Developing the Four Macro-Communication Language Skills amongst Rumanyo Learners: Perspectives of Rumanyo Teachers in Namibia

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Abstract

There is no other way out of teaching languages without integrating the four language skills amongst learners. Thus, teachers all over the world are sourcing for effective language skills integrative strategies. The present study aimed at identifying strategies in developing the four macro-communication skills (reading, writing, speaking, and listening) amongst learners of the senior primary phase (grade 6) in Kavango East region of Namibia. This descriptive qualitative research study adopted the instructional theory for skill development as proposed by Ramiszowski. The study employed a semi-structured interview guide and purposefully recruited (n = 10) Rumanyo first language teachers from the Kavango East region's Rundu and Ndiyona circuits. Permission was obtained from the school to allow researchers to collect data. The data was thematically evaluated, and themes were extracted from the merged findings. Tables and graphs were used to show biographical information. Participants were promised that their participation in the study was optional and that their names would not be utilised or revealed. Instead, each participant would be allocated a pseudonym. Prior to collecting data, subjects were reviewed and given informed consent. The study's findings reveal that teachers use storytelling to enhance the listening skill, they also use prepared and unprepared reading exercises to enhance learners' reading skills, they also teach punctuation marks, types of sentences and word formation to develop the skill of writing in learners. Based on these findings, the study recommends that a further study should be conducted to deduce dependent and independent variables that contribute/hinder the integration of the four language skills in the language lessons and develop a framework that may be used by all language teachers in the world to simultaneously develop the four language skills of learners.

1. Introduction

[1] register that today, significant progress is being achieved, particularly in the educational system. Grammar-translation, which was once widely used and the only method for teaching languages, is now mainly ignored by current teachers. For example, the study of [2] affirms that an archaic technique called the Grammar Translation Method was first employed to teach extinct languages. Latin and Greek, which were studied to obtain information and gain access to the history of past civilizations, are actually referred to as "dead languages". Latin and Ancient Greek are referred to as "dead languages" since no one today uses them for interactive communication. Substantively, the Grammar Translation Method has clearly lost its traditional or classical standing as a result of the assertions made above. As a result, this approach is rarely used by second- or foreign-language teachers, and it has a poor reputation in the ESOL (ESL, EFL) community. The grammar-translation approach has allegedly been discredited as a valid language teaching strategy by contemporary academics. The Grammar-Translation Method has no supporters and there is no theory supporting this practise. The Grammar Translation Method is thought to have a number of drawbacks, including: 1) The Grammar Translation Method could make learning a language tedious and monotonous; 2) The Grammar Translation Method may also cause students to feel frustrated when they visit places where the studied language is spoken (they find it difficult to grasp what people are saying and must work extremely hard to communicate at the most fundamental level); 3) The pupils' communicative competence is not encouraged or approached in this strategy.

[3] For complete communication, we require four skills when learning a language. Typically, when learning a language, we begin by listening, then speak, then read, and then write. The four "language skills" are these, frequently referred to as "macro skills." Language-related listening, speaking, reading, and writing are the most frequently mentioned macro abilities. Listening is a communication strategy that calls for the receiver to comprehend, interpret, and assess what is being said. On the other hand, speaking is the act of communicating verbally. We use a variety of body parts, including the lungs, vocal tract, vocal cords, tongue, teeth, and lips, to produce sounds when we speak. The second of the four language skills, speaking is typically the one we learn second. There usually has to be at least one listener for this vocalised type of discourse. A "di-

alogue" is when two or more people speak or converse with one another. Dialogue is a natural way for speech to flow from one person to another. In the case of giving a speech or presentation, it can also be prepared for and practised. For learners, reading is a key ability that they need for life and for learning. Reading is described as having the capacity to understand what is written down and properly interpret it. The ability to comprehend and employ speaking and listening abilities, as well as reading itself, are important determinants of (L2) reading skill development. This is because you need to: a word that you hear before you pronounce it; before you can read it, say a word, and before writing a word, read it. Writing is the creative process since it involves searching for and uncovering one's thoughts. Writing itself is a way of creating meaning [4].

