feel somehow, because it's been smooth sailing, and then just one word. (Stimulated recall)

Also, she sometimes held back from correcting her students' errors and let other students correct them instead. She would either ask the class if anyone picked up the error, or she would point it out and ask if any of the students knew how to correct it.

In contrast to Sebi's thinking about error correction, one of her students wished they could get corrected and guided by the teacher more often. Marion said that it would give her more direction on what to take away from the lesson.

> I think sometimes I would like more like, within an activity, here are some vocabulary words that I want you to be able to take away. Just a little bit more direction I think would be helpful for me.

4.1.6.6 Practicing Learner Autonomy

Sebi practiced learner autonomy in her classroom such as by letting her students discover information on their own and present in class. She said she liked to let her students be in control of their learning because they were the ones who needed to acquire the target language.

> I am just helping you towards learning, but you are in charge of your own learning. You [the student] put in the work. You prepare the PowerPoint presentation, and you do the talking. I try to correct you. You ask questions and just be in control of your learning. And sometimes I allow me as a teacher to just sit back and watch.

She also allowed her students freedom to initiate conversations in class. According to her, that strategy encouraged learner autonomy and not only made learning easier but also boosted learner motivation.

> When you give students that freedom, it makes learning easier. Because when you are not given the freedom to initiate a topic or to come up with your own ideas, if you are always told what to do, I don't think you learn […] You'll feel more motivated when you've got

that freedom, whereas if you're in a class where things are going in a very strict structured way, then it can really turn learners off.

Sebi mentioned that while she practiced learner autonomy, that she also monitored her students to ensure they did not go off-topic from the objectives of the day's lesson. She explained that to keep her learners on task even with that autonomy, she shared with them the lesson objectives at the beginning of each lesson and reminded them to not forget what they were trying to achieve at the end of the lesson.

> That's why you want to draw them to those objectives or that schedule that I tell them at the beginning of the lesson, that today we're going to be doing this and this and this. So even in your freedom, you should know that the focus is this.

4.1.6.7 Use of Zulu

Sebi encouraged the use of Zulu in her classroom and discouraged her students from using English. She had strategies that she used to get her students back to speaking in Zulu whenever they attempted to use English during the lesson, such as telling them, "Sorry, I don't understand. Can you please say that in Zulu?" (Observation 1). She explained that she always set ground rules with her students at the beginning of the course against the use of English in the classroom.

> For me, across all levels. I have an advanced class and with them, they never ever even try to make a joke in English. So, even with my beginners' class, I encourage them to speak Zulu the whole time.

Her students seemed to take note of this rule because the class used Zulu about 90% of the time. For instance, when students were assigned a task to present on birthdays of famous people on

Day 2, they mostly used Zulu in their presentations and would only switch to English briefly if they were completely stuck.

Sebi was happy that the ground rules she set in her classes against the use of English worked quite well. She said she did not mind if that meant limiting her students on what they wanted to say. On the flipside, Sebi acknowledged that the "Zulu only" rule sometimes meant that students missed some of the key information in the tasks she assigned in the classroom. She gave an example where one of her students had not fully understood one of the tasks and had missed adding pictures to his presentation about the birthdays of their favorite celebrities.

I noticed one student did not seem to understand what I said. He didn't collect the pictures. He just googled. But the main aim of the lesson [*sic*] was to actually just test them on birthdays. And yeah, so even if he didn't show the pictures, I was okay with that.

On occasions such as that one when she realized that not all her students were on the same page on what they were required to do, Sebi used some English to give instructions in subsequent tasks. She said that she used English to make sure that students fully understood the instructions and what they were required to do for the task. She said that it was especially important for her to clarify the instructions in English because she stated her lesson goals in Zulu and some students probably missed what the lesson was about.

Because in the learning objectives at the beginning, I always say it in Zulu. And so, when it's time to do the task, maybe they forgot what I said. So, I needed to clarify and make sure that they understand it in English as well. (Stimulated recall)

Overall, Sebi was happy when her students used Zulu more than English. She shared with me that her strategy for encouraging Zulu use in the classroom was to select and design activities for her lessons that would encourage her learners to communicate orally and produce Zulu as much

as possible. One such activity, she said, was the phone call simulation activity on Day 3 in which students pretended to call each other and have conversations about where they were and what they were doing. She said, "I was just trying to do something very natural here to get them talking more and using less English."

Students expressed mixed feelings on the extensive use of Zulu in their classroom with limited English. Lindah said she liked it when the teacher used more Zulu because she understood her well, but Lenny commented that sometimes it was difficult for him to understand what the teacher was saying and that he would then be forced to seek clarification from the teacher when he was unsure of how to move on. (Stimulated recall)

Sebi said that while she used Zulu extensively in the classroom, that she was always constantly assessing her learners' understanding of her speech to know when she needed to add some English for clarity. In this one instance, she told them a story of a homeless person in a South African city who exhibited ungrateful behavior when someone tried to help them. She told the entire story in Zulu and later explained that in the process of doing that, she was quietly assessing her students' understanding of the story. She said, "and then I just see them nodding the whole time. And I think, they're not getting me. Then I mixed English in." She said that another way she assesses her learners' understanding of Zulu is "through engaging and asking them, do you have any experiences to share too?"

In addition to using Zulu only in the classroom, Sebi also spoke at normal speed most of the time and did not slow her speech down. She explained that it was crucial for her students to get used to the normal speed of speech produced by native Zulu speakers.

4.1.6.8 Variety of Activities

Sebi varied learning activities within each lesson. She said, "I try to really differentiate my activities so that it doesn't seem like the same thing every day." Each of her lessons was a combination of activities that touched at least three language skills. The activities ranged from reading to watching videos, engaging in dialogues and discussions, and presenting in class. She said she did that to keep her students interested and to reduce their anxiety of worrying about grammar rules. On day 1, for instance, the lesson was mainly on reading out loud. Sebi then led a discussion session after students had read the storybook. Thus, within that activity, students got to practice reading, listening, and speaking skills.

On Day 2, the lesson started with a grammar activity on subject concords. Sebi said that she randomly made her students do grammar activities every few times a week to sharpen their skills on various grammatical rules. She explained that the goal of that grammar activity was to make students practice producing sentences with the correct subject concords based on Zulu noun classes.

> Because sometimes I noticed when they speak, they slightly mix up subject concords and it doesn't correlate with the noun class because we have what we call the noun table. And it's got different noun classes that when we speak about this, this is the subject concord that you use. (Stimulated recall)

For the second activity on Day 2, students were asked to individually research on three birthday gifts that they would give to a 5-year-old child. They were given a few minutes to prepare their presentations after which they each presented to the class. The teacher assigned them another task to research and present on the birthdays of famous people. Students were allowed a few minutes to research on the internet after which they presented again.

On Day 3, the first activity was a grammar activity using Annotate on Zoom. Sebi provided her students with a list of incomplete sentences for them to complete with infinitive forms of verbs. She explained that the activity was meant to test students' understanding of the infinitive forms of different verbs. The second activity was a classroom discussion where students and the teacher shared their views on a video they had watched prior to the lesson. Sebi displayed a slide with pictures of characters from the episode students had watched. She said that it was meant to jog their memory and aid in facilitating the discussion.

> On Thursdays, I have asynchronous lessons. And so, we just get like an online video, they watch something, and then they answer questions on it. And then when we get back the next day, we have a short discussion about it. So that's what the pictures were about. It's about a TV series that we're watching. It has 26 episodes. (Stimulated recall)

The third activity was a phone call simulation where students pretended to be in different settings and called each other in turns, prompting spontaneous dialogue on where they were, what they were doing there, whom they were with, etc. Sebi displayed preselected settings on the slides, such as at a concert, at a picnic, at the market, and at a party. She also had already added the names of two students on each slide who were to call each other on each setting. She later explained that the goal of this activity was to practice oral communication skills.

> The main objective for this lesson was mainly communication, like, spontaneous communication. I just give you pictures, and you just go ahead and communicate. I didn't want to make them do a writing or make them watch something and respond to it. I just wanted it to be spontaneous and natural, flowing conversation. (Stimulated recall)

Students shared that they enjoyed the variety of activities in their classroom. Lindah said that she liked it when the teacher included grammar activities in the lessons to supplement reading,

listening, and speaking tasks. She said, "especially going over the summer not having Zulu class, I remember a lot of the vocabulary, but a lot of the grammar stuff slips away. And so, I always think it's helpful when she does the grammar stuff." Marion also shared that she actually preferred grammar activities where they could work as a group over reading out loud or speaking. She attributed that to her own personality which she said she usually preferred not to stand out.

Overall, Sebi appeared to have preference for oral tasks in her classroom. She said that she liked to give her students communicative tasks to get them speaking. She mentioned that she preferred that approach over focusing on grammar too much. "And it's nice not to focus on grammar, the whole lesson. I just randomly put it every day like somewhere, a grammar activity."

4.1.6.9 Revisiting Problematic Topics

Sebi planned her lessons to address problematic areas that she had observed with her students. Whenever she observed difficulties in the use of a certain grammatical rule, she would include an activity on that particular grammar point in a future lesson. That was the case with the subject concord (noun class) activity and the activity on the use of infinitives because she explained to me that she had observed students' struggles in those areas.

In another instance, Sebi observed that her students did not know how to correctly say their birthdays or other people's birthdays in Zulu, and so she planned a lesson around that topic.

The main aim of the lesson was to actually just test them on birthdays, because I noticed that that was one thing they didn't know from a lesson prior to this, like a week before this. And I was like, I should set up a date where I just teach them how to report on days and birthdays and you know, dates.

4.1.6.10 Utilizing Classroom Technologies

The class was entirely virtual, and Sebi utilized pedagogical technologies including the features within and outside of Zoom. For instance, on Day 2, students performed the grammar activity using the Annotate feature of Zoom where they filled in the blank spaces with the correct responses. Sebi explained in the stimulated recall session that she liked to set up such grammar activities using Annotate because it worked well.

Sebi also used YouTube videos quite a lot in her lessons. She had her students watch TV shows and other video clips shot in South Africa on various topics. Whenever she experienced technical difficulties such as with her internet connection which made it difficult for her to play those videos in the classroom, she would share the YouTube video links with students so each could watch the video on their own. She said:

> Unfortunately, my internet gets really slow when I share the video on my screen. So, I figured that the best way to share videos with them is to allow them to stream on their own screens. And then I give them a timeline that in five to six minutes, you should be back again for discussion.

Students appeared to be comfortable using the classroom technologies incorporated into their lessons for the most part. Only on one occasion did one student seem to struggle with using the Annotate feature of Zoom, and Sebi guided him on how to complete the task.

4.1.6.11 Maximizing Interaction in the Classroom

Sebi maximized both student-student and teacher-student interactions in the classroom. From the moment students joined the class, she would engage them in small talk in which they chatted about random topics. Also, during the lesson, she frequently assigned her students pair work or engaged them in class discussions. In one instance where she had assigned them a task

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and one of them completed it early, she engaged that learner in a dialogue as soon as she came

back to the main classroom. She said that her main goal with that kind of chat was to get

feedback on what the student thought about the task.

> Lindah just got back from watching the video. I think she finished watching the video
>
> before everyone else. Usually when one person comes back, I sometimes chat on the side
>
> and say, "How was it? Did you like the video?" Just to get like short feedback.

Sebi said that she often tried to pair students with different abilities so that they could help each

other. "Some of them are stronger with speaking and some of them are stronger with writing,"

she said. However, she said that having only three students in her class was a limiting factor for

such a strategy.

4.1.6.12 Use of Authentic Materials

Sebi often used authentic materials in her classroom. She said using such materials

helped trigger meaningful conversations in the classroom. On Observation Day 1, students read a

children's storybook on a street boy in a South African city who was saved by a stranger and

taken to a shelter. After the reading activity, Sebi showed students a video that was also shot in

South Africa of a gentleman helping a homeless family. She then engaged them in a discussion

about the stories in both the book and the video. She said she wanted to "encourage students to

also ask questions amongst themselves so that I'm not the only one who's coming up with

questions to the story." On Day 2, Sebi asked students to research the birthdays of celebrities that

they liked, and on Day 3, she engaged her students in a discussion about a series they have been

watching in class. The TV series was produced in South Africa and thus, an authentic piece she

used in her classroom.

Her students shared that they liked it when their teacher included such materials in their lessons. Lindah said that it exposed them early on to natural language use and therefore, prepared them for when they would go to South Africa.

4.1.7 Other Factors Affecting Their Teaching Practices

4.1.7.1 Preparedness to Teach Online

Sebi explained that prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, she had only taught face-to-face classes. Her Zulu classes in the current institution where she is employed were her first experience teaching language virtually. Regardless, Sebi pointed out that she was prepared to teach virtually by the time she started her classes, partly because of her own initiative to take personal online courses on online language teaching.

> I think I was prepared. If I were to put it on a scale of one to ten, I would say I was at number eight. Because of the other things that I had said that I was already doing on my own. So, when I was introduced to Zoom, I was like, "Oh, I know this." When I was introduced to maybe Google Classroom, I was like, "Oh, I know how to save quizzes online. I know how to operate on Canvas, because I've done this before." Or "I know how to set up assessments online." (Interview)

In addition to taking those online courses, she mentioned that she had also tried teaching virtually through Google Classroom while in South Africa, and that had also exposed her to more skills regarding virtual teaching.

She stated that despite having prepared herself prior to starting her current Zulu classes, that she was learning each day, and that she sometimes consulted other people on how to navigate some parts of Zoom.

4.1.7.2 Challenges from Teaching Online

Sebi said that her most challenging experience with teaching Zulu virtually was with internet connection problems. She said that one of her students was having a hard time with internet connection, so they tended to miss a lot of classes and that slowed down their progress as a class.

> Sometimes we would be really doing an important assessment, then that means extra preparation on my side. That means I have to now put in extra hours. That means I have to make myself available on the same day or a different time and ask them, can we meet at this time so that you can do whatever you missed? It is very hard with regards to that. It disrupts learning in that sense. (Interview)

Sebi shared that the dependence on internet connection also affected her because it meant limitations on what she could do as the teacher. She said that face to face classes allowed her more opportunities to engage her students in interesting activities such as the ability to take her students outside for learning.

> If I take my laptop now and I want to show you something outside, my internet connection can get disturbed. Or if I go to another room. So, this means that I'm literally in this room the whole time. And the most I can do is maybe put my laptop on the table there and maybe move and do other things. But I'm stuck in this room. (Interview)

Sebi also pointed out she could not get her students moving around in class and practically using the language as they would in a face-to-face classroom. She said, "if this was a face-to-face classroom, I usually would give students the floor to show and tell or to act out. Right now, there's not much acting out." She said that even though students could work together virtually, there was no room for "live classroom action."

She added that navigating technology sometimes proved to be a problem even for her students, thus the need to slow down the entire learning process in the virtual setting. "Some even struggle using the pen, it takes a little bit longer. Sometimes they can't see where their mouse is [when I point], you know, it's just those little things that make it trickier," she said.

Sebi explained that she tried to make some adjustments to her virtual classes to bring in the aspects of learning that involved being outside or interacting with nature beyond the classroom. She commended the importance of virtual tours in such scenarios but pointed out the frequent challenge of internet connection when it came to streaming live videos.

> Luckily, we are learning about these virtual tours. Whether you're in the library or whether you're in a museum, or like a park, you get to do that online. But then another downfall is that I can't stream a video at the same time, because it gets disturbed because of internet connection. (Interview)

Sebi also commented that assessment of learners' work had been tricky for her to do online because she could not really monitor the learners' environment from her end. She explained that it was the reason why she preferred the Communicative Language Teaching approach because with it, she could accurately assess learners' oral skills.

> There is no way that you can cheat. Like if I ask you, "Okay, here's a letter, now respond to this letter." And I'm not really going to be looking for grammar, I just want to see how you communicate. Yeah, your flow of communication. Then I grade you on these kinds of terms. (Interview)

She concluded by saying that she tried to "just make it work with whatever tools you have here on this platform."

4.1.7.3 Institutional Support

Sebi mentioned that her current institution offered training courses to its teachers to prepare them to teach online. She said that they had two weeks of intensive online workshops where they had synchronous sessions and asynchronous sessions through Canvas. Among the things she learned from those workshops were balancing synchronous and asynchronous sessions in online teaching.

> They were trying to show us that, with this online learning, you don't always have to be here every day, like on the screen, there are some lessons that you could do offline and asynchronously, but just make sure that there is a flow and there is continuation.
> (Interview)

Secondly, she learned about the numerous applications that she could incorporate into her teaching to enhance learners' experiences in the classroom, and how to choose which ones to use and which ones to leave out to not overwhelm herself or the students.

> And I was just learning other apps, like, it was overwhelming for me as well. But it's nice that they were also teaching us in the workshop that you don't have to use everything. Because when you use everything, it just becomes too much for you, it becomes too much for your students as well to keep up. So, they were just giving us a lot of options that we could use for online teaching. (Interview)

During those workshops, Sebi said that they also got to do mock lessons where teachers from different backgrounds and varying lengths of teaching experience taught lessons and others learned from them. She was happy that her institution continued to offer them support aimed to ensure smooth running of their online courses, even as the semester was ongoing. She said that the university had a center that assisted instructors with technology and media, where she could

go to anytime and ask for any kind of help. She said that that support had boosted her skills and confidence in teaching virtually.

In summary, Sebi's own preparation plus the support from her institution prepared her to teach virtually and thus contributed to the success of her classes.

4.1.8 A summary of Sebi's Results

Table 4 shows a summary of Sebi's results. They include a list of her teaching attributes, teacher practices, and the other factors affecting her teaching practices.

Table 4. A summary of Sebi's results

Teacher attributes	Description
Maintaining a friendly classroom atmosphere.	Chatting with students freely about academic and non-academic topics.
Encouraging learners to participate	Practicing patience, allowing more time for learners to speak, praising them.
Unpredictability	Planning lessons on the go; surprising learners with unexpected lessons.
Teacher practices	
Greetings and small talk with students	Extended greetings with students, asking how they are doing, generally chatting with them.
Lesson organization	Displaying lesson outlines at the beginning of each lesson.
Balancing learner participation	Calling on individual students to participate.
Giving simplified summaries of content	Summarizing content in simpler words at certain intervals during the lesson.
Delayed correction of learners' errors	Allowing learners a chance to correct their own errors before jumping in.
Practicing learner autonomy	Assigning learners tasks that allow them to discover information on their own.
Use of Zulu	Encouraging learners to use the target language more than their first language, English.
Variety of activities	Incorporating various types of activities in each lesson.
Revisiting problematic topics	Noting problem areas and addressing them in subsequent lessons.
Utilizing classroom technologies	Incorporating various forms of technologies into the lessons.
Maximizing interaction in the classroom	Ensuring that learners are fully engaged in the classroom always.
Use of authentic materials	Selecting instructional materials originally produced for consumption by native Zulu speakers.
Other factors	
Preparedness to teach online	Sebi was mostly prepared to teach online because of the trainings she had taken.
Challenges from teaching online	Poor internet connection for some of her students; limited space for practicing the target language.
Institutional support	Sebi had already received some support and was still in need of more regarding assessment in virtual settings.

4.2 Case Study 2: George

4.2.1 The School

George teaches Zulu as a foreign language at one large university in the Midwest of the United States. His students are undergraduates and graduates who are majoring in different disciplines in the university. He was teaching his courses purely face-to-face before the COVID-19 pandemic forced his institution to move all instruction to the virtual setting. He has been teaching at his current university for over a decade. At the time of this interview, George was teaching virtually from home.

4.2.2 Teacher Background

4.2.2.1 Educational Background

George was born and raised in Zimbabwe. He obtained his education from primary school to the master's level in Zimbabwe. His primary education was in a rural area of the country, and he later went to a boarding school in one of the cities for high school. He pursued his undergraduate degree in Harare, the capital city of Zimbabwe. Later, he left Zimbabwe to pursue doctoral studies in the United States. His doctoral studies were in linguistics with a focus on phonology and morphology.

4.2.2.2 Cultural Background and Learning Experience

George learned English as a second language from elementary school through college. He said that his language learning experience since high school generally consisted of the discovery method where teachers would assign them tasks and let them discover new knowledge on their own. He said, "they [teachers] did not just spoon feed us." He also noted that group

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work was common in his classes as a student, and that lessons generally consisted of grammar, reading, listening to radio lessons, and practicing speaking.

He shared that in those classes, the relationships between teachers and students were largely determined by societal norms such as how the young related with the old. He mentioned that a hierarchy existed in his community based on age. He said, "When I first went to school, a teacher was kind of untouchable." He explained that the teacher was like a parent and was expected to do all that a parent would do to their child regarding discipline.

> In fact, any parent could take their child to school and leave the child with the teacher and expect the teacher to do everything that a parent would do. If a child misbehaves, they will have to be spanked. (Interview)

George explained that his culture played an important role in the school environment. He said that teachers tended to like students who were from the rural areas more because they found them to be more disciplined than those who were raised in the city, where there was heavy foreign influence.

> There were students who had grown up in the city. And I had grown up in the rural areas. Teachers could easily see the difference. We spoke the language better and we could show the proper cultural behavior when interacting with the teachers. But the students from the city sometimes did things that they were not supposed to do when they were dealing with an adult. (Interview)

George compared teacher-student relationships when he was growing up in Zimbabwe to those in the United States where he currently teaches and said that the two were very different. He attributed the difference to both the cultural differences between Zimbabwe and the United States and the different time periods. He said, "I think it's two dimensional. It's the culture and

the period." He thought that in both countries, there had been a shift over the years in the ways in which students and teachers interacted.

