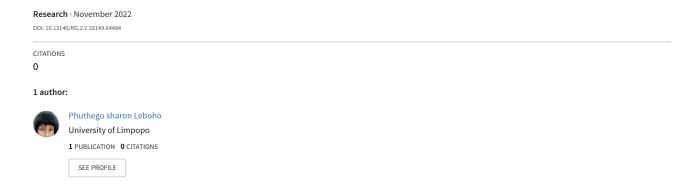# GUIDELINES TOWARDS THE DEVELOPMENT OF A COMPULSORY COURSE IN AFRICAN LANGUAGES FOR FIRST-ENTERING STUDENTS AT THE UNIVERSITY OF LIMPOPO

1 author:

Phuthego sharon Leboho
University of Limpopo
1 PUBLICATION   **0** CITATIONS

SEE PROFILE

Some of the authors of this publication are also working on these related projects:

GUIDELINES TOWARDS THE DEVELOPMENT OF A COMPULSORY COURSE IN AFRICAN LANGUAGES FOR FIRST-ENTERING STUDENTS AT THE UNIVERSITY OF LIMPOPO View project

GUIDELINES TOWARDS THE DEVELOPMENT OF A COMPULSORY COURSE IN AFRICAN LANGUAGES FOR FIRST-ENTERING STUDENTS AT THE UNIVERSITY OF LIMPOPO

by

LEBOHO PHUTHEGO SHARON

MINI-DISSERTATION

Submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

in

TRANSLATION STUDIES AND LINGUISTICS

in the

FACULTY OF HUMANITIES

(School of Languages and Communication Studies)

at the

UNIVERSITY OF LIMPOPO

SUPERVISOR: PROFESSOR S.J. KUBAYI

2021

DECLARATION

I declare that the **GUIDELINES TOWARDS THE DEVELOPMENT OF A COMPULSORY COURSE IN AFRICAN LANGUAGES FOR FIRST-ENTERING STUDENTS AT THE UNIVERSITY OF LIMPOPO** is my work in design and in execution, and that all the materials contained herein have been duly acknowledged.

27 November 2020

…………………………   ………………………..

Signature   Date

(Leboho P.S)

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my daughters, Baleseng Kefilwe Leboho and Mahlogonolo Leboho. You may not have understood why I was always glued to my computer, looking stressed and frustrated all day, and not having enough time to play with you. I hope to live longer so that I may tell you how important education is to me. *Go lena bana baka: ithuteng go jang mphofutšo wa phatla tša lena*.

My daughters are the bouquet of my life- Barbara W. Basley.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

ABSTRACT

This study provides the guidelines for the implementation of a mandatory African language course for first-year students at the University of Limpopo. The study utilised a phenomenological design to help participants to understand the need for a compulsory language course. Most importantly, the study aimed to understand the meanings that the participants ascribed to the importance of the course on campus at large. Data were collected using semi-structured interviews from 8 participants from the University of Limpopo. The sample size comprised of postgraduate students studying African language modules at the university, lecturers in African language modules, namely, Sepedi, lecturers in Tshivenḓa, and in Xitsonga.

This study tested Language Management Theory (LMT) by Neustupny and Jernudd (1970). The study clarifies the meaning of section 4 (4.8) of the University of Limpopo's language policy. Furthermore, this study brought the concept of 'multilingualism', as used in the setting of the University of Limpopo, into critical focus. This study recommended language module content needed at the University of Limpopo. Finally, the findings of the study show how students benefit from completing an African language course. The researcher suggested a compulsory African language module for all first-year students as a means to promote the use of African languages in academia. Furthermore, the study recommended that the language chosen by the students should not be their home tongue.

KEYWORDS

Medium of instruction; Bilingual education; Mother-tongue; Indigenous African languages; Multilingualism; Language policy; Official language

Table of contents

TABLE OF FIGURES

CHAPTER ONE: ORIENTATION OF THE STUDY

1.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter focuses on the background of the study, which examines guidelines towards the development of a compulsory course in African languages for first-entering students at the University of Limpopo. The chapter comprises of these sections: the background, research problem, and purpose of the study, the aim of the study, the objective of the study, the significance of the study, ethical considerations, quality criteria, and definitions of terms, chapter outline, and lastly the conclusion.

1.2 BACKGROUND

Until 1996 when the government declared 11 languages as the official languages of the country, English and Afrikaans were the only official national languages in South Africa. The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (1996), which is the supreme law of the country, caters for all official languages of South Africa. Section 6 (1) recognises Sepedi, Sesotho, Setswana, siSwati, Tshivenḓa, Xitsonga, Afrikaans, English, isiNdebele, isiXhosa, and isiZulu as official languages of the Republic of South Africa. Apart from English and Afrikaans, the rest are indigenous languages. Section 6 (3) (a) states that the national government and provincial government may use any particular official language, but they must use at least two official languages (Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996). Limpopo Province has adopted Sepedi, Xitsonga, Tshivenḓa, isiNdebele, English, and Afrikaans as official languages of the province (Limpopo Provincial Government, [Sa]).

An essential benefit and vision of the Constitution is multilingualism as the cornerstone for a democratic state. The acknowledgement of the role of indigenous African languages and the promotion of their use and development in education is mandated, although with limitations, by the Constitution. Section 6 (2) of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (1996) states that in, 'recognising the historically diminished use and status of the indigenous languages of our people, the state must take practical and positive measures to elevate the status and advance the use of these languages.' The national legislation

established a board known as the Pan South African Language Board (PanSALB), which aims at promoting, and creating conditions for, the development, and use of all official languages.

The multilingual model, is contained in Section 6 of the Constitution, because of a political compromise, that is, it is the result of the negotiated social contract. The national government and provincial governments, by legislative and other measures, must regulate and monitor their use of official languages, enabling these languages to enjoy parity of esteem and equitable treatment. Providing the principles that guide language policy, instruction, and use, the constitution creates a national framework encouraging the flourishing of multilingualism while demanding policies and practices that acknowledge and correct the inherited diminishment and disregard of indigenous African languages.

Section 29 (1) (a) of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (1996:14) states that "everyone has the right to basic education", and subsection (2) states that, "everyone has the right to receive education in the official or language of their choice in public educational institutions where that is reasonably practicable". The Higher Education Act of 1997 Section 27 (2) provides for the Minister to determine language policy for higher education in the country. Further, it provides that, subject to the development of policy by the Minister, the councils of public higher education institutions, with the concurrence of their senates, must determine the language policy of their higher education institution and must publish and make such a policy available on request. Such a policy must be aligned to key national principles of unity in diversity and social transformation.

The South African education system has been changing, and African languages are at the centre of these changes. With the development of Language Policy for Higher Education in 2002, South African universities were urged to create a language plan that stipulated how languages were to be applied within the universities. The policy developed and promulgated the Language Policy for Higher Education (LPHE). The policy seeks to

promote multilingualism in institutional policies and practices. It provides for 'the simultaneous development of a multilingual environment in which all languages are developed as academic and/or scientific languages while at the same time ensuring that the existing languages of instruction do not serve as a barrier to access and success' [2002:5 (6)]. The policy notes that 'the role of language and access to language skills is critical to ensure the right of individuals to realise their full potential to participate in and contribute to the social, cultural, intellectual, economic and political life of South African society' [2002:4 (4)].

The multiplicity of languages spoken by both staff and students at the University of Limpopo implies a need for language choice. Against this backdrop, the University of Limpopo needed to adopt a language policy. Adopted in 2003, this policy is known as the University of Limpopo Language Policy. The policy of the University of Limpopo (2003:7) stipulates that each faculty should identify at least one course, which could be offered in either English, Northern Sotho, Tshivenḓa, or Xitsonga as of 2009. "The timeframe suggested here for the University of Limpopo is reasonable as it will enable the University to plan well for the intended introduction of African languages as a medium of instruction in courses other than African languages themselves [University of Limpopo Language Policy, 2003: (8)]". According to the policy, African languages will be used as a medium of instruction in African language courses. At a postgraduate level, candidates have the right to use Sesotho sa Leboa, Tshivenḓa, and Xitsonga as a medium of instruction while English remains the medium of instruction in the majority of academic programmes because of the language's local and internal relevance. The Language Policy for the University of Limpopo stresses the importance of the development of multilingual awareness.

 The University of Limpopo Language Policy (2003) aims at promoting multilingualism following the Language Policy for Higher Education (LPHE). However, African languages at the University of Limpopo are only used for African language courses and some modules in the Bachelor of Arts in Contemporary English and Multilingual Studies (BA

CEMS) degree. The aim of the Language Policy (2003) is to uphold the provision of multilingualism, to encourage research and publications in multilingualism as a learning area, and to promote the learning and use of individual languages in the province. The University sees multilingualism as a resource rather than a hindrance towards South Africa's political healing, economic growth, and development, effective education, and training, fairness in the Courts of Law, and mutual respect across its social and religious "rainbowness" that has become the hallmark of South Africanness (University of Limpopo Language Policy, 2003).

This study is motivated by the fact that the language policy of the University of Limpopo has not been implemented. Hence, the need for guidelines towards the development of a compulsory course in African languages for first-entering students, which will, among other things, promote social cohesion and integration among the students.

1.3 RESEARCH PROBLEM

The Language Policy of the University of Limpopo requires the institution to use Sesotho sa Leboa, Tshivenḓa, and Xitsonga as a medium of instruction in formal contexts. In this way, the University should cater to its diverse student population by developing concrete measures towards the implementation of this policy, thereby adapting the three languages as languages of academic content alongside English. None of that has happened yet; English is still the main medium of instruction. From this perspective, the university does not comply with its language policy. If adopted, the guidelines discussed in this study will lead to an inclusive and multilingual environment where English dominates communication in both formal and non-formal contexts.

1.4 PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

1.4.1   Aim of the study

The study aims to examine guidelines towards the development of a compulsory course in African languages for first-entering students at the University of Limpopo.

1.4.2 Objectives of the study

The objectives of this study are to:

- Examine the provision of the University of Limpopo language policy in terms of the promotion of multilingualism.

- Develop content guidelines towards the development of a compulsory course in African languages for first-entering students at the University of Limpopo.

- Outline benefits of studying an African language course.

1.5 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The beneficiaries of this study include students, lecturers, and all language practitioners, particularly those that are interested in language policy, planning, and management. Students stand to benefit from social cohesion that emanating from the implementation of the course in African languages. This will have the added advantage of bridging the tribal divide brought about by a lack of understanding of each other because of the inability to speak each other's languages.

1.6 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Qualitative research involves researchers and participants, and relies on mutual trust and cooperation between the two groups (Sarantakos, 1997). Furthermore, it relies on promises, conventions, and expectations linked to the outcome of the research project. The researcher read out the details of the consent form to the participants. A consent form guaranteed that the participants are not be at risk or harm in taking part in the research. The participants' confidentiality and privacy were also assured. The researcher received ethical clearance from the Turfloop Ethical Research Committee (TERC).

1.7 QUALITY CRITERIA

Qualitative research must ensure quality similar to reliability and validity in quantitative research (Liamputtong, 2009): it must prove honesty, ability, clarity, completeness, and legitimacy of the research process. It must meet the standard of replication by other researchers (Christensen et al., 2011). Liamputtong (2009); Hammond and Wellington (2012) identify and propose four criteria for judging the quality, credibility, authenticity, rigour, or trustworthiness of qualitative research. These are dependability, transferability, credibility, and transformability.

The researcher relied on credibility and authenticity because they determine whether the research is genuine, reliable, or authoritative (Liamputtong, 2009:21). These necessitate ensuring harmony between the participant's opinions and the researcher's representation of those opinions. This ensures the trustworthiness of the research findings. The multiple realities given by the participants are represented as accurately and adequately as possible.

1.8 DEFINITION OF TERMS
1.8.1 Medium of instruction

The concept of medium of instruction refers to the language used for teaching the basic curriculum of the educational system. There may be one or more language/s of instruction in any system, depending on the need for and the prevalence of the language/s (Ministerial Committee, 2003).

1.8.2 Bilingual and/or multilingual education

According to the Ministerial Committee (2003), the use of two or more languages as media of instruction refers to bilingual and/or multilingual education. In several cases, the languages of instruction are often the official or majority languages.

1.8.3 Mother tongue

Mother-tongue instruction refers to the use of learners' mother tongue as a medium of instruction. UNESCO (2003:15) describes the term "mother tongue" as follows:

The language/s that one has learned first; the language/s one identifies with or one that enables the identification of a person as a native speaker by others; the language/s one knows best and the language/s one uses most.

1.8.4 Indigenous African languages

Department of Higher Education and Training (2015) believes that an indigenous language is a language of the original inhabitants of an area, a language that carries the history and the culture of a society. Roy-Campbell (2003) cited by Marungudzi (2009:11) defines an indigenous language as "a language of African origin and for whom the predominant speakers are native to African countries." Roy-Campbell seems to agree with Magwa (2008:41) who states that "an indigenous language is a language that carries the history and culture of a given society or country."

