

Language diversity and multilingualism in ECCE



You can find this story, with activities, on the African Storybook website at www.africanstorybook.org/reader.php?id=36448&a=1&d=0

This publication was produced with the financial support of the European Union. The contents are the sole responsibility of PIECCE and do not necessarily reflect the views of the European Union.

PIECCE was co-funded by UNICEF and the South African Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET).



higher education
& training

Department:
Higher Education and Training
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

unicef | for every child



Co-funded by the
European Union

Language diversity and multilingualism in ECCE

Introduction

In this illustrative pack, we explore some important ideas about language diversity and multilingualism in the context of birth to four care and education.

We take you on a journey through a day in the life of a baby girl Melokuhle, her older sister Anathi and her 4-year-old brother Asante. On this journey, you engage with a story in different ways. We hope you will learn something yourself as the teacher educator and that you will also use this story to engage with student teachers in your birth-to-four Diploma group. You can use the story as it is, or you can make some of your own creative changes. You can also adapt it to be more suitable for the Degree group.

You can find the story on the African Storybook website at <https://www.africanstorybook.org/> . You will find many more stories on that website that you can use for teaching in the Diploma and the Degree.

Teacher educator/student teacher activities

Throughout the story you will find activities. These are designed to engage your student teachers with some of the theories and ideas about language development and learning. As the teacher educator you can also do the activities as preparation for your teaching – they will then form part of your own learning.

The activities involve reading, discussing, writing and reflecting:

- Activity 1: Language in context;
- Activity 2: Learning and development;
- Activity 3: Multilingualism and translanguaging;
- Activity 4: Learning through doing;
- Activity 5: Supporting language development;
- Activity 6: Language and the NCF;
- Activity 7: Language and the learning environment;
- Activity 8: Reading stories; and
- Activity 9: Observe and practice.

Teacher educator notes and student support

Along the way, we have included comments and guidance. We hope this will help you to support your student teachers because some of them are likely to be:

- Second, third or even fourth language English speakers;
- Studying again for the first time in a number of years; and/or
- Unused to studying at university level.

You should also think about how to support them in other ways and how to link all this support to their Developmental Education.

Readings

Appendix One: The interaction between learning and development

L Vygotsky, 1978

Appendix Two: A practical summary of theories of language development

Nkidi Phatudi, 2019

Appendix Three: What can we learn from Piaget?, Adapted from Gultig (2010).

Appendix Four: How children learn: implications for practice

N Bennett and E Dunne, 2010

References

- Department of Basic Education, 2015. *South African National Curriculum Framework for Children from Birth to Four*. Pretoria: Department of Basic Education.
- Joubert, I., Bester, M., Meyer, E., Evans, R. & Phatudi, N. 2019. *Literacy in the Foundation Phase*. Pretoria: Van Schaik.
- Gultig, J. (Editor). 2010. *Learners and learning*. Johannesburg: Saide. [Online] Available at: <https://www.oerafrica.org/african-teacher-education-oer-network-aten/learners-and-learning>.
- Phatudi, N. 2019. A practical summary of theories of language development. Unpublished paper.
- Vygotsky, L. S. 1978. *Mind in society: the development of higher psychological processes*. London: Harvard University Press.

Let's begin the story ...

A day in the life of Melokuhle

Sheila Drew

Nolulamo Mnyaka-Mngeni

Nkidi Phatudi



African
Storybook.org



A day in the life of Melokuhle

Writer:

Sheila Drew
Nolulamo Mnyaka-Mngeni
Nkidi Phatudi

Illustrations:

Rob Owen

Translated by:



Melokuhle was born in a small, diverse rural township in South Africa. South Africans speak many different languages, like isiXhosa, Sesotho, isiZulu, Shona, English and Afrikaans – even in one household.

Melokuhle's mother speaks isiXhosa and her father speaks Sesotho. Her father lives and works in a city far away. Melokuhle's mother works in a shop owner's house in town. She has a firstborn child called Anathi, who is 15 years old. She also has two young children. Melokuhle is 6 months old and Asante is four years old.

It is early in the morning and it is still dark and cold outside.

Anathi steps onto the misty street and pulls the shawl close around her neck. Melokuhle is warm and cosy against the wind, wrapped in a blanket and sleeping on Anathi's back. Asante walks next to them, holding Anathi's hand. Melo and Asante are on the way to the play centre down the road.

As she walks Anathi sings a song.



Teacher educator notes and student support

Read the story *A day in the life of Melokuhle* all the way through before you begin the activities. Encourage students to read the story a few times as they work through the activities.

