



How is language diversity policy, as a transformative instrument, interpreted and implemented within Higher Education Institutions? A case study of the University of the Witwatersrand

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Declaration

I, Siphokazi Mbolo, declare that this research report is my own, unaided work. It is being submitted for the Degree of Master of Arts in Development Sociology at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. It has not been submitted before for any degree or examination at any other University.

Signed _____

This _____ day of _____ in the year _____

Dedication

This body of work is dedicated to the late Nojongile Ellen 'Nxamayo' Nkompela and Mandlezulu Nkompela.

Abstract

Historically, language in South Africa was politicized and used as an oppressive tool to control and limit black development through racially repressive laws under colonization and the apartheid regime which favoured the development of Afrikaans and English. The advancement of indigenous languages has been prioritized in the post-apartheid society as a transformative mechanism. Language diversity in South Africa is supported by the democratic Constitution (1996) and is overseen by policies adopted by government and institutions such as Higher Education Institutions.

This study adopted a qualitative case study to explore how language diversity policy, as a transformative instrument, is interpreted and implemented within HEIs. The study used the University of the Witwatersrand as a case study and analysed its 2014 Language Policy. The research aimed to explore the link between higher education language policies and transformation. It also aimed to explore the university's choice of primary language of instruction, how it promotes academic development through language diversity, and the implementation of its language policy.

The findings of this study revealed a disjuncture between the objectives set by government and the actual implementation of language policies which advocate for the advancement of indigenous languages in HEIs. The study concludes that government is not giving enough financial and epistemological support to HEIs to develop indigenous languages. The 2014 Wits Language Policy was found to be merely a symbolic document which has not brought substantive changes. Furthermore, the 2014 Wits Language Policy is not implemented through practical parameters which meet the aspirations set by the policy. It, therefore, does not attend to issues around language use, university culture, or demonstrate the significance of indigenous languages at Wits nor facilitate language as a transformative tool to rectify the imbalances of the past.

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Acronyms

ANC African National Congress

DHET Department of Higher Education and Training

DoE Department of Education

DPME Department of Planning, Monitoring, and Evaluation

GEAR Growth, Employment, and Redistribution

HEIs Higher Education Institutions

LoLT Language of Learning and Teaching

PanSALB Pan South African Language Board

RDP Reconstruction and Development Programme

SASL South African Sign Language

TRC Truth and Reconciliation Commission

Wits University of the Witwatersrand

1. CHAPTER ONE – INTRODUCTION

1.1. Introduction

The year 1994 marked a shift of power from a repressive, racist government to a democratic government, which meant tremendous changes occurred within all sectors of society. For the education sector, the abolishment of the apartheid system meant that a new curriculum and language policies were needed to redress the imbalances created not only by apartheid but also by colonization. Cooper (1989, 182) asserts that “to plan language is to plan society” and as such, restructuring language in education was essential for the democratic government, as Kamwangamalu (2004, 243) contends that language has historically, “... been an arena for power struggle, where white people exercised power over other ethnic groups and made decisions about languages that benefited them, while other ethnic groups lost their privileges, status, and rights”.

The education system has struggled with the dichotomy of advancing indigenous languages and using dominant languages such as English. In debates on which language(s) to use as the language of learning and teaching (LoLT), arguments have been put forward for either bilingual education or to only use English (Heugh, 2000). The significance of language diversity is noted by Wits in its 2003 Language Policy as it states that, “Linguistic diversity is a resource for creativity and cognition that should be protected. Learning the languages of South Africa is a means of enhancing understanding of one another and of overcoming our differences” (Wits, 2003, 1).

The role of HEIs in leading the project of transforming the education system through the development of indigenous languages, has been emphasised by numerous authors such as (Alexander, 2001; Kamwangamalu, 2004; Reddy, 2004; Webb, 2006), as well as the Council on Higher Education (2001), which has encouraged HEIs to revisit their language policies. Bourdieu cited in Alexander (2001, 12) argues that “language policy and language practices in institutions such as universities inevitably either reinforce or counter societal tendencies towards the unequal distribution of resources, opportunities and life chances”.

According to the University of the Witwatersrand's 2003 Language Policy, the institution takes on the call from government for each education institution to develop language policies that further transformation in the country. Wits has developed its own language policies which are framed at recognizing the significance of developing indigenous languages. The university appreciates the significant role played by language and acknowledges that language should never be a barrier in acquiring knowledge, stating, "Currently millions of South Africans do not complete their schooling, partly because they are taught and assessed through the medium of English or Afrikaans and have no access to concepts in a language that they fully understand. To overcome this legacy, it is essential to develop the African languages of South Africa to provide equal access to education" (Wits, 2003, 6).

The aim of the study was to use the University of the Witwatersrand as a case study to explore how language diversity policy, as a transformative instrument, is interpreted and implemented within HEIs. This study intended to locate the neglected advancement of indigenous languages in HEIs by investigating the planning, development, use, and implementation of language policies. This was done to get a better understanding of why indigenous languages are not developed despite government and HEIs language diversity policies which claim to appreciate multilingualism.

Ideally, I would have preferred to write this paper and conduct my interviews in IsiXhosa, my home language; however, English was used instead because it is the language of learning, teaching, and research at the University of the Witwatersrand. This paper was also written in English because the poor development of indigenous languages has made them act as barriers between people from different ethnic groups, which hinder communication and the process of transmitting information and ideas among these groups.

1.2. The context of the study

South Africa is a multilingual country (Painter, 2010). Contestations around language use and status are deeply engraved in the repressive systems of colonization and apartheid which marginalized indigenous languages and used Afrikaans and English to perpetuate domination and maintain socio-economic inequalities (Alexander, 1989; McLean, 1999;

Painter, 2010). Due to the under-development of indigenous languages during colonization and apartheid, the democratic government problematized the low status of indigenous languages, as Conduah (2003, 245), states that, the Language Plan Task Group (LANGTAG) argues, “No language is superior to any other but historical development and previous social struggles, including the defining facts of colonial conquest, racial discrimination, and apartheid, have made it possible for English and Afrikaans to become the dominant languages in South Africa”.

As such, the National Language Policy Framework (2003), states that the development of indigenous languages has been a priority post-apartheid in restructuring the country from the legacies of the past (Department of Arts and Culture, 2003). The Constitution (1996) affirms this by declaring that, “... recognizing the historically diminished use and status of the indigenous languages of our people, the state must take practical and positive measures to elevate the status and advance the use of these languages” (The Republic of South Africa, 1996, s 6 [2]).

Language diversity post-apartheid is considered to be a base to build national unity, to aid the ideals of democracy and work towards the aspirations of a non-racial, and equal nation (Alexander, 1989; Webb, 2002). The Constitution (1996) appreciates language diversity, declaring, “The official languages of the Republic are Sepedi, Sesotho, Setswana, siSwati, Tshivenda, Xitsonga, Afrikaans, English, isiNdebele, isiXhosa, and isiZulu” (The Republic of South Africa, 1996, s 6 [1]). Other indigenous languages such as the Khoi-San are awarded constitutional right, though they do not form part of the official languages. These languages are protected and developed under the PanSALB (Makoni, 2005; Mesthrie, 2006).

1.3. Rationale

The legacies of language inequalities in the country are rooted in all spheres of society, including HEIs (Lin & Martin, 2005). The Language Policy of the Department of Higher Education and Training (2017) has committed itself to meet the requirements of the Constitution (1996) by recognizing and developing all official languages, as it commits to, “... taking practical and positive measures to elevate the status and use of indigenous languages, to instill and maintain healthy partnerships, social inclusion and cohesion”

(DHET, 2017, 6). The significance of language diversity development in HEIs is recognized in the Language Policy for Higher Education (2002) as, “critical to ensure the right of individuals to realize their full potential to participate in and contribute to the social, cultural, intellectual, economic and political life of South African society” (DoE, 2002, 4).

However, as in other spheres of society, it is prominent in HEIs to continue to mostly adopt Afrikaans and/or English as LoLT, regardless of the policies adopted to address language inequalities. Sure & Webb (2000) define this as ‘linguist hegemony’ where one language is expanded at the cost of other languages. Sure & Webb (2000, 114) continue to argue that, “Linguistic hegemony can also lead to discrimination ..., and, when this happens, those discriminated against are said to have been subjected to linguicism, which is the linguistic equivalent of racism”.

According to the Language Policy for Higher Education (2002), not enough HEIs, “include an African language as a training requirement for undergraduate and postgraduate study or offer short courses in African languages as in-service learning opportunities for professionals in practice” (DoE, 2002, 8). The continued marginalization of indigenous languages in HEIs maintains the inherited inequalities from colonization and apartheid and jeopardizes the ideals of democracy towards nation building through a multilingual society. The Language Policy for Higher Education (2002) argues that failure to address these developments has the potential to threaten social cohesion and “hampers the creation of an inclusive institutional environment advancing tolerance and respect for diversity” (DoE, 2002, 8).

1.4. Research question and sub-questions

1.4.1. Main research question

The main research question explored in this research study is:

How is language diversity policy, as a transformative instrument, interpreted and implemented within Higher Education Institutions? A case study of the University of the Witwatersrand.

1.4.2. Sub-questions

- What are the benefits of formally introducing indigenous languages as LoLT at Wits?

- What are the challenges of implementing indigenous languages as LoLT at Wits?
- Do higher education language policies have the potential to promote transformation within the university?
- Do higher education language policies have the potential to contribute to societal transformation?

1.5. Objectives of the study

The study's intention was to contribute to societal and higher education debates around transformation by focusing on language policies in HEIs, using the University of the Witwatersrand as a case study. In this study, I expected to draw the link between education; language and transformation, to probe and develop practical solutions which favor the advancement of indigenous languages in HEIs.

The research aimed to critically assess and analyze the formulation, objectives, symbolic significance, implementation steps, and failures of the 2014 Wits Language Policy, so as to contribute valuable insights to academic and policy language debates. I anticipated this research would provide insight as to the effectiveness and impact of advancing indigenous languages as part of transformation for future government policymakers, HEIs, student activists, educators, and researchers.

1.6. The significance of the study

The research aimed to contribute to transformation and language debates by determining whether HEIs' language policies adhere to the Constitution (1996) and the Language Policy for Higher Education (2002) through their aspirations and practice of advancing indigenous languages. The research aimed to provide insightful data on higher education transformation by focusing on language diversity for policymakers, academics, students, and researchers.

1.7. Definition of key terms

1.7.1 Indigenous languages

This study adopted Webb's (2002, xx) definition of indigenous languages which are, "languages which originated within a country and used mainly within the country". English is a European language, therefore was not considered. Though Afrikaans is an indigenous language because it was developed in Africa and is only spoken on the continent (Sure & Webb, 2000), it is not historically marginalized, thus was not recognized in the criterion of indigenous languages referred to in this study.

According to the Parliamentary Monitoring Group, section 6(1) and 6(5) of the Constitution (1996) are to be reviewed and changed to add SASL as the twelve official South African languages. However, for the purposes of this study, SASL was not considered as the study focused on the oral and written use of official languages. The focus of this study was on historically marginalized indigenous languages which are now constitutionally recognized in the post-apartheid state, namely: Sepedi, Sesotho, Setswana, siSwati, Tshivenda, Xitsonga, isiNdebele, isiXhosa, and isiZulu.

1.7.2. Multilingualism

According to Franceschini (2011, 344) multilingualism, "describes the various forms of social, institutional, and individual ways that we go about using more than one language".

1.7.3. Black

The term black has been a contested term, with numerous meanings attached to it, such as victims of oppression based on skin color or a defenseless minority (Scotland, 2010). This research referred to black as, "those who are by law or tradition politically, economically, and socially discriminated against as a group in the South African society" (Biko, 1998, 360).

In the current South African context, taken from the Department of Trade and Industry's Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment Act (2005, 2), black refers to, "African, Colored or Indian persons who are natural persons citizens of the Republic of South Africa by birth or descent; or are citizens of the Republic of South Africa by naturalization before the commencement date of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa Act of 1993; or became citizens of the Republic of South Africa after the commencement date of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa Act of 1993, but who, but for the Apartheid

policy that had been in place prior to that date, would have been entitled to acquire citizenship by naturalization prior to that date”.

1.7.4. Language of learning and teaching (LoLT)

Krügel cited in Olivier (2011, 47), asserts that LoLT or medium of instruction, is “... the language used within the classroom and the medium through which learning, and teaching takes place”.

1.7.5. Transformation

The purpose of language policies in HEIs is to acknowledge the disparities created by colonization and apartheid. They aim to provide redress through creating a space where historically marginalized languages are afforded the same status as English and Afrikaans. These policies are supposed to reflect the democratic aspirations of the Constitution of South Africa (DHET, 2017).

Transformation in this study is defined as a process of “restoration, aimed at returning the language to a previously more healthy state, and to forge new roles for the language” (Bentahila & Davies, 1993, 355). This transformation is measured by a system where all marginalized languages are acknowledged, developed, and utilized as critical tools “to ensure the rights of individuals to realize their full potential to participate in and contribute to the social, cultural, intellectual, economic, academic, and political life of South Africa” (DHET, 2018, 10).

It is for the above reasons that this study argues that the Wits Language Policy is supposed to be transformative in nature. Therefore, this study seeks to examine the extent to which the Wits Language Policy is transformative in nature and implementation.

1.8. Chapter outlines

Chapter one introduced study, dealing with the rationale of the study, the main research question and sub-questions, and contextualized this study. The chapter dealt with the objectives and significance of the study and provided definitions of key terms. Chapter two proceeds to look at the literature where I interrogate language contradictions in South Africa. This is done by examining historical language policies, uses and how these have changed in the democratic era. The chapter also covers the relationship between society,

transformation, indigenous languages, and HEIs. The literature review also gives an overview of the 2003 and 2014 Wits Language Policies and identifies the gaps created by the government and HEIs in developing indigenous languages. Chapter three covers the methodology used in this study. It also includes details of how this study was conducted. Chapter four discusses and analyses the data gathered in this study and locates it in relevant literature. Chapter five provides conclusions and recommendations.

2. CHAPTER TWO – LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Introduction

In this section, I located this study within existing literature and interrogated the relationship between language, education, HEIs and transformation in South Africa. This literature review gives an outline of the developments and contradictions of languages and language policies.

2.2. Historical Context

This historical context explored language use and language policies under colonization and the apartheid regime. This section was explored because the effects of the two systems inform the language structures and developments (planning and policies) in the democratic South Africa.

2.2.1. 1652 - 1948

Language controversies in South Africa are deeply rooted in the arrival of European settlers in the Cape in 1652 who spoke Dutch, which later evolved into Afrikaans. The complete dominance of the Dutch was threatened in 1795 by the arrival of the British who defeated them for socio-economic power. The British proclaimed English as the dominant language to influence all spheres of society as the language of operation (Kamwangamalu, 2001; Marjorie, 1982). The development of English under the British continued through the imperialistic expansion of colonization where the state had complete control of all sectors of society (Banda, 2000; Smith, 2014).

The dominance of the British threatened the existence and cultural expansion of the Dutch as they were excluded from official office (Bloch & Alexander, 2003). English dominated all social spheres, including the education system where both indigenous and Dutch children were taught in English. The dominance of English in education limited the Dutch from learning their literature and language because they had to integrate into the English culture, thus restricting their platform to spread their ideology to future generations (Alexander, 1989; Snail, 2011). Kamwangamalu (2001, 366) contends that due to these factors, “The Afrikaners, who were angered by the occupation of the British, moved into the interior

where their language remained 'pure'. The Boers viewed Anglicization as a threat to their language, culture, and identity".

The predominance of English in education also affected indigenous people. Indigenous languages were banned in missionary schools which were responsible for educating black children. This act made it offensive for black children to communicate in their indigenous languages in school. This created a narrative of associating blackness and backwardness with indigenous languages (Alexander, 1989; Marjorie, 1982) while perpetuating the idea that English is, "... the language of culture and social elevation" (Snail, 2011, 81). Thus, black people grew accustomed to English as a development instrument and started to detach from their indigenous languages to escape inferiority.

Disputes for socio-economic and linguistic dominance between the English and Afrikaner communities continued and erupted in the Anglo-Afrikaner War in 1899. During this period, English and Dutch were the only official languages (Chick, 2002; Rasila, 2014). According to Rasila (2014, 8), in 1925 Afrikaans gained socio-political recognition and was recognized as an official language, "replacing Dutch as an official language". The status of indigenous languages, however, continued to further deteriorate.

2.2.2. 1948 - 1994

The year 1948 marked a significant political climate change in South Africa as the dominance of English was threatened by Afrikaners coming into governance under Apartheid. Afrikaans became the main language. However, despite this, English persisted as the dominant language of power and prestige. Afrikaans was rejected and resented by the indigenous people with some labelling it the language of oppression (Alexander, 2011; Bloch & Alexander, 2003), leaving English more favorable.

The status of English was preserved by the hatred for Afrikaans by black communities and historical notions of progress and development attached to it. English became the language of liberation for black people. It became particularly popular during resistance campaigns and protests against the apartheid regime. English was an instrument to communicate with

different members of different ethnic groups and the international community, thus becoming a significant feature in the liberation process (Kamwangamalu, 2001).

The education system was a significant sector for the apartheid government. Edition, Edition, Briefs, & Hub (2008) note that the education sector was an area of interest for the apartheid regime as it was believed to be one of the effective ways to, “not only to reproduce and promote the values, cultural norms, and beliefs of apartheid society but also as an instrument to maintain and legitimize unequal social, economic and political power relations”. The apartheid government believed that by maintaining and controlling the values of the regime through education, they could mold the attitudes of the populace to sustain the regime (Edition, Edition, Briefs, & Hub, 2008).