1.8.5 Multilingualism

According to the Department of Higher Education and Training (2015), multilingualism is the ability to use more than two languages and can be at the individual or societal level. At the individual level, it refers to the speaker's competence to use more than two languages. At the societal level, it refers to the use of more than two languages in a speech community. Multilingualism, in this context, refers to the use of multiple languages either by an individual speaker or by a community of speakers.

1.8.6 Language policy

Bamgbose (1991), cited in van Huyssteen (2003:19), asserts that language policy is a programme of action on the role of a language in a given community. In a multilingual situation, a language policy decision necessarily involves the role or status of one language concerning other languages.

1.8.7 Official language

An official language is a language used as a medium of communication within a country or an institution. In South Africa, there are eleven official languages, nine indigenous languages: IsiNdebele, IsiXhosa, IsiZulu, Sepedi, Sesotho, Setswana, siSwati, Tshivenḓa, Xitsonga, Afrikaans, and English. Phaswana (1994:3) states that an official language "is a language used in business, government, legislation, courts, etc." Similarly, Magwa (2008) argues that an official language "is the language of government, business, and administration in a country. This business includes, for example, the civil service, formal education, the judiciary, and the commercial sector" (Magwa, 2008:40).

1.9 CHAPTER OUTLINE

The table below outlines all the chapters that constitute this research:

Chapters	The title	Content description
Chapter 1	Orientation of the study	This chapter describes the research problem and its background, the purpose and significance of the study, ethical consideration, quality criteria, and definition of the key terms.
Chapter 2	Literature review	This chapter divides into two main sections, namely, the theoretical framework and a literature review. The review focuses on the three objectives of the

		study. The chapter describes the Language Management Theory (LMT) formulated by J.V. Neustupny and B.H Jernudd. Therefore, the review divides into the following sections: Implementation of the language policy at the University of KwaZulu-Natal; language management at the University of Limpopo; and lastly, advantages of using African languages in education.
Chapter 3	Research methodology	This chapter discusses the research methodologies used in this research to gather and analyse data. The chapter divides into the following sections: introduction, research approach, and research design. Thereafter, the chapter discusses the population and sampling

		technique, data collection, and analysis, respectively.
Chapter 4	Analysis and interpretation of data	This chapter presents the data analysis and interpretation.
Chapter 5	Findings, conclusions and recommendations	This chapter restates the aim and objectives of the study, provides a summary, findings, limitations, conclusions, and recommendations of the study.

Table 1 Chapter outline

1.10   CONCLUSION

This chapter outlined the thesis structure through which a guideline towards the development of a compulsory course in African Languages for first-entering students at the University of Limpopo unfolds. The research's purpose is to investigate how the University of Limpopo can better serve its diverse student population by implementing these suggested specific methods of having a compulsory African language served to first entering students. This chapter focused on the background of the study. The chapter also explored higher education institution language policies in South Africa, and further highlighted how to promote multilingualism and universities. The following policies were discussed; the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (1996); Limpopo Provincial government [Sa]; Language Policy for Higher Education (LPHE) (2002); and the University of Limpopo Language Policy (2003). Furthermore, the study looked at the

problem statement. It is at this level that the research question was defined. In the subsection dealing with the purpose of the research, three objectives of the study were identified. This was followed by a short outline and discussion of the significance of the study; ethical considerations, quality criteria; and definition of terms. The next chapter is chapter two, which outlines the theory and literature related to this study.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter provided the background of the study and examined guidelines towards the development of a compulsory course in African languages for first-entering students at the University of Limpopo. The chapter outlined the problem that led to the conception of this study.

This chapter reviews literature related to this study. A literature review identifies and compares earlier studies, and helps to avoid duplication and unnecessary repetition (Mouton, 2001:87). Burns and Grove (2001:10) describe a literature review as an "analysis and synthesis of research sources to generate a picture of what is known about a particular situation and knowledge gaps that exist in that situation". The purpose of a literature review is to look for research approaches used by other researchers, which could be useful to a particular study (Manzini, 1998:13). This chapter divides into two main sections, namely, the theoretical framework section and a literature review section.

2.2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The theoretical framework is the "blueprint" for the entire dissertation inquiry. It serves as the base on which to build and support a study, and provides a researcher with the structure to define how he or she will philosophically, epistemologically, methodologically, and analytically approach the dissertation as a whole. Eisenhart (1991:205) defines a theoretical framework as "a structure that guides research by relying on a formal theory constructed by using an established, coherent explanation of certain phenomena and relationships". The Language Management Theory (LMT), which was formulated by J.V. Neustupny and B.H Jernudd in the 1970s (Nekvapil, 2007), underpinned this study.

Language Management Theory is a concept based on the idea that it is necessary to differentiate between two processes (and thus two sets of rules) in language use. These are: (a) the process that enables the generation of utterances or communicative acts, and (b) the process whose object is the utterances or communicative acts generated already,

currently being generated, or anticipated. According to Fishman (1971:221), this difference can be classified as the differences between "language behaviour" and "behaviour toward language". The language management activity (or act of attention) focuses on language itself, communication, or certain aspects of language or communication. An agent of this activity can be either an institution or an individual. LMT is not only about institutions making decisions about languages, but also about the ordinary common usage of languages in particular interactions.

The Language Management Theory strives to explain how language problems arise in a discourse, and in whose discourse; and how they project into discourse if they arise from non-linguistic interest or systematic linguistic principles. The present research does not focus on the generation of utterances, but on how the University of Limpopo uses its official languages as stated in their language policy for academic purposes and the empowerment of such languages. According to Gundersen (2009:4), three major factors determine language, *viz.*: language responsiveness, language preparedness, and language awareness. Language responsiveness is the willingness and ability of an institution (organisation, company, or county) to accommodate the language needs of its associates. Language preparedness is the level of language competence possessed by an institution expressed against current and anticipated needs. Language awareness is the extent to which language issues are embedded in the strategies and policies of the institution.

The assumption is that a language conscious institution would explicitly question the availability of adequate language skills, conduct periodic assessments of language skills against needs, and maintain an inventory of in-house language skills. These three factors, applied in the context of the University of Limpopo, means that the institution should:

- Be aware of national and international languages within and outside its borders, and devise means to accommodate such languages,

- Accept the use of African languages within the Institution; and

- Take action to make sure that these languages are used for their benefit.

Language management is crucial to the development and promotion of South African official languages at universities. The researcher used this theory to examine steps that can be taken by the University of Limpopo to manage its official languages and to implement its language policy. The theory also assisted the researcher to assess the best strategy that the university can take towards the development of a compulsory course in African languages for first-entering students.

2.3 LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature review covers the following topics: implementation of the language policy at the University of KwaZulu-Natal; language management at the University of Limpopo; and advantages of using African languages in education and attitude towards the use of African languages at the University of Limpopo.

2.3.1 Implementation of the language policy at the University of KwaZulu-Natal

Scholars undertook researches looking into the language policy at the University of KwaZulu-Natal. This study looked into research by Mashiya (2010), Ndimande-Hlongwa, Balfourb, Mkhizea, and Engelbrechta (2010), and Zikode (2017). Mashiya's study aimed at outlining opportunities and threats of teaching mother tongue at the University of KwaZulu-Natal. Mother tongue refers to the language that the child knows best when they are first exposed to the school environment (Alexander, 2009:2). Mashiya believes in the advantages that a learner gets when taught in the mother tongue. Therefore, the Faculty of Education at the University of KwaZulu-Natal views the need to teach in the mother tongue as an important consideration. Mashiya's study focused on the opportunities and threats pertaining to mother tongue as a medium of teaching and learning at the University of KwaZulu-Natal.

Mashiya found that students' participation improved when taught in the mother tongue. Students got a chance of expressing themselves freely, without the fear of misusing the language. Students can produce new thoughts in their discussions as they sometimes memorise facts and reproduce them when taught in a foreign language. Students performed very well in all their activities. They all passed the examination with good marks than might have been the case if they were assessed in English. Teaching in isiZulu has even contributed to the translation of terms. This is a self-enriching activity for students as they learned new concepts. Teaching in the mother tongue enables the development of the concepts that are not used in people's daily conversation. Consequently, new words are developed, and words used by indigenous people, or borrowed from other languages or those that just emerged because of the advancement of technology find expression in teaching and learning.

Lastly, the practice of using isiZulu as the language of learning and teaching gave rise to the colloquium, which was themed "Mother Tongue teaching in the early years". This was the first time the discipline of Early Childhood Education/Foundation Phase hosted such a gathering. The colloquium was a huge success as different stakeholders from all parts of the province attended it. The foregoing submissions represented the opportunities that came with using isiZulu as a medium of teaching and learning.

Mashiya's study also highlighted threats or problems that come with teaching and learning in isiZulu. One of the observed challenges was that, although isiZulu and English students had equal amounts of time to complete their activities, the English group finished work much earlier than the isiZulu group. Furthermore, there is a lack of expertise; during the examination season, it was difficult to find an external examiner with expertise in the Foundation Phase, as well as in Life Skills and Language (isiZulu). Although it is appreciated that students expressed themselves freely in the mother tongue, this had an impact on the amount of work done. This was caused by the fact that a short word in English becomes long in isiZulu, e.g. 'sky' is translated as 'isibhakabhaka' in isiZulu. One word in English can be explained in more than one word in isiZulu, e.g. 'blue' is translated

as '*kuluhlaza okusasibhakabhaka*', and a short sentence in English turns into a paragraph in isiZulu. This affected the marker; a lot of time had to be spent reading large amounts of work. There is a shortage of staff; the programme is running with a shortage of human resources. This problem is disadvantaging students who want to take all three electives in isiZulu, including the numeracy module. This has financial constraints for the university.

Students hold different attitudes towards using isiZulu as a language of learning and teaching; isiZulu speaking students were encouraged to study Literacy and Life Skills in two languages (isiZulu and English). Some students were not willing to learn through the medium of isiZulu. Most students who had negative attitudes were those who went to multiracial schools (ex-model C schools), and who were good in English. Terminology was a threat too; terms in isiZulu are underdeveloped. Many words do not have isiZulu equivalents. Therefore, students had to code-switch to English to make meaning of what they were learning. They also encountered disagreements between concepts. When they translated a word from English to isiZulu, they sometimes ended up with another meaning, and when they switched back to English, they encountered a different meaning. Lastly, shortage of resources was yet another identified problem. It is costly to translate the entire set of materials into isiZulu. Hence, students are given materials in English and notes in isiZulu. The curriculum document, currently used in the Foundation Phase and the Foundations for Learning, is in English.

Mashiya drew conclusions and made recommendations based on the experiences of teaching in the medium of instruction of isiZulu. This paper highlights some important considerations and potential pitfalls necessary to take into account to make the practice of teaching in the mother tongue a feasible one at both the higher education and the school levels. This practice brought an awareness that isiZulu is usable as the language of learning and teaching like English and Afrikaans. Mashiya's findings can strengthen and refine the development of curricula offered in the medium of an African language. This will enable institutions of teaching and learning to overcome the challenges as well as seize opportunities that come with teaching and learning in African languages.

Noteworthy is that Mashiya's study reveals that the university can change its culture by implementing a language policy that stresses the use of isiZulu, for example. It calls for an appreciation that students are receiving opportunities to learn in their mother tongue at an institution of higher education, which is a very rare practice. Admittedly, this practice has some implications. For one thing, it has a huge financial impact on the Faculty of Education.

There is a need for more lecturers with expertise in isiZulu. Students who are part of this initiative interrogate the exclusion of isiZulu in the Numeracy module, which is still learned in English only. This means that this module has to be offered in isiZulu as well. Attitudes are still an obstacle in the use of African languages as media of learning and teaching. More seminars and colloquia need to consider educating people about the importance of mother tongue teaching and learning. Apparently, students had freedom of expression that resulted in lively class discussions when the mother tongue was used in a classroom context. At the same time, students need to be taught to write academically, and to provide answers that are concise and relevant in the mother tongue. This will result in them producing manageable amounts of work that is not time-consuming to the marker. Students could gain more vocabulary if terms are formed so that each English word has its equivalent in isiZulu. Translation of study materials and high-frequency terms is necessary. This includes the translation of curriculum documents, particularly, the Foundations for Learning document and the Life Skills assessment standards.

Resources for academic learning and classroom practice should be made available so that students do not get frustrated during the teaching practicum. The unavailability of resources in the mother tongue (isiZulu) has an impact on the implementation of the University of KwaZulu-Natal language policy and the DoE LiEP. Since it is noted that the isiZulu group ran short of time during assessments, it would be better to extend the time to accommodate them. Alternatively, they should be restricted to a certain number of words for each question, so that they are on par with the English group. The issues related to the lack of expertise in the moderation of examination question papers are not easy to

eliminate. The consideration of two requirements, instead of three, is the only possible solution now.

