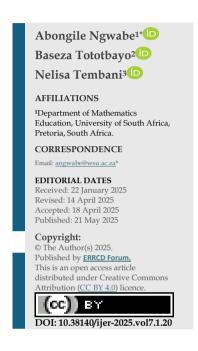**Research Article**

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Rethinking Education 4 Inclusive Development

The Impact of a Tutorship Development Programme on Tutors' Professional Transformation: A Case of a University in South Africa

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Abstract: Tutorship development programmes play a pivotal role in enhancing professional competencies and pedagogical skills among tutors in higher education. This study seeks to explore the professional transformation of tutors participating in a tutorship development programme, with a particular focus on their development in classroom management, leadership, teaching competence, and inclusive practices. Guided by Kegan's Theory of Adult Development, the study interprets tutors' progression from the Socialised Mind, characterised by reliance on external authority, to the Self-Authoring Mind, marked by independent pedagogical reasoning and decision-making. Anchored in the interpretivist paradigm and employing a case study design, the study adopted a qualitative approach. Data were generated through reflections from ten purposively selected tutors within a Faculty of Education at a selected university in the Eastern Cape, South Africa. Thematic analysis was utilised to analyse the data. Findings reveal three key themes of professional transformation: (1) enhanced professional growth through leadership development, reflective practice, and classroom management; (2) increased teaching competence in areas such as lesson planning, learner engagement, assessment strategies, and technological integration; and (3) the deliberate use of translanguaging as an inclusive pedagogical strategy to address linguistic diversity in multilingual classrooms. These findings illustrate the tutors' evolving pedagogical identities, autonomy, and responsiveness to learner needs. This study contributes to the discourse on tutor development by highlighting how structured, practice-based training programmes can facilitate profound professional transformation. It advocates for the expansion of such programmes to provide systematic opportunities for inclusive pedagogical training, peer collaboration, and critical reflection aligned with developmental growth.

Keywords: Tutorship development programme, professional growth, teaching competence, translanguaging, Kegan's theory, higher education.

1. Introduction

Tutorship development programmes in higher education serve as a crucial mechanism for enhancing student learning and tutor development. While these programmes, such as Peer Tutoring, Mentorship, and Peer-Assisted Learning programmes, are traditionally designed to support academic achievement among students (Alejos & Caballero, 2021; Comfort & McMahon, 2014; Ventura, 2023), research increasingly highlights their transformative impact on tutors themselves (DeFeo & Caparas, 2014; Nickow et al., 2023). Engaging in tutoring activities promotes professional readiness and pedagogical competence, positioning tutors as both facilitators of learning and beneficiaries of experiential development (Batz et al., 2015; Iwata et al., 2014).

A substantial body of research emphasises that tutors gain valuable experience, particularly in teaching skills, content mastery, and classroom management (Cotronei-Baird et al., 2021; Shum & Fryer, 2021; Belous et al., 2023; Templeton et al., 2021; Cotronei-Baird et al., 2022). Iwata et al. (2014) found that tutors often demonstrate improved academic performance due to the reinforcement of

learning through teaching. Similarly, Burgess et al. (2016) reported that tutors develop stronger instructional and communication skills, which are critical for future teaching roles. The mentorship and structured training provided within these programmes further enhance tutor preparedness (Chang et al., 2022). Thus, tutorship programmes serve as both an academic support system and a catalyst for the professional growth of future educators. By encouraging pedagogical expertise and personal confidence, these programmes create a dual impact, enhancing both tutor development and student success.

Despite this growing interest, empirical research investigating how professional development programmes shape tutors' professional transformation in terms of teaching competence, classroom practice, and inclusivity exists but remains relatively fragmented. Studies such as Hossain et al. (2024) illustrate how enhancing teaching competencies fosters more inclusive learning environments, while Altun and Toy (2023) document the value of collaborative-reflective models in transforming professional practice and classroom pedagogy. Gregory et al. (2024) further argue that collaborative inquiry-based models contribute not only to pedagogical development but also to the formation of professional identity, which is crucial to tutors' evolving roles. Additionally, reflective practice has been found to enable tutors to identify weaknesses in their instructional approaches and make effective improvements (Oduro et al., 2022). Shemanov et al. (2022) also emphasise the need for context-specific tools to assess tutor competencies in inclusive education settings. Collectively, these findings suggest that, while individual dimensions of tutor development have been studied, further comprehensive research is needed to critically synthesise these strands within a unified framework.