> Now we try to make our students feel comfortable and to be very close to us. Whereas in the olden days, there was always a professional distance that was kept. So, we try to accommodate even things that were not accommodated in the past. Students sometimes have many excuses that teachers in the past would just ignore. (Interview)

Regarding cultural differences, George said that he has had to constantly adjust to accommodate his students in the United States. According to him, students in the United States were not as disciplined as those in Zimbabwe in that "they could say anything to the teacher, they could interrupt you while speaking." Another adjustment that he said he had made was with giving his students study guides before exams. He said he did not think it was a productive thing to do, but he did it because the students needed it. Additionally, he said that when he prepared examinations, he made them a lot simpler than he would have in Zimbabwe.

> Here, I try to tweak the way I prepare my questions. I prepare questions in such a way that 80% of the students at least would get the question right. Whereas back home, I didn't worry much about that. I worried about the area. Had they been given this area before to study? If they had been given, I could just ask a question. (Interview)

He acknowledged that the grading system in the United States was very different and that if a student, especially a graduate student, scored a C, it was like a fail to them. In contrast, he said that back home, that was a good passing grade.

4.2.3 Teacher Training

George started training as a teacher during his graduate studies in Zimbabwe. When he completed his master's degree, he enrolled in a postgraduate training course called the Graduate Certificate in Education which prepared him to teach teacher trainees in Zimbabwe.

It's a yearlong course in teaching. It starts with examining the whole education system, especially primary and secondary school. You spend a week in primary school, another week in secondary school, before you even start your lessons. So, your first assignment is to write a report about what you have seen in the schools. So then, you get the theory for a term, and then you go out for teaching practice for another term, and then you come back for the last term for more theory and exams. (Interview)

He later relocated to the United States to pursue doctoral studies and was offered a Teaching Assistantship position to teach Zulu as a foreign language. This new job involved teaching non-native speakers of the language and, therefore, George said he felt the need for more training.

When I came to the United States, because I was teaching second language speakers, I always felt like I needed something more, something besides just a refresher course. I needed something more to be able to deal with second language speakers because back home I was used to teaching first language speakers. (Interview)

He took the initiative to attend training workshops during his doctoral studies. One of those workshops was offered by the National African Language Resource Center. According to George, most of the training workshops he attended focused on how to increase learners' speaking ability. Grammar instruction was discouraged, something that he disagreed with.

Basically, the emphasis was on speaking. In fact, when we were first taught here, we were taught to throw away grammar. Yeah, and just speak. But it became obvious to most

instructors that simply parroting the teacher wouldn't get the students very far. They would remain at the same level for a long time. Then we were told, okay, we can bring back the grammar. (Interview)

George said that he still attended training workshops both internal and external to his current institution to stay up to date. He added that every year, he went to conferences like the African Language Teachers Association Conference and ensured to attend the pre-conference presentations which he found to be informative.

4.2.4 Teaching Experience

George was hired as a teacher trainer in the same university after he completed his master's degree in Zimbabwe. He taught courses on language pedagogy to students in the Bachelor of Education degree program. He explained that his students were native Ndebele speakers and were being trained to teach the same language. Later, he moved to the United States to pursue doctoral studies. George explained that he has taught foreign language courses in the United States colleges for more than fifteen years. Besides that, he has taught as a substitute teacher in elementary schools and high schools in the United States.

4.2.5 Teacher Attributes

George described himself as a passionate teacher who has always enjoyed his job. He said that it is the profession he had always wanted and that even when he came to the United States as a student, he wanted to teach right away. "When I needed a job, I could only think of teaching because that's my life," he said. In this section, I present his attributes as observed in the classroom.

4.2.5.1 Supporting Struggling Learners

George took various actions during his lessons to support learners who seemed to struggle. One of them was his use of slower speech when needed. George would slow his speech down significantly in instances where a student seemed to struggle to understand him. For instance, when one student got stuck on how to say where they come from during the one-on-one dialogue on introduction, George repeated his own part again and again, slowing down and pronouncing the words more clearly until got it and answered correctly. He said:

> Students are going to be listening to other people, like let's say they go to South Africa, they will hear people speaking the normal way. But I also know that if you're new to a language, you'll hear better when things are slowed down. So that's why I try to slow down but I want them at the same time to learn to listen, to hear people the way they speak. (Stimulated recall)

George shared that he used that strategy of slowing down and repeating himself only with his novice students because they needed more help to understand the target language.

> Since this is at the beginning, I was kind of providing some of the answers especially by saying, "I come from this place, where do you come from?" As we progress, that is going to be dropped. They will just be asked, "where do you come from?" Without me telling them where I come from. So that is just to help them learn. (Stimulated recall)

George also helped when his learners struggled with vocabulary. For instance, when students did not know the Zulu words for "cow" or "chicken," he provided the vocabulary. Claire commented that even though oftentimes she looked up new words on her own, that the vocabulary lists provided by their teacher saved them time in class.

I have looked up stuff on my phone and dictionary before. Like if I tried to do homework and I don't know a word, I'll look it up quickly. But we don't usually have to. He gives us a pretty large vocabulary list which is really good. (Interview)

In another instance of supporting struggling learners, George set time aside in the lesson to review the past quiz with them. He had just returned to students the quiz results, and he said that some had not done well, which made it important that they review the exam as a class.

There are some things that some students did not get right. But when I review the exam, I don't want to refer to individuals. I don't want like any student to feel like embarrassed. I just want to motivate everybody. So, the best way to do this I feel like everybody just has to participate. (Stimulated recall)

He explained that reviewing the quiz as a class allowed students who had performed poorly to receive help without feeling highlighted, and those who got the questions right to feel good about themselves that they got it right. Therefore, George engaged his entire class in reviewing the quiz. He said, "If they make a mistake, then we can correct it together without having to correct it for a specific individual. We don't want to embarrass anyone."

After the quiz review, George announced that those students who had scored below a certain point should plan to meet him individually. He later noted to me that he had two students who were particularly struggling and that he wanted them to set up some extra meetings with him to receive extra help. He said he was aware that those students were experiencing difficulties at home which were interfering with their performance in class, and that he wanted to dedicate more time to helping them so they could catch up with the other students.

So, there are these two students, I feel like once we leave class, what we have not done in class is not going to be looked at. Also, their background, I think especially for one, I

think things are really tough for her at home. She comes from that background where she doesn't really have space at home. And even her connection. She has the poorest of the internet connection. So, I try to assist. I have had to meet with her during office hours. In fact, the two of them, I always advise them to meet with me during office hours, so that they can catch up with the rest of the class. (Stimulated recall)

George did not rush his students when they hesitated to respond to his questions during the lesson. For example, when he called on a student on Day 2 to respond to a question and the student hesitated, George waited patiently for them to speak. When the student hesitated further, George explained to her what the question required. He later said, "I knew that this student knew the answer. We had practiced this in the previous week. And I just had to wait for her to be in the right position to answer."

George also shared his own experiences as a student with his learners on what tricks helped him to do better in exams. He reminded them that being keen on spelling, reading instructions carefully, and understanding an entire question before responding to it could increase their scores. He said that he hoped this piece of advice would encourage his learners to be keener in future.

I gave that explanation because from previous work, sometimes I felt like some students had not read the instructions or had not read the whole question properly. Sometimes in quizzes, some students will just go on and answer what they think the question requires without looking at the instructions. So, I was just trying to emphasize that always, this is what is required. (Stimulated recall)

Overall, George was patient with his learners. He responded to all their questions, even those that had to do with the course schedule and could be answered by looking at the syllabus. For

instance, on day two, the day before the exam, when he announced that there would be a midterm, one student seemed to not have been aware that the midterm was coming up. Another student asked about what percentage the midterm would contribute to the final exam. George said that either some of these students had been absent in the previous lesson or had experienced poor connection when he announced reminders about the midterm. Regardless, he did not mind repeating the information in class and reminding his students to look at their syllabus occasionally for such reminders.

4.2.6 Teacher Practices

4.2.6.1 Greetings

George started his lessons with greetings. He asked students to unmute themselves and greet each other as well as the class. He led the greeting activity which he said also served as a review of some of the content they had learned previously.

4.2.6.2 Recycling Content

At the beginning of his lessons, George reviewed previously covered content with his students by engaging them in brief dialogues that elicited that content. For instance, on Observation Day 1, he engaged each student on a one-on-one dialogue on introduction in which they mentioned their names, where they came from and where they currently lived. He said that the goal with those dialogues was "generally to make sure that what we have learned, we don't throw away, we recycle" (stimulated recall). He said that recycling content enabled students to build upon that content and expand their knowledge as new content was being introduced.

> So, the stuff we did in the first two to three weeks, we also build on it. We started with
> the greetings, then introductions and leave taking. And then we went on to other things

like the copulative. "What are these? This is something, it is someone." Once they learned those, I bring them into the conversation as well. Just to make sure that they practice. (Stimulated recall)

George added that recycling content in form of brief dialogues also allowed his students to "use grammar in context." He said, "the goal is basically to get them to speak, to be able to speak in a natural setting." His student, Claire, confirmed his statement by saying that the repeated practice of past content in class helped her master it better, and thus, gave her more confidence. She said she felt quite confident, for instance, about her performance in the introductory dialogues.

I felt pretty strong about [my performance]. This [dialogue activity] is something that we do almost every day. But at least once a week, we always do greetings in the morning. And he'll usually ask us what our name is. And one question. So, like, what do you see? Where do you come from? So, I just feel very comfortable with that because we do it every day. (Stimulated recall)

She said that she would like even more practice with grammar points like demonstratives for her to feel more confident about them. "But I definitely think more practice is needed. I feel like our lessons have been adequate and I understand how to do it, but I really am not very good at it."

Overall, Claire was happy with the opportunities to revisit content that was previously covered in class. She gave an example of click sounds which she said she struggled with a lot but because of repeated practice in class, she had gotten much better over time in them. She said that she thought practicing clicks in class was 'cool' and very important in improving her Zulu pronunciation.

This was the first thing that I did in class, the Zulu sounds. Which I've found is like super important. The phonetic alphabet for me helps a lot with learning, because I feel that a lot

of the issues that I have with language are not even that I don't know the word. It's that I

can't say it. (Stimulated recall)

The frequency of recycling content in class reduced as students got more comfortable with it. For

instance, Claire commented that the frequency of practicing Zulu clicks reduced as they got

better in their pronunciation. "We used to do it every day, our clicks, and going through the Zulu

sounds, but now we just do it maybe once a week, which is cool." Overall, Claire was happy that

her instructor revisited the difficult topics and recycled content in class.

4.2.6.3 Explicit Grammar Instruction

George appeared to prefer grammar-focused instruction in his class. He said that because

he taught Zulu in a foreign language context, he felt the need to encourage creativity among his

learners rather than letting them "parrot" him. He said, "I don't want them to always just parrot

me. I want them right from the beginning to start to develop, to start to get to that creative level."

He said he encouraged his learners to produce language on their own after giving them the basic

structure of how to produce meaningful utterances.

I know some people spend a lot of time with the parroting kind of method. But for me, I

realized that if I do that, most of them would just learn very little. It will be hard to do

anything outside of class because I'm probably the only person that they're going to hear

speaking Zulu. But if there were more people speaking Zulu outside of class, then just

parroting me would help because they'll still hear the same thing outside. (Stimulated

recall)

George said that he was aware that there are still big arguments among language instructors

regarding how grammar should be taught, with many people suggesting that if you teach

grammar, you should put it online and not teach it in class. He disagreed with that view and said:

But the fact is, students can't do grammar on their own, most of the time. If their teacher can't do it, how can the students do it? So most, if you expect that they will do it on their own, without you having introduced it to them, it becomes a real problem. You want to introduce them to something then they can work on it with an idea of what they are doing. (Stimulated recall)

George took time to break grammar down and explain it to his students. For instance, when he taught about noun classes, he explained what variations students could encounter between the closely related languages in southern Africa. He said it was important to give students that extra information because sometimes, when they went for study abroad, they ended up in different parts of southern Africa where a different dialect or language was spoken.

Some students go for a program in Cape Town where they find that the language is Xhosa, but the noun classes are different. Some might go to Swaziland and so on. Even in South Africa, they might go to a place where there are these variations. So, I usually try to explain the variations. (Stimulated recall)

Claire also confirmed that the bulk of their lessons were usually on grammar practice. She said they usually received worksheets which they would complete as part of homework and then reviewed in class. She expressed a positive attitude towards those grammar activities and said that the worksheets made it a little easier to master the grammar rules.

Every time we get a new sheet like this that's about grammar, he will fill in half of the words and those will kind of tell us what we should be doing. Like, to figure out what the other half of the words are. So, doing little tasks like that made this pretty easy. (Stimulated recall)

Because of the extensive focus on grammar instruction, George's lessons were mostly teacher centered. He led the lessons by explaining grammar rules, asking questions, and choosing which student to speak in each instance. In one pronunciation activity, for instance, he pointed at a word and asked one student at a time to pronounce it. Students answered questions and took notes, and the teacher corrected their errors as they occurred.

4.2.6.4 Correcting Learner Errors

George corrected learners' errors as soon they came up. For grammar errors e.g., when students used "this" instead of "these" or "this" instead of "that," George stopped them and pointed out the error right away. He also pointed out when a student used a wrong prefix on a word or mixed noun classes up. He explained to me that he felt the need to correct these errors immediately because some of the rules appeared closely similar, and he needed to help his students distinguish them. He gave an example of one student who made an error on the use of Zulu noun classes.

> They have been working on all the noun classes. So, I was drawing her attention to the noun class. She was using the wrong class. And there are two classes that are similar. They have the "le-" and the other one is "leli". So she was using "leli" instead of "le-." So those classes matter because one has a nasal, and one doesn't have any. So whenever you have a nasal, it has to be "le." But when there is no nasal, it's just "leli." (Stimulated recall)

George also shared that his other goal with pointing out errors immediately they occurred was because he wanted the other students to also take note and avoid making the same errors. He said, "I was just drawing their attention to that. And I know that once I do that at the beginning, then the others will pay attention to it too." In one instance, Claire used a word that the teacher

did not consider the most appropriate in that context, and he stopped and corrected her. Claire later commented, "technically, I didn't do anything wrong, but it wasn't what he wanted me to say."

Occasionally, George gave other students a chance to correct errors made by their classmates. He would ask them if they had noticed the error and if they could help correct it. Also, he would sometimes hold off from correcting the error and try to make the student realize and correct their own error. For instance, when two students were engaged in a dialogue that was part of the quiz review, one student made a mistake and George asked the other student to repeat her part so that the former could notice her own error. He said, "I wanted her to see it from the other student hoping that would jog her mind but still, that didn't work." The former student did not notice her own error, so, George eventually helped her out.

4.2.6.5 Calling on Individual Students to Participate

George balanced learner participation in his class by calling on individual students to answer questions. Occasionally, he would ask for volunteers to answer questions but often, only one student, Claire, would volunteer. The rest, who always had their cameras turned off, hardly volunteered. That forced the teacher to then call out names to get them to participate. George said, "I sometimes ask students to volunteer, but most of them will not if you don't call upon them." He added that he usually asked them to volunteer when he knew that at least one of them would. "I ask them to volunteer especially when I know that at least one of them has the answer," he said.

His student, Claire, confirmed it by saying that she volunteered more often just because "in the class, not a lot of people speak." She said that she thought her classmates volunteered less because they did not pay attention too well in class. On her end, she thought volunteering gave

her "good practice opportunities." Claire said that she prepared a lot before class. It was evident from my observation that had a better grasp of what was going on in class compared to her classmates. She did well on areas where her classmates seemed to struggle with. As an example, she shared about a reference sheet she used to practice noun classes, which helped her answer a question in class that no other classmate could.

> I have my old prefix sheet which doesn't tell me the plural word for *ikhishi*, but it shows me the noun classes which he talks a lot about. So, like if I know that *ikhishi* is in class five, then *amakhishi*, which is the plural for class five, which is class six. I know that I can make it plural by changing the beginning. So, it's useful to have that as a reference. (Stimulated recall)

George said that participation in the lesson was what mattered, regardless of whether a student volunteered or not. He said that right from the beginning of his classes, he made it clear to his students that all classroom activities would involve all of them, and that therefore, attendance and participation were very important. He said:

> I give like 20% of the class to attendance and participation. And all of them have to be involved. If they miss class, it means they're missing some crucial points. So right from the beginning, they know that everybody has to participate. (Stimulated recall)

He said that to encourage his students to participate in the lessons, he reminded them that it was okay to make mistakes and that they should not be embarrassed by it.

> Everybody has to make a mistake. No one should be embarrassed of making a mistake because that's part of the language [learning process]. So that's why if I call anybody, even if they don't know, I tell them there is no problem. They can make whatever mistake they can. That's the only way they're going to learn the language. (Stimulated recall)

Claire confirmed that by reporting that she never felt embarrassed about making mistakes in class. That her teacher was supportive and would always correct them in a kind way and that therefore, while she preferred to volunteer when she was confident about her answer, that she was not scared to try either when she was doubtful. In summary, volunteering was not common among students except for Claire.

4.2.6.7 Variety of Activities

Although the bulk of George's lessons focused on learning grammar rules such as the demonstratives and noun classes, he also included a variety of other activities in different sections of his lessons. These additional activities, he said, were either from topics he felt his students were still struggling with or were meant to boost their understanding of the grammar points covered on that day. One of the activities on Day 1 involved practicing the pronunciation of Zulu click sounds. George said that he included this activity in the lessons frequently because clicks were one of Zulu's toughest aspects to learn for non-Zulu speakers, and that he could see his students' improvement as they practiced pronouncing the clicks more.

> At the beginning, for the first few weeks, these clicks we were practicing almost every
>
> day because for English speakers or non-Zulu speakers, clicks are the most challenging.
>
> So, now I don't bring that every day but at least twice a week. (Stimulated recall)

George also included reading exercises in his lessons depending on the topic of the day. On day 1, for instance, students read a passage that exemplified the use of demonstratives out loud in turns and later answered comprehension questions. George assigned that reading exercise after grammar practice on demonstratives. He said, "the main goal was just reading comprehension. Now that they have covered a few grammatical areas, can they now read?"

Lastly, George also included short dialogue sessions in his lessons, and these usually took place at the beginning. He led these dialogues and would prompt students to plug in the content which was previously covered. An example was the brief introductions on day one where students were asked to say their names, where they came from and where they currently lived. He said that after students had learned about demonstratives, he would include in the practice dialogues a question about what they could see around them.

4.2.6.8 Use of English

George used more English than Zulu in his class. He gave instructions and explained the grammar rules to students in English. He said that there were instances when he knew he could progress in Zulu and carry on. "Like those greetings and so on, I can ask the questions and so on, when they know them," he said. Since the bulk of his lessons involved breaking down and practicing grammar rules, his use of English was more than that of Zulu. He explained why he used English often.

> Basically, with beginners, because they don't have the language, when we give them instructions, we try to give them in English so that they are not confused by the question. I have to be clear about the task. If I try to give them the task in just Zulu, without the language, they will not get what the task is. So, I have to explain the task in English. (Stimulated recall)

He argued that even proficiency examiners use English to make sure that students understand what the task is, and then rate them on their production of the target language. He said that as his students moved up in terms of proficiency, he used more Zulu and less English with them.

Like my advanced students, they understand when I speak in Zulu, most of the things. I

just throw in English here and there when there is a problem. Otherwise, for most of the

time, they're fine. (Stimulated recall)

Claire also noted that she appreciated the use of English alongside Zulu because it helped her

understand the content more. She said that her mastery of Zulu was still low and that she would

struggle to understand the teacher if he used Zulu only in the classroom.

4.2.6.9 Using Realia

George in one of his lessons brought realia to the classroom and showed them to students,

one at a time, and asked them to name the objects in the target language. The lesson was about

the use of demonstratives. The teacher showed an object on the screen and asked, "what is this?"

and students were required to say, "this is a…" and name the object shown by the teacher. The

objects he used were such as a spoon, a cup, and a pen. He said:

I didn't want everything to just remain in the book. In the book, they had seen pictures,

but I thought to make it very realistic, you can actually do this [show real objects]. They

are things that you actually have in your house and so I thought this would be more

helpful than just looking at a picture. (Stimulated recall)

George commented that he used realia a lot in his face-to-face classes. He said that teaching

virtually had complicated his ability to use such realia in his lessons and that therefore, in cases

where he could not bring real objects, he used pictures. That during in person classes, he could

easily ask his students to stand up and touch different objects in the classroom or to perform

actual commands in the classroom.

I find that especially like right now my first weeks of teaching virtually, I have to use

pictures more than before. Before, it was like, for the first few weeks, we were touching

almost everything in class. "This is a desk, this is a chair, this is the window, open the window, close the window and the door." They do those things practically. But now, we can't do it. We have to use more pictures than the practical experience. (Stimulated recall)

4.2.6.10 Acknowledging and Praising Learners' Effort

George acknowledged his learners' effort by giving praises such as 'good!' whenever they answered questions correctly or generally did well in class. Sometimes, he would also tell them that they were correct. He said that this boosted learners' confidence and gave them the motivation to do better in future.