English language teachers are increasingly attempting to increase teaching quality by utilising an integrated strategy. All language skills are now thought to be vital and employed in communication, which is the most important aspect of language learning. Although this is the fact, up to date, there seem to be a dearth of literature in the Namibian context about strategies to develop the four macro-communication skills amongst grade 6 Rumanyo learners in Kavango East region. This was confirmed using the Google scholar search engine and ProQuest. But there is a plethora of literature on teachers' beliefs and practices in a multilingual context of Namibia, debates about mother tongue as a medium of instruction [5] [6] [7] [8] [9].

[10] postulate that although language has become a prominent issue in international business and management research, there are numerous untapped research areas in this field. The development of macro-communication skills in indigenous language subjects in the senior primary phase has received some attention but lacks significant systematic assessment. It is paramount to develop learners' macro-communication skills (Listening, Speaking, Writing and Reading or LSWR in short) as those are the skills they should use as they study any indigenous, foreign language or even any subjects in schools and beyond. Reading is vital for learning and absorbing information in school, and it has long-term implications for academic success [11]. Language skills at a young age are regularly found to influence later reading ability [12]. Weak reading skills are sometimes attributed to earlier poor language development. There is widespread worry that poor language abilities in the toddler stage are critical for reading acquisition, which is the most important element for scholastic success. Most studies that look at the links between early language skills and later reading begin with pre-schoolers (children as young as four years old) and monitor their development. The current study began with Rumanyo sixth-grade students in the senior primary phase to establish strategies the Rumanyo teachers are using in developing the four language skills amongst their grade 6 learners.

[13] study on teacher language quality in preschool classrooms: Examining connections with DLLs' oral language skills suggests that children's oral language is an important aspect of early development because it provides the groundwork for subsequent academic accomplishment. Preschool children's oral language

skills in the United States are linked to later reading and writing ability among monolingual English speakers and dual language learners. DLLs are youngsters who are learning English alongside or in addition to their native language. DLLs' progress in oral language abilities in preschool has been linked to reading skills in later grades, according to research. This study was conducted in the context of United States of America and in the Junior primary phase. The findings of this study may not be generalised to the present study as the context is different. That is to say, Namibia and Kavango East region is a developing country and region whereas the United States of America is a developed country. Also, the present study sought to examine the senior primary phase not the junior primary phase. Moreso, the senior primary learners in grade 6 have already gained most of the macro-communication skills, whereas the ones in the junior primary phase are still learning all these skills. The application strategies used in the junior primary phase cannot be generalised in all school phases because of the level. It is against this background that the latter sought to establish strategies that Rumanyo grade 6 teachers use to develop the four language skills amongst grade 6 learners in Kavango East region of Namibia.

Another study conducted in the United Arab Emirates by [14] on the impact of the Lughati Smart Education initiative on the acquisition of Arabic language skills among kindergarteners, as well as the strengths and areas for improvement in the Lughati programme from the perspective of the teachers who implemented the Smart Education programme, used a quantitative research approach and discovered that the Smart Education Programme (Lughati Initiative) aided in the acquisition of Arabic language skills. Because of the phase and methods gap, the findings of this study may not be generalisable to senior primary phase learners.

[15] contend that the primary job of educators in learning is to shape the learning environment so that it can enable improved behaviour change for pupils. To do this, instructors might employ a variety of learning resources to assist students in modifying their behaviour. Educators must also utilise tactics or learning approaches to keep pupils motivated and grasp the content being taught. As the initial phase of basic education, elementary school should be able to lay a solid foundation for the next level of education. Schools must endeavour to provide graduates with enough basic abilities and skills, namely strategic process capabilities. Students' language abilities enable them to learn a wide range of knowledge, appreciate literature, and develop themselves in a sustainable manner. Students will be able to learn a variety of knowledge through their language abilities, with the primary goal of understanding Indonesian language, literature, artistic language, and literature. People can use language to become social beings with culture, to establish healthy personalities, to become personal beings, to become citizens, and to comprehend and participate in the process of community development, both now and in the future. Global breakthroughs are driving our future, one of which is very real in the sphere of technology and informa-

tion, which is becoming increasingly sophisticated with the ability to read and write as we go.