Ndimande-Hlongwa, Balfourb, Mkhize, and Engelbrecht's (2010) study aimed at assessing progress and challenges for language policy implementation at the University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN). The conclusion drawn from the study is that the UKZN does not intend to compel academic staff members in schools and faculties to learn the isiZulu language but in the case of support staff, there is an urgent need for them to learn conversational isiZulu depending on the nature of the disciplines and their involvement with the community. The University Language Board (established in 2007) is currently embarking on a language audit to identify bilingual staff. The University of KwaZulu-Natal adapted the Complementary Language Use Approach; therefore, the implementation of its language policy should enable staff and students to redefine themselves as members of a scholarly community that prides itself on African scholarship. The main aim is to enhance student learning and help to improve throughput; using isiZulu as a local language should also help staff and students to engage better with their local community in service learning and in research-led community projects. IsiZulu as a local language helps in customising international knowledge for the public in general.

Zikode's (2017) study evaluated the implementation of the language policy for higher education at the University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN). The study found that there are three main challenges faced when it comes to implementing language policy. The first challenge is that the university is home to various students who speak different languages; secondly, the lack of proper financial planning at the university; and the final challenge is that students who speak other African languages make use of the English language. Most students prefer using the English language while others are trying to learn isiZulu. Zikode's study indicates that it was possible for universities such as UKZN to successfully develop an indigenous language as the language of learning and teaching because the institution has both the Language Board and the Language Planning and Development Office under the University Teaching and Learning Portfolio.

According to Jenvey (2013), cited by Zikode's (2017), UKZN staff and students are learning sufficient isiZulu for verbal academic interactions. IsiZulu is currently a compulsory model for all first-year students and has been successful. The key focus areas of the course are, introduction to isiZulu (culture, heritage, context), basic greetings and identity, conversational isiZulu, and lastly, reading and writing basic isiZulu words, sentences, and short phrases.

Zikode's study also outlined how students benefit from having indigenous languages as mediums of instruction. The study outlined the benefits of indigenous language as medium of instruction in South African higher education such as the University of Johannesburg (UJ) and the University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN). With UJ, there is academic proof to indicate that students who are taught in their mother tongue perform better and are in a better position to grasp and understand concepts than they would if taught in a language that is not their mother tongue. UKZN plans to increase cognitive access to information and to increase performance in students. This is precisely the reason why indigenous languages must be developed as a medium of instruction. The conclusion drawn from the study was that there was a consensus that it is possible to develop and implement a language policy based on African languages.

2.3.2   Language management at the University of Limpopo

This section focuses on studies undertaken by Mbaye (2016), Makamu (2009), and Nkwashu (2011) regarding language management at the University of Limpopo. Mbaye's (2016) study examines the evaluation of language management by the University of Limpopo. The researcher's observations are that most students, lecturers, and language practitioners who participated in this study were not aware that the institution has a language policy. Some were operating under the assumption that there is no such thing as "University of Limpopo language policy". Those who were aware of it argued that they had never seen it. Those who have seen it are not sure about what should be done with

it, and who should do it because of the absence of the implementation plan. The research findings show that the language policy aims at establishing the Senate/University Language Committee and a Centre for Language Services, which is not yet implemented.

According to Mbaye (2016), University of Limpopo students seem not to be interested in using their mother tongue as a medium of instruction. This indicates that there is still much that needs to be done to show them the benefits of mother tongue in education and to change their negative perceptions towards the use of African languages. Mbaye's findings revealed how languages are used during lectures, consultation, and tutorials. It was found that the most spoken language at the University of Limpopo is Sepedi. The students are, however, multilingual in that most students claim to speak more than two languages besides their mother tongue. Xitsonga is the second most spoken African language. The students' high school education was packaged in two languages, English and the mother tongue. The major subjects were taught in English, and mother tongue was used to teach home language subjects. The majority of the students use the English language to communicate with their classmates, their lecturers, and support staff. Furthermore, when asked if they had to choose any of the official languages to communicate with during lectures, consultation, and tutorials, the majority chose the English language.

The results from the questionnaires showed that English and Sepedi are the most preferred languages by the students to use in tutorials. Xitsonga is the second most preferred language. For a consultation, both English and Sepedi were the preferred languages. English being the mode of communication at the university, some students would prefer to use Sepedi for consultation. In addition, for lecturing purposes, students prefer the English language even when they are given the latitude to choose their mother tongue. Students who do not speak the official languages of the university preferred to use English as a medium of communication in lecture rooms, for consultation, and in tutorials.

Mbaye's study made several recommendations. The first recommendation is to make the language policy of the University of Limpopo a public document. Secondly, the university should formulate a plan for the implementation of the language policy. Without this plan, it is difficult to know who should be responsible for promoting African languages at the University of Limpopo. Thirdly, the university should introduce African languages as a beginner course in all faculties. Fourthly, attempts should be made to educate all stakeholders of the University of Limpopo about the benefits of mother tongue education to eradicate negative perceptions about African languages in education.

The fifth recommendation is that book exhibitions, debates, and posters on campus should be done in African languages to show students the expressiveness of their languages. The sixth recommendation is to encourage writing in local languages by holding competitions where African language writers are celebrated. Lastly, it is important to eradicate negative perceptions of African languages by using them in important events like university graduations, university open days, and so on.

Makamu's (2009) study documents the attitudes of Xitsonga speaking students towards the use of Xitsonga at the University of Limpopo. The study shows that Xitsonga speakers have little faith in their native language. The students are comfortable with being taught in English. The study recommends the development of African languages at universities. These languages carry the historical and cultural roots of the people. In trying to develop these languages, challenges will certainly surface, but these should encourage us, even more, to continue with the project of elevating our languages and that collective effort is needed from all spheres, especially from the social front.

Another scholar who researched at the University of Limpopo is Nkwashu (2011). The study reveals that both Xitsonga and non-Xitsonga speaking respondents (staff members and students) would not be proud to see Xitsonga being used as a medium of instruction at the university level even though they are (native) Tsonga (speakers). Reasons given were that the use of Xitsonga as a medium of instruction at a university level would harm

the students' employability, as most companies in South Africa prefer the use of English in the work environment. While some respondents disclosed that, such a system would be extremely expensive because each official language on campus would have to be catered for. Hence, the scholars report that the speakers of Xitsonga do not support the idea that Xitsonga must be used as the medium of instruction, instead of English, at the university level. Besides, some respondents alluded to the fact that English is an international language whose status as a higher education language of teaching, learning and research cannot be disputed (Van der Walt, 2004), and since people live in a globalised world, it would be beneficial to use English in education as they could work wherever their expertise is needed. The negative attitudes of speakers towards their languages can also be seen as reasons why African languages are not used in education.

The attitudes of the students are not the only challenge that African languages come across. There is also the problem of the unavailability of lecturers who can teach in African languages. It appears that Xitsonga speakers do not view their language as having the required linguistic range in terms of phonological, morphological, semantic, and syntactic complexity for deployment in high-status functions. Equally, it appears that the speakers do not want to be seen given preferential treatment as far as their language is concerned in a context where Sepedi is a dominant language of general communication.

The scholar recommended that Xitsonga speaking students must be encouraged to love their language. It is after the outcomes of the research initiatives suggested above that more informed decisions can be made about the future of indigenous official languages, Xitsonga included, spoken on the campus at UL.

2.3.3 The use of African languages at the University of Free State and the University of Pretoria

The language policy of the University of the Free State states that it is a parallel-medium basis University with English and Afrikaans as their dominant languages (University of

the Free State, 2003). This means that within the university, two languages are used in two separate classes. The University foresees that English and Afrikaans will remain and continue to serve as the dominant languages of instruction in higher education in the future (University of the Free State, 2003). This conception influences the language planning of other African languages as the attitude towards the status of these languages is then already set in a specific direction. It is provided that the University and the Minister of Education are "committed to ensuring that this capacity of Afrikaans is not eroded".

The University of the Free State has a Unit for Language Facilitation and Empowerment (ULFE). One of the focus areas this unit has is language management, and within language management, there are three projects. Language policy in South Africa is one of these projects. This institution proves the involvement and willingness to research and do projects in language planning and language policy. The University gives special reference to the development of other South African languages for use in instruction, in this case, Sesotho. It states that, "if deemed desirable, a language manual with more specific guidelines and arrangements may be developed and made available in conjunction with a language plan" (University of the Free State, 2003).

The language policy of the University of Pretoria states that in conducting business, the University shall use two official languages, namely, Afrikaans and English with Sepedi as a third language of communication (University of Pretoria, 2010). This statement suggests that Sepedi is not seen as an official language. The language policy does not elaborate on the desire of developing Sepedi as an official language. Corpus' plan of the University of Pretoria is mainly focused on Afrikaans and English. Two statements supporting this claim are, "Afrikaans and English are to be used and developed as academic languages to achieve excellence in academic communication" and "the University shall provide staff members with the necessary support and training to enable them to communicate in Afrikaans and English" (University of Pretoria, 2010). However, the policy document mentions developing and encouraging other languages too by, "presenting language courses and language programmes in these languages provided that there is a demand

for such courses and that such courses are academically and economically justifiable" (University of Pretoria, 2010). The website of the University is available in English and Afrikaans.

2.3.4 Advantages of using African languages in education

Maseko (2009) holds the view that there are several advantages of using African languages as primary languages in tertiary education. During tertiary education, young learners will strive to fit the new concepts within their conceptual and intellectual framework and experience to comprehend and internalise the information. Where a foreign language is used, the students will lack the supportive tool for proper comprehension, deepening their grasp of ideas and their articulation of issues. These students will grow up visibly inarticulate, passive, timid, and lacking in confidence. These students participate less in the lecture rooms.

Malatji (2004) points out that thinking and learning are all intimately fielded together, and that due to this relationship between language, thinking, and learning, it becomes clearer that when learning is not from one's mother tongue during formal learning, the cognitive development and scholastic performance are negatively affected. Students spend a great deal of time trying to encode the language of the course material. Failure to understand that language means the entire course/module will be failed. Two experiments in Nigeria and Cameroon showed conclusively that students taught in an African language as a medium of instruction, with English and French as second languages, performed significantly better than those who were taught uniquely in English or French (Mkandawire, 2005:172). African languages within the university allow speakers of other African languages to acquire other African languages, which will enhance the pedagogy of these languages as second languages. Furthermore, they help develop cognitive skills in languages of the community and advance their use in science and provide access to international communication through English (Makalela and McCabe, 2013). Another

advantage of using African or home languages in tertiary education is that they allow students, and later graduates, to serve in their various professions.

Monica (1998:160) in Malatji (2004) asserts that many learners take a long time to learn the second language, and because of the feelings of inadequacy, they lose confidence and develop negative self-concepts and low senses of self-worth. These learners are incompetent (in reading and writing) in their native language. They struggle to grasp concepts in the second language (for instance, English). African languages in primary education are relevant and pave the way for better development of adult education since more people will be able to read and write in their languages. Barba (1995) in Malatji (2004:17) holds the view that the native language in education is essential in that it helps students to:

- Build self-esteem;
- Improve students' attitudes towards schooling;
- Facilitate content area acquisition of declarative knowledge; and
- Aid in mainstream English language development.

Using African languages in education is not only for the benefit of the students but also for the advantages of the languages. The use of African languages in education will lead to their development in terms of their ability to cope as vehicles of modern thought, science, and technology. Such development will lead to greater participation of these languages in the life of the nation since with literacy; they can be allocated functions in the area of information and other areas of national development (Mkandawire, 2005:172).

To strengthen African languages in education, mother tongue education should be exercised from the pre-school right through the university with English as a supportive medium. Alexander (2007:34) adds that everywhere in the world, people use the mother tongue to teach their children. What is disappointing is that it is only in post-colonial Africa and few other countries in south-east Asia and Eastern Europe that people use a foreign

language to teach their children, and as a result, there is a terrible drop-out rate, repeater rates, and failure rates.

2.4 CONCLUSION

This chapter paid attention to the relevant literature related to the Language Management Theory. It discussed the implementation of the language policy at the University of KwaZulu-Natal; language management at the University of Limpopo; the use of African languages at the University of Free State and the University of Pretoria, respectively. It foregrounded the advantages of using African languages in education and students' attitude towards the use of African languages at the University of Limpopo. African languages still have a long way to go before their native speakers can accept them as legitimate and significant media of teaching and learning. However, this cannot be achieved in a vacuum. Everyone is accountable for the development of his or her languages. The next chapter discusses the research methodology of this study.

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter focused on the literature review and theoretical framework of the study. The theory that undergirded this study is the Language Management Theory. The literature review covered the following topics: implementation of the language policy at the University of KwaZulu-Natal; language management at the University of Limpopo; and advantages of using African languages in education and students' attitude towards the use of African languages at the University of Limpopo.