> I think for all education, positive reinforcement is very important for students. They want to know that they are doing well, so you have to do that. Otherwise, they don't think that what they're saying is valued. So when they do things correctly, you want them to remember that "oh, yeah, I did fine." Then next time, they'll probably do well as well. (Stimulated recall)

In many instances, when his students tried to respond but did not give an entirely correct answer, George appreciated them before correcting their errors. Claire commented that such praise from their teacher was reassuring and that it made her feel at ease with answering questions in class.

4.2.7 Other Factors Affecting their Teaching Practices

4.2.7.1 Preparedness to Teach Virtually

The virtual medium of instruction affected George's teaching practices in several ways. First, George said that the bulk of his training was to teach in the face-to-face environment. He mentioned that he did not have online teaching experience prior to the switch to virtual learning that was prompted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Therefore, he said that he was still learning and

adjusting his teaching practices to suit the virtual environment. Besides, he said he was still compiling online instructional materials as he did not have any ready. George commented that preparing for online classes generally took him longer than in person classes.

> I started this past summer to make the adjustment but I'm still learning. And it means I'm also still compiling materials, because online learning takes longer to prepare than the normal class. As I was mentioning, in class, sometimes you just have the table, the books, things that you can just readily have, but online, I have to make sure that I prepare those things, either to bring them physically or to pre-make pictures. (Interview)

George said that he was doing his best to teach online but that he did not quite feel as prepared as he usually did with face-to-face classes. He said that often, he felt like he needed more instructional materials. He said that as a teacher of an African language, he was facing the problem of scarcity of resources to aid in teaching the language.

> I don't think we have enough materials in disposal for our African languages. For most of our African languages, we don't have that many materials. You as the instructor have to prepare the materials, put things together. (Interview)

He commented that it was difficult to keep his learners motivated in the virtual environment compared to a face-to-face setting. He said, "keeping students motivated while you are fixed there needs some creativity. It's not as easy as in the classroom where we can move around and do a lot of things." He shared that he had made adjustments in teaching virtually with regard to task selection, content preparation, and assessment among other things. For instance, he said that he tried to choose tasks that he knew learners would enjoy doing in the virtual classroom.

> To keep them motivated, sometimes, I ask my students to record themselves speaking. They like to do that. Because that's part of the new culture, they have the phones and the

like, so when I ask for assignments, if I ask them for something that they record, they do

that really well, and you can see the excitement. (Interview)

Overall, George said that he was still "navigating the waters" of teaching in the virtual classroom

and that he was hoping that it would get easier with time.

4.2.7.2 Challenges of teaching language virtually

George said that while online instruction had some advantages such as his students not

having to move long distances to come to class, that he still had observed more challenges in the

virtual environment. He said that learner distraction was more common online than in face-to-

face classrooms. That, coupled with internet connection problems, he said, made it more difficult

for him to tell what problem the student was having and thus, how to help them to come back to

class.

Online is kind of a little bit fuzzy because you don't know whether the student is

distracted or not, unless they put their video up there. Sometimes, even if their video is

up, sometimes the connection is bad. You can't tell what is happening. You might think

that they are distracted when in fact it's the connection. (Interview)

Another challenge George faced was that his students reserved the choice to keep their videos off

during the lesson as per the university regulations. George said, "ideally, I would love to see

everybody in class, see their videos. But there are some regulations on that from the university,

that we don't have to force students to show their faces." He said even though as a language

teacher, he could require his students to keep their videos on to see them pronouncing sounds

and so on, that he did understand the rationale of the university, that students came from different

backgrounds, and those backgrounds "show up when you force students to share their videos."

He said he did not want to be too invasive.

> Basically, for me, I warn the students when I'm going to need their videos on. I warn them beforehand all the time. So, even if they are from a poor background, they try to make the background look the way they feel comfortable. (Interview)

As a result of students having the choice to keep their videos off during the lesson, George said that sometimes he could not tell if they were all paying attention. He said, "it's kind of difficult because you want students to learn, but at the same time, you don't want to put too much pressure on them because they come from different backgrounds."

Claire shared that she usually kept her video off only because her classmates had theirs off too. She said that she joined the class a week late and when she came in, she noticed that her fellow students' videos were always off. That made her shy away from keeping hers on even though she wished she could. She said, "At first, I always felt weird about it. Because I felt like we should have it on, but I didn't want to be the only person with it on." She said she was simply conforming to what everybody else was doing.

Claire said that while she didn't think that keeping their videos off had deeply affected her ability to learn, that she wished they could have their videos on in class as that would make the class feel "more personal" and that they would have more of a connection with their teacher. Besides, she thought that it would facilitate some aspects of language learning like pronunciation.

> Like sometimes, I feel like in the beginning, if I had had my video on, maybe some of the pronunciation would have happened more quickly. If we had our videos on, we would be able to get closer with our professors. And maybe have a better, easier time with pronunciation because you can see the mouth. And you can see if you're pronouncing all of the word. (Interview)

She added that sometimes, internet connection problems would make it worse to hear pronunciation when one's video was off. "Sometimes, the sound would break up, and you can't hear the full word or if I'm saying the full word correctly."

George shared that his students' performance could significantly differ sometimes, and that he thought part of it was contributed by the virtual medium of the class.

> There is the issue of who does their work outside of class, and who doesn't. Also, there is the issue of who is the fast learner, who's the slow learner. All those issues come into play. And sometimes I feel like it's not just a question of someone being a slow learner, it's a question of someone not accessing class work because of internet problems. (Interview)

4.2.7.3 Institutional Support

The form of support that an institution provides to its employees often has an impact on the employees' success in carrying out their duties. George shared that during the first days of the switch to virtual teaching at his institution due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Zoom platform which was provided was not as stable. He explained that that most instructors experienced Zoom failure where their classes would crash or abruptly end because Zoom was overcrowded. He said he opted to use Skype with his students for some time to escape that problem.

> At first, I was using Skype. I wanted to use Zoom, but I predicted that the system was going to be overwhelmed and it would collapse, which indeed happened. Those who were teaching the next few days were complaining that in the middle of their lesson, many things would just stop, and they would not complete the lesson. (Interview)

He said that he was happy when the problem was fixed and Zoom became stable because he could do more on Zoom as a teacher compared to Skype.

> I could do more on Zoom than on Skype. The one thing that I couldn't do on Skype was the breakout rooms. I like my students to work in pairs or in groups. But on Skype, I couldn't do that. (Interview)

Another form of support that George received from his institution was training to support the switch to virtual teaching. He said the trainings were offered in the summer after his institution had moved all classes to the virtual setting in the middle of the spring semester. Those training sessions were meant to prepare teachers for the fall semester.

> There was some training over the summer for teaching online, but it wasn't specific to Zoom. There were links to Zoom and things that we could read about. So, I went for those links and read about Zoom on my own. (Interview)

In these trainings, George was able to interact with his fellow teachers and to consult with them on how they handled some aspects of their courses such as group work. He said that a platform was provided where people could ask questions, and that they also held a final meeting together.

> When I asked the others [teachers] how they dealt with group work and speaking, it was good that they mentioned to me that the only solution they had so far was just for the students to record themselves. So that provided me with something that I could do. It was something that I was really excited to know I could do. (Interview)

George mentioned that he still needed more support from his institution regarding teaching virtually, especially with regard to preparing his virtual courses on the LMS. He said he may need to work with somebody who was knowledgeable in that area to help him.

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4.2.8 A Summary of George's Results

Table 5 shows a summary of George's results including his teacher attributes, teaching practices and other factors affecting his teaching practices.

Table 5. A summary of George's results

Teacher attributes	Description
Supporting struggling learners	Addressing problems of individual students. Practicing patience with slower learners.
Teacher practices	
Greetings	Greeting students individually and then as a class in the target language.
Recycling content	Including previously covered content in dialogues with students as a form of review.
Explicit grammar instruction	Breaking down grammar rules and explaining them to students directly.
Correcting learner errors	Addressing learner errors as they arose.
Calling on individual students to participate	Balancing participation among students by calling on them individually.
Variety of activities	Incorporating various types of activities in each lesson.
Use of English	Using learners' first language (L1) to explain content to them.
Using realia	Bringing real objects to class for students to identify.
Acknowledging and praising learners' effort	Praising learners' correct responses.
Other factors	
Preparedness to teach virtually	George did not feel adequately prepared and was still adjusting to teaching virtually.
Challenges of teaching language virtually	Poor internet connection for some of his students, scarcity of instructional materials to use virtually.
Institutional support	George had received some support and was still in need of more regarding teaching virtually.

4.3 Case Study 3: Frank

4.3.1 The School

Frank teaches Swahili as a foreign language at a university in the Northeast of the United States. He teaches undergraduate and graduate students who are majoring in different disciplines in the university. Although Frank was teaching face-to-face before the COVID-19 pandemic, he said he mostly used the hybrid approach in his classes. He has been teaching at his current university for about five years. At the time of this interview, he was teaching virtually from home.

4.3.2 Teacher Background

4.3.2.1 Educational Background

Frank received his elementary, high school, and undergraduate education in Tanzania. He pursued a bachelor's degree in Education which prepared him to teach English and geography to high school students. After completing his undergraduate degree, he worked as a teacher in Tanzania for about one year before he relocated to the United States on a Fulbright scholarship. Frank enrolled at a university in the United States to pursue a master's degree in applied linguistics after completing his year-long Fulbright program.

Frank shared that for his master's degree, he was mainly interested in the use of digital technologies in language learning and teaching. Therefore, he said, he took several courses in Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL). He later enrolled in a PhD in the same university and focused his doctoral dissertation research in the same area of CALL.

> I joined a Ph.D. program in instructional technology at the same university. This is a
> program that is focusing on instructional design and educational technologies. So, a
> whole lot of things in there, online learning, designing, curriculum design, but most

important, the use of digital technologies, digital games, and related things in learning.

(Interview)

Frank noted that because of his background in instructional technology, he felt prepared when his institution shifted to remote teaching due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

4.3.2.2 Cultural Background and Learning Experience

Frank learned English as a second language from elementary school through college in Tanzania. He said that the focus of instruction was mainly on grammar, and that his teachers generally preferred the lecture method of instruction. He said that homework was also mostly grammar exercises and added that opportunities to interact with the teacher or with other students to practice speaking the language were limited.

In a class assignment, basically, you are given something, let's say some grammar notes. And then you are given instructions as "change the following sentences from reported speech to direct speech," things like those. So, there were not many interactions.

(Interview)

Frank noted that English played a secondary role in his country at the time, and that oral skills in the language were not in high demand. He said that Swahili was the main language of communication, and that English was taught as a subject. Frank speculated that it was the reason why his English teachers focused solely on grammar and overlooked developing learners' oral skills in the language.

He also shared that in the community where he grew up, informal interaction between the young and the old was limited. That young people hardly engaged in casual talk especially with those who were supposed to be their supervisors or caretakers. He said, "the level of interaction is of someone who is giving instructions, and someone who is supposed to follow the

instructions. Someone who is giving orders, and someone who is supposed to take the orders."
He added that in his culture, "a teacher is a parent." He said that just like a parent must be
respected, so should the teacher, and that because of that, interaction between the teacher and
students was very low both in class and outside of the class.

> It doesn't mean that there completely were no personal interactions, and friendships
> among teachers and students. But that's not something that was created so much in the
> professional foundations. It's something that was built on personal levels, that a student
> may just happen to be friends with a teacher. But not really the entire class having this
> kind of close interaction with the teacher. (Interview)

According to him, that gap between the teacher and students encouraged teacher-centered
language instruction because "students were not really in charge of their learning process. They
were supposed to just follow what the teachers had for them," and thus, limited interactions in
the classroom.

4.3.3 Teacher Training

Frank underwent training as a second language teacher both in Tanzania and in the
United States. In Tanzania, he pursued a bachelor's degree in linguistics and second language
teaching. Then, he pursued a master's degree in the US in applied linguistics with a focus on
second language teaching as well. He said he also earned certificates in Teaching English to
Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL), teaching English as a foreign language, and Computer
Assisted Language Learning (CALL) in his master's program. For his PhD, he studied
instructional design and technology.

Further, he noted that he received "more specialized training" on foreign language
teaching in the US. He listed examples such as the Summer Institute which was organized by the

National African Language Resource Center to offer special training on how to teach African languages, the Swahili STARTALK Program which mostly focused on teaching Swahili as a foreign language, academic conferences, and internal training workshops at the universities he has taught in. He shared that each of those trainings contributed differently to his teaching skills since each had a different area of focus.

> Some programs were focusing on technology, but some of them were, like the STARTALK program that I attended, was focusing on curriculum design, especially the backward design and proficiency-based language teaching. Those were the main focus. The summer institute at the University of Wisconsin, Madison, was mostly targeting how to teach different language skills. (Interview)

At his current university where he teaches, Frank mentioned that he had not really attended many internal training workshops but rather research talk sessions on various factors that affect teaching and learning. He said, the "kind of faculty trainings that we have here, maybe we invite someone to talk about, let's say students' fear, classroom engagement and things like those." He noted that while those talks informed his teaching practices as well, that they did not compare to the hands-on training he had received from the other workshops.

4.3.4 Teaching Experience

Frank started teaching Swahili in the United States in 2010 when he came over on a Fulbright scholarship. He held the position of a teaching assistant for one year, where he said his primary role was coordinating conversation hours for language learners. He said that from 2012, he started teaching as the primary teacher and someone who "had to design the curriculum and execute the entire learning plan for the entire semester."

The context of his teaching has mainly been college students. He has taught graduate and undergraduate students from the beginning level to the advanced level and beyond. He explained that he had "students of different kinds and different interests," and that for his very advanced students, he would discuss with them what they wanted to learn, and he would tailor their lessons to their needs. "I'll be like, okay, why don't we sit down, and you tell me what you want to learn, and we do that."

In addition to teaching in regular semester programs during fall and spring, Frank shared that he had also taught in contexts such as intensive summer programs in other universities. Besides teaching language, he has also taught courses on instructional technology and on the East African culture and has conducted study abroad programs in other areas. He commented that "there is some kind of interconnectedness" between the courses he teaches in that the other courses he has taught do influence his language teaching practices, and so do his language classes to the others.

> When I'm teaching things to do with computer assisted language learning, I use some of the skills I obtained and developed myself as I was teaching Swahili, but also my Swahili language classes have been influenced by those classes in different ways. (Interview)

He said that for instance, from his introduction to Swahili culture class, he gave his language students cultural tips such as on the importance of greeting people and shaking hands among Swahili speakers. In addition, he mentioned that he always allowed some time to his language students to ask him questions related to culture towards the end of the lesson.

> I ask them to ask me any question in English, about anything in the language, or anything in the Swahili culture, or anything that they imagine in their minds about the Swahili

culture as well. So, they do ask those questions. And I do answer those questions. So that

they also know [the culture]. (Interview)

Frank stated that as a teacher from a foreign country, his cultural background and FL learning experience differ from those of his students. He shared that he has faced some challenges in his language classes that arose from such cultural differences between him and his students. He gave an example of when one of his students felt that he had not graded them fairly and threatened to report him to the Dean. Frank said he was taken aback by the way the student approached him and added that that would hardly happen in his home culture.

The way they approached me was more like, from the culture that I'm from, you don't

talk like that to your teacher. You have to respect your teacher, even if you have

something that you're not so happy about. (Interview)

He said he has had to adjust some of his teaching practices to suit his American students to reduce the chances of problems occurring. For instance, he said that he did not reprimand his American students who did not meet course requirements as much as he would in Tanzania because it was against American culture. He said that while students in the US would most likely not take a direct warning kindly, that students in his country would not mind such a warning from their teacher.

Telling a student "Oh, you know, you are really good. You will do well. Don't worry

about it!" And things like those. In my culture, a teacher will call a spade a spade, not a

spoon. So, if a student is not doing well, you say "hey, you're not serious, you're not

taking this class seriously!" […] You can tell a student that [in Tanzania] and the student

will feel like, okay, this is just like a normal warning. But here [in the United States], if

you told the student, "You're not taking the class seriously," you might be in trouble.

(Interview)

He concluded by noting that most of the cultural challenges he has experienced with his students occurred at the beginning of his teaching career in the United States. He said, "I think I had those [challenges] usually at the beginning of my career here, but not really as much anymore. I don't have many problems with the students now."

4.3.5 Teacher Attributes

4.3.5.1 Promoting a Friendly Classroom Atmosphere

Frank's classroom appeared to be easygoing and relaxed. He used humorous statements often, such as when giving example sentences, and students laughed or smiled. Frank was sitting on a couch in his living room while teaching and used Zoom features such as the whiteboard to write down words that he needed students to remember or to differentiate, such as Swahili numbers *nane* vs *nne* and *sita* vs *tisa*. He said that he liked to make his students feel comfortable with him because then they could talk to him freely when they needed help.

Frank's students appeared to be very comfortable with him. They freely asked questions when they did not understand something. In their interviews, they agreed that Frank was a friendly instructor and that they felt free with him. Serah said she enjoyed going to her Swahili class because both her teacher and her classmates were nice, and that it was "a helpful, friendly atmosphere." She added that "it always feels like a nice break from work to just go learn Swahili."

As another way to promote positive relationships in the classroom, Frank noted that he talked to his students about the fact that they were all from different cultures and that they should therefore take note of that as they interacted in the learning environment.

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This is one thing I told my students, that we are from different cultures, and we should

learn to bear with each other. If there's anything that I do subconsciously and a student is

not happy with, this is one thing I always tell them, like if you feel like there's something

I'm not doing as I should, or maybe I don't see that I'm doing something wrong, tell me.

(Interview)

4.3.5.2 Encouraging Teamwork Among Students

Frank encouraged teamwork amongst his students in various ways. For instance, when

his students sought his advice on Day 2 regarding creating a social media group in which they

would prepare together for the upcoming quiz, he encouraged them to go ahead with the plan and

even gave them alternative options in case they wanted a social media account that did not

require their phone numbers. He said:

I think it's good. I do not discourage my students from doing that. Because, you know,

social groups and online groups, they have them to update each other and to share

whatever they can share anytime they want to. […] Groups like those help them to know

what is coming, or if there's something that they haven't done, or some updates about the

class. (Stimulated recall)

He noted that he was happy that his students had decided on their own to create a common group

because university regulations did not allow him to ask them to join social media groups for the

sake of the class.

As much as I know, I cannot force the students to be on any social network because there

are many security and privacy issues associated with social networks. So, when they

initiate that, I'm like, "Oh, yeah, that's good." But I cannot make it a requirement for my

students to be there, even though it's very important for them to be connected and to have those social network groups. (Stimulated recall)

Frank stressed the importance of such groups in fostering teamwork amongst students, which in turn facilitated learning. He said that such groups helped students to be close to each other and that when they felt comfortable with each other, they learned better. He said, "When you put them in pairs, for example, they learn more because they are comfortable with each other, they can speak to each other, they can open up to each other."

He commented that because his students were already comfortable with one another, that he could use games in class without worrying about them feeling uncomfortable if they ranked low in a game.

When a student ends up last on a game, they don't have anything to feel ashamed of, because they have that kind of feeling of a family, the class is a family, you know. They don't really feel much embarrassed about it. (Stimulated recall)

Serah commented in agreement with her teacher's thoughts. She said that they were very close as classmates that she did not worry about them judging her performance in the games.

4.3.6 Teacher Practices

4.3.6.1 Greetings

Frank greeted his students individually and then as a group at the beginning of each lesson. He would sometimes engage them in brief small talk such as by asking them what they did the previous day. On Day 3, he asked them what time they had gone to bed in the past evening as a review the previous lesson on time.

4.3.6.2 Utilizing Classroom Technologies

Frank made use of the Zoom features such as the chat section, breakout rooms, and the whiteboard to facilitate his lessons. During the discussion on the *siri ya mtungi* film on day 1, he provided students with the vocabulary they needed by typing it on the chat section and pronouncing it for them. On Day 2, Frank sent students to breakout rooms to practice more on numbers, counting and simple arithmetic after he introduced the topic in the main session. Students learned the necessary vocabulary and phrases for the activity before joining the breakout rooms. Frank said the breakout rooms feature on Zoom was useful in allowing students to practice using the language, to challenge each other at the same level, and to foster the spirit of collaboration.

> When they work in pairs, they usually practice two things: listening skills and speaking skills. So, both receptive and production skills. When they work in pairs, they are working with people with the same level of language skills. So, they can challenge each other at the same level. That's one thing. Besides, collaboration helps students to learn a lot.

He added that breakout rooms helped save time because students worked in groups and could ask each other questions at the same time. He said that having all his students on the Zoom classroom session and asking them questions one after another often took more time. To facilitate breakout room activities, Frank visited students in the breakout rooms, and addressed any difficulties they had. He then brought them back to the main session and asked if they had any further questions.

Frank shared that another benefit of the breakout rooms was that it allowed his students who were fast learners to move ahead by exploring more content on their own in the rooms. He

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said that while he encouraged that, he often had to regulate it because otherwise, students could get carried away by content that was not related to the topic they were covering in class at that moment.

Another Zoom feature that Frank used quite often was the whiteboard. He used it to explain concepts to learners during the lessons on numbers and time. He only wrote selective information on the whiteboard. On Day 3, for instance, after students learned how to tell time in Swahili, Frank led a practice exercise in which he wrote down different times on the white board and asked students what time it was. Students said the time out loud. He said that he rarely wrote on the board even in a regular classroom unless it was something he needed to highlight to students.