1.1. Strategies to Develop the Four Language Skills (Listening, Speaking, Reading, and Writing) amongst Learners

1.1.1. Writing Skill Strategies

The study of [16] posits that storytelling is imperative because it develops learners' story writing. While the former study aimed to explore the views of learners and teachers on implementing the storytelling strategy as a way to improve learners' story writing, the latter study aimed at establishing strategies to develop all the four language skills in Rumanyo learners in the sixth grade. The present study thus closes the gap in literature, as it covers all the four language skills rather than concentrating on one language skill like in the former study. While [16] focused on storytelling as one of the many strategies to foster the writing skills of learners, [17] went further in the spectrum of Information and Communications Technology (ICT) on how it may enhance the writing skills of learners. In their quest to uncover how Google Apps may enhance learners' writing skills, they discovered that ICT has greatly aided teachers in advancing their teaching approaches. Our educational tactics are constantly improving as new technology reduces teachers' effort in creating materials and assists students in their learning. In reality, there are numerous study papers on the efficacy of employing ICT to engage students in their learning. Writing is regarded as one of the most difficult talents for pupils to learn because it may be a tedious and laborious endeavour. Furthermore, a lack of language had contributed to a lack of confidence and a high level of anxiety, causing them to struggle to write. According to Krashen's Affective Filter Hypothesis, learners who have a low affective filter, high motivation, self-confidence, and a low level of fear are better prepared for second language acquisition success. It is anticipated that incorporating ICT into the learning process using Google Apps will improve students' writing skills. They also asserted that acquisition will not occur if a learner is tense, furious, nervous, or bored, as this will activate the filter. As a result, when the student is relaxed or motivated, it will be lower. Integration of ICT in schooling appears to lower students' anxiety. Figure 1 depicts the conceptual framework of using Google Apps in English Second Language (ESL) writing borrowed from [17].

Figure 1 illustrates the conceptual framework of using Google Apps in English Second Language (ESL) writing.

[18] believes that metacognitive and critical thinking strategies may enhance learners' argumentative writing skills. Metacognition and critical thinking are two qualities that should be taught in argumentative writing teaching. Argumentative writing differs from other genres in several ways. A news report, for example, is a separate type of writing that allows writers to speak with readers indirectly. This common genre contains messages intended to encourage readers to accept or respond to the writer's point of view on the message he or she
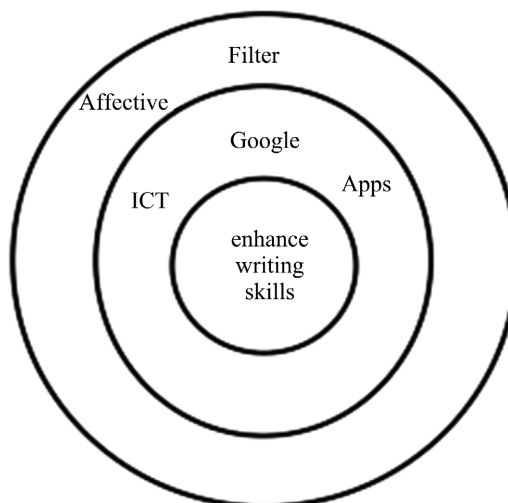
Figure 1. The conceptual framework of using Google Apps in ESL writing (Adopted from [17]).

authored. Regardless of the form or genre of writing, one thing all writers have in common is the writer's desire for a response from the readers. Substantively, argumentative writing is a critical skill for the twenty-first century, especially as it relates to the ability to think and debate rationally. An argument is primarily an author's attempt to persuade his or her audience through spoken or written expressions or public presentation. It is usually a discrete communicative act with clear temporal or spatial bounds. An argument occurs as a building block of argumentative writing when an author attempts to persuade a specific targeted author's audience to believe something by using reasoning or facts. In fact, an argumentative essay encourages students to construct arguments by conducting independent research on a topic in order to gather, generate, and evaluate data that will allow them to develop their own position on the subject.

