



# Decoloniality in Higher Education: Students' perspectives

University of the Free State  
**Qwaqwa Campus**

2022

[www.ufs.ac.za](http://www.ufs.ac.za)

 UFSUV |  UFSweb |  UFSweb |  ufsuv

*Inspiring excellence, transforming lives  
through quality, impact, and care.*

UNIVERSITY OF THE  
FREE STATE  
UNIVERSITEIT VAN DIE  
VRYSTAAT  
YUNIVESITHI YA  
FREISTATA



**UFS**  
CENTRE FOR TEACHING  
AND LEARNING (CTL)  
QWAQWA CAMPUS

# Foreword



The idea of a decoloniality essay competition is based on the University of the Free State's (UFS's) drive to enhance decolonisation. It is Dr M Mandew's, our campus principal's, idea that aligns with the UFS strategic plan for 2018 – 2022.

This was also our means as the Qwaqwa Write Site to bridge the gap between schools and tertiary institutions and enhance students' understanding of academic writing as a valuable tool. It gives our students a voice on decolonisation, which is a hot topic across tertiary institutions.

This is the second booklet based on the decoloniality essay; enjoy reading it.

**Ms TLS Msimang**  
**Write Site Coordinator**





# Sanele Hlongwane



THE HUMANITIES  
UFS

**Sanele Jabulani Hlongwane** is locally bred from the village of Tshiame. He is finishing his third year as a community development student at the faculty of humanities, Qwaqwa campus. His interest lies in being on the front lines of fighting climate change, social injustice, poverty, and ensuring capacity building for society at large. Thus,

he is working towards being a community and policy development researcher. In his leisure time, you will find him reading books, participating in community outreach activities and student development programs and writing poems.

## Practical Strategies for the Implementation of Marginalised Indigenous Languages in Teaching and Learning within the University of the Free State

The end of apartheid saw the rapid increase in previously marginalised groups choosing to embrace and recognise their cultures, tell their histories, study from African-written books, and run institutions based on values reflective of African culture, as opposed to the Eurocentric model in the effort of decolonisation (Jacob, Yao Cheng, & Porter, 2015:123). In a simple sense, that meant giving the unrecognised practices equal consideration as those that are dominant (Mheta, Lungu & Govender, 2018:5). Therefore, there is a need for higher education institutions to follow the practice of decolonisation and embrace all indigenous languages in teaching and learning. This can be done through practical strategies, such as multilingual talks in daily academic life and translanguaging in academic modules. In brief, this paper describes practical strategies for how the University of the Free State can incorporate all indigenous languages through multilingual talks and using translanguaging to decolonise education.

The institution can allow students to have tutorial discussions and lecture consultations using multiple languages. Starting with exploratory talks in tutorial discussions, students can use their first language to ask questions and discuss content in small groups. For example, lecturers can initiate tutorial content discussions wherein students can critically but constructively listen to each other's ideas about the applicable topic in their home languages. As a result, social bonds within the classroom may improve since precise language is unimportant in a more relaxed setting (Mheta *et al.*, 2018:5). Additionally, lecturers who can speak the same indigenous languages that students speak should have the freedom to utilise this skill. This should not infringe on the University's language policies. Common indigenous languages could be used freely in informal lecture discussions outside of class. This makes complex topics more accessible for the marginalised new students in the institution. Many new students come from rural areas where an estimated 55% of teachers use indigenous languages to explain content (Jacob, Yao Cheng, & Porter, 2015:123). Nevertheless, the success of the above strategy depends on classrooms having students who share the same languages and the tutor or lecturer being multilingual. Generally, the institution can adopt multiple languages in tutorials and lecture consultations while being aware of the need for multilingual knowledge on campus.

Following the above, the institution can use translanguaging in academic modules. This simply means acknowledging that languages in the classroom can work together rather than compete (Mheta *et al.*, 2018:5). Let us review the case of a history module, wherein the lecturers can employ a technique used by Machingambi (2022:5) through the use of input, processing, and output in the learning cycle. To illustrate, lecturers can allow students to gather content presentation information in their indigenous languages. Thereafter, the students present the information by interpreting it in English. Therefore, through this method, students can use their full language repertoires to improve their understanding of disciplinary knowledge. Thus, creating maximisation of learning, balancing the power relations among languages in the classroom, and boosting learners' confidence and motivation. However, Machingambi (2022:12) stresses that the success of the above strategy depends on the openness of the innovative practice among the students and staff. Additionally, staff should be trained in content analysis; multilingual reading, writing, speaking, translation, typing, and board writing; code-switching; and code-mixing skills. In brief, translanguaging in academic modules can close the power gap between languages in the academic sphere.

In conclusion, there is a growing need for higher education institutions to decolonise their practices by embracing all indigenous languages in teaching and learning. Indigenous African languages can be utilised in multilingual talks in lecturer consultations and tutorial sessions. Furthermore, translanguaging can be used in academic settings wherein students can use English and indigenous languages to learn simultaneously. Therefore, as higher education institutions embrace indigenous languages, the nation may move closer to decolonisation because of its prominent role in the nation.

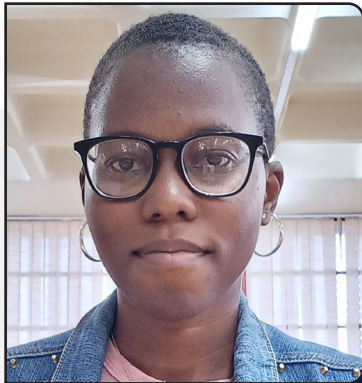
## Reference list

Jacob, A., Yao Cheng, S. and Porter, M., 2015. *Indigenous Education Language, Culture, and Identity*. New York: Springer link: 34 – 41.

Machingambi, S. 2022. 'Analysis of decolonisation of higher education in a new south African university. *African Perspectives of Research in Teaching & Learning*. 4(1):2 – 13.

Mheta, G., Lungu, B. and Govender, T. 2018. 'Decolonisation of the curriculum: A case study of the Durban University of Technology in South Africa. *South African Journal of Education*.' 12(2):1 – 7.

# Judith Rumbwere



ECONOMIC AND  
MANAGEMENT SCIENCES  
UFS

**Judith Rumbwere** is 21 years old, born in Zimbabwe, and raised in a small town in Limpopo called Mokopane. She is currently doing her second year studying B.Com with

a specialisation in general management at the University of the Free State, Qwaqwa campus.

## Ways in Which the Faculty Of Economic Management and Sciences (EMS) Can Address Poverty And Inequality In Local Communities

South Africa has struggled with inequality since apartheid, contributing to extreme poverty in most black communities. According to the World Bank (2022), South Africa has the highest level of global inequality. The Faculty of Economic Management and Sciences (EMS) can help reduce poverty and inequality in local areas by creating partnerships to support low-income communities through funding and scholarships. The fundamental issue addressed in this essay is how collaborating with and giving underprivileged communities access to education can help reduce poverty. In addition, by providing workshops and charity work, the EMS faculty can relieve poverty and inequality.