> I usually just write something that I think is very important. Also, sometimes I write when I want the students to pay attention to what I'm saying. Because if you're just saying, it can easily be hidden in a lot of other things that you say. But when I write, their eyes are focusing on what I'm writing, and they will listen better to the descriptions that I am providing. (Stimulated recall)

Students also shared their thoughts about the use of these Zoom features during the lessons. Eve said that she found breakout rooms to be helpful because "the other students all want to learn as well and so there is very little English, and we actually practice as we should." She added that it was also nice to speak with someone who was at her level and also made some mistakes, and that they could both help each other. On the other hand, Serah said that while she thought breakout rooms were helpful in general, that she got more out of the main classroom discussions where they could get feedback from the instructor. She said, "If there are just two of us and we make a mistake or get confused, it's difficult to correct ourselves." She added that in the main session,

she could hear four or five other people working through the same thing and she could retain more information from that.

4.3.6.3 Use of games

Frank frequently included games in his lessons, especially Quizlet and Kahoot games. On Day 1, he assigned students a Quizlet game on numbers, and on Day 2, students played a Kahoot game on numbers as well. The Quizlet activity required students to type in information while the Kahoot game required selection of an answer from the multiple choices given. Frank explained that he used games in his class to get students to review the vocabulary they had already learned in the assignments which they were required to complete before class.

> My students do homework assignment before they come to class. So, they will have learned the vocabulary which prepares them well to take part in the lesson. So, when they come in class, I'm trying to kind of refresh their memory of what they learned at home by playing those games. So, this activates some of the things that they had learnt already. (Stimulated recall)

Frank said that those classroom games were important in helping him assess learners' knowledge on a topic and to know who "wasn't putting in much work." He said that normally, the winner would be a different student each time. But when one similar student came last in every game, it was "a red flag." He said, therefore, that such games served as "a wake-up call" to those students were not doing adequate preparation before class.

> One of the benefits of games like those is that it helps those students who are not doing well, maybe because they're not working harder, to know that they need to wake up and do something so that they don't let other students down, or they don't let themselves down. (Stimulated recall)

Besides, he said he also used games because they were fun and kept students engaged and motivated. He mentioned that since games brought in competition, that students were challenged to do better each time.

> When students compete, everybody tries to get the right answer and to be the winner. And that helps them to learn at home because they know that they will be in a game. And if they're going to be last on the game, that may not look so good on them. (Stimulated recall)

His students also shared that they enjoyed playing these games in class and that besides breaking classroom monotony, the games were generally beneficial in refreshing their memories of previously covered content. Serah said, "I like doing the Quizlet activities. I think they're a nice break from Zoom and they do help with memorization of vocab, which can be difficult in more discussion-based classes," while Eve said, "it can be a fun challenge for myself to see how much I actually remembered and how fast I can recall it."

Some students also shared that they were a little worried about their performance in the games. Meghan commented that she prepared before class because she knew such games could come up. She said that she had felt a little stressed by the Quizlet game because she was not as confident with numbers yet. "I tried my best to be more patient and think about the numbers more carefully during the activity since one wrong answer would make the quiz restart for myself." She said the game was beneficial to her because afterward, she felt like she could think of Swahili numbers more quickly.

Frank displayed the results of the Kahoot game after it was over. Since only five students were in class that day, all their names were displayed on the screen from the first to the last.

Frank commented later that he did not worry about his students feeling uncomfortable if they ranked low in a game because of the friendly atmosphere they had already built in the classroom.

> This is something that I create from the very beginning of the class. Like I said, I like my students to be free, to be comfortable with each other and to be comfortable with me as well. So, when a student ends up last on a game, they don't have anything to feel ashamed of, because they have that kind of feeling of a family, the class is a family, you know. They don't really feel much embarrassed about it. (Stimulated recall)

His students confirmed his view by saying they did not feel embarrassed for ranking last in a game, but they noted that they felt happier when they did better. Meghan said, "I did not worry, as I don't really feel competitive with my classmates. As long as I am learning, I feel happy. However, I did enjoy getting the questions right." She added that she felt proud of how well she did in the game because it showed her that her practice paid off. Eve said, "the ranking does not really have any real significance in the class, and I do not think my classmates would care much how I did in comparison to them." She added that as long as she got the answer correct, winning was not as important. She added though that she felt a little stressed when the teacher was calling out the people who made mistakes. Finally, Serah said that theirs was a small class, and that they were very close as classmates that she did not worry about them judging her performance in the games. She added that she did not worry about the ranking because in any case, different people won every week and that "making one mistake can set you back for the whole exercise," so she did not give ranking a lot of weight.

4.3.6.4 Calling on Individual Students to Participate

Frank called on individual students to respond to questions in class more than he let them volunteer. On Day 2 for instance, he called on three students randomly and asked each of them to

count from one to ten, then in tens up to a hundred in Swahili as a review of the previous lesson's content. He also displayed clocks and called on individual students to read the time in Swahili. The final activity of that lesson involved the teacher asking individual students what time they went to bed the previous night. Frank said that he preferred to call on individual students because not all of them volunteered readily which could lead to unbalanced participation.

> Sometimes I ask them to volunteer. But sometimes there are students who will always volunteer. And there are students who will not at any time volunteer, because maybe they are not confident enough. So, calling their names helps to bring out those who may be in a hideout somewhere, or who are not so much comfortable. (Stimulated recall)

Frank added that sometimes, some students would have the right answers but would hesitate to volunteer thinking that their classmates could view it as showing off. "But when you ask them to answer, they will be like, 'Well, what do I do? I was asked to produce the answer.'" He said that the most important thing for him was to make sure that those students who were not confident to volunteer also participated and that the entire classroom was engaged in learning.

Frank also said he preferred to call on individual students to check if every student had understood what he was teaching. "There could be one or two who haven't. And because they feel like they shouldn't make everybody realize that they haven't understood, they keep quiet," he said. "So, by pointing at students individually, you get to know that, okay, this student is aware of what we're doing here," he added.

Frank explained that he had never been in a position where he had to force his students to participate. He said that if he asked a student a question, such as the meaning of a certain word, and they said, "I don't remember," or "I don't know," he usually would skip them and ask

another student to help. "This also helps the other student to know that "okay, maybe it is only me who doesn't know that, but someone else does.""

4.3.6.5 Correcting Learner Errors

Frank used a variety of strategies to correct his learners' errors. One was to correct errors immediately they came up. For instance, on Day 3, he randomly asked his students what time each had gone to bed the previous night as a review of time. He called on Meghan to respond first and when she left out some key words in her response, he corrected her immediately by telling her which words she had left out. Later, Frank shared that he corrected such errors so that learners did not fossilize them. Meghan commented on her teacher's correction saying, "I felt a bit embarrassed as the error seemed so obvious once he pointed it out, but the initial way I said it seemed correct to me at first."

In another instance, Frank displayed a list of questions on a slide and called on individual students to answer them. Questions were such as how many hours are in a day, how many minutes are in an hour, half an hour, etc. One student made a mistake and mispronounced the word for "thirty." The teacher pointed out and corrected her error. The student appreciated the correction and noted that she realized her mistake after being corrected.

Frank did not always correct each error as soon as it came up. He sometimes would allow his students some time to think and reframe their answers before interrupting to correct their errors. He would also give students hints to help them come up with the correct answer. He said he delayed correcting his learners' errors immediately especially if it was a question that he had asked earlier, or if he had expectations that students should know the right answer by then. For instance, Meghan made an error while trying to read time and she mixed up the word order in the sentence. Frank pointed the error out and explained to her and the entire class the structure of the

sentence and how she should formulate her sentence, then gave her a chance to try again. In another instance, one student read time wrongly by seemingly interpreting the Swahili clock in English. Frank guided the student to correct her error. He later said, "This is something that I think that she knows. So, I didn't want to conclude that she was wrong before I knew what exactly she wanted to say."

As another way of correcting his students' errors, Frank asked them to translate what they said in L2 (Swahili) to L1 (English). For instance, when one student repeated the question word *mangapi* 'how many' in her response, he asked her what *mangapi* meant in English. The student said, "how many," which led her to realize her mistake. Frank later explained that the translation strategy allowed for students to correct their own mistakes by first making them notice the mistake in the language they were more familiar with. Secondly, he said that by making students translate to L1, he too could understand what the student meant to say and therefore, realize if the response was erroneous or not.

Similarly in another instance, he displayed another slide with clocks. He then asked students what the time was in the first clock. When several students repeatedly made an error reading time on one clock in Swahili, he asked them to first read it in English, then later asked them what that would be in Swahili. That made them all realize the mistake they were making. One of them finally put it correctly in Swahili. Frank said that he liked to use this strategy especially when the concept was quite difficult for students to grasp.

Another strategy that Frank used to correct his learners' errors was to let other students correct their classmates' errors. When one student made a mistake, Frank would select another to speak or ask the entire class if anyone picked up on the mistake. He explained that he did this to encourage critical thinking among students.

A student correcting a student is a good strategy for helping other students to learn to think about things which other students say critically. So, when a student makes an error, instead of me correcting that, I would ask other students, and this would help them to think about what the other student said and try to produce the correct form. (Stimulated recall)

He also said that the strategy helped him as the teacher to assess other students' understanding of the concept in question to see if it was only a problem for one student or more, and thus he could plan on how to best address it. He said, "If I ask them to do that, and none of them is able to, then I know that this is something that maybe I need to find a better way to help my students understand better." Students expressed mixed feelings about the use of that strategy. Eve said she did not like it and preferred that the teacher pointed her towards the error instead. She said, "I would prefer him to ask a targeted question around where the mistake was so I could realize what it was and fix it, instead of just moving on to someone else." On the other hand, Meghan said she did not mind it as long as she was corrected. She said, "When I make a mistake, I like to be given an example of what I am supposed to do. I feel that when I listen to my classmates say things correctly, I learn better myself." Serah said it all depended on the type of mistake and how quickly the teacher moved forward.

Sometimes if I am really struggling or clearly confused, I find it helpful to move on to another student. But sometimes when we move on very quickly, I don't have time to understand what my mistake was and then don't catch where I went wrong. (Stimulated recall)

In summary, Frank stated that he liked to encourage students to correct their own errors because it was important for them to be able to. He felt that if he as the teacher corrected them directly all the time, that he may not help them to learn in the long run.

4.3.6.6 Practicing Learner Autonomy

Frank practiced learner autonomy in his classroom by using a variety of activities such as games, watching films, and roleplay activities. He let learners engage in discussions, figure out their own errors and discover information in the process of learning. He said, "Students have to be engaged in everything that we do in the classroom. It is really about them. It's not about me." He described his job as the one to help students learn rather than lead the learning process. He assigned his students homework regularly and they would complete it before class so that they came to class prepared for the lesson of the day.

> I do provide them with homework to do. Right now, my curriculum has two blocks of homework. They have homework that they do before they come to class on Monday and on Wednesday. So, students are engaged, and they are at the center of the learning process. (Interview)

He said that he always reminded his students that his job as the teacher was "to lay the foundation" and that their job was "to bring up the walls and put a roof." He believed that autonomy allowed learners to learn beyond what they covered in the classroom which was often a limited number of topics.

> At the end of the day, it's not me who will have to speak the language, it is them. So, if they don't have autonomy, they're likely not going to learn more. It's likely that they are only going to learn the things that I teach them, which are not going to be enough.

Frank added that he believed that learner autonomy boosted learner motivation. He noted that since learner autonomy meant students being in control of their learning process, it helped the students to be motivated.

> So, it does help them to seek for more content and help as well. To work or to tell me like, "Hey, I think I'm still struggling here," or "I will need to help with this one." So, learner autonomy is really very good and very important in language learning.
> (Interview)

He concluded by noting that while he practiced learner autonomy, that he monitored his students in the process because some students could overwhelm themselves with content "beyond what they can bear."

Students' views on learner autonomy were mostly in agreement with their teacher's. Eve noted that she enjoyed working on tasks independently with her classmates who were at the same level as her so they could both help each other discover new knowledge. Serah also commented that she enjoyed working autonomously but added that she felt more confident about her work after she received guidance or feedback from her teacher.

4.3.6.7 Joking with Students

Frank often joked with students during the lessons. He said that he joked with his students to keep the class at ease. "I want my students to be comfortable with me. To know that, you know, learning is not a fight, that 'I have to be serious, this is a fight,' no," he said. In one instance, he told two students who made errors in their responses that he would charge each a dollar if they repeated those mistakes. For one student, it was repeating the question word in her response and for another, Meghan, it was incorrect pronunciation of a word they had practiced

pronouncing in class. Frank said that joking did help his students remember which errors to avoid.

> They know that this could be a joke, but just talking about money, for example, makes them remember that although this is hypothetical, I would have lost some money if I repeated this error. So, they think about that hypothetically, in terms of money. But for me, it's to create some kind of reminder every time they do that. (Stimulated recall)

Frank thought that even his students liked his joking strategy. He said, "and I find that students would even sometimes remind me like 'Oh, now I know that I have to give you this much money for this error that I made.'" One of his students, Meghan, confirmed that by saying, "I enjoy joking around in class, as sometimes I get flustered, and humor helps me feel a bit better." As one of the students who were told they would be penalized for repeating certain errors, she said that she took the joke in good faith and added that even though it was a joke, that she did take the teacher's advice to heart and made sure to avoid making the same error again.

Frank explained that the jokes he used depended on the situation he was addressing. For instance, he mostly joked about penalizing students only for the errors he thought they should have gotten past. He said that when such errors occurred, he felt that the student was just not being cautious as they should be and needed something to remind them to be more careful.

> I do joke but when I use a joke like that, it is only when I realize that this student is making a mistake that they shouldn't. And they make that frequently. So, I realize that this is because they are not being cautious when they produce the language. So, the only way to make them remember that is to put that in a way that they would think like, "Okay, if I did this again, I would lose some money. If I lose some money, I need to be extra careful here so that I don't lose everything."

4.3.6.8 Focusing on Building Oral Skills

Frank's lessons largely focused on developing learners' oral skills. Most of the activities performed in all three lessons consisted of speaking. Such were the discussion on the film that students had watched prior to class, as well as them responding to questions about time. Students seemed to only take notes of the words or phrases they needed to remember but mostly answered questions orally in class. Frank shared why he preferred to focus more on oral skills.

> So, the goal of language is to communicate. And the primary form of communication is oral communication. Written language is still important, especially in the age of technology where people chat a lot. But again, we want our students to speak. When they're confident in speaking, then they can go for other skills. (Stimulated recall)

Frank also addressed the other language skills in his course content, but he mostly assigned them as homework. He said he liked to use the hybrid approach, which allowed for students to access content and prepare before class so that they could use class time to practice speaking. For example, on the lesson on numbers, he said that students had already learned the vocabulary for numbers in the homework that was due before that class. He also had them watch videos before class, and then he would engage them in discussions in class.

> Every module of mine, I usually cover one module per week, I have different sections of speaking, listening, writing and reading. So, they do all the things depending on what I think is important. They do some of the assignments on reading and they submit and when we go to class, we do not read. My main focus for lower levels of Swahili language is speaking. Interpersonal Communication, I should say.

He said as a result of that strategy, that his learners' oral skills grew tremendously within just the first year of learning, which he found to be impressive.

It does help a lot. Many times, I've had students who would even perform at the

Advanced Low level by the end of the second semester. It does happen a lot because

they're speaking a lot. (Interview)

To encourage his lower-level learners to speak more in class, Frank selected content that

encouraged them to engage in classroom discussions. He said that the *Siri ya Mtungi* film for

instance did help to provoke students to speak.

When they see something that they don't like, or they like, they want to share that and

that means they're going to find the language [with which] to share that. So, all that will

be speaking, and it does help a lot. So, students are speaking a lot. (Stimulated recall)

In relation to building learners' oral skills, Frank mostly used Swahili in his class and

encouraged learners to use it too. He discouraged them from using English. For instance, on Day

3, he displayed a slide with a collection of clocks that showed different times and called on

individual students to read the time in Swahili. One student used English, and he reminded her

not to do that. His students observed the rule and mostly used Swahili to communicate. For

instance, if they needed help finding a Swahili word for something, they asked for it in Swahili

using the Swahili equivalent of "How do you say X in Swahili?"

4.3.6.9 Explaining Difficult Concepts in Detail

When he introduced the lesson on time, Frank started by explaining to students the

difference between Swahili time and English time. He then gave students a formula for how to

convert English time to Swahili time. He later noted that Swahili time was one of the most

difficult concepts for his students to grasp and that he knew he had to explain it well. He added

that it was one of those lessons that forced him to lecture a lot in class.

Students commented that they found the teacher's explanation of the concept quite helpful. Eve for instance said that she was very confused until the teacher mentioned that day and night were almost exactly equal in the Swahili world. Serah also commented that she felt overwhelmed by the subject because of the mental math involved in conversions. "The concept is easy enough to catch on to, but I get stressed when I have to perform simple math on the spot in front of others," she said. She added that the difference between hour vs. time in Swahili also made sense once the teacher explained it.

4.3.6.10 Repetition of Content

Frank introduced new content in small bits and included a lot of repetition. For instance, the main lesson of Day 1 was on numbers. He introduced numbers orally. Students repeated after him in counting one to five then six to ten, then one to ten. This activity was repeated several times, each time increasing speed. Students repeated after teacher, then each student counted alone when the teacher called upon them. Then, students individually counted backwards from ten to one. The teacher then introduced more numbers orally. He pronounced them and students repeated after him e.g., ten, twenty, thirty, to one hundred. Also, after students counted orally, they went on to count fruits, then performed simple arithmetic to get them to memorize the numbers better.

4.3.7 Other Factors Affecting Their Teaching Practices

4.3.7.1 Preparedness to Teach Online

Frank said that the switch to virtual teaching at his institution due to the COVID-19 pandemic found him prepared because he was already used to designing his courses online. He said that although he had not taught any course purely online prior to COVID-19, he had been

using the hybrid model for a long time where he would set up all of the coursework on the LMS. Students would meet in class but make their submissions online. He said, "The course that I'm using right now, for example, is the course that I've developed for years. I have been using it for years." He added that he had a lot of online instructional materials which he had developed previously.

Besides having ready materials, Frank mentioned that he was well versed with several LMSs such as Canvas and Blackboard. He said that the only thing that had changed for him was the medium of instruction which was now on Zoom. He explained that due to the interactive nature of Zoom and availability of features like breakout rooms and screen sharing, that he could still run his class almost in the same way as a face-to-face class. He said, "I can share my screen and still play those games that I used to play in the classroom." He said that he was happy with the experience that he already possessed which meant he didn't need to change much of what he used to do.

Frank commented that he rarely took any of his students' assignments on paper even when he was teaching face to face. He instead required students to submit all their work on the LMS. He said that made things very easy for him as he had set up some of the assignments to be automatically graded. In summary, he said that the experience he had gained from hybridizing most of his classes made the switch to virtual teaching easy for him.

4.3.7.2 Challenges from Teaching Online

Frank thought that teaching virtually was convenient as it took less time to get ready for class. He pointed out however, that there were things he could not control in virtual classrooms. One was managing time while facilitating group work during the lesson. He said that because of the way Zoom was set up, he could not make his students speak to each other concurrently in the

main session, and thus, breakout rooms were the only option for pair or group work. He said, "when I put students in groups, when I visit one group, it is only that group that I can visit at that time, I cannot hear what is going on in the other group." He explained that this meant spending a good amount of time visiting each group which in the end would take more minutes than it would in a face-to-face classroom. Further, he explained that time wastage was bound to happen because the groups he had already visited would be idle as he visited the rest, and the pace of learning was slowed down a lot.

Another challenge was learner distractedness in the virtual classroom. Frank noted that while face-to-face classrooms were designed to support learning and reduce distractions, that in virtual learning, "You don't have much control of what the students will be doing." He said that the varying backgrounds for each participant in a virtual classroom provided multiple avenues for distraction. He said, "If you have students in an online class, they can be distracted by what is going on in the cameras of other students." He gave an example of a student who once came to class and forgot to turn off the TV, and another of students who had other people in the background talking or doing other distracting things.

Frank also said that there were topics he struggled to teach in the virtual setting, especially those regarding culture. He gave the example of handshaking which he said was an important cultural aspect among Swahili speakers.

> For example, we are teaching students about handshakes, how can you tell your students to greet each other here? It cannot happen. So, there are things which will require kind of physical presence and meeting with your students. That cannot happen in online settings. (Interview)

In the end, Frank argued that face to face classes would still be more impactful for his learners compared to the virtual classes. This was despite his advanced skills in instructional technology. He said he preferred the hybrid model which was a combination of both online and face to face.

4.3.7.3 Institutional Support

Frank commented that he was happy with the way his institution addressed their needs as instructors, such as by allowing them to move their classes to the virtual setting after the COVID-19 pandemic hit.

> The fact that they were willing to make our classes remote, I think that was very important support, especially at the time of COVID-19 where many of us would not be so much comfortable being in places where we'd have to physically meet students. (Interview)

While he described his university as supportive, he said that they as faculty had to push for some services to be provided to facilitate virtual teaching. He said that his university provided them with the virtual platform to teach from after they collectively pushed for it as faculty.

> So, my university didn't have Zoom enterprise before. So, when COVID-19 started back in March, we made some noise. Maybe they also saw that it was important that we had Zoom. So, the university had to provide that to make sure that teaching online was going to be successful. (Interview)

Secondly, Frank said that his institution provided support regarding internet connection as well as electronic devices to aid in the running of his classes. He said, "At some point, my internet wasn't working well, and the university gave me some mobile device that I use for internet." Further, he said that his department had provided him with a tablet which he used for one of his

classes and that the university had even offered him a laptop, but he did not take one as he had his own.