This chapter discusses the research methodology of this study. A research methodology is a procedure used for data collection to answer research questions. Teddlie and Tashakkori (2009:21) describe research methodology as "a broad approach to scientific inquiry specifying how research questions should be asked and answered."This study proffers the guidelines towards the development of a compulsory course in African languages for first-entering students at the University of Limpopo. A clear methodology is important to achieve the aim and objectives of the study. As a result, this chapter highlights the research approach, the research design, the sampling procedure, tools of data collection, and data analysis employed in this study.

3.2 RESEARCH APPROACH

According to Mohajan (2017), the research approach refers to a strategy of an act that gives direction to conduct a research study systematically and efficiently. This study adopted a qualitative research approach. Qualitative research is defined as an approach that generally harvests descriptive data from participants' own written or spoken words of their experiences or perceptions (Brynard, Hanekom & Brynard, 2014: 39). A qualitative method is more interested in the quality of a particular activity. Creswell and Creswell (2017) define qualitative research as an approach that is used to explore and understand meanings that individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem.

The researcher believed that by using the qualitative method, the reasons advocating why a language course is needed at the University of Limpopo would be easily understood. The qualitative research approach allowed the researcher to network with participants in their normal settings and was able to understand their views on the language policy and the value of multilingualism in the institution. McMillan and Schumacher (2006:315) claim that qualitative research describes and analyses people's individual and collective social actions, beliefs, thoughts, and perceptions.

3.3 RESEARCH DESIGN

Research design is a procedure and plan for studies that distance decisions from broad assumptions to detailed methods of data collection and analysis (Creswell 2009:3). For this study, a phenomenological design was utilised. Phenomenology is a discipline that aims at defining a particular phenomenon, or how things appear as lived experiences (Streubert & Carpenter, 1999:43). People gain new understanding and add to their knowledge meanings from varied phenomena, and look into how such phenomena can affect their lives. The purpose of the phenomenological study, according to Knapp (2007:346), is to label out participants' experiences and knowledge regarding a particular issue, and most importantly, to understand participants' meanings ascribed to that issue. The purpose of the phenomenological study in this study was to help to understand participants' understanding of the need for a compulsory language course in African languages at the University of Limpopo. Most importantly, to understand participants' meanings ascribed to the importance of the course on campus at large.

3.3.1 Population and sampling

(a) Population

According to Bertram and Christiansen (2014:59), the word 'population' refers to the total number of people, groups, or organisations that could be included in a study. Bless, Higson-Smith, and Sithole (2014:162) define population as the entire set (people or objects) whose characteristics the research project or researcher wants to examine.

Nunan (1992:231) defines population as "all cases, situations, or individuals who share one or more characteristics". The population of this study included students and lecturers at the University of Limpopo.

(b) Sample and sampling

It is difficult to study the whole population, hence sampling is utilised (Auriacombe, 2007:511). Sampling, according to Sevilla (2007:182), is a strategy that enables the researcher to pick a subgroup from a large group to make judgments about the larger group. Similarly, Brynard et al. (2014) define sampling as a technique employed to select a small group (the sample) to determine the characteristics of a larger group (the population). Tashakkori and Teddlie (2003), as quoted by Teddlie and Tashakkori (2009:169), add that, "sampling involves selecting units of analysis (e.g., people, groups, artefacts, settings) in a manner that maximises the researcher's ability to answer questions outlined in a study. When sampling, researchers simply identify and select participants from a designated target group.

A sample is a chosen group from the population from whom data are collected. Kumar (2005:164) defines a sample as, "a subgroup of the population you are interested in." Schofield (1996) explains that, "a sample is a part of a whole or a subset of measurement drawn from the population. A sample, then, is a selected group of elements from a defined population." Walliman (2011:185) argues that "a sample is a selected number of cases in a population". The researcher agrees with all the foregoing definitions, which essentially regard a sample as a selected group from the population. Since data was collected from the University of Limpopo as a location or institution, not all students, lecturers, and other staff members, or general workers formed part of the sample. The researcher sampled students and lecturers and still, not all of them were part of the sample, hence the need for sampling technique and sample size.

(c) Sampling technique and sample size

The researcher applied the nonprobability sampling technique known as purposive sampling to select the participants of the study. Purposive sampling, according to Etikan, Musa, and Alkassim (2016:2), is a process of identifying and selecting individuals or groups of individuals who are experts and are well-informed about the phenomenon of interest. In this instance, the researcher does not simply and randomly select the sample, but selects them if they meet the requirement for participation in the research. The researcher used purposive sampling because not all students and lecturers can take part in the study. Therefore, the researcher selected only those participants that served the purpose of this study. The main purpose of this study was to provide solutions to language-related problems, and lecturers and students from the language department helped in the provision of some remedial interventions against the identified problems.

The sample size is where the researcher decides on the number of participants that he or she needs for the study. This is important because without it, the time, as well as the resources needed, cannot be ascertained, and this can lead to poor planning for the study. The sample size comprised of six postgraduate students studying towards African language courses at the university, two lecturers in Sepedi, two lecturers in Tshivenḓa, and two lecturers in Xitsonga. The total population is twelve.

3.3.2   Data collection

Data collection is a procedure for gathering information based on the research questions to acquire an outcome (Charles & Mertler, 2002). The researcher made use of semi-structured interviews to collect data. A semi-structured interview is an in-depth interview data collection method (Marshall & Rossman, 2006; Matthews & Ross, 2010). The researcher asked a standard set of questions with one or more individually custom-made questions that are intended to seek clarity or to investigate the participants' reasoning (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005).

There are several advantages of semi-structured interviews (Marshall & Rossman, 2006; Liamputtong, 2009). The first advantage is that semi-structured interviews are face-to-

face, one-on-one interactions between the researcher and the participant. Secondly, interviews build a kind of intimacy resulting in mutual self-disclosure between the parties. Thirdly, interviews focus on the personal contexts of participants. Lastly, they assist the researcher to go in-depth, thus enabling the researcher to read the participants' emotions.

3.3.3 Data analysis

Once data have been collected, they must be analysed, interpreted, findings must be highlighted, and conclusions should be drawn. Data analysis is a process of turning the data into "a clear, understandable, insightful, trustworthy, and even original analysis," (Liamputtong, 2009:277). Data analysis involves making sense of text data, moving deeper into them to understand, represent, and make interpretations of their larger meanings (Creswell, 2009).

There are five types of data analysis, namely, content analysis, narrative analysis, discourse analysis, semiotic analysis, and thematic analysis (Liamputtong, 2009). Qualitative researchers believe that words are extra influential than numbers. The commonly used analysis method in qualitative research is thematic analysis, which is a method of identifying, analysing, and reporting patterns (themes) within the data (Ibid, 2009:284). There are several steps followed in thematic analysis. The first thematic step is to organise, sort, classify or categorise the raw data obtained using semi-structured interviews. This step helps in the preparation of raw data. Categorising involves recording the interviews, typing/recording field notes, and arranging the data into different general categories and themes in terms of their levels of difficulty (Creswell, 2009; Liamputtong, 2009).

3.4 CONCLUSION

It can be said that a sample in research saves mainly time and money, most importantly when a suitable sampling strategy is used and an appropriate sample size is selected. Prior to that, the researcher should take necessary precautions to reduce sampling and

measurement errors so that a sample yields valid and reliable information. The next chapter focuses on data analysis and interpretation.

CHAPTER FOUR: ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA

4.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapter 3 focused on research methodology, which is one of the most important components of this study to collect, and analyse data gathered from participants. The data gathering procedure followed a qualitative approach. In this chapter, the results of the data gathered during the semi-structured interviews with the participants are presented. Data is divided into three sections:

Section 4.2 discusses the provision of the University of Limpopo language policy in terms of the promotion of multilingualism. Section 4.3 is about the meaning of multilingualism in the context of the University of Limpopo. Section 4.4 probes the guidelines towards the development of a compulsory course in African languages for first-entering students at the University of Limpopo. The benefits of studying an African language course are discussed in section 4.5. Lastly, Section 4.6 provides an implementation plan for the language course.

4.2 THE PROVISIONS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF LIMPOPO LANGUAGE POLICY IN TERMS OF THE PROMOTION OF MULTILINGUALISM

This section presents data relating to the provisions of the University of Limpopo language policy in terms of the promotion of multilingualism. Participants were asked to reflect their understanding of section 4 (4.8) of the University of Limpopo language policy, which states that, "…each faculty of the University of Limpopo should identify at least one course which could be offered in either English or Northern Sotho or Tshivenda or Xitsonga as of 2009". Participants were asked to state their understanding of multilingualism on campus looking into the aim of the language policy of the University of Limpopo section 2 (2.1) which states that, "one of the aims of the University of Limpopo language policy is to uphold the legislative provision of multilingualism". Participants were asked to respond to the following questions:

The University of Limpopo language policy stipulates that each faculty should identify at least one course that could be offered in either English or Northern Sotho or Tshivenḓa or Xitsonga as of 2009. What does this mean?

Participants considered in this study include both students and lecturers who reflected their understanding of this provision. The following is a response from Participant 1:

> *I believe that this means by now we should be having, for example, Geology or other courses, which are offered in any African language spoken on campus. So far, that has not been implemented; the only practice done is teaching courses in English.*

Participant 1 argues that it is clear that the implementation of this policy is long overdue. It should have been started in 2009. In a sense, the participant expresses his frustration with the non-implementation of the language policy. He argues that this policy values English at the expense of African languages. According to the participant, this is unsustainable. He is of the view that the university could have done better by now.

Another participant expressed the same sentiments. He argued as follows:

> *My understanding is that each faculty should choose to lecture any course with any of those mentioned official languages of their choice. It means if the University of Limpopo can choose to lecture Biology in Northern Sotho or Sociology in Xitsonga that will be allowed.*

The participant acknowledges the fact that English is not the only official language. The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (1996) recognises 11 official languages. Nine of these languages are indigenous languages. Sepedi, Xitsonga, and Tshivenḓa are part of these languages. The participant argues that each faculty should be allowed to choose one course to be taught in any of the three languages. The participant picks Biology as an example. Biology is a highly technical subject. It is also a very sensitive subject because it deals with socially tabooed subjects. This shows that the participant is confident in the power of African languages to deliver tertiary education.

Participant 3's response is shown below. According to him:

> *This demonstrates that the University of Limpopo has not followed its language promotion policies. One subject must now be offered in any of Africa's official languages. Despite this, English remains the only medium of education.*

The above response puts it clear that the language policy statement was prepared solely for formality, with no plan in place to enforce it. The policy strives to promote equal and equitable use of all languages spoken in the University's environs. African languages, according to the participants, are not given a voice. He appears to have a strong desire to see African languages become as widely used as English is. African languages may be used as a medium of instruction.

Participant 4 argued as follows:

> *The university must embark on a system whereby education is not given in the language of the oppressor, that is, English. Education must be offered in three dominating languages of Limpopo Province that are also official languages of the University of Limpopo policy, which are Tshivenḓa, Xitsonga, and Sepedi.*

Participant 4 is enthusiastic about African languages. The Participant wants to see African languages developed and recognised as media of instruction at the University of Limpopo.

Participant 5 expressed the same sentiments as Participant 4, as follows:

> *This means by now the University of Limpopo must be having African languages as languages of the medium of instruction. This was going to differ by faculties.*

Participant 5's understanding of this section is that the 2009 period set in the language policy is overdue for implementation. By now, each faculty must be having an African language as the medium of instruction.

Participant 6 claims that:

Our home languages are not taken seriously at the University of Limpopo.
Years ago, a language policy should have been implemented. Language
policies have previously been introduced at other campuses, and they
have proven to be effective. The University of Limpopo can choose to
have one compulsory African language amongst the three and implement
it as the language of the medium of instruction. The University of
KwaZulu-Natal (KZN) has isiZulu language as a compulsory African
language course for first-year students. Sesotho is a compulsory
language at the University of North West (UNW).

The University of Limpopo, according to Participant 6, sees no importance in the usage of African languages. The participant believes that if the institution wanted to use African languages on campus, it would have done so. If the University of Limpopo did not know where to begin, they would have looked at how other universities dealt with the issue like UKZN. This participant appeared to be concerned about the issue. The participant was also asked if a compulsory African language course at the University of Limpopo was viable. The Participant replied in the following manner:

We can learn from successful universities and understand how they did
it, and then we can do it ourselves. There are underprivileged universities
such as Zululand and Northwest University among these other
institutions; they are not as well-funded as Wits and Fort Hare, but they
have made it.

The Participant suggested that the University of Limpopo should follow the footsteps of the universities such as Zululand and North-West that successfully implemented their language policy. The participant understood that the University of Limpopo is one of those that are underprivileged and not well funded universities but can still try it.