Education stimulates economic development and provides a foundation for eliminating poverty. According to Roberts (2011 cited in Omoniyi, 2013), "the primary determinants of a country's standard of living is how well it succeeds in developing and utilizing the skills and knowledge and furthering the health and education in the majority of its population". In other words, the economy and society benefit from providing children and locals in the community with education. Furthermore, education reduces the cycle of poverty within the communities because educated people are more likely to be employed and earn a higher income (Van der Berg, 2008). Thus, through education, the EMS faculty can help tackle poverty because once educated, the locals can contribute to the development of their communities and share what they have learned. Therefore, through education, the facility is effective in poverty reduction.

The EMS faculty can tackle poverty and inequality by working with local organisations that aim to alleviate poverty and through educational workshops. One way colleges and universities can play a significant role in this area is by collaborating with global and local non-profit organisations. Just as the government can play a significant role in economic and community development, the universities can also contribute to economic and regional social development (Albulescu & Albulescu, 2014). Therefore, the EMS faculty can contribute through workshops and creating awareness of finance, accounting, and the economy. Moreover, research conducted by students and lecturers can focus on solutions to poverty. In brief, collaboration and creating awareness are important to solving the social and economic issues of poverty and inequality.



In conclusion, this paper argues that the EMS faculty can help tackle poverty and inequality through education and philanthropy. By providing scholarships and access for students from the local community to the EMS faculty of the University of the Free State, the underprivileged communities can receive the same opportunities as the privileged communities. In addition, creating awareness about financial topics also reduces poverty. Although inequality and poverty are still a challenge in the local communities, there are ways the EMS faculty can help reduce poverty

## Reference list

Albulescu, I. and Albulescu, M. 2014. The University in the community. The university's contribution to local and regional development by providing educational services for adults.' *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 142, pp.5 – 11.

Hettiger, J. 2020. *Innovative Ways Universities Are Fighting Poverty*. The Borgen Project. [Online] Available at: <https://borgenproject.org/universities-fighting-poverty/> (Accessed: September 5, 2022).

Omoniyi, M. B. I. 2013. 'The role of education in poverty alleviation and economic development: A theoretical perspective and counselling implications.' *British Journal of Arts and Social Sciences*, 15 (2), 176 – 185.

Van der Berg, S. 2008. *Poverty And Education*. UNESCO Digital Library. International Academy of Education. [Online] Available at: <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000181754>.

World Bank Group. 2022. *New World Bank Report assesses sources of inequality in five countries in Southern Africa*. World Bank. [Online] Available at: <https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/press-release/2022/03/09/new-world-bank-report-assesses-sources-of-inequality-in-five-countries-in-southern-africa>

# Maleshwane Mokoena



EDUCATION  
UFS

I am **Mokoena Maleshwane**, 22 years old, and a full-time third-year student at the University of the Free State studying for a Bachelor in Education (BEd): Foundation Phase. I was born and bred here in Qwaqwa in a place called Makwane. I am currently a tutor at the University, tutoring MTCF1604, and was appointed in 2022 after applying in 2021. I am a very determined individual who grew up believing that fighting for your dreams and

desires will one day take you where you want to be in life. Moreover, I am a very dedicated young woman who always goes for what she believes in, and I am always eager to learn and discover new things. I can confidently say I am a hard worker with a lot of ambition. Most importantly, I enjoy challenges and establishing goals for myself on a regular basis so that I can have something to aim towards.

## Strategies In Which Marginalised Indigenous Languages Can Be Used In Teaching And Learning At The University Of The Free State (UFS)

Marginalised indigenous languages are the languages native people speak in a particular area or community. These languages are less privileged, and they are not included in official use. According to Alexander (2003:179), the marginalised indigenous languages of Africa have been severely disadvantaged by the lack of equality between Afrikaans and English and the African languages that are banned from official use. Consequently, this makes things harder for indigenous students because to understand a question, they usually must translate it first to a language they fully understand before attempting to answer it. Furthermore, some students from marginalised regions feel oppressed and less privileged because they realise that their home languages are not taken into consideration when it comes to teaching and learning in higher institutions (Hill, 2016:89). Language tends to be a barrier that prohibits effective teaching and learning. Therefore, utilising marginalised indigenous languages at the University of Free State (UFS) as a medium of instruction can benefit indigenous students. Thus, the oppressed, marginalised indigenous languages should be recognised and used as a medium of instruction in the University. Moreover, this decoloniality essay will briefly clarify the effects of oppressing indigenous languages when it comes to teaching and learning and address strategies for using the marginalised indigenous languages in teaching and learning at the UFS. The strategies that the essay will focus on are multilingualism, translating books into students' indigenous languages, and modelling two languages (bilingualism).

The utilisation and recognition of marginalised indigenous languages at the UFS as the medium of instruction can benefit the indigenous students from different regions of South Africa. Students benefit academically from using their home language as the medium of instruction because they are more likely to engage in the learning process. Furthermore, the teaching and learning process becomes more accessible when it is learner-centred. With all the evidence above, the UFS should also try implementing a multilingual strategy to promote effective teaching and learning. First and foremost, the University should be aware that teaching strategies that draw on multilingual reading, writing, and speaking styles give students access to cultural resources that enrich the relevance they apply to their academic work while facilitating greater access to texts written in multiple languages (Kamwangamalu, 2000:89).

Our university could help to translate books into different indigenous languages. These books can be translated by the module subject experts, which would then be printed for use by the indigenous students. In addition, translating books into indigenous languages for integration can be valuable as a tool to aid instruction in three main ways and here is how:

- To foster comprehensible input,
- To encourage social interactions,
- Moreover, lastly, to facilitate comprehensible output (Krashen, 1991:78).

Therefore, this would mean that students can understand the concepts the teachers are sharing with them. In return, students should be able to ask questions and interact with their tutors to understand the content and, more importantly, the context of what they are studying. For indigenous students who speak English as a second language, misunderstanding can quickly become a significant barrier. Therefore, translating books into students' home languages can help students overcome the misunderstanding and barriers they usually face during the teaching and learning process. Lastly, it is imperative to provide all students with the necessary translation skills to set them up for success now and in the future (Neville, 2003:60).

The University could allow students the opportunity to use their home language in the classroom by modelling strong language use in both their home and second languages. The use of a student's primary language encourages bilingualism. Students value their home language as a tool for comparing, accessing, and contextualising information and promoting overall academic literacy (Kamwangamalu, 2000:54). Students can connect words they do not understand in English to words they understand in their home language to better comprehend complex concepts. Learning could be made more efficient for university students in an environment where one must drive their own learning by use of indigenous language to understand the content matter. There would be an increase in engagement and the complexity of their answers because their language skills would not be holding them back from expressing and articulating their thoughts. Furthermore, by creating opportunities for students to engage in multilingual, content-based conversations, the University would provide indigenous students with the ability to show their mastery and practice language proficiency. As a result, the more students can authentically use their home language, the more indigenous students will gain confidence and build proficiency in both languages and content mastery (Eddington, 2017:34).