Frank also shared about additional training that his institution offered to teachers as they switched to the new virtual setting of teaching. He said that he himself participated in giving those trainings because of his strong background in instructional technology. Even though he was not in need of these skills, he was allowed a chance to train other professors which may have impacted him positively as he was able to put his skills into practice.

> I was providing training on, we called that training Instructional Design 101. So, we were trying to help our professors to be able to design their classes on the learning management system. I didn't really need much of technical support, because I know how to do those things. (Interview)

Frank summed up by saying that the opportunity to teach virtually opened a window for him to "do what he likes best to do," that is, to utilize classroom technologies to the fullest in teaching his students. He said, "if you know how to do things but the university didn't let you do what you think you should do, I think that would have been very problematic." He said that he found the flexibility which the university showed as a great form of support.

4.3.8 A Summary of Frank's Results

Table 6 shows a summary of Frank's results including his teacher attributes, teaching practices and other factors affecting his teaching practices.

Table 6. A summary of Frank's results

Teacher Attributes	Description
Promoting a friendly classroom atmosphere.	Interacting with students freely, use of humor.
Encouraging teamwork among students	Encouraging students to create study groups.
Teacher practices	
Greetings	Greeting students individually and then as a class in the target language.
Utilizing classroom technologies	Incorporating various forms of technologies into the lessons.
Use of games	Having students play different learning-related games during the lesson.
Calling on individual students to participate	Balancing participation among students by calling on them individually.
Correcting learner errors	Using a variety of strategies to correct learner errors
Practicing learner autonomy	Assigning learners tasks that allow them to discover new information on their own.
Joking with students	Using jokes to discourage learners from making avoidable mistakes.
Focusing on building oral skills	Planning lessons that focused more on speaking skills.
Explaining difficult concepts in detail	Taking time to explain new concepts to students
Repetition of content	Repeating new content in different formats to increase chances of mastery.
Other factors	
Preparedness to teach online	Frank was mostly prepared to teach online because of his background in instructional technology.
Technology use and challenges	Learner distractedness in the virtual environment; slower pace of the lesson.
Institutional support	Frank had received most of the support he needed regarding virtual instruction.

4.4 Case Study 4: Joshua

4.4.1 The School

Joshua teaches Swahili as a foreign language at a university in the Midwest of the United States. His students are undergraduates and graduates who are majoring in different disciplines in the university. He was teaching his courses purely face-to-face before the COVID-19 pandemic forced his institution to move all instruction to the virtual setting. He has been teaching at his current university for around fifteen years. At the time of this interview, Joshua was teaching virtually from home.

4.4.2 Teacher Background

4.4.2.1 Educational Background

Joshua completed his primary and secondary education in western Kenya. He noted that he learned English as a subject from upper primary school through secondary school. His secondary education entailed two sections: the ordinary level, and advanced level, the latter in which he chose to specialize in languages after failing to join medical school.

> I wanted to study chemistry, math, and physics, so that I could go to medical school. But, when I took the national exams, I did not do very well in chemistry. So that really meant I couldn't go to medical school. And so, I joined back to the same high school and studied Swahili, English, economics, and geography. (Interview)

Joshua thereafter joined one Kenyan university and pursued a bachelor's degree in arts. He said that even though he performed well in languages, he was unsure of what he wanted to do with them until after an impactful encounter with one of his professors at the university which made him decide to become a language teacher. The professor who at the time taught one of the required courses for Joshua's major wanted to reduce his class size, so, he gave his students a

test and announced that those who would score below 50% would have to drop the class. Joshua said he ensured that he scored above 50% and that he decided there and then that he was going to prove the professor wrong by pursuing a career in the same field.

> And then I told myself, I am going to study linguistics all the way to PhD, and then come back and be a professor at the same university. So that's when I decided to be a professor, when I was in my second week, in first year in college. (Interview)

In addition to influencing his career choice, Joshua noted that that professor's attitude also served as a push for him to work harder in school which led to him winning a scholarship to pursue a master's degree in the same university.

For his master's degree, Joshua studied English and linguistics. After earning his master's degree, he started teaching at a university in Kenya and enrolled in a PhD program in the same institution. He then left to pursue a doctoral degree in the United States four years later and transferred his doctoral credits to the new college. Joshua pursued his doctoral degree in sociolinguistics.

4.4.2.2 Cultural Background and Learning Experience

Joshua shared that his language learning experience in both primary and secondary school mainly entailed grammar instruction, writing compositions, and answering comprehension questions based on passages. He noted that his schools followed pre-determined curricula for language teaching which were largely grammar focused.

> Teachers could teach us all the structures about nouns, derivation of noun classes. And, changing of words from one grammatical category to another, and how to construct maybe different varieties of sentences, sentences style, and tenses. (Interview)

Joshua noted that in his language classrooms, interaction was minimal both between students and the teacher and amongst students themselves. He said, for instance, that his teachers rarely assigned them pair or group work.

> I don't remember working in pairs or in groups at all. The only way, the most common method or style of instruction was the teacher asking students to answer questions and the others would listen. (Interview)

He also pointed out that interaction between students and teachers was limited even outside of the classroom or school environment. He said that teachers possessed a lot of power over students by virtue of both their status and age. Joshua said that in his community, younger people were expected to show respect to the older people and that meant limited talking among the young when older people were present. He described his school environment as "stricter and more colonial" with no room for discussion. For instance, Joshua mentioned that punishment was frequent in his school, sometimes for very minor reasons.

> The frequency of punishment. Physical punishment when you are late, teachers didn't want to know what reasons made you not complete an assignment. Even when you got something wrong. There was a lot of power on the teacher. (Interview)

He added that because of the power imbalance, there was a lot of bad blood between teachers and students, and he disliked some of his teachers because of the way they conducted their classes. He gave an example of one of his English teachers who punished them for making errors on pronunciation, yet he had not taught them how to pronounce those words. "I was thinking, that's not how teaching should be," he said. He pointed out that as a student, he did not have any power to share his thoughts with the teacher about things he did not like about his way of teaching.

He commented that as a result of his own experience as a student, when he himself became a teacher in Kenya, that he punished his students much less. He said, "I could debate whether I should punish the student or not. I had to ask, 'in what situation should I apply this kind of punishment?'"

Comparing the culture in the schools he attended in Kenya to those he attended in the United States, Joshua said that the level of interaction in classrooms in the United States was higher, and he attributed that to the societal structure in the United States.

> In the U.S., from my experience, when it comes to the power dynamics between the student and the teacher, I think the gap is very small. There's mutual respect, you can be very close to your teachers, you can be free to ask questions or to express what you think. And I think there's room for people airing their views freely in an academic environment. […] So, there's more freedom for the American student. (Interview)

Having been raised and educated in a different culture from that which he is currently teaching in, Joshua shared that he has experienced some challenges in his language classrooms in the United States. He gave an example of when a student reacted negatively to his explanation of a certain grammatical rule in the classroom by openly suggesting that his explanation was wrong. He said that he was taken aback by his student's reaction but that he later consulted his seniors and had to adjust his way of explaining things to the students. Joshua noted that those challenges mostly occurred in his early years of moving to the United States from Kenya.

4.4.3 Teacher Training

Joshua's undergraduate training was in English, Swahili, and linguistics. However, he was not trained to be a language teacher himself. He said that he was "not trained on the methodology or the pedagogy of teaching a foreign language or a second language," (interview).

Therefore, when he first started teaching Swahili in the US as a doctoral student, he said that he just applied his own experience in teaching his American students. His university did not have programs for training instructors, nor did they have TAs who would teach foreign languages at the time.

Joshua attended his first teacher training workshop in 2009, around four years after he had been teaching Swahili. He said that the training was offered under a summer institute called the Summer Cooperative African Language Institute (SCALI), a Title VI (see McCann, 2002) funded intensive program that lasted for seven weeks. He explained that the training took place for two days prior to the start of the summer program. At the training, they were given opportunities to present mock lessons and critique each other's presentations. "I think the skills I acquired from that workshop were very good," he said.

He received two other similar trainings later, one which was called STARTALK (Ellis, 2016), a certificate program that lasted for three weeks and was offered by the National African Language Resource Center. Joshua said he received "hands-on training" on how to teach Swahili as a second or foreign language in the United States

> I remember they focused on curriculum development. We were trained on how to use the
>
> backward design to plan for classes, how to prepare a lesson plan, even how to design a
>
> syllabus or a curriculum. I learned quite a lot. How to implement a lesson, how to begin
>
> your class, how to go all the way, and how to wind up your class. (Interview)

In addition, Joshua shared that the training workshops exposed him to different methodologies for teaching a foreign language. "They focused on the communicative approach, where we were trained on how mostly to teach in the target language," he said. Further, Joshua said he received

training on how to select which materials to use to teach, how to vary his materials, and how to develop them.

In addition to those trainings, Joshua said he had also attended some trainings in the recent past that were offered by his own university. He said that he was in the process of completing an eleven-week online training course on introduction to online teaching. In that class, Joshua said he learned a variety of things regarding teaching a language online which are benefitting him in his current virtual medium of teaching.

> I learned a lot on how online teaching works. Before we finished the class, our instruction
> was transitioned to a virtual platform. So, I was using the same skills I had acquired in
> that class to teach online.

He added that he and his colleagues in the department had also been trained on how to use the university's LMS, such as how to upload and arrange materials on it, and how to use the gradebook. "I find all those skills beneficial as I teach all of my classes currently," he said.

4.4.4 Teaching Experience

Joshua has teaching experience in both Kenya and the United States. He said that after earning his master's degree in applied linguistics in Kenya, he worked for four years as a lecturer before he moved to the United States. He moved to the United States to pursue his PhD in sociolinguistics, and he has been in the United States for around 17 years. He said he started teaching Swahili as a foreign language soon after arrival to the US.

> So, I started teaching Swahili as a teaching assistant. I had a professor who was my
> supervisor for five years when I was a TA. I was always teaching one class. If it's
> elementary Swahili, one in the fall, and elementary Swahili two in the spring. (Interview)

He said that most of his learners were undergraduates and the class sizes used to be large. He also shared that often he would have graduate students whose goals with learning Swahili were for research purposes in different disciplines.

> Sometimes, we could get graduate students come to learn Swahili as regular students because they were doing research in East Africa. Most likely those who were interested in the African history, or some environmental studies in Africa. (Interview)

4.4.5 Teacher Attributes

4.4.5.1 Promoting a Warm Classroom Atmosphere

Joshua interacted closely with his students. He chatted with them at the beginning of class and asked them how they were doing or what they had eaten. If a student missed class, he asked them why they did. He said that he did so to model an atmosphere which his students would be comfortable with. Joshua thought that the switch to virtual teaching had caused detachment to both teachers and students, and that his students were in more need of his support. He said that students were also stressed because of the prevailing circumstances of COVID-19, the presidential election between Trump and Biden, which was ongoing at that time, and challenges with technology access and use.

> As a professor, my classroom, I model an atmosphere in my classroom that students are comfortable with. They can make mistakes, they can miss a class if there is an emergency. So, students have to understand from day one, for me as an instructor, that they have freedoms to go through situations which even if they are outside of what I require, then they can explain their situations later. (Interview)

Joshua explained that his own experiences as a student influenced what he considered appropriate teacher behavior. He said that there were some classes he wasn't motivated to attend

because he felt that the teachers were distant and wielded a lot of power. He believed that a good teacher was one with whom students felt comfortable to have dialogues with both in class and outside of the classroom. He said, "When you are molding young people, when you are assisting them to adjust for life tomorrow, I think there should be that mutual respect, and a sense of assisting." He added that the way a teacher modeled their class and the messages they shared with students all influenced learners' motivation and thus, success in the course.

Joshua commented that learner motivation for him was not restricted to the classroom only. He shared that the COVID-19 pandemic particularly made him more aware of the support he needed to give his students both in and out of the classroom. He said, for instance, that he frequently sent his students reminders about upcoming tasks, lesson recordings, and new schedules because he knew they could easily miss some information because of the prevailing circumstances. He said, "My job is to assist. I want to communicate to my students because motivation goes beyond when you are delivering that lesson to capturing and sustaining student interest or encouraging student participation and sharing the power in the classroom."

His students commented that they liked how their teacher conducted the class. Amanda said that she felt comfortable to ask questions in the classroom because it did not feel scary to do so, and Jacinta added that she felt free to answer questions in class even she did not know the answer because she knew that the teacher would not embarrass her for getting it wrong.

4.4.6 Teaching Practices

4.4.6.1 Greetings and Small Talk

Joshua started his lessons with greetings and small talk with students. On Day 1, he greeted his students and asked them what they had eaten for lunch (Observation 1). He chatted with those who were present as they waited for the rest of the students to join. On Day 2, he

asked students how they were doing. One student said she was having computer difficulties. Joshua proceeded to teach her and the entire class how to say that in Swahili and explained the grammar around that sentence such as the tense used (Observation 2). He commented that he realized that the student wanted to express herself in Swahili but got stuck and went back to English. So, he decided to help her say the sentence in Swahili because he thought it was a relevant sentence to the class even though it wasn't in the lesson plan.

> I thought it was another way as we waited for [that student] to settle down, we could be doing something beneficial to everybody in the class. And it's a real problem. To say, "I have issues with my computer, or technology," I find it very relevant. And so, I didn't have to wait to plan a lesson on the same. So I thought, this is quite relevant, and to keep my other students busy, and to record it there for [that student] when she is able to come on to class, she should find it on the chat. (Stimulated Recall)

On Day 3, Joshua greeted students and while he engaged in small talk with them, he asked Amanda why she had missed class the previous day. Joshua shared that another reason why he engaged his students in small talk was because by showing interest in how they were doing outside of the classroom, he could build strong relationships with his students.

His students also shared that they liked how their teacher showed concern for them. Jacinta said, "I feel like Joshua is a lot more like, laid back and actually concerned with, like, each person, and is understanding. I really like that." (Stimulated Recall)

4.4.6.2 Acknowledging and Praising Learners' Effort

Joshua acknowledged his students' contributions and correct responses in class by using praise words such as "good," or by thanking the student. For instance, during Observation 2, Jacinta gave an example sentence, and it was correct. The teacher was impressed by it and

praised her by saying "That's a good sentence, Jacinta." Joshua said he praised his students because he wanted to make them aware that he appreciated their effort.

> I give praises instantly because they are acquiring a language. I want to appreciate their effort. So, my verbal appreciation in class is because I want my students to know that when they make an effort, I appreciate that effort. (Stimulated Recall)

Amanda confirmed that by saying that her teacher's praises were not only encouraging, but also gave her confidence by confirming that her answer was correct.

Sometimes, Joshua would also point out which aspects of the answer given by the student were interesting. For instance, while reviewing homework on the use of the passive voice, Jacinta pointed out that she had noticed one odd sentence from the list they were given which did not require its verb to be changed into the passive voice. She asked the teacher to confirm if indeed that was true. Joshua acknowledged and praised her observation. He then explained to the other students why Jacinta's observation was right. He said, "I wanted to share the discovery she had made with the rest of the class. I wanted to take that time to explain, so they could be on the same page."

4.4.6.3 Joking in Class

Joshua maintained a relaxed and friendly classroom atmosphere throughout his lessons. He and his students cracked jokes in class every now and then. Most of those jokes arose from the content being covered in class. For instance, while teaching students how to use the verb "love" in its subjunctive form, Joshua jokingly told one of his students who had earlier given a sentence about his girlfriend that "you should love her." Students laughed. In another instance, while talking about the Swahili word for bankrupt, they made jokes about how the word 'bankrupt' came to be. Jacinta said, "it is a combination of 'bank' plus 'erupt' as in explode, like

your bank account explodes and you have nothing left." They all laughed and went on with the lesson. Joshua said he joked often with his students because he thought it was important in the process of learning and that it boosted their motivation.

> It's part of my teaching style. I know from experience, when you are teaching grammar, you find that you're the one who's speaking most of the time. So, one of the things I normally do is to bring some light moments into my classroom. (Stimulated Recall)

He said he liked to bring in jokes at intervals during the lesson to energize his students. According to him, when students heard a joke in class, they either wanted the joke to continue or they got some extra energy and looked forward to another joke.

> When they know that you as a teacher are fond of using jokes as breaks in the lesson, you catch their attention, and you sustain it. So, that's one way I keep my students engaged in the class. And I do that as frequently as I can, depending on the content we are handling at that time. (Stimulated Recall)

His students also shared that they enjoyed joking with their teacher in class. Jacinta explained that they were always laughing in class because of the stories the teacher shared with them and that it helped enliven the classroom.

4.4.6.4 Calling on Individual Students to Speak

Joshua called on individual students to answer questions in class more than he let them volunteer. He said that the approach he chose depended on the participation level of his students, or a pattern in class that day or previously. He added that it was specific students or only one student who always volunteered answers, and that therefore, by calling on individual students to speak, he could ensure balanced participation.

I have to share the time equitably and I want them to know that I am not going to just ask for anybody to volunteer an answer. And we end up having one student or two students dominating the interaction in class. So, to share time in a more equitable way among the students, they have to know that I am going around all of them. And I want them to think. (Stimulated Recall)

On Day 2, while teaching a lesson on subjunctives, Joshua gave students a sentence to translate. Jacinta volunteered to answer but the teacher stopped her as he wanted another student, who hadn't spoken in a while, to speak. He called on that student who hesitated a little before answering. For every different use of the subjunctive that he introduced, he ensured that each student participated in it by giving an example of a sentence or reading something out aloud.

Joshua said that he liked to encourage his students to volunteer answers in class whenever possible, but that some of them hardly ever did. He said that when students volunteered, it gave him a picture of where they were and what problems he needed to address for them. He said, "I've told them you don't have to give correct answers. Give any answer. Because it helps me know what their level of performance is, or what grammatical rules I need to fix for them."

When calling on individual students to speak in class, Joshua preferred to start with the fast learners before calling on those learners who seemed to struggle. He explained that that strategy allowed him to accommodate all his students whose paces of learning varied.

I know those who need more time, and I can come to them last. I start with those ones who think quickly sometimes, so that we don't spend too much time waiting for these students who need more time, who need to refer to the grammar notes, or those who retrieving material from their memory takes longer. (Stimulated Recall)

Although some of Joshua's students seemed to struggle to answer questions when called upon to speak, they did not appear afraid to try. Timothy commented that he felt comfortable enough with his classmates to not be afraid to make mistakes in front of them.

> I mean, you learn from your mistakes. Right? And I think it's a helpful technique, you know, puts you on the spot. […] If I was someone more insecure, especially around people in the class, maybe I wouldn't feel as comfortable of being called out if you will, and, like, hey, fix your mistake there. (Stimulated Recall)

4.4.6.5 Use of English in The Classroom

Joshua allowed the use of English in his classroom. He himself used English to explain most of the grammar rules (Observation 3). His students also used English to ask questions or whenever they got stuck when responding to a question. For instance, on Day 2, when he asked students to each read the sentences they had written down for their homework assignment, all students used English. Joshua cited several reasons why he allowed the use of English in the classroom.

> Normally, when I start with students from day one of first year, I give them instructions on how to ask questions. I normally give them some phrases. But still, as we move forward, to assist the students, sometimes I allow [the use of English]. (Stimulated Recall)

He said the language of use depended on the content being covered. Sometimes, he would correct his students or give them the Swahili version of what they wanted to say and sometimes, he would allow the use of English. He added that he allowed English use in his class because he knew his students were beginners. He said, "in some classes, I teach in Swahili alone, or 95%, or sometimes 80%. So, it's something I do intentionally depending on the class I'm teaching, the

level of the students." He explained that by allowing the use of English in class, his students hesitated less to participate in lessons.

> I don't want students to fail to ask a question so that I can respond and give an answer in Swahili or help the student master the grammatical rule in question, just because I've told them you cannot ask a question in English. (Stimulated Recall)

4.4.6.6 Correcting Learner Errors

Joshua corrected his students' errors as soon as they came up, sometimes cutting students off mid-sentence. He did this by pointing out the error and then providing the correct response or the missing vocabulary. For instance, on day 1, when students explained what they had eaten for lunch at the beginning of the lesson, he corrected one student who missed the Swahili word for breakfast cereal and gave them the correct word.

When correcting learner errors, Joshua would often go into detail about a grammar rule which a student had broken and would provide additional information about the rule. In one instance, Timothy wrongly added an infinitive marker on the subjunctive form of a single syllable Swahili verb and said "tukule" for "let us eat." Joshua pointed out his error and reminded him that he doesn't need the infinitive form "-ku-." He then gave the entire class some additional information about the rule, noting that there were only five verbs that applied that rule. Joshua also corrected Timothy's pronunciation of the word "tule." Joshua said he felt the need to give that extra information because the student who committed that error was struggling, and he felt that he needed to help him gain a better understanding of the rule while also explaining it to the whole class.

