

LANGUAGE GROUP TRANSFORMATION SUMMIT REPORT, JULY 2017

ABSTRACT /INTRODUCTION

Rhodes University makes use of English as a language of Business and Communication. The University Language Policy (adopted in 2014) also recognizes English as the only medium of instruction. This must be seen against a historical backdrop of an English-medium and colonial institution with a Eurocentric bias. This language policy disadvantages and excludes mother tongue speakers of Sesotho, isiXhosa and Afrikaans, the provincially recognized official languages, as well as speakers of other languages. It is suggested that the starting point of all engagements with the University community should be that the institution is a bilingual or multilingual institution and that it should foster such an ethos as part of a transformative agenda.

PROCESS

This working group was set up in preparation for the Transformation Summit at Rhodes University. The group comprised of both students, lecturers as well as support staff. A number of meetings were held where the group tried to unpack best language practices at the University, as well as taking into account a comparative approach of what is happening at other South African Universities. The group comprised of Professors Russell Kaschula, Esther Ramani, Michael Joseph, Dion Nkomo, Pam Maseko, Dr Leonie Goosen, Sanele Ntshingana, Nonthuthuzelo Faku, Ntombovuyo Ngaphu and Sisonke Mawonga. We also liaised with Noluxolo Nhlapho who attended meetings and discussion groups, as well as Prof Sam Naidu and the Chair of the Language Committee, Dr Jeanne du Toit.

Sink or Swim is a short (35 mins) powerful documentary film released by PRAESA and directed by the late Neville Alexander. The DVD "Sink or Swim" was screened publically on three occasions and responses were elicited from those present. This DVD is provocative and deals with the issue of medium of instruction and the cognition process. Mother tongue English speakers are taught Science in isiXhosa. This mirrors the daily struggles of African language mother tongue speakers who are taught through the medium of English, a language which is often a third or fifth language to them. The result is that learners are unable to follow the lesson and a breakdown in communication and learning often occurs.

In summary the film makes two key points: i) there is a need for South African education to change its current educational Medium of Instruction (MOI) policy and practices from an English only (or mainly) one to a bilingual one, that is one where the majority group of African speaking children learn content subjects through their mother-tongue; and ii) that advocacy for such an approach (also known as a mother-tongue based bilingual approach or an additive bilingual approach, as English will be retained as a subject, not as a MOI) should be extensively

carried out *from below*, that is by showing grassroots practices in classrooms (normal or experimental).

Though it was wrongly assumed that the film makes an unfair demand on white students to learn content through isiXhosa, the real purpose is about *black pain* and how it can be shown as a reality for non-black (English speaking users) to understand it empathetically, via their own pain when they experience the difficulty of learning through another language than their own.

Following these screenings certain recommendations were made in discussions which form part of this report.

As indicated above, the Language Working Group also liaised closely with the Rhodes University Language Committee (RULC) and relevant discussions and documents are shared in this report.

NATIONAL CONTEXT ON THE NEED FOR TRANSFORMED HIGHER EDUCATION LANGUAGE PRACTICES

Alexander (2005:30) sums up the challenge facing South African Universities as follows:

The basic idea is that a university or group of universities would be given the task of developing specific languages such as isiZulu, or isiXhosa, or Sesotho, or Setswana and over a period of 10 to 15 years...a step-by-step development and implementation plan should be formulated...such that...it will be clear when they will be able to be used as languages of tuition in specific disciplines. The decision, however, about when to begin using the languages for specific functions will be the prerogative of the relevant institutional community.

Each university must then formulate its own approach to change and transformation, language arguably being at the core voice of such transformation. Makgoba and Seepe (2004:19) are of the opinion that Africanisation and transformation will "...give us a new approach in knowledge seeking..." However, change cannot be simply imposed from outside, it needs to come from within and there must be buy-in from authorities and all stake-holders i.e. management, as well as academic and support staff, as part of what will later be referred to as meaningful engagement (Webb 2006). Universities and specifically curricula should no longer be defined by imperialist and colonialist ideology, but by African values and philosophy, an African voice underpinned by African languages and indigenous knowledge systems (IKS) as part of all "knowledge *per se*" (Horsthemke 2014).

Makgoba and Seepe (2004:18) initiated this debate on transformation as part of grappling "...with the meanings, the implications and consequences of what an African university is and ought to be." The first crucial step towards this is to create language equality and to intellectualise African languages (See also Wildsmith-Cromarty 2010). It is language that holds

the key to transformation as language is the voice and transmitter of all knowledge. The challenge is to establish what languages are to be used and heard, as well as in what contexts within Higher Education. A simple example would be the following: even though one may be teaching a course in English language linguistics, when dealing with the concept of a language, a variety or a dialect, there is no reason why students cannot relate this knowledge to their own mother tongues, for example isiXhosa where a number of dialects can be found.

A further challenge in the development of African languages in Higher Education is at the policy level, what Elbaz (1991) refers to as “political usage” of voice. While admirable policies exist, which, at a glance, should ensure development of African languages and promotion of multilingualism, these policies often lack a plan of implementation, as well as directives on who should lead or drive implementation (at both national and institutional level). The other factor related to implementation is monitoring. The *Language Policy on Higher Education* (LPHE) and the *Report on the Development of Indigenous Languages as Mediums of Instruction in Higher Education*, for example, state clearly what needs to be done by institutions in promoting the development of African languages. However, there is little monitoring of the extent of compliance with provisions of policy. The simple example is that of the formulation of institutional policy and the institutions’ submission to the Education Ministry of their 5-year plan regarding the development of African languages as mediums of instruction. The LPHE (2002) requires that Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) formulate their policy with an implementation plan, and publish it. The LPHE (2002) also stipulates that HEIs should provide the Ministry of Education, every 5 years, with a report which provides the extent of the implementation of its plan. While universities generally have their policies published, very few have provided the Ministry with a report on the progress of implementation of policy. The essence of the argument here, though, is that the policy could possibly be sufficient but lacks strategies and other means to monitor compliance, thereby continuing the status quo of the previous silence associated with the African voice at our universities.

