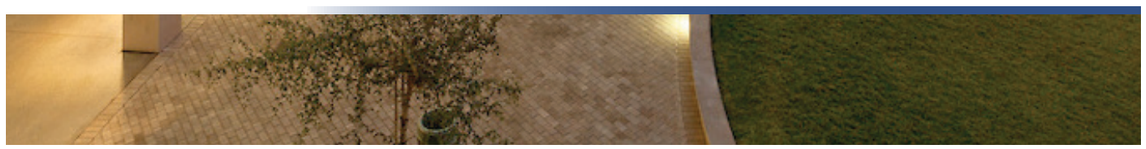
LANGUAGE POLICY SURVEY 2014

UNIVERSITY OF THE
WITWATERSRAND,
JOHANNESBURG

> *If you talk to a man in a language he understands, that goes to his head. If you talk to him in his language, that goes to his heart.*
>
> Nelson Mandela

> *The dogmas of the quiet past are inadequate to the stormy present, the present occasion is piled high with difficulty, and people must rise to the occasion, as our case is new, so we must think anew and act anew.*
>
> Abraham Lincoln



Report on the perceptions of expectations of the Wits community on the Wits Language Policy

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> *When I visited New Zealand I was impressed by the respect and love people there have for the Maori language. I would want the same thing for our indigenous languages. I am keen to learn, just so very busy with research, teaching and admin and my own family responsibilities. There are not enough hours in the day.*
>
> (One of the respondents)

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Executive Summary

In 2013, the Strategic Planning Division conducted an institutional language policy survey to establish which indigenous African languages are preferred for use by the University community and how these languages should be developed. The total number of participants in the survey was 7 491.

Sample Table	Headcount	Respondents	Response Rate
Total undergraduate enrolments	21 883	5 411	24.73%
Total postgraduate enrolments	9 814	1 014	10.33%
>50% fte academic staff	1 464	438	29.92%
Full-time administrative staff	2 242	394	17.57%
Outsourced services workers[1]	1 015	234	23.05%
Grand Total	**36 418**	**7 491**	**20.57%**

Table 1: Target Population and Sample

The survey targeted all Wits undergraduate and postgraduate students, academic staff, professional and support-services staff, and employees in outsourced services. Table 1 provides a breakdown of the relevant figures. Of a target population of 21 883 undergraduate students, 5 411 participated in the study, constituting 24.73% of the target population; of 9 814 postgraduate students, 1 014 participated (10.33%); of 1 464 academics (>50%fte), 438 participated (29.92%); of 2 242 full-time administrative staff, 394 participated (17.57%); and of 1 015 employees in outsourced services, 234 (23.05%) participated in the study. The average participation rate was 20.57%, representing 7 491 respondents from the 36 418 target population. With this high response rate, the findings of this study can be generalised across the entire University community.

The study made the following findings:

- The University needs to keep English as its main medium of communication. This view was supported by 80% of staff; 95% of students, and 31.25% of workers in outsourced services.
- The view that Sesotho should be replaced by another language was confirmed by the choice of isiZulu as the preferred language to be used officially with English and developed for wider use in the University. This was the case in all clusters of respondents (40.40% of staff; 58.64% of students and 37.95% of employees in outsourced services).
- Sesotho achieved second place as the preference of staff at 26.20%; third place among students at 8.73%; and third place among employees in outsourced services at 12.82%.

Views of Wits Staff

- Sesotho as a preferred language to be used parallel to English, as espoused in the current language policy, should be dropped. This view was supported by 64% of Wits staff.
- The University should support the development of English proficiency among all academics and make English proficiency a requirement for employment confirmation of academic staff. This view was supported by 90.35% of Wits staff.
- The University should support the development of English proficiency among all staff in support services and make English proficiency a requirement for employment confirmation of support staff. This view was supported by 84.62% of Wits staff.

[1] *Employees of outsourced services included all security officers, those employed by Wits and those employed by external service providers.*

- The majority of staff (58.88%) recommended that the chosen African language (isiZulu) be used on equal basis with English, while 35.88% disagreed with this view. This result among students was the reverse of this: 37.89% of students supported the equal-basis use of English and isiZulu, while 60.64% disagreed with this view.

- Wits staff also felt that a foreign language should be introduced as medium of communication, and a widely preferred language was French (36.14%).

- The study also shows that almost all Wits staff participants – 92.37% – felt that there was a need for the University to provide systematic development, through official courses, for all administrative and support staff to acquire the English competence needed to perform their duties.

- The data also show that 89.39% of Wits staff respondents supported the view that staff that came from backgrounds where English was not the dominant language should be trained for English proficiency.

- Wits staff respondents felt that it was necessary for the University to offer courses in either isiZulu or Sesotho to academic and support staff of the University. This view was supported by 74.73% of the group.

- Most of the University staff community (91.30%) believe that Wits should require all students to achieve full competence in written and spoken English by the end of their first degree.

- The majority of Wits staff participants (89.63%) also indicated that it was important for the University to require foreign students who could not demonstrate full competence in English to complete non-credit-bearing courses in English as a foreign language – courses that would help them become fluent in English at a level appropriate to their level of study.

- More than a third of Wits staff participants (38.86%) felt that in marketing, communication and branding in the South African context, the University should use only English. However, this view was opposed by 18% of this group who felt that the University should use English plus one other South African official language, chosen by the University.

- There is a widely shared view among participants (67.58%) that the University should start exploring the use of subtitles in the preferred alternative language on all audio-visual materials produced by the University for purposes of teaching and learning, research and general administration.

- The majority of participants (87.49%) in this study shared the view that the University should stick to English only in the design of public signage on all Wits campuses.

- Almost half the Wits staff participants (47.44%) felt that Wits should use only one language as its designated official language.

- Of the 58.88% of respondents who were of the view that a preferred indigenous African language should be used on an equal basis with English, 48.25% felt that isiZulu should be developed for scientific and business use in the University.

- The data show that 32% of respondents were of the view that an indigenous African language should be used in curriculum design, but a majority (63.53%) disagreed.

- A majority of respondents (59.24%) also disagreed with the view that an African language should be used for designing learning materials used by our students.

- A relatively high number of respondents (53.64%) agreed that a preferred African language should be used by students to ask and answer questions in teaching and learning arrangements, as long as the instructor is equally proficient in the language.

- A large percentage (62.567%) agreed that an African language should be used to explain and help students understand concepts in class.

- While a significant 30.87% agreed that the chosen African language could be used to write research reports, a large number (64.48%) disagreed with that view.

- Two-thirds (66.27%) of staff respondents disagreed with the statement that an African language chosen for official use should be used for business communication purposes. Only 29% supported the idea.

- Just over half (50.66%) the staff respondents agreed that an African language should be used for signage on all University campuses; 45.17% disagreed with this view.

- Most of this group (60.79%) disagreed with the view that an African language should be used in all technology-based interactions at Wits. Only 34.21% supported this idea.

- A bare majority of respondents (51.37%) felt that it was not necessary to make proficiency in one African language a requirement for the confirmation of academic staff members as permanent employees of the University.

- A similar majority (51.13%) felt that it was not necessary to consider proficiency in one African language when hiring or promoting staff in support and professional services.

- The data show 38.97% of these respondents as sharing the view that the introduction of an African language would have a positive impact on the University's strategic positioning; 34.92% were of the opinion that the impact would be neutral or negative; 20.98% had no opinion on the matter; and 5.13% did not respond to the question.

- More respondents agreed, than disagreed, with the proposition that the introduction of an African language would have a positive impact in developing world-class administrative support systems and processes in the University – 43.86%, compared to 31.11%; 20.02% had no opinion on the matter.

- On whether such a policy would have a positive impact on the University's ability to attract talented students, 46.84% of Wits staff respondents felt it would, while 27.53% felt it would not, and 20.74% had no opinion on the matter.

- In spite of the positive impact envisaged by many respondents on attracting talented students, a similar number (44.46%) were of the opinion that such a policy would have a negative impact on the University's ability to recruit international scholars.

Views of Wits Students

- The data show the majority of student participants (58.20%) as feeling that it was important for Wits to use at least one African language in teaching and learning, and in research. However, 40.72% of respondents did not share this view.

- When asked whether a preferred African language should be used on equal basis with English, the majority did not agree (60.64%).

- Opinion was evenly split among the students on whether it was necessary to develop a preferred African language for scientific and business use, with 49.03% indicating that it was, and 49.85% that it was not.

- Only 0.76% of the 6 425 students participating did not choose a preferred African language to be used together with English as an official means of teaching and learning, research and business communication at Wits. This suggests a high level of interest in the question, and the clear preference that emerged was isiZulu, with 58.64%.

- More than half the participants (55.56%) felt that it was important for students to be required to enrol in a communication course in a preferred African language; 43.01% felt that it would not be necessary.

- While it could be argued that there the difference in numbers between those who think that an African language should be used in designing the University curriculum and those who disagree with that

view is not large, it must be stated that the majority of participants (54.91%) disagreed. Only 42.31% of respondents felt that a chosen African language should be used in this context.

- The majority of students (51.83%) disagreed that the chosen African language should be used in designing learning materials; 45.95% agreed that it should.

- The majority of participants (61.66%) did not agree that a chosen African language should be used for formal assessment of students.

- A notable majority of 66.24% of student respondents supported the view that a chosen African language should be used for general communication, while 35.03% disagreed.

- Most respondents (59.78%) supported the view that a chosen African language should be used as an option when conducting research; 36.82% disagreed.

- Although the majority supported the use of an African language for research, the majority (54.65%) did not support the view that such a language should be used in writing research reports.

- Similarly, a majority of participants (54.29%) did not support the view that a chosen African language should be used in publishing scholarly work in Wits-based journals; 41.41% were in support of the idea.

- The data also show that 52.39% of respondents disagreed with using an African language for code-switching during research discussions. Support for this idea came from 43.25% of the sample. However, as with teaching and learning, the majority of respondents (55.31%) felt that it was important to recognise a chosen African language in general communication with researchers.

- A large proportion of respondents (63.41%) did not agree with the view that an African language should be used for business communication purposes. Only 33.30% felt that it should.

- Although in the minority, a significant number of student respondents (45.97%) felt that the University could use an African language in publishing all University policies. A bare majority (50.47%) felt that this was not necessary.

- A large number of participants (49.30%) disagreed with the view that an African language should be used for web-based official communication, but nearly as many, 46.68%, agreed with it.

- Another area that received large support for the use of an African language was in application and registration processes. The majority of participants (59.99%) felt that an African language should be used, and only 36.39% of respondents did not agree.

- The majority of participants (56.96%) did not support the view that an African language should be used for code-switching in business meetings, and 38.54% supported this view.

- The majority of participants (51.54%) did not support the view that an African language should be used in all technology-based interactions in the University, but 43.69% supported this view.

- The majority of students favoured the view that language courses and workshops should be designed for academic staff to acquire the required proficiency in the preferred African language (58.67%).

Views of Outsourced Services Staff

- The majority of outsourced-staff participants (54.70%) were not in support of English being the only medium of communication/instruction at Wits until such time as Sesotho was well developed. Only 38.46% supported the choice of English as the only language of communication. Furthermore, 48.29% supported the use of Sesotho as a language for development in scientific and business use; 44.02% did not support this proposal.

- There was strong support for the use of all 11 languages for communication and interaction on campus, at 86.32%. Most of these participants (80.34%) felt that all languages should be used to translate key documents such as contracts, rules, and application and registration forms. Only 12.39% of these participants did not think that this was necessary. A large majority of participants (84.62%) also felt that it was necessary to provide interpreting services in all official languages as a general University service. A similar number (83.76%) felt that the use of all 11 official languages should be included in all multicultural ceremonial gatherings and practices, such as graduations and inaugurations. Only 6.41% did not support this view.

- The data further show that 64.10% supported the view that the University must require English competence for staff within two years of their appointment, with which only 27.35% disagreed.

- There was also a widely shared view (58.55%) among participants in this category that the University should provide courses in Sesotho and isiZulu to all academic, administrative and support staff in the University. Participants felt that it was necessary to require staff who does not speak an African language to become communicatively competent in Sesotho or isiZulu – 66.24% supported this view, and only 26.07% did not.

- The view that the University should use all 11 official languages in marketing, communication and branding received support from 52.56% of this group, while 16.67% felt that English and another South African language should be used, and 14.10% felt that English should be used exclusively for these purposes.

- Using all 11 official languages in public signage was favoured by the largest group of this sample (45.73%) compared to other options.

- The data further show that 83.33% of participants were of the view that African languages should be used on equal basis with English, while 60.68% of respondents felt that if all else failed, the University should select one African language in addition to English to be developed as an academic and business language.

- Outsourced services employees feel that such a policy would have a positive impact on the recruitment of top academics and researchers to the University (59.40%); only 5.98% felt that it would have a negative impact.

- More than twice as many participants (38.46%) shared the view that such a policy would have a positive impact on the recruitment of international scholars to the University, as felt that it would have a negative impact (15.38%).

- The majority of participants (59.40%) felt that talented students would be attracted to the University, while only 4.27% felt that the policy would have a negative impact.

- The data further show that 64.10% felt that the policy would support the attainment of the University's objective to be in ranked among the Top 100 universities in the world, while 3.42% did not support this view.

Concluding Remarks

Taking into consideration the context and findings of this study, the University may consider:

- Conducting stakeholder consultation through focus groups to establish details and more meaningful ways to make the new language policy relevant and meaningful.
- Revising its existing language policy which identifies Sesotho as a preferred African language. The new language policy will have to make isiZulu a preferred African language of business, or opt for a combination of isiZulu and Sesotho while placing more emphasis on the development of isiZulu as the most preferred African language.
- Identifying various modalities through which the chosen African language can be phased into the mainstream communication fabric of the University and its core business.
- Identify means through which the development of a chosen language can be supported. This could include a combination of various funding sources, including government and donor funds.
- Investing resources to ensure that the chosen African language is well developed and institutionalised into the mainstream communication framework of the University.

Background

1.1 Introduction

Indigenous languages have not been well developed in South Africa and the historical inheritance of this country has promoted English and Afrikaans as mainstream languages for civil, business, research and educational engagement. This has led to the suppression, and stunted the development, of indigenous African languages. The current national South African language policy reflects legitimate political effort to undo the oppressive historical development of colonial languages, which granted these languages, particularly English, an elitist status and unfair advantage in educational, political, economic, social, technological, and religious platforms, while undermining the affirmation of indigenous languages. English, for instance, has played an important role in South Africa's transition from 'Dutchification (1652–1795) to Anglicization (1795–1948) to Afikanerization (1948–1994) to democratization (1994)' (Kamwangamalu, 2002: 1). There is a great need to shape the language policy in South African education by contextualising the relative freedom it promises and the role of languages in economic development. Language policy and practice continue to create a disempowering effect on African black communities in many universities and public institutions – an effect that often leads to new forms of social exclusion and denial of pedagogical access. This study is both a reflective analysis and a critical commentary on the language policy and practice at the University of the Witwatersrand, informed by practical realities, social aspirations, affirmation of African languages, and challenges facing the development of these languages. The study explores how the current Wits language policy has evolved over decades and in what areas it may need revisions. The study surveys the opinions of various Wits stakeholders, including students and staff, to establish which preferred indigenous African languages could be used as part of the mainstream University language policy.

1.2 History of English and Afrikaans Domination

Although South African indigenous citizens spoke various African languages, scholars often argue that from 1652 to 1806 the question of the official language of instruction was not an issue because the majority of the white population spoke Dutch (Reagan, 1988). African languages were never considered as part of mainstream communication languages in the conceptualisation of formal education policies. Native languages were not valued as usable media of communication. Even African communities had not by then realised the implications of the side-lining of their languages and culture in education. The positioning of English as a medium of instruction came into play in 1814 when the British settlers took charge of the Cape administration. In 1809, General Colin proposed that English teachers be imported to ensure that the next South African generation, both black and white, would be 'English' (Reagan, 1988). All black teachers who spoke English efficiently were offered huge salaries to promote the optimum use of English throughout

the country. This was a political strategy to Anglicise the Cape (and subsequently the entire South Africa) as a sound British base, a stance orchestrated by English authorities as a political campaign. In 1825 the implementation of policies that legitimised English as the South African first official language was effected. The Smuts Education Act of 1907 made the teaching of English obligatory, stipulating that every child had to learn English at school. Free English schools were established to promote English language and culture (Behr, 1988). Nobody dreamt of any African language ever becoming an official language in South Africa.

It is precisely this historical perspective that maps the political merits and socio-economic demerits of the current language policy in South Africa. English was clearly given an elitist and a prestigious status from the outset. It is blatantly true that English missionaries promoted English as a medium of instruction in schools, where African blacks who were competent in English were granted the status of 'Exempted Black Englishmen'. This title exonerated them from breaking racial segregation laws and allowed them to stay in 'white' towns, a phenomenon otherwise completely illegal in those days of oppression. It is unfortunate that such an otherwise controversial contextual promotion of English led to the social construction of English fluency as a symbol of close-to-whiteness, an emblem of the educated that socially positioned those with English fluency as far better than those with limited or no proficiency at all. English as an elitist language, in spite of the political correctness of the recent national language policy, continues to dominate mainstream platforms of human engagement in South Africa and the world. Analysis of institutional performance through ranking of world universities shows that global higher-education evaluation systems continue to give preference to English universities over universities of other linguistic heritage. However, there is a need to confront the status quo and start a process of developing African languages for business and scientific use, especially in South African universities.