[19] assert that corrective action is required. The idea that all students need to do is use the language and everything else would fall into place appears to be flawed. Students request that teachers instruct them. If they just want to converse, they'll usually let us know or go to an internet chat room. Without a doubt, students must be corrected as part of the learning process. Students, on the other hand, must be encouraged to use the language. It might be discouraging to correct children while they are attempting to use the language successfully. Making changes as a hobby is the most pleasant solution. Following each class activity, correction might be used as a follow-up. Correction sessions, on the other hand, can be used as a valuable exercise in and of itself. To put it another way, teachers can design an exercise in which each error (or type of mistake) is corrected. Students understand and acknowledge that the activity will be centred on rectification. However, these exercises should be matched with other, more free-form activities that allow children to express themselves without fear of being punished for every other word. They also contended that when it comes to correction, it's not an either/or problem. The necessary correction must occur,

and students anticipate and desire it. However, how instructors correct students has a tremendous impact on whether students feel confident in their use or are intimidated. Correcting students in groups, during correction sessions, at the end of assignments, and allowing them to remedy their own errors all help to encourage students to utilise English rather than worry about making too many mistakes. Self-Correction is one of the strategies for correcting our own mistakes or inaccuracies in our phrases. Teachers have always provided students with feedback on flaws; however, numerous methods of delivering feedback and correcting flaws have been adopted in current teaching methodologies.

1.1.2. Reading Skill Strategies

According to [20], i-THINK Mapping refers to the instructional strategies utilised in reading comprehension lessons to improve students' comprehension of the text and sharpen their analytical skills. As a result, the pupils' higher-order thinking skills (HOTS) will advance. The study of eight forms of thinking maps were proposed by [21], each with a distinct function: circle, bubble, double bubble, tree, brace, flow, multi-flow, and bridge.

Listening, speaking, reading, and writing are the four skills required to learn a language. Reading is regarded as one of the most important skills in language acquisition [22]. One of the primary goals of any early education programmes is to help pupils develop strong reading skills. They note that the i-THINK Mapping approach could be used to improve students' reading comprehension skills. i-THINK Mapping refers to the teaching methods used in reading comprehension to help students better understand the text and improve their thinking skills [20] [22]. As a result, pupils' higher-order thinking skills (HOTS) will improve.

Reading is one of the most important skills for children to develop in their early school years, as it serves as the foundation for their learning [23], as it can support the learning process at a higher level and will have a significant impact on encouraging students to compete globally [24] [25]. According to [26], empowerment of literacy workshops becomes a solution in an effort to solve problems faced by students affected by disasters and overcome the problem of low reading ability of students in refugee camps in order to avoid the birth of an illiterate young generation and so that students can read fluently so that they can access knowledge independently whenever there is another eruption.

1.1.3. Speaking Skill Strategies

The study conducted in Iran by [27] about " Examining the Effects of Cue Cards on EFL Learners' Speaking Fluency, Accuracy, and Speaking Anxiety" reveal that media is a powerful instrument that is increasingly being employed in the teaching-learning process. As a type of media, a cue card is a card with images or vocabulary that is used to motivate students to respond to questions in group or pair work [27] [28]. Cue cards are used to provide students practise speaking English in real-life circumstances. Cue cards, which are changed graphics, have various advantages, one of which is their visibility. Cue cards can thus assist

students when asked to explain something or someone exactly [27] [29] [30]. Cue cards are graphic cards on which cue phrases are used to aid students to initiate dialogs [27].