It has already been alluded to above that South Africa is arguably a “policy super highway”. As indicated, university language policies have been created but not policed. Kotze (2014:15) suggests that a favourable policy landscape has now emerged. There are however very few rest-stops along the “policy super highway” to actually engage with policies and to assess the effectiveness and appropriateness of such policies. For every policy there should be an implementation plan and a way of checking the success of the implementation of the policy. Arguably the Higher Education Ministerial Committee (2013) chaired by Professor Pitika Ntuli, which looked at the use of African languages across campuses and assessed implementation of policy was an attempt to remedy this and to hold universities accountable.

We know that national policy, particularly the Constitution of 1996, is burdened with limitation clauses such as “where possible”, “where practicable”, “may”, and so on. Policy at institutional level seems to take its cue from national policy and, as such, institutions seem to be able to escape some of their responsibilities towards use and development of African languages. Even though Rhodes for example has worked hard to implement its language policy which advocates the use of isiXhosa and Afrikaans in academic spheres, there are

numerous loopholes in favour of the university administration contained in the revised 2014 Rhodes University Language Policy. It would seem that the reason for this is to cover the university in case of any legal court cases that may emanate from lack of implementation. On closer examination, all language policies, whether they be university policies or otherwise, seem to follow the same approach. The complexities associated with such implementation within the work environment are explicated for example by Anthonissen and Kaschula (1995) as well as Anthonissen (2010) in relation to medical, legal and business settings.

There seems to be a disjuncture then between the law, namely the legislation, and the linguistic component, namely the content of the policy, resulting in the actual language implementation failures. The question remains as to where the actual problem is located: Is it for example the policies and legislation which do not give effect to the constitutional mandate, or is it the implementation phase that is problematic? There are many policies and much legislation that deal only with languages, or which make reference to and include a section on languages. This can be viewed as an advantage. However the number of policies does not illustrate the success in the implementation stages. It rather illustrates a failure within the implementation stage where policies seem to overlap and carry out the same mandate. A contributing missing link is the lack of legislation which is all encompassing. The Languages Act of 2012 (Act No 12) attempts to provide an all-encompassing piece of legislation, though not without its complications. Section (4)(1) requires all national departments, public entities and public enterprises to adopt language policies within 18 months of commencement of the Act. Arguably this will again contribute further to the policy “super highway” syndrome if proper implementation plans do not accompany such policies. Through assessment it is evidently clear that there is a failure to implement for a number of reasons at our universities and that this effectively halts transformation and Africanisation. A solution which is legally sound and linguistically equipped to resolve issues and successfully implement language legislation and policies is required and it is suggested that this is the concept of meaningful engagement as illustrated in the Rhodes Language Policy example in a section that follows (see Kaschula and Docrat 2014). Attempting to find a tool which has the potential to reverse the status quo and implement language policies and legislation successfully is now ever important in order to give voice to this aspect of transformation.

Meaningful engagement is a tool which has been successful where people were facing eviction from their places of residence for various reasons. Courts of law suggested that land owners “meaningfully engage” in order to find solutions. With the development of an original concept by the protectors and enforcers of the Constitution, namely the constitutional Justices, the concept of meaningful engagement was introduced, developed and successfully applied within a socio-economic rights sphere of eviction. As stated above, language and law are inseparable, thus the concept of meaningful engagement will allow for a legal concept to be utilised which has the potential to successfully implement language policies and legislation. There has been a constant call for engagement to occur, more recently by the late Neville Alexander (2013) who unequivocally stated: “My sincere wish is that readers will consider these thoughts, take a step back and try to get a perspective on what has actually been happening since 1990, when the new South Africa began. Even more optimistically, I hope that such a rethink will inspire the reader to want to find a point of engagement.” It is

really to re-engage once more with policy in a critical, consultative and robust manner. The tool of meaningful engagement with all stakeholders is proposed in the quest for successful language policy implementation and transformation not only within the country more generally, but within context driven environments where language policies have, and are being drafted to assist with transformation, for example universities, banks, the schooling system and within the broader public and private sectors. In other words universities in particular need to meaningfully engage within their respective contexts in order to come up with language policies and implementation plans which have buy-in from all sectors of the university and whereby the African voice is then pedagogically asserted through appropriate curriculum change.

At South African universities what is now required is intersection of the managerial, support staff, and the student and academic fraternity in a meaningfully engaged way, and not in way that fosters opposition. Arguably this will create “mindfulness” and inclusivity as part of wider transformation of university culture that addresses the notion of previously silenced or marginalised voices (Langer 1989:69; Ting-Toomy 1999:3). This can be achieved through increasing the visibility of other languages used on campuses while still supporting English as a LoLT if needs be. It is then about developing and promoting languages in order to create an appropriate multilingual and effective cognitive and intellectual environment. The late Nadine Gordimer in earlier interviews with her rightly refers to English as an “adjunct African language”, though a fully developed language. It would therefore be important to emphasize the intellectualisation of African languages alongside English and to some extent Afrikaans. Arguably, there is presently a renegotiation of new and old identities, especially at HWU’s, English and Afrikaans medium institutions such as the University of Cape Town (UCT), Rhodes, and the University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN). The “Rhodes-Must- Fall” debate of 2015 and the removal of the Rhodes Statue at UCT is an example of this “renegotiation” and asserting of contemporary voices. In this context it is important to create “familiarity” rather than “identity vulnerability”. It is about “...negotiating shared meanings in an interactive situation” (Ting-Toomey 1999:1-2). Even if one considers a small university such as Rhodes, there are more than twenty five languages which are represented and spoken on campus with more than 1600 of the 7300 students speaking isiXhosa as a mother tongue.