The current language policy embedded in the South African Constitution (South African Government, 1996: 4) recognises 11 official languages in South Africa: Sepedi, Sesotho, Setswana, siSwati, Tshivenda, Xitsonga, Afrikaans, English, isiNdebele, isiXhosa and isiZulu. Apart from political liberation, this policy intends to promote, among other things:

- the creation of conditions for the development and for the promotion of the equal use of all official languages (multilingualism – scope undefined, infrastructure unprovided for)
- the prevention of the use of the language for the purposes of exploitation, domination or division
- the non-diminution of rights relating to language and the status of languages existing at the commencement of the Constitution
- secure means to provide, respectively, for the right to language choice in educational institutions
- protect the right to establish educational institutions based on common language, religion and culture

In 1997 the Higher Education Act made an effort to inform language policy in higher education. Two main documents – 'Language in education policy' (1997) and 'Language policy for higher education' (2002) – lay out a framework for the development of a relevant language policy. The Act recognises the need for educational institutions to come up with and publish their language policies. Given that, the University of the Witwatersrand seeks to come up with a language policy which will see the adoption of one indigenous African language to complement English as part of the languages of instruction and conducting University business. The continual dominance of English and Afrikaans as lingua-franca in government, academia, business and trade is clear. The University of the Witwatersrand recognises the diminished use and status of indigenous languages and therefore identifies with the goals of the Constitution and, indeed, with the need for a multilingual language policy, and seeks to contribute in that regard through developing and activating one of the official indigenous languages listed above. This research comes against the backdrop of the installation of isiZulu at the University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN) as 'an additional medium of instruction together with the resources (academic and social) that make the use of the language a real possibility for interaction by all constituencies in the University' (University of KwaZulu-Natal, 2006: 1).

1.3 Language Policies in Public Institutions

This section covers relevant literature that deals with and advocates the need to develop indigenous African languages for various reasons. It has been argued that efforts to enhance the status and use of indigenous languages have generally been unsuccessful (Bamgbose, 2011). This is despite the fact that Africa is a highly multilingual continent (for example, Nigeria has 400 languages, DRC 206, Ethiopia 92, Tanzania 113, Sudan 21) with sub-Saharan Africa being the world's leading and most densely multilingual section of the globe if populations were to be measured against languages. Bunya's (1999) case study on the indigenous African languages in Kenya helps to demonstrate some of the difficulties that the African languages have faced since colonisation. Bunya argues that there is need for African education systems to be liberated from 'the Euro centric colonial legacy [and make] the grounding of African education in African indigenous cultures ... primary vehicles for social transformation' (1999: 338). Bunya continues to make a compelling argument that since language is both a part of culture and medium of deliberation in any given context, it is therefore necessary to rethink the role and centrality of indigenous African languages in the education system. This rethinking will likely influence curriculum, access to education and pedagogy. There is also an intimate relationship among language, development and education. Spencer (1985) attests to this when he argues thus:

> No developed or affluent nations, though many of these have minority languages, utilise a language for education and other national purposes which is of external origin or at most few of its people (cited in Bunyi, 1999: 337)

The United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) has also suggested that "illiteracy has a close correlation with poverty" (cited in Bamgbose, 1991: 38). If Africa is to develop to levels that tally with its natural and human capital resources it needs to increase its literacy rates and this, by implication, means an increase in the usage of indigenous languages as media of instruction in academia and business. There is sufficient research suggesting that pedagogical access in school and universities is often enhanced in cases where mother-tongue or indigenous languages of the people are used as media of instruction and communication. Two issues were identified in the study of the use and spread of colonial languages such as English and Afrikaans in the South African context, and these are (1) the future of these colonial languages and (2) the future of indigenous languages with which the colonial languages interact (Kamwangamalu, 2003). On the latter interaction, scholars such as Skutnabb-Kangas (2000) have labelled English as a 'killer language, for contacts between English and indigenous languages tend to lead to the demise of the latter' (Kamwangamalu, 2003: 65). The movement of English to other areas has seen those who speak English as a foreign or second language gradually becoming the majority speakers of the language (*ibid.*). It can be argued that pre-occupation with language purity which often shapes teaching of African languages in South Africa has also contributed to the marginalisation of these languages. If the use and development of African

languages were to be flexible like English, these languages would significantly develop and gain popular use.

According to Rebecca Tuhus-Dubrow (2002), indigenous languages are an important asset in the preservation, diversity and richness of indigenous knowledge. English has been described as an imperialist tool whose spread 'has been engineered by powerful British and American interests even after the removal of direct imperial control through systematic and often semi-secret language planning policies' (Kamwangamalu, 2003: 67). Further, Kamwangamalu (2003) suggests that the use of English language in some African contexts does more harm than good as it stunts efforts to nurture and grow local indigenous languages and prevents the mass of the population from participating in important public affairs of the country. Kamwangamalu makes two crucial observations in relation to the above assertion. Firstly he argues that English has been accused of being a double-edged sword, as 'even though it provides access to education and job opportunities, it also acts as a barrier to such opportunities for those who do not speak it or whose English is poor' (2002: 3). Secondly, English, even though an important language in 'knowledge, science and technology... is increasingly being seen as the major threat to the maintenance of indigenous languages... [It] is a remnant of colonialism and a cause of cultural alienation and as a vehicle of values not always in harmony with local traditions and beliefs' (*ibid.*). Added to that, English language is a corrosive influence on individual self-esteem and collective cultural identity because it conveys an "Anglo-Saxon", "Western" or "Judeo-Christian" world view alien to the societies and cultures to which English is spreading (Kamwangamalu, 2003: 67). Hence UNESCO (1953: 11) has strongly argued that:

> It is axiomatic that the best medium for teaching a child is his mother tongue. Psychologically, it is the system of meaningful signs that in his mind works automatically for expression and understanding. Sociologically, it is a means of identification among members of the community to which he belongs. Educationally, he learns more quickly through it than through an unfamiliar linguistic medium (cited in Bunyi, 1999: 339).

The African Union (AU) has also given prominence to indigenous languages in its language plan of action for Africa, where it observes that the general public has a negative estimation of the value of local African languages. In a comparative research project on language policy, looking at European indigenous-language policies in such countries as Switzerland, Canada and India, and comparing them with African ones, the AU, according to Phillipson (1996), discovered that African leaders in most countries had not realised the importance of promoting indigenous languages. Bunyi argues that the pattern in most African countries is that of relentless legitimising and 'overvaluing western languages which translates into delegitimization and devaluation of indigenous African languages' (1999: 350). Ngugi wa Thiongo's experiences on the devaluation of African languages and overvaluation of the English language in colonial Kenya is instructive at this juncture:

> ... it was *the* language, and all the others had to bow before it in deference. Thus one of the most humiliating experiences was to be caught speaking Gikuyu in the vicinity of the school. The culprit was given corporal punishment – three to five strokes of the cane on bare buttocks – or was made to carry a metal plate around the neck with inscriptions such as *I AM STUPID* or *I AM A DONKEY*. Sometimes the culprits were fined money they could hardly afford. And how did the teachers catch the culprits? A button was initially given to one pupil who was supposed to hand it over to whoever was caught speaking his mother tongue. Whoever had the button at the end of the day would sing who had given it to him and the ensuing process would bring out all the culprits of the day. Thus children were turned into witch hunters and in the process were being taught the lucrative value of being a traitor to one's immediate community (1986: 11).

This system still obtains in some African primary schools. While the intention of teaching English is good since it is used for high school or university entrance, its privileging and suppression of indigenous languages is problematic, and is a psychological mental 'metal plate' that keeps hanging on most Africans' necks. It is the burden that young scholars carry from primary school to university that their languages are inferior, and therefore not worth a place in academy, that remains problematic. Since independence most African countries have come up with language policies that hitherto remain unimplemented due to lack of funding and political will. However Bamgbose (1991) has argued that the cost argument has not been proven and remains impossible to prove. Besides the cost argument, language policies in these African countries remain characterised by such problems as 'avoidance, vagueness, arbitrariness, fluctuation and declaration without implementation' (Bamgbose, 1991: 6, 111 cited in Phillipson, 1996: 162). Teachers should be empowered to realize their new roles in language learning, because of insufficient professional preparation and education, teaching and learning will be more meaningful (Rogus, 1993). Emphasis on language as means of both teaching and learning recognizes that learners' use of language for learning is strongly influenced by a teachers' language command that prescribes and describes their role as learners. People generally learn by using language. By verbalizing, explaining, questioning, discussing, debating, hypothesizing, learners construct knowledge and make it their own. (Court, 1993).

Some studies have attempted to propose ways of strengthening language policies in Africa (Djite, 1993; Bodomo, 1996; Breidlid, 2008). Webb (1999) notices that in the South African context there has been an increasing mismatch between the stated policies on language and what obtains on the ground. Webb states that '[w]hereas the country's institutional documents (the constitution and the national policies being developed) proclaim linguistic pluralism to be the national objective the country seems to be regressing to its pre-apartheid monolingual practice situation of "English only" '(1999: 351). If the country's legal documents were to be used, Barkhuizen suggests, 'in the educational context this means that all of South Africa's 11 official languages should be taught in schools as subjects and all should be used as languages of learning and teaching' (2002: 500). The slow progress towards the implementation of indigenous African languages in schools and universities may be attributed to the 'fervent reactions' from educationists, planners and politicians who have highlighted the impracticality of such a move (Barkhuizen, 2002). From these debates what is clear is the valorisation of English as a language of success, progress and sophistication. These debates, according to Barkhuizen (2002), exclude those people who go to school or work with a myriad languages and 'want to live in a culturally integrated, multilingual society as people with the power to make [their own] decisions' (2002: 500).

There have been some studies that demonstrate the usage of multilingualism at Wits especially. There have been some studies that demonstrate the usage of multilingualism at Wits especially. Pat Hill and Susan van Zyl's (2002) study of the engineering profession at Wits revealed that the workforce in the profession was multilingual. The research surveyed 58 engineering personnel and used focus group discussions, interviews, observation and questionnaires to gather data. As a background, the researchers realised that English is used more than any other language in the South African engineering field, with some South African companies having adopted an 'English only' policy. The researchers argue that:

> ... engineers are also practitioners whose profession especially in South Africa necessarily involves them in regular and important interactions with a multi-lingual, multicultural workforce. Here, black engineers surely have a decided advantage as many bring into the field fluency in several African languages, and familiarity with many cultures represented in the workforce (Hill and van Zyl, 2002: 24).

The authors continue that African languages, even though too numerous for ease of multilingual practice, were useful in worker interaction at the big engineering and mining firms.

> African languages are spoken by a large stratum of black workers including skilled and semi-skilled personnel, machine operators, clerks, handymen, and unskilled labourers or helpers, and are the primary language of an increasing number of better-educated personnel including engineers. African languages are used on posters in the mines observed and in the reception areas to help job seekers. In the diamond mines they are spoken in safety meetings where all workers are represented... (*ibid*: 30).

The researchers also found that indigenous African languages are used in code-switching with English. There is also a realisation that the use of African languages is effective in social relations and also making workers feel part of the company they work for. For instance, Hill and van Zyl conclude that:

> ... engineers who can communicate with workers in their own languages also receive better cooperation, even increased production and are able to understand possible discontent, alienation and other social issues which are useful to the management. Such cooperation is not possible in English, Afrikaans.... This multilingualism ensures that, as far as possible, communication breakdown is avoided and the job is done... (2002: 34).

The suggestion in the above research is that it is possible to use indigenous African languages at the workplace. Therefore it becomes important that indigenous African languages be used as media of instruction and conducting business at Wits University, as this will empower students and create durable links between the University and industries that absorb many of our students.

With this in mind, it is important to highlight South African research that looks specifically at the possibilities of incorporating indigenous languages into the University curricula. These issues will largely inform the trajectory of the Wits language policy. A study by Neethling suggests that the teaching of indigenous languages, especially isiXhosa, in the Universities of Cape Town (UCT), Western Cape (UWC) and Stellenbosch 'to perform higher functions such as serving as a medium of instructions… is possible' (2010: 71). This assessment is based on Neethling's observation that, for instance, UCT medical students cannot graduate unless they demonstrate abilities to examine and speak to patients in Xhosa, English or Afrikaans. Moreover, UKZN had implemented the use of isiZulu for Nursing and Psychology, while:

> ... the University of Venda is developing a BA in IKS [indigenous knowledge systems] as well as introducing other African languages including minority languages such as isiNdebele… The Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University now offers short courses in translation studies and has opened a Translation and Interpretation Office as part of the department of Applied Language Studies in the Faculty of Arts (*ibid*).

Moreover, UCT has in place a glossary project in the Economics department where Xhosa-speaking students are given an opportunity to discuss and develop new economic concepts in their own mother tongue, and this has facilitated a better understanding of these and other concepts (*ibid*.).

Most importantly, the three universities, according to Neethling, have already accommodated, or 'agreed to accommodate' in future, isiXhosa on the campus signage boards, and this has made isiXhosa-speaking students feel at home. This has not only created a 'homely' experience for the Xhosa students but also 'mindfulness and inclusivity' rather than 'identity vulnerability' (Kaschula, 2013: 5, 6). Drawing from lessons from Rhodes University's language policy, Kaschula

(2013) argues that even though the University has 'critically evaluate[d] its historical narrative and practices as far as language is concerned', there seems to be a disjuncture between the Language Policy of 2005 and what currently obtains on the ground. This flags the problems associated with most policies: they are available in the blueprint but never implemented. The above assessment and activities in other universities act as models that need to be followed and implemented in a better way, and Wits may learn from them.

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With this in mind, it is important to highlight some researches that have been done in South Africa specifically looking at the possibilities of incorporating indigenous languages in the university curricula. These will largely inform the trajectory of the Wits language policy. A study by Bertie Neethling suggests that the teaching of indigenous languages especially isiXhosa in the Universities of Cape Town, Western Cape and Stellenbosch "to perform higher functions such as serving as a medium of instructions... is possible" (2010: 71). This assessment is based on Neethling's observation that, for instance UCT medical students cannot graduate unless they demonstrate abilities to examine and speak to patients in Xhosa, English or Afrikaans. Moreover UKZN implemented the use of isiZulu for Nursing and Psychology while "the University of Venda is developing a BA in IKS as well as introducing other African languages including minority languages such as isiNdebele ...The Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University now offers short courses in translation studies and has opened Translation and Interpretation Office as part of the department of Applied Language Studies in the Faculty of Arts". Moreover, UCT has in place a glossary project in the Economics department where Xhosa-speaking students are given an opportunity to discuss and develop new economic concepts in their own mother tongue and this has facilitated a better understanding of these and other concepts (Neethling, 2010). Most importantly thee three universities, according to Neethling (2010) have (already or in future) "agreed to accommodate" isiXhosa on the campus signage boards and this has made isiXhosa speaking students feel at home. This has not only created a 'homely' experience for the Xhosa students but also "mindfulness and inclusivity" rather than "identity vulnerability" (Kaschula, 2013: 5, 6). Drawing from lessons from Rhodes University's language policy, Kaschula (2013) argues that even though the university has "critically evaluate[d] its historical narrative and practices as far as language is concerned" there seems to be a disjuncture between the Language Policy of 2005 and what currently obtains on the ground. This flags the problems associated with most policies: they are available in the blue print but never implemented. The above assessment and activities in other universities act as models that need to be followed and implemented in a better way and Wits may learn from these.

Research Methodology

2.1 *Significance and Objectives of the Project*

In 2003 the University of the Witwatersrand came up with a 'Wits Language Policy' which was never implemented. The policy notes that:

> Sesotho and isiZulu are the most widely understood African languages in the immediate environment of the University. Ideally the University should promote and support the development and use of both these languages. However, given the financial constraints, the University commits itself to the development of Sesotho in the belief that institutions like KwaZulu-Natal are more suited to development of isiZulu (Wits, 2003: 1).

The policy does not state whether the stakeholders were involved in the selection of the preferred languages. In addition, the reasons for the University's failure to implement this policy are not known or clear in the report. Be that as it may, there was a need, therefore, to undertake a study of this nature in which all stakeholders in the University would participate and help select a preferred language of instruction and conducting business from the nine indigenous African languages that are deemed official by the country's Constitution. Proficiency in these languages will help in effective communication among all the constituents at the University, and contribute towards nation-building and pride in indigenous languages.