In another instance, Amanda asked for help with the Swahili word for "early" and the teacher not only gave her the word, but also its part of speech. He told her that it was an adverb, and he wrote it down in the chat section with its translation. He said:

From my experience with this class, I found out that they have problems identifying the grammatical categories of Swahili words. They wouldn't recognize an adjective from an adverb or from a noun. So, I think it's my responsibility, anytime I give an example of a word or a sentence, I've told them before, all of the nouns we would be coming across in our class, I'll be helping them put them in noun classes, so they don't have to repeat questions later on. "Which noun class is this word? Is it an adverb? Is it an adjective? And how do we know?" So I answer those questions as we go. (Stimulated Recall)

Joshua also used the strategy of translating L1 (English) to L2 (Swahili) to correct some of the learner errors. In one instance, he asked one student to give a sentence in English which had a negative command. The student gave the sentence "do not take a shower." He wrote that sentence in the chat section and asked the other students to translate it to Swahili. Jacinta tried first, but missed the subject marker. The teacher pointed out her error and asked her to add the subject marker, which she did successfully. (Observation 1).

In another instance, another student made a mistake by using "two" instead of "second" in her sentence. The teacher pointed out her error immediately and gave students two sentences, one with each of the words and asked them to translate the sentences to Swahili. The first sentence was "I wrote my two quizzes this morning," and the second one was "I wrote my second quiz this morning." Jacinta volunteered to translate but made one error with the noun class agreement. The teacher pointed this out and corrected her error.

His students also shared how they felt about his error correction strategy. Timothy commented that while he felt comfortable enough with his classmates to not mind being 'called out' and corrected by his teacher when he made mistakes, that he sometimes appreciated being allowed a chance to discover and correct his own mistakes.

> I think it's important to struggle a little bit and make your own mistakes and try to fix them. But there comes a point where there's time constraints […] And then there's also, sometimes you just don't get a concept yet. And him correcting you is just giving you one more example on the correct way of approaching said grammar or whatever. (Stimulated Recall)

Joshua said that he sometimes let some errors pass without him correcting them, and that it depended on the type of error, what they were doing in class, and the amount of time available.

4.4.6.7 Translation Method

Besides using the translation method to correct learner errors, Joshua also generally used translation of English sentences to Swahili in teaching grammar to his students. In several instances, when explaining a grammar rule, he gave students a sentence in English and asked them how they would say that in Swahili. When students got stuck in translating the sentence, he translated parts of it, especially the vocabulary, by writing on the chat section of Zoom.

Also, whenever a student used a word which the teacher suspected the others did not know, he translated the word for the other students. Joshua said that he chose to translate most of the vocabulary for students or to provide them with the vocabulary that was necessary for them to construct a sentence because that saved time. "I give them all those explanations at a go, so that we can save time. And I can wait for their full responses in the translation of the sentence I had given them."

4.4.6.8 Explicit Grammar Instruction

Joshua's lessons were mainly grammar based. He spent the bulk of the lesson breaking down and explaining grammar rules to his students. On Day 1, he covered the subjunctive form by explaining the various contexts within which to use subjunctives. Students took notes and asked questions in the process, and he responded and gave them more example sentences of how to apply the rule. On Day 2, the teacher and students reviewed sentences exemplifying the passive voice as part of the homework students had done previously. They went through one sentence at a time, and he explained the grammar in each sentence. On Day 3, he continued with the lesson on subjunctives. He asked students to each choose a verb and construct a sentence in the affirmative and then negative subjunctive form. Thereafter, he introduced the imperatives and told them to each come up with another sentence that had an imperative. Students gave their examples and the teacher corrected them where necessary.

Joshua explained grammar rules as they came up. He would divert from the focus of the lesson to explain a grammar point that came up incidentally, especially when a student made a mistake using that rule. In such instances, he would give students as much details as he could about the grammar rule. For instance, on Day 2, Timothy wrongly attached an infinitive marker to a single syllable subjunctive verb while answering a question. That prompted the teacher to divert from the lesson and explain the rule to students. He also gave them a list of the verbs in Swahili to which the rule applied. Joshua said he did this especially if a student broke a rule they had already covered in class because he did not want to create a whole other lesson to address the same topic. He said that diving deep into explaining such errors also helped him find out if the rest of the class was also struggling with that grammar point.

If I found out that a good number had not [mastered the rule], then I will put it down and have a lesson, or during office hours to make sure I address that error, or that grammatical construction. Otherwise, if I leave it, it's going to become part of their language. (Stimulated Recall)

Joshua said that he also liked to revisit those grammar rules which he thought were most confusing to his students, "such as the verb 'to be' and 'to have,' which are confusing and problematic." He said he usually did not wait until they had another class to address them. "I find it necessary to address that error and we move on," he said.

He noted that he usually allocated more time to those grammar features which he thought were difficult for his learners. The subjunctive, he said, was one of those difficult ones.

The subjunctive in Swahili is a very tricky construction. It's not there in their language, it is not marked. The function is there in English, but they don't mark it morphologically like we do in Swahili. So that's like a structure which is not available for them in their first language. And so, I find it necessary to take more time. (Stimulated Recall)

For the topic on subjunctives, he said that he had taught that grammatical rule in more than one class and had given his students several homework assignments. He said he was impressed when his students gave correct answers and asked questions about the subjunctive form in class. He said, "I felt that they understood the grammatical rule we were talking about."

Joshua's lessons were teacher-led with him explaining grammar rules and asking questions, and students taking notes and answering or asking questions too. Interaction was mainly between the teacher and students. Student-student interaction was limited. Also, Joshua's grammar instruction was generally explicit and out of context. He would introduce and explain a rule to students then ask them to each construct a sentence in Swahili using that rule. That was

the case with the subjunctive verbs on day 1, the passive form on Day 2, and the imperatives on Day 3. He said that by asking students to apply the rule in constructing sentences, that he was able to formatively assess their understanding of the rule.

Joshua did not teach grammar in context, but he told his students the contexts in which they could use those grammar rules in speech. For instance, he told them that they could use the subjunctives to make requests and suggestions. "If you don't tell them why they need that, they'll just study grammar for grammar's sake. You have to give them a context where they are going to use the language," he said. He referenced an instance in class where he explained a grammar rule in context and even incorporated cultural notes in it. He was explaining the use of the passive form and he explained to students that in the Swahili culture, while males "marry," females "get married by males." He said that it was an example of "how culture conditioned the grammar."

4.4.7 Other Factors Affecting their Teaching Practices

4.4.7.1 Preparedness to Teach Online

Joshua said he had never taught a course purely online before the switch that was prompted by the COVID-19 pandemic. He shared that he was in the middle of receiving training on online language teaching when his university moved all classes to the virtual setting because of the pandemic. He said that he applied some of the skills he had learned in his online language teaching course to his own language classes and that therefore, the training was very beneficial. He also added that he was currently developing an online language course module for first year Swahili using the skills he had gained from the training.

4.4.7.2 Challenges of Teaching Online

One major challenge that Joshua said he experienced regarding virtual teaching was internet connection problems among his students. He shared an example of one of his students who was always late to class because of poor internet connection. He said that even after she was able to join class, the student could hardly participate from repeatedly losing connection.

Besides internet connection problems, he also highlighted problems with access to technology. He said that some of his students lacked appropriate electronic devices and were using cell phones to attend class, which brought challenges such as inability to transition smoothly from one Zoom feature to another, for example, being able to type or to access the chat while still viewing the instructor's screen.

Another challenge that Joshua pointed out was that both him and his students were more easily distracted in virtual classrooms compared to the face-to-face classrooms. He explained that Zoom features such as the chat section could distract students and that even for him as the instructor, constantly checking the chat section to respond to students' questions could cause him to lose his train of thought. He added that typing was difficult for him when teaching via Zoom because he was slow at it. Additionally, he said that his students who used cellphones to join class struggled to access those notes he typed in the chat. On the other hand, he said that he found using PowerPoint slides in a language class to be disadvantageous because "when you share the PowerPoint, you block everything." He said he wanted his students to see him speak the language and was, therefore, against the idea of screen sharing.

Another challenge with teaching virtually was the limited interaction between him and his students as well as amongst students themselves. He said even though he and the students could see each other in the virtual classroom, that they did not share a physical space and that

interfered with their interaction. He said, "When you are remotely connected, everybody's aware that even if I'm seeing you, this is a remote kind of interaction."

He commented that the virtual setting had taken away the things that students could do before in their F2F classes that made them happy and energized, such as being around their fellow students. He said, "All the energy they [students] bring to the classroom emanates from what happened last night, what happened the day before." He felt that students exuded less energy in the virtual platform because they were somewhat isolated. Besides, Joshua said that he was able to address so many of students' problems in the F2F setting than online.

> I rarely get a student remaining on virtual classroom. The physical classroom, at the beginning of class, four students come to the front, and I give some time. And I tell them, if you can't make it to office hours, you can see me after class, [or] before class, and I solve so many issues in the physical classroom. (Interview)

He added that their virtual interaction was more affected by the fact that students reserved the right to keep their videos off in class which meant that he could not tell how much they were paying attention to the lesson.

Despite all those challenges, Joshua noted that he was aware of the difficulties his students were facing from the pandemic as well as the presidential elections which were going on in the United States at the time of data collection. He said that it was not just a matter of the virtual platform alone.

> They think while seated down, no walking outside, no seeing a friend as you go to class. And, you know, walking gives you different energy, more energy as you interact with the environment out there. We don't have that anymore. Some people depending on their places, they are in their bedrooms. So, you can imagine a student seated on the bed and

pretending to be very active in a class of two hours or one hour. Students get distracted.

(Interview)

He shared that he had made some adjustments to his instruction to accommodate some of those

challenges that arose with virtual teaching. First, he said he had felt the need to adjust the way he

assessed his students in the virtual classroom. He said that he had "liberalized" the deadlines for

assignments and allowed students to submit their assignments in more formats than before.

I accepted different ways of submitting the end product. So, people could take pictures,

people could do whatever they could do, like that student who drew by hand, so long as it

can reach my email, or [LMS] where I can download it. (Interview)

Other changes that he implemented were such as an increased use of study guides for quizzes

and exams, allowing for open book assignments, and adjusting his rubrics for the online classes.

Joshua shared that it took him more time to grade his students' online work because there were

more steps involved compared to physical paper submissions. He said he was behind in grading

such that he would sometimes pick what to grade and leave out some assignments. He also

explained that he had told his students "not to focus on grading." But rather, on the knowledge to

be acquired.

Joshua concluded by saying that despite these challenges, that the situation could still be

handled by the teacher supporting students. He said, "the best thing is to catch up with students

and share your personal experience. If you don't share your personal experience, students might

be like, 'Oh, I'm the only one going through this.'" He believed in telling his students how he

himself was doing too "so that they can see that they are not alone."

4.4.7.3 Institutional Support

Joshua noted that his institution provided him with training on online language teaching, which was the one form of support he needed the most to be able to accomplish his teaching duties virtually. He said he was undergoing training when his institution moved all classes to the virtual platform, and that enabled him to switch without much struggle.

He added that he still needed some form of assistance from his institution such as with office supplies that he needed for his class. "I do a lot of printing because I find it more convenient to grade when I can read instead of trying to turn pages on this screen," he said. As such, he needed supplies such as printing paper, which he wished the university could provide. He said he understood that his university would not cover all his expenses regarding virtual teaching, such as ink for his printer, but that he did not mind contributing some things himself.

Joshua pointed that it was much easier to access institutional support when classes were in person. He said, for instance, that when they were on campus, he often sought help from the grading office for his multiple-choice exams.

4.4.8 A Summary of Joshua's Results

Table 7 shows a summary of Joshua's results including his teacher attributes, teaching practices and other factors affecting his teaching practices.

Table 7. A summary of Joshua's results

Teacher attributes	Description
Promoting a warm classroom atmosphere.	Interacting with students freely, showing concern about students' well-being, telling personal stories.
Motivational teaching practices	
Greetings and Small talk	Greeting students and inquiring about how they were doing outside of the classroom.
Acknowledging and praising learners' effort	Praising learners' correct responses.
Joking in class	Using jokes related to lesson content to provide breaks during the lesson and to energize students.
Calling on individual students to speak	Balancing participation among students by calling on them individually.
Use of English	Using learners' first language (L1) to explain content to them.
Correcting learner errors	Addressing learner errors as they arise.
Translation method	Asking students to translate sentences from English to Swahili when teaching grammar.
Explicit grammar instruction	Explaining grammar rules to students out of context.
Other factors affecting his teaching practices	
Preparedness to teach online	Joshua was partially prepared to teach online when his institution switched to virtual teaching.
Technology use and challenges	Internet connection problems, students lacking the appropriate devices, e.g., laptops, limited interaction.
Institutional support	Joshua had received some of the support he needed, e.g., on training, and was still in need of more support.

CHAPTER 5. DISCUSSION

I conducted this study because it is important to understand the motivational teaching practices used in African language classrooms in the United States. Studies have shown that there is an upward trend of more American students learning African languages since 2001 (Furman et al., 2010; Looney & Lusin, 2019) and while this is great news for the programs, the challenge is retaining those students in the programs so they can learn languages like Swahili and Zulu to the advanced level. Teachers play a crucial role in student retention in language programs. Thus, it is paramount to understand African language teachers' approaches to building students' long-term motivation and sustaining it. Students need that sustained motivation (Dörnyei, 2001) to succeed. The question, therefore, is, are African language teachers providing the necessary conditions for their learners to cultivate and remain motivated to learn the languages? It may be helpful to understand if the teachers are implicitly or explicitly aware of their work in sustaining learners' motivation (Guilloteaux & Dornyei, 2008). This is because intentional efforts to increase student motivation may be best, as those intentional efforts can also be shared between faculty members for maximal motivation building within and across African languages.

I investigated the use of motivational teaching practices in African language classrooms by collecting data from four teachers and their students. The data included classroom observations, stimulated recall sessions, and semi-structured interviews. The four teachers in this study provided unique insights because they as a group represent the African language teachers in the United States, a group that remains under-researched on to date. Similarly, their learners represent the learners of African languages in the United States.

The results of this study show that the four teachers used motivational teaching practices in their classrooms, but in different ways. Thus, in this discussion chapter, I discuss the results

using cross-case analysis (Khan & VanWynsberghe, 2008). Khan and VanWynsberghe describe cross-case analysis as "a research method that facilitates the comparison of commonalities and difference in the events, activities, and processes that are the units of analyses in case studies" (p. 2). Cross-case analysis is often used in qualitative research methods to synthesize knowledge from across several individual case studies, and here it is an excellent way to compare and contrast the motivational teaching practices by these teachers. Also, other (non-motivational) teaching practices observed in their classrooms are discussed and linked to the motivational ones. In this chapter I also include a discussion of external factors which affected the teachers' motivational teaching practices. I discuss the results in relation to the components of Dörnyei's (2001) Motivational Teaching Practice (MTP) framework and the literature on motivational teaching practices, including the Motivational Orientation for Language Teaching (MOLT) scheme.

This discussion chapter is structured based on the research questions that this study sought to answer.

1. What motivational teaching practices do select instructors of two African languages in the United States implement in their classrooms?

2. What are the perspectives of learners on those motivational teaching practices and their impact on their motivated behaviors?

3. a. Do the teaching experiences and cultural backgrounds of the instructors influence their motivational teaching practices in their classrooms?

   b. What are the effects of the virtual medium of instruction on teachers' motivational teaching practices?

I will start by addressing the first two research questions together. I will discuss the motivational teaching practices of the four cases and learners' perspectives on how those practices impacted on their motivation in the classroom. Next, I will discuss the impacts of the teachers' training, teaching experiences, their cultural backgrounds, and learning experiences on their motivational teaching practices. Finally, I will discuss the effects of the online medium of instruction on the teachers' motivational teaching practices.

5.1 RQs 1 and 2: Motivational Teaching Practices and Learners' Perspectives on Them

All four teachers used motivational teaching strategies, but in different ways. For instance, some teachers used more strategies than the others. In this section, I will start by discussing those motivational strategies that were used by more than one teacher. Then, I will discuss those which were used by individual teachers.

5.1.1 Greetings and Small Talk with Students

Teachers in this study greeted their students at the beginning of each lesson. Sebi and Joshua extended those greetings and included a social chat whereby they checked on their students' wellbeing and how they were doing outside of the classroom. Guilloteaux's (2007) Motivational Orientation for Language Teaching (MOLT) scheme includes "social chat" as one of the motivational strategies that language teachers could employ in their classrooms to boost learners' engagement and motivation. "Social chat" is categorized in the first stage of the process-oriented model of L2 motivation, *creating basic motivational conditions* (Dörnyei, 2001), indicating that teachers can use the strategy to set the right environment for language learning. In other words, teachers who incorporate social chats into their classrooms can achieve better results by building stronger bonds with their learners.

Joshua noted that he checked on his students often because he was aware that the prevailing circumstances at that time, including the COVID-19 pandemic and the presidential elections between Joe Biden and Donald Trump, were difficult. He believed that by asking his students how they were doing, they would understand that he cared about them beyond the classroom, and that would boost their teacher-student relationship which would in turn impact students' learning experience positively. Joshua's thoughts about the effectiveness of social chats, therefore, are in line with Dörnyei (2001). Similarly, Sebi commented that small talk in class allowed her and her students to learn more about each other. She said she was able to understand them deeply and thus, be in a better position to address any problems that they experienced in the course.

Both Sebi and Joshua used the small talk sessions with their students to address some learning-related matters as well. Sebi, for instance, checked on her students' progress with classwork and made important announcements during small talk. Her students shared with her information on changes in their schedules. Similarly, Joshua used the small talk sessions to check on his students who missed class and to address any questions his students had before the start of class. Small talk, therefore, was an important aspect in both classrooms, which not only connected learners with their teacher, but also provided an avenue for both parties to address learning-related matters.

Sebi and Joshua's students also thought that small talk was beneficial in their classroom, thus corroborating their teachers' thoughts as well as previous findings on this topic. Marion, one of Sebi's students, commented that she appreciated her teacher's concern for her well-being outside of the classroom, especially considering the difficult times they were facing at the time. She said that her teacher's genuine concern for her made her feel like she cared, which then

boosted her morale in general. Similarly, Lenny added that he believed he performed better in those classes where he felt a stronger bond with the teacher because he felt free to ask questions and interact with the teacher.

5.1.2 Acknowledging and Praising Learners' Effort

Praising learners in the process of language learning can be a motivating factor (e.g., Guilloteaux & Dörnyei, 2008). These researchers define "effective praise" as that which not only tells the learner that they did well but also highlights to them what exactly they did well. For example, Joshua praised his student, Timothy, when he gave a correct response by informing the entire class why Timothy's response was correct. He pointed out a few wrong forms of the answer that he could likely have given but was able to avoid. Timothy later shared that his teacher's acknowledgement of his correct answer made him feel good and thus, boosted his confidence in responding to questions in class.

Guilloteaux and Dörnyei (2008) argued that simple phrases such as "Good!" or "Great job!" are not considered effective praise because they did not impact on the learners' learning process. Contrary to that argument, in this study, some teachers acknowledged and praised their students' effort using those simple phrases, and students reported being positively impacted by them. George commented that when he used those praises on his students, that he could see that they boosted his learners' confidence. In agreement with his observation, his student commented that she felt more at ease to answer questions in class when her teacher acknowledged her responses. Sebi, besides using those phrases, also acknowledged her students' responses by smiling and nodding. Her students took note of her facial expressions as acknowledgement, and one said it gave her confidence to want to participate further. Therefore, ability praises appear to

have some positive impact on learners' motivation as well, and this suggests that Guilloteaux and Dörnyei's (2008) view of them as ineffective may have been shortsighted.

5.1.3 Correcting Learner Errors

Research on feedback in language classrooms has mostly looked at its effects on learners' language ability such as their accuracy in L2 writing (e.g., Truscott, 2007). Such studies have found contrasting results with some finding significant benefits of error correction on learners' ability (e.g., Russell & Spada, 2006), and some finding no effect or negative effect on learners' ability (e.g., Truscott, 2007). Studies which have investigated the effects of error correction on learners' emotions have also shown that a teacher's method of correcting errors can either motivate or demotivate students (e.g., Hyland, 1999; Mahfoodh, 2017). Whether a teacher decides to correct errors immediately or delay correction, involve peer correction or self-correction through recasting, the teacher's tone and attitude when correcting errors, can all affect how a student will perceive the correction. Teachers in this study used a variety of strategies to correct learner errors, and for different reasons.

Sebi often delayed correcting her students' errors when they came up. She preferred to allow students a chance to try and correct their own errors before she helped them. Sometimes, she would point the error out to help students notice it, and she would ask the specific student or the class in general if anyone could correct it. She said in the stimulated recall session that she thought rushing to correct learners' errors every time they occurred could make learners nervous and therefore, interfere with their participation. Contrary to her beliefs, however, one of Sebi's students pointed out that she would have preferred direct correction from her teacher as it would point her to the error she committed and show her the correct format. Fu and Li (2020) also

found immediate feedback to be more beneficial to learners compared to delayed feedback which they said could lead to fossilization of errors.

George and Joshua corrected their students' errors immediately they occurred. In some instances, they cut a student off mid-sentence to correct an error. In agreement with the findings by Fu and Li (2020), George argued that some errors needed to be corrected immediately to prevent fossilization, while Joshua explained that by pointing out and correcting an error immediately, the other students could also realize the error and avoid it in their own responses. Both George and Joshua's students reported liking immediate and direct error correction from their teachers, thus also agreeing with Fu and Li's (2020) findings.

Another error correction strategy that the teachers used was involving peers to either help the other learner discover their own error and self-correct or to directly correct them. Studies on peer correction and self- correction have shown those two techniques to be more effective in correcting learner errors compared to correction by the teacher (e.g., Cahyono, & Rosyida, 2016; Ganji, 2019). However, contrasting results were found in this study. While leading his students in a pair dialogue activity, George asked one student to repeat her sentence so the other could notice the correct format and correct their own error. His strategy was unsuccessful, and after several trials, he eventually corrected the learner himself.