Even with academic reading and writing, it is a good practice to read the material a few times. There is quite a lot of reading required for some of the activities. Tell students not be to be afraid to read the articles as often as they need to.

Do Activity 1 to think about Melokuhle and Asante's context in this story.

Activity 1: Language in context

1. Read pages 1 and 2 of the story.
2. Now answer these questions:
 - a. Think of a song/s sung to babies in your culture and other cultures.
 - b. What do children and young babies learn from listening to and singing songs?
 - c. Who are the important people in Melokuhle and Asante's life?
 - d. Why is it important for Nolulamo, who runs the play centre, to know these people?
 - e. What do you think the reason is for their older sister, Anathi, to be taking Melo and Asante to the play centre, instead of their mother or father?
 - f. Is it important for Nolulamo to know these reasons? Why do you think so?

Comment on Activity 1

Singing is a common human activity across cultures. Even if children don't know the words they love to sing, dance and listen to the melody. That is all-important for language development.

What we know from the story so far is that Anathi is a very important person in Melokuhle and Asante's lives; and Melo and Asante are important in each other's lives. The children's mother is also an important person in their lives, though perhaps she does not get to be with them much during the week because of her work. It is possible that Anathi plays the role of a second mother. Perhaps that is why Anathi is taking the younger children to Lindumiso Centre.

No doubt the person who runs and teaches in the play centre also plays an important role in Melo and Asante's lives.

Let's continue with the
story...

Melokuhle and Asante are the first to arrive at Lindumiso Centre.

Nolu runs this play centre for children from birth to four years old. The centre is a small four-roomed house. Inside the play centre it is warm, heated up by the stove on which porridge is cooking.



Teacher educator notes and student support

In Activity 2 students will explore Vygotsky's ideas about learning and development. These ideas, including the concept of the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), lay the foundation for ideas about learning and teaching language.

The reading may be a bit difficult for some students. Give them plenty of time to read. The questions in the activities are designed to support their reading.

Encourage students to:

- Read slowly;
- Highlight or underline keywords related to the questions;
- Read through words they do not understand because the whole sentence might help them to understand the words;
- Read together and aloud, if it helps;
- Read the article more than once; and
- Ask for support.

Activity 2: Learning and development

1. Read Appendix One. This is an edited extract from Lev Vygotsky's book, *The interaction between learning and development*, taken from *Learners and learning* (Gultig, 2010).
2. While you are reading think about and answer these questions:
 - a. In Vygotsky's view, are learning and development separate, are they the same thing, or are they interrelated? Why do you say so? Give examples of quotes from the article that support your view.
 - b. Highlight and read Vygotsky's description of the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD). What does Vygotsky say is the role of *adult guidance* and *capable peers* in stimulating learning and development for young children?
 - c. Describe the ZPD in your own words. Share your description with a fellow student, ask for feedback and discuss your ideas together.
3. Noam Chomsky is a well-known proponent of Nativist theory. Read what Phatudi (2019) says about Chomsky's views in Appendix Two.
 - a. Discuss and write down what you think the main differences are between the views of Vygotsky and Chomsky?

Comment on Activity 2

There are three quotes in the Vygotsky reading (Appendix One) that we think sum up Vygotsky's view of learning and development:

- Page 5: *Learning and development are interrelated from the child's very first day of life ... A well-known and empirically-established fact is that learning should be matched in some manner with the child's developmental level.*
- Page 8: *... we can take account of not only the cycles and maturation processes that have already been completed but also those processes that are currently in a state of formation, that are just beginning to mature and develop. Thus, the zone of proximal development permits us to delineate the child's immediate future and his dynamic developmental state, allowing not only for what already has been achieved developmentally but also for what is in the course of maturing.*
- Page 12: *Our hypothesis establishes the unity but not the identity of learning processes and internal developmental processes ... A second essential feature of our hypothesis is the notion that, although learning is directly related to the course of child development, the two are never accomplished in equal measure or in parallel. Development in children never follows school learning the way a shadow follows the object that casts it. In actuality, there are highly complex dynamic relations between developmental and learning processes that cannot be encompassed by an unchanging hypothetical formulation.*

Comment on Activity 2 continued ...

The second quote shows how Vygotsky makes the link between learning and development, and the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD). Vygotsky's own description of the ZPD, which you found on page 7 is:

...the distance between the actual developmental level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem-solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers.

One key difference between Chomsky and Vygotsky is that Chomsky believes that language acquisition is a 'maturation process through which innate language-learning capacities develop as they mature' whereas Vygotsky argues that 'language arises initially as a means of communication between the child and the people in his environment.'

Let's continue with the
story...

