

EVALUATION OF LANGUAGE MANAGEMENT BY THE UNIVERSITY OF LIMPOPO

by

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DECLARATION

I declare that the **EVALUATION OF LANGUAGE MANAGEMENT BY THE UNIVERSITY OF LIMPOPO**, submitted to the University of Limpopo, for the degree of **MASTER OF ARTS in TRANSLATION STUDIES AND LINGUISTICS** has not previously been submitted by me for a degree purposes at this or any other university; that it is my own work in design and in execution, and all the materials contained herein has been duly acknowledged.

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Mbaye, A

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12-May-2016

DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to my lovely daughter Maite Morongwa Mbaye. *“In my daughter’s eyes I am a hero. I am strong and wise and I know no fear but the truth is plain to see that she was sent to rescue me. I see who I want to be in my daughter’s eyes.”*
(Unknown)

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ABSTRACT

This study is an evaluation of language management by the University of Limpopo. It is divided into six chapters which are arranged as follows:

Chapter one serves to introduce the study by first giving background to the study and the research problems. The researcher's aims and objectives as well as the research design, method used to collect and analyse data were discussed.

Chapter two deals with literature review that covers the scope of Language Management Theory; the language policy in higher education; the intellectualisation of African languages; the advantages of using African languages in education; the non-implementation of language policies; and the attitudes towards the use of African languages.

Chapter three discusses the methodology used in the research. The methodology used in this research is qualitative and the method used to collect data was questionnaires and interviews. Ten students and ten lecturers answered the research questionnaires and furthermore five language practitioners were also consulted for this study.

Chapter four of this research compiled a sociolinguistic profile of the University of Limpopo. SWOT analysis of languages was also done to determine the strength, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of the official indigenous languages of the University of Limpopo.

Chapter five presents the interpretation of results. The data from students, lecturers, and language practitioners were examined separately. SPSS version 23 was used to analyse the data collected through questionnaires and the graphs are shown in chapter four. Content analysis was used as well to analyse the data collected through interviews. And lastly, the summary of the results was presented.

Chapter six presents the summary of all the chapters included in this research. It also provides the recommendations of the study.

ABBREVIATIONS

BACEMS	Bachelor of Arts in Contemporary English and Multilingual Studies
CALRD	Centre for African Language Research and Development
LOLT	Languages of Learning and Teaching
LPHE	Language Policy for Higher Education
NLPF	National Language Policy Framework
MUST	Multilingual Studies
SPSS	Statistical Package for the Social Sciences
SPSETSA	Statistics on Post-School Education and Training in South Africa
SWOT	Strength, Weakness, Opportunities and Threats
UNISA	University of South Africa
UNIVEN	University of Venda

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CHAPTER ONE: ORIENTATION TO THE STUDY

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The South African education system has been undergoing changes, 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. Some of the universities were able to introduce African languages in their curriculum. This is the case with the University of Cape Town, in the faculty of Health Science. Students are required to learn either Afrikaans or isiXhosa as a compulsory subject to equip them with the linguistic skills and cultural skills considered essential for their professional training and practice of their study (Madiba, 2013:6). Recent developments came from the University of KwaZulu-Natal. As of 2014, the Deputy Vice-Chancellor of the University of KwaZulu-Natal introduced isiZulu as a compulsory module for all undergraduates. These are some of the developments of language policy in higher education in South Africa. This chapter discusses the key concepts, research problems and literature review. Relevant documents that support language policy in higher education are also discussed. The chapter further gives an overview of language planning and policy in South Africa. The purpose of the study is discussed in the form of aim and objectives. The research methodology of the study, its significance, and finally, the conclusion, are also presented.

The Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English (2009: 145) states that evaluation is “a judgment about how good, useful, or successful something is.” In terms of The National Evaluation Policy Framework (2011), evaluation is the systematic collection and objective analysis of evidence on public policies, programmes, projects, functions and organisations to assess issues such as relevance, performance (effectiveness and efficiency), value for money, impact and sustainability, and to recommend ways forward. It can be assumed that evaluation is done on organisations, programmes, projects and public policies in order to monitor their progress or as a way of generating new

knowledge about such an organisation. In evaluating language policy implementation structures, we look at their achievements throughout the years since they were implemented. Evaluation in this research will be used to refer to the assessment and analysis of the language policy of the University of Limpopo.

The concept language management can be broken down into two terms namely, language and management. The Compact Oxford English dictionary (2008) defines language as a whole body of words and methods of combination of words used by a nation, people, or race. Reber (1995:406) views language as what we speak, the set of arbitrary conventional symbols through which we convey meaning, the culturally determined patterns of vocal gestures we acquire by virtue of being raised in a particular place and time, the medium through which we code our feelings, our thoughts, ideas and experiences, and the most ubiquitous behaviour of humans.

The term management is defined as the application of skill, or care in the manipulation, use, treatment, or control of things or people, or in the conduct of an enterprise, operations, etc. (Oxford English Dictionary, 1970:106). Thus, management is a set of activities undertaken to ensure that the goals of an organisation are achieved in an effective and efficient way (Webb, 2002:281). Jernudd (1991) in Bassey (2000:8) defines language management as “a process through which particular people are given the authority to find and suggest systematic and rigorous solutions to problems of language potentially or actually encountered by members of their community.” Similarly, Webb (2002:281) sees language management as the actions and strategies devised to achieve language policy objectives. De Gruyter (2011:52) adds that language management, planning engineering, cultivation and treatment are actions taken by formal authorities such as the government or other agencies or people such as parents, teachers, or academics who believe that they have the authority to modify the language choices made by those they claim to have under their control.

Language management itself has three components: the development of explicit language plans and policies, their implementation and the evaluation of results and effects. This research focuses on the third component of language management, which

is the evaluation of language policy implementation structures established to oversee the implementation of the language policy at the University of Limpopo. In this research, language management will be used to refer to the development of corpus of a language. That is, measures taken to select, codify, and elaborate the orthographic, grammatical, lexical, or semantic features of a language at the University of Limpopo. It should be noted that language management includes the development of new scripts, reforming spelling in a language and coining new terms. Language management, in the context of the University of Limpopo, will also be used to refer to the development, monitoring, and promotion of the official languages, mainly Sesotho sa Leboa, Xitsonga, isiNdebele and Tshivenda in terms of the implementation of the language policy of the university. The University of Limpopo is a public institution for higher education. Situated in Limpopo Province, it is one of the 23 universities in South Africa (SouthAfrica.info).

1.2 RESEARCH PROBLEMS

The University of Limpopo uses English as the general medium of instruction. African languages are only used for African language courses and some modules in the Bachelor of Arts in Contemporary English and Multilingual Studies (BA CEMS) degree, therefore ignoring a call made by the Department of Higher Education to use African indigenous languages in education for general courses other than African language modules.

The institution does not implement the language policy that it has formulated. The University of Limpopo Language Policy (2013) makes recommendations that the university should establish a Centre for African Language Research and Development (Section 5.4). The centre would help in developing scholars, researchers and language practitioners in African languages, and arts and culture of the region (UNIVEN, 2009).

The University of Limpopo seems not to comply with official acts and regulations of the Department of Higher Education regarding the use of African languages at higher institutions of learning. The Language Policy disseminated in 2002 calls for the

simultaneous development of a multilingual environment in which all our languages are developed as academic and /or scientific languages.

There is no evidence of compliance with the Use of Official Languages Act (Act 12 of 2012) at the institution. The act requires every national department, national public entity, and national public enterprise to establish a language unit (Section 7). The university has not yet established a language unit.

1.3 LITERATURE REVIEW

1.3.1 The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (ACT 108 OF 1996)

The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (1996) was approved by the Constitutional Court on 4 December 1996 and took effect on 4 February 1997 (Bhaktawar, 2012:287). The Constitution protects all the linguistic rights of the citizens. Rissik (2011:45) states that the Constitution is the supreme law of the land and that no other law or government action can supersede its provisions. It is therefore important to quote the Constitution when discussing the issue of languages in South Africa.

The Constitution gives the national and provincial governments the responsibility to regulate and monitor the use of official languages, and urges that all official languages must enjoy parity of esteem and must be treated equitably. Mesthrie (2002) stresses that it is important to emphasise that regardless of the nature of recent political changes in South Africa, it is virtually assured that the linguistic diversity will remain a feature of social life for generations to come, and that bilingualism and multilingualism will remain commonplace for many, perhaps even most South Africans well into the next century.

(a) Language as a human right

Section 9 (3) of the Constitution makes it illegal to discriminate anyone based on their race, gender, marital status, ethnic or social origin, colour, sexual orientation, age, disability, religion, conscience, belief, culture, language, and birth. Language right can serve in all spheres of social life to bring people together or to divide them. Language

rights can serve to unite societies, whereas violations of language rights can trigger and inflame conflict (Kontra, 1999:1). Language, when used positively, can bring people together, and when used negatively, it can divide them. In the apartheid era, the people of South Africa were divided because language was used negatively. Language rights give the citizens of the country the opportunity to participate actively in governmental programmes.

(b) Linguistic rights in education

Section 29(2) states that everyone has the right to receive education in the official language or languages of their choice in public educational institutions where that education is reasonably practicable. In as much as the promotion of multilingualism is embedded in the Constitution, it is nonetheless disappointing to find that there is also an escape clause in that Act. Section 29(2)(b) can be seen as an escape clause in that schools, colleges and universities can claim that it is not generally practicable to provide education in African languages owing to their underdevelopment, among other reasons.

Teaching in mother tongue improves the quality of education that the students receive, and at the same time preserves the language used. Students have a better chance of understanding the issues at hand as compared to when they are taught in a foreign language. Even if the Constitution urges citizens to use their languages in education, the challenge is the attitudes of the speakers of these languages.

(c) Cultural rights

Sections 30 and 31 (1) of the Constitution raise the issue of culture and language. Section 30 says that everyone has the right to use the language and to participate in the cultural life of their choice, but no one exercising these rights may do so in a manner inconsistent with any provision of the Bill of Rights. In addition, Section 31 states that persons belonging to a cultural, religious, or linguistic community may not be denied the right, with other members of that community, to enjoy their culture, practise their religion and use their language to form, join and maintain cultural, religious, and linguistic associations and other organs of civil society. Prah (2007:3) holds the view that it is in a

language that culture is transmitted, interpreted and configured. One can never underestimate the power of language as it is the vehicle used to transport norms, rules, cultures and rituals from generation to generation.

(d) Linguistic rights of the accused

Section 35(3) of the Constitution (1996) accommodates arrested, detained and accused persons. This section states that every accused person has a right to a fair trial, which includes the right to be tried in a language that the accused person understands, or if that is not practicable, to have the proceedings interpreted in that language.

1.3.2 The National Language Policy Framework (2003) of South Africa (NLPF)

The South African Language Policy Framework (2003) came as a replacement of previous policies that contributed to the promotion and development of English and Afrikaans as the sole official languages of South Africa. This document suggests ways in which the languages of South Africa can be used to promote national unity. It also encourages the citizens of South Africa to accept all languages of the country and to increase their use in all spheres of the government. The National Language Policy Framework is the major document and binds all government structures to a “multilingual mode of operation” (Mesthrie, 2006:153).

With respect to the promotion of multilingualism, all provinces, public entities and enterprises in South Africa are urged to formulate their own policies in line with the guidelines contained in the Policy Framework, taking into account their regional circumstances, and the needs and preferences of communities, as stated in the Constitution. The government is urged to encourage, and where necessary, support private enterprises to develop and implement their own language policies in accordance with the National Language Policy Framework.

The NLPF requires the state to use 11 languages when communicating with the public. However, where it seems impossible to do so, the policy makes a provision for the national government departments to publish documents simultaneously in at least six languages. A principle of rotation should be applied to the Nguni cluster and the Sotho cluster.

1.3.3 Language-in- Education Policy (1997)

The Language-in-Education Policy (1997) aims to facilitate communication across the barriers of colour, language and religion, while at the same time creating an environment in which respect for languages other than one's own would be encouraged. Section 29 of the Constitution of Republic of South Africa (1996) acknowledges the right of all learners in South Africa to receive education in the official languages of their choice in public educational institutions where it is reasonably practicable. De Wet (2002:119) postulates that in accordance with the Constitution and the Schools Act, the Department of Education's Language-in-Education Policy aims to promote multilingualism and the development of the official languages, and to pursue the language policy most supportive of general conceptual growth amongst learners. Home language is seen as the most appropriate language that can be used as a medium of instruction, particularly in the first years of schooling. Section 6 of the Language-in-Education Policy (1997) states that the right to choose the language of learning and teaching is vested in the individual.