In regard to this diversification of the student body, strategies for increased “social penetration” are also required as part of the transformation process (Chen 2003:225) i.e. designing appropriate curricula particularly in African languages, and making the languages visible through visual representation such as signage and multilingual graduation ceremonies. Deeper curriculum change and multilingual courses can arguably create meaningful interaction despite perceived stereotyped cultural differences. Intercultural communication and increased social cohesion is then inevitable in this context, thereby entrenching the African voice and identity. Therefore South African universities must play a significant role in implementing multilingualism in the educational milieu in order to assist with transformation and Africanisation of universities (Alexander 2002; Kaschula and Maseko 2009; Maseko 2014).

Part of this transformation deals with the notion of identity negotiation. The challenge at most South African universities is to negotiate an identity of belonging for students. Language and culture are important in this process and acknowledgement thereof can create an environment conducive to inclusivity rather than exclusivity. Furthermore, an individual's self-identification through language opens up interaction with other cultures, thereby deepening a unified sense of voice rather than voiceless silence and cultural alienation. Developing mother tongue and second language vocation-specific courses is integral to fostering this sense of acceptance and inclusion (Maseko 2008; 2014).

It is equally important to develop material in African languages to support the LoLT which is English in most HEIs (Wolff 2002, 2013; Dalvit, Murray and Terzoli 2009; Sam 2010; Gambushe 2014; Mawonga 2014). The way we use and talk about languages at universities will influence campus "culture". Language is the vehicle of culture (Lanham 1980:11). In this regard, African languages are important in affirming an identity that has been undermined by dominant Eurocentric societal and institutional systems which tend to acknowledge and support the minority rather than the majority. In developing university programmes that promote multilingualism (as already suggested by Minister Nzimande as early as 2011 and analysed by Turner 2011) we should be informed by intercultural theorists such as Ting Toomey (1999), Gudykunst (2003) and Collier (1997). Ting-Toomey talks of "identity vulnerability" where we communicate with unfamiliar people. Universities need then to create "identity security" through multilingual/multicultural programmes which serve to foster transformation as is presently being done at the University of KwaZulu-Natal with the introduction of isiZulu, or the compulsory teaching and learning of isiXhosa for Journalism (mother tongue and second language) at Rhodes University.

Both Ting-Toomey and McLaren (1998:16) highlight the fact that culture is a changing human phenomenon that should be respected, both in terms of one's own culture and the values of others. Gudykunst (2003:163) points out that "[i]ntercultural communication...is conceptualised as communication between people from different...social classes, and interracial/interethnic communication..." On the one hand culture is like an iceberg: the deeper layers, for example traditions, beliefs, and values are hidden from our view; we only see and hear the uppermost layers of cultural artefacts, fashion, trends, and pop music. On the other hand, culture is dynamic and changes with the people within the system. This dynamism can be reflected in the cultural artefact, for example Western and African healing systems in pharmacy or medical courses. Shared features of South African "culture" seem to emerge only at the uppermost levels and universities need to engage with this in creative ways in order to create a deeper meaning of social cohesion and a unified voice. Ting-Toomey (1999:3) states that "...the achievement of effective intercultural communication is dependent on people's ability to manage differences flexibly and mindfully." University courses should be underpinned by an ethos of respect for self and others. They are central to university transformation, representing a deeper, more difficult level of transformation than say for example visible multilingual signage or visual representation, though this is also important (Kaschula et al 2009). It is these two facets of transformation that the Rhodes University community needs to grapple with.

RHODES UNIVERSITY: A LANGUAGE PRACTICE CASE STUDY

In a more recent study, Stein (2014:3) suggests that while much has been achieved in terms of transformation of the student body at Rhodes, these initiatives, "...while commendable, have not gone far enough in terms of tackling the problem of Rhodes' 'racialized identity'." This can be said of most HWUs. In a similar vein, Mkhize (2005:119) describes the institution as a "...white *colonial* vestige in a predominantly *black* South Africa..." thereby bringing to the fore the colonial legacy and culture which still persists at the institution. Indeed once again, the on-going role of language usage in changing this "voiceless" legacy and enabling transformation and Africanisation is crucial as shown below.

What follows is a brief analysis of the teaching and learning of African languages at Rhodes University, arguably a success story, as well as the creation and implementation of a language policy at the university as part of greater transformation. The purpose of this case study is to assess the extent of meaningful engagement in regard to language issues and to provide a possible model for implementation and thereby contributing to on-going transformation (Docrat and Kaschula 2015). Through engagement with management, and recognising a need from the student body, isiXhosa mother tongue courses were re-introduced in 2008, with the first PhD being written in isiXhosa and awarded in 2017. It is indeed almost inconceivable that a university in the heartland of amaXhosa speakers would not have offered isiXhosa at the mother tongue level as part of the Africanisation of the university, where isiXhosa mother tongue students can learn about and in the language, creating "voice" where there was previously academic silence (Obanya 2004). Previously students could only learn isiXhosa as a second or additional language. Today there are 600 students studying isiXhosa and African languages at both mother tongue and second language levels at this university, from first year through to third year, Honours, MA and PhD levels as well as vocation-specific courses discussed below. The emphasis is on isiXhosa (though at postgraduate level any language can be studied) due to the location of the university and in line with the provincial language policy. The Humanities Faculty Board has also accepted that postgraduate theses can now be written in a language other than English. Indeed, language has become a visible marker of Africanisation in what was arguably one of the most Eurocentric universities in South Africa, as reflected even in the controversial name "Rhodes University".