The apartheid government adopted the Bantu Education Act of 1953 and it became a fundamental component in shaping the perceptions people had about English, Afrikaans and indigenous languages. Most importantly, it was instrumental in grooming how people perceived themselves in socio-political terms in relation to these languages. Bantu Education controlled the medium of instruction in black schools. Mother tongue was used as LoLT in primary schools and later changed to English and Afrikaans in secondary schools (Kamwangamalu, 2001). The shift and unfamiliarity with English and Afrikaans and inadequate training of educators in the languages and curriculum caused a high failure and dropout rate in many black schools (Dalvit, Murray, & Terzoli, 2009; Lanham, 1996).

Msomi (1979) asserts that the use of indigenous languages in Bantu Education by the apartheid government was disingenuous and was problematized by black people. Msomi (1979, 12) continues to state that the ANC in a memorandum submitted to the United Nations argued that, “under the guise of developing African languages, the government is discouraging the teaching of English, so as to cut the African off from the world of culture and progress”. Limiting the development of black students using language solidified the apartheid’s objectives of separate development and the marginalization of the black communities (Heugh, 1999). Snail (2011, 42) expresses similar sentiments and argues that “The education Africans received was poor in quality and designed to keep them out of the

modern sector of the economy—thus ensuring a steady supply of cheap labor, particularly for the agricultural, mining, and domestic service sectors”.

Snail (2011) proclaims that the introduction of Bantu Education was part of a broader plan to control black people and ensure that white systems and privileges were promoted. Bantu Education became a tool to use education and language to limit the development and skills of black communities which would ultimately limit their access to job opportunities and economic participation, thus favoring and creating more opportunities for English and Afrikaner people. Professor Malegapuru Makgoba cited in Edition, Edition, Briefs, & Hub (2008) concurs with Snail (2011) and contends that education was essential to perpetuate apartheid values as “...what is common between a judge, a doctor, a politician, a policeman, a priest, a journalist, or editor and the ordinary citizen is the type of education they received or the curriculum that provided the foundations of their education”.

The marginalization of black people and indigenous languages also prevailed at tertiary level through the Extension of University Education Act of 1959. Under the Act, black students suffered from discrimination as they were prohibited from studying at white/English institutions. However, Africans were sometimes permitted to attend white universities such as the University of the Witwatersrand and the University of Cape Town, upon the approval of its Council and Minister of African Education, if deemed justified (Hall, Symes & Luescher, 2002). Under the Extension of University Education Act of 1959, white students were completely prohibited from attending or registering at black or bush colleges. The only institution that admitted students from all races was the University of South Africa, now formally known as UNISA. Segregation was also practiced as each racial group was restricted to different places though they were taught the same course by the same lecturers (Snail, 2011).

According to the Extension of University Education Act of 1959, HEIs for black students were to be created and funded out of money appropriated by parliament from Bantu Education (Msomi, 1979). The first institution dedicated to black students that predates the Extension of University Education Act of 1959, is the University of Fort Hare. After the introduction of

the Extension of University Education Act, the University of Fort Hare was put under the control of the Department of Bantu Education (Msomi, 1979; Snail, 2011). Later the apartheid government built additional HEIs to cater for different ethnic and racial groups where, “The University of Fort Hare serves the Xhosa ethnic group, the University of Zululand serves the Zulu and Swazi national groups, the University of the North serves North Sotho, South Sotho, Tsonga, Tswana and Venda groups” (Msomi, 1979, 60). These institutions differed from the well-funded and established white institutions as they had inferior facilities, lecturers, course offerings and funding (Badat, 2008; Cutten, 1987; Reddy, 2004).

Reddy (2004, 9) claims that instead of denying black students’ higher education, bush colleges served as an essential instrument in creating, “two types of subaltern political classes. A small elite to operate the administrative structures of the subaltern (in the Bantustans and urban areas) and a laboring class to perform unskilled labor for the industrial economy”. The success of this system would mean division in the black community through the production of an elite black class which would assimilate and aspire towards whiteness and abandon the struggles of the poor black majority. The apartheid government depended on this to weaken the political and moral claims of the oppressed towards white and/or Afrikaner domination and privilege (Badat, 2006; Reddy, 2004).

The apartheid government sought to organize higher education like broader society, along racial and ethnic lines. The ideological aspiration was to indoctrinate black people into internalizing that, “... their Otherness (inferiority) was ‘natural’. It aimed to imbue the subaltern child with an ‘ethnic’ (tribal), cultural identity, with the hope that it would identify with ‘its own’ people and ethnically defined Bantustan. It aimed to constitute thoroughly docile subjects whose will to resist would be crushed and policed by themselves” (Reddy, 2004, 9).

The introduction of Bantu Education was not only devastating for students but also to parents. Freda Troup (1976) cited in Msomi (1979, 70-71) states that “Education was seen by many African parents as the door to personal advancement, an escape route for their children from the lower depths of a racially divided society. The nationalist government’s

plans seemed to shut this door and even more horrifyingly, might condition the next generation to a permanent acceptance of its inferior status”.

Though there was resistance in accepting Afrikaans, there was also a high demand to learn this language as Snail (2011, 81) argues, “In the work situation, a Blackman’s promotion was highly dependent on his mastery of Afrikaans. The learning process, therefore, became a matter of life and death for the Black worker”. However, despite this, Afrikaans and Bantu education continued to be detested by black students and the broader society. This ultimately erupted into numerous resistance campaigns (Marjorie, 1982).

At tertiary level, Black Consciousness became a fundamental political influence in black universities. Hyslop (1999) argues that Black Consciousness was a vital component that provided ideological content which created a new sense of political awareness for students. The ideologies and spirit of Black Consciousness spread from universities to schools through young teachers. Students became very receptive to these ideologies. The hatred of Afrikaans and the new-found consciousness of students led to demonstrations which led up to the 16 June 1976 Soweto Uprising. The uprising marked the largest, most influential student demonstration against Bantu Education. The violence of the state and the police which led to numerous deaths and injuries were well documented and reached the international arena which prompted more support against the apartheid regime (Nieftagodien, 2014).

According to Hyslop (1999), the Soweto Uprising harnessed mass support and introduced a renewed stamina into all facets of the liberation movement. Hyslop (1999, 183) continues to assert that, “Renewed student action in 1980 to 1981 and later in 1984 to 1987 detonated the biggest explosion of workers and community struggle the regime had ever encountered. On every front including education, the state’s reform policy was obstructed and threatened with permanent defeat. Youth and students formed the front line of the resistance, engaging in street battles, organizing mass action and mounting pickets”.

Ultimately, liberation movements continued to shape education policies which resulted in tertiary and private schools being desegregated. In addition, the Afrikaans instruction policy was withdrawn and racial inequality in education spending was narrowed drastically. Reform measures of the education policies were introduced and one of them was the De

Lange Report, which opened conversations around addressing grievances in black schools (Hyslop 1999; Msomi, 1979). However, the schooling system remained effectively racially separated until 1994 when the apartheid government was overthrown (Hyslop 1999). Hyslop (1999) cautions that though Bantu Education was abolished, the consequences of the Verwoerdian Education Policy still live with us. Hyslop (1999, 184), continues to state that, “South Africa’s people will be tragically burdened with them in confronting the task of creating a post-apartheid educational system”.

2.3. Post-Apartheid Transformation

In this section, I evaluated the post-apartheid state by focusing on the transition to democracy; the legacies of colonization and apartheid; and the extent to which transformation has occurred during the post-apartheid era. This was achieved by discussing the post-apartheid’s societal; language and higher education transformation.

2.3.1. Society and Transformation

Despite the attainment of democracy, entrenched racial and structural inequalities from the colonial and apartheid system continue to reproduce themselves even after 1994. Badat (2008, 11) posits that two injustices prevail in the new South Africa. The first is centered in “beliefs, prejudice, stereotypes, chauvinism, and intolerance; which form patterns of social exclusion and subordination of particular social groups”. The second injustice is intertwined with the social and economic structures of society. These structures ensure that socio-economic privileges for the minority are sustained alongside the degradation and lack of opportunities for the majority. Badat (2008, 11) argues that this creates, “one of the most unequal societies in the world in terms of disparities of wealth and income, living conditions, and access to education, health, and various social services, and that severe race, class, gender, geographical, and other inequalities continue to be reproduced”.

The transformation project in South Africa aimed to address societal division by emphasizing social cohesion. According to the Department of Planning, Monitoring, and Evaluation (2015), nation-building encompasses “forming a common identity, while recognizing and respecting diverse ethnic, racial and other groupings. It involves multiculturalism, which recognizes the cultural rights of ethnic and other minorities” (DPME, 2015, 77).

The ideals of creating a new nation in South Africa were followed through the TRC. The TRC strived to reconstruct society through forgiveness and healing between the oppressed and oppressor. This was done through public acknowledgements by whites of the inhuman discrimination and crimes committed against black people. Though the TRC brought clarity and comfort to victims of violence through testimonies by perpetrators, the extent to which it contributed to nation building is contested (Badat, 2008; DPME, 2015).

The foundation of the new South Africa was also fostered through the recognition of the new Constitution (1996) and national anthem, which were more inclusive of societal diversity and played a vigorous part in shaping an all-encompassing national identity (DPME, 2015, 77). The Constitution (1996) particularly played a fundamental role in forging a national identity through recognition of human rights and equality before the law. Department of Planning, Monitoring, and Evaluation (2015) contends that the Constitution (1996) is “based on a vision of a South Africa built on a culture of reverence for human rights and an identity founded on the values of non-sexism, non-racialism and equality” (DPME, 2015, 78).

According to the Bertelsmann Transformation Index (2003, 2), the transformation project in South Africa centered on “social reconciliation and an end to the culture of violence that pervaded both the private and the public realm”. The Bertelsmann Transformation Index (2003) continues to argue that, after the little ground covered soon after liberation; the country has found that, years into democracy, transformation has proven to be a difficult project due to the slow pace of social transformation.

Reddy (2006) argues that in analyzing present-day society, it is essential to interrogate the transition period of apartheid to democracy. For Reddy (2006), this period is significant because it outlines the fundamentals of the transition and its failures which continue to haunt present society. Reddy (2006) asserts that the democratic government failed to fully foster a societal revolution for fundamental structural change and a transformation project initiated from below. Reddy (2006) states, “The change of regime was substantive but limited largely to the political realm, amounting to a change in the status of blacks from that of discriminated subjects under apartheid into voting citizens”. Badat (2016) problematizes the transformation project as merely a numbers system where large numbers of black people are integrated into structures and institutions without fundamental restructuring of

those structures. Badat (2016) insists that this way of looking at transformation has its limitations, in that it does not engage with crucial issues such as decolonization.

2.3.2. Language and Transformation

Post-apartheid, the development of new language policies held high potential and generated expectations of the transformation of the language inequalities within the country (Mesthrie, 2006). Language, as an instrument historically used to discriminate and marginalized people, was prioritized in the transformation initiative. In appreciating language diversity, the democratic government adopted a new Constitution (1996) which declared that the official languages of the Republic are Sepedi, Sesotho, Setswana, siSwati, Tshivenda, Xitsonga, Afrikaans, English, isiNdebele, isiXhosa and isiZulu (Mohope, 2012; The Republic of South Africa, 1996, s 6 [1]).

Trušník, Bell, & Nemčoková (2013) established that the choice of language and the way language is used is a central component to people defining themselves. Wa Thiong'o (1994) contends that language is a source of empowerment as language is a powerful mechanism which forms part of one's identity and acts as a foundation for intellectual development, learning to communicate, and relating to others. James Tollefson cited in Alexander (2011, 312) asserts that the concentration on language policies is imperative as "language is built into the economic and social structures".

The promotion of a multilingual society is fundamental in transforming society. It is regarded as redefining and discrediting the racial manifestations on language policies, identities, and power engineered during the colonial and apartheid era (Hornberger, 2002). The development of historically disadvantaged languages fosters national unity and acceptance of linguistic diversity, social justice, the principle of equal access and respect for language rights (Olivier, 2011, 80).

Alexander (2011) contends that due to the colonial and apartheid legacies which have spread into the democratic state, the dominance of English and Afrikaans is prevalent in socio-economic spheres. The acceptance of English as the common language was not only advocated by the National Party during the democratic negotiations but also by black elites (Abongdia, 2015). Snail (2011) argues that during the resistance campaigns and protests

against the apartheid regime, English became popular and was used by a number of activists and was thus considered a significant feature in the liberation process. The widespread support for English as the lingua-franca by the democratic government was considered to foster unity as it is an already established and used language (Alexander, 2011; McKay & Chick, 2002).

Wa Thiong'o (1994, 5), observes that there has been a general tendency for former African colonies to identify themselves by languages of their imperial colonizers as "English-speaking, French-speaking or Portuguese-speaking African countries". Wa Thiong'o (1994, 6) contends that it has become a norm for even the most supposedly radical and progressive Africans to situate the regenerating of African cultures in European languages. The languages of the colonizers in most African countries are said to be, "the natural languages of literary and even political mediation between African people in the same nation and between nations in Africa and other continents. In some instances, these European languages were seen as having a capacity to unite African people against divisive tendencies inherent in the multicity of African languages within the same geographic state".

Alexander (2011), states that despite the post-apartheid constitutional recognition of indigenous languages, these languages remain marginalized in society. The marginalization of indigenous languages is aided by the government's inability to reverse the apartheid regimes approach to indigenous languages, as languages that do not have economic value in society. In addition, these languages are also perceived to not hold the capacity to be instruments of formal knowledge production like English (Alexander, 2011).

Satyo cited in Snail (2011, 73), posits that the language policies in the post-apartheid era do not satisfy the needs and interests of society because "many South Africans especially whites are still in the comfort of Apartheid where Afrikaans and English were the only official languages. The speakers of these languages up until now do not see any need or reason to learn African languages or even to recognize the multilingual set-up that South Africa is". Alexander (2011, 317) argues that these deficits are, "self-limiting and self-defeating". According to Alexander (2011, 317), if the government does not intellectualize and attach market value to indigenous languages as instruments of knowledge, production,

and trade, “no amount of policy can guarantee their use in high-status functions and, thus, eventual escape from the hegemony of English”.

According to Desai (2001) and Webb (2009), the lack of language transformation taints the ideals of a multilingual society and nation-building. This is because the minimal value of indigenous languages in social, educational, political or economic will, remains unchanged. Webb (2009) continues to argue that the problem with language policies is that they have been developed and not implemented.

2.3.3. Higher Education and Transformation

According to McLean (1999), colonization and apartheid tainted the education system in South Africa; however, schools have and persist to play a significant part in transforming society. This is due to their powerful and vocal students who continue to use their platform to raise important societal issues and forcing conversations and actions of transformation. Higher education transformation has been a focal point for the post-apartheid government to broaden democratic objectives. Reddy (2004) claims the aspirations of government for HEIs are to contribute to overcoming the legacies of racism, sexism, and exclusion. Reddy (2004) argues that this burden is placed on HEIs because the economic, political and cultural traits they demonstrate are reflected to broader society.

Msomi (1979) argues the education system in former colonies must recognize that it is essential to acknowledge and deal with an African culture which is imbued with indigenous languages, values, and interests. The Eiselen Report of 1949 cited in Msomi (1979, 53) stresses the importance of the education system considering African education and African development as one process by asserting that, “African development and African education must be largely synonymous terms. Education is more than a matter of schooling. School education if it is to be coordinated, and in harmony with sound development must be seen as one of the many educational agencies and processes which lead the African to be better and fuller living”.

Badat (2008, 6) claims, “In as much as higher education institutions must debate and make choices and decisions on numerous issues, social equity and redress are not so much

matters of choice as they are pressing constitutional obligations that ‘must be fulfilled’, and societal imperatives in terms of which institutions must take ‘measures’ to advance persons, or categories of persons, disadvantaged by unfair discrimination”. The education system is regarded as a significant sector in transformation as education is one of the primary agents of socialization, with opportunities to shape the attitudes and behaviors of people (Ferguson, 2006).

The Education White Paper (1997) argues that universities, as agents used by the apartheid government to perpetuate racial discrimination, are required to assume an active and visible part in the culture of democracy and installing values of diversity and tolerance (DoE, 1997). Transformation in higher education according to the Education White Paper (1997) meant an improved and developed participation. This means that new policies had to be formulated to successfully overcome the historical structures which perpetuated inequality and discrimination. Furthermore, transformation meant to focus on the inclusion of black people and women as historically disadvantaged groups. Successful policies were conceptualized to establish a connection between higher education; the state and create an institutional culture which is considerate, diverse and representative (DoE, 1997).

However, the manner in which higher education should contribute to transformation has differed over the course of the years, starting with when the RDP was adopted. During this period, higher education was suggested to, “contribute to and support the process of societal transformation outlined in the RDP, with its compelling vision of people-driven development leading to the building of a better quality of life for all” (Reddy, 2004, 37). On the other hand, under GEAR, the emphasis was on globalization. HEIs were expected to prioritize the economic growth of society and skills development for a “knowledge-driven and knowledge-dependent society” (Reddy, 2004, 37).

In the government’s GEAR plan, HEIs were encouraged to be more entrepreneurial and produce, “person-power and knowledge that would make South Africa globally competitive by helping it reconfigure itself into the knowledge economy” (Reddy, 2004, 39). This has been problematized due to the high market value of English and the low status of indigenous languages. In addition, this meant that HEIs must be inclined to pursue economic

interests over non-economic, socially liberating values which move towards the realization of equality in language, race, and gender (Reddy, 2004).

Reddy (2006) argues that one of the key problems challenging HEIs includes responsiveness, which comprises institutions' engagement with broader societal problems. Reddy (2006), states that the engagements of HEIs should be reflective of the content and programs set by broader society for social cohesion. Higher education has proven to be continuously racist and oppressive to the historically disadvantaged regarding issues such as access, funding and language diversity. This leads to the disjuncture in government's aspirations and the practical means made available for disadvantaged groups to access resources to exercise their constitutional rights. For HEIs to be effective there needs to be an equitable distribution of resources to redress historical inequalities which exists within these institutions so that they reflect the democratic, representative state aspirations (Aina, 2010; Reddy, 2006).