In the South African context, research on inclusive pedagogical approaches, such as translanguaging in tutorship, remains underdeveloped. Although such strategies are increasingly recognised as essential in multilingual higher education environments, empirical insights into how tutors internalise and apply translanguaging remain limited (Wunseh, 2023). Madiba (2024) presents translanguaging as a decolonial and inclusive teaching strategy, while Ramafikeng (2024) highlights the social justice imperatives of integrating linguistic diversity into pedagogy. These perspectives indicate the necessity for more nuanced investigations into how tutors negotiate, adapt, and implement inclusive language practices, especially within structured professional development contexts.

In light of the above, these scholarly insights reveal a significant gap: existing literature does not adequately address how tutors experience professional transformation through structured development programmes that explicitly incorporate inclusive pedagogical tools. This study aims to address that gap by examining how participation in a Tutorship Development Programme facilitates tutors' growth in professional competence, classroom practice, and inclusive strategies such as translanguaging. Consequently, this paper explores the professional transformation of tutors participating in a Tutorship Development Programme, with a particular emphasis on their development in classroom management, leadership, teaching competence, and inclusive practices. In turn, it provides answers to the following questions:
- How does participation in a Tutorship Development Programme contribute to tutors' professional growth in higher education?
- How does the Tutorship Development Programme enhance tutors' teaching competence?
- How do tutors in the Tutorship Development Programme utilise translanguaging to support inclusive and effective teaching practices?

2. Literature Review

The following is a review of pertinent literature that addresses key themes associated with tutorship programmes and professional development in higher education. This review examines tutorship as a conduit between theory and practice, its role in the enhancement of teaching competence, and the

incorporation of translanguaging as an inclusive pedagogical strategy within the framework of tutorship development.

2.1 Tutorship programs and professional development in higher education

Tutorship programmes in higher education serve as critical platforms for professional development, fostering collaborative learning environments and enhancing pedagogical competencies. These programmes enable tutors to integrate theoretical knowledge with practical application, refine their teaching methodologies, and cultivate reflective teaching practices (Wani et al., 2022; Takei et al., 2022). A key advantage of structured tutoring initiatives is their emphasis on peer mentorship and continuous feedback, which allows tutors to evaluate and enhance their instructional strategies (Gustavsson et al., 2019; Kiziltepe & Sali, 2021). Such structured mentorship and feedback are central to the Tutorship Development Programme examined in this study, as they provide the foundation for tutors' professional transformation through experiential learning.

In addition to enhancing individual teaching competencies, tutorship programmes contribute to the broader quality of education by aligning instructional practices with students' evolving learning needs and workforce expectations (Erofeeva et al., 2020; Penta et al., 2019). The incorporation of experiential learning in tutorship programmes has been particularly impactful, as it deepens tutors' engagement and enhances their effectiveness in classroom settings (Owusu-Agyeman, 2023). Through integrating structured training and practical teaching experiences, these programmes help cultivate a culture of continuous professional growth within higher education institutions (Pischetola, 2021). This study builds on these insights by examining how experiential learning within a structured Tutorship Development Programme enables tutors to develop practical teaching strategies, reflective habits, and professional confidence. Thus, the literature affirms the significance of tutorship in shaping both instructional capability and professional identity. However, this study contributes to the field by specifically exploring how such growth unfolds in a South African higher education context. In doing so, it addresses the need for empirical research that captures the lived experiences of tutors undergoing structured pedagogical development.

2.2 Tutorship as a bridge between theory and practice

Tutoring provides a unique opportunity for tutors to engage in reflective practice, allowing them to analyse pedagogical theories while applying these concepts in real-world teaching contexts. This collaborative engagement facilitates deep cognitive processing, as tutors must continually adapt their teaching approaches based on student interactions (Hardman, 2015; Louw, 2018). Moreover, the collaborative nature of tutoring encourages co-evaluation among tutors, further enhancing their professional development (Louw, 2018). These dynamics are particularly significant within the context of this study, which explores how participation in a Tutorship Development Programme influences tutors' progression toward professional self-authorship. As tutors navigate the demands of mentoring and instructional support, they are not only reinforcing subject content but also developing critical skills such as reflection, adaptability, and classroom management—skills that are foundational to professional transformation. In this regard, tutoring acts as a powerful bridge between theoretical understanding and practical application, which aligns with the study's aim of examining tutors' growth in teaching competence and inclusive practices.

