

RESEARCH ARTICLE:

Indigenous Language Policy in Academic Writing at South African Higher Education: The Issue of Publishing and Accessing Scientific Materials in Setswana

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Abstract

The Language Policy of South African Higher Education was adopted in November 2002 to ensure that all official languages are equitably used and developed as scientific languages in higher education. The main issue is to address publication and access of scientific materials in the medium of indigenous languages. South African government has not made much progress in exploring and exploiting the full use of scientific materials of indigenous languages in higher education. Although a vast majority of articles are published in English, researchers in the field of indigenous languages are expected to provide research in high language proficiency which imposes a challenge for most of them. This paper, therefore, focuses on the post-positivism method as a tool utilized for observation and measurement of the reality that exists when planning and implementing measures for academic writing in the medium of indigenous languages. The systematic theory herein will portray how the strategies of language policy implementation plan will increase publication and access of scientific indigenous materials. This paper uses qualitative research to improve the system utilized in the implementation of the indigenous language policy plan. The data collected herein has been derived from existing materials such as books, journals and online articles.

Keywords: publishing; indigenous language; scientific materials; post-positivism; systematic theory

Introduction

Higher Education Act (2020: 9) states that language continues to be a barrier to access and success for many students at South African higher education institutions. Structurally, indigenous languages lack official space to function as academic and scientific languages. Therefore, this study aims to investigate how the implementation plan of indigenous language policy affects academic writing in South African higher education from the South African perspective. Writing and publishing in a language is one of the ways of preserving it for the present and future and ensuring that it is not neglected (Ngulube, 2012: 12). One of the expectations of South African higher education was that researchers must maintain a high language proficiency in the publication of articles where most of them are published in English. This is an indication that the South African government has not made much progress in exploring and exploiting the full use of scientific materials of indigenous languages in higher education. In the report on the use of African languages as mediums of instruction in higher education (2015: 46) the South African Minister of Higher Education states that the democratic dispensation has not made much progress in exploring and exploiting the full potential of indigenous African languages in facilitating access and success in higher education. Hence, the objective is to explore challenges in developing indigenous materials to be used in scholarly writings or for publication.

Madondo (2023: 1) points out that the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa provided a legal framework for the promotion of multilingualism, especially concerning developing African languages and acknowledging and celebrating language diversity (Republic of South Africa, 1996). South Africa is a plurilingual and multicultural

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country with twelve official languages. The demographics of the South African population support the establishment of twelve official languages such as English, Afrikaans, Setswana, Sesotho, Sepedi, isiZulu, isiXhosa, isiNdebele, Siswati, Tshivenda, Xitsonga and South African Sign Language approved in May 2023. Given this linguistic environment, the implementation processes of language policy at South African higher educational institutions are very slow. South Africa's democratic universities emerged as a hope for young black students, that they would be educated in their mother tongue. However, the challenges faced by students is that politics and history have denied them access to, and preservation of their languages. The Constitution itself is explicit that, 'All official languages must enjoy parity of esteem and must be treated equally', while section 29 (2) of the Bill of Rights stipulates 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' (Republic of South Africa, 1996). However, the status of English remains unchallenged even in this democratic dispensation. There is a delay in the effective implementation of language policy. Consequently, most young black students are not confident enough to use their indigenous languages in most universities. According to Prah (2003: 3), "The most significant victimization that is going on in the present age is the neglect of their languages and a concerted effort to assimilate them into so-called modernity".

There is a need to create situations that include and encourage the use of indigenous languages. People expressing themselves in their indigenous languages will be able to actively participate in civil society (Ngulube, 2012: 13). Historically, during the apartheid era South African education was divided into two parts, education designed for blacks and another system for whites. Afrikaans and English enjoyed an upper official status in that era. During the National Party's rule, Afrikaans became the dominant language in South Africa while the South African black indigenous languages, known as Bantu languages, were not recognised as scientific languages. This was done to sustain white supremacy. This ideology remains unchallenged and therefore this study could contribute to highlighting the challenges faced by higher institutions of learning in the publishing of scientific material in the medium of indigenous African languages. This would highlight proper planning in the implementation of language policy in most South African universities. Institutions of higher education in South Africa have prioritised research outputs through an upward trajectory of research publications, innovative ideas, and postgraduate studies. This prioritising of research outputs brought up challenges for indigenous language lecturers who are unable to do research through their language of preference.