Participant 7 had similar feelings to participants 3, 4, and 5:
According to my reading of this section, the translation module, for
example, must use any, if not all, of the University of Limpopo's official

languages as a medium of teaching. If the University of Limpopo were to implement its language policy, the pass rate would improve. If courses or modules were offered in our native languages, students will not have difficulties in understanding the language used. Students confront a number of study challenges, one of which is mastering the language rather than the course content.

The example given by the Participant demonstrates the exact practice that should be happening in each faculty and module. Despite this, the Participant indicated that having mother tongues as media of instruction would improve the pass rate.

Participant 8 made the following argument regarding section 4(4.8):

This can only mean that the University of Limpopo was trying to uphold the language policy set by the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (1996) by having African language as the language of the medium of instruction. This language policy section proves to us with a time frame that the University of Limpopo failed to promote multilingualism since English is still taking the lead.

Participant 8 emphasised that the University of Limpopo failed to follow the language policy set by the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (1996) and the Language Policy of 2003. To date, English is the preferred language of medium instruction at the University of Limpopo.

4.3 THE MEANING OF MULTILINGUALISM IN THE CONTEXT OF THE UNIVERSITY OF LIMPOPO

The second question that participants were asked to respond to was: one of the aims of the University of Limpopo language policy is to uphold the legislative provision of multilingualism. What does multilingualism mean to you in the context of the University of Limpopo?

Participant 1 argues as follows:

> *According to my knowledge, the University of Limpopo is a multiracial university that only makes use of English as if it was the only official language. Multilingualism is the ability to communicate well in three or more languages, or the ability of a group of people to communicate well in three or more languages. African languages must be used as equally as the English language at the University of Limpopo, that is something that is not happening. If multilingualism was practiced, then a larger community will be aware of our languages. Even international students will be able to communicate in our languages when they graduate.*

Participant 1 is looking at a large number of a diverse population at the University of Limpopo. The participant understands that to be a multilingual person is when one can communicate using three or more languages. The participant strongly believes that African languages are not treated with fairness as compared to the English language. If multilingualism was practiced; possibilities of language death would not be envisioned because both local and international students would be able to speak African languages.

Participants 2 and 3 have similar feelings. Participant 2 stated the following:

> *Multilingualism refers to the ability of people or groups of speakers to communicate in more than two languages. This means that University of Limpopo students must be multilingual. The University of Limpopo must also encourage the use of African languages since students are only exposed to the English language besides their mother tongues.*

Similarly, Participant 3 argued as follows:

> *Multilingualism according to my understanding is when an individual or a group of people communicate using two, three, or more languages. Something that is not happening with the University of Limpopo*

community. With my observations, students are only able to make use
of their medium of instruction and their mother tongues.

Participants 2 and 3 understand multilingualism as the ability to make use of two or more languages. When these participants observe the language situation on campus, they notice that African languages remain as mother tongues and students make use of an English language if they have a different native language. Participant 2 does not see any effort that the institution is putting into making sure that students are exposed to different African languages.

Participant 4 declared that:

> *In the University of Limpopo's context, multilingualism means that each*
> *student must be able to communicate in multiple languages. Tsongas*
> *and Swati's are mostly students who speak various African languages*
> *outside their native tongue, but Sepedi speakers have a negative attitude*
> *and claim ownership of the university. They will only prefer to*
> *communicate in Sepedi and English only.*

The ability to use multiple languages reflects that one is multilingual, according to Participant 4. The fact that the majority of students at the University of Limpopo are Sepedi speaking, which motivates some of these students to develop a negative attitude towards other African languages spoken on campus. The participant witnessed Tsonga and Swati speakers engaging with the other students using various languages apart from their mother tongue. Apparently, Sepedi speakers only prefer communicating in Sepedi or English instead of African languages because they have some sense of residence ownership.

Participant 5 made the following argument:

> *Speaking more than two languages is referred to as multilingualism. The*
> *majority of students speak Xitsonga, Sepedi, and Tshivenḓa, as well as*
> *SiSwati, and when they are together, they end up code-switching their*
> *languages. This shows that students at the University of Limpopo have*

no problem in learning other African languages, the problem lies with the language management failing to implement their language policy.

Participant 5 appears to have witnessed students playing a code-switching game with their peers. It is stated that students do not have a problem with African language usage or interacting amongst each other using their African language. The problem lies with language policy implementers who are failing to implement the language policy to promote multilingualism.

Participant 6 argued thus:

> *Students at the University of Limpopo come from a diverse range of cultures, which complicates communication. Multilingualism is a critical feature that the University of Limpopo must examine. Everyone must be able to communicate in multiple languages. If the suggested language course is implemented, the university will benefit greatly.*

By diverse, the participant is referring to having different attributes that people use to confirm themselves, which include demographic factors (such as race, gender, and age) as well as values and culture. Participant 6 argues that the University of Limpopo should promote a multilingual atmosphere to recognise the language differences among its students. As a result, the university must cater for the majority of spoken languages on campus. The participant believes that if African languages are introduced as compulsory modules for first-entering students at the University of Limpopo, students will receive numerous benefits from such an endeavour.

The following is a response from Participant 7:

> *Multilingualism means the use of various languages that the University of Limpopo is catering for. Students learn amongst each other to speak different languages while all university materials or communication mediums are in the English language. The only time where the University of Limpopo claims to be promoting multilingualism is through the program in Contemporary English Language Studies and Multilingual Studies*

(CEMS) as well as Translation Studies. Looking at the course itself, it is not multilingualism because it is taught in English and African language. Such a combination of two languages is referred to as bilingualism than multilingualism. As a result, the University of Limpopo does not comply with the legislative requirement to promote multilingualism.

Multilingualism, according to Participant 7, is the use of all languages that the University of Limpopo recognises as their official languages. In the context of the University of Limpopo, students are trying to learn each other's language and the University is doing nothing to promote multilingualism; rather they adopted bilingualism and used it to fill the multilingual gap through the CEMS and Translation Studies and Linguistics programmes.

Participant 8 stated the following:

The use of multiple languages is referred to as multilingualism. In terms of the University of Limpopo's content, this means that the institution must use all official languages following its language policy. These languages can be employed principally in three areas that are pillars of our institution: teaching and learning, research, and community engagement. At least one of these localities must utilise an African language, such as Sepedi, Tshivenḓa, or Xitsonga, from our list of official African languages. These languages must be utilised to support the three pillars and they must be employed equally and formally.

According to Participant 8, having the ability to make use of all official languages will mean one is multilingual. It was emphasised by the participant that, if Sepedi, Tshivenḓa, and Xitsonga can be used for teaching and learning, research, and community engagement, then we will say the University of Limpopo is treating its official languages equally. It is crucial to have all languages used equally since no language is superior to another.

4.4 GUIDELINES TOWARDS THE DEVELOPMENT OF A COMPULSORY COURSE IN AFRICAN LANGUAGES FOR FIRST-ENTERING STUDENTS AT THE UNIVERSITY OF LIMPOPO

This section presents data relating to the guidelines towards the development of a compulsory course in African languages for first-entering students at the University of Limpopo. Participants were asked to add all components, which they believe the African language course must contain. The following questions were asked:

If the University of Limpopo introduces a compulsory course in African languages for first-entering students, what should it look like in terms of content? What should the level of complexity of the course be? What about the vocabulary?

Participant 1 asserted:

> The proposed language course should concentrate on teaching grammar
> and improving student's practical knowledge and understanding of their
> African languages.

Grammar knowledge helps the student in the correction of inaccuracies and the improvement of written work. Only through an unconscious assimilation process can a person learn a new language effectively. Participant 1 suggests that the language course focuses on grammar teachings. The course must enhance students with knowledge and understanding of African culture.

Participant 2 argued as follows:

> I do not think it is necessary to go into detail on idioms, syntax, or
> morphology because students will only do this course for a year. I persist
> in teaching them a communicating language and a little history and
> culture of the language.

Participant 2 suggests that if students are to be taught idioms, syntax, or morphology the course will be too be complex. Looking at idioms, for example, is a phrase where the words together have a meaning that is different from the dictionary definitions of the

individual words (Wordoful.com, [Sa]). It is not always a case where you will find people speaking in riddles or making use of idioms in their conversations. The participant suggests that the language course focuses on communicative language, history, and culture. According to the participant, students should be taught solely communicative skills than complex linguistic aspects. Such communicative skills include speaking, thinking, listening, and nonverbal communication.

Participant 3 said that:

If an African language course is offered, the material must remain consistent (like an introduction to an English language course). Students must be taught the same concepts that are taught in a basic introduction to English course but in a language that they understand or prefer. The African language course must resemble an English course in terms of appearance, content, and vocabulary level.

Participant 3 meant that the African language course must share the same basic introduction as English language courses. According to the participant, what is taught in the introduction to English language course must be the same as the African language course.

Participant 4 argued as follows:

The African language course should begin with an introduction to orthography and grammar (spelling, and word order).

Participant 4 believes that the African language course must teach students orthography. According to Muscato (2021), orthography is a standardised system of writing. It is a set of rules that allows people to understand a language. This begins with the creation of the symbols that form the foundation of a written language. One of the earliest ways to do this is to use symbols to represent entire words or ideas such as alphabets. Grammar, according to Chung and Pullum (2021), is simply the collection of principles defining how to put together a sentence. Every language contains rules about how words should be

arranged in a sentence, therefore; the participant sees the need for students to know those rules during the study of the language course.

The following is a response from Participant 6:

> *The African language course must contain background, history, culture, phonetics (sound, how do we speak), and how to write words in a correct form.*

Participant 6 suggested that the African language course must teach phonetics amongst other aspects because phonetics allows students to examine the differences between the source of sounds and the target language that is being learned. Students can be taught how to write words in the correct form.

Participant 7 stated the following:

> *I think the language course must teach language writing and reading skills, provide the ability to distinguish between spoken and written languages, and lastly, the difference between standardised and dialect languages.*

Participant 7 suggested that students' language writing and reading skills should be enhanced during the African language course offering. This participant wants students to be able to differentiate the difference between spoken and written language at the end of the course. Most importantly, students must be able to spot the difference between a standardised language and dialect.

Participant 7 stated the following:

> *Students should be taught the linguistics of indigenous languages at a basic level, in my opinion. If the language is Northern Sotho, there must be components that deal with the language's linguistic features. That covers the basics of phonetics, phonology, morphology, syntax, and semantics, as well as other fields like pragmatics. I believe that a linguistic scientific examination of the language is required. They should then move*

on to literature because literature is another part of language teaching.
This also allows us to explore the more creative aspects of language use
and growth. As a result, the course must include African linguistics and
literature.

Participant 8 does not want students to only know how to communicate in an African language but believes that students must be taught fundamental aspects of language. Participant 8 wants them to understand how words are articulated, how sentences are formed, how to make certain speech sounds, the structure of a language, including the rules for combining, and so on. Therefore, students will need to be taught all of the fundamental aspects of the language. He argues that the course should also teach literature. By so doing, it will eventually allow students to use their creative thinking to come up with great developments towards the African language taught. Participant 8 further argued that:

> *Finally, I would want to point out that sociolinguistics and other aspects*
> *of a language's sociocultural use are possible subdivisions of an*
> *introduced African language. Even though I am convinced that the*
> *complexity will be centred on linguistics. Because we will be dealing with*
> *orthography and other challenges related to language, linguistics is a*
> *large discipline that will eventually transform into vocabulary treatment*
> (Participant 8).

Participant 8 pointed out that the course should teach issues relating to language and society and language and culture. Thus, students must be aware of societal influences affecting speakers as well the relationship between culture and language.

4.5 BENEFITS OF STUDYING AN AFRICAN LANGUAGE

This section presents data relating to the benefits of learning an African language course. Below follows the question asked and responses from participants:

How will students from the University of Limpopo benefit from learning an African language?

Participant 1 argued as follows:

> *I believe that students will improve their capacity to communicate with others and be exposed to a variety of work contexts that include people of various cultures and languages, making it easier for them to acquire and communicate in those languages.*

Similarly, Participant 2 argued as follows:

> *Students will be getting jobs across the globe; they will be exposed to different people and cultures, which will not give them a problem adjusting because they are taught how to learn a new language and respecting other cultures.*

Participants 1 and 2 emphasised the issue of students appreciating diversity. According to Participants 1 and 2, it will not be difficult for students to work with people who do not speak their languages since they are taught how to learn a new language for communication purposes. Participants also touched on the issue of culture, that students will know that across the world we have different cultures and that we must respect all cultures.

Participant 3 said that:

> *Students will be multilingual, and they will not feel like aliens if they acquire a job in an area where they do not speak the language since they will be taught how to acquire a completely new language.*

According to Participant 3, learning a new language offers a person a sense of belonging in a place other than their home. Learning a new language benefits one to become multilingual and have the skill to acquire a new language.

Participant 4 made the following argument:

Students will learn a new language, culture, and history attached to the
language. While remembering very well that the people are rooted in the
language they use for communication.