Anathi greets Nolu in Sesotho, "Dumela Mme."
Nolu responds in isiXhosa, "Mholweni, Anathi" and to Asante, "Mholo Sante."
"Unjani namhlanje?"
Asante replies but he is shy, "Philile."
Nolu gets Asante's attention, "Ungxamelephi na awandihoya?"
"Qhuba imoto," he replies and goes by himself to the car toys.
Nolu takes Melokuhle gently from her older sister's back and lays her on the mattress in the next room for babies.
Meanwhile, Asante plays with cars.



Teacher educator notes and student support

If you are offering this diploma face to face, for the third activity you can encourage students to discuss their thoughts and responses with each other. In that way, you will be modelling Vygotsky's ideas about problem-solving collaboratively with peers. After the activity you can ask students to reflect on their own learning in relation to Vygotsky's ideas, using questions like "Who are your capable peers?"

If you are adapting this activity for online learning, remember to include some way for students to engage with each other, such as through a WhatsApp group or an online chat forum.

And of course, you will encourage students to engage with each other in whatever language/s they feel comfortable with.

Activity 3: Multilingualism and translanguaging

Read pages 1, 3 and 4 of the story again.

1. Read the section on multilingualism and translanguaging from Appendix Two.
2. Think back to Melo and Asante's language context. Melo's mother speaks to Melo and Asante in isiXhosa and their father speaks to them in Sesotho.
 - a. What would you say Melo and Asante's home language is?
 - b. What role does Nolu have in helping Melo and Asante to speak isiXhosa and Sesotho?
3. In Activity 2 you read about the role of *adult guidance* and *capable peers* in stimulating learning and development for young children. Think about the ZPD.
 - a. Who are the important adults and capable peers in Melokuhle and Asante's life?
 - b. How can they support Melo and Asante to learn new words and additional languages?

Comment on Activity 3

Melo and Asante live in a multilingual community, in a multilingual family. In Appendix Two, Makalela (2014) suggests that this would make the idea of a home language (or mother tongue) for Melo and Asante irrelevant.

Nolu needs to understand the complex language context of all the children she works with, not just Melo and Asante. The play centre itself is likely to be a complex multilingual context.

We can tell that Nolu facilitates multilingual communication. She needs to identify what the children know and can do (their actual developmental level) in their languages, and she needs to be the *adult guide* and scaffold their learning to *potential developmental levels* in language (and other learning).

The important *adult guides* in Melo and Asante's lives are their mother and father, their older sister Anathi, each other and Nolu. These *adult guides* can support Melo and Asante by speaking with them, modelling new words and providing a rich multilingual environment.

As you read through the story you may be able to identify other *adult guides* and *capable peers* in their lives.

Let's continue with the
story...

Melokuhle wakes up. Nolu changes her nappy.

“Melo, Melo! Ubonwabele ubuthongo bakho. You enjoyed your sleep, neh?” She smiles.

Nolu laughs and shakes her head. Melo copies Nolu, shaking her head and giggling.

Nolu speaks to Melokuhle, “Masitshintshe ke ngoku,” making eye contact.

“Kufuneka sicoceke, sinuke kamnandi, xa sizakutya.” She wants Melo to be clean when she eats.

Melo looks at things around her and talks to herself quietly. “Ta, ta,” she says.

“Thatha,” says Nolu, giving Melo a soft toy which she chews.

Melo sees the bright sunlight coming through the window. She stares at the sunrays.

Nolu tells Melo it is time for breakfast. “Lixesha lesidlo sakusasa, Melo,” says Nolu. “Yum, yum, yum.”



When the food is finished, Nolu shows Melo the empty bowl and says, “Mmmmh, phelile!” Melo replies, “Mmmmh.” Nolu settles Melo on a blanket on the floor, next to two other babies. She puts a variety of toys in front of them. She shakes a soft ball in front of Melo’s eyes and says, “Hlukahla, hlukahla, hlukahla ibhola. Jonga, Melo.” She shakes the ball from side to side. Melo watches the ball carefully. Nolu names each toy for Melo and watches while she plays.



Teacher educator notes and student support

In Activity 4 the students are reading again. Remind students about the reading tips you have already given them.

You can point out to students that they are discussing their ideas with their peers, and using language to think and find meaning. It is important for them to reflect on how they themselves learn.

- What is their own ZPD?
- How do they learn from their peers and more experienced adults?
- How do they use language for learning?

You can add these kinds of questions to activities that you design and use in your teaching.

And as a teacher educator, how do these ideas affect your own teaching practice?

Activity 4: Learning through language and doing

We have already engaged with Vygotsky's theory of learning and development. Let's now explore Piaget's ideas.