Furthermore, effective tutoring enhances students' academic performance by providing specific instructional support, addressing individual learning challenges, and reinforcing theoretical concepts through practical applications (Xu et al., 2019; Grey & Osborne, 2018). This individualised approach ensures that students not only grasp the subject matter but also develop the skills needed to apply their knowledge effectively, thereby enriching their overall learning experience (Xu et al., 2019). Thus, the tutoring context allows tutors to evolve from knowledge transmitters to reflective practitioners, a transition that is central to the theoretical framing of this research.

2.3 Tutorship and the development of teaching competence

Engaging in tutoring fosters essential pedagogical knowledge and classroom management skills. Tutors are required to prepare thoroughly for each session, a process that enhances their understanding of instructional planning, student engagement strategies, and content delivery (Gibson et al., 2013; Naug et al., 2017). Research indicates that mandatory tutor training significantly improves teaching quality by ensuring adherence to best instructional practices (Gibson et al., 2013).

Moreover, peer observation and reflective frameworks, such as the 3P's matrix (Preparation, Presentation, and Performance), have effectively guided tutors in aligning their teaching practices with established pedagogical standards (Naug et al., 2017). Tutors who actively engage in lesson planning, assessment, and the provision of feedback not only strengthen their pedagogical knowledge but also develop robust classroom management strategies (Burgess et al., 2014). Consequently, by fostering effective communication, adaptability, and lesson structuring, tutoring serves as a critical mechanism for professional growth, equipping tutors with the skills necessary to create productive and engaging learning environments.

2.4 Translanguaging as inclusive pedagogy in tutorship development

In multilingual and multicultural contexts such as South Africa, translanguaging is increasingly recognised as an inclusive pedagogical approach within tutor development (Banda, 2017; Hurst, 2017; Wunseh, 2023). Translanguaging refers to the intentional utilisation of multiple languages in the classroom to facilitate communication and enhance comprehension (Creese & Blackledge, 2010; Kiramba, 2016). This approach enables both educators and students to draw upon their full linguistic repertoires, thereby creating richer, more accessible learning environments (Kiramba & Smith, 2019; Probyn, 2019). Such strategies are particularly effective in higher education, where language diversity often presents a barrier to equitable participation (Wunseh & Charamba, 2023). However, acknowledging that not all tutors possess multilingual capabilities, tutor development programmes can still promote inclusive practices by equipping all tutors, irrespective of their language proficiency, with institutional resources that support translanguaging. For instance, the incorporation of bilingual glossaries, multilingual teaching aids, and collaborative peer strategies enables monolingual tutors to facilitate understanding and inclusion. In this manner, tutors who are unable to speak multiple languages are not excluded from implementing translanguaging practices; rather, they are supported in creating inclusive learning environments through accessible and context-sensitive pedagogical tools aligned with institutional language policies (DHET, 2002).

Wunseh and Charamba (2023) argue that translanguaging facilitates language brokering and code-switching, thereby assisting multilingual students in navigating English-dominated academic spaces. This practice not only enhances students' understanding but also validates their cultural and linguistic identities. Hurst (2017) further positions translanguaging as a socially just pedagogy, advocating for its application in countering exclusionary language policies and promoting equity in classroom participation. Probyn (2019) highlights how pedagogical translanguaging challenges monoglossic, colonial educational norms and fosters inclusivity, particularly in content-heavy subjects such as science. Likewise, Kiramba (2016) underscores that permitting learners to utilise their home languages enhances their capacity to comprehend complex academic content, especially within multilingual science classrooms. The employment of translanguaging also bolsters student confidence and engagement, as it creates space for multiple voices and perspectives in the learning process. Furthermore, translanguaging contributes meaningfully to collaborative learning.