In conclusion, the integration of the home language plays a crucial role in a student's overall performance from their early years to learning at higher education institutions. Therefore, the above-mentioned strategies are just some of the few ways the University of the Free State could help integrate the indigenous languages of the people of South Africa into the learning process. Moreover, by using the strategies mentioned above, the majority of the students at the University of Free State will achieve more academically as these strategies will help them reach their academic goals.

## Reference list

Alexander, N. 2003. Language Policy, Symbolic Power and the Democratic Responsibility of the Post-Apartheid University.' *Pretexts: Literacy and Cultural studies* 12(2):179 – 90

Cooper, R.L. 1989. *Language Planning and Social Change*. Cambridge: University Press.

Hill, M. 2016. *Revitalising indigenous languages is key to decolonisation, Ricochet*. [Online] Available at: <https://ricochet.media/en/revitalizing-indigenous-languages-is-key-to-decolonization> (Accessed on 30 March 2019)

Kamwangamalu, N.M. 2000. *Language Policy And Mother Tongue Education In South Africa: The Case For A Market Approach*. Georgetown: University Roundtable on language and linguistics.

Krashen, S. 1981. *Second Language Acquisition And Second Language Learning*. Oxford: Pergamon Press inc.

Krashen, S.D. 1991. *Under Attack: The Case Against Bilingual Education*. Culver City: Language Education Associates.

Kamwangamalu, N.M. 2000. *Language Policy And Mother Tongue Education In South Africa: The Case For A Market Approach*. Georgetown: University Roundtable on language and linguistics.

Walqui, A., and Van Lier, L. 2010. *A Pedagogy Of Promise. Scaffolding The Academic Success Of Adolescent English Language Learners*. San Francisco: WestEd. [Online] Available at: from: <http://www.WestEd.org/scaffoldingacademic>



# Nomusa Ngqulunga



THE HUMANITIES  
UFS

**Nomusa Ngqulunga** has been an avid fan of Psychology since she was a teenager. She even took the Life Sciences stream at the High School level. She is a good listener; she is kind and likes to solve people's problems and solves puzzles. Complex puzzles are her favourite. As she became older, she enrolled at the University of the Free States (UFS), Qwaqwa campus. She is currently

doing her second year in a Bachelor of Arts, majoring in Psychology and English. Additionally, it is one of her best wishes to obtain a Clinical Psychology Honors degree after completing her undergraduate degree. She enjoys gymming, solving puzzles, reading novels, and travelling in her free time.

## Strategies In Which Marginalised Indigenous Languages Can Be Used In Teaching And Learning At The University Of The Free State (UFS)

I firmly believe that if the University of the Free State (UFS) can apply and adhere to indigenous language-eradication tactics, colonialism will be successfully and permanently eradicated in the education framework. This essay will discuss the importance of revising the UFS language policy, collaborating with, and utilising multilingualism in teaching and learning to successfully establish these strategies in the University of the Free State.

The University of the Free State (UFS) language policy is influenced by the 2002 Higher Education Language Policy. According to Petersen (2003), Sesotho and isiZulu should be used at UFS because of the local contexts. The University should mandate that all first-year Sesotho non-mother tongue speakers complete the Sesotho basic module as part of their degree requirements. For instance, the University of KwaZulu-Natal developed isiZulu as a language of communication. This is evident in their policy plan, where academic staff and support staff are encouraged to be fluent in isiZulu communication skills (Radebe, 2016:90). In the UFS Qwaqwa campus, these two marginalised languages are spoken by the majority of people but seem to be belittled. English is a minority language when considering statistical data on the number of speakers of the language. We can't communicate with lecturers in our languages because English is prioritised. For example, there is no Honours degree on our campus for isiZulu. This means students can study for an isiZulu-based degree for four years without any post-graduate options. This shows that indigenous languages are disregarded so students can't express themselves comfortably by utilising their home languages. This shows that this language policy must be revised as it threatens the long-term survival of our languages. Another problematic policy is the University's admission policy of a 50% minimum in English. The university should shift this to native languages so there can be a sense of comfort for students. The incorporation of using indigenous languages into the school curriculum can inspire and bolster students' academic success and interests. Indigenous languages connect people to their ancestral cultures and means of survival, their relationship with nature, and their heritage. Evidently, for indigenous people, language carries the moral principles of their ancestors in addition to identifying their origins. Indigenous languages must receive the same respect and recognition as English in higher education. They must play an equal role to English, as things stand, though this is challenging. Indigenous languages must be taught at the undergraduate and postgraduate levels as we also need a historical record of these languages (Peterson, 2003:6).

Secondly, the creation of collaboration, which is the development of programming in partnership with the indigenous community, is fundamental. This rests at the heart of developing relevant programming for language speakers within the

university. For instance, if the UFS can incorporate indigenous languages into Blackboard, it will be easier for students to grasp the content of their modules when taught in their own languages and this can uplift the university pass rate. In 2018, Queens University in Canada developed a language and culture centre and began a collaborative project. The project discussed how to move language instruction beyond the lecture halls, developing online resources to support language instruction, learning and opportunities. UFS can do the same and meet with other universities that have successfully implemented this strategy and discuss other potential joint projects. Creating collaboration requires the meeting of Western and indigenous knowledge to enable a reconceptualization of a wider range of possibilities. Incorporating indigenous languages into the school curriculum can inspire and bolster students' academic success and interests. According to Peterson (2003), a framework for the use of language could help create better societies. He claimed that while universities frequently collaborate in research or teaching and learning, they are not doing enough to deepen the engagement with tertiary institutions that have designed and developed interventions that can be useful in understanding the critical role language could play. At the UFS Qwaqwa campus, the Sesotho language can shift the paradigm of culture-based education by teaching about Sesotho culture in and through the Sesotho language. In this case, any content could be taught, and the method of understanding would be culturally based. The focus would be a culturally based shift from content to the medium of instruction. Although this may seem like a subtle shift, this would represent a paradigm shift (Peterson, 2006:5).