Government legislation and education policy interpretation and implementation have been disputed. They have also sparked intense debates around the slow implementation of transformation and the presence of old systems reproducing themselves within these institutions (Enders, 2004; Reddy, 2006). Multiple policies in HEIs have been developed to respond to the history of racial discrimination in efforts to restructure these institutions. Reddy (2006) argues that the role of HEIs, in the democratic South Africa, has only assisted in the "creation of a new black middle class. It has however also (given the nature of the transition and the macroeconomic choices of the political elite) helped reproduce the race/class exclusions, of the poor majority, that apartheid created and served as its foundation" (Reddy, 2006).

Despite the minimal role played by higher education towards its own and society's transformation, the Draft National Plan for Higher Education (2001), proclaims that higher education cannot be excused from playing a role in restructuring and transforming society, "Higher education has an unmatched obligation, which has not been adequately fulfilled, to help lay the foundations of a critical civil society, with a culture of public debate and tolerance which accommodates differences and competing interests. It has much more to do, both within its own institutions and in its influence on the broader community, to

strengthen the democratic ethos, the sense of common citizenship and commitment to a common good” (DoE, 2001, 4).

2.4. Languages and Education.

In this section, I evaluate the status, use, and development of indigenous languages in education. This section also focuses on the education system in its entirety and later narrows down to HEIs.

2.4.1. Basic Education and Languages.

Mazrui (2002) contends that in the transition from home to starting school, many black rural students are confronted with a new environment, and new learning structures where they must conform to a new language (English) which differs from the one acquired and used at home. This foreign language creates a teacher-centered approach and reinforces passiveness and silence in the classroom. This then slows down the learning process and participation, consequently having a negative effect on the child’s progress. Heugh (2000) posits that such an education system produces poor school performance with high drop-out rates, rooted in students not getting a good foundation of English before it’s used as LoLT. This is because prior to schooling in townships and rural areas, black children mostly interact and socialize only in their indigenous languages. Even after enrolling in schools, these children do not get enough exposure to English outside the classroom (Heugh, 2000).

According to Alexander (2004); Heugh (2000); Mazrui (2002), the use of the child’s mother language promotes a smooth transition between home and school. This allows the child to navigate the new environment (school) prosperously. The use of home language also lessens the burden on teachers as the learning process is more natural and less stressful. It is for the above reasons that the democratic government declared that it is important to develop policies such as the Language in Education Policy (1997), to ensure the promotion of indigenous languages through transforming language use and practices in the education systems. The Language in Education Policy (1997) encourages language rights and multilingualism in South Africa thus, eventually leading to the adoption of mother tongue languages as LoLT in schools (DoE, 1997; McKay & Chick, 2002; Nudelman, 2015).

However, despite attempts to elevate indigenous languages to the status of Afrikaans and English and incorporate them in the education system, Duemert (2000, 413) argues that, “Many parents, whose home language is a language other than English, prefer their children to receive their schooling in English rather than their mother tongue”. Heugh (2002) suggests that black parents abandon their indigenous languages and favour their children being educated in English because their indigenous languages have acquired negative connotations under colonisation and apartheid which have persisted into the democratic South Africa. These indigenous languages have become closely associated with backwardness, where for example, Dalvit, Murray & Terzoli (2009) contend that IsiXhosa was and still is associated with illiteracy and poverty. This makes some of its speakers reluctant to speak their indigenous language and to prefer English to give an impression of wealth and/or being educated.

Such realities are informed by the apartheid governments attached connotations of inferiority to indigenous languages, which are also linked to poor education. The apartheid government through Bantu Education managed to create an education system that marginalized much of the population by coupling indigenous language instruction with underfunding and an impoverished curriculum. Therefore, most black parents and students post-apartheid do not want an education taught in their own indigenous languages (Mazrui, 2002). This creates a growing rejection of indigenous languages in education as LoLT as they are associated with failure, while Afrikaans but especially English is associated with success. Ultimately, the stored perceptions of indigenous languages from the apartheid regime reinforce the idea that education given in indigenous languages is inferior and education given in English is more advanced (Nieftagodien, 2014).

The preference for English over indigenous languages by black parents and students is also informed by numerous factors, such as awareness of the power embodied by English. English is associated with intelligence, the likelihood of securing employment and financial security (Alexander, 2004; Dalvit, Murray & Terzoli, 2009; Gough, 1996). This idea is reinforced by Dlamini (2001, 36) through the assertion that “if a prospective employer were to know that a person studied through the medium of IsiZulu they might be reluctant to

employ that person”. The above creates a challenge in developing indigenous languages in education, while the use and status of English are boosted.

According to, Sure & Webb (2000), in the African framework, the continued use of colonial languages, particularly English, maintains the power of the colonisers. This power is reinforced through the education system where those who demonstrate a good command of the English language, assume dominant positions in society. Consequently, this illustrates how colonial languages continue to oppress and exclude the black majority from active participation in schools, the economy, etcetera (Nieftagodien, 2014).

Heugh (2000) argues that the democratic government’s stances to have English dominate all spheres of society including the education sector perpetuates the exclusion of indigenous language speakers in education, society, and the economy. According to Dlamini (2001, 1), English is increasingly becoming a tool used to attain high-status jobs in all sectors. Dalvit and de Klerk (2005, 17) argue that “less than 25% of the South African black population has a reasonable competence in English. This means that a large portion of the population is actively disempowered by their lack of English”.

2.4.2. Higher Education and Languages

According to the Report compiled by the Ministerial Committee (2003), on the development of indigenous African languages as medium of instruction in higher education, HEIs are situated at the “intersection between the public, private and civil society sectors” (DoE, 2003, 19). Therefore, the government tasked HEIs to promote the ideals of the Constitution (1996) of multilingualism (DoE, 2003, 19). According to this Report (2003), each HEI is obliged to develop its own language policy which promotes multilingualism through the development of indigenous languages. These language policies are to be guided by the Constitution (1996) and the Language Policy for Higher Education (2002) (DoE, 2003, 17).

As mentioned before in the study, the education system is one of the primary influential agents of socialization which shapes people’s attitudes and behaviors. The Report compiled by the Ministerial Committee (2003), argues that institutional and national transformation may be reached through the advancement of indigenous languages in the education system, particularly through higher education as “when students and educators use a particular

language to acquire education, it contributes largely to the growth of such a language” (DoE, 2003, 12). The growth of the indigenous language particularly in higher education is advocated for because it is at this level that languages are promoted and developed through books, funding, etcetera. Transformation through the promotion of indigenous languages according to Kaschula (2013) is a means of restoring value in African systems, cultures, and practice. Kaschula (2013) proceeds to state that language is embedded in the notion of identity negotiation as, “an individual’s self-identification through language opens up interaction with other cultures” (2013, 6). Thus, the development of indigenous languages fosters a sense of acceptance and inclusion.

However, despite the above, Webb (2006) proclaims that English and Afrikaans are the only LoLT in South African HEIs. The Council on Higher Education (2001), states that numerous HEIs show little development in the use of indigenous languages. Based on a survey conducted in 2000, none of the 21 South African universities were exploring the possibility of using an indigenous language as LoLT (DoE, 2001). Nyika & Van Zyl (2013) propose that the above is a consequence of the development of indigenous languages being too costly. According to Nyika & Van Zyl (2013, 722), HEIs should not channel their scarce resources towards such a project because “English is a global language. International research papers are in English. Therefore, to maintain a high standard of education and research, time and resources should not be wasted on different languages. It will require more lecturers, more training for already overworked lecturers, more classes (for different languages) which takes more space and time, as well as notes, tutorials etc. prepared and printed in different languages. The cost and resources of such a task could be put to better use”.

The preference for English, according to Alexander (2011, 317), is supported because “in a multilingual society, it is in everyone’s interest to learn the dominant language since this will help to provide equal opportunities in the labour market as well as in other markets”. For Nyika & Van Zyl (2013), the use of English as the only LoLT in HEIs is reinforced by the reality that HEIs are supposed to equip students with a language which will enable them to compete locally and internationally, and English is that language. The use of indigenous languages as LoLT in HEIs is perceived as futile as they are not developed enough to be used as LoLT and have no economic value. In addition, Nyika & Van Zyl (2013, 722) continue to

argue that in a country with eleven official languages, choosing specific indigenous languages to be the LoLT will intensify racial and ethnic tensions. For Nyika & Van Zyl (2013) the promotion of multilingualism should be an individual obligation and not an institutional one, “Individuals need to learn other languages on their own initiative and for their own purposes”.

In addition, Neethling (2010, 69) posits that tertiary level is not the best place to implement such a policy because, “One should not forget that many inhabitants of South Africa are exposed to English daily through the mass media, particularly television with intensive audio input, hence an underlying base, even if passive and not productive, is established. With a sound first language education at school, this passive internalization could be reasonably easily transformed into a productive mode. The current situation in the South African schools is not conducive to the implementation of the indigenous languages as mediums of instruction at institutions of higher learning”. Nyika & Van Zyl (2013, 723), concur with the above and propose that such a policy be first implemented at basic education level where indigenous languages will get to develop their lexical, literature, etcetera before they are implemented as LoLT in HEIs.

According to the Report compiled by the Ministerial Committee (2003), HEIs are supposed to look at provincial language policies to set a framework when making decisions on which language(s) to develop (DoE, 2003). Masoke-Kadenge & Kadenge (2013) contend that most HEIs language policies follow the above and use dominant regional languages to determine which language(s) to develop. This is rendered problematic and unrealistic because language usage is not restricted to geographic boundaries. Masoke-Kadenge, & Kadenge (2013, 41) continue to critique the dominant regional languages criteria, arguing that it means that South Africa, “... remained in an apartheid conception of a South African language. Apartheid had a geographical conception of African languages. Zulus live in Natal, Sotho’s in the Transvaal, Xhosas in the Eastern Cape, and so on”. This means if HEIs would follow provincial language policies and use dominant regional languages, they would be replicating apartheid language models.

Heugh (1999, 306) posits that there are internal and external structural forces which are politically and economically driven against indigenous languages being LoLT in HEIs. These factors are partly consequences of colonial inheritance and oppressed consciousness. Jonathan Pool (1993), cited in Heugh (1999, 307), argues that there is a strong relationship between language and political power, "...the nature of politics may be influenced by the fact that linguistic competition is one of the determinants of political success... those who have political power use it to get power over language, and those who have power over language use it to get political power, with the result that the ideal of democratic government is never achieved".

Zikode (2017), contends that the development of indigenous languages in HEIs threatens the outputs they will have. According to Zikode (2017, 137), "The Dhet confirmed that universities rely heavily on the research outputs produced by their academics each year for global recognition, which comes mainly from publication citation as well as for government financial subsidy. When students are taught indigenous languages, this poses a danger to the outputs because most indigenous languages are only based in South Africa and are not internationally visible". This means that because there is a perception that there is no value attached to indigenous languages, their implementation is not prioritized by HEIs.

Furthermore, Foley (2004) cited in Kadenge (2015), argues that there are linguistic, political and social reasons why indigenous languages are not established enough to be used as LoLT in HEIs. Linguistically, this is due to the insufficiency in the standardized forms. Foley (2004) adds, "Politically, there seems to be no really proactive determination on the part of the general population to bring about and sustain the necessary development and advancement of the indigenous languages, certainly for higher education purposes. Nor has language ever been seen as a priority by the present government. Socially, however, there seems to be little sense of the need to broaden the scope of the home language beyond the primary social functions. Instead, for the purposes of more general communication, advanced learning and education, formal economic involvement, and so on, the acquisition of English is seen as a necessity" (Kadenge, 2015, 33).

Tait (2007) proclaims that it is impossible for HEIs to develop indigenous languages as LoLT without reconstruction society first. According to Tait (2007) government must first create a demand for indigenous languages in all sectors of society. This will then inform the education, knowledge and skills students acquire. The development of indigenous languages outside of this is perceived to be ineffective because outside the boundaries of HEIs, students will not be able to attach value to them, as English solely dominates socio-economic and political spheres.

However, the use of English in a post-colonial state has been contested and treated as symbolic violence by Balfour (2007, 8) which means a “process of which the ultimate aim is to bring one subordinated group to a state where it will accept as normal the hegemony of another group”. According to Snail (2011, 87), the preference and dominance of English in society is contributing to the demise of indigenous languages where future generations will not be able to communicate in their indigenous languages because “English is becoming their home language”.

The significance of learning indigenous languages in a former colonial state is prioritized by Paulin Djite cited in Heugh (1999, 305), “... language is an important element of social organization and control that can be used in improving social life”. Djite further argues that the use of global languages such as English in African countries for development purposes have yielded to failure and have further perpetuated instability and the marginalization of indigenous languages (Heugh, 1999). Nyika & Van Zyl (2013, 723) argue that teaching in indigenous languages is an advantage because it gives, “... students access to a wealth of cross-cultural publications as well as providing a better understanding of other cultures and languages”.

According to the Report compiled by the Ministerial Committee (2003), the inability to advance indigenous languages in HEIs, “threatens the long-term goals of national reconciliation and may fester into a potentially destabilizing national sore two to three decades from now” (DoE, 2003, 19). In addition, this failure will contribute to producing a black elite class with low competency in indigenous languages, thus culturally alienating those black elites. This could fundamentally change the cultural conditions of the state and South Africans in ways which could potentially be destabilizing (DoE, 2003).

Therefore, it is worthy to note from the above arguments, presented by theorists, that the development of indigenous languages is necessary as it promotes cross-cultural communication, understanding, and tolerance. This is particularly important in HEIs as captured by Nyika & Van Zyl (2013, 726), "People should be encouraged to learn other South African languages at university as it is important for creating cultural understanding in the country". However, there are also noticeable conflicts in accommodating English which comes with socio-economic benefits and indigenous languages which are coupled with culture and identity. As a linguistically diverse country with a history of oppression, there should be careful consideration of how knowledge production is promoted along and simultaneously with cultural and linguistic diversity. This raises what was noted by Banda (2004) cited in Tshotsho (2013, 43), who posits, "the government must decide on how to reach the balance between what black people perceive as effective education for their children, and the promotion of cultural heritage. The government must come up with a strategy to promote and develop all South African languages in all the language aspects and not only promote speaking to the detriment of writing in any language. Therefore, there will be a need for innovation and funds to write and translate books to enable all languages to be used as mediums of instruction".

With the above, in the following section, an overview of Wits 2003 and 2014 Language Policies will be given to contextualize this study and to determine to what extent the debates raised in this literature review are adequately captured. Wits has only developed two language policies, in 2003 and 2014. The 2003 Language Policy is provided as an overview because it set the tone for the 2014 Language Policy. It provides crucial context to this study about the attempts to develop indigenous language at Wits. The recent 2014 Language Policy was the focus of this research and is discussed in section (2.5) which documents its characteristics. All evaluative discussions about the 2014 policy relative to the literature review and participants' responses are discussed later in chapter four.

2.5. The University of Witwatersrand Language Policies Overview

2.5.1. Introduction to the University of the Witwatersrand

Wits is located in one of South Africa's ethnically and linguistically diverse cities, Johannesburg. According to the 2011 census by Statistics South Africa (see table 2), Johannesburg has a population of about 4.4 million, of which 76.4% are black African; 12.3% are white; 5.6% are colored, and 4.9% are Indian/Asian (Statistics SA Census, 2011). According to the 2014 Wits Language Policy, Johannesburg is linguistically diverse, with IsiZulu being the most dominant language spoken by about 23.1% of the population, followed by English which is spoken by about 19.8% of the population (see table 1) (Statistics SA Census, 2011).

The Wits population is composed of 76 languages spoken by staff and students (Wits, 2003, 1) and this is why the university feels the need to reflect the linguistically diverse character of the nation and the city it is situated in (Wits, 2004, 1).

Table 1: Johannesburg language statistics (Statistics SA Census, 2011)

Language	Percentage
Afrikaans	7,2%
English	19,8%
IsiNdebele	2,9%
IsiXhosa	6,7%
IsiZulu	23,1%
Sepedi	7,2%
Sesotho	9,5%
Setswana	7,6%
Sign Language	0,4%
SiSwati	0,8%

Tshivenda	3,2%
Xitsonga	6,5%
Other	3.8%
Not Applicable	1,5%

Table 2: Johannesburg population (Statistics SA Census, 2011)

Group	Percentage
Black African	76,4%
Colored	5,6%
Indian/Asian	4,9%
White	12,3%
Other	0,8%

2.5.2. Introduction to Wits Language Policies

Both Wits Language Policies are informed by the Constitution (1996) and the Language Policy for Higher Education (2002), which highlight the necessity for developing multilingual HEIs. The policies appreciate linguistic diversity, as a means of, “developing a multilingual environment in which all languages are developed for use in education and the medium of instruction does not serve as a barrier to access and success” (Wits, 2003, 1). The 2014 Language Policy reinforces this sentiment by stating, “Linguistic diversity is a resource for creativity, selfhood, and cognition that should be cultivated and protected through institutions of higher learning in the 21st century” (Wits, 2014, 1).

The policies highlight the necessity for developing multilingualism as a transformative instrument. Through both policies, the university dedicates its resources to develop indigenous languages and develop the multilingual proficiency of its staff and pupils.

Choosing which indigenous languages to develop with eleven official languages in the country has been a hurdle for the university as they are aware that this process will exclude certain languages.

2.5.3. Language choice

The Wits Language Policies demonstrate a contradiction in which indigenous languages to develop. Both language policies agree, according to different surveys conducted within the university, that IsiZulu and Sesotho are the dominant languages spoken in the university, alongside English. However, according to the 2003 Language Policy, the university stated that due to financial constraints, the policy committed to developing only Sesotho as a LoLT alongside English. This was done under the impression that HEIs in KwaZulu-Natal would be “more suited to the development of IsiZulu” (Wits, 2003, 1).