As part of this transformation, vocation-specific courses have been developed in Journalism, Law, Education and Pharmacy, with the Journalism course being compulsory at both mother tongue and second language levels. In other words, in the same way that a UCT student cannot graduate with a medical degree without passing isiXhosa and Afrikaans, Journalism students at Rhodes must pass the required level of isiXhosa. When it comes to the teaching of African languages as second languages, generic first additional language or second language courses do have their place. However, there needs to be a more integrated social approach to the teaching of these languages as part of transforming university curricula and culture, creating the "mindfulness" discussed earlier. Furthermore, the development of vocation-specific courses is vital at this time in South Africa's socio-political history. There

remains little evidence of a normalised, integrated, transformed, multilingual society, at least from a linguistic point of view. Instead what exists now is a “linguistic fault-line” which divides the “haves” and the “have-nots” into a 3-tier economic system based on those citizens who are communicatively competent in English, those who have a partial knowledge of the language and those who speak no English at all (Alexander 2002). It could be argued that the growth in numbers and diversification of isiXhosa courses came about at Rhodes through a process of meaningful engagement with students, management and experts in the respective fields such as Pharmacy, as well as with practitioners on the ground. Interviews with practitioners and observations in loco influenced the design and content of the respective curricula.

The above developments are informed by the university language policy which was accepted by Senate and the University Council in 2005 and revised in 2014. **This language policy will again be revised in 2018 and the suggestions accepted at the Transformation Summit will be vitally important in this revision process.** As part of a meaningful engagement exercise the university approved the formation of the University Language Committee in 2011. This committee is made up of representatives from across the university community, from support staff to students, professors and Deans of Faculties. The main function of this committee is to oversee the implementation of multilingualism on campus in a meaningfully engaged manner, to organise annual multilingualism awareness events, as well as to revise the University Language Policy every three years (for further information See Docrat and Kaschula 2015). The Rhodes Language Committee is based on the model followed at UCT.

A brief summary of the policy is included below for ease of access:

SUMMARY OF RHODES LANGUAGE POLICY

Key principles and commitments

The policy recognizes English as the primary language of learning and teaching (LoLT), and as the language in which its official business is conducted. However, it also seeks to facilitate the achievement of transformation through the recognition of multilingual diversity. As part of this, it seeks to ensure that language usage does not act as a barrier to equity and access and that it creates a supportive environment in which all members of the university feel they belong. It also aims to prepare graduates as multilingual citizens. With these principles and commitments in mind,

1. The policy requires of the university to support the achievement of academic literacy and proficiency in English as the LOLT for all students. Such support should include the utilization of students’ own languages.
2. It commits itself to the promotion of all the official languages of South Africa and the equitable use of the three official provincial languages.

3. It seeks to develop isiXhosa as a language to support the LoLT. Here it states that the University "... aims to strengthen the status of isiXhosa by promoting its value as a medium of communication among academic and support staff."
4. It requires of the university to create conditions for the intellectualization of isiXhosa and African languages more generally. As part of this, it should ensure the use of isiXhosa as a language of learning and eventually also teaching.
5. It requires of Academic Departments to promote multilingualism within their teaching and research practices. As part of this, tutoring should be responsive to linguistics needs; teachers should use African languages as resources in meaning-making; and the university should facilitate the writing and examination of theses in languages other than English.
6. The University is required to ensure that translation and interpreting in isiXhosa and Afrikaans is provided for student and staff where necessary and feasible.

Guidelines for implementation

1. The Rhodes University Language Committee is required to facilitate awareness of and sensitivity to multilingualism
2. Academic Departments should establish strategies for the achievement of academic literacy that are responsive to the linguistic competencies and needs of their students. Such strategies should include the utilization of tutoring programs and development of teaching resources.
3. Infrastructure, Operations and Finance Division must ensure that university infrastructure promotes a culture of multilingualism. As part of this, they should ensure that selected signage on campus will be in isiXhosa, English and Afrikaans.
4. The Registrar's Division together with Communications and Marketing must ensure that university branding and correspondence is in at least two of the major provincial languages.
5. The Human Resources Division must ensure that selection committees for posts employ interpreters where necessary.
6. Selection committees for posts should prioritize candidates who are multilingual
7. Faculties and CHERTL must continuously evaluate the extent to which curriculum and teaching-learning methods are appropriate for those for whom English is an additional language as well as the extent to which they facilitate the students' ability to use English as the LoLT.

The Rhodes language policy was revised in 2013 and the revisions were approved by Senate and Council in 2014. The policy is trilingual and available in isiXhosa, English and Afrikaans. This policy revision involved an extensive attempt at meaningful engagement. A matrix containing a questionnaire was sent out to the entire university community including the student council, all heads of departments, units, institutes and trade unions. This was to assess the state of multilingualism on campus and to assess further what the university community wished to achieve in regard to the implementation of the language policy and multilingualism. The responses to this matrix were collated and analysed by a sub-committee of the Language Committee. The sub-committee then reworked the policy in line with the collated comments and suggestions. The revised document was tabled a number of times to the Language Committee. Once accepted, it was forwarded to the Equity and Institutional Culture Committee where it was again re-worked by a sub-committee set up by the Vice-Chancellor which included members of the Language Committee. It was then submitted for final approval by Senate in May 2014 and duly accepted. The above data and analysis of process is included here as an example of an attempt at a meaningful engagement exercise to encourage transformation and Africanisation in a transparent and meaningful way. In this regard the late Neville Alexander in his extensive body of works ranging from the inception of a democratic South Africa, to his last publication entitled *Thoughts on the new South Africa* (2013), points out that there has been no one policy or legislation which has had the ability to address both the constitutional language provisions and which has been successfully implemented.

Furthermore, at Rhodes and various institutions of higher learning, the intellectualisation of African languages is seen as part of transformation at South African universities. At certain universities this is being facilitated through centres, for example CHED at the University of Cape Town and the Fundani Centre for Higher Education Development at the Cape Peninsula University of Technology. The University of Johannesburg has a Language Unit which fulfils this purpose. At other universities it is being spearheaded by Departments of African languages, for example at the University of Venda and the University of South Africa.