Multilingualism is the process by which a new language is learned while the student still maintains and develops the mother tongue. This means that Sesotho-speaking students should learn to speak isiZulu, as this should not inhibit the learning of the first language. This also goes for isiZulu-speaking people. It should be prioritised at UFS because acquiring more languages results in a special kind of flexibility, such as the awareness that the same thought can be expressed in multiple ways and that some words and expressions have no equivalent in another language. For instance, at the University of Pretoria, the students with bilingual experiences seemed to have greater skill at forming concepts and a more diverse set of mental abilities. The mono-linguists appeared to have a rather unitary cognitive structure. Subsequent studies of bilingual students' academic, linguistic, and cognitive abilities were measured by nonverbal intelligence tests. The students in these later studies were adding a second language at no detriment to their studies (Lambert, 2020). This is important to ensure that the constitutional goals of linguistic equality and multilingualism are achieved and ensure the proper implementation of these languages. One of the paradigms within which the language policy should operate is an additive approach to multilingualism, which is interpreted as implying the maintenance of home languages as the main language with the subsequent addition of other languages. Speaking isiZulu and Sesotho will significantly eradicate colonial practices and realities in UFS and teaching and learning environments. In addition, the university must authorise the provision of opportunities for personnel to develop Sesotho communication skills. Moreover, the possibility for UFS to support students' ability to be creative and utilise their imagination to develop structures through the lenses of their own languages along with other languages spoken around the Qwaqwa campus is vital (Prah 2006:19; Lambert 2015).

Without a doubt, if the University of the Free State can implement the strategies of using indigenous languages to erase colonisation in the educational context, decolonisation can be successfully and permanently implemented. The contribution of this paper has been to confirm that these strategies cannot be ignored as they will produce a fruitful future for students in higher education in South African universities.

## Reference list

Baker, C. & Jones, S.P. 1998. *Encyclopaedia of Bilingualism and Bilingual Education*. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters  
Department of Education. 2002. *Language Policy for Higher Education*. Pretoria: Government Printers

Peterson 2003, 6. *Language policy*: Google scholar

Prah, K.K., 2009. 'Mother-tongue education in Africa for emancipation and development: Towards the intellectualisation of African languages' *Languages and education in Africa: A comparative and transdisciplinary analysis*, pp.83-104.

Radebe, I.S. 2019. *The Importance Of Indigenous Languages In The Decolonization Of Higher Education In South Africa: A Case Study of the University of KwaZulu-Natal's Language Policy*. Master's Dissertation. Pietermaritzburg: University of KwaZulu Natal



# Topsy Nzimande



THE HUMANITIES  
UFS

My name is **Topsy Nzimande**. I am Christian and have accepted Christ as my personal saviour. I am the third of four children at home, born and raised in Bethlehem, Free State, where I attended primary and high school. After graduating high school, I was accepted to the University of the Free State. I am currently doing my final year towards obtaining a Bachelor of Arts, majoring in Psychology and English. During my first year of studying English literature, I discovered that I love writing and telling stories from my own perspective, making me an

aspiring screenwriter. In my second year of study, I was honoured to be recognised as a Golden Key International Honour Society member, which meant that I formed part of the top 15% of learners in my course. Fast forward to my final year, I was accepted as an executive member of the Golden Key UFS, Qwaqwa campus chapter, where I am currently serving as a secretary. I watch movies, reality shows, interviews, or sermons in my spare time, and I also like learning from other people's experiences and points of view.

## Strategies in Which Marginalised Indigenous Languages can be used in teaching and learning at the University of the Free State

Decoloniality is referred to as the process of undoing colonialism (Radebe, 2019:29). Therefore, this essay discusses the decoloniality of African languages in the education system through strategies of implementing African language sessions and using the translanguaging process in the University of the Free State (UFS). Firstly, by implementing indigenous language communication sessions at the university, students can acquire an academic vocabulary in these languages that they can apply to their learning curricula. Secondly, by translating the content taught in English to indigenous languages, the use of African languages in teaching and learning at the University of the Free State can be effectively implemented.

One of the strategies the UFS can use to utilise African indigenous languages in teaching and learning is to form a group on campus wherein African language communication is practised. For example, isiZulu and Sesotho lecturers or tutors can form a group whereby they teach certain concepts in these languages, especially those mostly used in academics. Although we have Sesotho and isiZulu as modules in our institution, the content learned in these modules is for language purposes, so it mostly does not include words or vocabulary used in the curricula of modules like psychology, business studies and many others. Therefore, if various lecturers and tutors of indigenous languages can have sessions where they teach words relevant to the curricula of other modules in African languages, it can make it easier for these languages to be introduced in the teaching and learning of various academic disciplines. To illustrate, if students already know certain academic words in an indigenous language, it will be easier for them to learn and be taught other modules in indigenous languages. According to Sondag (2022:1), a lecturer at the University of Cape Town used this initiative by conducting a learning session in isiXhosa for medical students and also as a language acquisition for other students in the African languages department. Therefore, as much as African languages are for communication purposes like any other language, they can also be used in an academic context for students to understand better and have their languages used in teaching and learning.

The University can also use the translation method to utilise indigenous languages in teaching and learning. For example, when students write their tests and assignments in English, the University can include the translation of those questions asked in the paper in Sesotho, isiZulu, or any other required African language beneath the English questions in italics. This



method will also help students understand the questions better in their natural language while adding to their vocabulary in their natural language. This method can contribute to teaching and learning in African languages since we mostly do not have textbooks written in African languages. The University can simply create academic texts written in African languages. The translation method does not only have to be written words, as the UFS can also have individuals translate English lessons to African languages through virtual sessions. For example, suppose a class takes place physically or virtually. In that case, the UFS can have an additional recorded session wherein the same lesson is translated and taught in the required indigenous language. To emphasise, De Costa, Singh, Milu, Wang, Fraiberg, and Canagarajah (2017:464) also argue that translingual practices challenge the ideology of languages contributing to the separation of humanity in South Africa. Therefore, besides just teaching and learning in indigenous languages, the decolonisation of Western languages in the University of the Free State through translation can also contribute to the unity and humanity of students.

In conclusion, this essay has discussed decoloniality in the education system and its strategies. It has provided examples of implementing indigenous language sessions in the university. In addition, it has also proved the possibility of translanguaging in the teaching and learning context at the University of the Free State by translating English questions in tests and exams to African languages.

## Reference list

De Costa, P.I., Sign, J.G., Milu, E., Wang, X., Fraiberg, S. and Canagarajah, S. 2017. Pedagogizing Translingual Practice: Prospects And Possibilities. *The National Council Of Teachers Of English*. 51 (4):464-470.

Radebe, I.S. 2019. The Importance Of Indigenous Languages In The Decolonization Of Higher Education In South Africa: A Case Study Of The University Of Kwazulu-Natal's Language Policy. Master's Dissertation. Pietermaritzburg: University of Kwa-Zulu Natal. [Online] Available at: [https://researchspace.ukzn.ac.za/xmlui/bitstream/handle/10413/18710/Radebe\\_Innocent\\_Sbonelo\\_2019.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y](https://researchspace.ukzn.ac.za/xmlui/bitstream/handle/10413/18710/Radebe_Innocent_Sbonelo_2019.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y) (Accessed on: 22 August 2022.)