Thus, by enabling students to collaborate using multiple languages, tutors can foster peer-to-peer dialogue that deepens conceptual understanding. Creese and Blackledge (2010) and Banda (2017) demonstrate that such practices enhance academic outcomes and build inclusive classroom cultures. For tutors participating in development programmes, adopting translanguaging serves as a key

aspect of their professional development. It requires tutors to move beyond monolingual teaching norms and cultivate pedagogical flexibility, cultural responsiveness, and learner-centred approaches (Madiba, 2024; Ramafikeng, 2024). This process not only enhances their teaching competence but also raises awareness of linguistic justice and inclusion as core professional values (Wunseh, 2023). Moreover, engaging with translanguaging equips tutors with new instructional strategies that reflect the realities of linguistically diverse classrooms. Tutors learn to scaffold lessons more effectively, design multilingual learning materials, and communicate complex content in accessible ways, all of which are transferable skills that improve overall teaching performance (Madiba, 2024; Wunseh, 2023). In doing so, translanguaging strengthens tutor professional development by promoting inclusive pedagogy, addressing language barriers, and fostering socially just, culturally relevant teaching practices (Ramafikeng, 2024). These practices, in turn, transform tutors into reflective practitioners who can adapt to diverse educational settings and contribute meaningfully to the goals of access and transformation in South African higher education (Wunseh, 2023; Madiba, 2024).

3. Theoretical Framework

This study employs Kegan's (1982) Theory of Adult Development as a framework for understanding the cognitive, emotional, and identity transformations experienced by tutors in a tutorship development programme. The theory posits that individuals progress through orders of consciousness, reflecting increasing levels of complexity in their thinking, self-awareness, and interactions with others. This framework is particularly relevant to this study as it explores how tutors transition from students to educators, navigating new responsibilities and self-perceptions. Kegan's model describes how individuals construct meaning through progressively complex stages, evolving from reliance on external guidance to internal self-authorship (Kegan, 1982). Recent scholarship supports the application of Kegan's theory in higher education, particularly in understanding developmental trajectories among educators and adult learners. Chicoş (2024), for instance, demonstrates the applicability of the framework to meaning-making activities in creative and professional training contexts. Sithole and Gumede (2022) argue that Kegan's theory is particularly useful in evaluating and sustaining tutorship programmes, where reflective practice and adaptive learning are critical to tutor transformation. Stewart and Khan (2021) further highlight how the theory guided professional development during the shift to digital pedagogies amid the COVID-19 pandemic. Belous et al. (2023) reinforce the relevance of Kegan's developmental stages in designing tutorship practices that promote personalised growth, academic competence, and sustainable educator development. By applying this theory, this study aims to gain a deep understanding of the tutors' developmental paths within the educational context, particularly as they move toward greater self-authorship and professional maturity.

Furthermore, Kegan's framework delineates how adults progress through orders of consciousness, and this study examines how tutors evolve through these stages. Tutors initially exhibit characteristics of the socialised mind (third order), where they rely on external guidance from institutional structures. However, as they gain experience, they transition to the self-authoring mind (fourth order), wherein they develop independent teaching philosophies, classroom management strategies, and reflective practices (Perry & Imig, 2019). Cognitive disequilibrium is also central to this framework, as tutors encounter challenges such as difficulties in student engagement and diverse learning needs, prompting them to critically reflect, adapt, and develop problem-solving skills. The tutorship programme thus serves as a structured support system that enables tutors to navigate these complexities while promoting professional growth and self-efficacy. Through the application of Kegan's Theory of Adult Development, this study provides a structured framework for analysing how tutors grow cognitively and professionally. It highlights the transformational journey tutors undergo, demonstrating that tutorship catalyses adult development, professional identity formation, and long-term career growth.

4. Research Methodology

This study is situated within the interpretivist paradigm, which suggests that reality is socially constructed and best understood through the subjective experiences and meanings individuals assign to their interactions (Koskosas, 2008; Levy & Schuck, 2005; Mbambo-Marimirofa & Phillips, 2023). Interpretivism enabled a deep exploration of the personal and professional development of tutors by prioritising their lived experiences and reflective narratives. As the goal of this research is to understand how tutors make meaning of their growth within the Tutorship Development Programme, an interpretivist approach was deemed the most appropriate. This study adopts a qualitative research approach, which is suitable for exploring participants' experiences and understanding complex social phenomena in depth. Aligned with this approach, a case study design was employed to allow for an in-depth, contextualised examination of a specific group of tutors within the Faculty of Education at a South African university. The case in question is the faculty's Tutorship Development Programme, which offers structured support to selected senior students as they tutor junior peers while receiving ongoing training, feedback, and mentoring. Case studies are especially useful for examining complex educational interventions in real-life contexts (Wali et al., 2022; Ebekozien et al., 2022).