Benefits mentioned by Participant 4 include a new language added to the languages students already have, understanding different cultures besides their own, and learning history attached to the speakers of the language (their origin).

The following is a response from Participant 5:

Learning an African language will boost one's ability to communicate with
confidence in a language that is not theirs with the aim of learning and
will expand one's language learning knowledge.

Participant 5 also mentioned the advantage of boosting self-esteem in speaking a new language. Most importantly expanding one's knowledge on how to learn a new language.

Participant 6 expressed himself as follows:

South Africa is a multilingual and rainbow nation in its own right. Even
though other languages are not yet recognised officially. Learning a new
language is critical since we live in a democratic society where we are
free to work wherever we wish and communicate using languages of our
choice. Students will be able to communicate in more than one language.

According to Participant 6, in South Africa, there are so many spoken official languages. According to him, some remain dialects. Learning a new language is very important since every citizen has the freedom to express himself or herself in any language of their choice, therefore, it will be wise for students to learn African languages. By learning another language, students will benefit from speaking to different people using their language.

Participant 7 said that:

At about 100 percent of our students are not white or coloured but black.
Learning an African language will help them regain whatever they lost
along the way as they were growing. Students will be allowed to develop

their African languages and acquire basic grammatical standards. Having an African language as a requirement will assist our students in understanding who they are and how they may contribute to the growth of African languages and cultures.

Students will finally acknowledge or feel like Africans by learning their African languages, according to Participant 7. In Participant 7's view, African languages will develop and grow; students will finally get to learn more about standardised grammar. Students will understand their sense of belonging and will also contribute to the growth of their languages and get to practice their cultures with understanding.

The following is a response from Participant 8:

Learning an African language will benefit our students because our native language encapsulates our identity, culture, and heritage. Our students will be confident not just in speaking our languages, but also have to feel free to tell about their identity and culture. Students must rest assured that through the usage of our languages, one may be as successful as one may be in English (Participant 8).

Participant 8 indicated that by learning African languages, a summary of our identity, culture, and heritage would be exposed. Learning African languages helps students gain confidence in speaking and practicing their culture and lastly, in terms career success, African languages students can still make it like those who speak the English language.

4.6 DESIGNING AN IMPLEMENTATION PLAN FOR THE LANGUAGE COURSE

This section presents data relating to the implementation plan for a compulsory African language course at the University of Limpopo. Below is the question asked and data collected from participants.

Once the compulsory African language course has been designed at the University of Limpopo, students will be expected to enrol for one of the languages other than their home language. For example, a Sepedi speaker may choose either Xitsonga or

Tshivenḓa, a Xitsonga speaker either Sepedi or Tshivenḓa, and so on. What is your recommendation about how the African language course should be facilitated?

Participants 1, 5, and 6 have similar recommendations. Participants suggested as follows, according to Participant 1:

> *It must be more similar to a high school extra language. Learners already knew their native language, and English was added as a compulsory language to study, for example. The same should apply to the University of Limpopo students and not be allowed to study a language they already have.*

Similarly, Participant 5 argued as follows:

> *Students must not be allowed to study their mother tongue as an African language but a completely new language. Like at high school we had two languages, one mother tongue, and language of a medium of instructions.*

Participant 6 shared the same sentiments:

> *It can be looked at which African language a student already knows using a security background from a high school matric statement. As a result, if the learner speaks Sepedi, he or she must select between Xitsonga and Tshivenḓa. Students cannot study a language that they already have or know.*

Participants 1, 5, and 6 believe that their high school background can help the administrator of the first-year entering students in making sure they do not choose the African language they already have. They think that the University of Limpopo must follow in the Department of Basic Education's footsteps of having a certain language that will be compulsory to study. Participant 6 gave an example that if a student has Sepedi on their matric results he or she much choose to study one language between Xitsonga and Tshivenḓa.

According to Participant 2:

> *Making the African language a compulsory language will work, and students will be able to communicate with one another in their native tongues.*

According to this Participant, the African language must be a compulsory course since it comes with great benefits for students to be able to communicate using African languages with their peers.

Participant 3 suggested that:

> *The African language course should be a new compulsory language course because the University of Limpopo will be promoting African languages that way. This means students will have to learn a new language. If we have to make it mandatory, it will be extremely beneficial to them. Students will graduate with a third language under their belt.*

Participant 3 also suggests that we make this African language compulsory, implying that the university must teach a completely new language. It was said that students would, at the end of their study, have learned a new language.

Participant 4 proposed that:

> *Even if the module is not for exam reasons, we can have a non-degree required model to follow. The model may be more like an elective course, and the institution should make it a requirement that all students take it before graduating. We can have a way of rating students for a pass. If you are a Xitsonga speaker, you must take Tshivenḓa or Sepedi lesson. Someone must ensure that students comprehend the need of learning the basics of entirely new African languages.*

It was suggested by Participant 4 that the African language course can be like a non-degree module, which is a module that does not form part of a student's degree, but is compulsory to study. He even suggested that the course might not be part of exams but

might have activities, which should be rated for a pass. The participant was ecstatic to observe the growth of African languages and wanted to see great progress and engagement between organisers of the programme and students. He gave an example that a Tsonga student must not be allowed to study Xitsonga but Sepedi or Tshivenḓa instead, because this will show that the Participant wants to see growth.

Participant 7 suggested the following:

> *I think since the goal of the African language course is to teach students basic communication skills in new languages. They need to broaden their horizons and teach a new language to students so that at the end of the course students are multilingual.*

Looking at the goal of the suggested African language, Participant 7 suggests that a new basic communication language skill must be taught to individual students and as such, students will at the end of the course be multilingual.

Participant 8 offered the following:

> *Students should be given the freedom and latitude to choose which language they are most comfortable with and want to study. Irrespective of whether or not they know the language or they are native speakers of that language. The main feature should be that the learner could study any African language. It must be done following their preference and not their choice between languages they do not want. It must be accepted if the language they desire to learn is the same one they speak.*

Participant 8 had a unique perspective from other participants, which suggested that students use their freedom of choice to choose any language they want to study. It is unacceptable, according to Participant 8, to pressurise students into learning languages they do not wish to learn, just for the sake of studying an African language.

4.7 CONCLUSION

This chapter presented an overview of the research results obtained from participants. Attention was paid to participants' level of awareness of section 4 (4.8) of the University of Limpopo language policy, which states that each faculty shall select at least one course that could be provided in English, Northern Sotho, Tshivenḓa, or Xitsonga as of 2009. The meaning of multilingualism in the context of the University of Limpopo was also examined, with particular attention paid to section 2 (2.1) of the language policy of the university. The section indicates that one of the goals of the policy is to safeguard the statutory provision of multilingualism. The chapter examined the possibility of establishing an African language course in terms of content, complexity, and vocabulary. The chapter also looked at the benefits of studying an African language. The final section of the chapter was devoted to obtaining suggestions on the implementation plan for the introduced language course. The next chapter is the final chapter, which is chapter five. The chapter will discuss findings, conclusions and recommendations of the study.

CHAPTER 5: FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter presented the results of the study. The research results were able to uncover the meaning of section 4 (4.8) of the University of Limpopo language policy. The meaning of multilingualism in the context of the University of Limpopo was unpacked. Participants were requested to express their views about the content of the envisaged course in African languages at the university. The study results also outlined the benefits of studying an African language course. Lastly, participants provided suggestions on how the course can be implemented. In this chapter, findings of the study, limitations, recommendations, and conclusions drawn from the research results are also covered.

5.2 RESTATEMENT OF THE AIM AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

5.2.1 AIM

The study aimed to examine guidelines towards the development of a compulsory course in African languages for first-entering students at the University of Limpopo.

5.2.2 OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this study were to:

- Examine the provision of the University of Limpopo language policy in terms of the promotion of multilingualism.

- Develop content guidelines towards the development of a compulsory course in African languages for first-entering students at the University of Limpopo.

- Outline benefits of studying an African language course.

5.3 SUMMARY OF THE STUDY

Chapter 1 gives the background information to the study and presents the research problem. This chapter also outlined the purpose and the significance of the study, respectively. The researcher considered research ethics and highlighted how the study will meet the rigours of quality criteria. Finally, terms that form part of the research were defined.

Chapter 2 presented the theoretical framework of the study, namely, the Language Management Theory. The chapter further reviewed the literature related to the study. Literature related to the implementation of the language policy at the University of KwaZulu-Natal was reviewed. The chapter further reflected on language management at the University of Limpopo literature. Literature on the use of African languages at the University of Free State and the University of Pretoria was covered. Lastly, the advantages of using African languages in education were discussed.

Chapter 3 discussed the methodology of the study. The chapter presented the research approach of the study, which is the qualitative approach. The researcher preferred a phenomenological research design to look at lived experiences of lecturers and students in terms of the management of the language policy at the university. When looking into population and sampling, researchers' population was language lecturers and language postgraduate students at the University of Limpopo. Six lecturers and six postgraduate students formed part of the study. Semi-structured interviews were used to collect data.

Chapter 4 presented the interpretation of the results, which emerged from the data collected from participants. This followed questions posed to participants.

5.4 FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

This section presents the findings of the study, which are presented in the form of themes and subthemes. It was mentioned in Chapter 3 that this study made use thematic analysis

to analyse data. The following table outlines themes and subthemes that emerged from the data:

Theme	Subthemes
The meaning of section 4 (4.8) of the language policy of the University of Limpopo	- Establish African language course for each faculty - Failure of implementation of the language policy - Possibilities of having one compulsory African language course
The meaning of multilingualism in the context of the University of Limpopo	- Students' ability to communicate in Sepedi, Tshivenḓa, and Xitsonga - Equality of languages - Students conversing in each other's native tongues - The University of Limpopo caters to a diverse population of students
The content of the proposed language course	- The African language course must teach grammar: phonology, orthography, and so on - The course must teach communicative language - Background history and culture of a language concerned - Avoidance of teaching complex aspects such as idioms

Students benefits from learning an African language course	- Students will at the end of studying the African language course be multilingual - Gaining confidence and improving communication skills - Gaining a sense of belonging - Increase social cohesion - Enhancing language learning knowledge

Table 2 Themes and subthemes emerged from the data

Theme 1: The meaning of section 4 (4.8) of the language policy of the University of Limpopo

The first finding of the study emerges from the theme that relates to the meaning of section 4.8 of the language policy of the University of Limpopo as expressed by participants. The section states that, "…each faculty of the University of Limpopo should identify at least one course which could be offered in either English or Northern Sotho or Tshivenda or Xitsonga as of 2009". It appears that students and lecturers have a more or less similar understanding of this section. In other words, there is a consensus that the University of Limpopo should identify at least one course in each faculty, which could be offered in an African language other than the English language. Such a course should cater for the official languages of the University of Limpopo, which are Sepedi, Tshivenḓa, and Xitsonga. An example given by one student was "*… if the University of Limpopo can choose to lecture Biology in Northern Sotho or Sociology in Xitsonga that will be allowed*". It will then differ as it goes with different faculties. There are four faculties in the university: Health Sciences, Humanities, Science and Agriculture, and Management and Law. The Faculty of Management and Law can choose to have, for example, Economics lectured in Sepedi.

The second subtheme in terms of the meaning of section 4 (4.8) of the University of Limpopo relates to the 2009 time-frame that was set for the implementation of the language policy that seeks to establish a course to be offered in an African language. As one lecturer stated, "*This language policy section proves to us with a time-frame that the University of Limpopo failed to promote multilingualism since English is still taking the lead*". It is over 10 years since the University of Limpopo sought to have established a course in an African language. According to participants, this matter is overdue and shows a lack of commitment on the part of the university.

The third subtheme looks into the possibilities of having one compulsory African language course. This subtheme was constructed from the perspective of a lecturer about other universities. According to the lecturer, the University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN) requires all first-year entering students to learn isiZulu, whereas the University of North West (UNW) requires students to learn Sesotho. The lecturer used examples from other universities to demonstrate that it is possible to have an African language taught as a compulsory subject in a higher education institution. The lecturer argued as follows: "We can learn from successful universities and understand how they did it and we can do it ourselves".

The finding discussed on this theme is in line with the study of Mbaye (2016), which examines the evaluation of language management by the University of Limpopo. Subtheme 2 reveals that the University of Limpopo has failed to implement its language policy. Mabaye found that the language policy of the University of Limpopo is not being implemented in that there is still no language unit, and the recommendations made in the language policy of establishing a Centre for African Language Research and Development (CALRD) are also not being fulfilled. Mabaye's observations were that most students, lecturers, and language practitioners who participated in this study were not aware that the institution has a language policy. Some were operating under the assumption that there is no such thing as "University of Limpopo language policy". Those who were aware of it argued that they had never seen it. Those who have seen it are not sure about what should be done with it, and who should do it because of the absence of

the implementation plan. The conclusion drawn from the study was that there was a consensus that it is possible to develop and implement a language policy based on African languages.