Language serves as a method of communication, unification, and scientific and technological advancement. Furthermore, solid language skills are required for all levels of learning [31]. The findings of [32] reveal that the material in Indonesian learning has four characteristics of skills. Listening, speaking, reading, and writing are examples of these abilities. To gain good mastery of Indonesian learning, the child must thoroughly master these four areas, particularly speaking skills. Speaking abilities do not grow on their own; they must be practised on a daily basis to fully develop [33] [34]. Speaking abilities refer to a person's capacity to verbally transmit concepts supplied by others. Therefore, the present study sought to unravel the speaking skill strategies which may be adopted to enhance the speaking skill of Rumanyo learners in grade 6 in Kavango East region of Namibia. The former focused on enhancing the speaking skill of Indonesian language in elementary schools.

One of the most effective strategies to include children in enhancing their speaking skills is through storytelling [35]. This is because storytelling not only instils in children the habit of telling stories or conversing, but it can also boost their self-esteem. According to [36], storytelling is the oral transmission of information from one person to another. Students' self-confidence and speaking skills can be spontaneously strengthened through storytelling activities with peers [37]. The child develops excellent speaking abilities and overcomes their lack of self-confidence by frequently telling stories.

1.1.4. Listening Skill Strategies

According to [38], modern effective techniques of teaching listening skills range from interactive exercises to multimedia resources. Listening is one of the most easily acquired talents. Because putting a bit more emphasis on learning through easy and enjoyable activities leads to greater results. It makes no difference whether you work with younger or older kids in this scenario, as long as you apply one of the following strategies to develop yourself: Interpersonal activities such as role playing, mock interviews, interpersonal dialogues, and storytelling are among the most effective strategies to improve great listening skills. Students are separated into small groups of two or three and are asked questions based on the style.

[39] expound that listening is vital for learning because it allows students to participate in conversations while going about their daily tasks. However, if kids lack listening comprehension, they may become disoriented and acquire inaccurate information. Students' challenges with listening comprehension might be attributed to speech tempo, vocabulary, and pronunciation. For example, if the speaker has a unique accent that the students must be aware of, listening to audio as part of the task may be difficult. Pronunciation and unfamiliarity with vocabulary words might be a hindrance to good listening in this situation. Thus,

to mitigate these, [39] suggest that it is critical to use a content-based approach for support and to create listening exercise resources to help grade 8 students learn English. Therefore, this study aimed at discovering listening skill strategies to enhance the listening skills of grade 6 Rumanyo language learners in Kavango East region of Namibia.

1.2. Theoretical Framework

This study adopted the instructional theory for skill development as proposed by [40]. [40] idea for fostering skill development outcomes can be utilised to encourage all types of skills. Romiszowski defines skill as "the capacity to perform a given type of task or activity with a given degree of effectiveness, efficiency, speed, or other measure of quantity or quality (p. 202)". He differentiates between intellectual skills (involving the thinking), motor, sensorimotor, or psychomotor skills (involving the body), personal skills (including emotions), and interpersonal skills (involving dealing with others). Skill differs from knowledge in that it is acquired via experience and practise, whereas knowledge is either present or absent.

Skills, according to the notion, exist on a spectrum of complexity ranging from reproductive to productive. Reproductive skills are those that are concerned with the use of conventional procedures or mechanised processes, like as numerical multiplication or typing. Productive abilities, on the other hand, entail the use of concepts and techniques, such as creative writing or chess. According to Romiszowski, whether a skill is reproductive or productive has a significantly bigger influence on instructional technique selection and design than whether a skill is cerebral, motor, personal, or interpersonal.

The above theory is suitable for this study as it sought to unravel developmental strategies to enhance the four language skills (Speaking, listening, reading, and writing) of Rumanyo learners in grade 6 in Rundu and Ndiyona circuit of the Kavango East region. This theory advocates for encouraging all types of skills, and for this study is the language skills.