More recently this intellectualisation is being facilitated by a Department of Higher Education and Training Catalytic Project in African language concept formation run by the CEPD and hosted by Rhodes University. This project is working across universities, provinces and languages. A further example is the NRF Chair in the Intellectualisation of African Languages, Multilingualism and Education, hosted at Rhodes and working in six areas of intellectualisation including policy formation and applied language studies as well as lexicography and terminology development, theoretical linguistics and literature. The Chair facilitates national research in linguistic theory, applied language studies as well as literary studies. This will hopefully lead the way for universities to see intellectualisation in process and to see how it can assist with deeper transformation at South African universities.

While some strides have been made at Rhodes, the Language Working Group for the Transformation Summit suggests that better integration of best language practices are still to

take place across the University more generally and we will speak to this in our specific recommendations below.

METHODOLOGY OF THE LANGUAGE GROUP

As indicated above, the language working group established a two-fold approach to understanding staff and student perceptions about the language best practices or otherwise at Rhodes University:

1. Collection and analysis of documentation related to best practices through the work of the Rhodes Language Committee and the official Rhodes Language Policy
2. Discussion emanating from the public screening of the DVD “Sink or Swim”

Once the documentation was analysed, certain recommendations were suggested for the adaptation of policies to facilitate university wide transformation. The points that came out of the discussion groups were also included as final recommendations.

FINDINGS, DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The findings and recommendations are divided between issues related to management/administration and those pertaining to the academic project or pedagogy.

MANAGEMENT / ADMINISTRATION

1. All official, Human Resources Management and Governance documents should be translated into isiXhosa and Afrikaans. This list includes contractual documents, disciplinary processes documents and policies, minutes of governance bodies etc. The documents should be translated into 21st century isiXhosa/Afrikaans used in every day communication and not into academic isiXhosa/Afrikaans. The institution should have professional translators and interpreters.

There are instances when staff members sign documents without understanding what is contained in the document. Some staff members do not have the courage to refuse to sign documents whose contents they do not understand when they are ordered or asked to.

Furthermore, it is recommended that the stationery and the webpage of the institution needs to reflect the multilingual policy of the institution.

2. HR processes, such as disciplinary processes and interviews, should not be conducted in English only.

Even though interpretation services are offered, a staff member facing a disciplinary panel is often disempowered by the fact that he/she does not understand most of the communication taking place in the room. Poor performance in interviews is also often as a result of this disempowerment.

3. Interpretation services should not be offered for someone to accept or decline. In contexts where language might be a barrier to comprehension e.g. where managers have not learnt isiXhosa and other members of the unit have not learnt English, interpretation services should be standard and offered as a matter of course.

Individuals who work at Rhodes University come to the institution with an understanding that if they speak English they will receive better treatment at work than those who cannot speak English. Individuals are therefore likely to be more ready to struggle to speak English than to indicate that their level of comprehension of English is low and that they would be more comfortable communicating largely in isiXhosa.

4. Transformation should not just be something discussed at Rhodes, these discussions about language use in school and in the work place should also be taken to the township. Township schools and the university should work in partnership.

The positive valuation of the use of isiXhosa and other languages for work and study should be promoted from primary school level. The language should be used and celebrated from primary school level.

5. Managers and people in supervisory positions should learn the language and the culture of the people with whom they work.

Much of the conflict between managers, supervisors and members of units is also as a result of poor communication between supervisors and managers and the staff in their units. Instead of staff who have very little in terms of resources being expected to learn English, knowledge of isiXhosa and Afrikaans should be made a compulsory or desirable skill for managers.

6. To create multilingual signage for all new buildings and selected buildings such as Eden Grove. (See Appendix 1 for suggested draft multilingual signage.)

Multilingual signage will automatically create a more welcoming environment on campus and it will contribute to making languages more visible on campus. While multilingual signage might only be seen as aesthetic or as a sentimental gesture to multilingualism, the extent to which this is welcoming should not be undermined.

PEDAGOGY AND THE ACADEMIC PROJECT

7. Tutors who are multilingual need to be identified in terms of the languages that they speak. Discussion should take place and be encouraged in these languages and this process should be officially recognized and empowered through policy recognition. Students can then decide for themselves whether they wish to attend an English only tutorial or one that is conducted through their mother tongue or another language(s).
8. The University should consider a language requirement as part of all degrees that are offered.
9. Lecturing staff should be encouraged to become bi- or multilingual and they should also be encouraged to present bi- or multilingual power point presentations and to integrate multilingualism as part of their teaching strategies. T

The role of language in the construction of an institutional culture that encourages inclusiveness, access and success for all who inhabit the institution needs to be emphasised, from support staff to top management; also an institutional culture whose language policy and practices recognise our geographical location, and (national) legislative responsibility in development and recognition of isiXhosa in domains where it has been previously systematically and purposefully marginalised.

We could recommend a language requirement for *all* staff to be included in the confirmation of their tenure.

10. At Rhodes, a similar documentary film could be made to the Sink or Swim DVD mentioned above, drawing upon actual classroom practices however small they may be. Many of these practices are unknown to the broader Rhodes academic community. Examples are: what the School of Journalism is doing through use of isiXhosa for professional purposes; Dr Mkhize's 'disruptive pedagogic encounter' to make non-isiXhosa students at university aware of the cognitive tie between Eastern Cape history and the isiXhosa language in which original texts were written; Prof Kaschula's course where undergraduate learners are taught bilingually, producing work in their respective mother tongues i.e. isiXhosa and English – this course presently forms part of Ms Ntombovuyo Ngaphu's MA thesis on bi- and multilingual teaching pedagogies; Prof Pam Maseko's (and her student Sanele Ntshingana's thesis) on Xhosa literary texts during the colonial era etc.
11. Small scale projects should be initiated at Rhodes, such as translating key texts from each discipline by students as part of their course work; assignment and test questions in isiXhosa (in addition to English); a policy across the curriculum licensing the use of code-switching/ translanguaging in classroom discussion.