Sunday, A. 2022. *Sa's Language Learning Policy Needs To Include African Language At Universities*. Cape Town: UCT Communication And Marketing Department. <https://www.news.uct.ac.za/article/-2022-08-10-sas-language-learning-policy-needs-to-include-african-languages-at-universities> [Online] (Accessed on: 12 September 2022)

# Puleng Molupi



EDUCATION  
UFS

My name is **Molupi Puleng**. I am twenty-three and doing a Bachelor of Education, Foundation Phase. My hometown is Makwane Village, located inside the beautiful mountains of Qwaqwa in the Free State. I come from humble beginnings; my parents are unemployed, and I am the second to attend university in my family and will definitely be the first to have a degree. Moreover, I love and honour education. I love seeing educated people; I am inspired by education and seeing successes. I love reading books of all genres. My favourite author is Precious Moloi. Unquestionably, I am a good soul and

also a good teacher. My dreams and aspirations include succeeding and obtaining a doctorate. I believe that as a good teacher, I will make a great impact, shaping the lives of South African children. I am motivated by the desire to succeed and not to beat others. By this, I mean that *if they say it is impossible, it is impossible for them, not me*.

My positive energy is contagious; with that said, it's a long journey to success but I am able. *End of story*.

## Strategies In Which Marginalised Indigenous Languages Can Be Used In Teaching And Learning At The University Of The Free State (UFS)

Decolonisation is the action of eliminating colonial methodologies put in place when a nation maintains control over subordinate territories. Political theorist, Duong (2021) asserts that decolonisation may have been the century's greatest act of disenfranchisement because many anti-colonial activists sought independence more than universal suffrage within empires. Additionally, indigenous African languages were belittled by colonialism, and indigenous South African people were forced to speak unfamiliar colonial languages like Afrikaans and English. Subsequently, African indigenous languages were marginalised, times. Nowadays, in higher education, we still find that non-indigenous languages are used as the languages of instruction and, consequently, the languages of exclusion. The University of the Free State (UFS) should develop a new language policy that allows students to speak and learn using their home language. The Higher Education Act of 1997 instructed higher education institutions to create language policies that would align with the constitution. The Department of Higher Education and Training implemented the language policy for higher education in 2002. Therefore, previously criticised indigenous languages had to be acknowledged and developed by higher education institutions.

The University of the Free State's strategies for incorporating marginalised indigenous languages into instruction should include the use of multilingualism. UFS is a very diverse institution, and students there are from public schools where English is taught as a first additional language and is not their mother tongue. Additionally, moving to tertiary education and being expected to learn in a language that is not yours as well as communicating with a language that is not yours, is a challenge on its own, so a new language policy should be implemented, and African indigenous languages should be recognised at UFS. Essentially, at UFS's Qwaqwa campus, there are no white students.

However, students are expected to be taught, write exams, and communicate in a foreign language. Equally important, the UFS has to develop or revise their language policy to ensure alignment with the Language Policy Framework for Public Higher Education Institutions. Additionally, the institution is obligated to provide a yearly report to the Department on developing and implementing its language policies and plans. Further, as it is known that UFS is a diverse institution, all eleven official languages should be used to ensure equality. Briefly, goods and services such as African books written

in nine indigenous languages should be made available and accessible so that indigenous languages are utilised in UFS (Saliwa-Mogale, 2021).

A second implementation strategy that can be adopted by the University of the Free State can be language awareness. Moreover, utilising indigenous languages in the UFS will help students improve their capacity to impact political policy procedures to protect their human rights. As a result, the institution should also develop implementation strategies to enhance student success by providing high-quality language-support services, such as translating and interpreting. The institution should establish centres for language development to undertake relevant research concerning each official language. All South African scholars are invited to participate in discussions regarding this research, particularly curriculum research, in the South African Education Research Association (SAERA), founded in 2013. Yet, remembering English and Afrikaans are foreign languages, the quality of education remains a complicated matter due to the linguistic diversity. In summary, education is generally regarded as a key to social and economic progress for any country's decolonisation. Evidently, without indigenous languages in the University of the Free State education is meaningless and the importance of African indigenous languages in decolonisation can no longer be side lined, with widespread evidence pointing to the detrimental effects of the domination (Cummins, 1995).

In conclusion, since African indigenous languages were marginalised, the university should implement a new language policy that accommodates the institution's diversity. In addition, the institution should recognise and develop the indigenous languages that were previously marginalised as well as allow students to speak and write exams in their mother tongue languages.

## Reference list

Abari, A.O., Oyetola, O.I., and Okunuga, A. A. 2013. Preserving African Languages and Territorial Integrity in the Face of Education and Globalization. *Problems of Education in the 21st Century*. 57: 8–15.

Cummins, J. (1995). *Discursive power in educational power and practice for culturally diverse students*.

Corson, D (Ed.), *Discourse and power in educational organizations*. Hampton Press: 191–213.

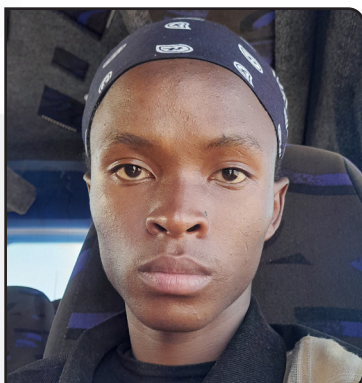
Duong, K (2021). Universal suffrage as Decolonization. *American Political Science Review*. 115(2): 412–428.

Neville, A. 2003. Language Policy, Symbolic Power and the Democratic Responsibility of the Post-Apartheid University. *Pretexts: Literary and Cultural Studies*. 12(2):179 – 90

Saliwa-Mogale, N.F. 2021. *Development and empowerment of previously-marginalised languages: a case of African languages in South Africa*. Doctoral Dissertation. Faculty of Humanities, School of Languages and Literatures. Cape Town: University of Cape Town.



# Thabiso Sothoane



NATURAL AND  
AGRICULTURAL SCIENCES  
**UFS**

**Thabiso Sothoane** is a young black boy from Tsheseng, Qwaqwa. He is twenty years old and the second born to parents named Motshedisi Sothoane and Letekotoa Simelane. Growing up, he was a self-driven person and looked up to Maya Angelou and Lebo Mashile, who

were the biggest inspirations for him to write and to be passionate about writing. He believes in himself and sees a wonderful future in the world that will advance his writing skills even more. Lastly, he believes that you can be everything you want through determination.

## The Discussion of Strategies in Which Marginalised Indigenous Languages Can Be Used In Teaching and Learning at the University of the Free State (UFS).

In this essay, the term decolonisation will refer to the actions used to eradicate colonisation or initiate liberation methods in society. It is an essential tool that gives people the power to stand their ground and voice everything which bothers them. At the same time, it enables the maintenance of stability in African countries. Introducing language policies that cultivate the learning and teaching in indigenous languages is highly imperative because it is the only way in which students will have a better concept of who they are genuinely at the University of the Free State (UFS). This essay will focus solely on the background, causes, and effects of the marginalisation of indigenous languages and the strategies that new language policies can utilise in teaching and learning at the university.