(a) Languages as subjects

The policy makes it compulsory for the learners to be offered one approved language as a subject in Grade 1 and Grade 2. As from Grade 3 onwards, all learners are offered their language of learning and teaching, and at least one additional approved language as subjects. These language subjects are to be given equitable time and resources. Learners are expected to at least pass one language as of Grade 5 so as to move to the next level. From Grade 10 to Grade 12, the learners are expected to pass two languages, first language, and second language and of these languages, one must be an official language. These languages are also compulsory to qualify for university entrance.

(b) Language of learning and teaching

The learner must choose the language of teaching upon application for admission to a particular school. However, this applies to a school where the language of learning and

teaching chosen by the learner is exercised. This right to choose the language of learning and teaching is not readily offered in schools. Made (2010:157) argues that some school governing bodies refuse to comply with all the provisions of the Language in Education Policy, and use explanations as varied as school culture, corporate vision, capacity and resources availability as excuses for their actions. Since these learners are only minors, their parents are the ones responsible for choosing the languages of learning and teaching for them. Kamwangamalu (2001) argues that black communities will not accept education in the medium of an African language, and will trade in their own language for English unless they are convinced that the outcomes of education in the medium of an African language will be as rewarding as those of English or Afrikaans-medium education.

1.3.4 Language Policy for Higher Education (2002)

Language Policy for Higher Education (2002) was produced by the Department of Higher Education in South Africa to deal with languages in higher institutions of learning. Vila and Bretxa (2014:135) assert that the governance of higher education in South Africa is executed in terms of the Higher Education Act, 101 of 1997. The Language Policy for Higher Education (LPHE) was developed according to this act. Section 27(2) of the Higher Education Act requires that subject to the policy determined by the minister, the council, with the concurrence of the senate, must determine the language policy of a public higher education institution, and must publish and make it available on request.

LPHE should be perceived as an effort by the South African government to recognise multilingualism. Multilingualism is also reflected in higher education. The student population in higher education is also linguistically diverse. This policy, however, comes with its own challenges. Kaschula (2013:4) argues that one of the main challenges in the development of African languages in higher education is at policy level. An excellent language policy which provides for the development of African languages and the promotion of multilingualism in the education sector exists. The policy, however, often lacks a plan of implementation as well as directives on who should lead or drive its implementation, that is, at both national and institutional levels.

With much dedication from those responsible for the implementation of educational language policies, African languages can be developed to the status of English and Afrikaans. In summary, the LPHE (2002), according to Nodoba (2010:52), outlines how the following are to be dealt with within the higher education context:

(a) Languages of instruction;

(b) The future of South African languages as fields of academic study and research;

(c) The study of foreign languages; and

(d) The promotion of multilingualism in policies and practices of institutions of higher education.

1.3.5 The language policy for the University of Limpopo (2013)

The Language Policy for the University of Limpopo (2013) is premised on the guidelines provided by the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (1996), the National Language Policy Framework (2003), the Department of Education's Language Policy for Higher Education (2002), the Ministerial Committee's Report to the Minister of Education on the Development of Indigenous African Languages as Medium of Instruction in Higher Education (2005), and the conference on Language Policy and Implementation in Higher Education Institutions (2006).

The Language Policy for the University of Limpopo stresses the importance of the development of multilingual awareness. Being home to a several number of African indigenous languages, the University of Limpopo is affected by the surrounding languages of the province which are Sesotho sa Leboa, Xitsonga, Tshivenda, isiNdebele, English and Afrikaans. SiSwati, though not an official language in the province, is present at the University of Limpopo as the institution caters for students from all over South Africa and internationally.

The policy proposes that the university should adopt English, Sesotho sa Leboa, Xitsonga and Tshivenda as languages of teaching and learning, research and publications. For this reason, these languages are the official languages of the

university. As suggested by the policy that African languages be media of instruction for African language modules, the university uses African languages as media of instruction in African language modules and other modules offered in the BA CEMS degree.

1.3.6 Language planning and language policy in South Africa

(a) Language planning

Language planning consists of three types of activities, namely, status planning, corpus planning, and acquisition planning (Reagan, 2002:420). In the South African context, examples of status planning includes the selection of official languages and the use of various languages in official and semi-official settings, for example, as media of instruction in schools, in law courts and by the public broadcaster (Made 2010). Status planning, according to Crystal (1997:95), deals with the standing of one language in relation to others. In addition, Cooper (1989:99) says that status planning refers to deliberate efforts to influence the allocation of functions among a community's languages. In status planning, a particular language or a variety may be chosen for specific purposes and be given an official status.

Webb and Kembo-Sure (2000) define corpus planning as the determination of standards and norms for a language, as well as the introduction of new words and technical terms. Corpus planning, however, focuses on the changes by deliberate planning to the actual corpus or shape of a language. In addition, Cobarrubie and Fishman (1983: 13) hold that corpus planning focuses on the development of the body or form of a language, and that provisions concerning scientific and technological terminology relates to the corpus of a language. Cooper (1989) states that acquisition planning is useful for two reasons:

- (a) Considerable planning is directed towards the language spread, that is, an increase in the user or the uses of a language or language variety; and
- (b) Changes in the function and form sought by status and corpus planning effect, and are affected by the number of language users. New users may be attracted by new uses to which a language is put.

(b) Language policy

Language policies in African countries are characterized by one of the following problems: avoidance, vagueness, arbitrariness, fluctuation, and declaration without implementation (Bamgbose, 1999). These characteristics are also found in South African institutions of higher learning. The University of Limpopo will be assessed on one of the problems, namely, declaration without implementation. This, according to Bamgbose (1991), takes one of the three forms. Firstly, a policy may be declared, which, in the circumstances, cannot be implemented, and policy makers are aware of this. For instance, when a country declares that the pre-primary education shall be in the mother tongue, and there are no pre-primary schools in the country, clearly the policy is only for propaganda purposes. Secondly, the policy may be declared but with some escape clauses built into it. This effectively gives an alibi for its non-implementation. Thirdly, a policy may be declared but procedures may be left unspecified with the result that it is a good plan only on paper. In addition to the escape clauses, the policy does not provide any mechanism for its implementation. The University of Limpopo has a language policy that states what they are going to do as an institution to promote multilingualism. However, the policy is not being implemented.

1.4 PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

1.4.1 Aim of the study

The aim of this study is to evaluate language management by the University of Limpopo.

1.4.2 Objectives

The objectives of this study are:

- To compile a sociolinguistic profile of the University of Limpopo.
- To evaluate the language policy of the institution.
- To assess the University's compliance with language acts of the Republic of South Africa.

1.5 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

1.5.1 Research design

According to Creswell (2009:3), research designs are plans and procedures for research that span the decisions from broad assumptions to detailed methods of data collection and analysis. The overall decisions involve which design should be the worldview assumptions that the researcher brings to the study; procedures of inquiry (called strategies); and specific methods of data collection, analysis, and interpretation. For this study the exploratory research design will be utilised. Exploratory research is conducted to gain new insights, discover new ideas, and for increasing knowledge of the phenomenon (Burns and Groove, 2003:374). Van Wyk (2012:8) postulates that the main aim of exploratory research is to identify the boundaries of the environment in which the problems, opportunities or situation of interest are likely to reside and to identify the salient factors or variables that might be found there and be of relevance to the research.

1.5.2 Sampling

Sampling, according to Sevilla (2007:182), refers to strategies which enable you to pick a subgroup from a larger group and then use this subgroup as a basis for making judgments about the larger group. In addition to the definitions of sampling, Brynard et al. (2014) define sampling as a technique employed to select a small group (the sample) with a view to determining the characteristics of a larger group (the population). Population is defined by Sevilla (2007) as all members of any well-defined class of people, events or objects. The population at the University of Limpopo consists of students, lecturers, administrators, top management, and the employees (care takers).

This research, however, pays close attention to students and lecturers because the language policy affects them since they interact on a daily basis. In this research non-probability sample will be used. Babbie (2015:186) defines non-probability sampling as any technique in which samples are selected in some way not suggested by probability theory. The types of non-probability sampling include convenience sampling, quota sampling, volunteer sampling, and purposive sampling (Curtis and Drennan, 2013:345).

This research will use volunteer sample. Volunteer sample is explained by Du Plooy (2002:115) as consisting of people such as students, readers or television viewers who volunteer to participate in a study. In volunteer sample studies, the individuals are recruited from a population (e.g. students at your school). The advantages of non-probability samples are that they are quicker, cost effective and convenient than probability samples. Furthermore, non-probability samples do not require a sampling frame, and the sample size and quota requirements are usually achieved (Koul, 2009:208). The sample population will be as follows:

- 10 volunteer students
- 10 volunteer lecturers
- 5 language practitioners (lecturers)

1.5.3 Data collection

According to Myers (2009), qualitative data sources include participant observation (fieldwork), interviews, questionnaires, documents and texts, and the researcher's impressions and reactions. The researcher in this study will use semi-structured interviews and self-administered questionnaires as methods of data collection. Interviews are a systematic way of talking and listening to people. They are also another way of collecting data from individuals through conversations with them. Kvale (1996: 14) views interviews as the interchange of views between two or more people on a topic of mutual interest. Interviews focus on the centrality of human interaction for knowledge production, and emphasize the social situatedness of research data. They allow for open questions and new ideas to be brought up during the interview following the interviewee's response. Semi-structured interviews are used to gather qualitative data by setting up an interview that allows the respondent time and space to talk about their opinions on a specific subject. Morgan (2013) says that the strength of open-ended interviews in inductive research is the ability to pursue topics that emerge during the course of the conversation. Through this method, the researcher hopes to achieve the goal of gathering relevant data and extra information that the participant brings forth.

The second method of data collection is questionnaires. The researcher will use a questionnaire that has both open-ended and closed-ended questions. Best and Kahn (1993) in Makamu (2009:6) are of the view that questionnaires are data gathering instruments that enable the respondents to answer questions in writing. The questionnaires will be handed out to volunteer students all around the campus.

1.5.4 Data analysis

Bless and Higson-smith and Kagee (1988:163) state that data analysis is conducted to enable the researcher to detect consistent patterns within the data such as the consistent co-variance of two or more variables. Data from the questionnaires will be analysed through the SPSS data analysis method. SPSS, according to Kurt (2014:131), is a window-based program that can be used to perform data entry and analysis, and to create tables and graphs. Data collected from interviews will be analysed through the content analysis method. Content analysis enables the analysis of the contents of documentary materials such as books, magazines, newspapers, and the contents of all other verbal or printed materials (Kothari, 2004:110). Data collected through interviews will be recorded and then analysed.

1.5.5 Credibility

Credibility refers to whether the participant's perceptions of the setting or events match that of the researcher's portrayal of them in the research report (Mangal and Mangal, 2013:169). The researcher has to accurately represent the participants' feelings, thoughts and the processes that influence their actions, feelings, and thoughts. To establish credibility in this research, the following two measures will be taken into consideration:

(a) Prolonged engagement

Prolonged engagement is referred to as spending time in the field to learn or understand the culture, social setting, or phenomenon of interest (Armstrong-Vogel, 2008:70). The data will be collected at the University of Limpopo. As a student at the institution, the researcher is familiar with the setting. The researcher will spend two

weeks with the participants to develop a trusting relationship with them during the interviews.

(b) Persistent observation

Persistent observation refers to identifying those characteristics and elements in the situation that are most relevant to the problem or issue (Roller and Lavrakas, 2015:217). The researcher is aware that some participants may not be aware of the topic, therefore the participants will be briefed about it so that they understand it. This will enable them to make informed decisions.

1.6 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The university management will be assisted in their difficulties to implement the language policy. Language policy is important at the University of Limpopo. Its implementation will not only mean that the university becomes multilingual. It will also ensure that the official languages of the university will be developed to be used in education, business and in government communication, both provincially and nationally. The study will help future language planning students to draft a language policy that is both functional and applicable. The government will also find the study helpful; they will know in which areas to allocate their budget to promote multilingualism in all spheres of government, especially in education for better communication with the public.