12. A key text in each discipline should be selected and translated into isiXhosa and/or other African languages.
13. The creation of further discipline-specific multilingual glossaries to aid cognition.
14. The further development of mother tongue and second language for specific purposes courses such as those already operating in Law, Pharmacy, Journalism and Education.
15. Use of languages other than English should be encouraged in the lecture halls and tutorials as evidenced in the MA thesis being researched and written by Ms Ngaphu. This can be a context-driven process, while the core language remains English.
16. The University could explore offering bilingual degrees where half the subjects are taught and examined through English and the other half are taught and examined through another language such as isiXhosa. This model is already being effectively used at the University of Limpopo.

The possibility in recognising multiple linguistic and cultural capital that students bring with in a multilingual learning space should be encouraged. With that in mind, we recommend an expansion of possibilities in some programmes, where students can take some courses offered in isiXhosa or another language. We can convey African ways of thinking and knowledge in any language, as long as that language is not disabling to others. We recommend that each Faculty gives an indication of how they are including African epistemologies in their curricula.

17. The University must acknowledge across faculties that postgraduate work does not only take place through the medium of English and that theses can be written in other languages.

Furthermore, all theses passed by the university should have abstracts in at least two languages, one of which *should* be isiXhosa if such thesis is written in English.

18. Explore the use of interpreting services in formal lectures where deemed necessary.
19. The University should consider the established of a Centre for Multilingualism which oversees all issues related to multilingualism, translation and interpreting. At one level, the Centre proposed could seek to provide practical language support for the production of theses and publications, as well as assisting with the development of the University's multilingual materials and providing language acquisition courses. At the other, it could aim to further develop the academic space in which postgraduate students are enabled to acquire applied language skills based on a firm

understanding of the theoretical background of language studies, with particular reference to South Africa.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

Building on this notion of multilingualism, South African universities should be thinking of intellectualising selected African languages to be used as media of instruction where the majority of students speak such a language and are proficient in it as a mother-tongue. The term “intellectualisation” is a contentious one but in this instance it is taken to mean the entrenchment of both corpus and status language planning, in other words developing linguistic repertoires in a language as well as academic visibility. The notion of the intellectualisation of languages is the applied sociolinguistic equivalent of the political agenda regarding the empowerment of languages. It targets the usability and actual use of any language in all semantic and pragmatic domains, particularly in education. This term implies that African languages already have intellectual content and form to draw on in furthering this intellectualisation process.

The intellectualisation process at universities should be done in the interests of better cognition and conceptual understanding, the core business of any university, whether located in China and teaching in Chinese or in Germany and teaching in German. Busch, Busch and Press (2014:311) refer to Alexander’s notion of “intellectualisation” of African languages as a way forward. This additive mother-tongue-based language of instruction policy has already been proposed in policy documents at the University of KwaZulu-Natal which is forging ahead with its compulsory isiZulu language learning policy, thereby bringing the student back to the centre of the debate of what role the university actually serves in South African society, and what type of student should be graduated. What stops a history class (dealing with Eastern Cape history), for example from being taught and examined in isiXhosa at Walter Sisulu University where the majority of students and the lecturer are isiXhosa-speaking? The answer is simple. It is not the lack of isiXhosa vocabulary, but rather the neo-colonial, silenced or oppressed voice and attitudes of students who embrace the hegemony of English no matter what the intellectual cost to themselves, and lecturers as well as a minority of students (often monolingual) who do not wish to experiment with multilingualism in the sense of embracing language as a resource. They represent what could be referred to as a silent and often distorted monolingual English voice in a naturally noisy multilingual African environment. They rather resort to seeing language or multilingualism as a problem and therefore to be avoided in the lecture halls and tutorials (Ruiz 1984). According to Wolff (2013:12) these negative attitudes towards multilingualism and multiculturalism “...have meanwhile turned into self-fulfilling prophecies which are prohibitive to the empowering use of African languages in high and prestigious domains... formal – and in particular higher – education, science and technology.”

One needs to draw a distinction between language of learning and teaching (LoLT) i.e. the language of instruction at South African universities, at the moment English, and how languages other than English can be used in an empowering and transformative way, in other words to be seen as a resource rather than as an impediment. Ruiz’s (1984) three orientations

to language planning: namely language as a problem, language as a right, and language as a resource, constitute a theoretical framework that university language planners need to engage with. Orientation refers to “a complex of dispositions toward language and its role, and toward languages and their role in society” (Ruiz 1984:16). The crucial argument is that the significant role of language planners is to keep these language orientations overt. The role of language planners, whether they be at universities or not, is to confirm whether these orientations have been accommodated in the existing policies, and also to advocate them in newly established policies (Ruiz 1984:16).

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APPENDIX 1

SELECTED MULTILINGUAL SIGNAGE PROPOSAL

IsiXhosa, English and Afrikaans

All these terms can be capitalised

Preamble:

A number of issues are raised in the terms of reference of the Rhodes University Language Committee (RULC). Some of the points raised are relevant to the issue of signage on campus and these are quoted below:

“To advise on multilingualism and creating multilingualism awareness and a multilingual environment, both on and off-campus...

To provide advice to the University’s Naming Committee and to ensure accuracy regarding multilingual signage on campus...”

In terms of the above clauses contained in the RULC terms of references the language committee is then in a position to advise regarding multilingual signage on the Rhodes campus.

It is suggested that this is to be done in conjunction with Infrastructure, Finance and Operations (IFO) as well as the Communication and Marketing division, the former being responsible for putting up any signage and the latter being in charge of University branding.

The suggested multilingual signage will require university approval at the level of Senate where all minutes of the RULC are finally presented.

It is hoped that this initiative will be seen as forming part of transformation on campus and of the institution, enhance the academic project, and contribute to making Rhodes a home for all, representative of the diverse cultures and languages that makes for a vibrant post-1994 South Africa.

This initiative speaks to both policy documents on a national and provincial level and it also speaks to the recently revised RU Language Policy which was initially accepted by Senate in 2005.