The 2003 Language Policy’s rationale for the choice of developing Sesotho instead of IsiZulu is because although the choice of developing IsiZulu received the highest percentage in the Nguni category during their 2002 language survey; the university reasoned, “IsiZulu is the dominant African language in the country and needs to be promoted less than the other languages” (Wits, 2003, 4). The choice of developing Sesotho was rationalized by it receiving, “28.7% support, with Setswana 16.9%, and Sepedi 11.8%” (Wits, 2003, 4). The policy continues to assert that Sesotho has only the University of the Free State as a natural institution in the country. According to the policy, “The University of the Free State is geographically close enough to Wits to enable inter-institutional co-operation as is the University of Lesotho. The University of the Witwatersrand is uniquely placed to ensure that urban forms of the language are taken into consideration when the language is further developed” (Wits, 2003, 4).

The 2014 Language Policy agrees with the sentiments demonstrated in the 2003 policy about the choice to develop Sesotho but does, however, offer to develop IsiZulu too. The policy reasons to develop both IsiZulu and Sesotho are because these two languages “represent two major language clusters (Nguni and Sotho) to which seven indigenous African languages belong. In addition, Sesotho has rich historical and cultural ties with Johannesburg (Gauteng – a Sesotho name for a place of gold) and isiZulu is the majority national language – the only language that has a 3% increase in the latest Census” (Wits,

2014, 2). The 2014 policy does not speak to the financial constraints highlighted in the 2003 Language Policy which prohibited the development of IsiZulu.

2.5.4. Language implementation

The development of these indigenous languages is envisioned through phased development stages where in 2003 Sosetho and in 2014 Sesotho and IsiZulu were to be used as LoLT, alongside English.

The 2003 policy states that Sesotho will be developed in phases.

Phase 1: “developing materials and resources needed for teaching Sesotho as a subject at all levels. To be completed by 2010” (Wits 2003, 1).

Phase 2: “developing linguistic abilities of staff and students. During this phase, Staff and students who do not speak any African language will be required to become communicatively competent in Sesotho. To begin in 2011” (Wits, 2003, 2).

Phase 3: “Once Sesotho has been developed for use as a language of instruction in Higher Education, the University will, in Phase 4, prepare staff and students for the introduction of English and Sesotho as a bilingual medium of instruction. Students and staff should be able to switch between these languages. The time frame for Phases 3 and 4 was to be based on the national language landscape at the time” (Wits, 2003, 1).

The 2014 policy states that the Sesotho and IsiZulu will be developed in phases.

Phase 1: “focuses on developing a multilingual linguistic landscape and branding. To be completed by 2016” (Wits, 2014, 2).

Phase 2: “focuses on the development of the materials and resources needed for the teaching of isiZulu and Sesotho as subjects for communicative purposes. Phase 2 to begin in 2018” (Wits, 2014, 2).

Phase 3: “will focus on developing the linguistic abilities of staff and students. Staff and students who do not speak any indigenous South African language will be required to become communicatively competent in either isiZulu or Sesotho. Those who speak African languages will be required to choose one of the two languages provided their language of choice is not from their home language cluster. Speakers of minority African languages

(Xitsonga and Tshivenda) will choose either isiZulu or Sesotho. The University commits itself to enhance proficiency and academic literacies in English for staff and students who speak an African language or a foreign language” (Wits, 2014, 2).

Phase 4: “the University is set to play a role in the development of the isiZulu and Sesotho as the medium of learning and teaching alongside English” (Wits, 2014, 2).

2.5.5. Role of English

According to both language policies, English will be the only LoLT, until the development of the selected indigenous languages, where they will be used together. During this period, “Academic, administrative and support staff will be supported in acquiring the level of English competence they need to succeed in their jobs and students will be supported in acquiring the level of English competence they need to succeed in their studies and the world of work” (Wits, 2003, 2). The 2014 Language Policy rationalized the use of English by stating, “The University, as a Centre of excellence, aims to graduate students with a full command of the English language. English language skills are essential for a successful career in South Africa and internationally” (Nudelman, 2015; Wits, 2014, 5).

2.5.6. Implementation body

No specific bodies were selected to oversee the implementation of the 2003 language policy.

According to the 2014 Language Policy, a Language Planning and Development Board was supposed to be set up in 2015 to oversee the implementation of the language policy and provide expertise and support. The 2014 Language Policy was reviewed in 2017 where the university declared that a, “Language Board was established, comprising of a range of University stakeholders to focus on creating awareness and implementing the new Language Policy, to determine the language requirements of the institution, and to compile a budget that will enable the implementation of the first phase of the plan” (Wits Transformation update, 2017).

2.5.7. Shared responsibility with stakeholders in government

These policies recognize language as an instrument of transformation and commit the university's resources to enhancing linguistic proficiencies of students and staff in the chosen indigenous languages. Furthermore, the policies make it explicit that such an initiative is only possible with the partnership of government to develop South African indigenous languages.

2.6. Conclusion

This literature review explored the historical language use and language policies under colonization and apartheid which inform the post-apartheid language structures and developments (planning and policies). I evaluated the transformation project and language status, use, and development of indigenous languages in society and in higher education. This chapter also gave an overview of the 2003 Wits Language Policy which set the ground for the 2014 Language Policy that is evaluated in chapter four. The literature revealed that the post-apartheid state is faced with a language crisis and poor transformation on a national and education level. Theorists have argued that the Constitution (1996) and higher education policies aim to protect and develop indigenous languages and give them the same status as English and Afrikaans, however, indigenous languages remain marginalized.

This research located part of the challenge in developing indigenous languages in higher education at the implementation level. Though language policies exist, with admirable proclamations that recognize the need to develop indigenous languages in HEIs and appreciate the significance of multilingualism as a transformative instrument, higher education language policies often lack implementation. This research aimed to speak to issues of language diversity policy interpretation and implementation in higher education, engaging why it is that indigenous languages are not developed in HEIs despite policies which claim to appreciate language diversity. This research interrogated language policies and their formulation process, implementation steps, and the possible strengths and constraints in the implementation process. The results of which are discussed in chapter four. The following chapter (three) is dedicated to the methodology that informed the study.

3. CHAPTER THREE - METHODOLOGY

This chapter details the methodology used in this study, including how the data was analysed, as well as the study's limitations and ethical considerations.

3.1. Research approach

A qualitative approach was utilized to conduct this study. Mouton (2001) posits that qualitative research studies social life traits with the objective to describe social phenomena. This approach was seen as appropriate for the study as Taylor, Bogdan and DeVault (2015) contend that this approach deals with collecting descriptive data by recording people's words and behaviours. This approach enabled the researcher to understand the perspectives and experiences of the participants, and thereby produce a comprehensive answer to the research topic.

The aim of this approach according to Merriam (1988, 522) is to, "... provide illumination and understanding of complex psychosocial issues and are most useful for answering humanistic 'why?' and 'how?' questions". Based on Merriam's (1988) assertions, this approach was advantageous in analysing the 2014 Wits Language Policy as it allowed the researcher to understand influential dynamics in the language policy formulation process; to understand language use dynamics within the university; along with constraints and strengths in the implementation of the language policy within the university.

3.2. Research Design

3.2.1. Case Study

A case study research design was selected for this research. Yin cited in Zainal (2007, 2) defines a case study as, "an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context". This research adopted a single case study located at the University of the Witwatersrand to probe deeper into how language policy as a transformative instrument is interpreted and implemented.

Zainal (2007, 2) continues to argue that the function of a case study is to, "explore and investigate contemporary real-life phenomenon through detailed contextual analysis of a

limited number of events or conditions, and their relationships". This design was suitable for the research as it enabled the exploration of the state of post-apartheid South Africa and the extent to which HEIs language policies have conformed to the aspirations of the democratic Constitution (1996) on multilingualism.

3.3. Research Site

Convenience sampling was used to select the University of the Witwatersrand as the study area. Farrokhi & Mahmoudi-Hamidabad (2012) contend that convenience sampling is based on the discretion of the researcher to select a sample which is deemed to produce the most favourable results, and which is most conveniently accessible to the researcher. The University of the Witwatersrand was conveniently selected as the research site because it is the researcher's immediate institution of learning which assigns easy access to the relevant participants.

The University of the Witwatersrand was also selected because it is one of the leading institutions in Africa, situated in Johannesburg, one of South Africa's most diverse cities. The University's population is diverse, composed of staff and students from various backgrounds and linguistic contexts. Due to the University's status and widespread recognition, it was essential to investigate what the institution is doing to become more multilingual and to advance indigenous languages, particularly because Wits prides itself as one of South Africa's leading HEIs engaged in the discourse of transformation.

3.4. Participants

Purposive sampling was used in the research to select the Wits employee participants in this study. De Vaus & de Vaus (2001) assert that purposive sampling is a non-probability sampling technique, which allows a researcher to choose specific people within the population to use for a study or research project. The researcher relies on his/her own judgment to select sample group members. The advantage of using this sampling strategy is that it targets a very specific population, which can help gain detailed insight.

This study consists of a total of eight participants. Five of the eight participants are registered masters' students in the Department of Sociology who completed their undergraduate degrees at Wits. The three other participants consist of two members of the

Wits Transformation Office and Professor Crouch the current Deputy Vice-Chancellor of Academics.

The study purposively selected knowledgeable participants about the 2014 Wits Language Policy to gain in-depth data about the policy and dynamics surrounding indigenous language interpretation and implementation in the university, to better answer the research question. Three expert participants were purposively selected for this study, consisting of two members from the Wits Transformation Office and Professor Crouch, the Deputy Vice-Chancellor of Academics. I tried to get more of such participants for the study but all the university employees who were involved in developing the 2014 Language Policy were no longer at the university. I tried to reach out, but none replied. I would have preferred more participants from the Transformation Office but only two members (Justine and Nyakallo) were available for the research. The Transformation Office's participation was critical to the study to understand what transformation means for the university and determine whether transformation can be achieved through the 2014 Language Policy. In addition, the office was significant in determining whether the implementation of such a policy is possible and how its implementation aimed to address inequalities across the campus and/or in the country.

The study also selected Professor Crouch, who oversees the University's language element of the transformation program. Professor Crouch's expert knowledge was essential to obtain an in-depth understanding of the policy formulation process to comprehend what was considered before drafting the policy, to determine if there were contesting issues around transformation and indigenous languages in this former colony, situated in a globalized world. In addition, Professor Crouch assisted in gaining an understanding of the interpretation of indigenous languages in the university and factors around the implementation process.

To develop a broad understanding of the research, the study used purposive and convenience sampling to select students within the university to get multiple perspectives on the research. The Department of Sociology was conveniently chosen as the researcher's home department. Masters students who completed their undergraduate degrees at Wits

were purposively selected as they have spent more time in the university, thus are in the best position to provide data on the university's language dynamics. The selected students assisted the research by providing a broader understanding of language use and development in the university outside of the policy, to determine whether the objectives in the language policy had been experienced or witnessed regarding the advancement of indigenous languages. The research engaged five student participants. The number of student participants was determined by the saturation point.

3.4.1. Participant descriptions

This study consists of two respective groups as illustrated in Table 3 and 4. Table 3 represents the descriptions of five student participants and table 4 represents the descriptions of two members of the Wits Transformation Office and Professor Crouch. It is important to note that due to the sensitivity of the study, pseudonyms were used in place of the real names of the participants to conceal their identities, except for Professor Crouch whose real name was used.

Table 3. descriptions of student participants

Name of participant	Gender	Ethnicity	Degree
1. Nkosinathi	Male	Xhosa	Master's in General Sociology
2. Dzuva	Male	Tshivenda	Master's in Health Sociology
3. Qaqamba	Female	Xhosa	Master's in Development Sociology
4. Nomzamo	Female	Zulu	Master's in General Sociology
5. Dikeledi	Female	Tswana	Master's in Health Sociology

Table 4. description of Wits employee participants

Name of participant	Position in the University
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1. Professor Crouch	Deputy Vice-Chancellor of Academics
2. Justine	Member of the Wits Transformation Office
3. Nyakallo	Member of the Wits Transformation Office

3.5. Data Collection

3.5.1. Interviews

In-depth interviews are one type of data collection methods utilized in this research. In-depth interviews were chosen because Johnson (2002) states that this type of interview is advantageous because it allows the participant to openly express their understandings and feelings about a phenomenon. It was particularly important for this study to get participants to open-up and express their thoughts and experiences on the topic, as language is a sensitive subject which can be hard to talk about as it is linked to other sensitive factors such as race and culture. The one-on-one conversation structure of in-depth interviews enabled the researcher to create a safe, private space for the participants. The one-on-one interaction was the best method to get insight into whether people feel language policies can foster diversity and transformation. The In-depth interviews also allowed the researcher to probe further about the dynamics of transformation and language use within the university and how the participants relate to these issues.

The interviews were guided by a set of questions. The researcher had two sets of questions which were tailored for the students and for Wits employees. The students' questions were designed to get a broader understanding of how the 2014 Wits Language Policy is perceived by students and how this relates to language and transformation at Wits. The employees' questions were tailored to get a deeper understanding of factors that have led to the development of the 2014 Wits Language Policy, its relation to transformation and the implementation process.

Open-ended questions were also used to probe further and get more clarity about participants' responses. According to Geer (1988, 335), open-ended questions are questions

which, "allows individuals to respond to the query in their own word". This was beneficial for this research as it enabled the researcher to conduct intensive individual interviews to extract detailed information and to better understand the participants' responses (Patton, 2005). Unclear issues that arose after the interview were explored with follow-up questions and this was useful to ensure that the scope of the participants' responses were accurately captured to have accurate findings.

All the interviews were conducted in English. Surprising, I also conducted interviews in English with participants who spoke my home language. I place some weight on this to the fact that there is no vocabulary for some of the words and concepts I used in this study but I think the primary reason for this, is because English is the only language of learning and teaching and research at Wits and we have therefore grown accustomed to speaking English even when engaging individuals who speak the same language.

All participants were given the liberty to choose when and where they wanted the interview to be conducted, for the purposes of making them feel safe and comfortable so they would find it easy to talk. For instance, Professor Crouch's interview was conducted in his office, four interviews took place in the sociology postgraduate room, one by the matrix and the other at the south-west engineering building.

A total of eight interviews were conducted, with one interview taking about 30 – 45 minutes. After completing each interview, the participants were thanked for their participation and assured that the information gathered from them would be captured accurately and anonymity was guaranteed, except for Professor Crouch, who consented to his real identity being used in this study.

3.5.2. Audio Recordings

The use of audio recorders is encouraged when conducting research as it enables the researcher to capture elements which might have been missed or lost during an interview (Gill, Stewart, Treasure & Chadwick, 2008). This was the case for this study, as after the participants were made aware of the purpose of the research, its guiding principles, they were given consent forms to sign to approve the use of an audio tape. All the participants

consented to an audio tape being used during the interview. This was particularly useful because some of the participants spoke very fast which would have made it hard to take down notes. Also, the use of audio tapes allowed the researcher to concentrate on the participants which was encouraging for the participants as they were keener to talk. Sutton & Austin (2015) contend that if a researcher is going to make use of audio recorders, it is imperative to transcribe before data analysis. This assisted the researcher in verifying interview notes to ensure that all the facts are represented and correct. This was implemented in the study as the tapes were ran numerous times and compared to the transcribed interview, to ensure all the data was accurately captured.

3.5.3. Documents

This study utilized documents as a data source to add substantive understanding and depth to the field. Johnson & Turner (2003) state that documents, are secondary data which has already been written. Johnson & Turner (2003, 316) argue that these are officially recorded documents by a member on behalf of an organization. Analysing documents is essential to this study as institutions are governed by policies which layout rules and objectives to ensure order and optimal functionality. The use of documents is motivated by their ability to influence social organization, interactions, and transformation in HEIs.

I utilized documents in the form of 2014 Wits Language Policy to understand how language diversity policy, as a transformative instrument, is interpreted and implemented within the university. The 2003 Wits Language Policy was utilized in chapter three to provide contextual background to the language developments initiated at Wits. However, only the 2014 Wits Language Policy was utilized in the findings of this study as it is the most recent, thus relevant language policy. In addition, the 2014 Language Policy was the only one utilized because no one at Wits had any information on the background and processes of the earlier policy. Professor Crouch also did not have much knowledge of the 2003 Language Policy as he only assumed office in 2013.

Despite this, it was however hard to get a copy of the 2014 Wits Language Policy as it is not easily accessible on the University's web page. It was even harder to access its appendices (Wits language survey) which the 2014 language policy was based on. It took about a month

to get the appendices, because there was no clear stipulation on the Wits web page and/or on the 2014 Language Policy on how or where exactly to get the appendices. When confronted with this, Professor Crouch assured that these would be updated onto the university's page for all to access.

In analysing the 2014 Language Policy, I was able to compare the realities within the university with the stated objectives of the policy, to develop a broader understanding of the university space. This is important as it assisted in understanding why the objectives to promote indigenous languages have not yielded successful outcomes despite the policy advocating for the advancement of indigenous languages.

3.6. Data Analysis

Data analysis is described by Wong (2008, 14) as, "the process of systematically searching and arranging the interview transcripts, observation notes, or other non-textual materials that the researcher accumulates to increase the understanding of the phenomenon". The data in this research was analysed using thematic analysis. According to Vaismoradi, Turunen, & Bondas (2013) thematic analysis involves identifying themes and patterns within the study and analysing the interrelationship between them. The purpose of this for Braun & Clarke (2006) is to combine the data from the participants (which would not make much sense in isolation) to form a comprehensive picture of their collective experience.