1.7 CONCLUSION

This chapter discussed the introduction and key concepts of the research, the research problems, literature review, purpose of the study, research methodology, and the significance of the study.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides an overview of the literature which deals with Language Management Theory; language policy in higher education; the intellectualisation of African languages; advantages of using African languages in education; the non-implementation of language policies; and the attitudes towards the use of African languages. As the aim of this research is to evaluate language management by the University of Limpopo, it is relevant to visit the literature that addresses language management in universities.

2.2 LANGUAGE MANAGEMENT THEORY

The Language Management Theory was formulated by J.V. Neustupny and B.H Jernudd in the 1970s (Nekvapil, 2007). Language Management Theory is a concept based on the idea that it is necessary to differentiate between two processes (and thus two set of rules) in language use, and these are: (a) the process which enables the generation of utterances or communicative acts, and (b) the process whose object is the utterances or communicative acts themselves, whether they have already been generated, are currently being generated, or are anticipated. 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 from systematic linguistic principles. The present research does not put focus on the generation of utterances but as how the University of Limpopo uses its official languages as per stated in their language policy for academic purposes and the empowering of such languages.

Language management, according to Gundersen (2009:4), is determined by three major factors: 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 into 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 actions to make sure that these languages are used for its benefits.

Language management is crucial to the development and promotion of South African official languages at universities.

2.2.1 Language management in universities

Webb (2002) is of the view that language management derives from management, which refers to a set of activities undertaken to ensure that the goals and strategies of an organisation are achieved in an effective and efficient way. Language management is important at universities because they are presented with a variety of people who are culturally diverse and hence use different languages. The multiplicity of languages at the University of Limpopo implies a need for language choice. Language management can be a way of creating balance between competing languages at the university.

Spolsky and Hult (2010) are of the view that in most communities, language policy development and management through educational sectors are considered to play a significant role in helping to maintain national unity; to foster economic development; to provide citizens with access to social services; and as a mechanism to minimise internal

conflicts between social, political, and ethnic groups. The language management approach is relevant for pointing out spaces for implementing a bilingual education.

Jernudd (2002) points out seven spaces of implementing a bilingual education in a university context. These are identified as:

- (1) teaching acts between students and teacher;
- (2) study acts by students;
- (3) administrative acts between students and members of faculties and administrator representatives of university departments and administrative offices;
- (4) research acts;
- (5) writing and other presentation acts;
- (6) service acts performed by members of faculties in communication with different audiences; and
- (7) governance acts between representatives of the university and those of government offices and the public.

(a) Use of languages in universities

Universities use languages for five types of activities (Grin, 2010:8):

- (1) Languages are taught as subjects;
- (2) The language or languages of instruction are used in the teaching of other, non-linguistic subjects;
- (3) The languages are used by academic staff in research, mainly (in) research activities proper, including project drafting and submission, interaction within and between research teams, and publication of scientific work in specialist journals and

books or in formats destined to the general public (including in both cases on-line publications of materials);

(4) The languages used by university in its administrative operations; and

(5) the language used by university in external communication (e.g. for recruitment purposes, public relations or abroad etc.).

Any university that formulates a language policy has to specify how the respective languages will be applied in relation to the five activities mentioned above. In assessing the language management by the University of Limpopo, the above mentioned activities will be the pillars of discussion.

2.2.2 Language management in schools

Ndlovu (2013) is of the view that language management in education refers to specific acts or language interventions that seek to modify, confirm, impose, influence and/or manipulate language practice and behaviour of learners within the school domain. The Language-in-Education Policy provides guidelines on how the primary and secondary schools in South Africa can manage the languages in their domains.

The school domain uses a number of tools of language management, namely, the policy process perspective; the choice of the language of instruction; the teaching of core or compulsory, optional or additional subjects; foreign languages, testing and punishment; entry requirements; training; and deployment and employment of teachers (Ndlovu, 2013:112). These tools cannot be all applied to language management at universities as these institutions differ from primary and secondary schools. Language management is thus a collection of tools for dealing with language issues in institutions. Tools like punishment are not used in the university context.

2.3 LANGUAGE POLICY IN HIGHER EDUCATION (LPHE)

According to Madiba (2004), transformation in South African higher education is required in the sense that the legacy of apartheid reflected in the underdevelopment of African languages must be eliminated. The apartheid legacy has to stop. The multilingual nature of South African campuses is acknowledged and validated by the LPHE, which requires all higher education institutions to advance the use of African languages. This is in line with the Constitution as Van Der Walt (2004) writes: “in line with its (*Constitution*) founding provisions of non-racialism, non-sexism, human dignity and equity, it (*Constitution*) not only accords equal status to all our languages, but recognises that given the marginalisation of indigenous languages in the past, the state “must take practical and positive measures to elevate the status and advance the use of these languages”.

The LPHE seeks to redress the imbalance and injustice of the past, whilst mapping the way forward for the promotion and development of indigenous languages. The promotion of multilingualism in higher education is also aimed at creating an environment in which all languages work together for the benefit of the student community. Makalela and McCabe (2013) are of the view that a multilingual university encompasses all situations where administration, teaching and/ (or) research are, to some extent, conducted in more than one language at the institution.

Mutasa (2015) gives a brief overview of language policies of some South African universities:

- UNISA adopted functional multilingualism, that is, the choice of a particular language in a particular situation on the basis of the context in which it is used, the function for which it is used, the audience at which it is aimed, and the message that it is intended to get across.
- At the University of the Western Cape, the language policy requires that in terms of teaching, that is, setting tasks, assignments, tests and examinations, three languages, English, Afrikaans, and isiXhosa should be used where it is practicable to do so. Furthermore, for academic and professional discourse,

English takes precedence because all students will have access to entry level courses aimed at strengthening their English (oral and aural) communication skills and improving their academic literacy in English.

- The University of the Witwatersrand acknowledges the use of African languages as languages of learning and teaching. It however rejects the use of dual-medium instruction where some subjects would be taught through the medium of Sesotho and some through the medium of English. Furthermore, the institution also rejects the use of parallel-medium instruction where lectures would be repeated in each language, as this would be costly and also likely to divide students on the basis of language.
- The University of the Free State acknowledges its multilingual and multicultural nature, and is therefore, committed to promoting multilingualism sought within the context of the two main languages, Afrikaans and English, including the phasing in of Sesotho. The institution does not implement mother-tongue education based on the inclusion of indigenous African languages of South Africa.
- At the University of Pretoria, English and Afrikaans are adopted, used and developed as the languages of teaching and official business of the university. Education through other languages is seemingly not in the best interest of the university. The university focuses on academic excellence and rigour, achieved through established and developed languages that have stood the test of time, and those languages are English and Afrikaans.
- The University of KwaZulu-Natal's language policy adheres to the stipulations enshrined in the Constitution of South Africa. The university is said to be committed to the promotion and use of isiZulu, the dominant indigenous African language of the region, as a medium of instruction and administration. Nonetheless, English continues to be the primary academic language.
- The University of Stellenbosch language policy makes use of English for communication and access to information and knowledge because of its international status and function, and because of the sizeable number of English

speakers in the Institution. The policy makes provision for isiXhosa as one of the official languages spoken in the region, and hence, commits itself to the development of isiXhosa as an academic language.

- At the University of North West, English and Afrikaans are used as the primary languages of tuition. Other languages are used at different campuses as a way of enhancing and facilitating access to higher education through the provision of interpreting services.
- The language policy of Rhodes University acknowledges English as its primary language of teaching and learning. The university commits itself to multilingualism and sensitivity to language use and choice, and recognises the academic viability and status of three official languages, namely, Afrikaans, English and isiXhosa. Furthermore, the university undertakes to promote and teach the South African Sign Language.
- The language policy of the University of Cape Town acknowledges English as the primary language of learning, teaching and examination, except in the departments of languages and literature where a language being taught is also used as the medium of instruction.
- The language policy of Tshwane University of Technology adopted English as its primary language of learning and teaching, communication and documentation.

One language (English) is common in all the policies discussed above. In some universities, multilingualism is used as a condition for entry into programmes or admission to the institution, whereas in others, it is used vocationally, that is, as a product or outcome expected at the end of university education.

Makalela and McCabe's (2013) research showed that the University of Limpopo has two clear majority African languages: Sepedi and Xitsonga. Furthermore, these scholars argue that multilingualism is an available resource that the University of Limpopo has not utilized to increase multiple competencies inherent in the discourse of local African languages.

Of all the universities that were reviewed, one can deduce that English is the preferred primary language for medium of instruction, and Afrikaans takes second place. The African languages in these institutions are used partially, and there is not a single university that uses African language as the main medium of instruction for all the general courses.

2.4 THE INTELLECTUALISATION OF AFRICAN LANGUAGES

Madiba and Finlayson (2002:40) in Kaschula and Maseko (2014:11) assert that intellectualisation is a planned process of accelerating the growth and development of indigenous languages to enhance their effective interface with modern developments, theories and concepts. A language is said to be modernized and intellectualised if the particular language being developed is used in educational instructions in any discipline from kindergarten to tertiary level (Sin-wai, 2004:65).

The intellectualisation of African languages will lead to a democratisation of access to scientific knowledge and technology to the benefit of the masses of the rural population who now wallow in ignorance, misery, disease and hunger because such life-saving knowledge and skills are confined to a foreign language accessible only to a privileged few (Mkandawire, 2005:173). South Africa and the rest of Africa are faced with the dilemma of illiteracy. It is important that African languages be empowered to deliver access to the less educated and underprivileged.

Ouane and Glanz (2010:22) point out that African languages are treasures yet to be fully discovered, valued and used. They argue that a universal principle of language development is that language develops in use. If a language is not used, it will die with the last of its speaker. Every language can be used for any purpose. African languages can be used as languages of education throughout to the end of tertiary education. Addulaziz (2000) is of the view that scholars in the linguistic of African languages have a great task in securing and preserving the linguistic heritage of Africa.

It is relevant to intellectualise African languages at tertiary levels so that teachers who understand the notion of mother tongue and mother tongue based bilingual education can be fed into the Basic Education Department (Kaschula and Maseko 2014:11). This is for the production of teachers who can teach in more than one language; teachers who understand multilingualism and see multilingualism as a resource rather than as a problem. This is the way of ensuring that Afrikaans and especially English do not become the sole languages of power in South Africa.

Kaschula and Maseko (2014) add that African languages should be intellectualised in order to function in government administration, science, technology, medicine, engineering, and other spheres of life. There is a need to reduce the use of European languages as languages of education, technology and modernisation. It is essential to develop languages that could be used as a means of communication and knowledge in all spheres of modern life. These include the languages that are now functioning very well as national or official languages at the national and regional levels. Nevertheless, so much can be written down in books but if action is not taken, their efforts will just remain good recommendations stored in the library shelves.

2.5 ADVANTAGES OF USING AFRICAN LANGUAGES IN EDUCATION

Maseko (2009) holds the view that there are a number of advantages of using African languages as primary languages in tertiary education. During tertiary education, the young learners will strive to fit the new concepts within their conceptual and intellectual framework and experience in order to comprehend and internalise the information. Where a foreign language is used, the students will lack the supportive tool for proper comprehension, deepening their grasps 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 in which the course material is in. 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 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 the primary education are relevant, and pave the way to better development of adult education, since more people will be able to read and write in their own languages. Barba (1995) in Malatji (2004:17) holds the view that the native language in education is essential in that it helps students to:

- (1) build self-esteem;
- (2) improve students' attitudes towards schooling;
- (3) facilitate content area acquisition of declarative knowledge; and
- (4) aid in mainstream English language development.

Using African languages in education is not only for the benefit of the students, but also to 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 a 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.

2.6 THE NON-IMPLEMENTATION OF LANGUAGE POLICIES

Theoretically, in South Africa, students have a right to choose the medium of instruction. However, practically, the medium of instruction is not only chosen for them, but is also not always the language that the students either know well or understand. Minister of Higher Education, Nzimande (2012) was quoted as saying the following:

I am aware that universities are at different levels of promoting multilingualism within their operations. There are universities that have developed language policies with multilingualism cited as an important element or drive in their policies. However, I am also aware that to some universities multilingualism and the promotion of African languages remain mere policy expressions that have no articulation in reality.