Apartheid was the major source of the marginalisation of indigenous languages, and many institutions were susceptible to it, including the UFS (Williams, 2018:90). Under the influence of colonialism and the apartheid system, indigenous languages were marginalised and colonial languages known as English and Afrikaans were urged to be known by the South Africans. Consequently, this has resulted into the destruction of cultural practises amongst African people. By reviewing the UFS's past, it is broadly shown that apartheid was the dominant system because Afrikaans was the medium of instruction for learning and teaching purposes (Maldonado-Torres, 2007:213). Furthermore, the University of the Free State was declared to be an independent Afrikaans language institution in 1950. To illustrate, the name "Kovsies" shows how long UFS has been under the influence of the Afrikaans language. This term became known when UFS still called the *Universiteit van die Oranje-Vrystaat*, which means University College of Orange Free State. With the origin of this term, black students were excluded or referred to as the minority in the institution. Again, it symbolises the prestige of a university which rejected black students' existence. Furthermore, it creates a sense of feeling unwelcome in the institution for those black students who were excluded. It does not exhibit a genuine dedication to diversity, incorporation, and fairness like a democratic institution but aligns with the legacy of apartheid and colonialism (Mignollo, 2007:499). At the outset, this institution was meant for whites only, meaning that blacks were excluded, proving evidently that the marginalisation of indigenous languages was favourable at the time. After the apartheid years, the university arrived at a racial dispute about a video trending in late February 2008, wherein five black workers were ridiculed and coerced to eat food that had been urinated on. This has to be the best example of how racism acted as a definitive factor in the recognition of black students at the UFS. The moment you start jumping into the zone of treating another person badly then it means that you don't even care about that person's identity, language, or whatever portion forms the person. Thus, apartheid was instrumental in marginalising indigenous languages (Mignolo, 2007:459).

Throughout history, the importance of preserving indigenous languages was not considered, and this turned out to be a problematic factor for the African people (Grosfogel, 2007:213). Moreover, regarding land ownership, it is said that the indigenous languages of African people were marginalised through land possession. Through land possession, the European powers were able to decimate indigenous cultures and accelerate a bid to remove the ancient African knowledge so that it could be replaced by their Western knowledge (Cupples & Glynn, 2014:57). European powers were in control of the African colonies, and this was a major influence on the evolution of both

southern and northern part of Africa (Jansen, 2017:158). The marginalisation of indigenous languages meant more than restricting the general public from interacting in their language; it meant that they were stripped of their self-worth and the true version of who they were. In addition, they were deprived of the right to express themselves using their language. With all of that being mentioned, the significance of protecting indigenous languages from being marginalised was truly ignored or taken into account (Connell, 2017:10).

The new strategies introduced to the language policies are essential and viable solutions to achieving the goals outlined to encourage multilingualism in the UFS (Heleta, 2018:58). The University of Free State is obliged to create tactics for advancing student capability in the appointed languages of tuition. For example, if the indigenous languages are used as the language of instruction, that will align with the strategies of the language policies in UFS. The indigenous languages would be reinstated and re-established because the students will be rooted back in their African cultures steadily and entirely. They will also get a better chance to embrace their own languages while wearing pride as their crown. The language policies replenishing indigenous languages must also promote the utilisation of indigenous languages as a medium of instruction alongside English and Afrikaans (Bryman, 2012:66–71). They should firmly empower the status of indigenous languages through inclusive thinking and practice for students to exercise the full potential of opposing the marginalisation of African (indigenous) languages. Cultural values are equally important to the preservation of indigenous languages, and for that to be successful, heritage should be made a major priority so that learning and teaching in UFS can be enhanced. As a matter of fact, it would be wise to opt for relevant linguistic skills in language so that teaching and learning can be enhanced at the UFS. Therefore, the safest route for the UFS to establish multilingualism should be motivated by the introduction of language policies as a feasible goal at all costs (University of the Free State, 2017:2–6).

In conclusion, introducing language policies that consolidate indigenous languages in learning and teaching is tremendously vital due to the fact that students can have a better notion of who they may be in the University of the Free State. Apartheid was the primary threat to the indigenous languages within the UFS, as the institution itself was for whites only, and the medium of instruction was Afrikaans. This amounted to injustice against the indigenous languages by inflicting a huge disturbance to the cultural practices of the black students existing in the institution. As has been noted, historically, the upkeep of indigenous languages was not taken into consideration. Furthermore, land possession gave Europeans the power to rob Africans of the right to express themselves in their African languages. The reinstatement of indigenous languages after being completely marginalised relies on multilingualism because it allows students to reconnect with their roots. Moreover, overturning the history of the deprivation of indigenous languages relies on the cultivation of multilingualism in the UFS. This can be attained by protecting the students' heritage and uprooting discrimination in every aspect. Losing indigenous languages means losing a great part of our heritage because languages are more than spoken or written words and sentences – they are also the means through which cultures, knowledge, and traditions are transmitted between generations. Together we can pave the way to success by acknowledging that indigenous languages are an essential part of ourselves, which shall make UFS a safe space for students to learn and associate with one another.

## Reference list

- Bryman, A. 2012. *Social Research Methods*. 4th Ed. Oxford University Press Inc.:New York.
- Connell, R. 2017. 'Southern Theory and World Universities'. *Higher Education Research & Development*. 36(1): 4–15.
- Cupples, J. & Glynn, K. 2014. 'Indigenizing and decolonizing higher education on Nicaragua's Atlantic Coast. *Singapore Journal of Tropical Geography*. 35:56–71.
- Grosfoguel, R. 2007. 'The Epistemic Decolonial Turn.' *Cultural Studies*. 21(2): 211 – 223.
- Heleta, S. 2018. 'Decolonizing of higher education: Dismantling epistemic violence and Eurocentrism in South Africa.' *Transformation in Higher Education*. 1(1): 1–8.
- Jansen, J. 2017. *As By Fire*. Cape Town:Tafelberg.
- Maldonado-Torres, N. 2007. 'on The Coloniality Of Being'. *Cultural Studies*. 21(2–3):240–270..
- Mignolo, W. D. 2007. 'Delinking: The Rhetoric Of Modernity, The Logic Of Coloniality And The Grammar Of Decoloniality. *Cultural Studies* 21(2–3):449–514.
- University of the Free State. .2017. *Integrated Transformation Plan*. [Online] Available at: [https://www.ufs.ac.za/docs/default-source/all-documents/the-ufs-integrated-transformation-plan.pdf?sfvrsn=9752a521\\_0{2019-05-23}](https://www.ufs.ac.za/docs/default-source/all-documents/the-ufs-integrated-transformation-plan.pdf?sfvrsn=9752a521_0{2019-05-23}) (Accessed in 2022)
- Williams, A. C. 2018. 'Decolonizing knowledge: Reflections on Colonial Anthropology and a Humanities Seminar at the University of the Free State'. *Strategic Review for Southern Africa*. 40(1):82–103



# Tebello Mkwanazi



ECONOMIC AND  
MANAGEMENT SCIENCES  
UFS

**Tebello Clement Mkwanazi**, born in the rural village of Qwaqwa, Free State, is a fourth and final year student at the University of the Free State, Qwaqwa campus. He is currently in the Economic and Management Science faculty, studying towards his Bachelor's Degree in Public Administration (B.Admin) and majoring in industrial psychology.