The Constitution

At national level the Constitution of the country, and particularly Section 6, seeks to create “parity of esteem” between the 11 official languages. At the provincial level 4 languages are recognised as official. These are IsiXhosa, Sesotho, Afrikaans and English. The University Language Policy seeks to promote 3 of these 4 provincial languages, namely IsiXhosa, English and Afrikaans with English being the Language of Learning and Teaching at the university.

The multilingual signage therefore speaks to these policy documents, particularly Section 6 of the Constitution, the 2002 Policy Framework for Higher Education (where the use of African languages is entrenched) as well as our own Institutional Policy.

The Language Policy for Higher Education

Our national policy uses as a point of departure the 1995 Language Plan Task Group (LANGTAG) recommendations which ‘...provided a framework for the development of the indigenous languages.’ The *Language Policy for Higher Education* (LPHE, 2002) is now the national policy document guiding language use and practice in South African HEIs. It makes provision for the role different South African official languages must play in higher education. It states that individual and national development should be facilitated by promoting the use of all appropriate official languages, especially in higher education. In recognising the widely accepted role of a university in research, and the historical backlog in the development of indigenous African languages, it also stipulates that universities need to take the initiative in the development and use of African languages in higher education. However, it is also the accepted view that English and Afrikaans, because of the state of their intellectualisation, and as a result primarily of the privileges they enjoyed in the past political dispensation, will continue to be languages of tuition for some time to come.

In essence, the LPHE recommends that universities make provisions for assisting students speaking languages other than those of tuition with academic literacy; to make provisions regarding the academic role of indigenous African languages against other languages within the institution; to undertake projects that focus on the development of all South African languages such that they can be used across disciplines, as well as their use as formal academic languages at the higher education level; encourage multilingualism by identifying and promoting the learning of at least one additional language or supportive language of tuition; and provide a comprehensive plan regarding the development and implementation plan of relevant languages in each institution as to when they would be fully developed to be used as mediums of instruction in specific disciplines.

Multilingual signage at Rhodes

Multilingual signage at Rhodes University therefore falls within the ambit of furthering the visibility of African languages on campus and also contributing to transformation, though on the uppermost visible level of visible language planning, namely signage.

One of the main challenges in the development of African languages in Higher Education is at this policy level. While an admirable policy exists, which, at a glance, should ensure development of African languages and promotion of multilingualism, the policy often lacks a plan of implementation, as well as directives on who should lead or drive its implementation (at both national and institutional level).

The purpose of this signage document is then to create policy guidelines for all multilingual signage applications on campus and to suggest as a point of departure specific categories of buildings that should be signed in a multilingual way as well as to provide such tri-lingual terminology in English, Afrikaans and isiXhosa for ratification and implementation.

It is also suggested that the University motto “Where Leaders Learn” be translated into the 3 languages put forward in the University Language Plan and that all official documentation reflect this multilingualism. The University of Cape Town as well as the University of Johannesburg have set a good example in this regard.

A recommendation and decision will need to be made in terms of the order in which the languages will be used and appear on multilingual signage. An existing example of a metre X metre trilingual sign would be the existing sign for the “NRF SARChI Chair: Intellectualisation of African languages, Multilingualism and Education” as reflected in item number 23, Appendix 1 below. This should dispel any fears that trilingual signage would not be possible due to space constraints on any particular board. This is perhaps the lengthiest of any possible university trilingual signage and it fits comfortably on this metre X metre temporary signage board:



Proposed process to be followed:

It is suggested that all existing signage be re-visited and re-worked into trilingual signage where appropriate.

It is suggested that all new signage needs to use the 3 official university languages in accordance with the above-mentioned policy.

Academic departments teaching those languages must verify accuracy.

A distinction also needs to be made between different types of university signage which would be applicable for different buildings. Each will take a different form of multilingual signage. Examples of where multilingual signage will occur include external street signage, internal street signage and streets on campus, the N2 and so on. This will include then information signage; academic buildings and facilities such as laboratories, administration, the library; public spaces; student residences and related facilities, sports buildings and other facilities. See below the list of buildings on campus.

Implementation guidelines include the following:

Buildings to be considered for multilingual signage are chosen in collaboration with IFO and Communications and Marketing (who assist with branding) through the LC;

All new names suggested by the Naming Committee should be presented to the RULC in order to consider multilingual signage for such names and buildings;

The RULC oversees initial translation of signage for present selected buildings and this is vetted by practitioners working and lecturing in these languages; Departments and HODs etc are consulted regarding final signage proposals together with the RU Aesthetics Committee; Infrastructure, Finance and Operations will need to approve all multilingual signage based on the above policy guidelines and implement the erection of such signage. Any disputes must be referred to the LC where there is disagreement regarding multilingual signage.

The following Multilingual signage framework is proposed:

[Such a framework can create wording, design and colour standards and style that make decisions and use easy]

1. Academic Buildings
 - a. Lecture theatres, seminar rooms, labs, etc.
2. Offices and Administration Buildings
3. Halls and Student Residences
4. Guest and transit accommodation
5. Street and Facilities

APPENDIX 1

EXAMPLES OF MULTILINGUAL SIGNAGE FOR FURTHER CONSIDERATION

1.

IThala leeNcwadi
Library
Biblioteek

2.

IZiko leeNkcukacha zabaFundi
Student Bureau
Studenteburo

3.

UNdlunkulu
Main Administration Building
Hoofadministrasiegebou

4.