These universities have produced what scholars refer to as excellent language policy on paper. “To these universities the concept of multilingualism is often invoked as evidence of compliance with policy and constitutional imperatives, there is very little on the ground to show that the institution is indeed committed to develop indigenous African languages” (Nzimande, 2012).

The minister, however, goes further to contradict himself when he says that “English is an international language utilised in higher education across the globe, and it is practicable for South African institutions to utilise this language as a main language of teaching and learning”. This does not encourage the universities to implement multilingual language policies. If these language policies were to be implemented in reality, South Africa will truly be a rainbow nation where all the South African languages, native and sundry, are celebrated in education systems and given equal status. In the meantime, it is worth noting that the non-implementation of university language policies, which are present and transformational to some extent, seems to be a norm in South Africa.

Hibbert and van der Walt (2014:42) argue that in South Africa there is no monitoring of the compliance with the provision of language policies (at both national and institutional levels). This is true in that universities formulate language policies that are submitted to the Department of Higher Education but with no actual implementation of such policies. They point out further that the policy could possibly be sufficient but lacks the strategies and other means to monitor compliance to its provision. The National Language Policy Framework, Language-in-Education Policy, Language Policy for Higher Education and the provincial language policies have slim chances of being implemented because there is no one monitoring the implementation of these policies. Kaschula (2013:3) is of the view that universities, and specifically curricula, should no longer be defined by imperialist and colonialist ideology, but by African values and philosophies, underpinned by African languages and Indigenous Knowledge Systems (IKS). Provincial language policies also take direction from the Constitution, most with three official languages. It is with these provincial language policies that South Africa’s language policy can become

a reality, and universities should take their cue from these policies. However, not all universities actually have a language policy and implementation plan in place.

2.6.1 Reasons for non-implementation of language policies

Mwaniki (2004:16) categorises the reason for the non-implementation of language policies into political, economic and sociolinguistic explanations. Lack of political will and support on the part of the new South African government has been cited as one of the reasons for the non-implementation of the multilingual policy and plan as envisioned in the Constitution. Kaschula (2013) adds that language policies in Africa are characterised by lack of political will to drive the process, and thus 'much lip service has been paid to the implementation processes', to little effect.

Economic explanations have also been advanced to explain the non-implementation of South Africa's language policy and plan as envisioned in the Constitution. The domination of western free-market is such that it influences the economies of the third world countries. The western economy is also very often accompanied by linguistic racism (linguicism), which places high status on English, for example, and low status on other languages. According to Kamwangamalu (2001), two economic variables that contribute to the non-implementation of South Africa's language policy and plan include financial constraints and market forces. As far as market forces are concerned, there is no sustained demand for multilingual skills in the African languages for academic, economic, administrative and employment purposes. In South Africa at the moment there is no demand for multilingual skills in the African languages. The demand for these languages would therefore contribute towards raising their status and change the way in which they are perceived by the different communities.

Sociolinguistic explanations relate to language attitudes and language development. South African universities face challenges of being given the task of developing specific languages such as isiZulu, isiXhosa, Sesotho or Setswana. Over a period of 10 to 15 years, a step by step development and implementation plan should be formulated. Such plan will be clear enough to enable African languages to be able to be used as

languages of tuition in specific disciplines (Alexander, 2003:39). These universities are supposed to establish a language centre, where African languages of their choice will be developed for use in academia. For instance, the Language Policy for the University of Limpopo (2013) makes a mention of Centre for African Language Research and Development. Up to date, this centre has not yet been established. A language policy exists but with no implementation plan.

Kaschula (2013) states that in 2003, the then Department of Education provided for this imperative through a broad approved policy, the aim of which being to develop indigenous languages as languages of learning and teaching (LoLT) in higher education. South African universities need to operate in reflecting and implementing their own language policies.

2.7 ATTITUDES TOWARDS THE USE OF AFRICAN LANGUAGES

The negative attitudes of African language speakers towards their own languages also create a challenge for the development of African languages. Dalvit and de Klerk (2009) are of the view that students in other universities fear that introducing African languages in education would create tension with speakers of other languages. South Africa was divided in the past through language, and students feel that choosing one African language as a medium of instruction will cause tension for other African indigenous language speakers whose languages were not chosen to be media of instruction. Students at Fort Hare expressed fear that using their mother tongue as language of learning and teaching would entail lower levels of English proficiency.

The students were aware of the fact that English was dominant in education in South Africa, and believed that the English medium schooling was of a better quality. These students even suggested that English be the medium of instruction even at the pre-school and lower primary, sacrificing one's mother tongue for English. Dalvit and de Klerk (2009:11) identify three commonly-held (mis)conceptions about the use of African languages:

- (1) The sooner Xhosa children start using English as LOLT in school, the better;
- (2) Mother-tongue instruction impedes the development of English proficiency; and
- (3) Knowledge acquired in one language cannot be transferred to another.

Another scholar whose research shows that African language speakers have little faith in their native languages is Makamu. Makamu (2009) conducted research at the University of Limpopo. His research documents the attitudes of Xitsonga speaking students towards the use of their source language on campus. He discovers that the students are comfortable with being taught in English. He also points out that these students have a negative attitude towards the use of their source language, hence most of these students prefer using English rather than their source language. Clearly, when there is low demand of African languages in education by the student population, chances of implementing language policies that favours multilingualism are low.

Another scholar who conducted research at the University of Limpopo is Nkwashu (2011), who documents the use of Xitsonga at the University of Limpopo (Turfloop Campus). Her 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 despite the fact that they are (native) Tsonga (speakers). She reports that the speakers of Xitsonga do not support the idea that Xitsonga must be used as the medium of instruction, instead of English, at university level. 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.

Nkuna (2010) conducted research to find out about the use of indigenous languages in South African higher education system. His findings show that there are no lecturers at any of the universities qualified to teach in more than two languages. This poses yet another challenge if African languages are to be the medium of instruction in higher education. The unavailability of lecturers who can teach in indigenous languages put African languages at risk of not being developed for tuition. Nkuna adds that this paints

a negative image of uncommitted universities on delivering on the status and use of indigenous languages for the higher education (Nkuna, 2010:252). 17 of the 23 universities that participated in Nkuna's research show that English is used to teach an indigenous language. Using a foreign language to teach an indigenous language poses a serious threat to the indigenous language.

2.8 CONCLUSION

This chapter paid attention to the relevant literature related to the Language Management Theory, language policy in higher education, the intellectualisation of African languages, advantages of using African languages in education, the non-implementation of language policies, and the attitudes towards the use of African languages. African languages still have a long way to go before they can be accepted by their native speakers as being able to deliver the same quality of education as English. However, this cannot be achieved in a vacuum. Everyone is responsible for the development of their own languages.

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The study evaluates language management by the University of Limpopo. This chapter outlines the methodology that will be applied in this research. A clear methodology is important in order to achieve the aim and the objectives of the study. The chapter will explore the research method, the research design, the sampling procedure, tools of data collection and data analysis that will be employed in the study.

3.2 RESEARCH METHOD

Kothari (2004:8) defines research methodology as a way to systematically solve the research problem. A researcher has an option of choosing one of the three research methodologies, namely, qualitative, quantitative and mixed method. This research adopted a qualitative approach to collect and analyse data, to address the research problems, aim and objectives. Qualitative research methodology is defined as a methodology that generally produces descriptive data by the participant's own written or spoken words pertaining to their experience or perception (Brynard et al., 2014:39).

The researcher feels that by using the qualitative method, it will be easy to understand the reasons why phenomena occur the way they do at the University of Limpopo. This will allow the researcher to interact with the participants in their natural settings and be able to understand their views of the language policy and language management. 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

According to Creswell (2009:3), research designs are plans and procedures for research that span the decisions from broad assumptions to detailed methods of data

collection and analysis. The overall decisions involve which design should be the worldview assumptions that the researcher brings to the study; procedures of inquiry (called strategies); and specific methods of data collection, analysis, and interpretation.

For this study, the exploratory research design will be utilised. Exploratory research is conducted to gain new insights, discover new ideas, and for increasing knowledge of the phenomenon (Burns and Groove, 2003:374). One can deduce that exploratory research is an attempt to lay a foundation that will lead to future studies. Van Wyk (2012:8) postulates that the main aim of exploratory research is to identify the boundaries of the environment in which the problems, opportunities or situations of interest are likely to reside and to identify the salient factors or variables that might be found there and be of relevance to the research. Language management at the University of Limpopo will be explored in this study as it has not been explored before.

3.3.1 Sampling

Sampling, according to Sevilla (2007:182), refers to strategies which enable you to pick a subgroup from a larger group and then use this subgroup as a basis for making judgments about the larger group. In addition to the definitions of sampling, Brynard et al. (2014) define sampling as a technique employed to select a small group (the sample) with a view to determining the characteristics of a larger group (the population). Sampling refers to the identification and selection of participants from a selected target group, and furthermore, it used to select a portion of the population for study.

(a) Population

Population is defined by Sevilla (2007) as all members of any well-defined class of people, events, or objects. In this study population refers to all the members of the University of Limpopo. The population at the University of Limpopo consists of students, lecturers, administrators, top management, and support staff members.

(b) Sampling

This qualitative research is based on non-probability and volunteer sampling. Babbie (2015:186) defines non-probability sampling as any technique in which samples are

selected in some way not suggested by probability theory. The types of non-probability sampling include convenience sampling, quota sampling, volunteer sampling and purposive sampling (Curtis and Drennan, 2013:345). This research will use volunteer sample.

Volunteer sample is explained by Du Plooy (2002:115) as consisting of people such as students, readers or television viewers who volunteer to participate in a study. In volunteer sample studies, the individuals are recruited from a population (e.g. students at a school). The advantages of non-probability samples are that they are quicker, cost effective and convenient than probability samples. Furthermore, non-probability samples do not require a sampling frame, and the sample size and quota requirements are usually achieved (Koul, 2009:208). The researcher will use the participants who are easily accessible.

(c) Sample

The research cannot include everyone in this study as the population is large. The sample population will be as follows:

- 10 volunteer students
- 10 volunteer lecturers
- 5 language practitioners (lecturers)

3.3.2 Data collection

In the following subsection, data collection approach and data collection process are discussed.

(a) Data collection approach

Two approaches are used in this research, namely, semi-structured interviews and self-administered questionnaires. According to Myers (2009), qualitative data sources include participant observation (fieldwork), interviews, questionnaires, documents and

texts, and the researcher's impressions and reactions. The semi-structured interviewing method was chosen because it is a systematic way of talking and listening to people.

Kvale (1996:14) views interviews as the interchange of views between two or more people on a topic of mutual interest. Interviews focus on the centrality of human interaction for knowledge production, and emphasize the social situatedness of research data. The semi-structured interviews allow for open questions and new ideas to be brought up during the interview following the interviewee's responses. This method is used to gather qualitative data by setting up an interview that allows the respondent time and space to talk about their opinions on a specific subject. Morgan (2013) says that the strength of open-ended interviews in inductive research is the ability to pursue topics that emerge during the course of the conversation. Through this method, the researcher hopes to achieve the goal of gathering relevant data and extra information that the participant brings forth.

The second method of data collection is questionnaires. The researcher will use a questionnaire that has both open-ended and closed-ended questions. Best and Kahn (1993) in Makamu (2009:6) argue that questionnaires are data gathering instruments that enable the respondents to answer questions in writing. Questionnaires are a cheaper and time saving way of collecting data from a large number of people.

(b) Data collection process

The interviews will be conducted in lecture rooms and lecturer offices. The respondents will be recorded during interviews, and the researcher will take down the notes. This is to make sure that the researcher captures accurate information. The questionnaires will be handed out to volunteer participants all around the campus. The questionnaires will be distributed at computer labs, the student centre, the cafeteria, lecture rooms and the library. Delivering the questionnaires personally helps the respondents to overcome difficulties with questions that might need clarification.

3.3.3 Data analysis

Bless and Higson-smith and Kagee (1988:163) state that data analysis is conducted so that the researcher can detect consistent patterns within the data such as the covariance of two or more variables. Data from the questionnaires will be analysed through SPSS version 23. SPSS, according to Kurt (2014:131), is a window-based program that can be used to perform data entry and analysis, and to create tables and graphs. The questionnaires will be coded to allow easy capturing into the SPSS.