In another study by Cao, Yu and Huang (2019), the authors found that learners perceived the benefits of peer feedback in varying levels which were influenced by factors affecting the learning environment, such as the type of content being learned. Similarly, learners in this study perceived feedback from their peers both positively and negatively. Both George and Frank allowed for direct correction of others' errors by peers. Frank asked his students if any of them had picked up the error committed by their classmate and if they could correct it. He said that he

did so to encourage critical thinking among his students and added that the strategy allowed him to know if there were more students that were struggling with the concept in question. On the other hand, not all his students perceived peer correction to be helpful. His student, Eve, commented that she would rather her teacher corrected her as that would help her understand her error better and get the most accurate correction. She argued that her own classmates who were at the same level of language proficiency as herself may not be able to correct her errors exhaustively.

5.1.4 Use of Jokes

Previous studies on the use of humor in the classroom have shown that it can bring positive results such as by fostering a more comfortable classroom atmosphere which can reduce learners' anxiety and thus, increase their chances of participating in the lessons (e.g., Askildson, 2005; Garner, 2003; Gonulal, 2018; Harmer, 2007; Ziyaeemehr et al., 2011). Teachers in this study also joked with their students in class. Frank, for instance, told two of his students that he would charge them a dollar each if they repeated certain errors again. He later reported that he used that joke to dissuade those students from making errors on content they had already practiced in class. Frank's use of that joke, therefore, made his warning to his students less harsh. As one of his students commented later, she liked it when their teacher joked in class because it made learning less stressful. Frank's joke was also effective in warning students because one commented that the joke indeed reminded her to be more careful when producing the target language because if it were a real situation, she would have lost some money to the teacher for committing those errors.

Gonzalez (2014) wrote that both the teacher and the student can initiate humor in the classroom, and that both parties should appreciate each other's humor for the strategy to work

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even better. A good example of that was when one of Joshua's students cracked a joke about the origin of the word 'bankruptcy,' which made the whole class laugh. That indicated that the student was comfortable enough with both her teacher and her fellow students to be able to crack a joke in class, and she confirmed that in the stimulated recall session. Therefore, jokes in class can be an indicator of an easy-going atmosphere, especially for students.

5.1.5 Promoting Autonomy

Guilloteaux and Dörnyei (2008) described learner autonomy as when the teacher gives students a variety of activities to choose from, assigns students tasks that allow them to discover and present information on their own, or involves students in decision making regarding resources and the timing of activities during the learning process. Also, Benson (2001) briefly defined learner autonomy as when learners take control of their own learning. Dörnyei (2001) encouraged language instructors to promote learner autonomy in their classrooms as it is a motivator for language learners. In this study, teachers who promoted learner autonomy in their classrooms did so in a variety of ways. Sebi assigned her students research tasks often and had them present their findings to the class, while Frank assigned his students role play activities and games that exposed them to content relevant to their lessons. Both teachers also had their students watch films outside of class then engaged them in discussions on those films in class. Both teachers believed in letting students discover information on their own, noting that it was how they learned best. They also acknowledged that learner autonomy promoted learner motivation, thus aligning with Dörnyei's (2001) argument.

Students in previous studies have reported positive effects of learner autonomy on their motivation (e.g., Hu & Zhang, 2017), and so did students in this study. Serah, Frank's student, reported that she enjoyed working autonomously, but highlighted the importance of receiving her

teacher's guidance in the process. She noted that it would confirm to her if she was on the right track. Sebi and Frank monitored their learners while they worked autonomously noting that it helped ensure that students did not overwhelm themselves with information (Frank) or lose focus and divert from the objectives of the lesson (Sebi).

5.1.6 Use of The Target Language

The use of the target language versus learners' first language in foreign language classrooms has been a controversial topic with some scholars discouraging the use of learners' L1, and some encouraging it (Littlewood & Yu, 2011). Teaching approaches such as the Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) approach are also known to recommend extensive use of the target language in the classroom as a gateway to building learners' oral and aural competence. Littlewood and Yu (2011) added that more use of the target language by the teacher helps learners develop a positive attitude toward the language and thus, be more motivated to learn it. They also discussed instances where teachers are often forced to use learners' L1, such as when explaining difficult grammar points.

In this study, two teachers, Sebi and Frank, encouraged more use of the target language in their classes. These two teachers openly discouraged their learners from using English. Their argument was similar to Littlewood and Yu's (2011) that learners needed to master the target language, and that there was no better way to do that than by maximizing the opportunities to practice it. Sebi did not mind if her learners struggled to express themselves in Zulu, or if they did not understand her 100% of the time in class. She set the ground rules right from the beginning of the course to discourage the use of English. Both Sebi and Frank focused on building their learners' oral skills, and that explains why they both emphasized the use of the target language in their classrooms.

The other two teachers, George and Joshua, appeared to prefer grammar instruction. That necessitated the use of English most of the time to explain the grammar rules to students (Littlewood & Yu, 2011). Both teachers commented that they saw nothing wrong with the use of learners' L1, a language the learners were more familiar with, to explain new concepts to them. George commented that it was important that his learners understood him and that was why he gave instructions in English. He added that even language examiners use English to give instructions to examinees in language proficiency interviews. Jonathan, on the other hand, said that although he was trained on how to use the Communicative Language Teaching approach, he sometimes found it necessary to switch to more use of English depending on the type of students he had, such as those that preferred explicit grammar instruction. Again, his thoughts align with the findings by Littlewood and Yu (2011) that even teachers who prefer more L2 use in the classroom also find themselves in situations where they are forced to use more L1 sometimes. In a similar situation, Sebi decided to translate her instructions to English once after she realized that one of her students had not understood the instructions in the previous task, which she had given in Zulu, and had not completed the task adequately. Frank, on the other hand, used English to explain the concept of Swahili time to students, and later explained in the stimulated recall session that the concept was one of the most difficult for his students to grasp, and that he felt the need to explain it in a language with which learners were more familiar. As such, he said, he used more English in that lesson than he usually did.

Learners from all four classes also shared their views on the use of the target language versus their L1 in instruction. In general, they seemed to prefer a combination of both the target language and their L1 rather than a strong focus on just one language. George and Joshua's students, whose classes were grammar focused, noted that they were more comfortable when

their teachers used English because otherwise, they would not understand the grammar being explained. On the other hand, students from Sebi and Frank's classes, where the target language was used more, noted that they sometimes got lost when their teachers used the target language alone. One of Sebi's students, Lenny, commented that he was sometimes forced to seek clarification from the teacher when he did not understand what she explained in Zulu. Lindah commented that she sometimes did not understand what her teacher said in Zulu, but some coping mechanisms such as looking at the slides she displayed in class and revisiting the lesson outline helped her understand what the teacher was talking about. This indicates that the way a teacher organizes and presents a lesson can help facilitate learning even when the target language is used more. This is because visuals and other useful information can be added to the slides to aid in understanding the teacher's explanations.

5.1.7 Variety of Activities

The use of a variety of activities in the classroom can help boost learner engagement by curbing monotony and boredom (Daniels, et al., 2015; Goetz & Hall, 2014; Pawlak, et al., 2020). Besides, varying learning activities also provides multiple ways of understanding content, which can ensure that the needs of learners with different learning styles are met. In this study, the teachers used a variety of activities in their classrooms and to varying degrees. Sebi used the largest variety of activities such as reading exercises, watching videos, engaging in dialogues and discussions, and giving presentations on various topics. She incorporated all the four language skills and culture in her lessons. She said she did that to keep her students interested and to reduce their anxiety of worrying about grammar rules. While Sebi included grammar activities in her lessons, she did so sparingly, and noted that it was often a brief exercise on a grammar point she had noticed her students were struggling with. Her students enjoyed the wide variety of

activities and, in line with the findings by Daniels et al., (2015) and Pawlak et al., (2020), noted that such a variety not only made their classes interesting, but also ensured that their needs were fully met.

5.1.8 Use of Authentic Materials

Bacon and Finnemann (1990) defined authentic materials as those produced by and intended for native speakers for non-pedagogical purposes. Two teachers in this study, Sebi and Frank, used authentic resources such as videos and storybooks in their classrooms and engaged their learners in discussions about that content after watching the videos or reading the books. They both noted that those materials played an important role in their classrooms, such as developing their learners' L2 proficiency and increasing their motivation to learn the language, findings similar to Belaid and Murray's (2015) research outcomes. Authentic materials have also been said to expose learners to the target language culture, thus promoting the integrative value of the language (Guilloteaux & Dörnyei, 2008). Language teachers, therefore, are encouraged to use authentic materials to expose learners to natural language use by the target language speakers. Through such materials, learners can visualize themselves using the target language as well and therefore prepare better for immersion into the target language culture (You et al., 2016). Learners in this study especially opined that they enjoyed watching the films assigned to them by their teachers. Lindah from Sebi's class noted that the film exposed them to natural language use and, therefore, prepared them for when they would go to South Africa.

Sebi and Frank's classes consisted mainly of communicative activities, and they used authentic resources more than the other two teachers who focused on grammar instruction. That indicates that the teaching approaches followed by the teachers affected their choice of instructional resources and activities. To reiterate, in these cases, it appears that instructional

methodologies and materials selection stemmed from the teacher's basic approach of whether to focus on form (teach grammar-translation) or not (teach a more communicatively-oriented curriculum). The decision to not focus on form, and rather focus on tasks in which students must produce language, led the teachers toward more authentic materials selection. These findings may underscore the importance of a communicative approach, as it appears to allow time and call for teachers to draw upon more authentic language resources. Communicative language teaching seems to snowball instruction toward richer, and more meaningful input, while focusing on grammar translation seems to set up a kind of blockade, or a row of learning obstacles, such as less time using the target language in class, fewer divergences into authentic material, and more time on complicated explanations in the students' L1.

5.1.9 Scaffolding

Guilloteaux and Dörnyei (2008) mentioned scaffolding as a teaching practice can enhance learners' motivated behavior. They described it as when the teacher demonstrates skills and strategies to students to help them complete a task successfully. It also includes the teacher refreshing students' memories of previously learned content or skills and reminding them of how they could use it to complete the current task. In this study, teachers included elements of scaffolding in their lessons in ways such as following the present, practice, produce method of instruction, repeating new content to learners multiple times and in different formats, revisiting previously covered content, and explaining difficult concepts to students before assigning them tasks on the same. By doing so, these teachers supported the learning process (Gonulal & Loewen, 2018), which in turn boosted learner motivation. For instance, after Frank introduced new content on numbers in his class, he allowed students to practice counting multiple times as he guided the repetition activity. The result was fluent mastery of the numbers by his students,

indicating that the repetition practice paid off. In another instance, he took time to explain the concept of Swahili time, which he considered to be difficult, to his students before asking them questions on the same. Consequently, his students perceived the strategy to be beneficial in the learning process. Serah, for instance, commented that the concept only made sense to her after the teacher's explanation.

In another instance of scaffolding, George reused previously covered content in his classes by asking learners questions that elicited that information. He used those brief review exercises at the beginning of each lesson to activate learners' memory of previous content which they would then use in the current lesson. His student, Claire, found that practice to be useful in helping her activate her memory, thus agreeing with the previous findings as well.

5.1.10 Use of Games

The use of games in language classrooms can boost learners' performance, engagement, and motivation (Flores, 2015; Sykes, 2018; Sykes & Reinhardt, 2012; Tan et al., 2019). Games bring the element of competition and, according to Guilloteaux and Dörnyei (2008), competition by individual learners or groups of learners can be motivational in the language learning context. Frank used games frequently in his classroom whereby his students competed both individually and in groups. He believed that through games, students could have fun while learning. Besides, he noted that games allowed him to assess his students' mastery of content (Sykes & Reinhardt, 2012). Frank's students also shared that they enjoyed playing games in the classroom, noting that games eliminated the monotony of covering usual content and refreshed their knowledge on the content tested.

The element of competition that games bring into the classroom has been found to be a motivating factor (e.g., Burguillo, 2010; Cagiltay, Ozcelik, & Ozcelik, 2015; Chen & Chang,

2020), especially when that competition is healthy and engaging. In line with these findings, even though Frank's students reported feeling some anxiety or stress from the games, the findings indicate that it was facilitating anxiety as one of them reported that she felt the need to prepare more to score better in the games. Frank's students also reported that they did not worry about how they ranked in the games because of the close relationship they had with each other and with their teacher, indicating that when the classroom atmosphere is warm and friendly, then learners' anxiety is reduced significantly.

The format of the classroom games also affected learners' stress or anxiety levels and how well they do in the games. Frank mostly used Kahoot and Quizlet games which allowed him to test students by using multiple choice questions and fill in the blank activities respectively. One of his students reported feeling more anxious about Quizlet activities because it required them to type in information, which tested their spelling skills. In addition, she said that failing one question caused the game to restart all over again. On the other hand, students found Kahoot games to be easier because all they had to do was select the correct response. Frank timed his Kahoot games, but his students did not report having any problems with the timing of the game. That could be because Frank allowed adequate time for students to answer each question in the game.

5.1.11 Providing Neutral Feedback

Neutral feedback is defined by Guilloteaux and Dörnyei (2008) as feedback that is directed to the whole class rather than an individual student. It is considered a motivational teaching strategy because a teacher could use the strategy to avoid pointing out learners who performed poorly, which could cause them stress. In this study, George provided neutral

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feedback to his students for that reason. He noted that when reviewing the quiz with them, he did not want to embarrass those who had failed and therefore, provided neutral feedback.

5.2 The Process-Oriented Model of L2 Motivation and MTPs Observed

To reiterate, the process-oriented model of L2 motivation consists of four stages wherein an instructor can implement motivational teaching practices. Those motivational teaching practices can aim to create basic motivational conditions, generate initial motivation, maintain and protect motivation, or to encourage retrospective self-evaluation among students. In this study, most of the motivational teaching practices that the teachers used focused on maintaining and protecting learners' motivation. That could be tied to the fact that this study was conducted towards the end of the semester, and therefore, teachers had already created those basic motivational conditions and generated that initial motivation among their learners and were now working on protecting it as the semester progressed.

Some of the motivational teaching practices observed involved the use of technology in the classroom, such as the use of digital games and YouTube videos to support learning. Results showed that students found the use of such resources to be motivating. It should be noted that the MTP framework does not directly list the use of technology in the classroom as a motivational teaching practice. It does however, mention that teachers can use stimulating, enjoyable, and relevant tasks, and, while we can assume that technology plays the role of making classroom tasks stimulating and enjoyable, it might be necessary to update the MTP framework to reflect the role of technology more directly, especially now that COVID-19 has made technology and language teaching ever so more intertwined.

Another finding of the current study was that learners found grammar instruction to be motivational. The MTP framework does not list grammar instruction among its motivational

teaching practices, thus raising the question of how grammar instruction may or may not fit into the framework. There seems to be an overlap between the MTP framework and communicative language teaching, which suggests that perhaps the proponents of the framework prefer communicative-oriented language teaching methodologies. Therefore, the effects of explicit grammar instruction on learner motivation may need to be addressed more deeply in relation to the MTP framework.

Table 8 shows the motivational teaching practices used by the four teachers of African languages alongside the components of the MTP framework where each belongs or where it closely relates to. It not only shows the validity of Dörnyei's (2001) framework to the context of African language classrooms in the United States, but also highlights the gaps that need to be addressed in future research.

Table 8. A Summary of the MTPs observed

Components of the MTP Framework	Practices Observed in This Study
1. Creating basic motivational conditions by establishing a good teacher-student rapport, creating a pleasant and supportive classroom atmosphere, and generating a cohesive learner group with appropriate group norms.	● Greetings and small talk with students
2. Generating initial motivation, that is, "whetting the students' appetite" by using strategies designed to (a) increase the learners' expectancy of success and (b) develop positive attitudes toward the language course and language learning in general.	● Use of the target language
3. Maintaining and protecting motivation by promoting situation-specific task motivation (e.g., through the use of stimulating, enjoyable, and relevant tasks), providing learners with experiences of success, allowing them to maintain a positive social image even during the often face-threatening task of having to communicate with a severely limited language code, and promoting learner autonomy.	● Use of jokes ● Promoting autonomy ● Variety of activities ● Use of authentic materials ● Scaffolding ● Use of games
4. Encouraging positive retrospective self-evaluation by promoting adaptive attributions, providing effective and encouraging feedback, increasing learner satisfaction, and offering grades in a motivational manner.	● Acknowledging and praising learners' effort ● Correcting learner errors ● Providing neutral feedback

5.3 Other Teaching Practices

Other teacher practices that may not necessarily be categorized as motivational were also observed in the classroom. In this section, I briefly discuss those practices and how they relate to the motivational teaching practices that the teachers applied in their classrooms.

5.3.1 Calling on Individual Students to Participate

According to Guilloteaux and Dörnyei (2008), the rate at which learners volunteer to participate in the classroom indicates their level of motivated behavior. In this study, however, teachers appeared to prefer calling on their individual students to participate in the lessons more than they let them volunteer. Their main reason for doing that was to balance participation

among students. Frank thought that some students could hesitate to volunteer even when they knew the correct answer because they imagined that their classmates would see it as showing off. He said that such students, however, would respond when called upon.

Additionally, Frank argued that some shy students may feel afraid to ask for clarifications in class even when they did not understand something. He said that by calling on them individually, that he could assess their understanding of the concept in question and help them where necessary. Joshua also noted that when he let students volunteer to participate, that he often had one or two students dominating the interaction in the classroom. Therefore, the strategy by these teachers to call on their individual students to participate rather than letting them volunteer does not necessarily imply lower motivation on the side of students. Besides, these teachers all had small classes, and thus, adequate time to engage all their learners one at a time. The situation could have been different for a larger class.

5.3.2 Utilizing classroom technologies

All four teachers were teaching virtually via Zoom at the time of data collection. Their use of pedagogical technologies varied with Sebi and Frank utilizing more Zoom features and external technological resources like YouTube compared to George and Joshua. Sebi, for instance, used the Annotate feature of Zoom to assign her students grammar activities. By doing so, she was able to monitor what each student was typing, and she addressed their errors by pointing them out when they occurred. In addition, she used the screen sharing feature to display the outlines and content of her lessons. Frank utilized the breakout rooms and the whiteboard on Zoom to facilitate his lessons. He typed selective information on the whiteboard during practice sessions and later, he would send his students to breakout rooms to practice the content further. He commented on the usefulness of breakout rooms in allowing students to challenge each other

at the same level, and to promote the spirit of teamwork. Also, both Frank and Sebi used YouTube as a resource in their classrooms. They both occasionally assigned their students films to watch outside of the classroom and then engaged them in discussions on the films in class. Further, Sebi included short YouTube video clips which were shot in South Africa in her lessons to supplement the content she was teaching.

George and Joshua, on the other hand, utilized fewer pedagogical technologies, especially outside of Zoom. Joshua often typed his comments or feedback in the chat section of Zoom as he explained grammar rules to students. He commented that he sometimes placed his students in the breakout rooms as well but that depended on the type of content they were covering. George on the other hand used the screen sharing feature of Zoom to display the files which contained the grammar he was teaching. He would then type in the document on the screen as he discussed the grammar with his students.

There are notable differences in the ways these teachers utilized pedagogical technologies, and a pattern can be drawn in relation to their motivational teaching practices. For instance, the same teachers who used more pedagogical technologies in their classrooms also exhibited a larger variety of motivational teaching strategies, indicating that they embraced a wider variety in both content and methods of teaching. Teachers also appeared to have personal preferences when it came to the use of pedagogical technologies. While Sebi and George liked to use the screen-sharing feature, Joshua and Frank said they disliked it because it hid the students from the screen and interfered with interaction in the classroom. These differences in the preference of each teacher may also reflect on their implementation of motivational teaching practices in general. As Tavakoli et al. (2018) reported, teacher practices in the classroom are sometimes determined by their individual characteristics.

5.3.3 Explicit Grammar Instruction

Explicit learning involves consciously processing information to find out any regularities and then developing ways of describing those regularities (Brown, 2007). As such, explicit grammar instruction involves breaking down grammar rules to notice regular patterns. In this study, George and Joshua's classes were more grammar based and the two teachers taught grammar explicitly most of the time. Joshua explained grammar rules to his students and then asked them to construct sentences using the rule to check their understanding. Also, he sometimes gave students sentences containing a rule they had learned and asked them to translate it. Similarly, George explained grammar to his students and asked them questions individually to test their understanding. The preference of these two teachers to engage in explicit grammar instruction may explain why they used fewer motivational teaching practices in general. The two teachers each performed grammar activities with students in the same format from the beginning to the end of each lesson.

Even though both George and Joshua focused on grammar instruction in their classrooms, students in Joshua's class appeared to be more engaged while George's class was quieter. Joshua's students participated more freely despite the lesson being teacher centered, and that could be a result of the warm and easygoing classroom environment they had established. On the other hand, George's students only spoke when called upon and even then, some still hesitated and some gave very brief answers. Several factors could explain their situation, including the fact that lessons were teacher-centered. Also, the element of social chat which leads to a warm and friendly classroom environment in which people can interact freely (Guilloteaux & Dörnyei, 2008) was lacking in George's class. Students may also have felt shy to speak from the constant error correction by their teacher.