During the data analysis process, I listened to all the audio-tapes from the interviews and transcribed the data gathered from the participants. All the data from the participants was captured precisely and produced into readable texts. It took about a day to transcribe each interview, as I listened and read the transcript several times to ensure that all the data was accurately captured. The data was analysed using thematic analysis. The data was then organized, and I colour coded features from each transcript which were relevant to the research. The color-coded common features from each participant were then grouped together into themes, for instance, many of the participants noted the significance of indigenous languages for the academic success of black students and the importance of government financial support for the successful implementation of language policies. During

the thematic analysis process, I identified different themes and subthemes from the participants' responses.

The themes and subthemes used in the findings are:

1. The role of a university.
 - 1.2. Reflecting the democratic ideals of South Africa
 - 1.3. Universities' role to provide equal access and opportunities for success
2. Languages at Wits
 - 2.1. Indigenous languages and English at Wits.
 - 2.3. Synchronization of South African Indigenous languages
 - 2.4. Implementation of the Wits Language Policy and sharing responsibility with the government

The themes and subthemes were formulated with the intention of formulating an answer to the main research question of 'how is language diversity policy, as a transformative instrument, interpreted and implemented within Higher Education Institutions: A case study of the University of the Witwatersrand'. I will discuss the findings in chapter four, situating them in terms of the literature review that was conducted in chapter two.

3.7. Ethical Considerations

According to Resnik (2011), ethics are standards of conduct and discipline which inform what is considered right or wrong. Johnson (2002) posits that ethical considerations also encompass ensuring that no physical, psychological or emotional harm comes to the participants and that there is no deception at any point in the research. The researcher was cognizant that language is a sensitive topic as it is closely related to race, culture, etcetera, which on their own, are delicate topics due to the nature of South Africa's history under colonization and apartheid. For instance, some participants did not feel comfortable disclosing certain information, and some held strong opinions I do not necessarily agree

with, but I took extra caution to be sensitive towards the participants' opinions and to respect and value their privacy.

In addition, the ethical consideration taken in this study included awaiting ethical clearance (approval) before conducting interviews. All the participants were given the participation information sheet, along with consent forms. All the questions participants had were fully answered. This transparency was important as Johnson (2002) asserts one of the most important ethical components is telling the truth. With the various perspectives or interpretations, the researcher has an ethical commitment to present all these perspectives equally.

3.8. Informed consent

When conducting research, it is imperative that participants understand what they are participating in. Consent is required. According to Nijhawan, Janodia, Muddukrishna, Bhat, Bairy, Udupa & Musmade (2013, 134) consent is, "the process where a participant is informed about all aspects of the trial, which are important for the participant to make a decision and after studying all aspects of the trial the participant voluntarily confirms his or her willingness to participate".

The participants were approached by being informed of the study and its objectives. They were given participation information sheets where they were made aware that should they choose to be part of the study, their participation was voluntary and not legally binding, meaning, they could choose to terminate their participation at any point without repercussion. They were also given consent forms to state whether they understood what was expected of them and the researcher. The participants chose their own appointment times and where they wanted the interview to take place. All interviews took place on campus in quiet private spaces where there were no interruptions to ensure that participants felt comfortable and could be assured that their identities were protected. All except Professor Crouch chose not to disclose their real identities.

Upon arrival, the researcher reiterated the information on the participation information sheet about the purpose of the study, what was expected of the participants, and the role of

the researcher. The participants were then handed consent forms to sign as a demonstration that they understood the nature of the research and agreed to have the interview and allowed it to be audio-taped. All participants' questions were fully answered, and all the participants signed the consent forms.

3.9. Limitations of this study

This research utilized a single case study, thus the data obtained from this research cannot be generalized and used to represent other HEIs. Another limitation of the study is that the research does not have a diverse pool of student participants as these were only masters' students from one department (Sociology). This may affect the findings of the study as different experiences and perspectives from students at different levels and from different faculties were not included. In addition, factors such as age, gender, race etcetera, were not considered, thus the data obtained from them cannot be generalized to the rest of the Wits student population.

However, though the data from this study cannot be generalized, it provides valuable insights on the significance of indigenous languages in higher education and new ways of thinking about when, how and who should develop higher education language policies and the role of each set of actors and institutions in society in order for this initiative to be realized. The concerns raised by the participants also provide significant cautionary guidelines for Wits and the government in their attempt to create multilingual HEIs. In addition, the research provides new ways of thinking about the development of indigenous languages.

3.10 Conclusion

This chapter discussed the research methodology used in this study to collect data. Eight participants were interviewed, consisting of five masters' students from the Department of Sociology and three Wits employees, two from the Transformation Office and Professor Crouch. Convenience sampling was the most effective technique used to select the location of this study. Purposive sampling was used to select Wits employees and student participants for their expert knowledge and institutional experience. In-depth interviews were useful for this study due to their conversation style and flexible structure which also enabled the researcher to ask open-ended questions to extract as much data as possible.

The interviews were conducted on an informed, voluntary basis where the participants were given participant information sheets and consent forms to approve their participation. The recorded interviews were transcribed into readable texts. Thematic analysis was used to colour code common features relevant to the research, which were grouped into different themes which will be further discussed in chapter four.

4. CHAPTER FOUR – DATA FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

4.1. Introduction

This chapter discusses data gathered from interviewed participants. The discussion is presented through the themes identified during data analysis. This chapter also provides a brief description of the participants to provide contextual background.

4.2. Participants

This study consists of a total of eight participants. Five of the eight participants are registered masters' students in the Department of Sociology who completed their undergraduate degrees at Wits. The three other participants consist of two members of the Wits Transformation Office and Professor Crouch, the Deputy Vice-Chancellor of Academics.

As mentioned before in chapter three, participants were selected for their expert knowledge and multiple perspectives of the language policy formulation and implementation process at the University of the Witwatersrand.

4.2.2. Summary of participants' contextual backgrounds

Below are summaries of the participants' contextual backgrounds, including their pseudonyms, sex, residential location, family and schooling history, home languages, students chosen field of study and when they were first exposed to English as a LoLT. These factors are raised to get to know the participants better and to potentially determine whether the above factors influence participants' perceptions and understanding of the Wits Language Policy and their views shared during the interview (which will be unpacked in 4.3).

As previously mentioned in chapter three, the nature of this research is highly sensitive, and pseudonyms are used in place of the real identities of the participants. Furthermore, Justine and Nyakallo requested that no description of their personal information be published for personal reasons.

4.2.2.1. Nkosingathi

Nkosingathi is a masters' student in General Sociology from Libode in the Eastern Cape. He grew up in Barkly East where the dominant languages were IsiXhosa, Afrikaans, and a bit of English and IsiZulu. He was first exposed to English as a LoLT at crèche but would disregard the language after school. English was later reinforced by his father when he went to Kings College. His father was a pastor there and made sure that he mastered the English language. Due to his strong foundation in the language, Nkosingathi became very fluent in English.

4.2.2.2. Dzuvha

Dzuvha is a Tshivenda masters' student in Health Sociology. He grew up in Soweto and later moved to Florida which at the time was mostly a white suburb of Johannesburg. He frequently interacted with his family in Soweto which exposed him to the township culture and lifestyle. He was first exposed to English as a LoLT at crèche and he started speaking it more and more from there. In high school, he went to a 'white' school where most of his colleagues and teachers were English mother tongue speakers, which threw him deep into the language. The language was also reinforced at home where he was never taught Tshivenda or bought reading or playing material that was in Tshivenda. Instead, everything was always in English. Thus, he only knows Tshivenda at a very basic level.

4.2.2.3. Qaqamba

Qaqamba is a masters' student in Development Sociology from the Eastern Cape. She moved and came to Wits because of the status Wits holds and the doors it opens. She was first exposed to English as a LoLT in primary school and has continued using English to this point. For her, English has always been easier to understand than her mother language in terms of school work.

4.2.2.4. Nomzamo

Nomzamo is a masters' student in General Sociology. She was born in KwaZulu-Natal and moved to Johannesburg when she was five and has settled in Johannesburg since then. She resided in Soweto where she attended public school. She encountered English as a LoLT in primary school and the language was reinforced at home by her mother who used to buy her books written in English.

4.2.2.5. Dikeledi

Dikeledi is a female masters' student in the Department of Sociology. She was born and bred in Johannesburg. Dikeledi is Tswana but the area she resides in is dominated by English and IsiZulu language speakers. She is more proficient in English than Tswana and she attributes this to segregation and multiracial /model-C schools where the first point of call is English. She states that her exposure to other languages, including her mother language was always outside of school and the only languages they could learn at school were English and Afrikaans.

4.2.2.6. Professor Andrew Crouch

Professor Crouch is the current Deputy Vice-Chancellor of Academics at Wits. He took office in 2013 and in his portfolio, he is responsible for teaching and learning, e-learning, strategic and academic planning. Part of this means Professor Crouch oversees the language element in the university's transformation program (Wits Executive Management page).

4.3. Themes

The themes and subthemes examined in this study were derived from the data analysis obtained from the participants interviews. The themes and subthemes provide an outline of this chapter. These are:

1. The role of a university
 - 1.2. Reflecting the democratic ideals of South Africa
 - 1.3. Universities' role to provide equal access and opportunities for success
2. Languages at Wits
 - 2.1. Indigenous languages and English at Wits
 - 2.3. Synchronization of South African Indigenous languages
 - 2.4. Implementation of the Wits Language Policy and sharing responsibility with the government

4.3.1. The role of a university

4.3.1.1. Reflecting the democratic ideals of South Africa

According to the Strategic Framework for Universities South Africa (2014, 4), since 2009, the regulatory environment within which universities operate has undergone extreme changes, where persons assuming the office of Minister of Higher Education and Training are granted authority to intervene in the affairs of universities in the name of public interest. Under these changes, “[a] new set of reporting regulations were introduced for implementation in January 2015 increasing reporting and accountability requirements of universities to the DHET”. These developments came about to accelerate the development and role played by universities in the years 2015 – 2019, for universities to better, “... contribute to the social, cultural and economic development of our country” (Strategic Framework for Universities South Africa, 2014, 1).

In keeping up with the transformation framework developed by the Department of Higher Education and Training (2017), universities are obligated to create policies which are in line with government’s transformation objectives. The Education White Paper (1997) asserts that this is particularly important for South Africa to overcome, “... historically determined patterns of fragmentation, inequality, and inefficiency” (DoE, 1997, 13). These institutions are obligated because according to the Strategic Framework for Universities South Africa (2014), the role of universities is to be institutions that act in the best interest of the country and its people through representing the transformation pillars which govern the country. The Strategic Framework for Universities South Africa (2014) contends that government relies on HEIs to address the developmental needs of society which assists in building the equal rainbow nation South Africa strives for. Pandor (2006) asserts that government relies on HEIs because they, “.... are leading agents of social enquiry and usually leaders in the creation of new ideas and solutions”.

The National Commission on Higher Education (1995) is one of the most influential documents that promote HEIs as agents of societal transformation. This is because there is an assumption according to the commission that these institutions could be powerful agents in society’s socio-economic and political reconstruction and development. Language being a contested political issue in South Africa and with government striving for a multilingual

society, the University of the Witwatersrand has taken on the responsibility placed by government on HEIs by developing a language policy guided by the, “South African Constitution (Act No. 108 of 1996), and the Ministry of Education's Language Policy for Higher Education (2002)” (Wits, 2014, 1). As previously mentioned in chapter two, Wits developed its first language policy in 2003 and later amended it in 2014. Both policies are committed to linguistic diversity and the development of indigenous languages, which according to the policies will create an environment where individuals from diverse backgrounds can succeed. Justine from the Wits Transformation Office also reinforces this idea, stating:

“Any institution that is geared towards making sure everyone belongs should look at language as it is a vehicle of thought. The institutional culture should be designed to make sure that everyone feels comfortable speaking. Where we have a Constitution that has eleven official languages, we cannot only stick to one. That is a deprivation of some people’s rights”

Pandor (2006) reiterates, “The role of language and access to language skills is critical to enabling individuals to realize their full potential to participate in and contribute to the social, cultural and intellectual life of the South African society”. Wits recognizes its position as an influential stakeholder in South Africa and has dedicated its resources towards the advancement of multilingualism. Wits (2014, 1) states that, “... Given the University’s status as a national premier institution situated in the most diverse city in the country, its policy should reflect this national character”.

Nyakallo from the Wits Transformation Office agrees with the National Commission on Higher Education’s (1995) assumptions on HEIs being agents of social transformation, arguing that this is true, particularly when it comes to changing the language dynamics in the country and at Wits. Nyakallo advocates that Wits is committed to developing a language policy which ensures that:

“There is some sense of identity because what the university is all about, as should any institution, is about its brand and its brand is close to its identity and image. And so the university in its keeping with efforts at ensuring that there is a consistent university and institutional culture develops policies that help make sure everybody sticks to the script”

Universities can also be agents of transformation which play a pivotal role in reversing policies and systems which were historically designed to subjugate and discriminate against other groups. The Education White Paper (1997) asserts that HEIs hold the potential, “to redress past inequalities and to ... serve a new social order, to meet pressing national needs, and to respond to new realities and opportunities” (DoE, 1997, 2). Governments call for HEIs to play a role in being agents of social change is very significant here in ensuring that these institutions create policies which improve opportunities of access and academic development for all, particularly previously disadvantaged groups. This is one way the democratic government ensures that institutions strive towards improving and creating a better South Africa for all and remove all legacies and resemblances of colonization and apartheid.

Student participants in this study similarly expressed these views. Dzuvha best expressed it, stating:

“The society we exist in now is far more diverse, linguistically, politically, religiously, etcetera. So, for me, it would only make sense for Wits to change, well not change but adapt. Adapt means to align itself to a reality that is existing and continues to exist and entrench itself”

Dikeledi, however, provided differing views from all the other participants, arguing that universities should be independent institutions that do not necessarily reflect society or reproduce societal ideals but rather should be spaces that contest ideas, produce alternative ways and knowledge, which force society to constantly question and seek to reimagine itself. She argued:

“Maybe universities should not reflect society. Maybe they should be spaces that challenge society to force it to change, force it to realize itself, force it to go into a different direction. Maybe it isn’t just supposed to reproduce the same ideas that already exist”

Though Dikeledi provides an alternative way of understanding the role to be played by universities, Badat (2008, 6) argues that, “In as much as higher education institutions must debate and make choices and decisions on numerous issues, social equity and redress are not so much matters of choice as they are pressing constitutional obligations that ‘must be fulfilled’, and societal imperatives in terms of which institutions must take ‘measures’ to

advance persons, or categories of persons, disadvantaged by unfair discrimination”. This establishes the notions that universities are significant actors in transformation as education is one of the primary agents of socialization, with opportunities to shape the attitudes and behaviours of people which would provide unity among different racial and ethnic groups.

4.3.1.2. Universities’ role to provide equal access and opportunities for success

McLean (1999) asserts that great emphasis has been placed on HEIs to be pioneers of change in society through not only creating spaces for academic development and knowledge production, but they are also expected to be character moulding institutions that groom students with the knowledge and discipline necessary for them to prosper in the workplace. In terms of languages, Wits (2014, 4) states that, “To redress these linguistic imbalances of the past and valorize the linguistic pluralism that characterizes South Africa, all students should graduate from tertiary institutions in a post-apartheid South Africa with an ability to communicate in languages that cross the racial and cultural divide”. These actions by HEIs are regarded as empowering and freeing people up for the economy. This realization is dependent on the character grooming process of these institutions that produce, “graduating students who ... need to be prepared for effective participation in a continuously changing world of work and be able to participate constructively in providing solutions to the many social and economic problems faced in our country” (Strategic framework for Universities South Africa, 2014, 2).

The above sentiments were expressed by all the participants, with them arguing that they view HEIs as access points for knowledge which equip students for the workplace. The Strategic framework for Universities South Africa (2014, 4) posits that “universities also provide the labor market, with ever-changing high-level competencies and expertise necessary for the growth and prosperity of a modern economy, while contributing to high-level research for development in its broadest sense”. Nudelman (2015, 87) contends that, “once one has gained access to the university, it is the university’s function to make sure one’s access to the institution leads to one’s success, with a particular focus on language, students need to be prepared for work, and in the globalized society in which we live, this language is seen to be English”. According to the Wits policy, maintaining English as the LoLT is a means of safeguarding its academic standing, “The University, as a center of excellence,

would like to be known as producing graduates with a full command of the English language. English language skills are essential for a successful career in South Africa and internationally” (Wits, 20014, 5). These views are also shared by some of the participants. Dzuvhá best described the matter by stating:

“If you are going to be teaching people skills, English is a skill that you can use”

However, some participants argued that universities are failing in their mandate to equip students with the knowledge and skills to succeed in the workplace by denying access to potential students due to language requirements. They assert that for one to gain access at Wits, and other HEIs, students must obtain a certain mark and exhibit a certain level of competence in English or they will not be successful. This is beside the fact that they might have performed extremely well in their mother tongue language and in other subjects. This group of participants argues that the initial step towards employability is gaining access to an HEI. This access must necessarily include linguistic access. Wits also recognizes that the sole use of English in the university is a challenge towards access and academic success, stating, “There is evidence to suggest that speakers of African languages would like more support than the University is currently offering” (Wits, 2014, 6), and understands that the development of indigenous languages will help lift this burden. However, Wits has not made any acknowledgements of relaxing the English requirements as it states that English, “... Proficiency is a requirement in all qualifications” (Wits, 2014, 6).

Akoojee & Nkomo (2007) contend that access for historically disadvantaged groups has increased significantly over the past years, where black people have increasingly gained access to historically white institutions. This access into university spaces means that historically disadvantaged groups can enter job markets, which would assist in developing their lives and break the cycles of poverty that they were systematically trapped in. However, language has proven to still be a major stumbling block towards access and succeeding in university spaces for many students from disadvantaged backgrounds that are not proficient in English. All the participants in the study agreed that although the number of black students has increased, the prosperity of black students in HEIs is questionable. The participants’ responses conclude that if the students in these institutions, who are not

proficient in English, are excluded because of their linguistic inadequacies, this means that they are also excluded from the transformation project. This inclusion is very significant if one is to be an active participant in the global and local economy.