South Africa is a plurilingual country that is characterised by a history of segregation and apartheid. When South Africa obtained dominion status in 1910, the vision of General Louis Botha, the then-prime minister of the Union of South Africa, was focused on the British and the Dutch, (the Afrikaner people) (Lebeloane and Machaisa, 2017). This exercise meant that whites were the ones who decided on the future of blacks, which included their education system, among others. During this era of inequality, blacks were not allowed in white schools and vice versa. As part of the corrective measures, the democratic government introduced policies to develop the African languages, as well as their use as a medium of instruction and scholarship. Jansen (1990) states that in 1922 the teaching of vernacular was made compulsory in all primary schools by the government of that time. Historically, the use of vernacular posted the stage of insecurity and inferiority complex to the apartheid government. In 1976 Afrikaans was made compulsory in black schools. This was not welcomed by the black students who resorted to revolt against the implementation of Afrikaans as a compulsory language of instruction in schools. The disruption in the South African education landscape is not new given the history of protests in 2016 #feesmustfall where students protested the colonial curriculum used in higher learning institutions. In the researchers' observation, their voices were not heard. The curriculum remains unchanged, and the implementation of indigenous language policy is still a challenge to South African universities.

Although the implementation of languages changed by a democratic transition in the education of South Africa whereby marginalised indigenous languages such as Sepedi, Sesotho, Setswana, siSwati, Tshivenda, Xitsonga, isiNdebele, isiXhosa, and isiZulu were recognised as official languages and expectation was that all these languages would practically 'enjoy parity of esteem' and usage in all areas of life, especially in education and economy. South African higher education institutions were faced with the challenge of ensuring the development of a multilingual environment in which all official South African languages, particularly those which have been historically marginalised, are afforded space to develop as a language of scholarship, research as well as teaching and learning (Language Policy Framework for Public Higher Institution, 2020: 9). Hantrais (1989) defines culture as the practices and beliefs governing the life of a society. In this instance, a particular language is the vehicle of expression for communication among members of that society. Most lecturers teaching African indigenous

languages want to be identified with their own culture. This article argues that while the language policy for higher education in South Africa recognises SA indigenous languages, implementation by the Department of Higher Education and Training seems to be stalling around the publishing of research material in South Africa and did not consider the importance of scientific indigenous materials when making strategies for the implementation of language policy. There is still no plan on how to publish or access scientific indigenous materials that can assist in the effective implementation of this language policy at higher institutions. There is therefore an indication that little has been done to challenge the status of the dominant language, which is English and therefore African academics need to redefine the role of indigenous languages in research.

The Department of Higher Education and Training has awarded subsidies to universities that have through their researchers produced journal articles and books that meet the criteria listed by the department. However, while there is such support and encouragement from the government, scientific indigenous materials are not part of this academic development. Although there is distinct progress in the use of indigenous languages in the Department of Higher Education in South Africa, these languages are still undeveloped and not yet fit to be used as academic and scientific languages. Ngulube (2012: 12) states that language is central to the ability of writers to communicate and transmit their literary messages, expressions, philosophies, and ideas for present and future use. This shows that language is a fundamental ability for students and society to communicate and get their literal messages, expressions, and ideas through their indigenous languages.

Justification for the Research and Methodology

The abolition of apartheid laws concerning education policies in 1994 was a beacon of hope to all black South Africans. The Language Policy of Higher Education (Department of Education, 2020: 9) states the Ministerial Advisory Panel on African Languages in Higher Education (MAPALHE) established in 2012 to assess existing institutional language policies and their level of implementation at universities and advise the Minister on how indigenous languages could be strengthened. However, the educational transformation practice did not spell out how to develop the materials to be used in teaching those indigenous languages, and therefore the language issue remains a problem in South African higher institutions. Consequently, there are no academic publications or fora in the sciences where scientific ideas can be discussed and disseminated in African languages. This is a big challenge for African researchers in South African universities who do their research in languages other than their own, particularly the English language which seems to be enjoying an upper status in most universities. That is why this study would like to find answers to questions such as to what are the challenges of developing scientific materials in the medium of the South African indigenous languages? Do the South African higher education institutions have an indigenous language policy implementation plan?