This project is significant in that it attempts to rescue indigenous African languages from obscurity and irrelevance. In addition, the University is committed to making use of at least one indigenous African language for educational, research and business purposes. This commitment is not only an affirmation of African languages, but a means to improve the quality of communication in the University using languages preferred by the majority of stakeholders. A study by Barkhuizen (2002) revealed that in South Africa, indigenous languages are perceived to be of low value, hence they are under-studied. Again, Kamwangamalu (2002) suggests that because of English's social status as the leading global language, and its privileged place in South Africa, the language has a secure place in the country. It is the view of the researchers in this study that, premised on principles of academic excellence and the moral purpose of the University, the perception of indigenous languages as of lower value than English needs to be altered. This study asked crucial questions regarding how this change can be achieved through progressive practices in the University.

2.2 The Objectives of this Study

The study intended to:

- find out which indigenous language/s the University stakeholders (students, academics, non-academic staff and contract staff) would prefer as a lingua franca for University business, research and educational arrangements
- understand how to redress the language policy inequalities that currently exist in the University and encourage respect for, and development of, indigenous African languages
- establish considered views on means through which preferred languages could be developed and mainstreamed
- propose an implementation strategy which will guide how the preferred language/s can be placed at the centre of the academic and business enterprise of the University
- inform the work of the Language Policy Task Team by developing an awareness of the need for the University to play a leading role in honouring the constitutional imperatives for multilingualism

2.3 Research Design

The language policy survey attempted to give the whole community of the University an opportunity to participate in choosing an indigenous African language that will be used as a medium of both instruction and communication in the academic and business activities of the University. This was concomitant with Barkhuizen's findings on the perceptions of isiXhosa among learners that language planners need to engage students, who are usually the 'blind spot' in such projects – never researched or attended to when the decisions are taken. They must not be ignored because they are the ones who are ultimately affected by language policy decisions. This research followed Barkhuizen's suggestion:

> In order for students' perceptions to be taken into account, that is, before intervention can take place, we need to discover what they are. One way of getting their voices heard is for teachers and researchers to gather data and to report their findings in an accessible form to those who have the power to make final decisions about policy and its implementation (2002: 510).

From the foregoing it was concluded that the University needed all stakeholders to participate in the formulation of its language policy. Most importantly, the language policy has to overcome the weaknesses Bamgbose (1991) listed as typical of language policies in Africa. For a policy to be practical and implementable, Webb (1999) suggests that it must not have clauses that inhibit its implementation. Expanding on Bamgbose's list of weaknesses, Webb (1999) suggests the following:

- Avoidance in the policy is found in the number of escape clauses, such as reasonably practicable, reasonable alternatives, equity, and practicability.
- Vagueness is found in the fact that some of its basic elements (like multilingualism) can be interpreted in different ways. Equally there is no clarity on implementation procedures, in particular: who has to do what? Which body? When? How? A negative reading of the documents can easily lead one to deduce that the policy is a 'declaration without serious intent'. Lack of specificity leads to alibis for non-implementation.

2.4 Research Methodology

The survey targeted all Wits undergraduate and postgraduate students, academic staff, professional and support-services staff, and employees in outsourced services. Table 2 provides a breakdown of the target population (this table is also presented as Table 1 in the Executive Summary).

Sample Table	Headcount	Respondents	Response Rate
Total undergraduate enrolments	21 883	5 411	24.73%
Total postgraduate enrolments	9 814	1 014	10.33%
>50% fte academic staff	1 464	438	29.92%
Full-time administrative staff	2 242	394	17.57%
Outsourced services workers[2]	1 015	234	23.05%
Grand Total	**36 418**	**7 491**	**20.57%**

Table 2: Target population and Sample

Students and Wits staff members were invited to complete an online survey and were provided with a link to the website. Follow-up emails were sent to students and staff a week before the closing date to persuade them to participate. Incentives to encourage participation were made available. Respondents who were interested in winning the prizes on offer were requested to furnish their email addresses or cell phone numbers. The study targeted the entire population shown in Table 2 with the intention of gaining participation and responses from at least 20% of the target population. It was felt that the results could be fairly used across the University even if the response rate was less than 20%. This expected response rate was deliberately set above the 10% minimum required for qualitative surveys. According to Nulty (2008):

> Whether or not the response rate is adequate depends on the use that is being made of the data. If the data gathered… were to be used only to bring about improvements… and there is even one response that provides information which can be used in this way, the survey's purpose has, at least in part, been served and the response rate is technically irrelevant.

While it is conventionally understood that the reasonable response rate in social surveys is at least 10%, in this study, following the Nulty (2008) premise, a response rate above 8% could be deemed sufficient for drawing inferences to inform language policy decisions at Wits.

The study looked for responses to the following key research questions:

a) What is the preferred African language for inclusion in the official language policy at Wits?

b) How should such a language be used for educational, research and business purposes?

c) How should that language be developed for business and scientific use within the University?

[2] *Employees of outsourced services included all security officers, those employed by Wits and those employed by external service providers.*

Data collection and analysis procedures employed in this research served two purposes. Firstly, the research was exploratory, that is, the aim here was to gain insight into an area that was not previously researched. Secondly, the goal was to determine the dominant view in terms of the preferred language without doing an in-depth study on the complex issues that would require focus groups and lengthy interviews, for instance. Thus questions asked were largely of the 'what and how' kind rather than the 'why' kind. In order to carry out this research, a survey questionnaire was deemed the most appropriate instrument.

The survey questionnaire included questions in the following areas:

a) Demographic information
b) Expected language competencies
c) Preferred indigenous African language
d) Preferred indigenous foreign languages
e) Mechanisms through which the preferred languages should be developed

The questionnaire was translated into some 'major' South African indigenous languages used as means of communication predominantly by the outsourced workers. These languages were isiZulu, isiXhosa, Tshivenda, Sesotho, Sepedi, and Setswana. Employees of outsourced services were required to complete these surveys and drop them in a box administered by the Strategic Planning Division staff. The questionnaire for support staff, academic staff, management staff, and students was made available online in English.

2.5 *Analysis of Data*

After the data was collected through the questionnaire, statistical analysis was conducted to code and analyse data using the Excel statistical package for quantitative data and QDA Miner for open-ended questions. The qualitative responses were analysed separately using a thematic analysis approach, with the purpose of identifying key themes emerging from the narratives.

2.6 *Ethical Considerations*

An email-based electronic response is never truly anonymous, since researchers know the respondents' email addresses. According to Goree and Marszalek (1995), researchers are ethically required to guard the confidentiality of their respondents and to assure respondents that they will do so. In this case researchers used a centralised electronic platform which did not require any email identity for participants to respond. However, those participants who wished to participate in the iPad draw were invited to submit cellular phone numbers to be used in the draw to contact them in case they won. Submission of such information was entirely voluntary. There were no means of linking respondents to their responses through the cellular numbers provided. The study assured that high levels of confidentiality were maintained for all participants in the study.

Permission to conduct this survey was sought from the University of the Witwatersrand's Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC), and approval to conduct the study at Wits was sought from the Registrar's Office. Quality is linked to ethical research execution through ensuring adherence to the stipulated research approach and methodology as well as paying attention to the way in which tools are applied. Quality was further assured through the inclusion of experienced researchers and by soliciting feedback from various stakeholders before and after concluding the final report.

Views of Wits Staff [3]

3.1 *Profile of Participants*

The analysis of data reveals that of 839 participants, 52.21% were academic staff members, and 46.96% were staff members from support and professional services. It is quite clear that there was a relatively high participation of both academic staff and staff from support services in the study. Views presented are therefore fairly balanced given a minimal differential between these categories. Views expressed in this study can therefore be taken to represent the views of academics as well as those of University administrators and professionals. Figure 1 depicts this reality.

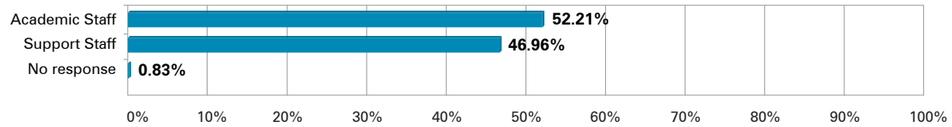

Figure 1: Staff Category

Responses from both these groups of staff were aggregated for gender representivity analysis. Figure 2 shows that the majority of staff participants in the study were female (58.28%), with male staff members constituting 40.17% of respondents.

The analysis of gender representivity does not represent a necessity to align the choice of language to the gender identities of participants, it merely contributes to reassuring the researchers that the sample population was fairly representative in all dimensions and categories of difference.

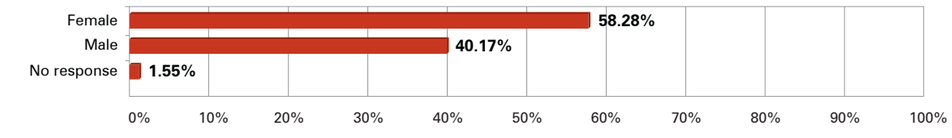

Figure 2: Gender

[3] *This includes both academic staff and support- and professional-services staff, as depicted in Tables 1 and 2 above.*

It would have been very difficult to do a proper analysis of which language is most preferred by staff members at Wits without linking this to race, given the historical complexities of South African society which were largely defined along racial lines. It is in our difficult historical past that the choice, support, development and use of language were directly linked to racial identities of South Africans. We can therefore not de-link the preferences made by the University in terms of which African language should be used without exploring an understanding of the identities of who makes those choices.

Figure 3 shows that the highest percentage of respondents (44.34%) was White, followed by African respondents (34.92%), Indians (11.08%), Coloureds (5.72%) and Chinese (0.72%). A case has to be made quite explicitly that in the current situation in South Africa the majority of White, Indian and Coloured citizens would rarely use African languages, but there are various situations informed by contextual factors and socialisation in which individuals of these races could communicate more easily in African languages. On the other hand, it is anecdotally assumed that African black people have been forced to speak English by the nature of the business and economic settings of the country, but the truth is, based on similar contextual and social settings that made other races unable to speak African languages, not all African black people have been able to communicate in English. The question of language choice is not entirely based on other races learning African languages, but is a two-way street supposed to create opportunities of open access to language learning for those who cannot speak English to learn the language, and for those who cannot speak African languages to learn one of these languages.

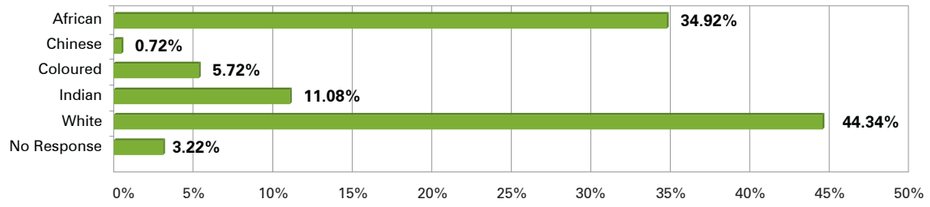

Figure 3: Race

Given the fact that the study was about establishing which African languages were preferred for use in the mainstream educational, research and business engagements in the University, it is encouraging to realise that most staff respondents in this study (82.96%) were South Africans. Figure 4 shows that only 15.49% of respondents were staff members of international origin. This implies that the majority of people who expressed opinions on a preferred language were predominantly those who understand the historical and political dynamics shaping language use in South Africa's civil society and economic sphere. However, the views of international staff were equally important to have, given the fact that recommendations on which language should be used would have direct impact on the ability of international staff at Wits to communicate and conduct research and educational activities.

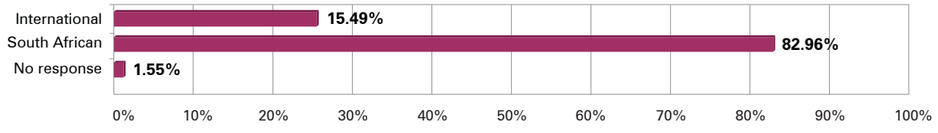

Figure 4: Nationality

It was very important to ascertain that such choices do not create communication barriers for international staff. In fact, an attempt has been made in this study to tease out the notion of language preference against the ideal identity of the University as a world-class intellectual powerhouse in Africa. Views on which other languages need be developed, besides English and preferred indigenous African languages, were also solicited in this study. This matter will be unpacked further later in the analysis.

Figure 5 shows that participation in this study was fairly spread across all age groups. It can be strongly argued that the language choices made in this study are not views particular to a specific age group. However, it should be noted that the majority of participants were between the ages of 31 and 40 (31.70%), followed by 41–50 (24.08%), followed by 51–60 (19.78%). The group 21–30 constituted 16.21%, and those staff members older than 61 constituted 12.87% of the total staff sample.

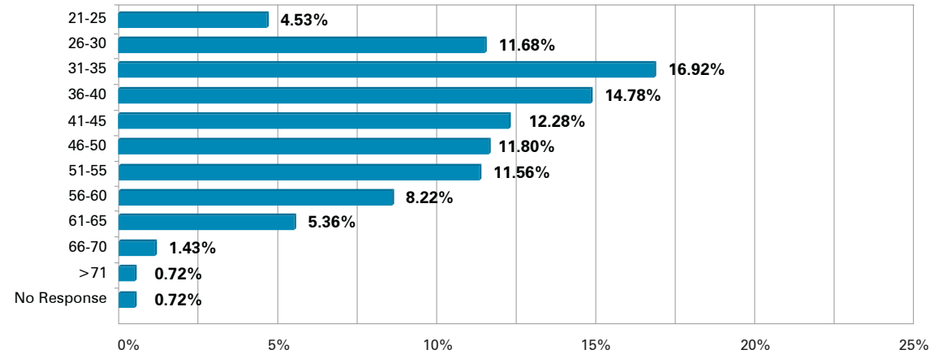

Figure 5: Age

Given that language is used for various different purposes in the University, including enterprise activities, teaching, learning and research, the study sought responses from staff members located in different parts of the University, representing different language-usage needs in the University business. Figure 6 shows that staff who participated in the survey came from different organisational arrangements within the University. These included central administration (14.66%), all faculties (72.22%), research institutes (2.50%), and Wits Group organisations (7.87%). A small group (2.74%) did not indicate their organisational affiliation. It is very clear that views expressed in this study are not limited to a particular organisational affiliation, but can be generalised from this widely representative group across different affiliations in the University.

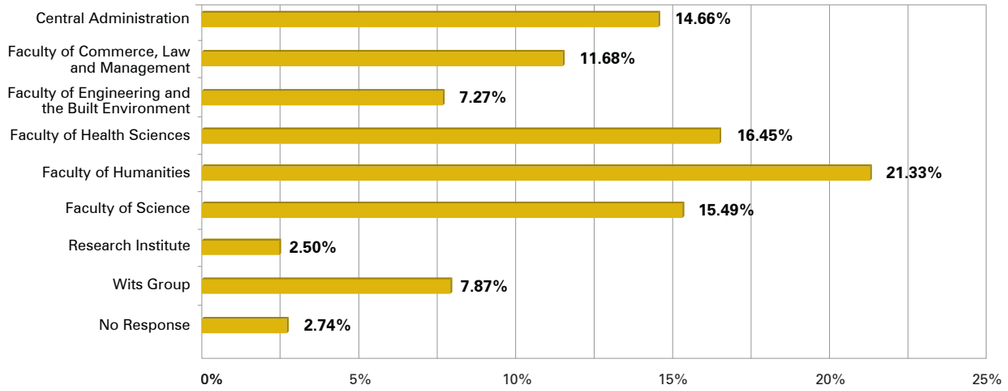

Figure 6: Faculty or Division of Affiliation

Figure 7 provides an analysis of employees' positions and job designations. There was a fair spread and reasonable representation of different categories of staff in the survey. Among participants the following job designations were represented: 4 executive VCO members (0.48%); 3 Faculty Deans (0.36%); 5 Faculty Registrars (0.60%); 12 Heads of Schools (1.43%); 20 heads of support-service units (2.38%); 31 tutors (3.69%); 31 faculty administrators (3.69%); 46 full professors (5.48%); 83 senior lecturers (9.89%); 85 associate professors (10.13%); 91 specialists in support-service units (10.85%); 127 lecturers (15.14%); and 187 administrators in support-service units (22.29%). In addition to these, one Faculty Assistant Dean participated and 22 (2.62%) did not declare their designations.