The study focused on 10 purposively selected tutors out of a broader group of 38 who participated in the programme. These participants were chosen through criterion-based purposive sampling, specifically for their detailed and reflective written submissions that demonstrated evidence of professional transformation. This approach ensured the inclusion of information-rich cases (Palinkas et al., 2015), enabling a focused exploration of tutors whose narratives clearly reflected the study's core themes of professional growth, teaching competence, and inclusive pedagogical approaches. The submissions were anonymised during analysis, and the selection process emphasised the quality of reflections rather than any relationship with the researchers. Participants were assured of confidentiality and informed that their responses would be evaluated independently of the researchers' expectations. An independent review process further ensured the objectivity of the findings. The tutors represented diverse academic levels, from third-year undergraduates to master's level students, and each tutored students below their own academic level.

The data collection method involved analysing tutors' written reflections submitted as part of their participation in the Tutorship Development Programme. These reflections served as primary sources, capturing tutors' perspectives on their evolving roles, the challenges faced, and the strategies employed in classroom settings. For data analysis, the study employed thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006), a widely used method in qualitative research that enables the identification, organisation, and interpretation of recurring patterns across narrative data. Thematic analysis was conducted through a six-phase process, including familiarisation with the data, coding, theme development, and interpretation. The analysis was theoretically informed by Kegan's Theory of Adult Development (1982), which focuses on tutors' progression from the Socialised Mind, where identity and action are shaped by external expectations, to the Self-Authoring Mind, characterised by internalised, autonomous decision-making. This study adhered to all ethical guidelines for research involving human participants. Ethical clearance was obtained from the Faculty of Education Research Ethics Committee (Ethical Clearance Number: FEDREC15-06-23-3). Participants were informed about the purpose of the study and voluntarily consented to the use of their reflections for research purposes. To ensure confidentiality, all identifying information has been anonymised, and tutors are referred to using pseudonyms (T1 to T10).

5. Presentation of Findings

This section presents data according to the three themes, starting with professional growth, followed by teaching proficiency and translanguaging in tutorship, in relation to Kegan's Theory of Adult Development. Thereafter, a discussion and conclusion are provided.

5.1 Theme 1: Professional growth

The data reveal that tutors experienced substantial professional growth through their participation in the Tutorship Development Programme. This growth is evident in areas such as classroom management, leadership, conflict resolution, reflective practice, and mentorship. Tutors described how the programme enhanced their confidence, professional identity, and ability to navigate complex teaching environments. This marks a shift from dependence on external authority to autonomous professional decision-making, as outlined in Kegan's Theory of Adult Development. The following reflections from tutors highlight their professional transformation:

> **T1**: *One significant area of focus was conflict resolution strategies, where I learned to identify the root causes of conflicts and mediate disagreements in a calm and impartial manner.*

> **T2**: *The programme emphasised the importance of constructive and balanced feedback that highlights both strengths and areas for improvement. I learned to provide feedback in a way that is specific, actionable, and supportive, focusing on guiding student teachers toward growth rather than discouraging them.*

> **T5**: *Respecting the profession goes a long way. You grow more by sharing the knowledge you have with the next person. As much as you respect people around you despite their backgrounds, shortcomings, or abilities, you learn and teach throughout a lifetime.*

> **T9**: *Being part of the Tutorship Development Programme helped me gain confidence and courage to stand in front of learners and deliver a lesson. Most importantly, as an upcoming educator, you need that confidence boost.*

> **T7**: *Beyond teaching content, I learned the importance of being a mentor who supports students emotionally and academically. I developed stronger interpersonal skills, enabling me to build meaningful connections with students and help them overcome challenges.*

> **T6**: *The programme encouraged me to reflect continuously on my practice and identify areas where I could improve. This reflection, coupled with ongoing feedback, helped me make intentional changes to my approach and reinforced the notion that teaching is a dynamic, evolving profession.*

These reflections demonstrate that tutors are not merely acquiring techniques but are undergoing a deeper shift in how they view their roles and responsibilities as educators. T1's emphasis on calm conflict mediation reflects a newfound sense of leadership and self-regulation. T2 and T6 illustrate how constructive feedback and reflection were integral to their development, supporting the idea of evolving from reactive teaching to intentional practice. T5 and T9 highlight the internalisation of professional identity, where teaching becomes not just a task but a vocation. T7's comment underscores the holistic nature of growth, combining academic mentoring with emotional support. Collectively, these insights indicate that the programme fostered self-authorship and autonomy among tutors, consistent with Kegan's theory, and enhanced their readiness for future professional roles in education.