According to Tshotsho (2013, 3), about 78% of the population lacks proficiency in English and this poses a major challenge to potential higher education students. Smith (2013) concurs with the above and asserts that only one in twenty black students, succeeds in their academics due to language barriers. The participants in this study also problematized the emphasis placed on English by Wits as it states, "All students need full competence in English to excel in their academic studies ... and to be prepared for the world of work" (Wits, 2014, 6), with the participants arguing that Wits reinforces the idea that English is the language of success and it, therefore, makes indigenous languages seem insignificant. The PanSALB (2001) contends that the challenge of not being fluent in English generates unequal disparities, which continue to maintain the skewed socio-economic equalities experienced in the country. Nomzamo expressed:

"Languages give us access to spaces. They give us privilege. We have all these colonial and apartheid legacies embedded in us, which have created this notion that everything white is civilized, is better. This whole thing that to be good, intelligent is to be white. There is a desire towards aspiring and assimilating to English and whiteness"

What is evident from the participants and what seemingly is lacking in the Wits Language Policy is a clear acknowledgement of the significance of indigenous languages where students are made to realize that success is not dependent on the mastery of English. However, the policy states, "English language skills are essential for a successful career in South Africa and internationally. It is a source of deep concern therefore that recent graduates of the University seem to struggle to achieve satisfactory levels of proficiency in oral and written communication" (Wits, 2014, 5). To the contrary, the participants alluded to, indigenous languages and its speakers being equally capable of contributing towards societal development and intellectual academic discourses. For access to be equitable at Wits, apart from the development of language policies which advocate for the advancement of indigenous languages, the university also needs to question its existing understanding and expressed connection between knowledge, language, and success. This interrogation

will facilitate a full understanding of underlying issues to fully transform the university. This requires more research and resources to develop and motivate new ways of thinking around this matter.

4.3.2. Languages at Wits

4.3.2.1. Indigenous languages and English at Wits.

According to the Wits 2014 Language Policy, the institution intends on developing isiZulu and Sesotho as mediums of instructions or LoLT along with English through, “Researching and developing language teaching resources, materials ... Researching and developing curricula materials in isiZulu, Sesotho” (Wits, 2014, 3). Different responses arose from participants about the introduction of indigenous languages as LoLT alongside English at Wits, with some participants holding more than one view. Seven out eight of the participants demonstrated certainty about the positive impact of introducing indigenous languages, arguing that the introduction of indigenous languages alongside English as LoLT could provide more effective communication and academic development. For these participants, this meant that access could be granted to individuals currently excluded from the system despite them lacking proficiency in English. For these participants, this will make Wits truly diverse through bringing in people from different walks of life who are linguistically diverse and who will be able to express their diversity on an academic level by using their indigenous languages. Wits asserts that the development of indigenous languages as LoLT is particularly significant for the university as it will create, “... a multilingual environment in which all languages are developed for use in education and the medium of instruction does not serve as a barrier to access and success” (Wits, 2014, 1). Reinforcing this idea, this group of participants believed that this will create a smoother learning process for indigenous language speakers who are not competent in the English language, as they will be in a better position to articulate themselves.

Nomzamo is part of this group and, during the interview, she mentioned that as a tutor in the Department of Sociology, most of the students in her tutorials are black and, often she finds it challenging to get them to engage due to the language barrier. Nomzamo talked about how she comes across students who are very intelligent and hardworking, but who find themselves struggling to communicate. For Nomzamo, this challenge does not just end

at an academic level, but rather eventually trickles down to the students' personal behavior as she saw how it also affected students' self-confidence. She says most students do not interact during tutorials because they do not know the answer or have not done the readings, but rather because, some feel as though they do not have the right accent or model-C English. She continued:

“... Students fail because the writing assessments are only in English. They fail because they cannot articulate themselves and you cannot mark a student based on what you think they are saying, you mark them on what they are saying. So, when you take a student who is not competent in English, you put them in a first-year class and teach them complicated concepts that are even hard to pronounce, obviously the likelihood is that they will fail. Language is about expressing and articulating yourself to the reader or marker to pass. So, if you cannot articulate yourself you will fail. We need to ask how many students fail due to language and not necessarily the content of that course”

Dzuvha who is also a tutor in the Department of Sociology also expressed similar sentiments to Nomzamo arguing that English should not be the only LoLT at Wits because as a tutor, he has experienced the difficulty of teaching students from rural areas who have been taught every subject in high school in their indigenous languages (where teachers translate the studying material to their vernacular languages), which makes it hard for him because he has to teach them everything in English. Even when he sometimes sees that the students are struggling to grasp particular concepts, it is almost impossible for him to explain it in vernacular because there are no terms for such concepts. He says we must then wonder what justice is when we have institutions which accommodate students from different backgrounds and test them using one measurement. He described the development of indigenous languages as important because:

“Students from rural areas and those who are not proficient in the English language would feel comfortable in a space that legitimacies their existence through recognizing their languages. That will go a long way in terms of self-esteem and articulating themselves in their languages, without seeing English as this superior language they need to subscribe to”

For Nkosingithi, the introduction of indigenous languages brings hope that the biased selection process Wits has will be addressed. English is the most prioritized language when applying for admission, which excludes a lot of potential students, particularly black students. For Nkosingithi, the exclusion of black students is seen as an injustice and betrayal

of the 1994 promise of freedom and access. Nkosinathi is optimistic that this development will lead to:

“... Wits relaxing their requirements for English and then the second language will have as much weight as English, if not more. Only then will we be able to let in more students who are not as proficient in English but intelligent into the system. This will teach students that intelligence is not limited to English”

This is supported by the literature, with Hibbert (2011) asserting that the lack of linguistic transformation in HEIs is a buffering act which prevents the realization of the multilingual aspirations of the country while widening the crisis of inequality in the education system. Hibbert (2011) contends that there needs to be a remediation of language development in HEIs as they are often based on outdated assumptions which take for granted that all actors in a university space share the same level of competence in English, while never considering that this is not the case and other intelligences outside of English exist.

However, though majority of participants are in favour of the introduction of indigenous languages, some demonstrated conflicting views on the effects of introducing indigenous languages. They assert that there would be an incline and expectation for black students to favour and use indigenous languages rather than English. This group of participants anticipates negative cultural and social effects on black students who prefer the use of English over their indigenous languages. The participants anticipated that this would lead to the violation of some students' linguistic rights, thus creating disunity among students. Dikeledi explained that this is because society believes that culture and language cannot be separate. That one cannot learn a language without learning its culture simultaneously. She asserts that she has a problem with this line of thinking because it assumes that the only medium for her to access her ancestors and culture is through a certain medium. That the only way she can be truly black is if she is all Tswana and negates the fact that she was born in this country. She claims that just because she speaks English does not make her less black or less African and states:

“English is my first language and by telling me that I need to speak the language that my mother speaks, you are totally negating my experiences as a black South African. What of us? What of these model-C's, these cheese boys, all these kids that went through the South African school system and

came out on the other end sounding and acting a particular way. Do we now say that because we are trying to go back to precolonial that our experiences have no value? I don't think that is fair"

Dzuvha talked about his own personal experience of how his incompetence in Tshivenda has sometimes been used to oppress him. As a person who was exposed to English and the white culture, with white friends from a young age, Dzuvha said he often felt victim and was made to feel guilty by other black people for not being competent in his indigenous language. He stated:

".... there is an underlying assumption that as a black person you can speak a vernacular language and what happens when people find out that you are not fluent or that you must mix it with English, that you must balance your inadequacies with English, then the approach towards you becomes very different. It becomes very cold, stand-offish, because there is this sense that you have thrown away an aspect of your culture and you replaced it with the culture of the oppressor and colonialist"

Dzuvha and Dikeledi raised very significant points on the effects of implementing indigenous languages on black students and how this affects their socio-cultural relations and linguistic rights. In some of the literature covered in this study, there is a continuous assumption that all black people can speak and want to be educated in their indigenous languages. This acts as a continual blackmail for black people to want their indigenous languages because the alternative threatens the survival of indigenous languages and cultures. Tshotsho (2013, 39) reinforces this argument, arguing that when black people prefer the use of English over their indigenous languages, "The value attached to these languages (English and Afrikaans) even by blacks themselves, undermines the survival of African Languages".

The above statement emphasizes the points made by Dikeledi and Dzuvha, in that the linguistic rights of black students to choose which languages they prefer is compromised by the pressures put on them by other black students, to want their indigenous languages with prospects of preserving indigenous languages and not disadvantaging the success of other black students as Tshotsho (2013, 40) states that "English as the language of choice of the majority of South African students will result in entrenching unequal opportunities to teaching and learning which will invariably undermine the success of bilingualism". De Klerk (2002a, 3) asserts that there is an assumption that when black people prefer to use English

over their indigenous languages, that it is attributed by the fact that English is perceived as, “the language of prestige and something to be aspired to”. According to Tshotsho (2013, 40) this “... confirms the power and value attached to English. Thus, the functional value of English as the medium of instruction is endorsed and students are obliged to adhere to English in order to progress at tertiary level”.

For De Klerk (2002a), the above trend is common because of the apartheid system which has entrenched legacies in the democratic state despite attempts by government to develop the use and status of indigenous languages. The dominance of English according to De Klerk (2002a, 3) has created a situation where black people are seen as, “Lacking pride in their indigenous languages and urgently seeking access to participation and mobility in wider society, which they saw as accessible through English”. On this hand, there is an evident oversight of the linguistic rights of black people to choose their preferred languages and this reinforces the points made by Dikeledi, that the experiences and realities of black students who prefer English are not given recognition in South Africa but rather are demonized into assimilating into English and whiteness, where they are treated as traitors to black people. This is also evident in Marnewick (2015) where it is portrayed that people who prefer English think that, “speaking and learning in English means you are ‘well-educated’, and so they, often unwittingly, support the abandonment of their children’s mother tongue”.

According to De Klerk (2002a), there is an unfortunate assumption when it comes to the language debate, where people assume that to prefer English means to be against indigenous languages, where it is presented as an either-or situation. De Klerk (2002b) suggests that since English is an internationally dominant language, which has a bold presence in the South African government and economy, the only way forward is to accept the presence of English and develop indigenous languages alongside it in a bilingual education system. Heugh (2001), cited in De Klerk (2002b, 14), states, “Bilingual education for each child within a multilingual educational policy does not mean the choice between either English or an African language. It means both. It means developing the first language and adding a second language in the best possible manner to ensure the successful learning of the second language”. Bilingual education is the only solution for De Klerk (2002b) because it means that the value people attach to English does not have to suggest an

insignificant valuation of indigenous language languages. For De Klerk (2002b, 15), “If it were not an either/or choice, they would probably choose both. A bilingual language-in-education policy would solve the dilemma for parents such as these, uplift and nurture indigenous languages and offer all children equal access to English, should they desire it”.

In addition, De Klerk (2002a) contends that numerous studies have confirmed that instead of wanting to replace English, parents and students favoured using their indigenous languages alongside English (a bilingual system). Dzuvha concurred with the above sentiments by stating:

“I don’t think Wits has to see language developments in an either-or dichotomy. I think diversity must be part and parcel of the curricula and social culture at Wits but without neglecting the globalisation aspect. It shouldn’t be one versus the other. There should be a co-existence between what we are taught in globalization i.e. being fluent in English but there also needs to be a balance in being well-versed in indigenous languages, cultures, dialects, and etcetera. I think in an institution as big as Wits, there is space for co-existence”

However, some participants provided complex positions on not introducing indigenous languages. In their view, the introduction of indigenous languages would not be feasible due to tensions which would be caused by having too much diversity on campus. Nkosingithi advocates that the current system be maintained because English is a universal language and if Wits is going to be teaching people skills, English is a skill everyone can use to navigate the world and that cannot be said about any other indigenous language. Nkosingithi believes English is also the first point of reference, even in South Africa, to see if there is a communication barrier with an individual as we live a multilingual society with numerous linguistic groups, which makes it hard to know whether someone speaks your language or not. For Nkosingithi, this also applies to the language culture at Wits as English is the default language. When describing the Wits culture and languages dynamics, Nkosingithi said:

“Wits is a university that has people from different races and ethnic groups, which makes language an issue. There is a problem with too much diversity because it creates barriers, hence we should embrace English as the default language”

According to Tshotsho (2013), the implementation of indigenous languages has been deemed not foreseeable due of the dominance of English, as it is the language used in

parliament, government and is growing to dominate many areas of spheres of society (De Klerk, 2002a, 2). For Tshotsho (2013, 42), this dominance shadows the significance of developing indigenous languages because “Business in South Africa is conducted in English and even job interviews are conducted in English. Furthermore, those who are not proficient in English are not likely to get good paying jobs because English is used as the yardstick to measure whether a person is capable of doing the job or not”. With the above, Tshotsho (2013) argues that the development of indigenous languages would be unfair on students as the role of schools is to equip students with essential tools to develop their livelihoods and English is that tool. Tshotsho (2013) asserts that this is why some students and parents are reluctant to see the value of developing indigenous languages as they are not convinced of its benefits. Tshotsho (2013, 42) continues to state that, “... unless socio-economic conditions change, education through the mother tongue will not lead to socio-economic mobility for children”.

To reinforce this idea, Jonathan Jansen (2013) cited in Brand South Africa (2003), was quoted saying, “Black parents prefer to have their children study in English. No matter what politicians might say about indigenous education or the Pan South African Language Board about language rights, black parents make the correct calculation that virtually the entire economy is now organized on English terms and therefore the chances of success are much greater in the colonial language.” Barnard (2010), on the other hand, proposes that people perceive English as a resource rather than a threat to indigenous language as it holds the capacity to place the country on the world map and enable its citizens to further themselves. According to Barnard (2010), the solution is to assist disadvantaged students who are not competent in English by improving their access to English, particularly in the early stages of their education careers. Barnard’s (2010) claims are reinforced by Brand South Africa (2003) where it is stated that the, “... resolution is to instruct every teacher and every child in English from the first day of school, rather than worsening the burden of poor mother tongue instruction in the foundation years and the traumatic transition to English later on”.

Dikeledi also questioned the value of developing indigenous languages by arguing that their introduction at tertiary level is confusing and their purpose is unclear. For her, this can only

be done for two reasons, one being to develop indigenous languages for the sake of developing them or secondly, to propagate some kind of Pan Africanist ideology. She asserts that the development of these indigenous languages would just be a tool of separation where students are stuck in certain areas because that university specializes in certain languages. For Dikeledi, such an initiative would mean that universities must cater for everyone's primary language or it would mean that certain groups are prioritized, while excluding others; which for her is the very essence of Bantustans, which was the same logic used by the apartheid government, where certain languages were prioritized, and certain languages were made exclusive to certain areas. Not introducing indigenous languages at Wits was particularly important for Dikeledi because according to her:

“Having one language in a university is very efficient. Durkheim says bureaucracy is made so much smoother if only one language is used because there is no confusion. There's no need for an extra department for translation”

Foley (2007) argues that the development of indigenous languages will just be adding to the problem. For Foley (2007), such an initiative is divisive in that each language group would have to have an institution of its own. This means that students would have to attend schools that offer education in their languages. In the case of Wits, the implementation of IsiZulu and Sesotho would be an additional problem for students who are already struggling with English as they would have another language to familiarize themselves with. Foley (2007, 14) argues that its, “... not unfair to expect that by the time learners leave school they will all have full academic proficiency in at least one language (for the moment this would continue to be English or Afrikaans) as well as some degree of academic proficiency in one and perhaps two other official South African languages”. This means that for those students to succeed they would have to enrol in an institution that offers their mother tongue as a LoLT to stand a better chance of academically succeeding. According to Foley (2007, 14), if HEIs implemented their language policies, this would be, “... return South Africa to a kind of linguistic apartheid reminiscent of a former era”.

The uncertainties demonstrated by some of the participants indicate that there are potential struggles to compete with the pressures of acting according to social and cultural expectations which the Wits Language Policy does not acknowledge. The policy is biased in

its articulation of the consequences of developing indigenous languages as it only highlights the positive aspects as it states, "... it is essential to develop the African languages of South Africa in order to provide equal access to education" (Wits, 2014, 7). According to the Wits policy, the language surveys conducted in 2002 and 2014 were only to determine, "the most widely understood African languages in the immediate environment of the University" (Wits, 2014, 2), which then raises concerns on whether the Wits constituency at large wants the development of indigenous languages as Tshotsho (2013, 40) asserts that "At present 80% of the South African population choose English as the language of learning and instruction".

The consultation and involvement of societal and university stakeholders is significant to the prosperous execution of the language policy and any policy for that matter as Foley (2007, 4) states, "It is only when coordinated and systematic linguistic research is able to draw on, and feedback into, an actual, developing discourse of practice in a mutually enhancing relationship, that a language can begin to evolve into a functioning mode of academic and scientific expression". The Wits community's readiness to accept the development of IsiZulu and Sesotho is crucial for the success of the language policy and the realization of government's call towards a multilingual society. Consultation with the Wits community is mandatory and requires informed consent from all constituencies rather than the policy being based on the discretion government and the Wits' Senate.

The participants' responses demonstrate a struggle to accommodate the development of indigenous languages and English as LoLTs. Their sentiments capture the challenge to concurrently accept the need to assert African identities into university spaces and the need for access to English. The participants recognize the pressures of gaining international recognition and economic development which begs for the need to access English because this access could provide them with social mobility and material power.