Data collected from interviews will be analysed through the content analysis method. Content analysis consists of analysing the contents of documentary materials such as books, magazines, newspapers, and the contents of all other verbal or printed materials (Kothari, 2004:110). The recorded data from interviews will be transcribed and then analysed.

3.4 CONCLUSION

This chapter outlined the methodology that the research will adopt. Exploratory research design was chosen for this study. For sampling, non-probability sampling technique was used, and the researcher used a volunteer sample. For data collection, interviews and questionnaires were utilized, and SPSS version 23 was used to analyse the data collected through questionnaires, while content analysis method was used to analyse the data collected through interviews.

CHAPTER FOUR: THE SOCIOLINGUISTIC PROFILE OF THE UNIVERSITY OF LIMPOPO

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This section will provide a short summary of the language situation of the University of Limpopo. Webb (2000) in Rammala (2002:121) defines the term sociolinguistic profile as a socio-political characterisation of the language situation in a state, region or community, or the language world of an individual. A sociolinguistic profile is a special summary description of the language situation based in part on a series of indices and classifications (Ferguson, 1971). The function of a sociolinguistic profile is to form an input into the development of language policy and language plans (Rammala, 2002:121). The profile will include the following information about the University of Limpopo: socio-political context; the languages spoken; the families in which the languages are classified; the language knowledge of the population of the University of Limpopo; and the swot analysis of the official languages of the University of Limpopo.

4.2 THE SOCIO-POLITICAL CONTEXT

The University of Limpopo is one of the 23 universities found in South Africa. It is the result of the merger between the former Medical University of Southern Africa (MEDUNSA) and the University of the North, which merger occurred on 01 January 2005 ([ul.ac.za/historical background](http://ul.ac.za/historical%20background)). The university is situated in the foothills of the Hwiti (Wolkberg range) in Mankweng, Midway between Polokwane and Magoebaskloof ([ul.ac.za/historical background](http://ul.ac.za/historical%20background)). It is a growing institution in that the number of students that they register increase yearly.

4.3 THE LANGUAGES SPOKEN

Table 4.1 Languages spoken at the University of Limpopo 2015

Languages	2015
Afrikaans	243
English	352
IsiNdebele	428
Northern Sotho	13560
Other African languages	17
Other European languages	74
Sesotho	265
Setswana	384
Shona	249
SiSwati	1429
Tshivenda	1796
IsiXhosa	205
Xitsonga	3559
IsiZulu	722
Total	23283

Table 4.1 shows the number of speakers per each language at the University of Limpopo. The statistics shown above were retrieved from the University administration. The University of Limpopo is a host to all the 11 official languages as well as other African and European languages. The table above shows that Northern Sotho is the most spoken language followed by Xitsonga at the second place, Tshivenda at third place and the fourth spoken language is siSwati. The official languages of the University of Limpopo are Northern Sotho/ Sepedi, Xitsonga, Tshivenda and English. The university receives most of its students from its residing province of Limpopo and the

neighbouring provinces such as Mpumalanga, Gauteng and KwaZulu-Natal. Other students come from the neighbouring countries such as Zimbabwe.

The statistics shown below were retrieved from Statistics on Post-School Education and Training in South Africa (SPSETSA). The statistics used in this sociolinguistic profile are from the year 2010 to the year 2013.

Table 4.2 Registered students by ethnic groups from 2010-2013

Year	African	Coloured	Indian/Asian	White	Total
2010	17780	34	155	235	18205
2011	20063	35	143	263	20504
2012	21787	36	149	277	22249
2013	22478	26	132	278	22914

Table 4.2 shows the number of students registered at the University of Limpopo from the year 2010 to the year 2013 by ethnic group. These numbers show that the University of Limpopo is dominated by the African/ black students, and coloureds are minority students at the University. Throughout the years from the year 2010 to 2013, the number of African students has been increasing fairly well. One can say that the University of Limpopo is a black university.

Table 4.3 Gender distribution at the University of Limpopo

Year	Female	Male
2010	9708	8497
2011	11148	9356
2012	12043	10206
2013	12405	10509

Table 4.3 shows the gender distributions at the University of Limpopo. The University of Limpopo has a high number of female registered students from the year 2010 to 2013 and the assumption made is that the female student population will continue to increase even in the coming years.

The University of Limpopo has four faculties. These faculties are divided into the Faculty of Health Sciences, Faculty of Humanities, Faculty of Management and Law, and the Faculty of Science and Agriculture. The majority of the students are registered as undergraduate students.

4.4 LANGUAGE GROUPS

In Rissik's view the four major African language groups in South Africa are: the Nguni (made up of Northern isiNdebele, Southern isiNdebele, siSwati, isiXhosa, and isiZulu), the Sotho (Northern Sesotho, Southern Sesotho and Setswana), the Tsonga and the Venda (Rissik, 2011: 274). The Indo-European family in South Africa has members of the Germanic branch (English and Afrikaans, and to a lesser extent German) (Mesthrie, 2002:11). These groups are also represented at the University of Limpopo. The Nguni group is represented by siSwati and the Sotho with Northern Sotho as the majority speakers.

4.5 LANGUAGE KNOWLEDGE

For one to gain entry into the university, they need to have passed the home language and one additional language. The majority of students speak Northern Sotho and English as their additional language. The population at the University of Limpopo can be said to be bilingual with some being multilingual. Those who do not speak Northern Sotho learn it when they arrive at the University of Limpopo. These students have a sound knowledge of English, which is used as the major language of communication at the university. English is also used as the medium of instruction for general courses.

4.6 SWOT ANALYSIS OF THE OFFICIAL LANGUAGES OF THE UNIVERSITY OF LIMPOPO

The languages discussed below are the indigenous African languages of the University of Limpopo.

4.6.1 NORTHERN SOTHO

Strength

- It is the official language of the university, the province and the country.
- It is the major language spoken at the University of Limpopo.
- The majority of the staff members and the students speak Northern Sotho.
- It is the dominant language spoken by the residents surrounding the university.
- It is taught as a subject and also a medium of instruction for linguistic target module.
- It is used to teach Multilingual Studies (MUST) in BACEMS degree.
- It is used to give instructions in graduation ceremonies.

Weaknesses

- Negative attitudes from the speakers.
- Absence of the language policy implementation plan.
- Lack of scientific vocabulary.

Opportunities

- Students who do not speak Northern Sotho learn it when they arrive at the University of Limpopo.
- As the major spoken language, it has the opportunity to be used as a medium of instruction as compared to other indigenous official languages of the university.

Threats

- The use of English as major language of communication is a threat to the growth of this language.

- There is lack of commitment from the university management to recognise African languages.
- Lack of understanding of the importance of mother tongue education.
- The negative attitude of the speakers diminishes its chance of being used as a medium of communication/ instruction.

4.6.2 XITSONGA

Strength

- It is the second most spoken language at the university when looking at the results from the present research.
- It is used to teach a linguistic module.
- It is the official language of the university, the province and the country.

Weaknesses

- Negative attitudes from the native speakers.
- Lack of implementation plan.
- Lack of scientific vocabulary.

Opportunities

- It has a recognised and celebrated culture within the university student population.

Threats

- Lack of commitment from the university management to promote the use of Xitsonga.
- Dominance of English and Northern Sotho is a threat to the growth and recognition of Xitsonga.
- Its role will remain unknown until the development of the implementation plan of the language policy of the university.

4.6.3 TSHIVENDA

Strength

- Official language of the university, the province and the country.
- Used to teach a linguistic module.

Weaknesses

- Low status.
- Absence of the language policy implementation plan.

Opportunities

- Has the opportunity to be developed through research.

Threats

- The dominance of English, Northern Sotho and Xitsonga.
- Lack of scientific vocabulary.
- Minority speakers as compared to the speakers of Northern Sotho and Xitsonga.

4.7 CONCLUSION

This chapter gave a brief overview of the language situation at the University of Limpopo. The sociolinguistic profile of the University of Limpopo shows that Northern Sotho is the most spoken language by the students. It further indicates that most students are female. The majority population at the university are black, making it a black university. English is the major language of communication used by the university to communicate with its stakeholders. The SWOT analysis showed the strength, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of the official languages of the University of Limpopo.

CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION, PRESENTATION AND INTERPRETATION OF FINDINGS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter focuses on the presentation and analysis of the data obtained from research interviews and research questionnaires. The aim of this research is to evaluate language management by the University of Limpopo. The questions used in both interviews and questionnaires were deemed relevant to achieve the aim of the research. The questionnaires were distributed to the lecturers and students of the University of Limpopo. The results will be presented in three sections: from students, lecturers and language practitioners.

5.2 DATA MANAGEMENT AND ANALYSIS

SPSS version 23 was used to analyse the data collected through questionnaires. For interviews, the content analysis method was applied to analyse the data. Ten questionnaires were given to the students and all ten were returned to the researcher. Furthermore, ten questionnaires were distributed to lecturer's offices and only eight questionnaires were returned to the researcher. E-mails were sent out to the external language practitioners requesting them to participate in the study. Only one responded positively but when the questionnaire was sent to him, it was never returned.

5.3 RESEARCH RESULTS

5.3.1 Students

The data presented below is from the students at the University of Limpopo. 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 beside 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 subject.

(a) Preferred languages for lectures, consultation and tutorials

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 a choice to choose any of the official languages to communicate for 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 for tutorials. Xitsonga is the second most preferred language. For 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 a choice to choose their own 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.

(b) *Language challenges*

Of the students who responded to the questionnaires, the majority claimed to have no language challenges with respect to the language used by the lecturers. Those who pointed out that they have challenges gave reasons such as, "*The use of bombastic words by the lecturers makes it difficult for some of us to grasp the meaning.*" The lecturers are said to use difficult terms when discussing simple concepts.

The University of Limpopo hires international lecturers and thus some of them have unfamiliar accents. One of the respondents put it as follows: "*Unfamiliar accent from lecturers who are foreigners.*" These accents are said to pose challenges to students as

they find it difficult to understand some of the words that the lecturer might be saying. People from different regions articulate words differently.

Some participants argued that they did not understand the home languages of some lecturers. One participant said, *“lecturers use their home language and is difficult to understand that they are saying and also the use of big terms.”* The University of Limpopo has students who do not speak the official languages of the university. Lecturers sometimes use their own mother tongue to explain a concept, and the students who do not understand that language are left out.

When students were asked if they experienced any language difficulties/challenges when they write their assignments, most of the participants claimed to experience no difficulties. Those who expressed to have difficulties mentioned the following as their challenges:

- *“Terms which are used in the question papers”*
- *“Not being able to understand what is meant when asking the question”*
- *“Spelling of some words in English”*

The use of difficult words is also stated as one of the factors that make students to have challenges when writing assignments. Difficult language itself when used within academic discipline can become a barrier to access and success in the student’s education. English, like any other language, can present ambiguities, and when the question is not drafted concisely and clearly, it can cause a student to misunderstand what is required of them. Spelling errors were also mentioned as another factor that poses difficulties when writing assignments.

Table 5.1 How mother tongue improves performance

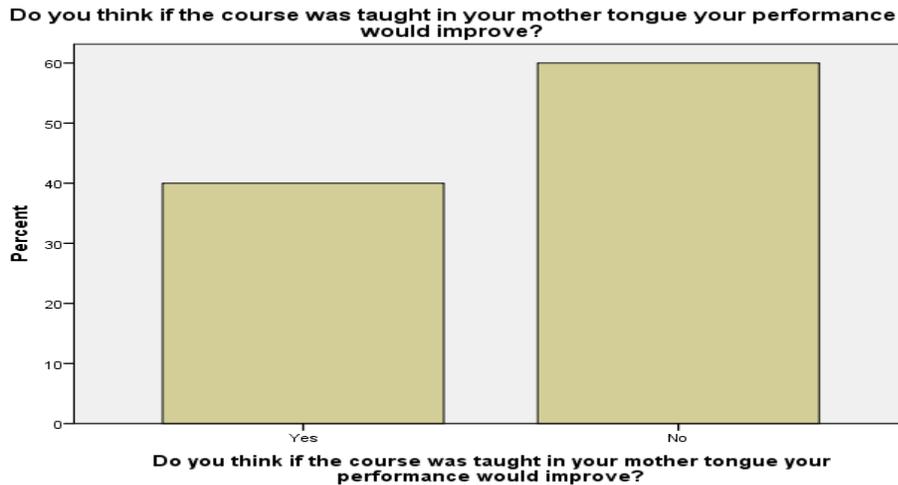


Table 5.1 presents the results of participants on their thoughts about the modules being taught in their mother tongue. The findings show that the students do not believe that their performance will improve even when their native language is used as a medium of instruction.