1. Read Appendix Three: *What can we learn from Piaget?* While you are reading, focus on points about learning from action.
2. Read pages 5, 6 and 7 of the story again. Remember to look carefully at the pictures too.
 - a. Think about and write down what you think Nolu is doing that supports the babies' learning through doing and interaction.
 - b. What is Nolu doing that supports Melokuhle's language development?
3. Read again, in Appendix One, the section by Vygotsky on the importance of language in learning.
 - a. Concerning language learning and development, what value do you think Piaget and Vygotsky place on Nolu speaking to Melo, talking about what she is doing and interacting with her,?
 - b. What value does language learning and development have for reasoning and reflective thought?
4. Discuss your responses with a fellow student. Do you agree with each other about your responses? What if you disagree? Can you reach agreement?

Comment on Activity 4

The way Nolu speaks and engages with Melo and Asante is an opportunity for them to communicate with the people in their environment. For Vygotsky, this is how language first arises. This gives rise to 'internal speech and reflective thought'. This learning creates the opportunity for children to move towards their potential developmental level.

...learning must awaken a variety of internal developmental processes that are able to operate only when the child is interacting with people in his environment and in co-operation with his peers. Once these processes are internalised they become part of the child's independent developmental achievement (Appendix One, page 11).

In support of these ideas, Joubert et al. (2015) highlight some important points through their research:

- Language acquisition cannot take place in isolation.
- Language is about communication and the richer the input from the environment in which the young child interacts, the greater will be her communicative competence.
- At each age, children can understand much more than they can say.
- Being able to speak one language seems to provide the foundation for learning any additional languages.

So, language is the basis for the development of internal mental functions and adult (or reflective or higher order) thought.

Let's continue with the
story...

Asante's had breakfast too. Now they are playing.

Asante wants to show Melo his baby doll. He finds Melo in the baby room, lying on a blanket. "Melo," he says, giving her the doll, "Yeyakho."

Melo grabs the doll's leg and tries to put it in her mouth.

"Asante, mkhulu kakhulu unodoli kuMelo." The doll is too big for Melo.

Nolu takes the doll and tells Melo not to eat it. She says, "Melo, sukutya unodoli." She gives Melo a soft rubber toy.

"Uyathanda ukwabelana nosisi wakho omncinci." She praises Asante for sharing with his baby sister.

"Ewe," says Asante.

Nolu asks Asante to play with his friends. "Hamba uyodlala nezihlobo zakho."

"Ndihlala noMelo," Asante replies.

"Melo yahleka," says Asante.

"Yes," says Nolu. "Melo yahleka." She asks Asante to come back later.

"Ungabuya uzokumbona ngelinye ixesha?"

"Ewe." Smiling, Asante goes to play.



Teacher educator notes and student support

You can adapt Activity 5 and Activity 6 so that students are not just reading and thinking, but also discussing with each other.

It is crucially important for each student teacher to have a copy of the National Curriculum Framework birth to four. Make sure you give them access by providing a link to an online version or downloading and printing them for students.

Activity 5: Being responsive to language needs

1. Think about Asante giving his doll to his baby sister.
 - a. Why is it important for him to talk to Melo and share what he does?
 - b. Why did Nolu give Asante time to talk to Melo?
 - c. Why did Nolu take the doll from Melo and ask Asante to go and play with his friends?
 - d. Why did Nolu give Melo a rubber toy to play with?

Comment on Activity 5

We know now that Asante is one of Melo's *capable peers*. But it is also important for Asante, for his own learning and emotional development, to engage with Melo. She is his sister, after all.

Nolu is responsive to Asante's need to engage with his baby sister. She doesn't scold him, but manages to persuade him that the doll is not appropriate for Melo and that she is happy. Nolu helps Asante to feel secure enough to go and play with his peers.

But Nolu is also responsive to Melo's need to have appropriate and safe toys to interact with in her environment.

Activity 6: Language and the NCF

1. Read this extract, adapted from the *South African National Curriculum Framework for children from Birth to Four* (NCF) (DBE, 2015, page 45). It shows the Communication Early Learning and Development Area (ELDA) guidelines for the *Advancing further* stage, for the aim of *Children speak using different styles of communication relationships*.

| Aims | Developmental Guidelines for Babies, Toddlers and Young Children | Examples of activities for Adults and Older Children to offer while working with Babies, Toddlers and Young Children |
|---|---|--|
| <p>2. Children speak using different styles of communication relationships</p> | <p>Advancing further Young children</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Talk in complete sentences • Take turns in conversations • Speak clearly enough to be understood even by those not familiar with the child • Enjoy language games and rhymes • Speak in complex sentences, use grammar and words correctly and learning many new concepts and words every day • Speak sentences of more than five words • Use the future tense • Tell longer stories and imaginative stories • Have a vocabulary of around 2000 words • Demonstrate most of the skills identified below (Grade R) | <p>Advancing further</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue with all activities above (Moving on) • Include children in conversations whenever possible • Encourage children to experiment with new words • Introduce new words and ideas each day through new experiences for the children perhaps by working with topics for example, 'Insects', 'The weather'. • Tell many traditional stories, which enable the child to use her imagination. |

Activity 6: (cont ...)