Through his passion for art, he has embraced a fanatical interest in music and so far released about thirty songs, most of which can be found on digital platforms such as; Audio Mack, Apple Music, Spotify, etc. Furthermore,

his hobbies include reading novels, watching documentaries, and writing essays. Ranking in the top four in the decoloniality essay project has motivated him to work even harder and enhance his writing skills to be number one next time.

Like any other person who has personal values, Tebello values creativity as it frees the mind in a way that enables a person to absorb knowledge more easily and to solve problems more openly and with innovation. He also values education, believing it is the key to success.

## Strategies In Which Marginalised Indigenous Languages Can Be Used In Teaching And Learning At The University Of The Free State (UFS)

South Africa is one the most culturally diverse countries in Africa, hence the title "*Rainbow Nation*". For this reason, different languages emerge from time to time within the country. Some of these unfamiliar languages become dominant and start to overshadow or marginalise the indigenous languages for many reasons. So, to prevent the *linguicide* (language killing) of the indigenous people and promote decolonisation in our educational system, the need to recognise and develop policies that cater for the marginalised indigenous languages in higher education is essential. Decolonisation, a process by which colonies achieve independence from their colonisers (Watts, 2009), is needed in the institutions of higher learning, and effective strategies in which marginalised indigenous languages can be used in teaching and learning at the University of the Free State need to be implemented to address this issue.

The teaching and learning of indigenous languages are significant, especially to the indigenous and native people who value their heritage or ancestral heritage. For the indigenous people, not only do languages help people identify their origin, they also carry their ancestral ethical values, and the indigenous knowledge which connects them with their land is imperative for their survival and the future aspirations of their youth (Degawan, 2019). The idea of teaching and learning indigenous languages helps with the preservation and knowledge of the indigenous people, which can be carried forward and utilised in educational and political systems for future generations. However, indigenous languages are slowly disappearing and will probably go extinct in a few decades unless interventions to preserve them are implemented quickly. Their disappearance is due to many contributing factors, such as; the death of native speakers, radical changes in their way of life, state policies which fail to recognise their value, and oppression of the indigenous people because of minority and former colonialist practices (Haboud, 2009).

To address the issue of marginalised indigenous languages and their use at the tertiary level in institutions of higher education and training, particularly the University of the Free State (UFS), is the most important aspect. The UFS is a multicultural institution in South Africa. Having its three campuses spread across the Free State province in which the dominant language is South Sotho, followed by Afrikaans, Tswana, and English, implies that the mode of communication and feedback has to cater for everyone. In this instance, only English is widely used on all of its campuses for teaching and learning, and this causes other indigenous languages to be neglected or marginalised. As a dominant language of the province, Sesotho is not commonly used in UFS, especially by other tribes in the institution.



Instead, other provincial languages, such as Zulu and Xhosa, are preferred. So, to promote decolonisation and oppose the marginalisation of indigenous languages in the University of the Free State, strategies to address this issue could be implemented in the following ways.

Firstly, the university should develop a system or policy allowing the content to be taught to students in the language they understand or prefer, such as their home language. Mother-tongue-based education fosters inclusion and equity. Although this system would cost a lot of money in research and implementation, it would also bear long-term benefits. A mother-tongue-based education would provide an easy transition from basic to tertiary education and help students excel in their studies while de-marginalising minority sections of the population and accommodating migrants. Secondly, introducing a trilingual system will be very helpful in de-marginalising the indigenous languages. Because of constant migration, displacement of people and a variety of languages worldwide, the need to introduce third languages (for example, Spanish, French, and Igbo) at the University of the Free State is required. Through this system, the institution will enhance home and second languages, which are national languages, and teach a third (foreign) language that will equip students with skills to compete and thrive in international business and politics. Finally, the system would minimise language barriers and open doors to international opportunities, knowledge and information-sharing (Wolff, 2019).

In addition, the university should introduce modules in its curriculum which focus on or teach marginalised indigenous languages. Teaching indigenous languages as modules enriches the spirit because it promotes diversity and respect between cultures and represents our foremothers' and forefathers' legacy. Furthermore, it is the students' right to learn their indigenous languages, and the institution could revitalise the cultural identity of the indigenous youth (Conde, 2019). Lastly, for the University of the Free State to revitalise and preserve the marginalised indigenous languages, it could hire and train proficient speakers of the native languages and professional translators so they could teach them to both students and lecturers within the institution. According to Ball (2019:14), creating proficient adult speakers who can serve as teachers and use language functionally in social life can help sustain the vitality of the marginalised indigenous languages. This revitalisation would surely sustain the indigenous languages until they become a norm and are taught in the institution for future generations.

In conclusion, it is important for institutions of higher learning, particularly the University of the Free State, to promote decolonisation in their educational system through the recognition and development of policies that accommodate marginalised indigenous languages. The significance of preserving, teaching, and learning marginalised indigenous languages will have long-term benefits for future generations that want to know their origin and heritage. Mother-tongue-based education systems, trilingual systems, and revitalisation strategies promote inclusivity and equality while de-marginalising indigenous languages and minority populations and embracing cultural diversity amongst groups. The recognition and development of policies that would cater for every individual of the institution are needed, as this helps with the preservation and sustainability of the indigenous languages and other reasons mentioned above.

## Reference list

Bella, J. & McIvor, O. 2019. Language in Education Policies and Indigenous Language Revitalization Efforts in Canada: Considerations for Non-Dominant Language Education in the Global South. *FIRE: Forum for International Research in Education* 5(3): 12–28.

Conde, K. 2019. *Towards the Teaching of the Indigenous Languages in Schools*. Bolivia: UNICEF. [Online] Available at: <https://www.voicesofyouth.org/blog/towards-teaching-indigenous-languages-schools>. (Accessed: 10 September 2022).

Degawan, M. 2009. *Indigenous Languages: Knowledge and Hope*. UNESCO. [Online] Available at: (<https://en.unesco.org/courier/2019-1/indigenous-languages-knowledge-and-hope>) (Accessed: 07 September 2022).

Haboud, M. 2009. *An Epidemic is Threatening Indigenous Languages*. Pontifical Catholic University of Ecuador: UNESCO. [Online] Available at: <https://en.unesco.org/courier/numero-especial-octubre-2009/epidemic-threatening-indigenous-language> (Accessed: 07 September 2022).

Watts, M. 2009. *ScienceDirect. International Encyclopedia of Human Geography*. California: RELX. [Online] Available at: <https://www.sciencedirect.com/topics/earth-and-planetary-sciences/decolonization> (Accessed: 07 September 2022).