Unfortunately, though Wits eagerly advocates for the development of indigenous languages in its 2014 Language Policy, there is no direct correlation provided between the development of indigenous languages and the socio-economic benefits they will provide students. Instead, the policy continuously reinforces the benefits and significance of English,

“English language skills are essential for a successful career in South Africa and internationally. It is a source of deep concern therefore that recent graduates of the University seem to struggle to achieve satisfactory levels of proficiency in oral and written communication” (Wits, 2014, 5). The reasons for this are unclear, however, Foley (2007, 11) cautions institutions such as Wits by arguing that for students and parents to accept and be eager about the development of indigenous languages, it is the responsibility of HEIs and government to ensure that, “... parents and their children see that mother-tongue education leads to palpable benefits in such spheres as economic empowerment, social mobility and influence, and pathways to further academic opportunities”.

The lack of acknowledgement of the socio-economic value of indigenous languages by the Wits policy feeds into the reluctance of people to see the value of developing indigenous languages, because if students cannot see how indigenous languages will help improve their academics, chances of getting employment, and an overall improvement in their livelihoods as the Wits policy portrays are benefits of English, then students will not be compelled to want to invest in indigenous languages.

Seemingly choice is a central issue and Foley (2007) argues that in a democratic state, “choice is paramount, especially when it comes to such issues as the language in which a child is to receive his or her education. It is no small matter that this right is enshrined in the Constitution” (2007, 14). Though Foley (2007) appreciates sentiments expressed by the likes of Marnewick (2015), who argues that, “languages are the most powerful tools for preserving and developing our tangible and intangible heritage”, Foley (2007) contends that self-determination is a constitutional right everyone in South Africa is entitled to and this includes determining which languages one wants to speak and be educated in and that this, “rests on the State to ensure that this is provided as effectively as possible for everyone who wants it” (2007, 14). This means that though the government is trying to rectify the injustices of the past and provide redress for the low status and poor endorsement of indigenous languages, this should not be to the detriment of those who wish not to participate in this initiative or lead to any socio-cultural exclusion of black students who wish to speak and be educated in English.

According to Foley (2007, 14), the protection of people's linguistic rights is important because, "No language in education policy which is forced on the majority against its will can ever succeed, and will serve only to perpetuate the unequal and inefficient conditions which currently exist in South African education". Unfortunately, the Wits Language Policy does not raise any of these challenges around linguistic rights, and the socio-cultural effects of developing indigenous languages on black students, which is very unfortunate because the intention of the language policy is not to oppress members of the group the policy intends to benefit. The evasions of such critical consequences are detrimental to the successful implementation of the policy and it being accepted by members of the Wits community.

Despite the above, the development of indigenous languages alongside English demonstrated a stronger presence and significance among some participants, over the demonstrated contradictions and contestations. Nomzamo stated:

"Any change comes with challenges and there's no way we can prevent these contradictions. What we have to ask ourselves is if it's better to continue to watch black students fall off from the education map because they are unfamiliar and cannot think in the language of instruction or do we want to change the system in an equitable manner where everyone has an equal chance of prospering"

In addition, Dzuvha stated he does not feel comfortable with English being the only LoLT at Wits because he thinks that would reflect a bygone era. Dzuvha stated:

"I think the system is still very much of a bygone era because in a bygone era you'd have institutions such as Wits teaching in dominant languages such as English because the world mostly engages in them. So they teach in English because society was structured in that way. That when you go out there, your doctors, your lawyers, etcetera, would be English speaking. But we don't live in that society anymore. Our society is now far more diverse, linguistically, politically, religiously, etcetera, so for me, it would only make sense for Wits to change. Well not change but adapt. Adapt means Wits must mould itself to the reality of the current diverse South Africa"

These findings concur with Banda's (2000). assessment of bilingual models where it is stated that students' primary languages should be maintained throughout their education, to demonstrate solidarity with students from linguistically diverse backgrounds who have desires for recognition and affirmation of their indigenous languages and African identities. Banda (2000) adds that the development of indigenous languages is particularly significant in

order to ensure that all students have an equal opportunity to participate and succeed in their education.

4.3.2.2. Synchronization of South African Indigenous languages

The participants raised numerous interesting questions around which indigenous languages should be developed and which would be more appropriate for the Wits community. The participants in the study raised concerns that the Wits Language Policy favored dominant regional indigenous languages. According to Professor Crouch, when he assumed office in 2013, the university looked at the Wits population demographic changes and had a language survey which showed an equal split between English, IsiZulu, and Sesotho. The findings of the survey are what informed the changes to the 2003 Language Policy which resulted in the current 2014 Language Policy. This was done to develop a language policy which was more relevant to the people it was supposed to serve. Though the participants demonstrated concerns and held more than one view, six out of eight of the participants were not opposed to the development of IsiZulu, and Sesotho while two preferred Setswana over Sesotho. Justine was part of the participants who demonstrated concerns about the criterion used to select these languages. Justine was concerned whether solely using dominant regional languages was enough to select languages to be LoLT because according to him:

“Our country is one of constant internal migration”

This is a significant point and is unfortunately not addressed in the Wits 2014 Language Policy. This raises concern on what should happen should the regional dominant languages change. In addition to this, some participants problematized using dominant regional languages as a criterion, arguing that this might reawaken the spectre of apartheid language tensions. It is for such reasons that DzuVha only agrees with the introduction of indigenous languages if it is going to be a fast-paced implementation and is not limited to the two proposed indigenous languages, IsiZulu, and Sesotho. The reasoning behind this, for DzuVha, is that if the introduction of other indigenous languages takes too long, Wits might run into issues such as tribalism, which might feed the racial, ethnic divisive tension that already exists. However, if there is a fast-paced addition of other indigenous languages, maybe the effects of tribalism will not be as severe. For DzuVha, Wits must want to represent the whole

community but also want to do it in a way such that people feel valued and respected while other people's languages are being developed. He further articulated his stance by stating:

“I agree with the addition of indigenous languages only if Wits is creating a template to add other languages but if they just want to keep it at two indigenous languages (IsiZulu and Sesotho), then we are going to run into the same problems we are seeing and having with English and Afrikaans. It will be a repetition of the same problem they are trying to address”

Also, the participants argued that Wits' inability to develop all the eleven official languages would lead to the marginalization of students whose languages are not represented, thus creating tensions on campus. The participants advocate for linguistic equality where all students have the liberty to choose which languages they want to be taught in. However, due to limited resources, Professor Crouch contends that Wits can only focus on developing two indigenous languages. Professor Crouch stated that there are currently no future plans to include any of the other indigenous languages because:

“Though we might be accused of being divisive, we cannot develop all eleven languages, it's too costly. That is why we prioritized the three most spoken languages which are English, IsiZulu, and Sesotho”

Justine argued that the effects of introducing such a policy are complicated because of all the dynamics that come with it such as tribalism. According to Justine, such challenges are all very deeply and historically entrenched on a national level and are very systemic. These challenges for Justine cannot be ignored because their legacies exist and they themselves have existed even before colonisation and the apartheid regime because there were differences between linguistic groups before. According to Justine, what is happening now is that:

“Universities are now aware that they need to address this but are also a bit shell-shocked and numbed by the enormity of the problem because there are several factors such as tribalism, that have made the problem almost impossible to solve”

Justine states that Wits is struggling to address the manifestation of tribalism today on campus, particularly finding a language that could address this matter. Justine continued to say:

“The university is in a very difficult place. There is a lot I feel that should have changed many years ago - structurally, systematically - that would have made this easier, but it did not. Still, results are expected, which for me is unrealistic. There are many missed opportunities in this country (such as the transitional period) to address divisive issues which has not yet taken place”

When comparing the comments above about these languages gaining linguistic monopoly at Wits, it is evident that the selection of just these two languages can be problematic because it means that speakers and students who are proficient in these languages are given an unfair advantage over those who are not. Other linguistic groups will be burdened with learning the additional languages on top of English while juggling their academics (see 4.3.2.1 for further discussion).

When dealing with linguistic rights and the development of certain indigenous languages over others as LoLT, Conduah (2003) suggests attentions be directed to the study of the ‘harmonization of Nguni and Sotho languages’. Conduah (2003, 257-258) argues that “the harmonization of Nguni and Sotho languages is an important option in any attempt to address issues regarding the multiple African languages in South Africa”. These sentiments were shared by most of the participants, stating that the option of IsiZulu and Sesotho ensures that people from the Nguni and Sotho language groups would be represented because these languages fuse different dialects. Conduah (2003) would agree because the four major dialects from the Nguni group include Swazi, IsiZulu, Ndebele, and IsiXhosa whilst the Sotho language group consists of Setswana, Pedi, and Sesotho.

Though there is always the option of going to another institution should students and staff feel unhappy with the language dynamics at Wits, the university is one of the leading institutions in Africa and is globally recognized for the research it does, which makes the option of leaving the institution very difficult. The participants’ fear of feeding into linguistic, ethnic tensions is one which should not be taken lightly. Thus, for Wits to successfully

implement the development of IsiZulu and Sesotho, requires educating all groups and deliberating on the possible outcomes.

4.3.2.3. Implementation of the Wits Language Policy and sharing responsibility with the government.

Though seven out of eight of the participants demonstrated positive attitudes towards the introduction of indigenous languages at Wits alongside English, mixed expressions from some of the participants showed that though the initiative is necessary and should be executed with the greatest of urgency, they believed that a university and any institution of higher learning is not the best place to first implement such an initiative. Qaqamba stated that Wits has a language problem. According to her the problem is not limited to Wits but is also a national problem of the complacency of English being the language of communication, business, as well as the economy. She finds that the use of English eliminates the chance of learning each other's languages because South Africans' would rather resort to English than learn each other's languages. She thinks this betrays the diversity, inclusive picture that South Africa is trying to create. In dealing with this language challenge Qaqamba said:

“The language problem is not a tertiary or a Wits problem, it's bigger than that. Even outside of Wits, English still holds the power and is even the only lingua franca in a country with eleven official languages. I think transformation and change has to start with government not reinforcing English as the dominant language”

Nomzamo echoed similar sentiments to Qaqamba by saying:

“The language debate is not a Wits problem only, it's a countrywide conversation. So, Wits cannot create a language policy in isolation. The state and all corners of society should be the drivers. Government, higher education institutions and the rest of society must work together to create this space because it would be useless if Wits does it and produces graduates who are useless in the market. So, it should be a full total integration to say we are all working together and there is a meeting point where we find out what it means to do business and all social functions and interaction in our indigenous languages. It's not a one institution's job but all must come to the table”

Also, Dzuvha felt as though language change in the education system should not initially start at tertiary level. Dzuvha argued:

“I think this is a structural issue and tertiary level is the furthest end of the structure. There is a whole structural underbelly that needs to be addressed. I think we need to start at a pre-school level

going to primary. Once you have that generation of kids that have been taught in a variety of languages, then it might be easier to implement in secondary and tertiary level. That then would feed off into different industries, affect the economy and make different languages economically valuable”

Nkosinathi agrees with the initiative of introducing indigenous languages in HEIs though he points out that:

“... it will take a long time to implement and will take up too many resources”

Nkosinathi believes indigenous languages should only be introduced when they are developed because, at this point for him, they are not developed to the point where they can be used in academia in relations to having words that fit the terms and concepts for the theories being taught. This resonates with Foley (2007) who states that for indigenous languages to be developed in HEIs, the standard of written forms of these languages needs to be developed first so they can carry academic discourse effectively. Foley (2007, 5) asserts that though there are numerous initiatives taken by HEIs and PanSALB to develop indigenous languages through the establishment of research centres, “projects aimed at orthographic standardisation; lexicography and terminology development; and the promotion of literature in the indigenous languages; as well as the creation of new courses in translation and terminography; the progress of all of these projects has been slow, leaving a lot to be done for indigenous languages to be functioning fully as academic and scientific media of instruction in HEIs”.

According to Foley (2007, 2), indigenous languages are currently founded on, “... rural dialects in conservative contexts, having been standardised in the nineteenth century by missionaries, and later by the apartheid era Language Boards. As such, these standard written forms remain in many ways archaic, limited and context-bound, and out of touch with the modern scientific world”. This means that for indigenous languages to be developed in HEIs as LoLT, the standard written forms of indigenous languages need to be modernised, regularised, codified and elaborated. Foley (2007, 3) posits the above can be done through, “... the revision of the spelling and orthography rules of the languages; the elimination of dialectal variation in the writing of the languages; the enlargement of their vocabulary, especially though not only in the fields of science and technology, together with

the creation of modern dictionaries; and the codification of their grammars, based on the actual current practices of their speech communities, rather than on otiose cultural norms”.

The Wits 2014 Language Policy as mentioned before intends on adding IsiZulu and Sesotho as LoLT by developing them through research. What this research entails is not clear and there is no mention of it in the policy. The policy also does not indicate how well developed IsiZulu and Sesotho are to be used as LoLT or if there are other indigenous languages that are developed to a point where they can be used as LoLT. In addition, the Language Policy for Higher Education (2002), including other government documents which promote the development of indigenous languages in HEIs do not make mention of whether these language development centres Foley (2007) mentioned above, will be made available for all eleven official languages. Though government has made a call to HEIs to develop language policies which are guided by the Constitution (1996) and the country's ideals of multilingualism, government has failed to give these institutions support and resources. The government has provided no framework of how to deal with the challenges which may arise nor provide the financial muscle to implement these policies. This makes one question whether government is truly genuine about the development of indigenous languages. The fact that government does not make the development and implementation of language policies in each HEIs mandatory nor provide a framework suggests that they want to divert all responsibility away from themselves, leaving HEIs to solve this for themselves.

Even though government has been dragging its feet with regards to providing support for HEIs to advance their language policies and encourage multilingualism, some of the participants felt as though the initiative was great but that Wits was being disingenuous about its attempts to want to promote indigenous languages. This was because of the way in which the university is set up, including things like the curriculum and its teaching staff. Both Justine and Nyakallo felt as though the Wits Language Policy was not thoroughly thought out and that the university was overly ambitious in its attempts to develop indigenous languages. Justine said:

“If you want a language to be taught you need people who are able to teach it. People who are taught how to teach the language and this needs to happen at a university level. Wits does not have this and has not put measures in place to ensure this”

Justine and Nyakallo made a note that as much they should be in support of the policy, being members of the Transformation Office, they, however, had very little faith in the policy and its materialization. Nyakallo said the first language policy was written hastily as a stunt to make Wits seem transformative and views the second language policy as:

“...just nice words”

Justine felt as though:

“... both language policies are ambitious, and I think any policy is only really as good as its rate of implementation otherwise it’s a piece of paper. So, it’s a lovely set of words that address this beautiful image of the university where every single person on this campus is able to dynamically code-switch between English, IsiZulu, and Sesotho”

Nee (2018) argues that it is impossible to learn the level of nuanced expression and subject vocabulary richness of a new language at tertiary level to a point of code-switching. Justine contends that the Wits Language Policy will not materialize because code-switching requires a level of competence that is near mother tongue competence, which one cannot obtain through a few courses in the space of finishing a degree. According to Justine, for the Wits community to get to a point where everyone can switch between English, Sesotho and/or IsiZulu is unrealistic.

While Wits is still researching how to develop indigenous languages to be LoLT (Wits, 2014, 3), Wits asserts that it wants to develop the linguistic proficiency of its staff and students to ensure that eventually, everyone can code-switch between English, Sesotho and/or IsiZulu through, “Providing courses in isiZulu, Sesotho for all staff” and “Ensuring that students who do not speak an African language acquire communicative competence in either isiZulu or Sesotho” (Wits, 2014, 3). Professor Crouch stated that Wits is working with the Wits School Languages to offer courses in IsiZulu and Sesotho to improve the proficiency of its constituencies. He stated:

“This language school already has an established course structure from beginners’ courses to intermediate and advanced courses. The aim is to roll out these courses in English, IsiZulu, and Sesotho. We are also looking into how we can make language courses more accessible and the school is looking into an online format”

Justine added that making these language courses compulsory for students will also cause a lot of contradictions for foreign and local students who have never been previously exposed to these languages. For Justine, this would mean that students who are proficient in IsiZulu and Sesotho will have an unfair advantage and higher probability of passing, while others will have their degrees held hostage because passing the set curriculum will not be enough as they will also have to juggle these additional languages. Justine added:

“The students who will have more success at it will generally be students who have pre-existing knowledge of the language and are able to adapt quicker to the academic demands of the language”

When asked if these courses will be compulsory and whether not mastering these languages or not passing the language courses will result in students failing their degrees or staff being fired, Professor Crouch was uncertain, stating:

“That’s a Senate decision. Senate is still deliberating whether it should be part of the curriculum and formal program. There are more discussions needed in this”

It is alarming that such critical questions have not been dealt with yet, particularly considering that 2018 marks the fourth year since the policy was developed and the fact that the policy states that, “This policy will be reviewed at the end of 2017” (Wits, 2014, 3). This means that these issues and other related factors should have been tabled by now. This speaks to the lack of political will of developing indigenous languages and feeds into the reluctance expressed above by the participants on the materialization of the policy.

Also, Justine argued that for indigenous languages to be LoLT, Wits needs people who are proficient in these languages and must be able to teach them at the tertiary level. According to Foley (2007, 10), South Africa is experiencing a scarcity of university educators who can provide quality tertiary training through indigenous languages, with even fewer in the scientific subjects. In relation to the language courses Wits wants to give to existing staff to improve their proficiency in Sesotho and IsiZulu, Foley (2007, 10) finds this problematic in that, “Such courses would, of necessity, need to be taught part-time (after hours, during the

vacations) which would place an enormous burden on both the schools and the universities, and would again require a heavy investment on the part of the State in terms of additional lecturing staff, tuition and transportation costs, and perhaps even temporary teacher-replacements. Such courses would also by their very nature have to be completed over an extended period and would thus require a strong commitment on the part of both lecturers and teachers over and above the normal duties which they have to perform in an already highly pressurised work environment". The above contestations and debates are not considered in the Wits Language Policy.