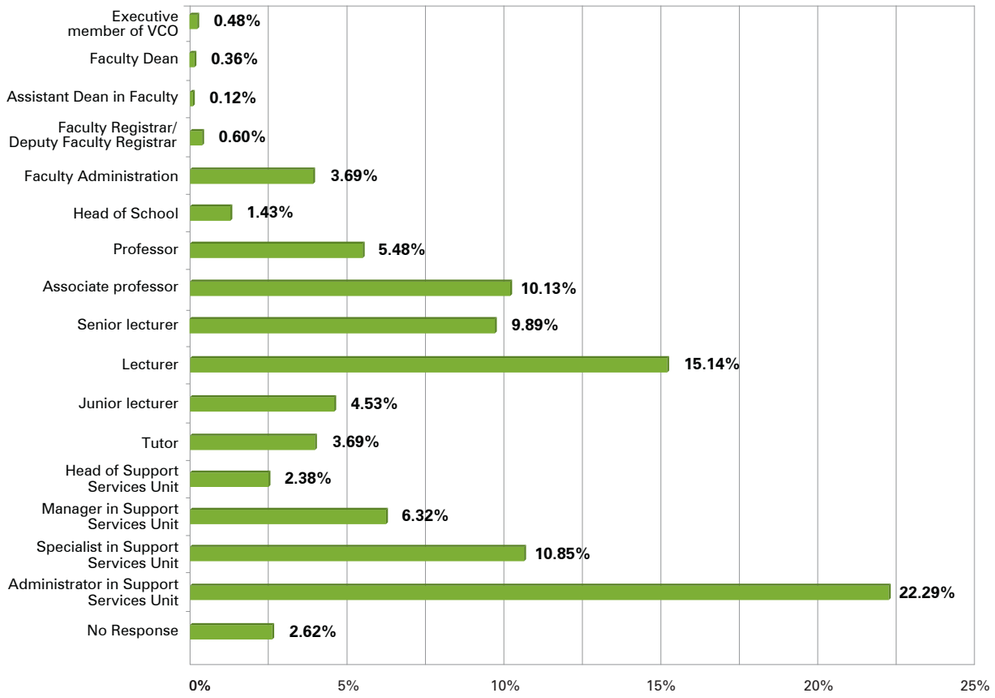

Figure 7: Designation

Although, as depicted in Figure 8, participants came from all campuses of the University of the Witwatersrand, the majority came from four campus locations. These are Braamfontein East Campus (52.92%); Braamfontein West Campus (17.52%); Parktown Education Campus (9.06%); and Parktown Health Sciences and Johannesburg Hospital (11.80%).

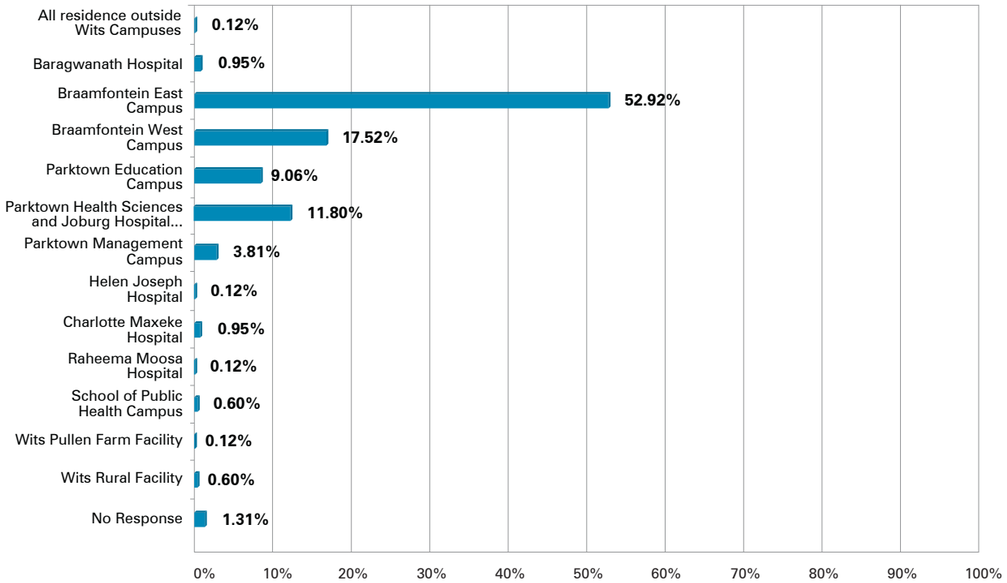

Figure 8: Campus of Affiliation

As part of establishing whether any of the respondents understood what the current language policy was all about, they were asked whether they were familiar with its contents. Figure 9 shows that only 35.16% (295) of the respondents indicated that they were familiar with the contents of the existing Wits language policy, and 63.77% (535) indicated that they were not.

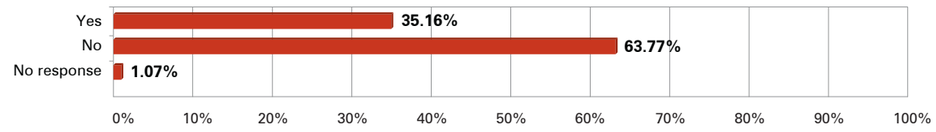

Figure 9: Familiarity with the Current Wits Language Policy

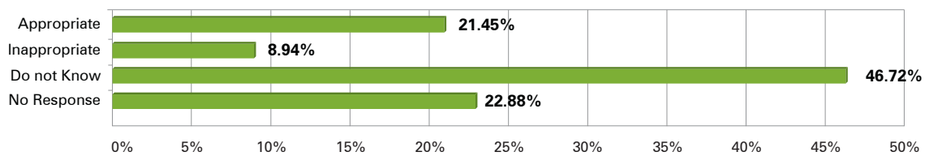

Figure 10: Appropriateness of the Current Wits Language Policy

To probe opinions on the appropriateness of the current language policy, the 63.77% of respondents who had indicated that they were not familiar with it were excluded from the results shown in Figure 10 above. This analysis was thus based on responses of only the 295 participants who were familiar with the policy. Of these, only 21.45% indicated that the current language policy was appropriate and 8.94% indicated that it was inappropriate. The majority either did not know (46.72%) or gave no response (22.88%).

However, given the fact that the questions represented in Figure 11 below were fairly straightforward and guiding in terms of the content of the existing language policy, the total number of responses (839) was considered for their analysis. There was a largely shared view among the majority of respondents (80.69%) that they supported the use of English as the only medium of instruction and communication at Wits until such time as it could be used together with Sesotho (which is the indigenous language specified in the existing policy). It was very clear in the way in which the question was posed that the use of Sesotho as an alternative to English could only happen when Sesotho had been developed sufficiently for purposes of University instruction. The huge majority support for this view indicates in the eyes of respondents, Sesotho cannot be used at this stage, or until such time as it is developed for the scientific and business needs of the University. However, 16.21% of the 839 respondents disagreed with this view. They appeared to share the view that Sesotho could be used together with English while it is being developed as a scientific language.

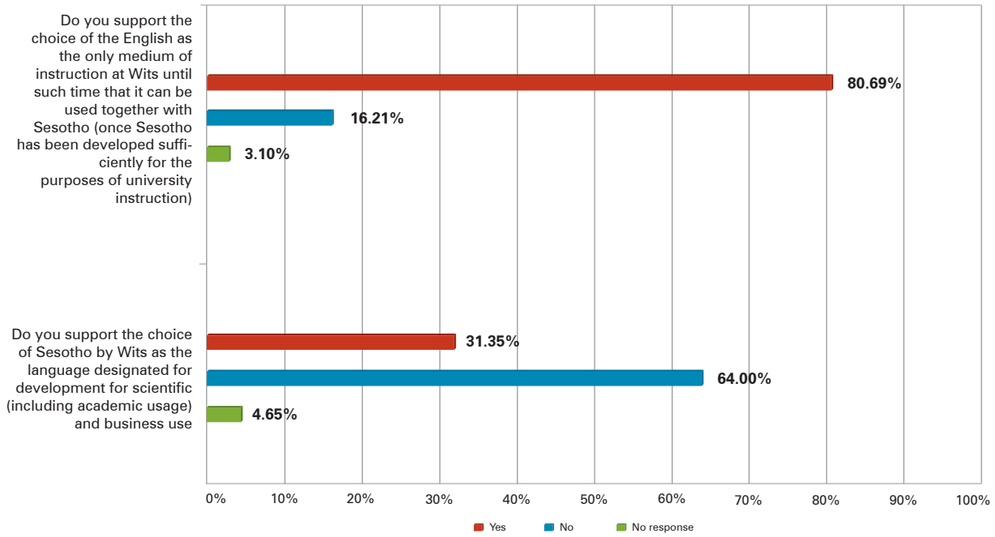

Figure 11: Choice of Languages in the Current Language Policy

Data in Figure 11 also suggests, however, that the majority of participants do not support the choice of Sesotho as the language that should be developed for scientific and business use. A notable 64% disagreed with the development of Sesotho for scientific and business use, with only 31.35% of respondents supporting this view. It became very clear at this early stage of the study that the participating University community was signalling wide acceptance of English as a language for both academic and business use, while questioning the choice of Sesotho as an alternative language choice – thus indicating that another language could be considered instead of Sesotho. This topic is analysed later on in this report, but it can be concluded at this stage that the current language policy, which supports the use of English and Sesotho, was not very popular among the University staff stakeholders.

Canvassing views on various issues to do with preferred languages provided data, analysed in Figure 12 below, that gives a snapshot understanding of the complexities surrounding the language policy at Wits. Evidence gleaned through the analysis of data suggests that a majority of participants in this study believe that Wits should not only embrace bilingualism in its language policy, but should create a language potpourri which allows the multilingual use of all South African official languages. The majority is a slim one, with 51.85% of respondents agreeing that Wits should create space for the use of all 11 official languages for interaction on campus. The 44.82% of respondents who did not agree with this view, however, could be basing their responses on a number of factors, including the complexities linked to the structural nature and differences between these languages; the unaffordability of such an ambitious policy; and the difficulty of drawing parameters on the extent to which each of these languages can be developed for multilingual use. However, it can be stated that to a certain extent Wits informally remains a multilingual, global institution which draws its participants from all the corners of the world, who, upon congregating on the University's premises, freely engage in a plethora of world languages.

The study also wanted to establish whether members of the Wits community supported the notion of translating key documents such as contracts, policies and rule books, and application and registration forms, into at least four dominant languages in the Gauteng province. There are a number of challenges relating to this notion. The first is that the official language policy of the province is modelled directly on the official language policy of the country, which constitutionally recognises 11 official languages. However, the census conducted in 2001, which informed the Gauteng Language Policy Framework of 2005, showed that there were four widely used home languages in the province: isiZulu (21.52%); Afrikaans (14.36%); Sesotho (13.12%) and English (12.51%). It is important to note that these languages did not automatically become the official languages of the province by virtue of being widely used, and thus acquire a superior status over other languages.

Secondly, it is structurally problematic for any University in this country to embrace the notion of provincial official languages, given that universities are not provincial entities but national institutions regulated by national policies and the national Higher Education Act, and governed through the national Ministry of Higher Education and Training. This implies that the positioning of a university in a province does not mean that it should respond to the narrower imperatives of provincial organisation. Universities therefore would need to attract students and staff from across all parts of the country, and, in the case of a university such as Wits, the world.

The data show that 59.83% of respondents supported the notion of translating key University documents into the four dominant languages (isiZulu, Sesotho, Afrikaans and English) in the province. Only 36.47% disagreed with this notion. Clearly, from this point of view, a particular form of multilingualism was supported by the majority of staff respondents in this study.

There was further support for the notion of creating a multilingual community at Wits by providing interpreting services where necessary in formal arrangements, such as disciplinary hearings, public talks, etc. The data show that 86.05% of respondents supported the view that the University should provide interpreting services where necessary in different languages, and at least in the four dominant languages in the Gauteng province.

Members of the Wits community in this study also believe that the University should support multilingualism by including multilingual and multicultural practices at various official and ceremonial gatherings, such as graduations and inaugurations: 64.96% of participants supported this view, and 31.23% did not.

A nuanced notion of multilingualism at Wits was embedded in the view that the majority of participants also felt that there was a need to offer an academic major in at least one foreign language for all those who studied at Wits. This further complicates the idea of institutionalising a language policy, taking it beyond the confines of the South Africa's constitutionally recognised languages, to embrace the notion of institutionalising the teaching and learning of at least one foreign language as part of the University language policy.

The data show 64.24% of staff participants as being in favour of including one major course in a foreign language as part of the official curriculum. Only 30.99% opposed the idea. It could be argued that those supporting this view had in mind a notion of a global University premised on principles of world-class status, attracting talented students and academics from various parts of the world – who could be using other strategic foreign languages such as French, Portuguese, and Mandarin. While this could be viewed as a progressive act of embracing globalisation, the University should be cautioned to ensure that in adopting this view of multilingualism it is not seen to be further purging African languages from the mainstream discourse. It would be ideal for the University first to put mechanisms in place to develop and institutionalise the use of at least one indigenous African language in addition to English, before including a foreign language as part of the broader language policy.

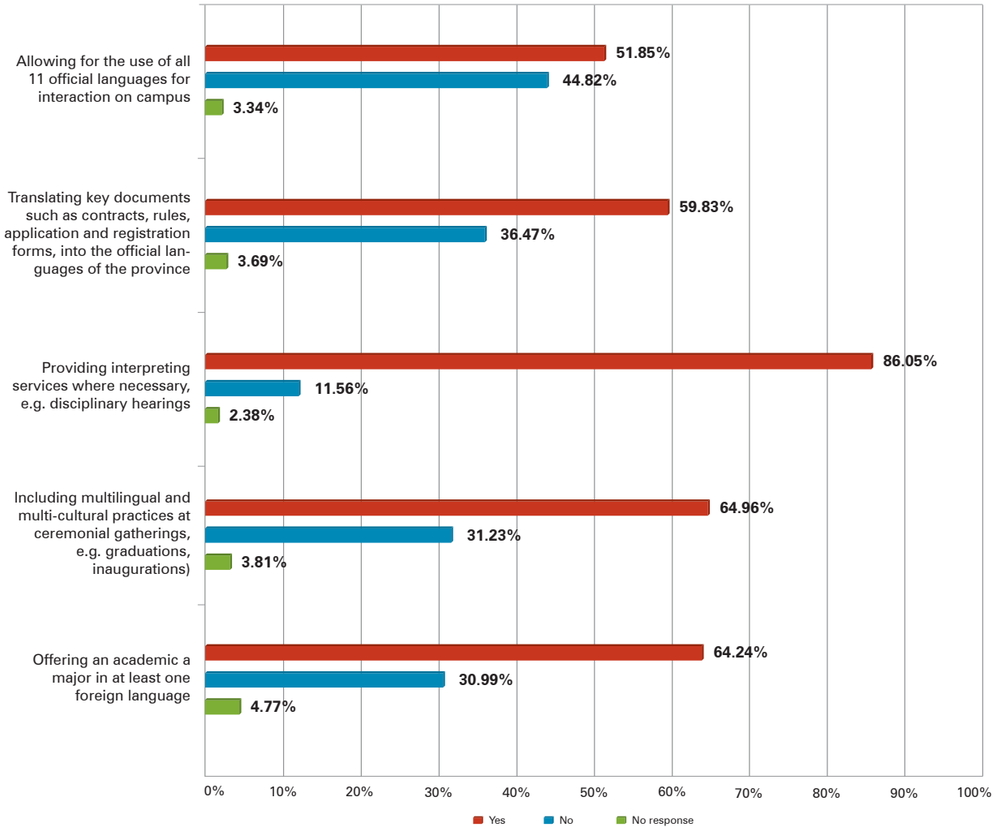

Figure 12: Support for Multilingualism at Wits

Accepting that the Wits community strongly supports multilingualism on campus, we move on to the section of the study that went further to unpack the understanding of multilingualism and the implications for University readiness to use it. Data

presented in Figure 13 show that the large majority of respondents (89.39%) felt that it should be a requirement for all academic staff to be fully competent in English at the end of their probation period, before being confirmed as permanent staff members. This implies that all those academics who come from backgrounds where English is not widely used as a medium of communication should be required by the University to improve their English language skills in order to became part of the permanent academic community at Wits. There are very strong implications for international staff members who come from backgrounds where English is not the dominant language. These implications equally apply to South African academics coming from social environments which did not encourage them to polish their English language skills.

The study also shows that the overwhelming majority of participants in the study felt that there was a need for the University to provide systematic development, through official courses, for all administrative and support staff to acquire the English competence needed to perform their duties: 92.37% of respondents supported this view. Only 4.65% of respondents did not support it. It became very clear that developing competence in English was regarded as an imperative by most participants in this study. It is well known that such competence cannot be acquired in a limited period of time. However, the study sought to establish reasonable timeframes within which it could be a required achievement. A large majority (83.43%) agreed that English competence should be required within two years of their appointment from all those who joined Wits. Only 11.92% of respondents did not support this view.

Similarly, there was decisive agreement in this group that it was an obligation of the University to provide courses in English as a foreign language to train all foreign staff coming from backgrounds where English was not part of the mainstream communication enterprise. Agreement on this issue came from 89.39% of respondents. Only 6.32% did not agree. Training of both academic and administrative staff in other languages was seen not only as an important gesture, and an obligation on the University.

The data also show that 74.73% of these respondents felt that the University had an obligation to offer courses in either isiZulu or Sesotho to academic and support staff of the University; only 21.45% disagreed.

We see, then, that data presented in Figure 13 largely suggests that the Wits community believes that it is extremely important for Wits staff to be competent in English to allow them to carry out their duties effectively. The majority of this group of participants sent a very clear signal through their responses that the Wits community was not willing to compromise the use of English – preferably good English – as means of communication in the University. However, when participants were asked whether those members of the University community who could not speak African languages should be required to acquire competence in one of the two dominant African languages in Gauteng (isiZulu and Sesotho), there was a relatively even split of opinion. The larger group (49.23%) supported this view, but almost as many did not (47.32%). It can therefore be argued at this point that there are at least two things that the University could consider doing: firstly, to provide systematic support for all members of the Wits community to acquire meaningful English competence, and secondly, to identify one African language, provide development opportunities, and require staff to develop competence in that language.