5.4 RQ 3: Impacts of Other Factors on Motivational Teaching Practices

The results of this study show that factors from outside of the classroom also impacted on teachers' motivational teaching practices, a finding similar to Dörnyei and Cheng (2007). In this section, I discuss the impacts of the following factors on the teachers' practices: the teacher's cultural background and learning experience, their teaching experience, teacher training, preparedness to teach online, challenges of teaching online, and institutional support.

5.4.1 Cultural Background and Learning Experience

A teacher's cultural background can have a significant impact on their teaching practices by influencing which practices they prefer (e.g., Tavakoli et al., 2018). Tavakoli and colleagues found that Iranian teachers' choice of teaching strategies, such as teacher-centered instruction, was influenced by their culture, which exalted the teacher. Teacher participants in this study were all born, raised, and educated in different African countries, and they also shared that in their cultures, learning was teacher-centered, and that teachers wielded a lot of power. For such teachers, having to maintain motivation among their American students whose culture was different may not have been as straight forward it as would have been if both learners and teachers shared a cultural background. Additionally, these teachers had students who mostly did not take the African language in high school, and that could mean that these Swahili and Zulu students' motivation may have been rather fragile, when compared to students learning languages more commonly taught in the United States, such as Spanish or French. Cohorts of Spanish or French language learners at the college level in the United States, for example, almost always, one could most likely prove, have cohort members who studied the language prior to entering college. Thus, those cohorts of learners will have longer-term foundations in learning the language, more across-time investment in studying the language, and a lower-level learning

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base that was more slowly, and thus perhaps more deeply, acquired, as high-school language learning programs normally develop learners language at a slower pace than at the college level. Without high school or earlier experience learning the language, African language learners may easily be able, perhaps, to give up or switch to another language in college, as they do not have as much time-bound investment in learning the African language. Therefore, these teachers were provided with a somewhat uphill task of taking fragile motivation among their learners (whose culture was also different) and turning it into long-term and sustained motivation.

Being from different cultures from those of their students, the teachers in this study talked about some of the adjustments they made to accommodate their American students and to foster conducive learning environments. Even though they themselves obeyed and even feared their teachers when they were language learners, as teachers in the United States, they shifted to more affective, communicative, and inclusive teaching practices. For example, Frank said that he refrained from giving his students harsh warnings, even when they were in the wrong, because he understood that they would not take such direct warning kindly as would students in his home country. Similarly, Sebi shared that she was careful how she approached learners who were not meeting course requirements in her class to make sure that she did not offend them. She said that had she been teaching in South Africa, that she would have been more direct in reprimanding her students because she knew that those students would not get offended. This shows that these teachers took into consideration their students' cultural backgrounds and tried to do what they thought worked best for those students depending on the context.

In relation to their cultural backgrounds, these teachers' own learning experiences also influenced their teaching practices. Previous studies have shown that some teachers teach in the same way they were taught while others may refrain from applying certain teaching practices

because they did not like them as students (e.g., Cox, 2014). George said he borrowed some teaching practices from his teachers in Zimbabwe, such as promoting the discovery method of learning where he let his learners discover information on their own. The other three teachers, on the other hand, did not borrow much from their own learning experiences. Sebi explained that her language teachers focused too much on grammar which she did not find to be helpful in developing oral skills. Frank said that he did not borrow much from his L2 learning experience because the approach that his teachers used was mostly grammar translation. He said that if anything, his own learning experience helped him to avoid some of the things that he thought were not done well. Joshua criticized the lack of interaction between his teachers and him as a student due to the age gap and power dynamics. He said that from those negative experiences as a student, he learned what to avoid and thus, strived to ensure a positive atmosphere in his own classes by not wielding out power. Therefore, only George, who had a positive experience with his teachers as a student, borrowed from their teaching practices, indicating that teachers borrow only those practices that impacted them positively as students.

5.4.2 Teacher Training and Teaching Experience

Studies on the impact of a teachers' length of teaching experience on their performance in the classroom indicate that teachers' efficacy increases with experience (e.g., Liu et al., 2007). However, studies have also shown that more experienced teachers may be more rigid about their teaching practices (Soodak & Podell, 1997). In this study, two teachers had more than a decade of teaching experience while the other two had less than that. Their classroom practices showed that the teachers with fewer years of teaching experience used a larger variety of practices while the ones with more years of experience exhibited a narrower collection of those practices. Besides, the teachers with fewer years of experience utilized more pedagogical technologies

compared to the other two. It is possible that the more experienced pair had developed a form of rigidity and held on to their preferred teaching methods while the less experienced teachers did not struggle to try out new teaching practices.

Teachers' training has also been found to influence teacher practices in the classroom (e.g., Saydee, 2014). Saydee found that when teachers received appropriate and adequate training, that it overpowered their preconceived notions about what constitutes proper teaching practices. Similarly, in this study, teachers commented that the training they had received on foreign language teaching had the heaviest influence on their teaching practices compared to other factors such as their cultural background and learning experience. Frank, for instance, described teaching as an art of painting, and noted that it was his training that had equipped him with the skills he needed to accomplish that art successfully.

Teacher training workshops can vary in length, content covered, intensity, as well as the time period when they were offered, and these can also influence teacher practices. The four teachers in this study had attended different training workshops that equipped them with different skills on language teaching. As a result, their practices in the classroom showed variation as well. Also, the four teachers had all attended a common teacher training workshop offered by the National African Language Resource Center (NALRC), but at different time periods. The NALRC training workshop is known to focus on the Communicative Language Teaching approach and how to increase learners' oral proficiency in the target language. However, not all teachers focused on that goal in their classrooms, and this could be because the four teachers attended their trainings at different time periods. George and Joshua, who focused more on grammar instruction and the use of more English in their classrooms, had attended the NALRC training workshops over a decade ago while the other two, Sebi and Frank, who focused

more on oral proficiency, had attended the same training more recently. It is possible that as more time elapsed from the time of the training on CLT, the other two teachers reverted to their own pre-established practices.

5.4.3 Preparedness to Teach Online

Teachers in this study reported varying levels of preparedness to teach virtually because at the time of data collection, their institutions had just moved all classes from in-person classes to the virtual platform. This new medium of instruction affected their teaching practices in different ways. For instance, Frank, whose professional training was in instructional design and technology, and who had been using a hybrid model of instruction even before the COVID-19 pandemic struck, reported being adequately prepared to switch to virtual teaching. That was evident in how relaxed the atmosphere of his class was, the variety of strategies he used and how smoothly he navigated the various technologies he included in his lessons. Frank commented that he rarely took any assignments on paper in class but instead required students to submit all their work on the LMS, and that eased his work as most of the assignments were auto graded. Sebi also reported feeling adequately prepared to teach virtually because she possessed some previous experience teaching online through the shared course initiative at her institution. Additionally, she had briefly taught remotely in South Africa earlier on and had undergone training on online language teaching on her own. Sebi also used a variety of teaching practices and pedagogical technologies in her lessons.

On the other hand, George and Frank, who reported no prior experience teaching virtually, noted that they felt inadequately prepared to teach virtually. George said that he struggled to gather appropriate and adequate materials for his online classes while Joshua noted that he struggled with grading his students' assignments and keeping up with assessment in

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general. The different levels of preparedness among the four teachers and their experiences teaching online underscore the importance of teacher training on not only content areas but also on the mediums of language teaching, thus supporting previous findings (e.g., Saydee, 2014) which state that teacher training is the gateway to better performance in the classroom.

5.4.4 Challenges Related to Teaching Online

The switch to virtual teaching by most institutions due to the COVID-19 pandemic found most teachers unprepared to teach in the new medium (Webb et al., 2021). That unpreparedness meant myriad challenges in running virtual classes and, while teachers have undergone training to curb that challenge (Webb et al., 2021), many other challenges remain because some are beyond the control of teachers.

Webb et al., (2021) point out limited interaction between the teacher and students as one common challenge in the virtual platform. Similarly, George reported that his university allowed students the choice to turn off their videos while in the classroom to protect their privacy. Therefore, his students always kept their videos off in class, and George said that it was difficult for him to tell how much attention those students paid to the lesson.

Another challenge observed in this study was with learner distractedness in the virtual classroom. Frank and Joshua reported they found their learners more distracted in the virtual classroom and they cited reasons such as the home environment from which students are attending their lessons. Joshua noted that in addition to the distractions caused by the virtual platform of learning, that he thought his learners were even more distracted because of the circumstances which were prevailing at that time, that is, the 2020 presidential elections in the United States, and the lockdown due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Frank shared that he had created rules at the start of his online classes that semester about things that students could do

and things that they could not do to deal with the problem of distractions. However, he admitted that he still did not have control of what happened in the learners' backgrounds.

Thirdly, Frank shared the frustrations that came with the use of Zoom breakout rooms for group work. He said that unlike the face-to-face setting where he could stand in front of the class and listen to what was going on in all the groups or be attending to one group and overhear a problem in another group, thus addressing it immediately, that things were different online because when he was in one group, he could not really hear what was happening in another group.

The fourth challenge was with workload. Apart from Frank, the other three teachers reported that it took them longer to prepare for online classes, a finding similar to that of Sun (2011). George reported that he struggled to find appropriate and adequate instructional materials for the virtual platform because, Zulu being a Less Commonly Taught Language, that resources in the language were scarce. Joshua, on the other hand, said that it took him longer to grade his students' work because he had to print everything and grade on paper. That interfered with his ability to inform students of their tentative grades on time, which made some of his students anxious. In summary, the challenges that arose from teaching online not only affected teacher's ability to deliver successful lessons, but also affected students, such as by making them anxious, and that could interfere with their levels of motivation in the long run.

5.4.5 Institutional Support

The form of support that an institution provides to its employees can impact on the employees' success in carrying out their duties. Teachers in this study shared that they had received some form of support from their institutions, especially regarding teaching online, and that had facilitated the success of their online instruction. Frank, for instance, who had only six

students in his class, shared that his department preferred to keep small classes so teachers could attend better to students. That helped to avoid overwhelming teachers or under-serving students. He and the other three teachers also shared that their institutions had provided them as faculty members with electronic devices they needed to run their lessons, had offered them training workshops on how to navigate the online platforms, and had technology experts on standby to address any problems that teachers encountered in their classrooms. They each shared that the institutional support had been useful to them, and some were planning to seek more help from the technology experts in their institutions because they felt that their skills on teaching online were still lacking in some areas.

5.5 Chapter Summary

To summarize the discussion chapter, I will briefly restate the response to each research question. The first research question asked what motivational teaching practices are used by select instructors of African languages in the United States. Findings show that the four teachers used a variety of strategies from all four stages of Dörnyei's (2001) MTP framework. However, their use of those motivational teaching practices varied. A pattern was observed in the data whereby two teachers who focused more on communicative language employed more motivational teaching strategies while the other two who focused on grammar instruction employed fewer strategies, thus indicating the potential influence of teaching approaches on the use of motivational strategies.

Regarding the second research question, students' perceptions on the motivational teaching practices used by their teachers were mainly positive with students expressing enjoyment and appreciation when their teachers made the lessons more interesting, or the learning experience much easier, with those motivational strategies. However, not all students'

views aligned with their teachers' views or previous findings on the effects of various strategies. Some of the students' views were in contrast, indicating that perceptions on the usefulness of motivational teaching practices varied depending on individual characteristics or preferences. For example, Sebi taught that delaying error correction would reduce anxiety among her learners and make them participate more freely, but her student, Marion, said that she actually preferred immediate and direct feedback. Also, in contrast with Guilloteux and Dornyei (2008) who stated that saying just "good" or "nice" do not count as effective praise, language learners in this study commented feeling appreciated by their teachers with such comments and thus, they felt more encouraged to participate. It is possible that such brief praises have no real value in correcting learners, but they make the students feel good, and that in itself is important as it impacts positively on learners' motivation and impacts the classroom environment, making it an inclusive, friendly, supportive one. This is a strategy that teachers can use to support their students' motivation, it seems.

The third research question inquired on the effects of various factors on the implementation of motivational teaching practices by African language teachers. First, the study found effects of the teachers' cultural backgrounds, learning experience, training, and teaching experience on their teaching practices. Since all teachers were born, raised, and partly educated in different cultures from the one they were teaching in, these teachers reported adjusting their practices to suit their new environment and learners. Overall, it is evident that teachers' training has the greatest impact on their teaching practices compared to the other factors. Secondly, this study found that the virtual medium of instruction also affected teachers' implementation of motivational teaching practices. Factors such as preparedness to teach online, the challenges involved in online teaching and institutional support determined the success levels of these

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teachers' classes. Overall, all four teachers noted that they were still seeking support from their

institutions to achieve better levels of success in their classrooms.

CHAPTER 6. CONCLUSION

6.1 A Summary of The Study

In this study, I investigated the motivational teaching practices of four teachers of Swahili and Zulu in the United States with the goal to fill the existing gap in literature on L2 motivation and the use of motivational teaching practices in African language classrooms in the United States I used the case study methodology to investigate which motivational teaching practices were used by these African language teachers, their students' perceptions on the impacts of those practices on their motivated behavior, and the effects of certain external factors on the teachers' use of motivational teaching practices. Participants in this study were four teachers, two of Zulu and two of Swahili, and their students.

6.2 Findings in Summary

The findings of the study showed that the four teachers used strategies from all four stages of Dörnyei's Motivational Teaching Practice framework. That is, they implemented strategies to activate learners' motivation at the beginning of the lesson, to maintain it during the lesson, and to allow for retrospective self-evaluation. These teachers, even though some of them noted having had negative learning experiences with some of their teachers in the past, all strived to nurture warm and friendly environments in their virtual classrooms, albeit to varying degrees. The teachers' choice of teaching practices indicated that they cared about the success of their learners, and that, in turn, positively impacted their learners' attitudes towards the languages, and their motivation to learn them.

I would like to point out that several patterns emerged from the results of this study. As mentioned earlier, the teachers used motivational teaching practices in varying degrees. First, Sebi and Frank generally used more motivational teaching strategies than George and Joshua.

This could be attributed to the focus of the former pair on the Communicative Language Teaching approach which necessitated the use of a variety of activities and teaching methods to maximize the chances of students using the language in the classroom. On the other hand, Joshua and George largely focused on grammar instruction and consequently, each used fewer motivational teaching practices.

Secondly, some motivational strategies that were unique to individual teachers were also observed, a finding which was in line with previous research that teachers' choice and use of motivational strategies can be influenced by their individual characteristics or preferences. Other teaching practices that are not be categorized as motivational as per the MTP framework were also observed across the four teachers with Joshua and George using most of those practices.

Finally, one can clearly see the effects of the teachers' backgrounds, training, and teaching experience on the teachers' uses of motivational teaching practices, and so are the effects of the medium of instruction on those uses. The virtual medium of instruction and technology use in general played an important role in the implementation of MTPs by the four teachers, thus highlighting the need for the MTP framework to be updated to address the effects of technology on learner motivation.

6.3 Contribution of This Study

The current study contributes to both theory and pedagogy in the field of language teaching. First, the study was conducted with an under-researched population of both teachers and students. Its results fill a gap in literature by revealing the motivational teaching practices of African language teachers in the United States, and the resulting motivated behaviors of learners of those languages at the college level. The study, therefore, responds to Guilloteaux and Dörnyei's (2008) recommendation for more research on the use of motivational strategies in

different languages, cultures, and instructional contexts, which could highlight and account for any possible nuances. Secondly, this study followed a qualitative, case study methodology, which has not been largely explored before in research on motivational strategy use (Ushioda, 2013). Ushioda recommended the use of qualitative methods and termed purely quantitative methods as insufficient in addressing the complexity of the motivation construct. Therefore, this study makes a significant contribution to the literature by adding to the few studies that have examined motivational strategy use using descriptive qualitative methodologies.

This study also informs the instruction of African languages in the United States by highlighting how teacher practices in the classroom impact on learners' motivated behavior. The study reveals that while learners perceive most of their teachers' motivational practices positively, that there are instances when disagreement occurs between what a teacher thinks is motivational and what students think.

6.4 Limitations

This study was conducted during the COVID-19 pandemic, which was not a normal time. That could be seen as a weakness or a strength. It could be seen as a weakness because it may be difficult to know whether these results would be the same outside of the timeframe of the pandemic. It can be seen as a strength because the data provide insights into the ways in which teachers of the two languages coped during the pandemic. Also, in this study, a further limitation was that only three lessons were observed for each case. It is possible that only a few motivational teaching practices of each teacher were captured during those observations. That may be true especially considering that for some classes, it was the same topic that was covered in the lessons that were observed, which can mean the use of similar strategies throughout. Besides, teachers also noted that the structures of their lessons depended on the type of the

content they were covering and its difficulty level. Had this been a longitudinal study with more observations, more strategies could have been captured when the teachers were teaching a variety of topics. Thirdly, students who participated in the study were self-selecting, which may have skewed the way they viewed their teachers' actions. Finally, as a case study, the results of this study may not be generalizable to other contexts and populations. Regardless, the data that were collected in this study provide insights into the research problem. The data and the outcomes from them form a basis for future research on this topic or in this context of study.

6.5 Future Research

Future research could expand on this qualitative methodology and include more classroom observations to capture a better picture of both the motivational teaching practices and learners' motivated behavior. Secondly, future research could investigate the relationship between the MTP framework and grammar instruction in language classrooms. It is unclear if the MTP framework's authors purposefully excluded grammar instruction because the authors saw grammar instruction as unmotivating, thereby aligning the framework itself with more communicatively oriented teaching tasks. The hypotheses behind such framework-design choices may need to be debated by theorists in future work. Finally, future researchers could investigate the validity of the MTP framework in current times when language teaching and learning is getting more intertwined with technology and the use of virtual settings. There seems to be a need to update the MTP framework to include motivational strategies that concern the virtual teaching environments.

APPENDICES

Appendix A: Semi-structured interview questions for teachers

Semi-structured interview questions for teachers

Cultural (and Educational) Background
1. Tell me briefly about your educational background from elementary school to the highest level of schooling you've attained.
   a. How did your teachers conduct classrooms in general? How did they teach?
   b. How much interaction happened between you and your fellow students during a lesson? (any lesson)
   c. How much interaction happened between you and your teachers during a lesson?
2. During your time in school, were you ever a L2/FL language learner?
   a. Which language(s) did you learn?
   b. Describe briefly how your language teachers conducted their lessons.
   c. What kind of interactions took place in class?
3. Briefly describe your cultural background in terms of how people interact.
   a. Different groups of people, e.g., teacher-leaner relationships
   b. Tell me if you think your culture influenced the kinds of interactions you had in your language classroom as a student.
4. How do you compare the culture in which you were educated with that of your current students in the United States?
   a. In terms of teacher-student interactions in the classroom
   b. In terms of the classroom atmosphere in general.
   c. What are the major outstanding differences between your culture and your students' culture or the culture in which you're currently teaching?
5. Have you faced any challenges in your language classrooms in the United States that you think arise from the culture differences between you and your students?
   a. Challenges related to teaching in general
   b. Challenges related to interactions with your students.

Teaching Experience
6. For how long have you taught in the US?
7. Describe some of the classes you've taught.
   a. Context, type of learners, course goals, etc.
8. Describe to me your background in training to teach this particular FL.
   a. Any training before coming to the US?
   b. Any training while in the US?
   c. Where, when and for how long did you receive the training(s)?
   d. What was the main area of focus for each training?
9. Beside that training, how often, if ever, do you attend additional training workshops?
   a. What topics do those trainings focus on mainly?
   b. How frequently do you attend additional trainings? When was the last one?

Perspectives about motivating language learners
10. What are your perspectives about keeping learners motivated in the classroom?
    a. Do you think it is possible to keep learners motivated in the classroom?

  b. Do you think it is important to keep learners motivated in the classroom? How so?

11. Tell me some of the things you often do to keep your learners motivated in the classroom (*I may have only observed a fraction of them*).
12. Do you sometimes have distracted learners in your classroom?
  a. How often does that happen?
  b. What do you think causes the distraction? How do you usually fix that?
13. Are there any effects of the current virtual medium of instruction on your teaching practices?
14. Tell me the things or experiences that largely influence your FL teaching practices.
  a. Is there a role of your own L2/FL learning experience in it? Explain.
  b. Is there a role of your own cultural background in it? Explain.
  c. Is there a role of your level of training as a FL/L2 teacher in it? Explain.
15. Any additional comments about the course? Any questions?

Appendix B: Teachers' background questionnaire

Please answer all questions and return the questionnaire to the researcher.
1. Your name ……………………………………….
2. Your email address …………………………………….
3. Age (years) ………………………………………
4. Your first/native language ……………………………………….
5. The language you currently teach …………………………………………….
6. Your class/course level …………………………………….
7. How many students are currently enrolled?
8. Name of your university …………………………………….
9. For how long have you been teaching this African language in the United States?
   …………………………………….
10. Which mediums of instruction that you are currently using for language teaching.
    …………………………………….
11. How many times a week does your class meet? …………………………………

Appendix C: Learners' background questionnaire

Please answer all questions and return the questionnaire to the researcher.
1. Your name …………………………………….
2. Email address ………………………………….
3. Age (years) ………………………………….
4. Your first/native language ………………………………….
5. The FL you're currently learning ………………………………………
6. Your class/course level ………………………………….
7. Name of your university ………………………………….
8. Your academic major ………………………………….
9. Your academic minor ………………………………….
10. What is your reason(s) for taking this foreign language?
………………………………………..……………………………………..……

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