Wolff, H. 2019. *Five Ways Indigenous Languages Can Be Championed For Learners: The Conversation*. [Online] Available at: <https://theconversation.com/five-ways-indigenous-languages-can-be-championed-for-learners-114651> (Accessed: 08 September 2022).

# Tokollo Kgaditsi



EDUCATION  
UFS

I am **Tokollo Clifford Kgaditsi** from Ga-Masemola, Mashwanyaneng village in Limpopo. I am a postgraduate student at the University of the Free State in the Faculty of Education. I am currently enrolled for Honour's Degree in Curriculum Studies, majoring in science and technology.

I describe myself as a risk-taker and self-motivated individual for success. I am inspired by my achievements and the greatness of making a difference in people's lives

so they can reach their full potential. As an educator, I use the opportunity to inspire and make a positive change for my learners. My goal for furthering my studies is influenced by the uncertainties that exist in our curriculum, and it is my vision that in the near future, I can be a qualified stakeholder who can be involved in decision-making regarding addressing the gaps that exist in the curriculum.

## Decolonisation of Indigenous languages in the University of Free State curriculum

Mother-tongue languages form an important part of a child's culture; excluding children's indigenous language in teaching and learning influences their performance in the classroom (Ford, 2018). Policies in the Apartheid era prioritised using English and Afrikaans for teaching and learning in the curricula. The needs of African speakers were ignored as educational policies aligned with the interests of English and Afrikaans speakers. Higher education institutions must promptly begin initiatives toward an inclusive education system that does not undermine indigenous languages. Therefore, there is a need to revise the curricula and involve indigenous academic practitioners to develop educational systems that embrace indigenous languages and a strategic plan of language inclusivity based on cultural dominance. In this essay, I will specifically discuss various ways to include marginalised indigenous languages at the University of the Free State so that marginalised indigenous languages form part of teaching and learning in the institution.

The University of the Free State (UFS) must revise the curricula by including indigenous languages in teaching and learning to empower African existence. The current UFS language policy declares English and Afrikaans as their official languages and promotes the scientific use of Sesotho (Olivier & Lotriet, 2007). In reality, the policy still reflects colonialism concerning the inclusivity of indigenous languages as applied in the curricula of UFS. According to de Oliveira Andreotti, Stein, Ahenakew, and Hunt (2015), colonialism is an imbalance of power. It must be understood in consideration of how we, as indigenous people, have lost the freedom to exist as indigenous peoples. Henceforth, it is through education that, as Africans, we can start to regain power and our African ways of life. The University of Free State offers mainly English and Afrikaans in general teaching and learning of all modules and offers Sesotho and IsiZulu only as exclusive language modules. This language inclusivity is not sufficient to promote the use of indigenous languages in the curricula. Therefore, the university curricula must be revised so that these indigenous languages are also used for teaching and learning in all academic disciplines available at the University of Free State.

The University should strive towards incorporating effective engagement among language practitioners, including students, to develop a curriculum that embraces each indigenous language. According to Bonilla-Silva & Forman (2000), students and faculty have equal opportunity to compete for positions within a university and to succeed (or fail) according to its

logic. With this in mind, the conversations about decolonisation in the post-racial period tend to be controversial. That is, whoever speaks about race is likely to be labelled a racist. However, the University must take an approach whereby various indigenous language experts engage in the process of developing translated programmes for learning and teaching indigenous languages in the institution. Although the process may not occur immediately, gradually implementing such a strategy will lead us towards decolonisation at the University of the Free State and higher education institutions.

Implementing the strategy of including indigenous languages in the curricula must be based on cultural dominance. The process should depend on the location and population of the institution to accommodate everyone reasonably. According to section 26 (2) of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, "everyone has the right to receive education in the official language or languages of their choice in public educational institutions where such education is reasonably practicable". For this reason, including indigenous languages in the university curricula should consider the strategy of cultural dominance. This means that every institution in South Africa must include several indigenous languages based on the majority language spoken within the institution for teaching and learning. For example, Zulu and Sotho make up the majority of the population on the University of Free State's Qwaqwa campus; hence, the programme should begin with these two indigenous languages.

According to the Language Policy of the University of the Free State (2003:3), the additional use of Sesotho in teaching situations where there is a need and it is reasonably practicable is encouraged. However, the policy still needs to be improved from where it currently stands. It is important to remember that the "separate development" policy resulted in the elevation of English and Afrikaans to the official languages of the Apartheid state and the marginalisation and under-development of African and other languages (Department of Education, 2002). That said, decolonisation does not imply a total erasure of the existing system. The reality is that there must be one language that unites all of us while we are taught and assessed in our indigenous languages. English is a universal language. Therefore, the University of the Free State should offer English as a conversational language. Hence, it will no longer be a barrier for the majority of students entering higher education who are not fully proficient in English or Afrikaans.

In conclusion, the inclusivity of indigenous languages in higher education can only be possible through unity among stakeholders in the academic fields. Strategies become effective when they are put into action rather than just being spoken or written about. Present policies in higher education institutions are evidence of the gap that exists concerning the inclusivity of indigenous languages. The process of including indigenous languages in the University curricula, specifically in the University of the Free State's Qwaqwa campus, needs such strategic planning, which involves revising the curricula practically and reasonably to ensure that the English and Afrikaans do not serve as a barrier to academic access and the success of African students.

## Reference list

- Bonilla-Silva, E. & Forman, T. A. 2000. 'I'm Not A Racist But...': Mapping White College Students' Racial Ideology In The USA.' *Discourse & Society*, 11(1): 50-85.
- Constitution of the Republic of South Africa 1996.
- Department of Education. 2002. Language policy for higher education. Pretoria: Government Printers. [Online] Available at: [https://www.gov.za/sites/default/files/gcis\\_document/201409/langpolicy0.pdf](https://www.gov.za/sites/default/files/gcis_document/201409/langpolicy0.pdf) (Accessed on:22 September 2022).
- De Oliveira Andreotti, V., Stein, S., Ahenakew, C. and Hunt, D. 2015. Mapping interpretations of decolonization in the context of higher education. *Decolonization: Indigeneity, education & society*. 4(1): 24 – 40
- Ford, P. 1986. *Outdoor Education: Definition and Philosophy*. Washington: ERIC Clearinghouse on Rural Education and Small Schools.
- Olivier, H. and Lotriet, A. 2007. 'the Implementation Of A Classroom Interpreting Service At The University Of The Free State—A Needs Assessment.' *Southern African linguistics and applied language studies*, 25(2):131 –139.
- University of the Free State. 2003. Language Policy of the University of the Free State. [Online] Available at: [https://www.ufs.ac.za/docs/default-source/all-documents/language---policy-335-eng.pdf?sfvrsn=d62ae421\\_0](https://www.ufs.ac.za/docs/default-source/all-documents/language---policy-335-eng.pdf?sfvrsn=d62ae421_0) (Accessed:24 September 2022).



# University of the Free State Qwaqwa Campus