One of the participants who said that mother tongue would not improve their performance argued as follows: *“No, I think my mother tongue would not be good as I wouldn’t be able to communicate with other pupils with different languages as mine.”* Others argued that they do not speak their own mother tongue perfectly and thus it would be a bad idea if it is to be used in their education.

On the other hand, other participants were simply not interested in learning their own mother tongue because they were aware that they knew less about their own language. One participant said, *“there are many things that I don’t know in my mother tongue.”* There is also a belief that mother tongue in education will delay the progress of learning. One of the participants put it as follows, *“some of the words are difficult to interpret in mother tongue and it will delay the progress of learning.”* Furthermore, some participants claimed to understand English better than their own mother tongue.

The participants who expressed that mother tongue would improve their performance mentioned the following as their reasons:

- *“mother tongue is easy to understand since most of the terms are well known”*
- *“I will have a clear understanding of any phrases or sentences that the lecturer might use”*
- *“I would understand it better compared to other languages”*
- *“because mother tongue is easy to understand and easy to relate”*

Apart from the participants who believed that mother tongue would not bring any difference in their performance, few students seemed to be aware of the benefits of mother tongue in education. These participants were aware that education will be simple when packaged in mother tongue simply because mother tongue is easy to understand and easy to relate to. Not only that, but many English concepts in education are well known by the students and can be used without being translated to another language.

Table 5.2 The use of mother tongue in offering current courses

Would you prefer your current courses to be taught in your mother tongue?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Yes	2	20.0	20.0	20.0
No	8	80.0	80.0	100.0
Total	10	100.0	100.0	

Table 5.2 shows that the majority of the participants do not want their native languages used in their respective courses. The study tells us that most students do not want to use their mother tongue in education and would rather continue using English. This is confirmed by Makamu’s (2009) and Nkwashu’s (2011) studies that the students at the

University of Limpopo do not prefer to use their mother tongue/ source language as the primary language in education.

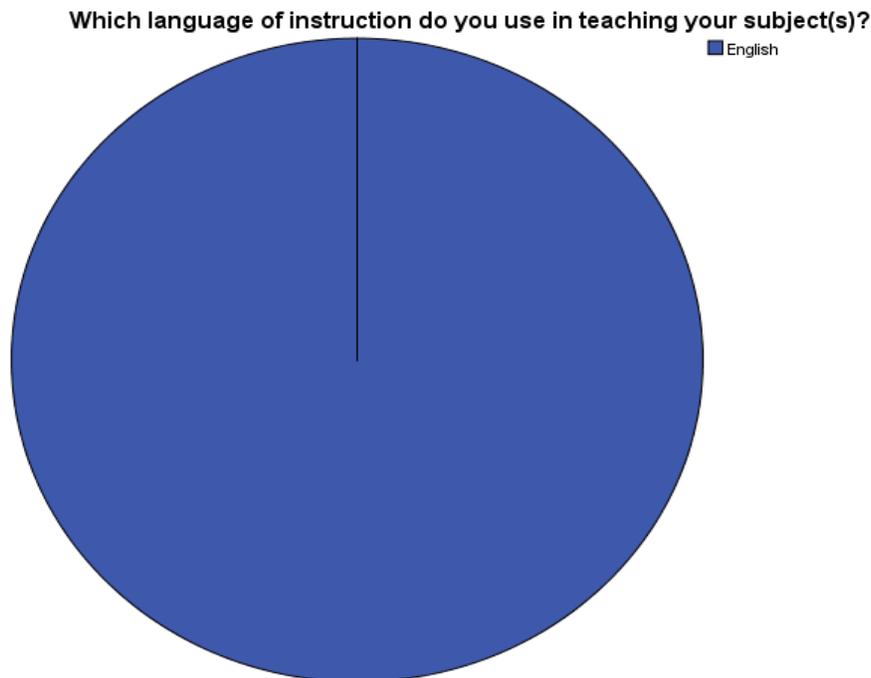
5.3.2 Lecturers

Ten (10) questionnaires were distributed to lecturers, and only eight were returned to the researcher. Questionnaires were distributed to the lecturer's offices and collected after a few days of distribution. The data that is discussed in this section come from those questionnaires.

The participants of this study taught modules such as Communication, Plant Production (Agronomy), Anthropology, Business English, Media Studies, Translation and Linguistics, Semantics and Pragmatics, Psycholinguistics, Generative Syntax, Multilingual Studies, Contemporary English Studies, and Creative and Critical Thinking.

These participants were asked which languages they use to teach their respective courses and the outcomes were rather not surprising. English was the language used to teach their respective modules.

Table 5.3 The medium of instruction used for teaching at the University of Limpopo



The table above shows the general language used as a medium of instruction by the participants. The participant who said that he used African languages taught a dual-medium BA degree in Contemporary English Language Studies (CELS) and Multilingual Studies (MUST). MUST is taught and assessed in Sesotho sa Leboa. However, English was chosen as the general medium of instruction with Sesotho sa Leboa for the MUST module. MUST is the only module which is not an African language course that is taught in an African language at the University of Limpopo.

Table 5.4 Language used for research activities in African language modules

Which is the language used for research activities in African language courses?

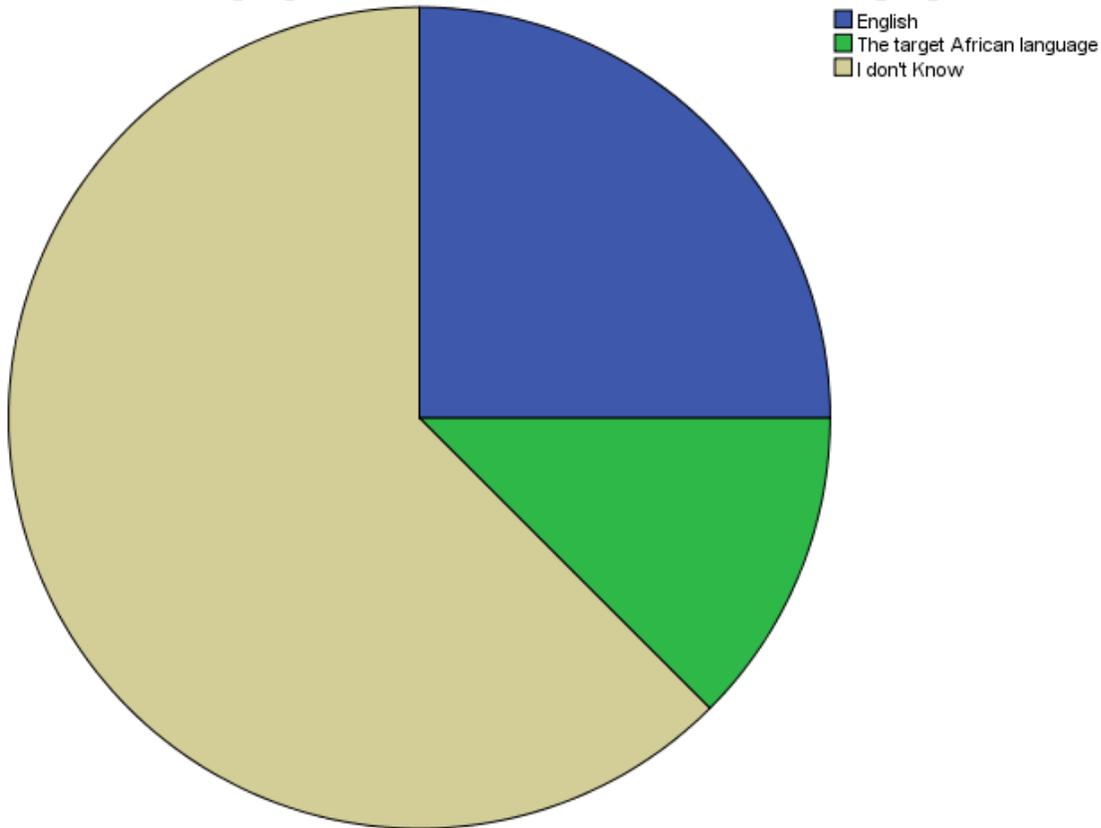


Table 5.4 shows the results of the participants about the language(s) that is used for research in courses in an African language. From the study it was found that most of the lecturers did not know which language(s) was used for research in African language courses.

Only few lecturers were aware that the target African language was used for research in African language courses. The language policy of the University of Limpopo allows students studying African languages to conduct research in African languages. Some lecturers indicated that if he/she is teaching a group that understands his/her mother-tongue (e.g. Sesotho sa Leboa), they will use that language to give the students instructions and to explain the concepts to them. They indicated that using English when both parties understood Sesotho sa Leboa was not necessary.

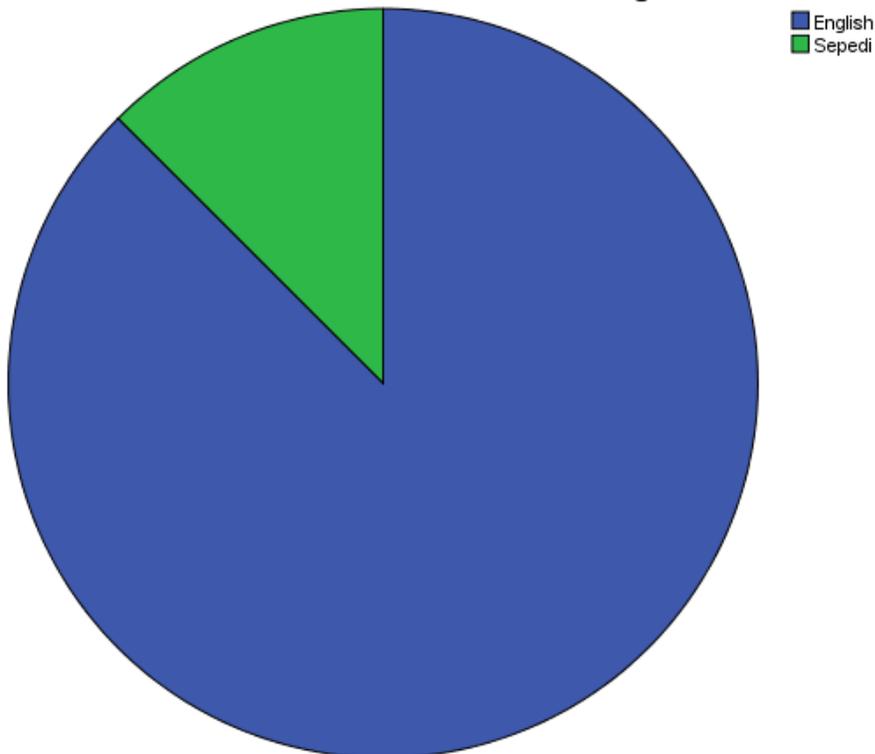
There are few dissertations by students that were conducted in African languages. For instance,

- *Tšhomišo le kgodišo ya dika tša Sesotho sa Leboa* by Mothemela Maale Florah,
- *Tsenguluso ya ndeme ya u thuswa ha nwana nga nḽila ya Tshivenda* by Mahwasane Mutshinyani Mercy,
- *Yin'wana ya mitlhonthlo eka theminoloji ya nawu wa vanhu: Hi ku kongomisa eka Xitsonga* (Some of the challenges in the terminology of public law: with special reference to Xitsonga) by Malope, Nkhensani Lindiwe.

These are some of the theses by the students of the University of Limpopo. These theses are written in the African languages. A search into the university's repository shows that many theses are written in Tshivenda language as compared to Sesotho sa Leboa and Xitsonga.

Table 5.5 Language used for research in non-linguistic courses

Which are the languages used by academic staff in research, mainly for research activities, including project drafting and submission, interaction within and between research teams in non-linguistic courses?