5.2 Theme 2: Teaching competence

The reflections of the tutors reveal a marked improvement in teaching competence, encompassing lesson planning, student engagement, assessment strategies, classroom management, and the integration of inclusive pedagogical techniques. Tutors reported increased confidence in applying learner-centred approaches and demonstrated an ability to adapt instructional strategies to diverse student needs. This theme illustrates their shift towards independent and reflective pedagogical decision-making, consistent with Kegan's notion of the Self-Authoring Mind. The excerpts below highlight key aspects of this development:

> **T3**: *I learned that as a teacher, you don't always have to be teaching in class; you can sometimes be the facilitator and let students learn on their own while guiding them toward the right answers.*
>
> **T2**: *The program emphasised the importance of establishing clear expectations and routines at the beginning of a class. I learned to set rules collaboratively with learners, ensuring they felt involved and respected, which minimised disruptive behaviour.*
>
> **T5**: *Staying calm even in chaotic situations and handling them with patience instead of pushing back with anger really helped me handle even those learners with behavioural problems.*
>
> **T8**: *I used structured observation tools, such as rubrics and checklists, to assess various aspects of teaching, including lesson delivery, classroom management, and learner engagement.*
>
> **T4**: *Providing constructive feedback is crucial. I used the 'praise-suggest-praise' model, where I acknowledged what students did well, provided suggestions for improvement, and ended with an encouraging remark to motivate them.*
>
> **T10**: *I made use of multimedia resources, think-pair-share activities, and hands-on manipulatives to cater to different learning styles. This resulted in improved student engagement and motivation.*
>
> **T7**: *I established a safe space for participation by encouraging respect and empathy, ensuring all learners felt valued when sharing their thoughts.*

These reflections collectively point to a deepening of instructional competence. T3's adoption of a facilitator role signals a shift towards constructivist teaching, where learners are encouraged to take ownership of their learning, integrating more mature teaching practices. T2's proactive approach to classroom norms and T5's emotionally intelligent management of behavioural challenges highlight their ability to create respectful and orderly learning environments. These are essential elements of classroom leadership that foster sustained student engagement.

In the area of assessment, T8's use of structured observation tools and T4's application of a formative feedback model demonstrate tutors' growing ability to evaluate student learning and respond in targeted ways. These practices reflect a move beyond generic evaluation to more personalised, evidence-informed instruction. The integration of technology, as illustrated by T10, and the commitment to inclusivity voiced by T7 reflect a responsiveness to diverse learner needs and a forward-thinking approach to pedagogy. Collectively, these insights signal a transformation from task-oriented tutoring to intentional teaching, affirming that the Tutorship Development Programme has significantly contributed to tutors' growth as competent, adaptable educators. This growth aligns with Kegan's (1982) theory, in which educators begin to construct and refine their own pedagogical philosophies.

5.3 Theme 3: Translanguaging in tutorship as an inclusive pedagogy

The tutors' reflections illustrate how translanguaging—using multiple languages in teaching and learning—emerged as a natural and intentional practice within the Tutorship Development Programme. Tutors recognised that linguistic diversity in classrooms, particularly where students had varying proficiencies in the language of instruction, required flexible communication strategies. By incorporating learners' home languages alongside English, tutors aimed to enhance understanding, build learner confidence, and foster inclusive learning environments. This aligns with inclusive pedagogical practices and supports students' sense of belonging, particularly in linguistically diverse South African contexts. The following quotes highlight how tutors implemented and experienced translanguaging:

T1: *I incorporated mother-tongue support, allowing learners to discuss key concepts in their home languages during group activities before presenting in the primary language of instruction.*

T9: *I also sometimes took the class outside so that they can have a visual clue and representation of what I am talking about, while infusing the use of both languages isiXhosa and also English… sometimes I asked one of the learners in the class who understood me well… to explain to her classmates what I am saying in isiXhosa.*

T15: *Some of us were unable to focus because we were being taught in isiXhosa, which can make us lose track or not hear anything. So please use English instead… try to use English so that all of us can be accommodated.*

T7: *This tutorship was very helpful because most of the students understand us better since we're at the same age… online classes don't work for me since the module is Mathematics, so I asked them to come to contact sessions, and they don't hesitate, they come in numbers.*

These reflections underscore that translanguaging was employed not just as a linguistic technique but as a means of relational and pedagogical inclusion. T1's use of mother-tongue discussions during group work allowed students to process and internalise content in a language they were comfortable with before engaging with formal academic discourse. T9's blending of isiXhosa and English, along with reliance on peer explanation, highlights how translanguaging can empower students to support each other, thus reinforcing collaborative learning and shared understanding.