Theme 2: The meaning of multilingualism in the context of the University of Limpopo

The meaning of multilingualism in the context of the University of Limpopo was the second theme or finding of the study. Students and lecturers shared their perspectives on how they perceive multilingualism in the context of the University of Limpopo. There were some emerging subthemes in support of the theme of multilingualism.

The first has to do with students' ability to communicate in the official languages of the University of Limpopo. The data show that students must be able to speak two or more, if not all, of the three official languages of the university, namely, Sepedi, Tshivenḓa, and Xitsonga. They must also be able to understand these languages. This means that if a student is a native speaker of Sepedi, he or she must also be able to communicate in Tshivenḓa and Xitsonga. Similarly, those who speak Tshivenḓa should be able to understand Sepedi and or Xitsonga; those whose mother tongue is Xitsonga should use the other two languages fluently.

In the second subtheme, data indicated that there should be equality in the use of languages. Currently, English is a dominating language at the university because it is used as both the medium of instruction and as a lingua franca. Instead of creating a multilingual environment, the university ends up singling out English as a dominant language. The use of African languages will lead to equality in the use of all official languages at the university, and true multilingualism.

The third subtheme looked into students conversing in each other's native tongues. According to one student, students end up code-switching their languages and learn languages from each other. For example, a Sepedi-speaking student will contribute a few

Tshivenḓa words to a conversation with Tshivenḓa-speaking students to try to win their heart back, *'Ndi khou humbela pfarelo hle chomi yaka'* (I am asking for forgiveness, please my friend). In this case, the pupils alternated between Tshivenḓa (*Ndi khou humbela pfarelo*), Sepedi (*hle, yaka*), and isiZulu (*chomi*). This means that during their conversations, students use each other's languages and learn from one another.

According to the fourth subtheme, multilingualism in the context of the University of Limpopo means that the university should cater for a diverse population of students in terms of making official languages at the university accessible to all students. One lecturer argued that, "Students at the University of Limpopo come from a diverse range of cultures, which complicates communication." Languages and culture are intertwined and students speak a variety of languages at the University of Limpopo. As a result, in terms of this subtheme, the University of Limpopo should accommodate its diverse students by teaching an African language course as proof of the institution's commitment to multilingualism. The institution should ensure that the official languages on campus are catered for. This will ensure that all students at the university will be able to speak at least one other African language by the time they graduate.

This finding is supported by Mbaye's (2016) study, which examines the evaluation of language management by the University of Limpopo. The researcher's findings revealed how languages are used during lectures, consultations, and tutorials. It was found that the most spoken language at the University of Limpopo is Sepedi. The students are, however, multilingual in that most students claim to speak more than two languages besides their mother tongue. Xitsonga is the second most spoken African language.

Theme 3: The content of the proposed language course

The data suggest that the university should design an African language course for all first entering students. The course should be taught in each of the three African languages, Sepedi, Tshivenḓa, and Xitsonga. The course should cover several aspects of language. The majority of participants agree that an African language course should include

grammar, such as phonology and spelling, and so on. Students, according to the participants, must understand how sentences are produced in a language (structure/morphology and syntax) at the end of the course. Students should learn how to make speech sounds and the rules governing pronunciation in a language. They should learn writing skills.

For example, students will be taught how to correctly write words in Sepedi, i.e., how to pronounce the word *ntlo* (house), that the sound of the letter 'n' is made with the tongue touching the hard palate of the inside mouth and –*tlo* sound will be made with the mouth round open and the tongue touching the floor of mouth. Looking into morphology, they will then know that the plural of a house in Sepedi will have (*di-)* as a prefix, resulting in *dintlo* (houses).

The second subtheme suggested that the African language course should teach communicative skills. According to the data, students are motivated by the desire to communicate meaningfully. There are many types of communicative skills that the students can learn. According to Yearlyglot (2021), the ten most important things to know in a language are greetings (hello, good night, see you later), common courtesies (excuse me, please, thank you), asking questions (who? How?), necessities (the bus stop, a bank, food), numbers (basic numbers 1-100, names of currencies), directions (north, down, in, here), basic action verbs (run, go, eat, take), comparatives (good, bad, warm, cold), body parts (arm, leg, heart) and vital information (prescription, allergies).

Thirdly, the data further indicate that the course should teach students about the history and culture of a language concerned. Students who will be doing the Sepedi language, for example, should learn briefly about the history of the Bapedi people. Similarly, those who will do Xitsonga or Tshivenda should be introduced to brief issues about the history of the people concerned. This will go a long way in instilling a sense of unity between people. It will show that although we speak different languages, we are one people. The course should also teach about the culture of people in terms of the different languages that they speak.

According to Mayor (2009), culture is defined as the beliefs, way of life, art, and customs that are shared and accepted by people in a particular society. For example, men and women greet each other differently in Bapedi, Vatsonga, and Vhavenḓa culture. For example, men say *thobela,* and women say *re a lotšha* in Sepedi culture while the same applies to Tshivenḓa culture, men say *Ndaa*, and women say *Aa*. Students must be taught the euphemistic vocabulary of expressing certain body parts whose literal mentioning is taboo. The course should emphasise the importance of euphemisms and honorifics of certain cultures in which the language is concerned. This also includes the use of body language. For example, the use of hands when greeting, kneeling, and so on.

Subtheme 4, the final subtheme, encapsulated the notion that the course should avoid teaching students complicated concepts like idioms. Idioms are a group of words that has a special meaning that is different from the ordinary meaning of each separate word (Mayor 2009). Since students are not natural speakers of the language, teaching them idioms and proverbs will make the course extremely difficult for them. For example, one can use this idiom *go ipolaya* 'to kill yourself', which means to bring trouble unto oneself. Someone who is not a native speaker of Sepedi will not understand what the speaker is referring to.

This finding is in consonance with Jenvey (2013) cited by Zikode (2017), that UKZN staff and students are learning sufficient isiZulu for verbal academic interactions. The study shows that the isiZulu language is currently a compulsory model for all first-year students and has been successful. The key focus areas of the course are introduction to isiZulu (culture, heritage, context), basic greetings and identity, conversational isiZulu, and lastly, reading and writing basic isiZulu words, sentences, and short phrases.

Theme 4: Benefits of learning an African language course

According to the data, an African language course will be beneficial to students. This theme discusses these benefits. The majority of participants mentioned multilingualism as the first goal of the course. By the time they matriculate, students would have learned

two languages. It would be extremely beneficial for them to learn a third language, as this would allow them to communicate in multiple languages.

The second subtheme looks at the fact that students will gain confidence and improve their communication skills. When students are taught a language, it is not the same as when they acquire it on their own. They develop confidence and can increase their communication skills because they would have mastered the communication techniques from professionals. One student argued that, if one gets professional education in an African language, it will be much easier for him or her to communicate meaningfully in the specific language concerned.

According to subtheme 3, at the end of an African language course, students will gain a sense of belonging. Humans have an innate desire to be part of a group. A sense of belonging is, of course, that feeling of connectedness to a group or community. The social bonds that come with a sense of belonging operate as a stress-relieving influence. If you find a job in an area where people speak Xitsonga and you have only recently learned the language, you will have less stress engaging with people at work and in the community. According to Wickham (2019), when we feel we have support and are not alone, we often cope more effectively with difficult times in our lives. The same is true of communication; when we speak the same language, we immediately form a social bond and feel accepted.

Subtheme 4 looks into social cohesion as one of the benefits that are increased by learning an African language. Social cohesion is the spirit of togetherness that keeps the society united and harmonised (Justine Burns, George Hull, Kate Lefko-Everett & Lindokuhle Njozela, 2018). Moving to a new nation, whether forced or voluntary, is a life-changing experience that presents a variety of challenges ranging from integration to isolation. The new beginning necessitates learning the host language. Language learning can promote social and life skills that are crucial for many individuals to adapt to a new community or country.

The fourth subtheme focuses on the enhancement of language learning knowledge. Students will have a decent knowledge of how to learn a new language by the end of the language course. Khasinah (2014) adds that students' language learning knowledge refers to their understanding of how cognitive and affective aspects like aptitude, personality, and motivation influence language learning. In addition, it includes specific knowledge about how the above factors apply in their experiences encountered in their languages or languages known.

The benefits discussed here are in line with Zikode's study that outlined the benefits of indigenous language as mediums of instruction in South Africa higher education such as the University of Johannesburg (UJ) and University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN). With UJ, there is academic proof that students who are taught in their mother tongue perform better and are in a better position to grasp and understand concepts in a language that is not their mother tongue. UKZN plans to increase cognitive access to information and to increase performance in students. This is precisely the reason why indigenous languages must be developed as a medium of instruction.

5.5 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The researcher came across certain obstacles that limited the study to expand as planned. This study was supposed to be conducted live at the University of Limpopo Turfloop Campus and use a semi-structured face-to-face interview. Since South Africa is facing the COVID-19 pandemic, most educational institutions are shut down due to lockdown. Consequently, the researcher was unable to collect data face-to-face, but had to rely on the telephone for interviews. The researcher had planned to interview a sample size that comprises two Sepedi postgraduate students, two Xitsonga postgraduate students, and two Tshivenḓa postgraduate students. Furthermore, the researcher planned to interview two Sepedi lecturers, two Tshivenḓa lecturers, and two Xitsonga lecturers. The total population is twelve. Only three lecturers responded to the email sent to them requesting an interview and the researcher managed to get hold of five students. The total number of participants taking part in this study is eight.

The researcher would have achieved the goal of the data collection if the interviews were conducted face-to-face. Telephone interviews limited the researcher from capturing actual verbal and non-verbal cues. The researcher in this case could not see body language, which can indicate a level of discomfort with the questions and the level of enthusiasm for the topics under discussion in the interview. The researcher could not capture an interviewee's emotions and behaviours. Time spent on the call was limited because the researcher could not ascertain if the interviewee was bored or not. The researcher could only assume that brief responses were the participants' hints of the need to "move fast" and wrap the interview.

5.6 CONCLUSIONS

This study was mainly about content guidelines towards the development of a compulsory course in African languages for first-entering students at the University of Limpopo. Students will have to choose one of the institution's three official languages that they have never studied before. There are many benefits for first-years to gain from such an African language course, as indicated by participants. Students will expand their social cohesion experiences at the end of the course. Students and lecturers believe that learning a new language will improve students' attitudes towards the target language and culture. It was said that the African language course must be a new language to individual students and compulsory to study too.

This study was anchored to the Language Management Theory (LMT). The Language Management Theory strives to explain how language problems arise in a discourse, and in whose discourse; and how they project into discourse if they arise from non-linguistic interest or systematic linguistic principles. The present research did not focus on the generation of utterances, but on how the University of Limpopo can use its official languages as stated in their language policy for academic purposes and drawing guidelines towards the development of a compulsory course in African languages for first-entering students.

This Language Management Theory (LMT) helped the researcher to look into the three major factors: language responsiveness, language preparedness, and language awareness. The willingness of the University of Limpopo to accommodate African languages was showed by the formulation of a language policy that aimed at promoting multilingualism and having the African language as a medium of instruction. It is indicated in the theory that it is the responsibility of an institution to manage its languages. The theory is crucial to the development and promotion of South African official languages at universities.

5.7 RECOMMENDATIONS

This study possesses a potential to serve as a springboard for further studies. In particular, it has managed to demonstrate the most possible ways of promoting the use of official languages of the University of Limpopo. While emphasising the importance of multilingualism, it suggested that students should take a completely new course in an African language. Future research can investigate if students are delighted with the notion of taking a compulsory new African language course rather than choosing among the three African languages recognised by the institution.

Another potential outcome of this research could be an investigation of how the proposed African language course at the University of Limpopo will affect students who are not native speakers of Sepedi, Xitsonga, or Tshivenḓa, particularly foreigners. The employment of African languages in light of the institution's three pillars of teaching and learning, research, and community engagement is fertile for research. It would also be fascinating to see how this might affect the institution's efforts to develop a plan for the implementation of the language policy.

REFERENCES

Alexander, N. 2007. Affirmative action and the perpetuation of racial identities in post-apartheid South Africa. *Transformation: Critical Perspectives on Southern Africa* 63(1):92-108.

Alexander, N. 2009. *Mother tongue bilingual teaching is the key: in a colloquium on mother-tongue teaching in the early years*. Durban: University of KwaZulu-Natal

Auriacombe, C.J. 2007. Unobtrusive research methods: critical issues. *Journal of Public Administration* 42(6):458-471.

Bertram, C. and Christiansen, I. 2014. *Understanding research: an introduction to reading research.* Pretoria: Van Schaik Publishers.

Bless, C., Higson-Smith, C., and Kagee, A. 2006. *Fundamentals of social research methods: An African perspective.* Juta and Company Ltd.