2. Read Asante's responses to Nolu and other children on pages 7 and 8 of the story.
 - a. What would you say about Asante's speech and communication?
 - b. What does Nolu do to help Asante?
 - c. What opportunities would you advise Nolu to give to Asante?

Comment on Activity 6

Asante seems able to take turns in conversations, he listens carefully and responds, and he seems to enjoy games with other children. Many of his sentences are shorter than five words and are not very complex.

We think Nolu does well when she speaks with him in longer sentences because she is giving him a good example. She does not discourage him by correcting him all the time. It is also good that there is opportunity for Asante to engage meaningfully with other children in the games and activities that Nolu has prepared in the environment.

We hope that he enjoys listening to stories and looking at books, and we hope that there are lots of stories in isiXhosa and in Sesotho.

We believe that he will become fluent in isiXhosa and Sesotho if Nolu continues to give him a range of rich language opportunities.

Let's continue with the
story...

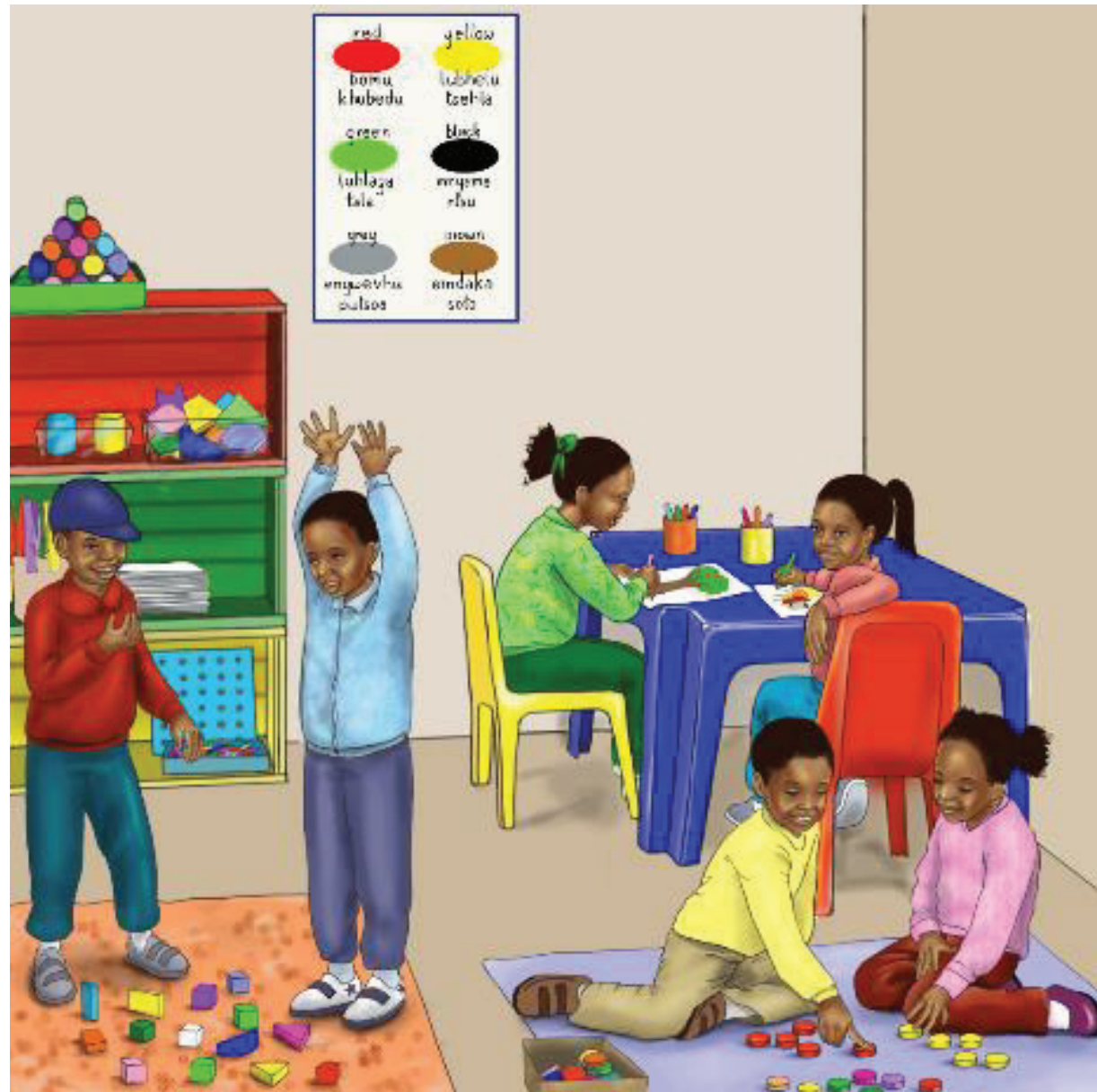
Teacher Sara has prepared the learning environment. Asante and the other children are busy playing. They take turns doing different activities, chatting to each other.