However, the reflection from T15 introduces a critical counterpoint: while translanguaging can enhance access for some, it may disaffect others who do not share the same linguistic background. This highlights the complexity of inclusive pedagogy, where tutors must strike a balance between honouring linguistic diversity and maintaining equitable participation. T7's emphasis on shifting from online to in-person sessions further reflects the relational dimension of inclusive practice; language use was intertwined with building trust and familiarity in face-to-face interactions.

Overall, the tutors' reflections demonstrate that translanguaging functioned as a tool for inclusion, comprehension, and cultural validation. It was not simply about code-switching, but about legitimising the multilingual realities of students. The tutors' willingness to adapt their language use and classroom practices reflects the development of pedagogical flexibility, empathy, and learner-centredness, symbols of inclusive education and indicators of professional maturity. Within Kegan's (1982) framework, this also signifies a move toward self-authorship, as tutors exercised autonomy in modifying instructional strategies based on learners' linguistic and contextual needs.

6. Discussion of Findings

The findings of this study highlight the professional transformation of tutors through their participation in the Tutorship Development Programme, particularly regarding professional growth, teaching competence, and the adoption of translanguaging as an inclusive pedagogical strategy. These transformations are best understood through Kegan's (1982) Theory of Adult Development, which describes a transition from externally driven learning (Socialised Mind) to internally motivated, independent decision-making (Self-Authoring Mind). The discussion below examines each of the three themes in turn, linking the findings to broader scholarly conversations on tutor development and professional identity formation.

6.1 Professional growth

Tutors reported substantial personal and professional development, particularly in their leadership skills, reflective practices, and capacity to mentor others. For example, T1 articulated the acquisition of "practical knowledge in maintaining classroom discipline, fostering positive relationships, and resolving disputes effectively." This illustrates a transition from reactive classroom management to

proactive, relational teaching approaches, emblematic of professional maturity and self-regulation. Similarly, tutors indicated growth through reflective practice; T6 remarked that the programme "encouraged me to reflect continuously on my practice and identify areas where I could improve." This form of critical self-evaluation corresponds with findings by Gustavsson et al. (2019) and Kiziltepe & Sali (2021), who contend that reflective engagement promotes pedagogical improvement and the internalisation of professional identity. The development of mentorship roles also emerged as a recurring theme, with tutors such as T2 describing how they adopted more structured and supportive roles.: "I learned to provide feedback in a way that is specific, actionable, and supportive." This transformation is supported by Takei et al. (2022), who found that structured reflection encourages a stronger sense of agency and mentorship identity among tutors. These examples demonstrate a clear movement toward self-authorship, as described by Kegan (1982), where tutors no longer rely solely on formal instruction but begin to define their own values and teaching practices. Their journey from dependency to autonomy illustrates the transformative potential of tutorship programmes in higher education (Reznicek-Parrado, 2023).

6.2 Teaching competence

Another significant finding is the enhancement of tutors' teaching competence. Tutors demonstrated growing confidence and skill in lesson planning, managing classroom dynamics, differentiating instruction, and providing formative assessment. For example, T1 noted the use of differentiated materials and peer-assisted learning strategies to support diverse learners, while T2 emphasised the importance of collaboratively setting class expectations to maintain structure and engagement. This aligns with Hardman (2015) and Louw (2018), who argue that effective tutors adapt content delivery to match learner diversity, thereby balancing theory and practice in real-time. The emphasis on adaptability, empathy, and emotional intelligence, such as T5's ability to remain "calm even in chaotic situations," suggests the development of nuanced classroom management strategies rooted in self-awareness and student-centred pedagogy. Assessment and feedback also featured prominently. T8 explained the use of structured rubrics, while T4 highlighted their use of the "praise-suggest-praise" feedback model. These practices reflect a deeper pedagogical understanding and align with Gibson et al. (2013), who found that formal tutor training strengthens assessment capacity. Xu et al. (2019) similarly emphasise the role of feedback in co-constructing learning, which supports the constructivist framework underlying this study. Furthermore, technology integration was mentioned as an area of growth. T10 reported using multimedia resources and digital tools to support engagement. This supports Pischetola's (2021) findings on the importance of digital literacy in contemporary teaching. Altogether, the tutors' expanding pedagogical repertoire illustrates their move toward independent, responsive, and reflective educators, key markers of self-authorship.