Brynard, D.J., Hanekom, S.X. and Brynard, P.A. 2014. *Introduction to Research*. 3rd edition. Pretoria: Van Schaik

Burns, J., Hull, G., Lefko-Everett, K., and Njozela, L. 2018. *Defining social cohesion.* Cape Town: SALDRU, UCT, 1(216). Retrieved from www.opensaldru.uct.ac.za. (Accessed 04 August 2020)

Burns, N and Grove, SK. 2001. *The practice of nursing research: conduct, critique, and utilization.* 4th edition. Philadelphia: Saunders.

Charles, M.C. and Mertler, C.A. 2002. *Introduction to educational research Boston*. MA: Allyn & Bacon.

Christensen, L.B., Johnson, B., Turner, L.A. and Christensen, L.B. 2011. *Research methods, design, and analysis*. New York: Pearson

Chung, S. and Pullum, G. 2021. *Linguistic society of America.* https://www.linguisticsociety.org/resource/grammar (Accessed 18 June 2021)

Constitution of the Republic of South Africa. 1996. Government Printers: Pretoria.

Creswell, J. 2002. *Educational research: Planning, conducting, and evaluating Quantitative and Qualitative research.* Upper Saddle River, NJ: Merrill Prentice Hall

Creswell, J. and Creswell, C. J. 2017. *Research design: qualitative, quantitative and mixed methods approaches.* 5th edition. Lincol: SAGE.

Department of Higher Education and Training. 2015. *Report on the use of African languages as mediums of instruction in higher education.* Pretoria.

Eisenhart, M. 1991. *Conceptual frameworks for research circa 1991: Ideas from a cultural anthropologist; implications for mathematics education rese*. www.nepc.colorado.edu (Accessed 20 August 2020)

Etikan, I., Musa, S.A. and Alkassim, R.S. 2016. Comparison of convenience sampling and purposive sampling. *American Journal of Theoretical and Applied Statistics* 5(1):2

Fishman, J. A. 1971. *The sociology of language: an interdisciplinary social science approach to language in society*. The Hague: Mouton.

Gundersen, S.L. 2009. *Language management in multinational companies.* Institute for research in economics and business administration. Bergen: SFN.

Hammond, M. and Wellington, J. 2012. *Research methods: the key concepts*. British: Routledge.

Ibid, S. 2009. Preface. See. Bayraktaroğlu, A. and Sifianou M. 2001. *Linguistic politeness across boundaries: the case of Greek and Turkish.* Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John. Benjamins Publishing Company 88:11-14.

Jenvey, N. 2013. *University demands that students and staff learn Zulu.* http://www.universityworldnews.com/article.php?story=2013051073217996 (Accessed 15 August 2019)

Khasinah, S. 2014. Factors influencing second language acquisition. *Englisia: Journal of Language, Education, and Humanities* 1(2):27.

Knapp, D. 2007. A longitudinal analysis of an out-of-school science experience. *School Science and Mathematics* 107(2):346

Kumar, R. 2005. *Research methodology: A step-by-step guide for beginners.* 2nd edition. London: SAGE publications.

Leedy, P.D. and Ormrod, J.E. 2005. *Practice research: Planning and design.* 8th edition. New York: Merrill Prentice Hall.

Liamputtong, P. 2009. Qualitative data analysis: conceptual and practical considerations. *Health Promotion Journal of Australia* 20(2):133-139.

Limpopo Provincial Government. [Sa]. *Language service.* Department of Sports Arts and Culture

Magwa, W. 2008. *Planning for the future: exploring possibilities of using indigenous languages as language of instruction in education, the Zimbabwe experience.* Pretoria: Unpublished thesis, University of South Africa.

Makalela, L. and McCabe, R.M. 2013. Monolingualism in a historically black South African university: a case of inheritance. *Linguistics and Education* 24(4):406-414.

Makamu, T. A. B. 2009. *Students' attitude towards the use of source languages in the Turfloop Campus, University of Limpopo: a case study.* Master's dissertation, University of Limpopo, Sovenga.

Malatji, M. 2004. *The role of language in science education: a case study at the rand Afrikaans University, Soweto campus.* Rand Afrikaans University.

Manzini, H.N. 1998. *Student nurses drop out.* Unpublished D Litt et Phil. Pretoria: University of South Africa.

Marshall, C., and Rossman, G.B. 2006. *Designing qualitative research.* 4th edition. Thousand Oaks, London and New Delhi: SAGE Publications.

Marungudzi, T. 2009*. English as a language of learning and teaching: perspectives of secondary school teachers in the Masvingo District (Zimbabwe).* Pretoria: Unpublished dissertation, University of South Africa.

Maseko, P. 2009. *Terminology development for the intellectualization of African languages.* PRAESA occasional paper no 38.

Mashiya, N. 2010. Mother tongue teaching at the University of KwaZulu-Natal: Opportunities and threats. *Alternation* 17(1):92-107.

Matthews, B. and Ross, L. 2010. *Research methods: a practical guide for the social sciences.* Harlow: Pearson Education Limited.

Mayor, M. 2009. *Longman dictionary of contemporary English.* Pearson Education India.

Mbaye, A. 2016*. Evaluation of language management by the University of Limpopo.* MA dissertation. University of Limpopo.

McMillan, J.H. and Schumacher, S. 2006. Evidence-based inquiry. *Research in Education* 6(1):26-42.

Ministerial Committee. 2003. *The development of indigenous languages as medium of instruction in higher education.* Pretoria: Government Printers.

Mkandawire, T. 2005. *African intellectuals: rethinking politics, language, gender and development.* London: Zed Books.

Mohajan, H.K. 2017. *Two criteria for good measurements in research: validity and reliability*. (Unpublished Manuscript)

Mouton, J. 2001. *How to succeed in your master's and doctoral studies: a South African guide and resource book.* Pretoria: Van Schaik.

Muscato, C. 2021. *Orthography in linguistics: definition & examples.* Study.com https://study.com/academy/lesson/orthography-in-linguistics-definition-examples.html (Accessed 19 June 2021)

Ndimande-Hlongwa, N., Balfour, R.J., Mkhize, N. and Engelbrecht, C. 2010. Progress and challenges for language policy implementation at the University of KwaZulu-Natal. *Language Learning Journal* 38(3):347-357.

Nekvapil, J. 2007. *From language planning to language management. Sociolinguistica Jahrbuch* 92:104.

Nkwashu, D. 2011. *The use of Xitsonga at the university of Limpopo Turfloop campus: a sociolinguistic analysis.* PhD dissertation. Turfloop: University of Limpopo.

Nunan, D. 1992. *Research methods in language learning.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Phaswana, N.E. 1994. *African language policies at the University of Venda and the medium of instruction question.* Cape Town: University of Cape Town.

Sarantakos, S. 1997. *Social research.* 2nd edition. New York: Palgrave.

Schofield, W. 1996. *Survey sampling: data collection and analysis.*

Sevilla, C. 2007*. Research methods*. Florentino, Quezon City: Rex Printing Company.

Streubert, H., and Carpenter, D. 1999*. Qualitative research in nursing: advancing the humanistic perspective*. 2nd edition. Philadelphia, PA: Lippincott Williams & Wilkins.

Teddlie, C. and Tashakkori, A. 2009. *Foundations of mixed methods research: integrating quantitative and qualitative approaches in the social and behavioral sciences.* California: Sage publications, Inc.

UKZN Extended Learning. 2019. *IsiZulu basic.* From: https://ukznexdendedlearning.com/course/isizulu-basic-open/ (Accessed 03 August 2019)

UNESCO. 2003. *Education in a multilingual world.* Paris: UNESCO.

UNESCO-CEPES. 2000. *The bilingual university-its origins, mission, and functioning.* Report on an invitational seminar, UNESCO-CEPES, Bucharest, Romania, 15-19 March 2000.

University of Limpopo. 2003. *Language policy of the University of Limpopo.* Turfloop: University of Limpopo.

University of Pretoria. 2010. *Language Policy of the University of Pretoria.* Available from http://web.up.ac.za/default.asp.ipkCategory!D=102 (Accessed: 5 April 2020).

University of the Free State. 2003. *Language policy of the University of the Free State.* http://www.uovs.ac.za/about/E-language (Accessed 12 June 2021).

Van der Walt, C. 2004. The challenge of multilingualism: in response to the language policy for higher education. *South African Journal of Higher Education* 18(1): 140-152.

Van Huyssteen, L. 2003. *A practical approach to the standardisation and elaboration of Zulu as a technical language.* Pretoria: Unpublished thesis. University of South Africa.

Walliman, N. 2011. *Your research project: designing and planning your work.* 3rd edition. London: Sage Publications.

Wickham, J.L.P.C. 2019. *Behavioural health: is having sense of belonging important?* https://www.mayoclinichealthsystem.org/hometown-health/speaking-of-health/is-having-a-sense-of-belonging (Accessed 16 July 2021)

Wordoful.com. [Sa]. *Idioms and phrases.* https://www.literacyatwork.net/uploads/8/3/5/9/8359813/idioms_and_meanings.pdf (Accessed 18 June 2021)

Yearlyglot. 2021. *The ten most important things to know in a language.* yearlyglot.com https://www.yearlyglot.com/10-most-important-things-in-any-language/ (Accessed 13 July 2021)

Zikode, N.P. 2017. *An evaluation of the implementation of the language policy for higher education: African languages as medium of instruction at selected South African universities.* Pretoria: University of Pretoria.

APPENDIX A

TITLE: GUIDELINES TOWARDS THE DEVELOPMENT OF A COMPULSORY COURSE IN AFRICAN LANGUAGES FOR FIRST-ENTERING STUDENTS AT THE UNIVERSITY OF LIMPOPO

Consent Form for Interviews: a Qualitative Sub-study

Thank you for reading the information sheet/letter about the interview sub-study. If you are happy to participate, then please complete and sign the form below. Please initial the boxes below to confirm that you agree with each statement:

Please Initial box:

I confirm that I have read and understood the information sheet and have had the opportunity to ask questions.

I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without giving any reason and without there being any negative consequences. In addition, should I not wish to answer any particular question or questions, I am free to decline.

I understand that my responses will be kept strictly confidential. I understand that my name will not be linked with the research materials, and will not be identified or identifiable in the report or reports that result from the research.

I agree for this interview to be tape-recorded. I understand that the audio recording made of this interview will be used only for analysis and that extracts from the interview, from which I would not be personally identified, may be used in any conference presentation, report or journal article developed because of the research. I understand that no other use will be made of the recording without my written permission, and that no one outside the research team will be allowed access to the original recording.

I agree that my anonymised data will be kept for future research purposes such as publications related to this study after the completion of the study.

I agree to take part in this interview.

_____   _____   _____

Name of participant   Date   Signature

_____   _____ _____

Principal Investigator   Date   Signature

Copies: *Once all parties have signed this, the participant should receive a copy of the signed and dated participant consent form, and the information sheet. A copy of the signed and dated consent form should be placed in the main project file, which must be kept in a secure location.*

APPENDIX B

Letter of Informed Consent

Dear Participant

My name is Phuthego Sharon Leboho (student number 201113275). I am Masters Candidate studying at the University of Limpopo. The title of my research is: "Guidelines towards the development of a compulsory course in African languages for first-entering students at the University of Limpopo". It is important to participate in this study because that will assist the researcher to achieve the aim of the study, which is to examine guidelines towards the development of a compulsory course in African languages for first-entering students at the University of Limpopo.

The interview will take a minimum of 15 minutes. The researcher will explain and clarify some of the questions that you do not understand. This is voluntary, and you will not be asked in anywhere during the interview to mention your name. The information that you will give during the interview will remain confidential.

Your participation is thus important! I can be contacted at: School of Languages and Communication Studies, University of Limpopo. Email: 201113275@keyaka.ul.ac.za Cell: 081 53 12345.

My supervisor is Professor S.J. Kubayi who is located at the School of Languages and Communication Studies, University of Limpopo. Contact details: email joe.kubayi@ul.ac.za. Phone number: (015) 268 8449.

APPENDIX C

Interview questions are as follows:

1. The University of Limpopo language policy states that each faculty should identify at least one course that could be offered in either English or Northern Sotho or Tshivenḓa or Xitsonga as of 2009. What does this mean?

2. One of the aims of the University of Limpopo language policy is to uphold the legislative provision of multilingualism. What does multilingualism mean to you in the context of the University of Limpopo?

3. If the University of Limpopo introduces a compulsory course in African languages for first-entering students, what should it look like in terms of content? What should the level of complexity of the course be? What about the vocabulary?

4. How will students from the University of Limpopo benefit from learning an African language?

5. Once the compulsory African language course has been designed at the University of Limpopo, students should be expected to enrol for one of the languages other than their home language. For example, a Sepedi speaker may choose either Xitsonga or Tshivenḓa, a Xitsonga speaker either Sepedi or Tshivenḓa, and so on. What is your recommendation about how the African language course must be facilitated?