Workshops, conferences, and symposiums were organised to address the issue of the indigenous languages at higher institutions, and this is still perceived as a big challenge. HESA's Transformation Strategy Group and the Transformation Manager's Forum organised a workshop at the University of Pretoria in February 2015 to share good practices and work towards finding viable and sustainable solutions to the challenges regarding the teaching and learning of African languages and Mathematics. The intention was to encourage the development of indigenous languages at institutions of higher learning in South Africa. Despite good work and dedicated postgraduate students who wrote their thesis and dissertation in Setswana (NWU), isiZulu and Sotho language group (University of Witwatersrand), isiXhosa (Fort Hare University and Rhodes University) to promote professionalism in South African universities, based on my experience as a Setswana supervisor, the history has exposed the frustrations experienced by these students when collecting data. One of my PhD students complained about the shortage of written sources, even at institutions such as the National House of Traditional Leaders and the Department of Arts and Culture. This shows an impact directly on the growth of postgraduates in indigenous languages, which leads to a shortage of market for publishers and the development of indigenous languages in higher education.

Diko (2023: 2) states that:

"When I was engaged with my master's degree in African languages (isiXhosa as a specialisation), I encountered several challenges and setbacks in obtaining certain materials such as honoured and valuable books that are constructed and assembled in the isiXhosa language. One of the books that I faced difficulties obtaining is Ucamngco (Memoir) by Lennox Leslie Wongama Sebe (1980). As it stands, I remain confident that other scholars within the

discipline of indigenous South African languages such as isiXhosa, Tshivenda, Xitsonga, and so forth continue to experience similar challenges that I encountered”.

Currently, there is an outcry for African indigenous language materials at South African higher institutions to close the gap between these indigenous languages and the privileged ones. It is therefore evident that many African languages have not been developed to be used as academic or scientific languages (Zikode, 2017). The exclusion of African indigenous languages in the allocation of resources led to the closure of most departments of African languages in some universities. This shows that valuable materials are not available for the academic landscape. It signifies a disregard for the cultural fertility and linguistic diversity of South Africa, potentially perpetuating a dominance of colonial languages and undermining the preservation of indigenous cultural pedigree. The unavailability of scientific materials produced in these languages underlines a deeply rooted challenge. It is not only the Nguni languages, but also the Sotho language group are affected by this unavailability of valuable materials.

The search strategies employed in this literature review involved a systematic and post-positivism approach. Thus, the paper used the post-positivism method as a tool based on careful observation and measurement of the objective reality that exists when planning and encouraging academic writing of indigenous languages in higher education. In Ryan (2006: 19) post-positivism researchers do not see themselves as inevitably solving problems but as setting out investigations. This study employed a qualitative research method to explore challenges in developing scientific materials to be used in scholarly writing for publication and research purposes. According to Bryman (2016: 32) qualitative research methodology can be defined as a research method that emphasises words in contrast to the quantification of research data. No human participation was used in data collection, but the researchers used existing materials to collect data and provide a research design to show how the research process has been undertaken. Keywords such as “publishing scientific materials, “indigenous language policy, and “systemic theory” were utilized to yield a comprehensive dataset. Multiple databases were meticulously chosen to ensure a broad scope of coverage, including reputable platforms such as journal articles, Government Gazettes, books, and Google Scholar. A desktop method was used to collect online information based on publishing and accessing scientific materials in the mediums of South African Indigenous languages. The selection criteria emphasized recency, relevance to the research questions, and the scholarly impact of the publications (Sundoro *et al.*, 2024). Data were thematically analysed. Beginning with content analysis, researchers search to extract themes using words such as publishing indigenous language, South African indigenous language policy, and implementation policy plan to make sense of the data obtained. Responses were put in categories based on the meaning they conveyed. The systematic theory is being used to explore the systematic strategies on how to plan for a language policy. This theory will assist language planners and researchers in identifying a problem and facilitating communication amongst themselves.