The participants raised very interesting points about what is expected from the language policy and how it will be delivered. There seems to be a gap between what the policy says and the expectations the participants showed, and this is largely due to the details left out in the policy. For example, the participants assume that IsiZulu and Sesotho will function like English when they are eventually developed as LoLT. However, according to Professor Crouch:

"We are looking into translation services, so students can sit with headsets. The lecturer will speak English in front and the headsets will translate the lecture into IsiZulu or Sesotho (real-time translation). But it will take time because we have to train the machine and enlarge the database of the machine"

Though the Wits Language Policy is catchy and is radical in its demonstration of what it expects from the staff and students, it has not materialized. Professor Crouch could not answer about the details of the first language policy but acknowledges the backlog they are faced with in regard to the implementation of the second language policy. There were no other reasons provided for this backlog except for financial constraints. Professor Crouch alluded that the Department of Arts and Culture was supposed to provide financial assistance which never materialized, placing the entire burden on the university. He stated that:

"Government is not giving us much support, so it has to be something that we the institution are pushing on our own capacity"

The above is contradictory as Professor Crouch also stated:

“Because the language policy was accepted by Senate, this means that we have made resources available”

According to the above, one might assume that the first language policy was also approved by the Senate, which means that funds were made available for the development of indigenous languages since 2003. However, when assessing the objectives set on both language policies, very little has been accomplished. In addition, though Professor Crouch highlights a potentially good initiative where the university commits resources despite not having matching government inputs, Nyakallo disputes this, arguing that as the Transformation Office, they have not seen this budget because they have been requesting resources to conduct research on the feasibility of implementing the policy. Nyakallo states:

“... That is us trying to implement this policy but there is a need for a budget”

Consequently, it is evident from the above that the development of indigenous language is a huge undertaking which requires the provision of great resources, both material and human. Although government does not provide adequate support to HEIs, Barnett (1990) asserts that this does not give HEIs an excuse to be idle and excuse themselves from social concerns and the implementation of transformation policies. Barnett (1990, 68) posits that “whether we like it or not, higher education is bound up in, and is a key player in, the formation of modern society”. Therefore, while Foley (2007) argues that the burden should not be placed solely on HEIs to provide resources to develop indigenous languages, it is also the responsibility of HEIs to hold government responsible and ensure that they are equipped with all the information and resources they need to diversify and transform not only HEIs but also society at large. In addition, there must be a joint effort from all sectors of society like the private sector, business, parents, government, HEIs, etcetera, to provide these resources to develop indigenous languages.

4.4. Conclusion

This chapter provided an analysis of the themes and sub-themes of this study. The results presented in this chapter establish that English still holds socio-economic prominence in society and in the education system. This is because English is an essential component in pupils’ success in all spheres of society including education and in the job market.

Indigenous languages, unfortunately, do not offer similar benefits, and as such, their status and use continue to deteriorate. In addition, the study revealed that the lack of articulation by government and the 2014 Wits Language Policy on the socio-economic benefits of indigenous languages perpetuates the negative attitudes towards indigenous languages.

The findings also reveal that the development of indigenous languages is an essential component of transformation. This is because it validates and affirms black people's cultures and identities. This breaks the legacies created by past oppressive governments who have used language as a separationist instrument to create uneven racial and ethnic disparities. The study's findings show that the development of indigenous languages is necessary to uphold pupils' constitutional rights and to ensure that HEIs are diverse and representative of South Africa's multicultural and multilingual society. Despite the positive attitudes around the development of indigenous languages, the results also show contradicting perceptions about the development of indigenous languages in HEIs. Some of these contradictions include socio-cultural effects on black students, limited resources and ethnic disputes such as tribalism. The harmonization of indigenous languages has been a contested issue which raises concerns like which and how many indigenous languages to develop.

The participants seem to agree that though the strides to develop indigenous languages in HEIs are admirable, developing them in HEIs without first creating an accommodative socio-economic platform for education received in indigenous languages is not favourable. This is because in South Africa, English remains the dominant language used in knowledge production, government, business, etcetera. The data also revealed that there are financial, human resources and political will challenges to be overcome by Wits and government in implementing language diversity policies in higher education. At the core of the findings is that more consultation and collaboration is necessary to ensure all contestations are acknowledged and confronted. This is to ensure smooth implementation and most importantly, to ensure that these policies are relevant and accepted by the target groups. The findings emphasise the need to create accountability measures, both by government and HEIs. This is to ensure there is transparency, dedication, and ramifications for lack of

commitment to the development of indigenous languages. Final conclusions and recommendations will be provided in the following chapter (five).

5. CHAPTER FIVE – CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1. Conclusions

Language in South Africa has been a significant factor, shaping macro and micro dynamics and interactions within the country. Historically, language has been an instrument used to drive hate and toxicity among different racial and ethnic groups under the colonial and apartheid governments. However, language can also be a tool to bring about peace and unity among people as evident by the actions of the democratic government. Linguistic transformation in South Africa has been translated into different social, economic, political and legal spheres, with the Constitution (1996) recognizing eleven official languages. Government and HEIs have created language policies to acknowledge and develop indigenous languages to prevent the hegemony of one language over others. The hegemony of one language would hinder the country's transformation objectives of being multilingual. Though there is political freedom in South Africa, with diverse groups' openly co-existing, and the encouragement of language diversity policies, language continues to manifest itself in a violent manner in the country, particularly within the education system, where English manifests its hegemonic hold.

Based on the data obtained in this study, there were sentiments against the development of indigenous languages as LoLT. These views were based on the concurrence of English being a neutral language in a multilingual country like South Africa. English was viewed as a tool which could help escape the socio-cultural effects of developing indigenous languages. Participants' also expressed concerns around the dichotomy of protecting people's linguistic rights and the socio-cultural pressures to want to preserve indigenous languages and African cultures. According to the participants, such dilemmas cease to exist when English is the only LoLT used.

Additionally, the data also noted that the criterion of dominant regional languages used at Wits was problematic due to the continuous internal migration in the country. The data showed, as noted by Conduah (2003, 254), that favoring "the use of dominant regional languages as media of instruction, might rekindle the spectre of apartheid by excluding speakers of other mother tongues". Furthermore, some participants were against the development of indigenous languages due to the underdevelopment of these languages,

their dialects, educators, etcetera. The development of these languages was argued to be too costly and time consuming. This initiative was further problematized by concerns of further burdening students who are already struggling with English and their academics, as they would have to familiarize themselves with additional languages.

Despite this, the data indicated that there was more support for the development of indigenous languages and multilingualism. The data suggests that the development of indigenous languages will enhance cross-cultural understanding and linguistic tolerance. This tolerance and understanding was alluded to take root in broader society as HEIs are vessels of knowledge production and key institutions of producing and grooming members of society. Also, the benefits of developing indigenous languages were linked to social transformation as noted by Smith (2013) who posits that language plays a crucial role in students' success, their academics, and careers. Smith (2013) notes that only one in twenty black students succeeds in their academics due to language barriers. This means that almost half of black learners drop-out before finishing their education. Smith (2013) contends that the continued dropout rate of black students compromises the realization of full transformation in our education institutions and South Africa. This dropout rate raises concerns about biased access to knowledge as a number of black students in HEIs lack proficiency in English. Based on the above, Smith (2013) demonstrates that poverty in black communities is thus maintained and this contradicts government's aspirations to create an equal society.

The support for the development of indigenous languages was demonstrated to not mean discontinuing English as a LoLT. This is because English was recognized as the language used for social, economic, and political interactions, not only in South Africa but also across the globe. English was thus seen as a tool South Africans can use internally and externally. The data showed the problem to be the sole dominance of English, as it disadvantages students who are not proficient in the language. The development of IsiZulu and Sesotho at Wits was accepted as they represent two major language clusters in South Africa i.e. Nguni and Sotho.

One of the interesting observations from this study was that language diversity in the 2014 Wits Language Policy was only interpreted in terms of acknowledging the significance of

multilingualism, with no practical implementation. This means that Wits still continues to perpetuate what Kadenge (2015, 30) describes as a, “failed institutional language policy which symbolically reproduces an old language ideology of a monolingual English based university, which goes against the spirit of the National Language Policy Framework (2003) which compels South African universities to transform, develop, and implement language policies that accommodate linguistic, cultural and racial diversity”.

The magnitude of the role played by indigenous languages in higher education transformation and nation building has been extensively articulated by government in its language policies. However, government has dismally failed to tackle essential factors which the realization of multilingualism in higher education relies on. Firstly, after reviewing the data from this study, it is evident that government has failed to adequately challenge the existing legacies of colonization and apartheid which have left tensions between racial and ethnic groups. There is no clear indication of how HEIs should develop their language policies to address these tensions. In governments’ call for HEIs to develop multilingual language policies, government does not speak about the potential challenges these institutions might face in the future as consequences of these language developments. Government does not address the significance of knowledge production through indigenous languages and the repercussions thereafter if this does not materialize.

It is evident from the data analyzed in this study that HEIs do not have the financial resources and authority to implement language policies that favor the development of indigenous languages on their own. It is safe to conclude that Wits and the government are not dedicated to creating a multilingual academic environment as both the 2014 Wits Language Policy and government’s language policies for HEIs do not address the epistemological challenges related to the advancement of indigenous languages. These two actors have not demonstrated that they are eager to change English as the only LoLT by meaningfully dedicating resources and research towards how indigenous languages can be intellectualized for higher education academic learning. Thus, this continues to maintain the hegemony of English and consequently results in the exclusion of black students whom the system is supposed to prioritize as a group previously disadvantaged racially and linguistically.

The data collected indicated that some of the major faults against the Wits 2014 Language Policy which have resulted in implementation failure, four years on, and a lack of linguistic transformation, are rooted in its conceptual flaws, lack of political will and financial constraints. These findings are useful because they highlight and unpack the gaps between the policy on paper and its practical implementation. Therefore, the multilingual environment which Wits and the government want to create is merely symbolic.

5.2. Recommendations drawn from the study's insights

The language conversation is one that is needed and overdue in the post-apartheid education system. Based on the data obtained in this research, I suggest the following recommendations which Wits, other HEIs, and the government may take into consideration in developing language policies with successful implementation, which support the development of indigenous languages as LoLT.

5.2.1. Changing negative attitudes towards indigenous languages

For centuries language has been used as a political weapon in South Africa. In the democratic dispensation, the country has not had an honest, open conversation, inclusive of all stakeholders in society about the role of language in the country's oppressive past and how it can inclusively be transformed in the democratic dispensation to bring unity in a manner which does not hold divisive attitudes and consequences such as tribalism.

The success and failure of any language policy are largely dependent on the attitudes held against those languages, and its users. Thus, it is valuable to consider research into language patterns, attitudes and practices at Wits and South Africa at large (with the intention of drawing further comprehensions into contributing factors to languages policies, particularly in HEIs and the complex relations between English and indigenous languages in the background of South Africa's racial, ethnic history and the present multilingual aspirations). Government and HEIs need to run educational workshops, seminars, etcetera, where people's negative attitudes are engaged and countered. This would ensure a smooth development of not only language diversity policies but the realization of a multilingual country.

5.2.2. Implementation Monitoring

Among other things, policy implementation has proven to be an obstacle. The DHET's allowance for HEIs to develop their own language policies and have autonomy over those policies has created institutional language policies with little to no implementation. This study recommends that the DHET limits the autonomy HEIs have in developing and implementing language policies. The DHET must create a timeframe and implementation plan for each HEI as they are located in different contexts, with different resources, and demographics. In addition, the DHET must take measures to monitor the progress made by each HEI in terms of policy development and implementation. Ramifications need to be taken against institutions which do not comply. This means that HEIs must make periodic submissions to the DHET. Furthermore, the DHET needs to make frequent visits to these institutions and assess their developments and evaluate what assistance or resources they can make possible for efficient and effective implementation.

5.2.3. Stakeholder Collaboration

The development and implementation of language policies require resources, research, and collaborative efforts. This study recommends that the first collaborative initiative should come from the bottom-up so that policy development and implementation is inclusive of parents, students, teachers, and other relevant stakeholders. This is to ensure that the policies are not rejected by their constituencies and takes into consideration everyone's viewpoints and concerns. This is very important considering the history of South Africa and the legacies of the past that are still attached to language. The approval and acceptance of society are vital to the successful implementation of such policies.

In addition, the government and all HEIs need to share resources and information. This will accelerate the process of filling in the gaps around developing dialects, training educators, determining which and how many indigenous languages to develop, and when to implement these languages as LoLT. This also allows these actors to collectively and quickly dissect the challenges which may occur during and/or after implementation.

5.2.4 Multilingualism at Basic Education Level

Based on the data obtained in this study, the development of indigenous languages at tertiary level seemed to be confusing and raised numerous contesting issues. This study concurs with these findings and suggests that though the development of indigenous languages in HEIs is essential for the appreciation of people's linguistic rights and ensuring that people's identities are affirmed, tertiary level does not seem to be the best place to first implement such policies. This study suggests, as mentioned by some of the participants, that such policies should start at basic education level where we would have generations that are taught in different languages and grow up in that system. This will ensure that those students will grow up being linguistically diverse. Thus, the implementation of language diversity policies in HEIs will not act as an additional barrier that students must conquer in addition to their studies and/or English. This will ensure that everyone truly has an equal chance at academic success and upward mobility.

5.2.5. Potential Research

This study has facilitated additional questions for potential further research, namely:

1. Is tertiary level the best place to first implement language diversity policies?
2. What monitoring, and evaluation strategies can HEIs utilize to hold government accountable in the development and implementation of indigenous languages as LoLT?
3. What monitoring, and evaluation strategies can the government utilize to hold HEIs accountable in the development and implementation of indigenous languages as LoLT?
4. The socio-cultural effects of introducing indigenous languages as LoLT on black South African English primary speaking students.
5. The attitudes of South Africans to having one national language?

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7. Appendices

Annex A: Ethical clearance



SOSS Human Research Ethics Committee

Clearance Certificate

Protocol Number: SOC170804

Project Title: 'How is language diversity policy, as a transformative instrument, interpreted and implemented within Higher Education Institutions: A case study of the University of the Witwatersrand'

Investigator's Name: Miss Siphokazi Mbolo

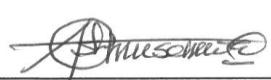
Department: Sociology

Date Reviewed: December 2017

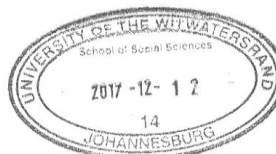
Decision of Committee: Approved / Unconditionally

Expiry Date: 12 December 2019

Date: 12 December 2017

Head of School: 
Professor Mucha Musemwa

CC supervisor: Ms Kezia Lewins



Declaration of Investigator

To be completed in duplicate and one copy to be returned to Ms. Sarah Mfupa in the School of Social Sciences, Room 152, 1st Floor, Robert Sobukwe Block.

I fully understand the conditions under which I am authorised to carry out the abovementioned research and I guarantee to ensure compliance with these conditions. If any departure from the research procedure as approved, I undertake to resubmit the protocol to the committee.

Student Signature

Date

Annex B: Participant Information Sheet

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET

Dear participant

My name is Siphokazi Mbolo and I am conducting research for my Master of Arts degree in Development Sociology at the University of the Witwatersrand. I would like to invite you to participate in this research project. I am investigating how language diversity policy, as a transformative instrument, is interpreted and implemented within Higher Education Institutions. The University of the Witwatersrand is my case study.

With your permission, I would like to conduct face-to-face in-depth individual interviews with you. Participation involves making yourself available at a time and place of your preference for an in-depth face-to-face interview that I expect will last approximately 30 – 45 minutes. If you are interested and available, further follow up interview(s) of similar duration would be helpful to me, but only if you are available and would like to.

To make it more private, the only requirement would be that the interviews be conducted only with you wherever you are comfortable (that is if you prefer for the interview to be conducted at school, in your home, or in a public area). I would like, with your consent, to record the interview. This is for no other purpose than ensuring that I will be able to capture responses accurately.

Participation is entirely voluntary. You are free to decline to participate in the study without any consequences. You can refuse to answer any questions and to end the interview and your participation at any time, without any consequences. If you choose to participate, you will be assisting me, and I really appreciate it. Participation will not be beneficial to you in any way. There will be no compensation.

I will ensure that your participation in this research is kept confidential, and I will not use your real name in transcribing the interviews or reporting the results of my research. You will therefore not be identifiable in any way. I will ensure that I send you an electronic link to my research report once it is deposited in the Wits library and made public.

Attached to this letter are two different consent forms where you can give permission to participate in an interview and to have an audio recording device present. If you agree, please sign the form for the different activities you agree to and leave blank any you do not wish to agree with.

If you are willing to participate, I will be most grateful. You are welcome to contact me at 1503581@students.wits.ac.za and/or to contact my academic supervisor at the university at any time about this research: Kezia.Lewins@wits.ac.za

Yours sincerely,

Siphokazi Mbolo

Annex C: Interview Consent Form

CONSENT FORM FOR INTERVIEW

I, _____, consent to be interviewed by Siphokazi Mbolo for her research project. I understand that there will be no direct benefit for me in participating in this study. I understand that participation is voluntary, and I am free to withdraw from the study at any time.

I have been given enough information about this research project. The purpose of my participation as an interviewee in this project has been explained to me and is clear.

I have been guaranteed that the researcher will not identify me by name.

I have read and understood the Participant Information Sheet; my questions about participation in this study have been answered satisfactorily.

Participants' Signature: _____ Date: _____

Annex D: Audio-Tape Consent Form

CONSENT FORM TO AUDIO RECORDING

I _____, consent to my interview with Siphokazi Mbolo to be audio-recorded. I understand that the interview session will be audio recorded to help with capturing all that is said as the researcher cannot write up everything that is said. This will help ensure that what is said is as accurate as possible.

I have had all the information explained especially how my confidentiality will be guaranteed and I understand the explanation. Neither my name nor any of my other identifying information will be associated with the audio recording or the transcript.

Participants' Signature: _____ Date: _____