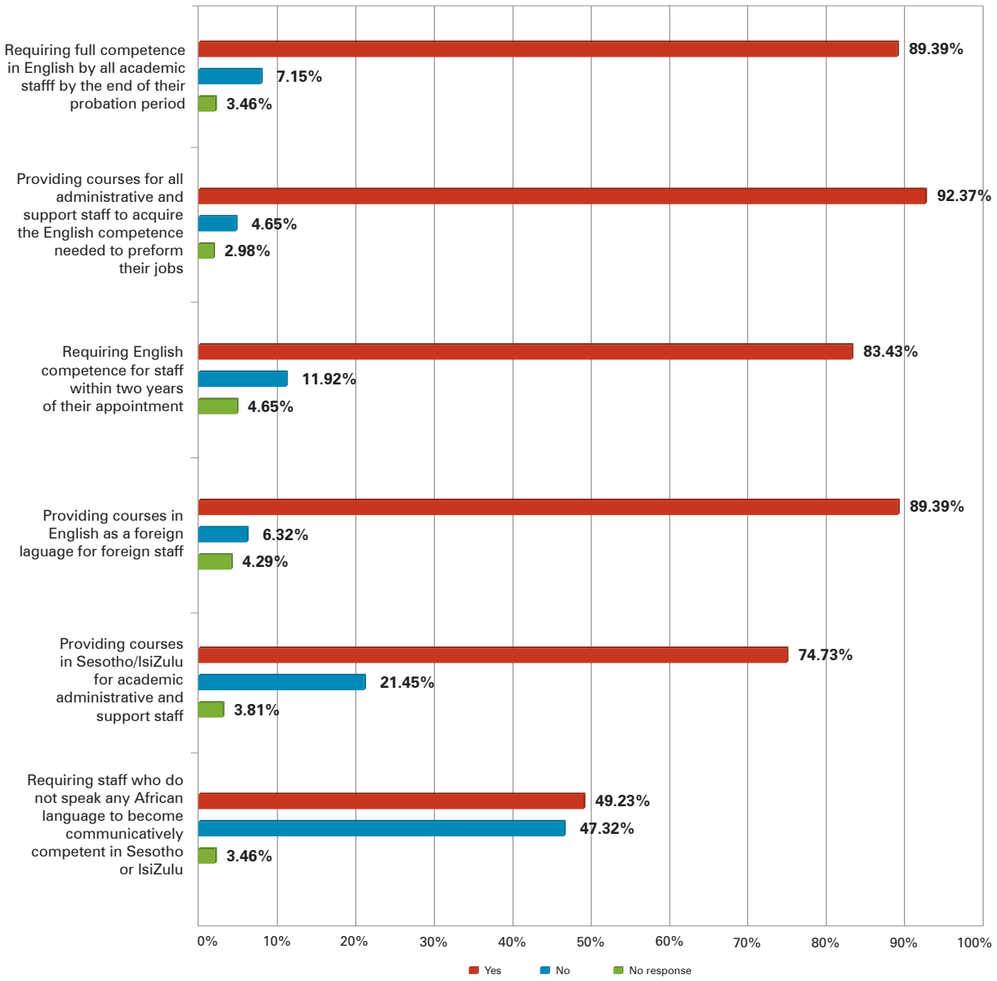

Figure 13: Development of Linguistic Abilities of Staff

Data presented in Figure 14 clearly indicates that a large majority of the University community (91.30%) believe that Wits should require all students to achieve full competence in written and spoken English by the end of their first degree. This view could have a wide range of implications; these could include providing official training through the formal curriculum, and requiring students to register for English communication courses as part of their official curriculum. This could also mean embedding the development of competence in English into other existing subjects in the formal curriculum, while using various activities to assess English language competence explicitly. Whatever choice the University makes in this regard, a formal way to demonstrate the assessment of full competence in English would have to be considered as a requirement before graduation. Members of the University community quite evidently believe that students should be provided with the necessary support to develop literacy and competence in English within their existing subjects, or by being allowed to take credit-bearing courses that would ensure their fluency in English. On this proposal, 92.37% were in favour, and only 3.58% disagreed.

There is a compelling case for the development of English proficiency among staff and students at Wits. English is one of the fittest communicative mediums for large variety of societal and inter-societal communication needs in South Africa and, increasingly, the global village (Dhamija, 1994). In South Africa and elsewhere in the world most research is published in English and the majority of higher-learning institutions distribute learning opportunities in English as a highly dominant medium in the globalised world economy. World-class business enterprises and global state engagements are largely conducted through the medium of English. This means that those with poor English command have limited or delayed access to knowledge and development opportunities. Without expecting staff and students to use 'English English', proficiency in mainstream South African English (Trudgill and Hannah, 1985) would widen access to information, knowledge and economic opportunities.

The majority of participants also indicated that it was important for the University to require foreign students who could not demonstrate full competence in English to complete non-credit-bearing courses in English as a foreign language – courses that would help them become fluent in English at a level appropriate to their level of study. Only 6.08% did not think this was important, while 89.63% did.

Far fewer participants (48.15%) felt that there was a need to require students who did not speak any African language to complete at least two credit-bearing modules in basic communication in isiZulu or Sesotho, while 47.56% of respondents felt there was no need for this. Although the difference between these percentages is small, it is important to state that more supported the view than opposed it. The data also show that the majority of participants (62.69%) felt that it was necessary to provide a major in isiZulu or Sesotho (whichever became officially preferred by the University) as part of the formal curriculum to help students develop language skills in areas where they did not have this.

While previous data suggested that the University community supported the notion of embracing foreign languages to enhance multilingualism at Wits, data presented in Figure 15 indicate that the majority of staff participants in the study (74.85%) did not think it was necessary for the University to start making formal efforts to communicate in foreign languages with international staff and students. At 25.15%, the minority that felt that this was important to do was not, however, particularly small. If the University were to listen to the minority view, it would need to identify a particular mainstream foreign language to adopt for such communication.

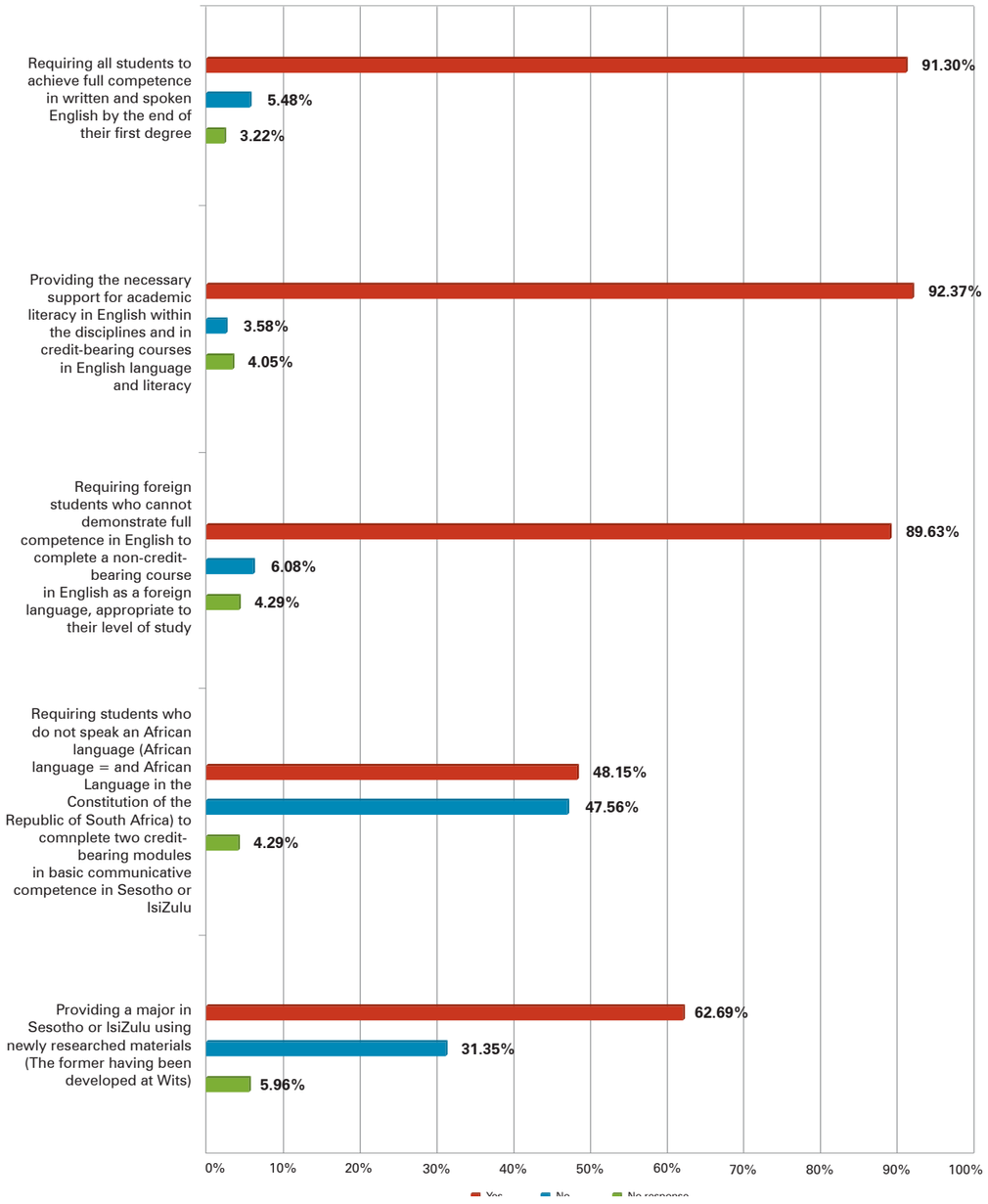

Figure 14: Use of Multilingualism among Students at Wits

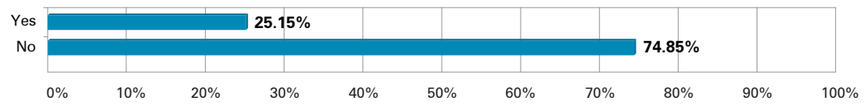

Figure 15: Communicating with Foreign Students and Staff

The study attempted to establish languages that would be preferred by the University community to be used as formal languages for communication with foreign students and staff in the University. French received the most support by a clear margin (36.14%). It was followed by English (15.09%), although English in the case of Wits is a non-negotiable requirement; Portuguese (10.53%); Chinese/ Mandarin (9.12%); Spanish (8.77%); German (6.70%) and Swahili (5.61%). It could be argued from this that there is a widely shared view among University staff – both academic and administrative – that French should be the preferred formal foreign language. However, as stated earlier, a more robust study would need to be conducted.

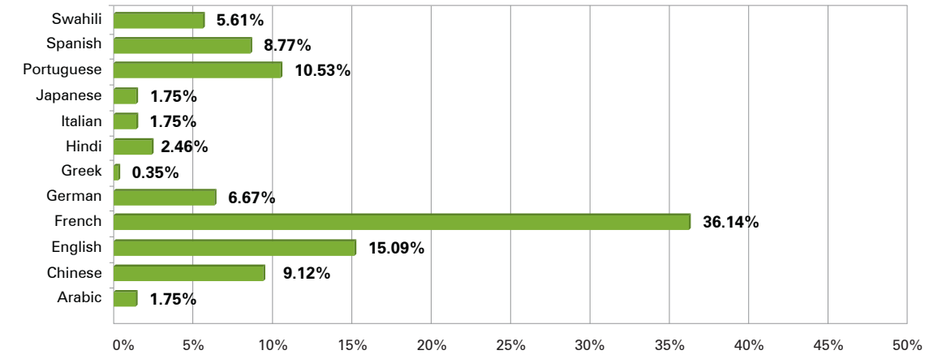

Figure 16: Communicating with Foreign Students and Staff

The study also tried to establish particular areas of University business where the use of either bilingualism or multilingualism could be institutionalised. Data presented in Figure 17 show that more than a third of respondents (38.86%) felt that in marketing, communication and branding in the South African context, the University should only use English. However, this view was opposed by 18% of respondents who felt that in a similar context Wits should use English plus one other South African official language chosen by the University. It is intriguing that 17.64% of respondents were of the view that the University should use all 11 official languages in marketing, communication and branding in South Africa. The data also show that 16.57% of respondents felt that the University should use English and two more official languages for these purposes.

The generally dominant views seem to be that the University should either use English only, or consider using English plus one other South African official language chosen by the University. However, if Wits were to be advised to go with a single view from the choices made by these research participants, it is quite clear that the majority feel that English should be the preferred language for marketing, communication and branding.

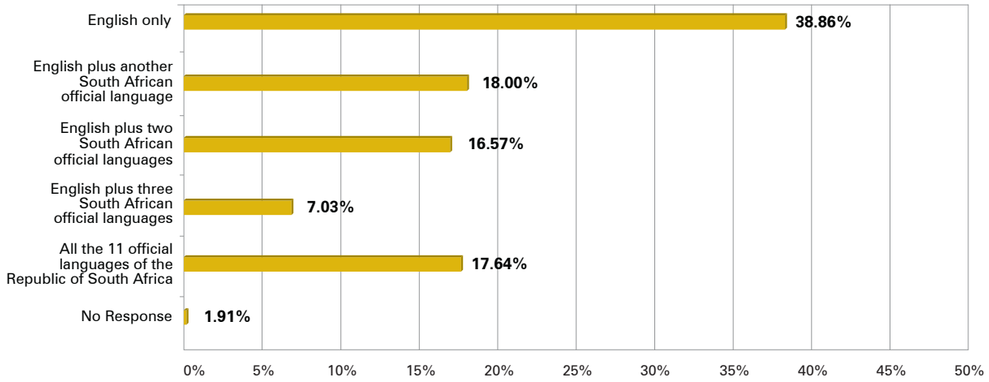

Figure 17: Marketing and Branding in South Africa

As Figure 18 illustrates, when it comes to the marketing, communication and branding of Wits internationally, the University community appears to support a differentiated approach to communication. The data show 51.85% of respondents as supporting the use of a foreign language that would be most appropriate to each market, while 46.01% supported the use of English only for marketing, communication and branding in international markets.

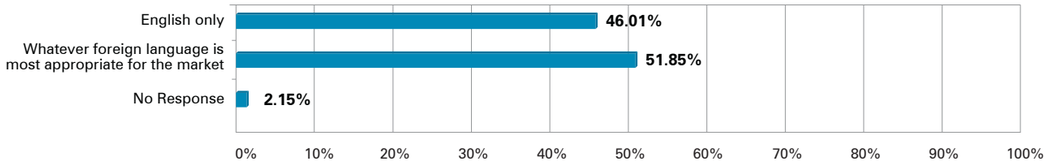

Figure 18: Marketing Communication and Branding Internationally

A large proportion of respondents in this study were supportive of the provision of sign-language interpretation at all public and ceremonial events. Only 27.14% of participants disagreed with this view. It is quite clear that the majority of stakeholders in the University support of the provision of sign language on such occasions.

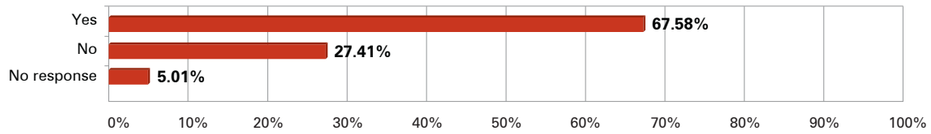

Figure 19: Sign Language in Public and Ceremonial Events

As shown below, there is a widely shared view among participants that the University should start exploring the use of subtitles in the preferred alternative language in all audio-visual materials produced by the University for teaching and learning, research and general administration. The same would apply to teaching and learning materials provided by the University on various IT platforms. Only 9.30% of participants disagreed with this view.

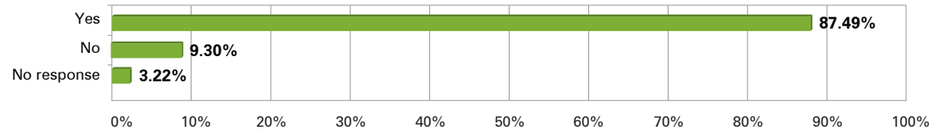

Figure 20: Transcription Captions on Audio-visual Materials

On the other hand, the view that the University should stick to English only in the design of public signage on all Wits campuses found more support (at 44.93%) among these respondents than any of the alternatives suggested in the survey. However, 20.38% felt that the University could use English plus one other South African official language, chosen by the University, for public signage on all campuses. Further, 16.09% of participants believed that the University should use English plus two other South African official languages for its signage. However, if the University wanted to take an official view based purely on these results, it would most logically be that signage should be left in English only.