Asante loves playing with blocks. He stacks them high until they fall down. When they fall Lebo says in Sesotho, "A re etse hape, ibedelele jwalo kasifate!" Asante laughs. "Ewe, ibende njengomthi," he agrees in isiXhosa. They build another tower as tall as a tree.

Xolani and Cynthia always play together. Now they sort bottle tops and put them into colourful piles. Xolani says, "Eziluhlaza kunye, ezibomvu kunye, ezilubhelu kunye."

"Blue, red and yellow," says Cynthia.

Nomsa and Tumelo are drawing at the table talking to each other about their drawings.



Teacher educator notes and student support

Activity 7 is quite a long activity. You should work through it slowly, step by step. It is an important activity because it is an opportunity to make links between what has already been learned and some new but related ideas.

You will notice, and you can point out to students as well, how this kind of learning draws on and demonstrates the idea of moving from existing skills and knowledge to new ideas, with some support or scaffolding.

This activity also makes a link to materials on play, developed by the Play Learning Materials Consortium (PLMC) associated with the PIECCE project and supported by UNICEF.

Activity 7: Language and the learning environment

1. Read Appendix Three again. This time focus on Piaget's views about equilibrium, accommodation and assimilation.
2. Read page 8 of the story again.
 - a. Who are Asante's *more knowledgeable* others?
 - b. How will they help him to learn Sesotho? What else can they help him to learn?
 - c. What role does Asante play in the learning and development of other children, including Melo?
3. How does the learning environment that teacher Sara has prepared support learning through doing and interaction?
4. Read Appendix Four.
 - a. What do Bennett and Dunne suggest is Vygotsky's key argument against Piaget views of learning?
 - b. Are the children in the story *lone scientists* in your view?
 - c. Who are the *more knowledgeable others* in the learning environment in the story?
5. Think back to Vygotsky. How does the environment in the story support learning and development, language, cognitive reasoning, etc. What activities promote language development? What else supports language development?

Comment on Activity 7

Learning and development are supported by the rich mixture of spoken and written language, activities for the children to do, opportunities for the children to interact with other children and adults, and time to play.

From a Piagetian point of view, the children are active and interactive, receiving feedback from the environment. A good example is when the tower of blocks falls down and they have to build it again. They are encouraged to think (and change their thinking) about something they did (assimilation and accommodation). Children also get feedback from their interaction with knowledgeable others (for example, when Nolu explains that the doll is too big for Melo). The children, including the babies, are free to *move about* in (the environment).