2. Materials and Methods

This study used a descriptive qualitative research approach to gain a comprehensive understanding of grade 6 Rumanyo first language teachers in Namibia's Kavango East region on strategies for developing the four macro-communication skills (reading, writing, speaking, and listening) among senior primary phase (grade 6) learners. Qualitative research encompasses a wide range of theoretical perspectives and approaches, methodologies, and research strategies. Case studies, oral histories, participant observations, action research, ethnography, netnography, autoethnography, interviews, grounded theory, and action research are only a few examples [41] [42] [43]. However, certain key traits are shared by such techniques. [44] describes qualitative research as an inquiry process of understanding a social or human problem based on building a complex, holistic

picture, formed with words, reporting detailed views of informants, and conducted in a natural setting. Qualitative research, according to [45], is "an emergent, inductive, interpretive, and naturalistic approach to the study of people, cases, phenomena, social situations, and processes in their natural settings in order to reveal in descriptive terms the meanings that people attach to their experiences of the world" [45]. [44] posits that qualitative research is an inquiry approach for understanding a social or human problem that is built on developing a complex, holistic picture using words, relaying comprehensive viewpoints of informants, and taking place in a natural context. Substantively, [45] contend that qualitative research is an emergent, inductive, interpretive, and naturalistic approach to the study of people, cases, phenomena, social situations, and processes in their natural settings in order to reveal in descriptive terms the meanings that people attach to their experiences of the world.

The current study is based on the interpretivist research paradigm and employs a case study as a research strategy. The study employed a semi-structured interview guide and purposefully recruited (n = 10) Rumanyo first language teachers from the Kavango East region's Rundu and Ndiyona circuits. Rumanyo is a first language taught only in the Kavango East Region of Namibia and the sample was thus gathered from the Rumanyo teachers in two circuits. These teachers were approached on a purpose basis because the researchers believed to collect viable data from them as they are the ones that teach the learners using the four macro skills of communication in a language. Permission was obtained from the school to allow researchers to collect data. The data was thematically evaluated, and themes were extracted from the merged findings. Tables and graphs were used to show biographical information. Participants were promised that their participation in the study was optional and that their names would not be utilised or revealed. Instead, each participant would be allocated a pseudonym. Prior to collecting data, subjects were reviewed and given informed consent.

3. Results and Discussion

This section presents and discusses findings about strategies Rumanyo teachers may employ to enhance the four macro-communication skills amongst grade 6 learners of the Ndiyona and Rundu circuit in Kavango East region of Namibia. The data emanates from the interviews conducted with ten Rumanyo teachers in Ndiyona and Rundu circuit in Kavango East region of Namibia.

3.1. Biographical Data

Age Group Categories of Participants
The age distribution of the participants shows that there is no significant difference between age groups; the mean age of all subjects is 37 years, the median age is 37 years, the mode age is between 30 and 38 years, and the range is 18 years (Figure 2).
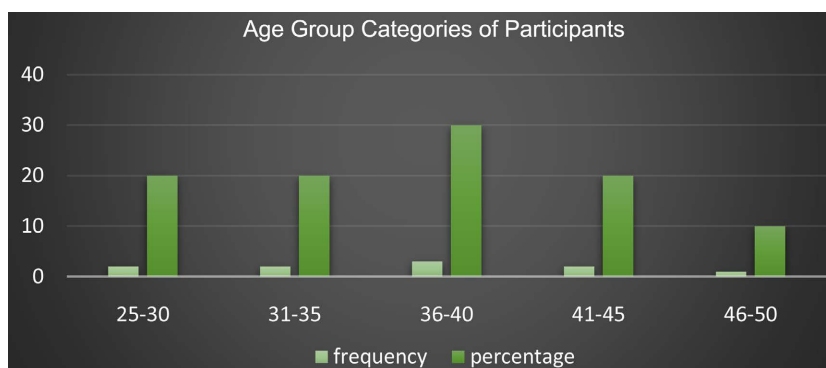
Figure 2. Age category of participants.

3.2. Gender of Participants

Figure 3 illustrates that there is an even distribution of participants in terms of age who participated in this study. The participants share the percentage in half.