6.3 Translanguaging as inclusive pedagogy

The strategic implementation of translanguaging has emerged as a deliberate and influential element of tutors' pedagogical development. Tutors reported that utilising multiple languages during tutorials facilitated learners' comprehension of academic content more effectively, especially in linguistically diverse contexts such as South Africa.. T1 explained: "I incorporated mother-tongue support, allowing learners to discuss key concepts in their home languages during group activities before presenting in the primary language of instruction." Similarly, T9 described using both isiXhosa and English during outdoor learning to help students visualise and internalise complex ideas. These practices reflect not only a pedagogical strategy but also a growing awareness of learners' linguistic needs, which indicates pedagogical empathy and professional maturity. Literature supports these findings. Creese and Blackledge (2010), Kiramba (2016), and Hurst (2017) highlight translanguaging as a socially just and inclusive pedagogy. Tutors' reflections affirm that this practice improved comprehension and increased student participation, thereby fostering culturally responsive learning environments. Moreover, these decisions reflect the tutors' ability to

make context-sensitive instructional choices. Kegan (1982) would interpret this as a shift toward self-authorship, where tutors design and adapt instructional practices to meet student needs without relying solely on institutional norms. As Probyn (2019) and Wunseh & Charamba (2023) argue, translanguaging challenges monolingual norms in higher education and empowers educators to validate students' multilingual realities. In this sense, translanguaging was not only a method for enhancing student learning but also a critical dimension of the tutors' professional transformation. By integrating learners' home languages, tutors demonstrated adaptability, inclusivity, and agency, which are essential qualities of an evolving educator.

7. Conclusion and Recommendations

This study examined the professional transformation of tutors through a Tutorship Development Programme, concentrating on their development in classroom management, leadership, teaching competence, and inclusive pedagogical strategies, including translanguaging, to enhance understanding of content and promote inclusive teaching. The findings indicated that tutors transitioned from passive recipients of knowledge to self-directed educators capable of critical reflection, adaptive instruction, and learner-centred practice. Their growth was evident in their ability to lead learning environments, manage diverse classroom dynamics, mentor peers, and implement inclusive teaching approaches tailored to multilingual contexts. Furthermore, tutors exhibited increased confidence and agency in shaping their pedagogical identities. Their use of reflective strategies, collaborative planning, and inclusive language practices demonstrated a commitment to continuous professional improvement and responsiveness to student needs. These outcomes illustrate the transformative impact of structured tutorship programmes in fostering meaningful shifts in educators' practice and mindset. While the findings provide valuable insights, the study's limited sample size constrains generalisability. Future research could encompass a broader participant base, comparative analyses between pre-service and in-service tutors, and longitudinal tracking to examine sustained professional growth. Additional exploration is also required to assess how inclusive strategies, such as translanguaging, continue to influence tutor identity and effectiveness in multilingual and multicultural settings.

7.1. Implications for Kegan's theory of adult development

The findings of this study strongly align with Kegan's (1982) Theory of Adult Development, particularly the transition from the Socialised Mind to the Self-Authoring Mind. Tutors began the programme by relying on external guidance but gradually moved towards independently defining and applying pedagogical values and strategies. This was especially evident in their reflective practices, instructional autonomy, and inclusive pedagogical choices. The study confirms that self-authorship emerges when individuals are given the space, support, and structure to engage with complex teaching scenarios and reflect critically on their experiences. Tutors' willingness to challenge traditional norms (e.g., the exclusive use of English in instruction) and adopt more inclusive approaches (e.g., translanguaging) suggests a meaningful progression towards self-authored professional identities. Additionally, this research contributes to the theoretical discourse by demonstrating how adult developmental stages can be accelerated through well-designed experiential learning frameworks such as tutorship programmes. It suggests that structured mentoring, reflection, and context-specific challenges create fertile ground for developmental progression, thereby offering a practical extension of Kegan's theory in educational contexts.

8. Declarations

Data Availability Statement: The data supporting the findings of this study are available from the corresponding author upon reasonable request. Access will be granted to researchers who meet the criteria for data sharing established by the institutional review board or ethics committee.

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