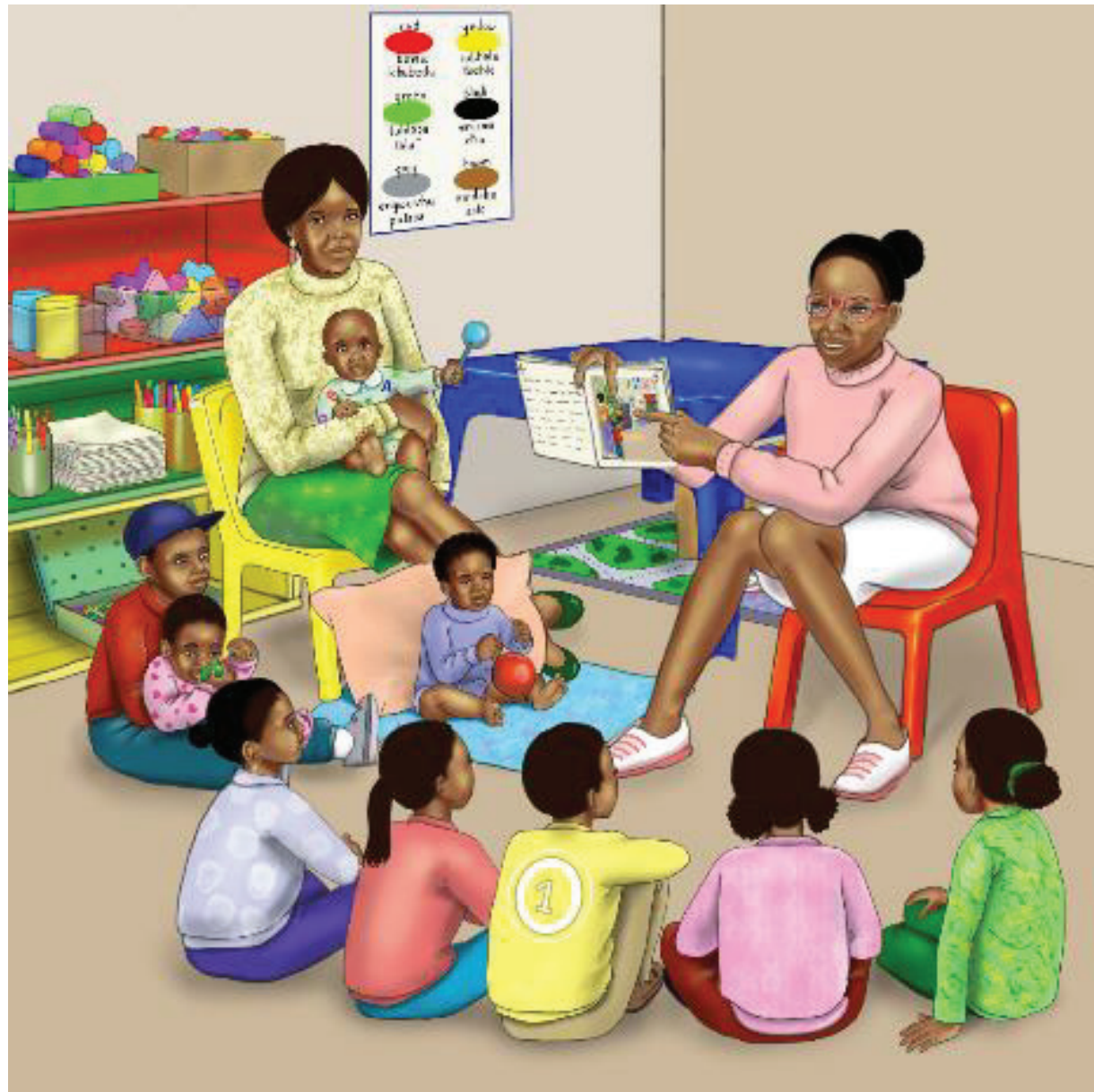
From a Vygotskyan point of view, there are opportunities to engage at the existing developmental level of some children (such as the coloured circles on the chart), and other things which might be beyond them (such as the written names of those colours in English). These things, together with the interaction with each other and the adults in the environment, contribute to the children's language and other learning and development.

From Bennett and Dunne's perspective, the children in Lindumiso Centre are social beings (Vygotsky's view), more like *social scientists* than *lone scientists*.

There are many ideas in the [UNICEF Teacher Training packages](#) on play to illustrate how play and language development support each other.

Let's see how the
children's day ends in the
story...

It is nearly time for the children to rest. They help Teacher Sara pack toys on the shelves. Then they sit in a circle on the floor next to Teacher Sara. While she reads, she shows the pictures to the children and listens to them when they talk about the story. Nolu knows that Melo also likes to listen to stories. Nolu sits on her chair next to Asante. Melo also sits next to Asante. The brother and sister are happy together, listening to the story.



Teacher educator notes and student support

In Activity 8 students will again build on knowledge they have gained to this point. They will also have a chance to apply their learning to a more practical situation, in the story.

Once again, they will need access to the National Curriculum Framework birth to four.

Activity 8: Reading stories

1. Watch this [video](#) of an ECCE teacher reading from a storybook in isiZulu. While you are watching, think and make notes about what you have learned about learning and development.
2. Discuss with a fellow student what the value of storytelling and reading storybooks with young children is for language learning and development.
3. Read this quote again, from Makalela in Appendix Two.

Makalela (2014: 17) maintains that when more than one language is used to access the same content, children develop a deeper understanding of that content. For language teaching, translanguaging is a useful strategy to develop a language through cross-transfer of skills between the language skill sets that children already possess. According to García, (2011: 7) translanguaging does not recognise boundaries between languages, but focuses on what the speakers do with their language.