For non-linguistic courses English and Sesotho sa Leboa/Sepedi are the only languages used for research as indicated by the participants. It was explained that Sesotho sa Leboa is only used for the MUST module. For publication of scientific research, the participants indicated that the publications are in the English language.

The University of Limpopo uses English as its primary language for its administrative operations. The participants of this study indicated that the main language used for administrative operation is English. Moreover, some lecturers said that Sepedi or Xitsonga were used if both interlocutors understood the language. If the other party does not understand the mother tongue of the administrative officer, then English was used.

Table 5.6 Preferred languages for medium of instruction

If you were to choose amongst all official languages which would you choose to use as a medium of instruction for the module that you teach?

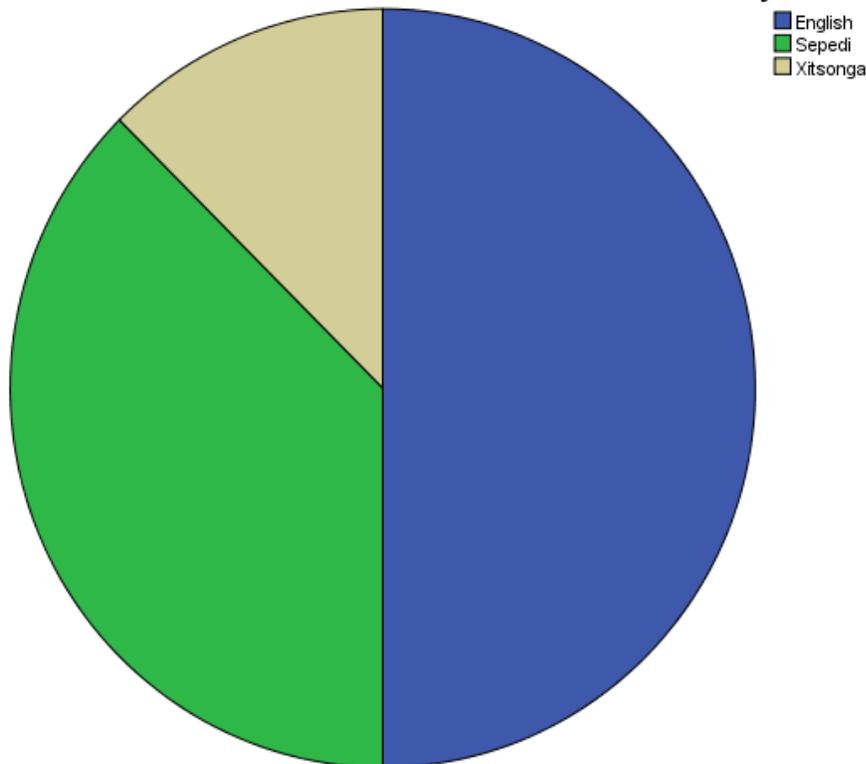


Table 5.6 shows the preferred languages by the lecturers to teach their modules. Given a chance to choose amongst the 11 official languages of South Africa to use as medium of instruction, English was first place followed by Sesotho sa Leboa/Sepedi. Some participants chose English as a medium of instruction because of the awareness of diverse languages found in the lecture room.

(a) English preference

One participant said, *“My students speak different languages so it would be a problem to use an African language. There is also lack of terminology in our African languages, in case I chose Xitsonga; I would not be able to express the terms.”* Our African languages lack the terminology but those terms can be borrowed. In addition, one can explain what those terms mean in their native African languages. For terms that are already familiar to the students do not need to be translated into African languages, they can be used as they are. It was also found that the low status of African languages put them at a disadvantage. Some lecturers believed that English is the language that is used worldwide. It is also a neutral language among all African and other languages that we have in the world.

Furthermore, it was argued that English is a professional language that accommodates all people. In addition, it was pointed out that the University of Limpopo has students from all the ethnic groups in Southern Africa, and the only language that can meet our understanding is English. Some lecturers who participated in the study were aware that the majority students at the University of Limpopo speak Northern Sotho/ Sesotho sa Leboa/ Sepedi. However, because of the fact that the university caters for students other than those who speak Sepedi, English should be used as a medium of instruction. Moreover, because English is the common language understood by the students, it should remain as the medium of instruction.

(b) African languages preference

The lecturers who preferred to use African languages maintained that they were comfortable speaking to the students in their home languages, and that this assists

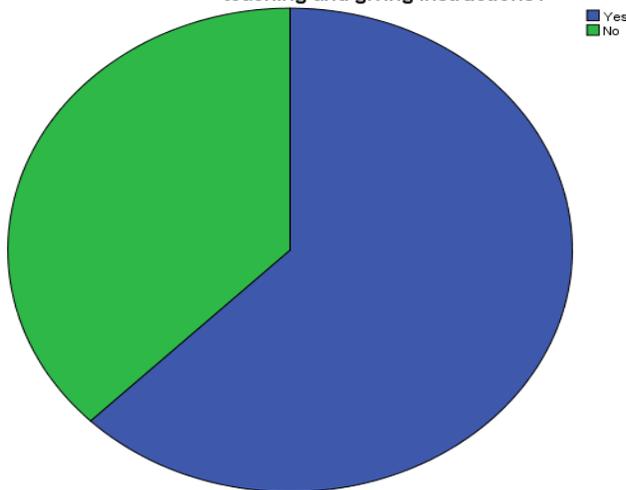
students who speak Sepedi to have full grasp of the concepts. One participant said: *“I have realized that English is a barrier in the teaching and learning process.”* When language becomes a barrier in education, it means that those who have a grasp of English will be more advanced than those who have less knowledge of the language.

The findings of this research show that there are lecturers who are aware that students cannot use the English language. The participant said, *“Students seem to have serious difficulties understanding and writing in English. Their native languages would perhaps enable them to articulate better than in English.”* Using mother tongue as a medium of instruction is far more beneficial because:

- (1) it is a reliable source (for learning and teaching);
- (2) many students come to university with a well-established and well-developed mother tongue; and
- (3) much of learning and teaching best occur in the language students understand best.

Table 5.7 Students’ understanding of the language used as medium of instruction

Do you think the students have difficulties understanding the language used for teaching and giving instructions?



The table above shows that the lecturers thought that the students have difficulties understanding the language used for teaching and giving instruction. The majority of the

participants of this study believe that the students have difficulties understanding the language used as medium of instruction.

(c) Future of African languages at the University of Limpopo

The participants of this study were asked to shed more light on the future of African languages at the University of Limpopo. One participant thought that the future of African languages at the University of Limpopo was gloom and bleak. The participant said, *“I think the future is gloom and bleak because the African language programmes are overshadowed by other programmes concerning economic responsiveness.”* Programmes in African languages throughout South African universities are overshadowed by other programmes, and this comes as no exception to the University of Limpopo. For instance, the first entering registration of African language subjects is not as high as that of the English language.

Table 5.8 First entering students’ registration rates

Languages	2010	2011	2012	2013
ENGL101	395	290	184	16
NSOT101	103	184	177	50
TSON101	35	41	46	15
VEND101	17	22	16	1

Table 5.8 shows the number of students registered in language courses. This table shows that even though English has the highest number of registered students, it has, however, seen a decrease as of the year 2013. Tshivenda language has had a low number of students from 2010 and has decreased until 2013. These numbers support that there is a need to promote African language courses, that is, in addition to English modules.

Moreover, some participants hold the view that African languages at the University of Limpopo will not find any space, and that English has come to stay. There is still a need to raise awareness about the importance of African languages in education.

Another issue that put African languages at a disadvantage is the fact that everything at the University of Limpopo is done in English. It is only on rare occasions that African languages are considered. Some participants hold that African languages will never be pure because even if one is conducting research in an African language, it is mixed with English. *“I may be conducting research in Xitsonga but you find that most quotations are in English.”* This is evident in the theses by the postgraduate students at the University of Limpopo. The thesis in question was written in Tshivenda language but the quotations are in English.

On the other hand, other participants asserted that African languages are gradually becoming extinct. This view was supported by the majority of people, who would rather prefer to use English than any of the indigenous African languages.

On the contrary, others believed that there could be a future for African languages if these languages are given enough attention. One participant indicated that *“the need to extend the usage of African languages in the media (and as languages of learning and teaching) is essential for their development and growth. My feeling is, if this usage is extended the growth of African languages will be more sustainable and meaningful.”* Raising awareness of African languages at the University of Limpopo means that the language policy of the university is made accessible and available to everyone. It also implies that the students, lecturers, and administration staff will be informed about their language rights.

There is a beliefs that the Department of African languages should be responsible for the promotion of these languages. In addition, it was expressed that if African languages are promoted, one language will dominate other languages at the University of Limpopo, and that that language should be Sepedi/Sesotho sa Leboa.

5.3.3 Language practitioners

For this study, the researcher used the internal language practitioners as they were readily available. Due to their busy schedule, they preferred to answer the research questions in their own time. Five language practitioners from the University of Limpopo participated in this study.

(a) Knowledge of the language policy of the University of Limpopo

Getting interviews with language practitioners was difficult as the researcher was told that they could not discuss something that did not exist. One cannot blame them because the language policy of the University of Limpopo is hidden from the general public. To access it one has to be a staff member of the university, and have access to @ul.ac.za email account. For ordinary people and students, the language policy is simply inaccessible. Those who did answer the interview questions indicated that they did know about the language policy of the University of Limpopo but have never seen it. The one who knew about it at first argued that it did not exist. Some of the participants said they were aware of the language policy. One participant responded, “I *wasn't* aware of the language policy until **now** (until the participant was approached to give insights about it).” Those who were aware claimed that the issue of language policy at the University of Limpopo is not clear as there has been very little said about it.

(b) Responsibility for the implementation of the language policy

On the matter of who should be responsible for implementing the language policy of the University of Limpopo, the language practitioners indicated that people working with languages and those who are interested in language matters on campus should implement the language policy. Some feel that the management as well as the language users must be responsible for the implementation of the policy. Encouragement from the department of languages and communication would be the required fuel to implement the language policy of the University of Limpopo. All the stakeholders should play a role in deciding the language or languages to be used at and by the university. These stakeholders include student bodies, academics and management. Yet, these stakeholders will have to be informed about the issue of

language policy and the importance of mother tongue in education. They also need to develop a positive attitude towards African languages. One participant emphasized that *“the management should support **and show to be giving their support** to the African languages.”*

(c) Implications of implementing the language policy

With regard to the implications involved in the implementation of a multilingual language policy at the University of Limpopo, one practitioner argued that students would have much better understanding of whatever they are taught, because as it is, most students are struggling with English as the medium of instruction on campus. Implementing the language policy of the University of Limpopo will imply that there will be many languages used at the university, and this will encourage the use of our native languages. One participant said that *“the best thing that can happen for the university is to allow that it be a multilingual community. Anyone be allowed to use a language of their choice.”* It was reported that some of the implications of implementing the language policy is that this may require translators and interpreting services in classes. Above all, it will show the people of Limpopo that their languages are important, and by association they are important.

(d) Measures put in place to implement the language policy

The practitioners indicated that they did not think that there are measures put in place to ensure that the language policy of the University of Limpopo is implemented. It was further argued that *“so it might just be on paper and not implemented.”* While some thought that it is just a policy on paper; others argued that its chances of implementation are minimal. These participants argue that the language policy is not known. It was reasoned that *“Nothing much is said about the language policy and I believe most people are not even aware that there is a language policy. The talk is being talked but not walked”.*

The department of African languages said that it should be empowered with more staff. Not only that, they should also be given the opportunity to be involved in more forums where they can advocate the use (write and publish) of their own languages.

(e) Language unit

It was believed that establishing a language unit will be of benefit to the university as some of the languages are taken for granted. The importance of establishing a language unit is that one will know which language to use in formal settings as will be stipulated in the language policy. The university cannot avoid the issue of a language unit as establishing a language unit is a requirement from the national government of South Africa. Other participants assert that *“Implementing a language unit would be the best approach, while the university is busy with its day to day responsibility, there should be parties attending to language issues.”* The establishment of a language unit is crucial for the development of the local languages as well as a smooth translation to English as a medium of instruction. *“I believe that academic achievement is more likely to result from the development of advanced reading and writing skills in mother tongue of the learner and students”, said a participant.*

(f) Centre for African Language Research and Development (CALRD)

Establishing a Centre for African Language Research and Development (CALRD) is regarded as important in that it will not only benefit the students and the staff, but also the communities around the university. Furthermore, the language practitioner added that *“people might have interest in preserving and developing their languages through CALRD.”* The other importance of a CALRD is promote language, and to develop a language policy. The University community at large would benefit from the CALRD because *“it will solve issues around most people undermining their own languages.”* A CALRD can become a rich research area and therefore become known specifically for African languages research. Once established, the CALRD must be known by African languages speakers.