A Comprehensive Review of Current Literature

Literature reveals that throughout history some languages have experienced dominance over other languages in a variety of ways (Madzimbamuto, 2015). Political and military conquest is the way many European languages such as English, French, Portuguese, Spanish, and Arabic became dominant on the African continent. Economic power has also elevated English as the superior language around the globe. Most underdeveloped nations have however tended to use foreign languages as their official languages and have thus grappled with alienated concepts and skills (Mogara and Chebanne, 2023). In pre-democratic South Africa languages enjoyed the status of national languages rather than official languages, a move which gave colonial languages an upper hand. Despite the gravity of this milestone in terms of decisions and policies, it has proven difficult to shake off the vestiges of the colonial legacy (Mutasa, 2015: 46). A report on the use of African languages as mediums of institutions in higher education (DHET, 2015) gives an account of the institutions that are taking bold steps in the development and implementation of curricula to teach African languages to speakers of other languages, teaching content subjects in the medium of South African languages. Despite their call, the English language has continued to dominate in the teaching of indigenous languages in universities (Viriri and Ndimande-Hlongwa, 2023: 5). This article also argues that while the development of African languages was tabled by the government, little has been done to promote these languages due to a lack of implementation plan. Most universities are still trapped in their institutional history. Viriri and Ndimande-Hlongwa (2023: 3) argue that governments have taken a laissez-faire approach towards the project; they have not committed themselves to crafting language policies that genuinely address the promotion of education using indigenous languages. In most of the African states’ educational policies,

the indigenous languages are often neglected and inferioritised to the benefit of the foreign 'colonial' languages. It is proper here to recognise the effort of the United Nations Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO), which organised an Intergovernmental Conference on Language Policies in Africa in Harare, Zimbabwe in 1997 (Mohochi, 2006).

Mavunga (2019: 82) states that by January 2016, #FeesMustFall protests had broadened the scope of unhappiness with student accommodation and language of instruction policies mainly at the historically white universities in South Africa. This move has shown more changes in the structures of the universities where academics came together and raised their concerns based on the teaching and learning of indigenous languages. Most universities wanted the transformation to be implemented with immediate effect to restore the language dignity of Africans. Bunyi (1999) highlights the importance of African languages being released from what he calls "the Eurocentric colonial legacy" and sees "the grounding of African education in African indigenous, cultures, primary vehicles for social transformation". The Language Policy for Higher Education (Department of Education, 2020) stipulates that each university should formulate a language policy that strives towards the development of languages other than English and Afrikaans for academic purposes (Mkhize and Balfour, 2017: 140). However, some universities find it difficult to implement the language policy effectively because language policy committees are sometimes chaired by people who are not interested in the languages themselves. The progress in supporting and developing all languages at higher education as of equal status seems to have stalled. Hlatshwayo and Siziba (2013) state that one of the reasons for slow implementations is the weakness of 'policy glamorisation' within the government. According to Zell (2018), African academics are more and more marginalised. They are unable to participate in contemporary academic debates or at conferences about language status. This marginalisation has therefore contributed to a backlog in implementation and created an attitude in developing African languages. The historical education system, which deprived the disadvantaged, also contributed to poor reading skills and research due to a lack of scientific material for African indigenous languages materials at institutions of higher learning. Motsaathebe (2011) attests that the notion of marginalisation in many parts of Africa is conspicuous in their reluctance to publish in indigenous African languages. Therefore, the relevance of indigenous languages in teaching as a subject has been underestimated. According to Möller (2013) many publishers show no innovative strategies to create high-quality work in African languages, which remains cheap and accessible and reflects the nation's attitude towards its languages. Accessing African language materials, particularly in indigenous academics in South Africa is a crucial issue.

According to Stewart (2018) in New Zealand, leaders and scholars have been at the forefront of Māori advancement and had a vision for Māori to be recognised in education and for the development of the Māori language. In South Africa however, the policy makers seem to be very slow in the implementation of language policy to elevate the status of indigenous African languages. Hlatshwayo and Siziba (2013) state that the language policy is over-emphasised, and people are concerned with public buy-in and neglect the implementation process. The perception of South African indigenous languages is partially used in institutions of learning. According to Zikode (2017) the Higher Education Institutions have a ministerial committee which was created to advise on the development of these languages as a medium of instruction in higher education but nothing much has been done regarding who is responsible for ensuring the implementation of language policy. To ensure effective access to free and fair education the government must consider all reasonable alternatives including publishing scientific material in the medium of indigenous languages. Although the implementation of education policies is taking time, some universities such as the University of KwaZulu-Natal, the University of North-West, and the University of Witwatersrand have heeded the call to develop their language policies. However, inequality in education continues to be a major challenge in using scientific material in the medium of indigenous languages. Lecturers and students do not have scientific books written in the medium of indigenous languages and rely on scientific materials written in English. This imposes difficulties when selecting relevant research topics for postgraduate students. The University of Witwatersrand approved the language policy in 2014, whereby the Nguni and Sotho language groups are preferred as the language of teaching and learning. In this context, postgraduate students are allowed to do research in the medium of indigenous languages. However, the major problem of selecting researchable topics in the medium of indigenous languages is caused by a lack of scientific materials to refer to. Therefore, young black students and lecturers of indigenous languages are mostly affected by the politicisation of languages at higher institutions of learning.