ULawulo IwezemiDlalo
Sports Administration
Sport-administrasie

5.
ImiHlaba neziTiya
Grounds and Gardens
Terrein en Tuine

6.
Isakhiwo iStephen Bantu Biko
Stephen Bantu Biko Building
Stephen Bantu Biko Gebou

7.
Ubuxhakaxhaka nokuSebenza
Infrastructure and Operations
Infrastruktuur en Ondernemings

8.
INdlu yangaSese
Toilet
Toilet

9.
IziNdlu zangaSese
Toilets
Toilette

10.
INdawo
yoLwamkelo–uNxibelelwano
Main reception - Communications –
Ontvangs – Kommunikasie

11.
ICandelo loKhuselo lweYunivesithi
Campus Protection Unit
Kampus-beskermingseenheid

12.
IziKhombisi zoNcedo kwabaseNgxakini
Emergency signs/routes
Noodaanwysings/-roetes

13.
INdawo yokuGcina abaNtwana
Day Care Centre
Dagsorgsentrum

14.

IZiko lokuThuthuzela
Counselling Centre
Beradingsentrum

15.

IZiko loNcedo kwezoMthetho
Legal Aid Clinic
Regsadvieskliniek

16.

IZiko loNyango
Sanatorium
Sanatorium

17.

IOfisi yoMmeli wabaSebenzi
Shop Steward's office
Kantoor van die Werkgesant

18.

liNdawo zezoNqulo eYunivesithi
Places of Religion on Campus
Godsdiensterreine op Kampus

19.

Ulapha ngoku
'You are here'
Jy is hier

20.

IMaphu
Map
Kaart

21.

AmaSebe
Departments
Departemente

22.

IFakhalthi
Faculty
Fakulteit

23.

NRF SARChI USihlalo: Ukuphuculwa kweeLwimi zesiNtu, ukuSetyenziswa kweeLwimi ngeeeLwimi nokuFundiswa kwazo (isiKolo seeLwimi)

NRF SARChI Chair: Intellectualisation of African Languages, Multilingualism and Education (School of Languages)

NRF SARChI Leerstoel: Intellektualisering van Afrikatale, Veeltaligheid en Opvoedkunde (Skool vir Tale)

24.

IZiko loPhando kwiMfundo ePhakamileyo, ukuHlohla nokuFunda

Centre for Higher Education Research, Teaching and Learning (CHERTL)

Sentrum vir Hoër Onderwys Navorsing, Onderrig en Leer

25.

ICandelo leeNkonzo zemiZobo

Graphic Services Unit

Eenheid vir Grafiese Dienste

26.

ISEbe loFundo-nzulu ngoCwangciso-mali

Department of Accounting

Departement Rekeningkunde

27.

ISEbe leAntropholoji

Department of Anthropology

Departement Antropologie

28.

Department of Biochemistry, Microbiology & Biotechnology

ISEbe loFundo-nzulu ngobomi beziNambuzane

Departement Biochemie, Mikrobiologie en Biotegnologie

29.

ISEbe loFundo-nzulu ngeziTyalo

Department of Botany

Departement Plantkunde

30.

ISEbe leKhemestri

Department of Chemistry

Departement Chemie

31.
ISEbe loFundo-nzulu ngeeKhompyutha
Department of Computer Science
Departement Rekenaarwetenskap
32.
ISEbe leDrama
Department of Drama
Departement Drama
33.
Department of Economics and Economic History
ISEbe leZoqoqosho neMwali yeZoqoqosho
Departement Ekonomie en Geskiedenis van Ekonomie
34.
ISEbe lezeMfundo
Department of Education
Departement Opvoedkunde
35.
ISEbe lesiNgesi
Department of English
Departement Engels
36.
ISEbe loLwimi lwesiNgesi neLingwistikhi
Department of English Language and Linguistics
Departement Engels en Linguistiek
37.
ISEbe loFundo-nzulu ngoKusingqongileyo
Department of Environmental Science
Departement Omgewingswetenskap
38.
ISEbe lezobuGcisa nokuZoba
Department of Fine Art
Departement Kuns
39.
ISEbe loFundo-nzulu ngezeLizwe
Department of Geography
Departement Geografie

40.

ISEbe loFundo-nzulu ngoLwakhiwo loMhlaba
Department of Geology
Departement Geologie

41.

ISEbe lezeMbali
Department of History
Departement Geskiedenis

42.

ISEbe leNtshukumo-mzimba
Department of Human Kinetics and Ergonomics
Departement Menslike Bewegingskunde en Ergonomika

43.

ISEbe loFundo-nzulu ngeeNtlanzi noSetyenziso lweeNtlanzi
Department of Ichthyology and Fisheries Science
Departement Igtiologie en Visbedryfkunde

44.

ISEbe leeNdlela zoGcino-nkcukacha kwiKhompyutha
Department of Information Systems
Departement Inligtingstelsels

45.

ISEbe lezobuNtatheli noFundo-nzulu ngezoSasazo-ndaba
Department of Journalism and Media Studies
Departement Joernalistiek en Mediastudie

46.

ISEbe lezoMthetho
Department of Law
Departement Regte

47.

ISEbe loFundo-nzulu ngezoLawulo
Department of Management
Departement Bestuurswetenskap

48.

ISEbe lezoBalo
Department of Mathematics
Departement Wiskunde

49.

ISEbe loFundo-nzulu ngezoMculo
Department of Music and Musicology
Departement Musiek en Musikologie

50.

ISEbe zamaYeza
Faculty of Pharmacy
Fakulteit Aptekerswese

51.

ISEbe leFilosofi
Department of Philosophy
Departement Filosofie

52.

ISEbe leFizikisi nezoMbane
Department of Physics and Electronics
Departement Fisika en Elektronika

53.

ISEbe loFundo-nzulu ngezoPolitiko nangezeHlabathi Jikelele
Department of Political and International Studies
Departement Politieke Wetenskap en Internasionale Studie

54.

ISEbe loFundo-nzulu ngezeNgqondo
Department of Psychology
Departement Sielkunde

55.

IsiKolo seeLwimi
School of Languages
Skool vir Tale

56.

ISEbe loFundo-nzulu ngeeNkcukacha-manani
Department of Statistics
Departement Statistiek

57.

ISEbe loFundo-nzulu ngeziLwanyana neziNambuzane
Department of Zoology and Entomology
Departement Dierkunde en Entomologie