3.3. Pseudo Names of Participants and Their Highest Qualifications

Table 1 shows that all the participated respondents are qualified to teach Rumanyo at grade 6 level. And their qualifications range from Basic Education Teachers' Diploma to Bachelor of Education Honours degree.

3.4. Strategies to Develop the Four Macro-Communication Skills in Grade 6 Rumanyo Learners

The findings of this study show that most teachers incorporate the four macro-communication skills in their grade 6 Rumanyo lessons. And they had the following to say:

"*I teach listening by having students listen to the text while answering questions.*" "*Before I read the text, I give the learners instructions, and then they have to discuss the key words, topic of the text, and pictures, if any.*"

Other participants agreed that using story telling techniques help learners listen to a text attentively and motivates them to talk. According to the other participant, the following tactics must be used while teaching listening skills. Visualisation, cooperative learning, and chances for all learners to participate in questions and activities are examples of these. These findings are in congruent with the findings of [38] who postulate that modern effective techniques of teaching listening skills range from interactive exercises to multimedia resources. Listening is one of the most easily acquired talents. Because putting a bit more emphasis on learning through easy and enjoyable activities leads to greater results. It makes no difference whether you work with younger or older kids in this scenario, as long as you apply one of the following strategies to develop yourself: Interpersonal activities such as role playing, mock interviews, interpersonal dialogues, and storytelling are among the most effective strategies to improve great listening skills. Students are separated into small groups of two or three and are asked questions based on the style.
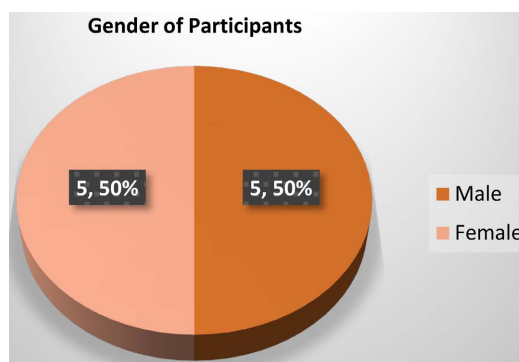
Figure 3. The gender of participants.

Table 1. Highest qualifications of participants.

Pseudo Names of Participants	Highest Qualification
1) Polo	Basic Education Teachers' Diploma
2) Tiguan	Bed Honours
3) Fortuner	Bed Honours
4) Amarok	Basic Education Teachers' Diploma
5) BMW	Bed Honours
6) Audi	Basic Education Teachers' Diploma
7) Toyota	Bed Honours
8) Jeep	Bed Honours
9) Benz	Bed Honours
10) Mazda Demio	Bed Honours

When asked to respond to respond on how they enhance the reading and writing skills amongst their grade 6 Rumanyo learners, they said that "in reading and writing "I use prepared and unprepared reading before they can do the writing part. This means children are given books to read and all participants agreed that these were the strategies most teachers use." They also added that for them to enhance the writing skills of learners they teach their learners writing skills in different ways: "*My learners are always monitored to write letters correctly because this where writing skills starts." She further added that other thing that I do for my learners to master this, "I teach them the use of punctuation marks, sentence, and word formation." "From the beginning I always make sure that my learners identify simple, complex and compound words.*"

4. Conclusions

All in all, this study sought to establish the strategies Rumanyo teachers use to develop the four language skills amongst grade 6 learners and found out that teachers use storytelling to enhance the listening skill, they also use prepared and unprepared reading exercises to enhance learners' reading skills, they also teach

punctuation marks, types of sentences and word formation to develop the skill of writing in learners. It is against this background that this study recommends the following:

- To develop the Rumanyo learners' language skills, teachers may still integrate Information and Communications Technology (ICT) using the Google Apps to teach writing online.
- A further study should be conducted to deduce dependent and independent variables that contribute/hinder the integration of the four language skills in the language lessons.
- A further study should be conducted to develop a framework that may be used by all language teachers in the world to simultaneously develop the four language skills in language skills in learners.

Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

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