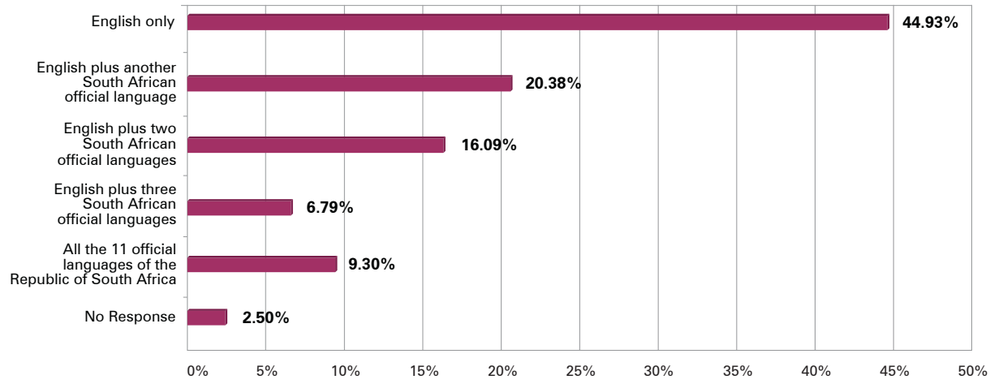

Figure 21: Public Signage in Wits Campuses

Of the 839 respondents, the greatest number (47.44%), as shown in Figure 22, felt that Wits should use only one language as its designated official language. It is assumed in this study that since the majority supported English as the mainstream language, and by default English is a fait accompli choice, the single language preferred by the majority would be English. However, the data in Figure 22 below also show that 18% of respondents felt that the University should use at least two languages for purposes of communication, while 15.97% supported the idea of using three official languages, and 10.49% felt that all 11 official languages should be recognised in official University business.

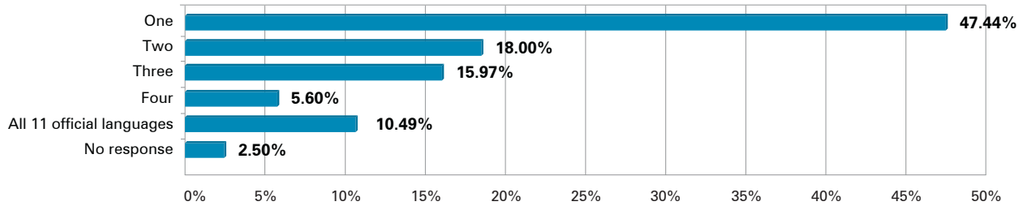

Figure 22: Number of Languages to be designated as Official Languages

Two issues are emerging from the study. The first is that English is preferred by the majority of respondents in this group. However, if one takes the view that the purpose of the survey was to *identify the other African languages to be used in addition to English* as part of the official medium of communication, the data in Figure 23 below gives a different perspective. While a relatively large number of respondents decided not to commit to a single, indigenous African language as an alternative choice parallel to English, the remaining participants expressed a wide range of views on the languages that could be preferred. Those who decided not to participate could have done so for many reasons: they may have favoured English only, or had multiple preferences that could not be reduced to a single choice, or had inadequate information to have an opinion on which language would best be used in the University.

The data representation in Figure 23 clearly shows that isiZulu was the most popular choice among these respondents as a language to be used in parallel with English, with 40.40% choosing it. This was followed by Sesotho (26.20%). Other indigenous African languages received very low support, below 4%. It is obvious at this stage of the research that the majority of the University community do not think that the University should consider isiNdebele, isiXhosa, Sepedi, Setswana, siSwati, Tshivenda, and Xitsonga as official languages to be used in the University's business and in the arenas of teaching and learning, and research. If the University intended to use two indigenous African languages together with English, it would need to develop a policy which recognises English, isiZulu and Sesotho. If bilingualism is the preferred direction, Wits would then need to use English and isiZulu. If it had no intention to embrace indigenous African languages, the study suggests that it should rewrite its language policy to establish English as the only official language.

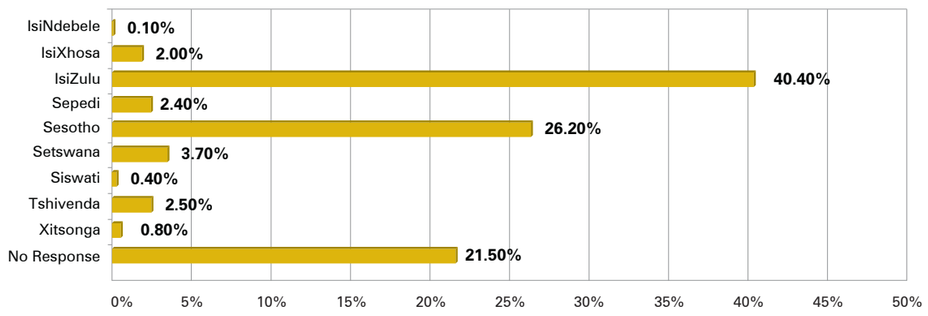

Figure 23: Language/s to be Designated as Official Languages

One of the interesting dimensions of this study is the emerging contradictions emanating from responses given by respondents. This suggests that the question of language in a University context remains a largely complex issue which cannot be resolved by clear-cut answers to complex questions. We found earlier on in this study that the majority of participants chose English as the preferred language, and advocated for a nuanced development of English competence among its staff and students to make sure that English was used effectively in all University business, teaching and learning, and research arrangements. In the same study, we found that the majority of respondents embraced multilingualism by suggesting that the University should adopt French as a formal foreign language for communicating with foreign students. We also learnt that the respondents favoured the use of isiZulu as one of the most preferred indigenous languages. This indicates that the development of a language policy remains complex, loaded with contradictions, confusion, emotional commitment and uncertainties about cultural unfamiliarities. Table 3 below provides a breakdown of how different categories of staff made their choices with regard to an indigenous language

	IsiZulu	Sesotho	Others	No response	Grand Total
Executive member of VCO	1		1	2	4
Faculty Dean		1	1	1	3
Assistant Dean in Faculty			0	1	1
Faculty Registrar/Deputy Faculty Registrar	3	1	1		5
Head of School	3	3	1	5	12
Associate professor	28	21	4	32	85
Professor	11	14	1	20	46
Senior lecturer	37	20	6	20	83
Lecturer	54	33	12	28	127
Junior lecturer	16	13	2	7	38
Tutor	17	8	1	5	31
Faculty Administration	10	11	8	2	31
Head of Support Service Units	2	10	2	6	20
Manager in Support Service Units	28	10	8	7	53
Specialist in Support Service Units	41	29	9	12	91
Administrator in Support Service Units	85	43	37	22	187
No response	3	3	6	10	22
Grand Total	**339**	**220**	**100**	**180**	**839**
% Language Preference	**40.41%**	**26.22%**	**11.92%**	**21.45%**	**100%**

Table 3: Language Choice by Designation of Respondents

Data presented in Figure 24 shows that 58.88% of respondents felt that the preferred indigenous African language should be used on an equal basis with English. This evidence of support suggests that the language chosen should be developed for both academic and business use, and deeply entrenched in all forms of communication used in the University, and that staff and students should be capacitated to use this language on an equal basis with English. Only 35.88% of participants did not support this view. If the University were to adopt a view based on the support expressed, the argument is made that a chosen African indigenous language should be developed as a fully functional alternative to English.

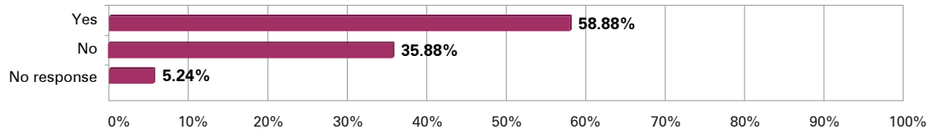

Figure 24: The use of an African Language on Equal Basis with English

Figure 25 shows that of the 58.88% of respondents who were of the view that a preferred indigenous African language should be used on an equal basis with English, 48.25% felt that isiZulu should be developed for scientific and business use in the University, and 31.13% felt that Sesotho should be developed for these functions. No other language suggested received more than 5% support for scientific- and business-use development. If the University were to base a decision on the views expressed here to choose a single language for development in this way, that language would be isiZulu. If it adopted a position of developing two languages, the languages would be isiZulu and Sesotho.

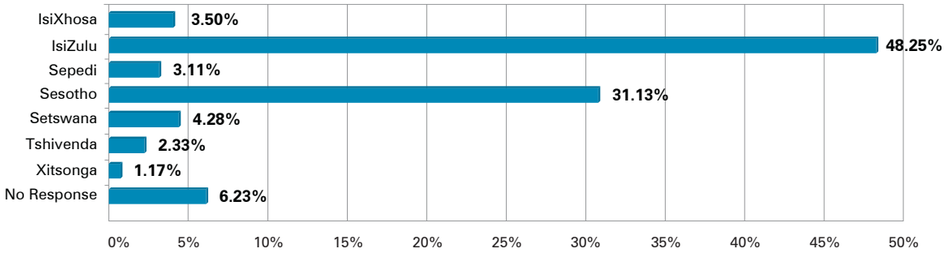

Figure 25: Languages to Develop for Scientific and Business use

	IsiZulu	Sesotho	Others	No response	Grand Total
Executive member of VCO	1		1	2	4
Faculty Dean		1	1	1	3
Assistant Dean in Faculty			0	1	1
Faculty Registrar/Deputy Faculty Registrar	2	1	0	2	5
Head of School	2	2	2	6	12
Associate professor	23	17	5	40	85
Professor	9	12	1	24	46
Senior lecturer	28	12	5	38	83
Lecturer	40	29	6	52	127
Junior lecturer	9	11	2	16	38
Tutor	16	6	3	6	31
Faculty Administration	10	11	5	5	31
Head of Support Service Units	3	6	2	9	20
Manager in Support Service Units	26	6	6	15	53
Specialist in Support Service Units	29	25	9	28	91
Administrator in Support Service Units	74	30	19	64	187
No response	4		2	16	22
Grand Total	**276**	**169**	**69**	**325**	**839**
% Language Preference	**32.90%**	**20.14%**	**8.22%**	**38.74%**	**100%**

Table 4: Support for Scientific Development of African Languages by Designation of Respondents

As previously seen, in Figure 14 above, nearly half of this group of respondents indicated that the University should require students to take courses in isiZulu or Sesotho. Figure 26 below clearly shows that the majority (51.25%) of the 839 participants felt that the University would need to require students to enrol for communication courses in the preferred indigenous African language, which in this case is isiZulu. Although 45.05% of respondents did not agree with this view, quite clearly the University would in fact need to consider structured ways through formal training and other forms in which it would develop the required competence in the preferred African language among its students.

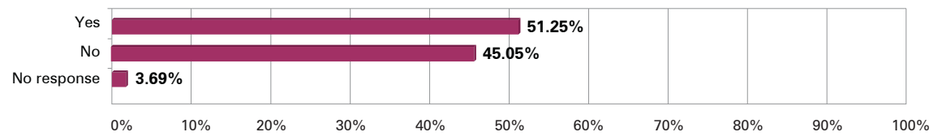

Figure 26: Student Enrolment for a Course in an African Language

Concerning the ways in which the preferred indigenous African language might be used in teaching and learning, respondents' views varied. The majority (63.53%), as shown in Figure 27, were not in support of using this language in curriculum design. Only 32% of respondents agreed that this would be desirable. A 59.24% majority also disagreed with the view that an African language should be used for designing learning materials used by our students, with 36.71% supporting the idea.

However, the data also show a tie of opinion on the use an African language for code-switching in class. Those who agreed and disagreed constituted 47.91% each. A relatively high number of respondents (53.64%) agreed that a preferred African language should be used by students to ask and answer questions in teaching and learning arrangements as long as the instructor is equally proficient in the language. Only 42,79% disagreed.

A large percentage (62.567%) of participants agreed that an African language should be used to explain and help students understand concepts in class. However, the majority (64.60%) did not agree with the statement that an African language should be used for formal assessment of students. The idea that an African language should be used for general communication with students brought another (almost) even split in opinion, with 48.27% in favour, and 47.56% against.

The analysis of data presented in Figure 27 clearly shows that the majority of respondents believe that a chosen African language should not be used for all aspects of pedagogical engagement with students in class, although they do support code-switching when explaining concepts in class in those cases where the lecturer can speak the language. This raises the question of whether the University community clearly understands the role of indigenous languages in teaching and learning.

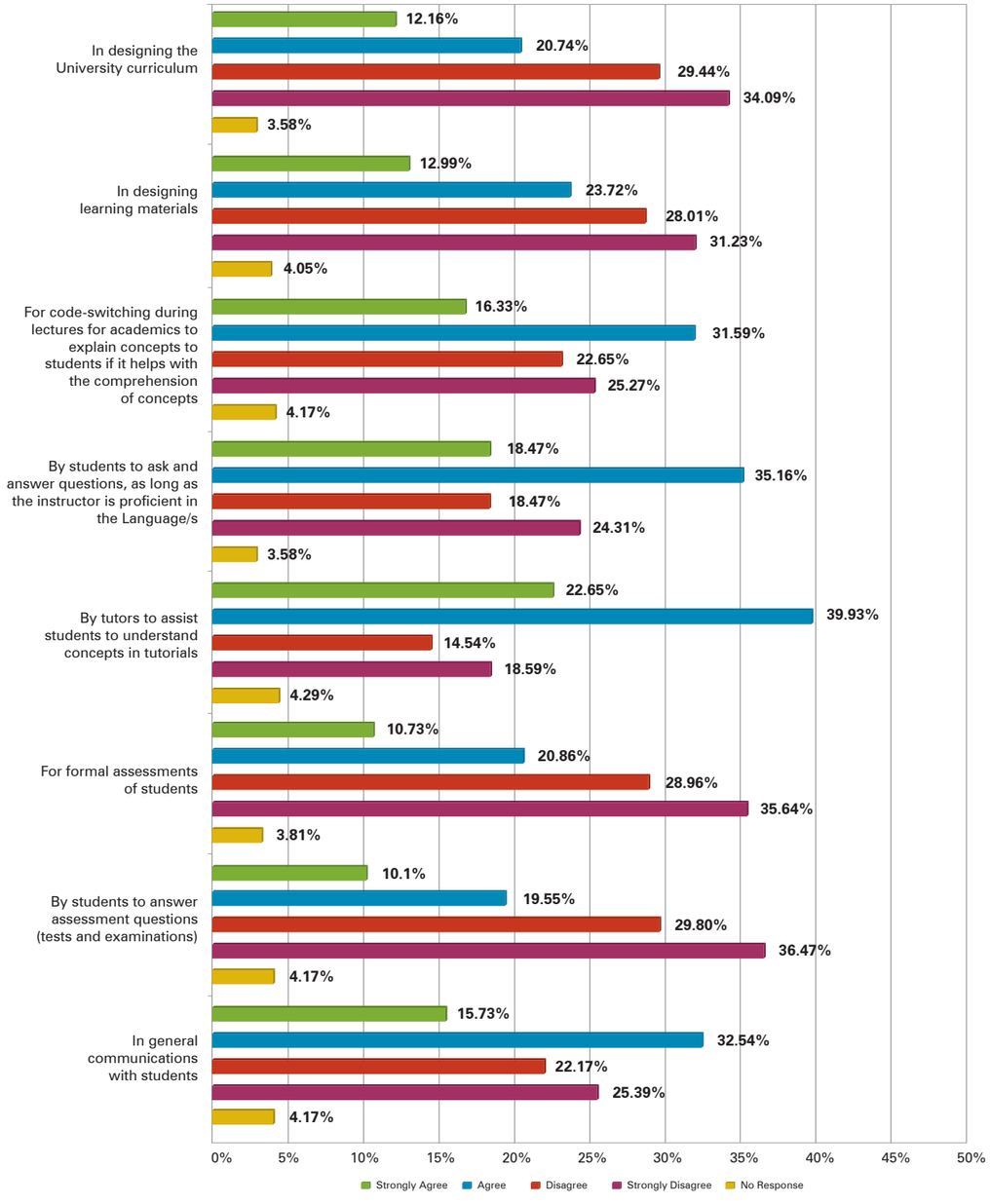

Figure 27: African Language use in Teaching and Learning

Data presented in Figure 28 show an even split of opinion regarding whether or not the chosen language could be used for research purposes, with 47.79% on each side of the issue. While 30.87% agreed that the chosen African language could be used to write research reports, a large number (64.48%) felt it should not. Similarly, 29.80% of respondents felt that African languages should be used in publishing scholarly work on Wits-based journal platforms, but the majority, 64.96%, disagreed with that view. Data further shows that while 44.10% agreed with the view that an African language should be used for code-switching during research discussion, it is important to note that the majority (51.54%) disagreed with this view. The view that an African language should be used for general communication with researchers was supported by 42.31% of respondents and rejected by 52.45% of participants.