Countries such as New Zealand have already taken action to support language maintenance in the diasporic Polynesian communities and embrace these languages along with Māori as languages of the country (Stewart,

2018). Finlayson and Madiba (2002) believe that intellectualisation in South Africa is also likely to succeed if there is proper planning. The necessary resources to promote the indigenous languages in the restricted domains are mostly needed to communicate special knowledge. Practical and positive measures should be considered to elevate the status and advance the use of indigenous languages in higher education. English is seen as a global endemic which cannot be easily erased. In our observation in South African higher institutions, the great majority of students and lecturers speak indigenous languages but are forced by the system to speak English because it is a language of instruction besides the existence of departments of African language. Publication in the medium of indigenous language is hindered by a false perception of editors who are influential in journals and interested in topics that are of interest to a Western audience. Many African academics actively frown on journals from the continent, focusing their efforts on publishing in international, supposedly remarkable titles that will earn them promotions. Most people prefer international publications because it is regarded as important for advancing the relevance of scholarship and research findings based on sentimental attachment and networking. The number of PhDs in indigenous languages has therefore been on the prohibitive side of the trajectory due to a lack of resources and data collections. The bravery and commitment of those who wrote their thesis or dissertations in their mother tongue are saluted because the promotion of indigenous languages and African scholarship in higher education will contribute to the building a critical mass of human capital to advance Africa-led-globalisation (Kaya *et al.*, 2016). The indication is that there is nothing wrong with acquiring education in the medium of indigenous language. The planners of indigenous language policy need to do away with their stereotyped negative attitude when planning for strategies to be implemented by institutions.

Section 32 (1) (a) of the Constitution of South Africa affords that, “everyone has the right of access to any information held by the state”. Furthermore, the Act states in Section 31(a) that access “Exists in the language that the requester prefers, be given access in that language”; or 31(b) “does not exist in the language so preferred or the requester has no preference or has not indicated a preference be given access in any language the record exists in”. Therefore, the Act emphasises information being made available in different languages so that individuals may have access to information in their preferred languages. Language is important because it carries knowledge, history, and culture. Shortages of documented indigenous languages compound the problem as speakers have no resources to develop and promote their own languages (Chebanne, 2016). Though this has lost momentum over the years, it had dire impacts on the minds of the speakers of the indigenous languages. It has produced first-language speakers of English who are non-whites, with a low regard for the indigenous languages. The language of a subject represents the knowledge structure of the subject. This shows that addressing the language issue inside classrooms will develop a deep appreciation for indigenous languages. It is therefore important for lecturers, students, and supervisors to understand these language dynamics for them to be able to come up with strategies that can help students overcome these hurdles when publishing, accessing, and collecting materials in their own languages. In Mashatole and Makgoba (2022) historically indigenous languages during the apartheid era were used as a tool for the division of African people into conflicting and competing ethnic groups. Initially founded as the University of the North (now University of Limpopo) was intended for students of Sotho, Tswana, Tsonga, and Venda descent; the University of Durban Westville was created to cater to Indian students, and the University of Western Cape meant for coloureds. For isiZulu students, the University of Zululand was created, and Fort Hare University (for isiXhosa students). Though, these universities were among the indigenous people, no plan for higher education was utilised to encourage access and publishing in the medium of indigenous languages. Kaya *et al.* (2016), point out that the sustainability of language programmes in higher education needs joint projects, fellowships, scholarships, external examinations, conferences, and electronic interaction.

Unveiling Insights: A Journey through Findings and Discussions

The South African government has not made much progress in exploring and exploiting the full use of scientific materials of indigenous languages in higher education. The National Language Policy of Higher Education requires the universities to promote and develop South African languages as academic languages. Most universities have heeded this call in developing their language policy that states that South African indigenous languages will be used as academic language but there is no clear strategies on how to implement those language policies. The national language policy did not spell out strategies or mechanisms on how to develop the materials for those indigenous languages. This paper revealed that there is a shortage of scientific indigenous materials to promote and develop South African indigenous languages.