(g) Promoting multilingualism in the University’s curriculum

For the university to promote multilingualism in its curriculum, it was suggested that firstly, no language should be above others. The university should respect the equal status that has been given to all the official languages of South Africa. It was further pointed out that the university can promote multilingualism in its curriculum by helping

facilitators with their understanding and performance in native languages. The materials should be produced in native language. The issue around curriculum are said to be of sensitive nature because *“before one can promote multilingualism in any curriculum, the negative and the positive side of things should be looked, that is, if it would be proper for a student to learn in two languages.”* Another participant raised four issues that should be looked into to help promote multilingualism at the university:

- (1) Firstly, raise awareness of the diverse languages and their culture by having activities such as exhibition of Xitsonga days or an IsiNdebele day; arrange for speakers who are representatives of a certain language and its literature or folklore or customs;*
- (2) Secondly, some content subjects should perhaps be taught in both languages;*
- (3) Thirdly, bilingual content subject textbooks or summaries of textbooks be in the local languages; and*
- (4) Lastly, main lectures can be in English and tutorials in each of the local languages.*

(h) Is the university concerned about the implementation of the language policy?

When asked if they thought the university is more concerned with the implementation of its language policy, the practitioners argued that *“no this was supposed to be a known issue on campus, that is, where the university stands with regards to multilingualism. This should be well known by both the staff and students alike.”* The argument is that since the language policy is not well known by the students, the lecturers, administration staff and the language practitioners working within the university, chances of the policy being implemented altogether are low to none. Moreover, it was believed that less efforts have been made on the matter of language policy implementation. One practitioner said, *“I somehow believe that it was put in place just to fulfil the requirement and not meant to be used”*.

Most language policies at institutions of higher learning are there to fulfil the requirements of the Department of Higher Education. In addition, since the issue of

language policy is not discussed at the university, it becomes difficult to implement it. At the University of Limpopo there seem to be *“more lip service than the actual implementation”*.

(i) The future of African languages at the University of Limpopo

It is argued that the languages are not getting the attention they deserve, and thus, in the years to come *“we might find ourselves without African languages.”* This is of great concern as universities should help shape, develop and promote the languages of the surrounding communities. Our African languages are said to be more and more diluted by English on a daily basis, and that *“we are in a way killing our languages by diluting them with English.”* It was, furthermore, suggested that maybe students should do at least one African language as an elective course across all degrees. It was also believed that *“with the dedication and efforts from the facilitators in African languages discipline, the future looks bright.”* Regardless of the future looking bright, the challenge is that people in general have misconceptions about the importance of African languages.

(j) Survival of African languages at the University of Limpopo

This section addresses the issue of what should be done to ensure the survival of African languages at the University of Limpopo. Much cannot be done to ensure the survival of African languages at the University of Limpopo until the language policy is publicly available for all. The language practitioners argued that ensuring that the policy is **available** and **accessible** to everyone interested in languages can be another way of pushing for the language policy to be implemented. It was further added that *“language and culture are intertwined, so if our languages are at risk, so will be our culture.”*

It was also proposed that there should be criteria that whosoever is admitted at the university, he or she must do at least his/her home language as a module in the first year. This will enhance the learning of native languages. Furthermore, some modules

must be taught in African languages. The best way of ensuring the survival of African languages at the University of Limpopo is to firstly, make sure that the language policy is not kept a secret. Secondly, all stakeholders should be aware of the language policy of the university. Thirdly, an attitude that of high positivity should be part of all stakeholders regarding African languages.

Some participants maintained that in an ideal world the implementation of a language policy of the University of Limpopo should be driven by all speakers of the local vernaculars because:

charity begins at home, and furthermore African languages should not remain in the 'hinterland' as stated on paragraph 2.2 of page 3 of the UL Language Policy, but be given a public platform where possible. For instance, public address. We should have someone speak in our local languages before switching to English.

The participants pointed out that choosing English is an economic decision (we cannot ignore this) but the language of the heart and our identity needs to be nurtured.

5.4 OVERVIEW OF RESEARCH FINDINGS

From the researcher's observation, most of the students, lecturers and language practitioners who participated in this study were not aware of the language policy of the University of Limpopo. Some were operating under the assumption that there is no such thing as the language policy of the University of Limpopo. Those who were aware of it have never seen it before. 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 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 CALRD are also not being fulfilled. The students, on the other hand, seem not to be interested in the use of mother tongue in

education. This shows that there is still so 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.

5.5 CONCLUSION

This chapter presented the overview of the research results obtained from the interviews with language practitioners, and the data collected through questionnaires from students and the lecturers. The methods of content analysis and SPSS version 23 were used to analyse the data presented. In conclusion, one can deduce that the language policy of the University of Limpopo is known by few people. This calls for the policy to be made public for all the interested parties to access it.

CHAPTER SIX: SUMMARY, RECOMMENDATIONS, CONCLUSION

6.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter analysed the data, reported the findings and presented the interpretation of the data. This chapter provides the summary of all the chapters included in this research. The recommendations and conclusions drawn from the research results are also covered.

6.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

The following are recommendations of the study.

- The first recommendation is to make the language policy of the University of Limpopo a public document.
- Secondly, the university should formulate an implementation plan of the existing 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 the faculties other than the Faculty of Humanities. These are the measures taken by the University of KwaZulu-Natal to ensure the continuous acquisition of isiZulu. IsiZulu has been made to be a compulsory module across all degrees.
- Fourthly, amends should be made to educate all the stakeholders of the University of Limpopo about the benefits of mother tongue in education to eradicate negative perceptions about African languages in education.
- The fifth recommendation is that book exhibitions, debates and posters on campus should show the students the expressiveness of their languages. This means that the use of African languages should be encouraged on the campus.
- The sixth recommendation is to encourage writing in our local languages by holding competitions where African language writers are celebrated.

- Comments, summaries, and abstracts in research must also be in the local languages. For instance, PRAESA publications at the University of Cape Town are published in mostly three languages: isiXhosa, Afrikaans and English.
- And lastly, eradicate negative perceptions of African languages by using them in important events like the university graduations, university open days and so on.

6.3 SUMMARY OF CHAPTERS

Chapter one first introduced the study by giving background information. Furthermore, research problems were laid out. Finally, the researcher's aims and objectives as well as the research design, method used to collect and analyse data were discussed.

Chapter two dealt with literature review that covered the scope of Language Management Theory; the language policy in higher education; the intellectualisation of African languages; the advantages of using African languages in education; the non-implementation of language policies; and the attitudes towards the use of African languages.

Chapter three discussed the methodology used in the research. The research method, the research design, the sampling procedure, tools of data collection and data analysis used in the study were explored.

Chapter four compiled a sociolinguistic profile of the University of Limpopo. SWOT analysis of languages was also done to determine the strength, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of the official indigenous languages of the University of Limpopo

Chapter five presented the interpretation of results. The data from students, lecturers, and language practitioners were examined separately. SPSS version 23 was used to analyse the data collected through questionnaires and the graphs are shown in chapter four. Content analysis was used as well to analyse the data collected through interviews. And lastly, the summary of the results was presented.

Chapter six presented the summary of all the chapters included in the research. It also provided the recommendations of the study. The present study assessed language management by the University of Limpopo.

6.4 CONCLUSION

The aim of this study was to evaluate language management by the University of Limpopo. It was found that the students preferred to be taught in English. The data also indicated that there were negative perceptions attached to African languages in education. The University of Limpopo not only uses English as medium of instruction but also as the language of communication with the public and its stakeholders. Even though some lecturers do notice the language difficulties experienced by the students, the majority still prefers to use English as a language of teaching in their modules. The language practitioners raised the point that the language policy of the University of Limpopo is poorly published. They thus saw the need to make it public.

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ANNEXURE A

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE: LANGUAGE PRACTITIONERS

My name is Mbaye Agnes (201001633). I am a student at the University of Limpopo in the School of Languages and Communication, Department Translation studies and Linguistics. I hereby request for your assistance in research by being a respondent to the interview. The research is titled “**EVALUATION OF LANGUAGE MANAGEMENT BY THE UNIVERSITY OF LIMPOPO.**”

Signature

1. Are you aware of the language policy of the University of Limpopo?

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2. Who should be responsible for implementing the language policy of the University of Limpopo?

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3. What are the implications of implementing a multilingual language policy in the University of Limpopo?

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4. To what extent do you think the language policy of the University of Limpopo is being implemented?

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5. What is the importance of establishing a language unit within the university?

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6. How can establishing Centre for African Language Research and Development bring improvements to the university at large?

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7. What do you think the University should do to promote multilingualism in its curriculum?

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8. In your opinion, do you think the university is more concerned with implementing its language policy?

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9. In your opinion, what is the future of African languages at the University of Limpopo?

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10. What do you think can be the best way of implementing the language policy of the University of Limpopo? What should be done to ensure the survival of African languages in the University?

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Thank you for your participation

ANNEXURE B

QUESTIONNAIRE: LECTURERS

1. What subject(s) are you teaching?

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.....

2. Which language of instruction, do you use in the teaching your subject(s)?

English	1
Sepedi	2
Xitsonga	3
Tshivenda	4

3. Which are the languages used by academic staff in research, mainly for research activities, including project drafting and submission, interaction within and between research teams in African languages courses?

English	1
Sepedi	2
Xitsonga	3
Tshivenda	4

4. Which are the languages used by academic staff in research, mainly for research activities, including project drafting and submission, interaction within and between research teams in non-linguistic courses?

English	1
Sepedi	2
Xitsonga	3

Tshivenda	4
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5. Which is the language used for publication of scientific work in specialist journals and books or in formats destined to the general public (including in both cases on-line publications of materials) in your faculty?

English	1
Sepedi	2
Xitsonga	3
Tshivenda	4

6. Which is the language used by the University in its administrative operations?

English	1
Sepedi	2
Xitsonga	3
Tshivenda	4

7. Which is the language used by the University in external communication (e.g. for recruitment purposes, public relations or abroad etc.)?

English	1
Sepedi	2
Xitsonga	3
Tshivenda	4

8. If you were to choose amongst all official languages which would you choose to use as a medium of instruction for the modules that you teach

English	1
Sepedi	2
Xitsonga	3

Tshivenda	4
IsiNdebele	5
IsiSwati	6
IsiXhosa	7
IsiZulu	8
Afrikaans	9
Setswana	10
Sesotho	11

Please provide a reason for your answer

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9. Do you think the students have difficulties understanding the language used for teaching and giving instructions?

Yes	1
No	2

10. In your opinion, what is the future of African languages at the University of Limpopo?

ANNEXURE C

QUESTIONNAIRE: STUDENTS

1. What is your mother tongue?

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2. What other languages do you speak?

.....

.....

3. In what language have you been taught in your high school education?

English	1
Sepedi	2
Xitsonga	3
Tshivenda	4
IsiNdebele	5
IsiSwati	6
IsiXhosa	7
IsiZulu	8
Afrikaans	9
Setswana	10
Sesotho	11

4. In what language(s) do you use in communicating with your classmates, lecturers, and the university staff?

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5. Do you know about the language policy of the University of Limpopo?

Yes	1
No	2

6. What difficulties/ challenges do you come across in relation to the language used by your lecturer in lecture rooms?

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7. What language challenges/difficulties do you come across when you write your assignments?

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8. Would you prefer the current courses that you are studying to be taught in your mother-tongue?

Yes	1
No	2

9. Do you think if the course was taught in your mother-tongue your performance would improve? Please provide a reason for your answer

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.....

10. If you had a choice, which language(s) would you prefer to use

For lectures?.....

For consultation?.....

For tutorials?.....

Choose from the official languages of the University

English	1
Sepedi	2
Xitsonga	3
Tshivenda	4