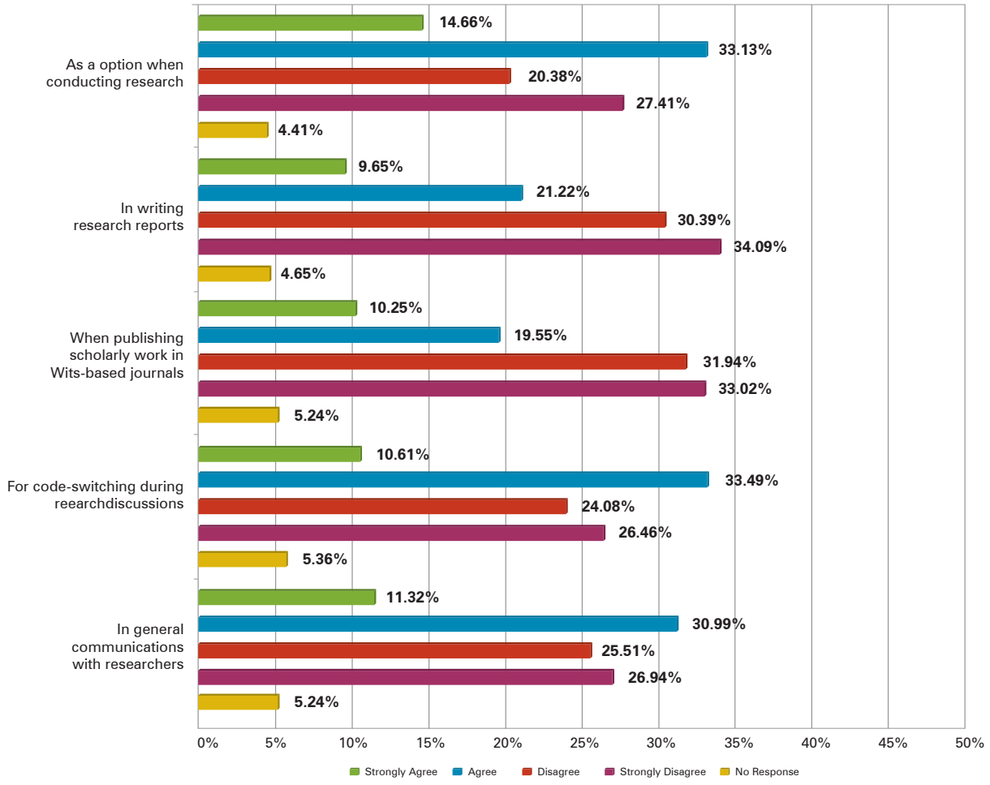

Figure 28: African Language use in Research

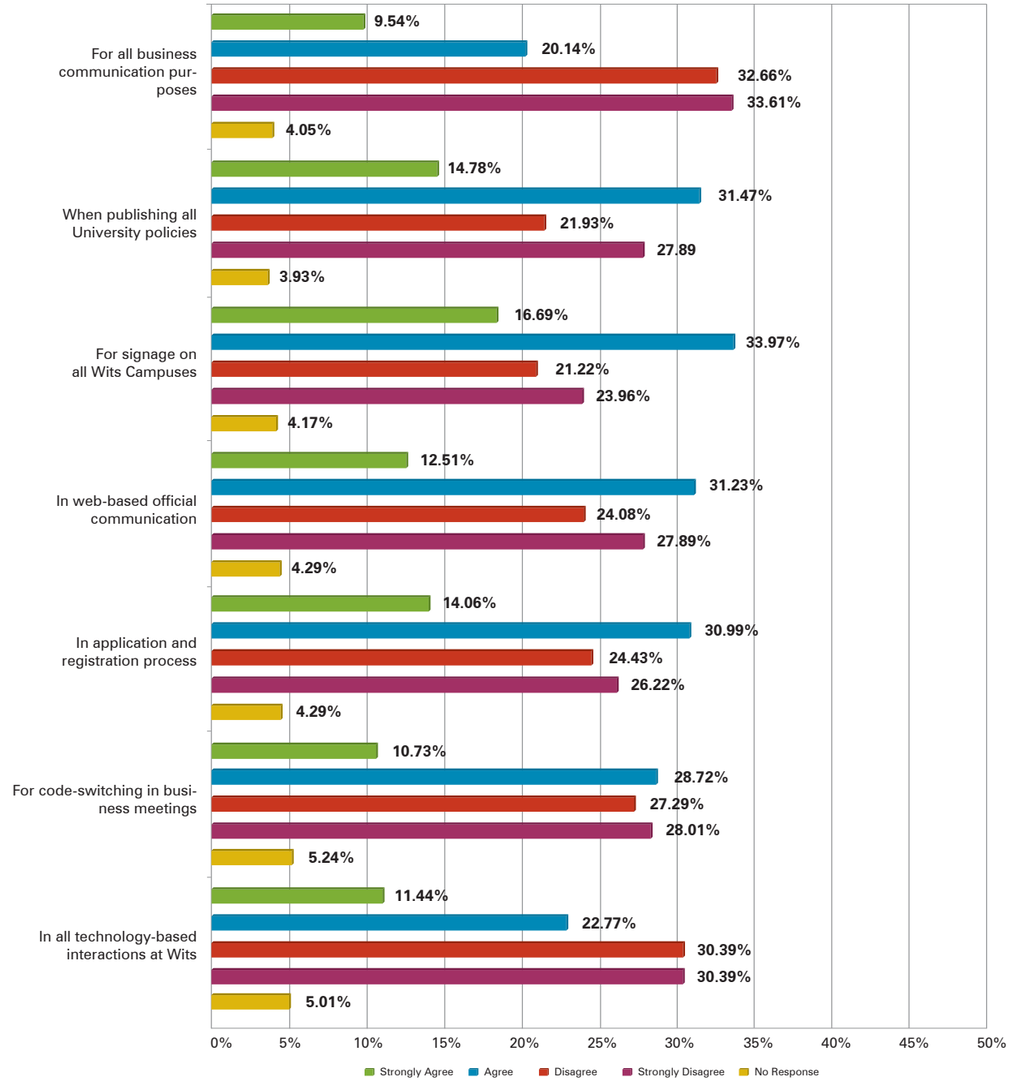

Figure 29: African Language use in Business

As depicted in Figure 29 above, two-thirds (66.27%) of staff respondents disagreed with the statement that an African language chosen for official use should be used for business communication purposes. Only 29% supported the idea. However, a greater number of respondents, 46.25%, supported the view that a chosen African language could be used in developing and publishing official University policies, although slightly more, 49.82%, disagreed with this view. More than half the respondents (50.66%) agreed that an African language should be used for signage in all University campuses, while 45.17% did not agree. This level of approval was reversed, however, in terms of web-based communication: 51.97% shared the view that an African language should not be used for such purposes while 43.74% indicated that it should. Similarly, in relation to using an African language for application and registration purposes, more than half the participants (50.66%) disagreed with the idea and only 45.05% agreed. The majority (55.30%) also disagreed that an African language should be used for code-switching in business

meetings, a suggestion that met with the approval of only 39.45% of this group. The data also show that 60.79% of respondents disagreed with using an African language in all technology-based interactions at Wits, with only 34.21% indicating agreement.

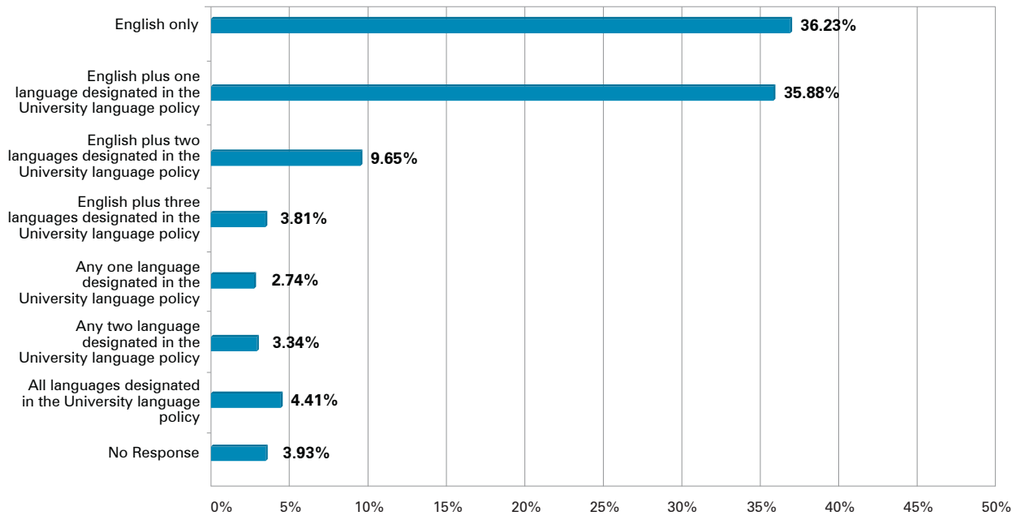

Figure 30: Languages Wits Staff should speak in Administrative Context

Figure 30 above shows that the use of English only when engaging with staff at Wits in administrative contexts, and the use of English and one African language in that context, garnered almost equal support – 36.23% and 35.88% respectively. This data suggests two significantly large schools of thought on the issue. Relatively few participants felt that more than one African language should be used.

In the light of these results and the analyses presented in Figure 27, 28 and 29, it is very important for the University to try to establish exactly how an endorsed African language should be used in the University business. There appear to be contradictory views in terms of the purposes for which this language should be used: although relatively high numbers of participants are in favour of isiZulu being used together with English, the exact nature of the uses envisaged is harder to determine. From the data it appears as if the majority of participants are arguing for a peripheral 'token' recognition of (at least) one additional African language, as opposed to a robust development and use of that particular language.

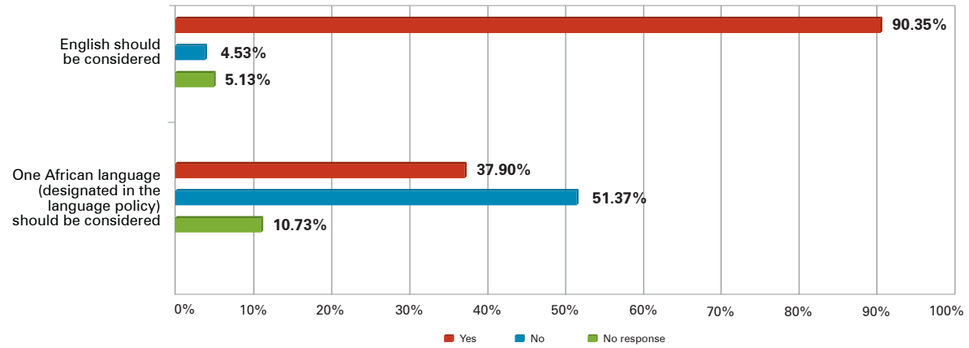

Figure 31: Proficiency Requirements for Employment Confirmation for Academic Staff

Figure 31 clearly shows that Wits is a predominantly English-speaking University. A large majority of respondents (90.35%) felt that it was important for academics to have English proficiency prior to being confirmed as staff members of the University. Only a very small percentage (4.53%) did not share this view. However, when the views on proficiency in one African language were solicited, 37.90% of respondents felt that it was important for academic staff to be proficient in one African language before they were confirmed as staff members in the University. A majority of respondents (51.37%) felt that this was not necessary. Figure 31 suggests that the majority of the University community felt that it was important for international staff who come from environments where English is not the main medium of communication, and those local staff members who have not been sufficiently exposed to the use of English, to develop their English language skills sufficiently to enable them to engage meaningfully in teaching and learning, research and corporate activities. The study sends a very clear message through data provided in Figure 31 that the University community is largely committed to ensuring that everybody's English proficiency is improved in line with the view that English is the main medium of communication at Wits.

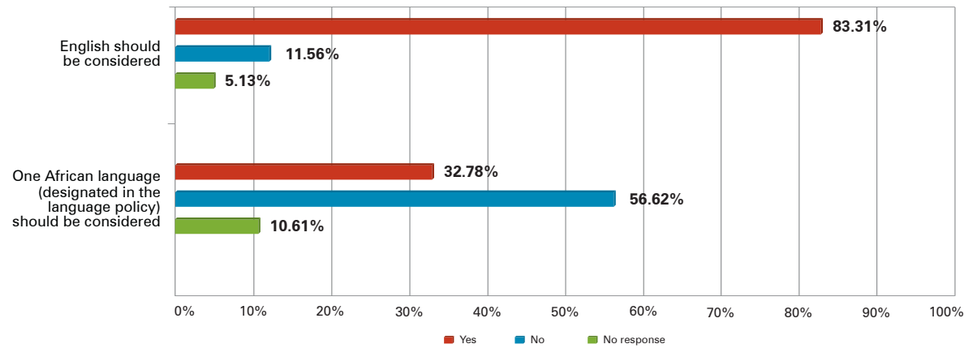

Figure 32: Proficiency Requirement for Promotion of Academic Staff

The trend depicted in Figure 31 is also reflected in the data presented in Figure 32. Staff members were asked if it was necessary to consider English proficiency for promotion purposes among academic staff in the University. A large majority (83.31%) agreed that it was, and only 11.56% of respondents felt that it was not. However, in relation to proficiency in one African language, data shows that the majority of respondents (56.62%) felt that this should not be necessary for promotion purposes in relation to academic staff. Only 32.78% of respondents felt that it should.

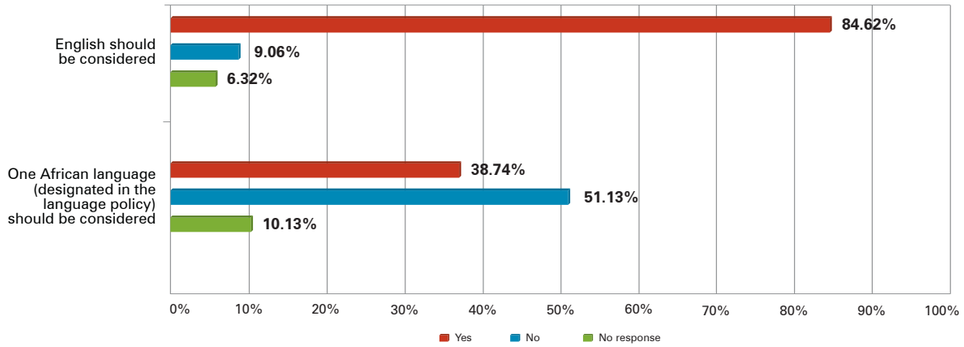

Figure 33: Proficiency Requirements on Employment and Promotion of Support Staff

It is important to note that the same trend reflected in Figure 30 and 32, focusing on academic staff, is also reflected in Figure 33, which focuses on the employment and promotion of support staff in the University. Quite clearly staff members in the University feel that it is important for the University to consider English proficiency when employing and promoting staff in support and professional services. The data show that 84.62% of respondents shared this view, with only 9.06% disagreeing.

Similarly, the issue of proficiency in one African language among academic staff is also reflected in Figure 33 with regard to support staff. The majority of respondents (51.13%) felt that it was not necessary to consider proficiency in one African language when hiring or promoting staff in support and professional services. Only 38.74% felt that it was important.

From the analysis of data provided in the three figures above, two things are emerging. The first is that the majority of the University community is not compromising on the use of English for teaching and learning, research and business communication. The second is that there is also an emerging pattern of relatively large numbers of respondents (above 30% in each case) who share the view that one chosen African language should be fairly developed, introduced and integrated into the mainstream of the University's core business.

While it is very clear that the majority voice in the University still feels that it is not necessary to introduce one African language, it is important to juxtapose this view against the racial profile of participants depicted in Figure 3 in this study. While no correlation has been done between the results presented on the various specific aspects explored in this report and the racial profile presented in Figure 3, understanding that profile may help to contextualise the opinion of the majority of participants who do not feel that an African language should be fully developed and integrated into the mainstream business of the University. As Figure 3 shows, slightly more than a third of the participants were black African staff members. It is reasonable to speculate that it may largely be this same third that provided the above 30% support observed for integration of an African language, while the remainder of the sample, who perhaps do not find themselves inconvenienced by the lack of such integration, are less convinced of the importance of this happening.

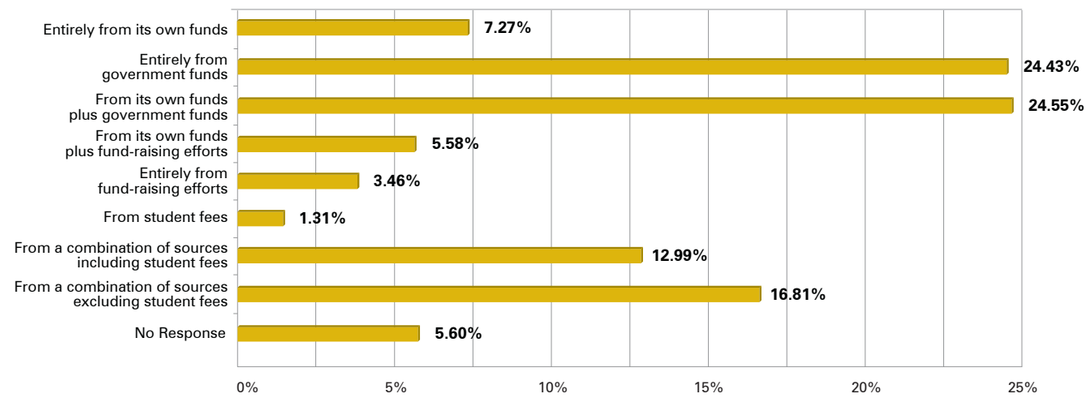

Figure 34: Suggested Ways of Funding the Implementation of the University's Language Policy

Moving forward with the view that a large majority of participants felt that either isiZulu (40.40%) or Sesotho (26.20%) should be designated as an additional official language in the University (see Figure 23), it is important for this study to explore how the University community feels that the development of this language should be funded. There was a wide array of competing opinions on this matter. The greatest support, as shown in Figure 34, was for the use of government funds, or a combination of government and University funding. These figures, respectively, were 24.43% and 24.55%. The data also show that 16.81% of respondents felt that the University could develop such a language using a combination of funding sources, excluding student fees. The proportion of respondents who felt that it could be developed from a combination of funding sources, *including* student fees, was 12.99%.