The expectations of higher education in South Africa require researchers to maintain a high language proficiency in the publication of articles where most of them are published in English. Most universities in South Africa still rely on the English language for research purposes. This contributes to many supervisors relying on English materials to guide students and hence a delay in the production of materials written in indigenous languages. The idea of publishing scientific material in the medium of indigenous languages can succeed if the system of education breaks the wall of rules between the use of English and African indigenous languages as a medium of teaching, learning, reporting, assessing, and research. The support and development of scientific materials in indigenous languages seem to be problematic in South African higher education. The language policy of higher education has not spelled out how the plan of the South African indigenous language policy should be implemented. African indigenous language materials are slowly being documented. For so many years of South African democracy, publishing and accessing information in the medium of these indigenous languages was neglected by higher education. African students studying at universities built by the colonial powers based on European models were required to learn in the colonisers' languages and to master the texts of the European canon (Chawane, 2016).

Language use in education, politics, the economy, religion, or life in general has been and is still one of the most vexing issues in South Africa and Africa (Madadze, 2019). This notion changes gradually, for example, the thesis and dissertations are written in the medium of indigenous languages, mostly in South African languages. Some indigenous languages are not well resourced with limited corpus research about a much-needed significant amount of information. Zeng and Li (2023) mentioned that the promotion of Tagalog/Filipino contributed to the language shift from vernacularisation to assimilation. The indication is that assimilation was achieved through legislation. This shows that the success of the implementation of language policy would be achieved if there is an implementation framework and support from the government and the Department of Higher Education. This will assist students in demonstrating their learning through a wide range of tasks that represent the kind of activities that they will encounter in the working environment. The South African universities need to support, monitor, and develop the marginalised languages that are used as vehicles of communication and knowledge in all spheres of modern life. They need to reduce, where possible, the diglossia prevailing in the use of European languages as language of publication and academic writing. Some journals such as the South African Journal of African Languages (SAJAL) and Journal for Language Teaching (JLT) accommodate articles written in the medium of indigenous languages. Government and academics need to support and utilise journals that would increase indigenous research outputs at higher education. This shows that the researchers and policy makers need to change their mindset in academic writing. There is nothing wrong to publish scholarly articles in the medium of South African indigenous languages. In order to increase the indigenous research outputs at higher education, the researchers need to establish their own mother tongue journals that would promote their indigenous languages and give access to the medium of indigenous languages.

For South African higher institutions to invest in indigenous languages, the government needs to support and allocate funding and adequate resources to South African institutions of learning. South African higher education curriculum needs the voices of a wide range of writers to prepare students for a diverse world in which they can find their place as equals. Inclusive planning is needed, like, planning for the process using alternative approaches may provide a way of improving efficiency in a variety of contexts (Bitzer and Albertyn, 2011: 876). Effective planning can be achieved if courses are designed to respond to agility to newer national and international paradigms that affect humanities. Language planning needs guidance and effective planning to avoid the marginalisation of other languages. The department of African languages at higher education must refrain from working in silos. Academic communities and policymakers need to establish communication and knowledge-sharing platforms. Regular forums, workshops, and conferences that bring together researchers and practitioners can facilitate meaningful dialogue, ensuring that research findings are not confined to academic circles but actively inform decision-making processes (Rakhmani and Siregar, 2016).

The paper recommends that there should be writing retreats and research workshops to address the issue of producing scientifically proven materials in all South African universities. Again, there should be platforms where indigenous scholars share and discuss how best this could be done to promote and develop scientific materials in the medium of indigenous languages. South African universities need to support the supervision of the construction and provision of professional development systems, programs, and activities.

Conclusion

In conclusion, languages should not act as a barrier to access and publication in higher education. Although more efforts have been made by universities in offering indigenous languages as a medium of teaching and learning, a lot is still to be accomplished in collecting, publishing, and accessing African indigenous language materials for higher education. Young black South African students have demonstrated that it is more urgent that scientific materials in the medium of indigenous languages be considered. Radical thinking and collaboration of universities when pertaining to sharing of ideas and resources must be prioritised. South African indigenous languages have been oppressed by the politics of the country for many years, now and it is time to come up with the implementation strategies that will make publication a success for all indigenous languages. Recently, higher institutions have witnessed that teaching indigenous languages is a major career enhancement for those studying indigenous languages.

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