- a. In what way do you think the idea of translanguaging is supported by what you see in the reading video? Why do you say so?

Activity 8: Reading stories (cont ...)

1. Read the themes from the NCF.
2. Give one example of each NCF theme in Nolu and Sara's practice in the story.

Theme 1: I am a competent person

Principles

1. I am a competent person who actively creates my own identity and my own understanding of the world.
2. I am unique and have a unique life-story.
3. I flourish when attention is paid to equality of opportunities where I can participate to develop my own potential.
4. I am sensitive to individual and group differences and must be educated in ways that help me to celebrate differences.

Theme 2: My learning and development is important

Principles

1. I am curious, energetic and active and I learn by taking up opportunities to make meaning about the world around me.
2. Appropriate local and indigenous knowledge and skills are resources that can be used to promote socially, culturally and linguistically sensitive learning environments for me.
3. Play and hands-on (active) experiences enhance my learning and development.
4. A comprehensive ECD learning programme for quality and equality of opportunities pays attention to my developmental domains (social, emotional, cognitive, physical – with a focus on health and nutrition), the content areas (languages and mathematics) and my strong links with my family and later, my links to schooling.

Theme 3: I need strong connections with adults

Principles

1. Parents and families in their different forms play a central role in my overall development.
2. I benefit from a close and loving relationship with an adult.
3. Adults have the responsibility for the protection and promotion of my rights regardless of my age, background, ethnicity, ability and gender.
4. We would like adults to promote children's well-being, positive identities, inclusivity, child-focused activities and competence for living and coping with life.

Comment on Activity 8

We all know that reading to young children is important. Perhaps you can now see more clearly why reading, even to babies, has value. Even if babies do not understand the story, they will benefit from the verbal engagement and become familiar with the idea of a story or a storybook, especially if they can touch the book!

Stop and think

What kind of story or storybook will be suitable for Melo?

What kind of storybook will be suitable for Asante and his peers?

Is it okay for Melo to listen to a story for older children?

What will happen if Asante looks at a picture book with his baby sister, Melo?

Parents, siblings, caregivers and ECCE teachers should tell stories and read to babies and young children:

- To develop and inculcate a culture of reading;
- To sharpen and develop listening skills;
- To widen their imagination;
- To help them in retelling stories; and
- To expose them to new words, new languages and new ideas.

When we read with children in more than one language it validates all the children's languages, it allows them to show the different language skill sets they have, and to transfer those skills between all the languages they speak.

One final integrated
activity ...

Teacher educator notes and student support

Here is one final integrated activity. You can link it to the students' work integrated learning (WIL).

In this final activity students have an opportunity to consolidate what they have engaged with in the previous activities and apply it to an authentic ECCE setting. Hopefully, this will help them to deepen their learning. You may need to adapt this activity to suit your context and the design of your WIL structure/programme.

Support the students by providing guidance on what to observe and how to record what they observe. This is important preparation for you to do before they go out on WIL.

You can integrate this into other observations and practice they do for WIL. Find out more about this in the [WIL Illustrative Pack](#) from the PIECCE project.

Activity 9: Observe and practice

1. Observe a learning environment in an ECCE site.
 - a. Comment on different parts of the environment in relation to language development.
 - b. Observe young children and babies and identify language learning and development theories in the practice of teachers and engagement of children.
 - c. Look again at the themes from the NCF that you were referred to in Activity 8. Give one example of each NCF theme that was evident in the ECCE site where you did your observation.
 - d. Make suggestions for improvement of the ECCE environment you observed.
2. You might already be working in an ECCE site, or you might not yet have access to an ECCE site. Depending on your context:
 - a. Set up, or design on paper, your own ECCE environment, taking into account what you have learned from these activities and the story.
 - b. Reflect on your environment.
 - c. What ideas will you add from your observation?
 - d. Design and implement your own language play activities for children.

The End

A day in the life of Melokuhle

Writer:

Sheila Drew
Nolulamo Mnyaka-Mngeni
Nkidi Phatudi

Illustrations:

Rob Owen

Translated by:

Date of Publication:

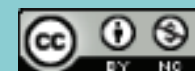
2020



This publication was produced with the financial support of the European Union. The contents are the sole responsibility of PIECCE and do not necessarily reflect the views of the European Union.



PIECCE was co-funded by UNICEF and the South African Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET).



This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution (CC-BY) Version 3.0 Unported Licence

Disclaimer: You are free to download, copy, translate or adapt this story and use the illustrations as long as you attribute or credit the original author/s and illustrator/s.