Other views about the source of funding for the development of an African language attracted less support. The data show 7.27% in support of the University funding this initiative entirely from its own funds; 3.58% from its own funds plus fund-raising initiatives; and 3.46% believing it should be done entirely from fund-raising initiatives. Only 1.31% of respondents felt that such an initiative could be funded from student fees alone. The competing views illustrated in Figure 34 strongly suggest the creation of a strategic engagement platform to explore a range of different possibilities for funding the development of an African language at Wits.

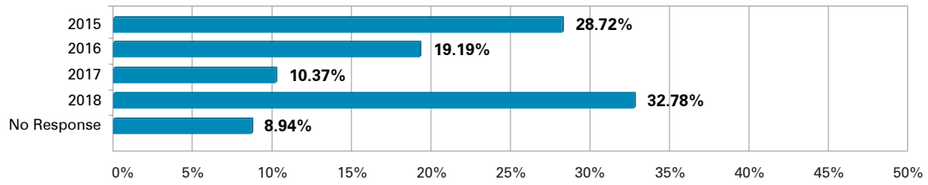

Figure 35: Year of Implementation of Suggested Language Policy

An initiative that seeks to introduce a second language as part of the mainstream business communication enterprise cannot be constructed and launched overnight. It requires proper conceptualisation, scoping and funding, which often takes time in a University environment. Figure 35 explores the understanding of when staff members think that the implementation of the language policy that embraces one or two African languages should start. The largest number (32.78%) was of the view that the official implementation of such a policy should commence in 2018.

However, other participants expressed different views which suggest that the official implementation of such a policy, in their view, should be carried out as soon as possible. At 28.72%, the number of respondents who felt that such a policy should be implemented as early as 2015 was almost equal to the number who thought it should take four years. For the rest, 19.19% suggested 2016 and 10.37% felt that the policy could be introduced in 2017. These data suggest that there are different levels of readiness for the implementation of such a policy among Wits staff members. This clear lack of consensus would need to be debated by the University stakeholders if such a policy is eventually approved.

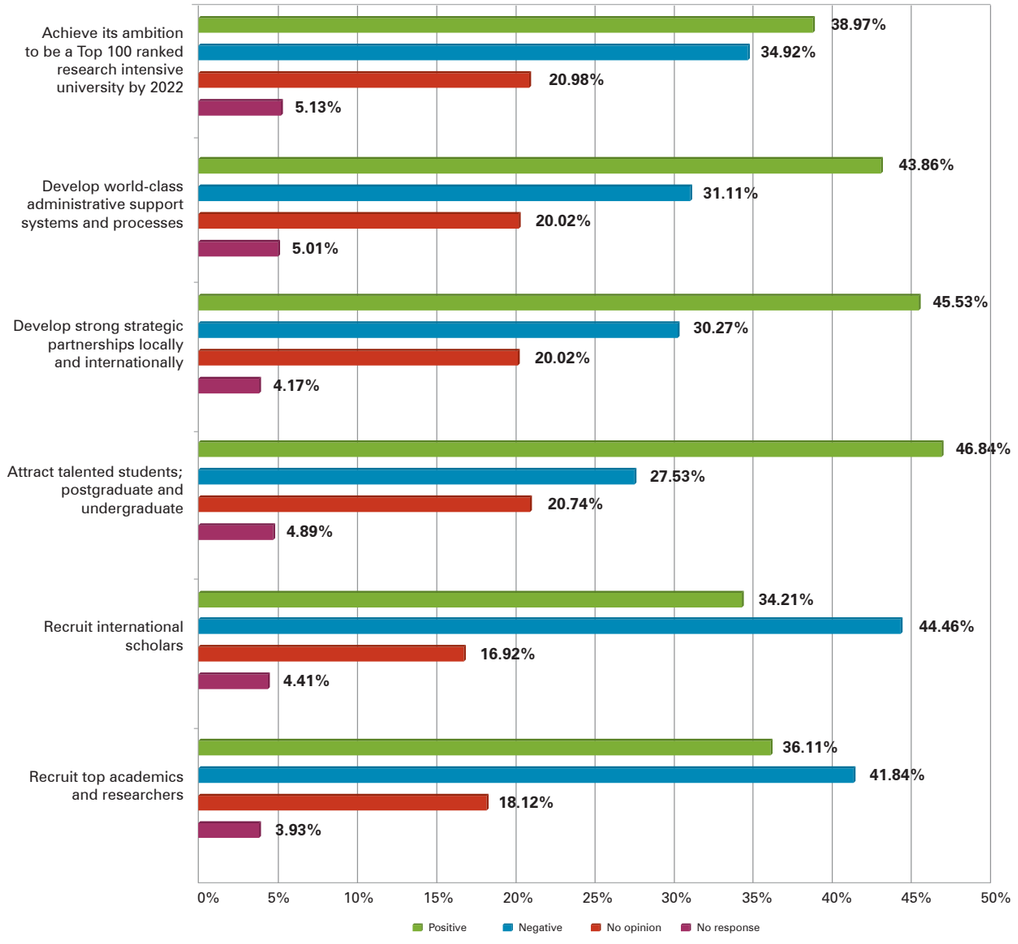

Figure 36: Impact of the Policy on University Strategic Priorities

Data presented in Figure 36 emanated from the study's intention to solicit the views and perceptions of academic staff about the impact on the strategic priorities of the University of a policy that uses an African language as an official medium of communication. It is quite intriguing to observe that the largest group of participants felt that the use of an African language in addition to English would have a positive impact on the ability of the University to achieve its vision and strategic goals as espoused in Wits's *Vision* 2022. This was the opinion of 38.97% of respondents, while 34.92% expressed the opinion that such a move would have a negative impact on the strategic positioning of the University. A further 20.98% had no opinion on the matter, while 5.13% did not respond to the question. There was a larger positive response (43.86%) to the idea that the introduction of an African language would have a positive impact in developing world-class administrative support systems and processes in the University. Only 31.11% felt that such a move would have a negative impact in this area of the University's development, while 20.02% had no opinion on the matter.

Similarly, 45.53% of respondents felt that the introduction of this policy would have a positive impact on the development of strong strategic partnerships locally and internationally, with only 30.27% taking the opposite stance, while 20.02% had no opinion on the matter.

On the issue of the impact of such a policy on attracting talented students at both undergraduate and postgraduate levels, opinions were again more positive than negative, with 46.84% respondents of the view that it would attract more students of talent. Only 27.53% had the view that it would have a negative impact, while 20.74% had no opinion.

In spite of this envisaged positive impact, 44.46% were of the opinion that such a policy would have a negative impact on the University's ability to recruit international scholars. This could be expected, given the fact that any chosen African language would be a locally spoken language and perhaps widely spoken in the SADC region, but some of our international staff hail from countries that would have no familiarity with it. Having said that, it is important to note that 41.84% of respondents shared the view that the impact of the African-language policy on the recruitment of top academics and researchers (from anywhere) would be negative, while 36.11% felt it would be positive. As reflected in Figure 36, 18.12% did not have a view on this matter.

In spite of these last three more negative results, it could nevertheless be concluded that the wide perceptions shared by University staff on the impact of the introduction of an African language on our strategic priorities is predominantly positive.

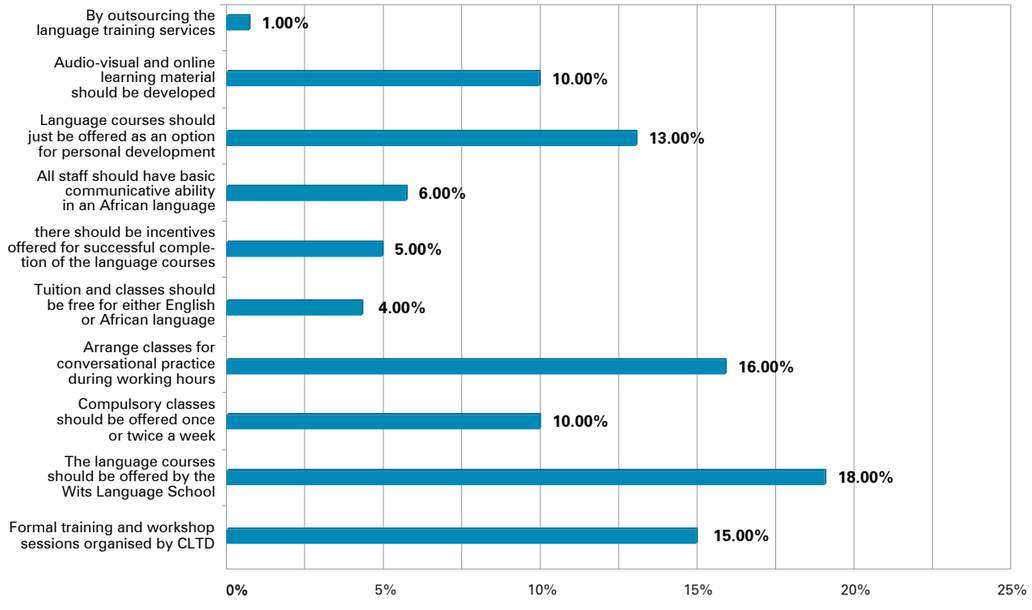

Figure 37: How to Train Staff to use a Preferred African Language

Figure 37 provides opinions on a wide range of mechanisms that could be used by the University to train staff and develop proficiency in the use of a preferred African language. In order of popularity, the modalities offered on the questionnaire were: language courses offered by Wits Language School (18% in favour); classes for conversational practice during working hours (16%); formal training and workshop sessions organised by the Centre for Learning, Teaching and Development (CLTD) (15%); offering optional language courses for the personal development of staff (13%); running compulsory classes once or twice a week (10%); providing audio-visual and online training material (10%); making the ability to communicate in an African language a requirement for all staff (6%); providing incentives for those who complete an African language course (5%); and making provision of language training free (4%). These diverse views make it clear that the University cannot use a one-size-fits-all approach. An array of opportunities and programmes would need to be developed to provide staff with means to develop their proficiency in a preferred African language.

Comments on the Training in the Preferred African Language

- A carrot rather than a stick should be used, e.g. research-funding incentives offered for successful completion of training; training in both oral and written communication skills are essential.

- Beginner's African language courses must be developed. Staff must attend. This should also include talk time where staff has space to practice the language; e.g. greetings must be in the African language, etc.

- Compulsory language courses that have to be completed within a specified period of time with evidence that proficiency in the chosen language has been achieved.

- High-quality language courses using latest second/foreign-language teaching methodologies. From a personal experience, I can attest I was taught isiZulu at undergraduate level to an intermediate level, but I was taught in such a way as to pass the exam, not necessarily to be an effective communicator.

- I am not for it but if it is forced because of a government policy then it should be introduced through the language school via CLTD where during the course of the next few years until 2018, all staff will become somewhat familiar with an African language.

- I believe that giving staff the chance to learn these languages at no cost would be great. Their use informally would build understanding and relationships, but more formalised and official use dilutes our efforts for no benefit.

- I believe we should separate business/academic-excellence goals from subjective, notional and compassionate considerations, and not detract from Wits's goals of being international – considering SA has 11 official languages, Nigeria has more than 150 languages, etc., etc. we should focus on achieving goals in an international fashion and not an emotional one.

- I do not think this is something that should be formalised. It's a personal decision for the staff to make. We can't possibly accommodate all 11 languages so for pragmatic reasons we should stick to English. I am much more interested in learning Shangaan or Venda (due to the profile of my social groups) than I am in learning the contenders for Wits's second languages, but I don't think it's reasonable to force anyone to learn anything they don't want to.

- I don't believe that African languages should be used at all because these languages are NOT an international standard. No one is going to go to NASA, for example, and be able to communicate in an African language. Even within an African context, South Africa and its immediate neighbours are the only countries in Africa which recognise South Africa's official languages. We need to incorporate languages like French and Portuguese in order to make a global mark.

- I think that staff should be granted time off during the year to learn additional courses but the time granted must not be during holidays. There has to be strong incentive for staff to learn new languages. Learning a new language can be difficult. If staff is expected to learn on their own during the academic year or during their holidays, they might not be inclined to do so.

- I think they should be offered beginner's and intermediate courses free of charge or at a reduced staff rate.

- If staff does not speak an African language they should be required to become proficient at the University's expense.

- Immersion is the only way to learn a language. This should be facilitated by the University.

- Learning a language is a collective process and it should be organised along School/Departmental/Unit lines.

- In-house, compulsory training (perhaps offered before or after working hours) at no cost to staff to take place on campus. Should be several times a week before or after work so as not to impact teaching time.

- It is insufficient to only teach and focus on the learning without the interactions; casual and informal, to encourage the use of the language rather than only focussing on it as a task.

- It starts with communicating with your preferred language in the work place... the rest can easily be attainable following that implementation.

- It would need to be a unit dedicated to helping staff master an African language of their choice as they may already have a limited vocabulary in one of the languages. The times should be in working hours to suit the times of the support and academic staff. It should not be mandatory to attend after hours.

- Language acquisition is complex and lengthy and requires a great deal of motivation. If the University is serious about implementing the language policy, regular classes will need to be built into workloads. Classes should be small and as we know that assessment drives learning, there would need to be incentives and accountability built in.

- Have a day in the week where everyone speaks an African language and if a person is found speaking another language on the day, he or she must bring a cake for that week. (Make it fun!)

- Online video tutorials. Classes would be nice (and could happen once every month or so) but mostly people are busy and may not always be able to attend classes. Videos on the other hand are accessible all the time and can be studied in your own time.

- Optional training in African languages would be very valuable, but I am strongly opposed to moving Wits away from the international academic community by tuition in an African language.

- Perhaps this is SA's return to Bantustans where students are taught Maths in Pedi, then you will never use your Maths in Sweden or UK or Germany. African languages are necessary for informal communications but never for internationally relevant formal research, teaching and communication. This is not primary school where language could affect performance.

- Provide courses in office hours and at the different campuses that can be attended. Also, possible online courses.

- Provide weekend and workshop training. Allocate one particular language and require departments'/units' communications to be in that language, as well as encourage staff to communicate in that language within their departments/units.

- Should be allowed once a week, an hour in the morning that has been designated by the University to be trained and taught in the preferred African language.

- Staff can teach one another within their different units/departments. Identify learners and tutors, and then pair them. Also through e-Learning.

- Staff should be assessed in proficiency as part of staff induction, and offered classes as a part of the working day. All learning material should be disability accessible where necessary – i.e. braille, audio files, sign language interpretation at classes, etc. Assessment should be accredited so that proficiency can be proven in the form of a certificate/etc. Excellence in learning should be recognised and incentivised.

- Staff should have free access to online courses for basic literacy in the preferred language. Once they have competently completed such courses, they should have free access to attendance courses which would improve their spoken and written proficiency, if we are to develop such a language academically.

- Take courses from both credited Department of African Languages and/or uncredited ones at Wits Language School.

- The main obstacle will be finding time to complete the training. Language training will have to compete with the existing time demands of research, training postgraduates, undergraduate teaching.

- The University should offer this support – and translators in the classroom so that there is constant verbal clarification.

- Training should be contextual and participatory, e.g. conversation, and put them in a context during training where using English is not possible (e.g. converse with people who cannot speak good English – learn from cleaning staff).

- They should be given enough time during working hours to focus on practically based training.

- They should have time allocated to attend a communicative language class or tutorials that encourage discussion and collaborative learning, facilitated by a language expert, rather than being lectured.

- They shouldn't be trained! This is ludicrous, I'm sorry. To learn a language as an adult is extremely difficult, and now you're thinking of forcing it on people? Talk about demotivating staff further than they already are!

- This should be entirely optional. If we are really serious about being a top-100 institution then our academic mission must be international and that would mean English as the medium for all academic communication.

- This should be voluntary and enabled for relevant contexts, for instance, those professions which are carried out in a particular language context, engaging with communities or individuals who might not be proficient in English. It is an expensive undertaking and therefore should be as targeted as possible, with staff participants in free language courses having to motivate how they will use these skills. In these professions, indigenous language courses can be compulsory for students. Training can be in lunch hours during semesters, but self-training manuals and audio-material would also work very well and reduce the cost. The policy should be enabling and not a directive.

- This would indeed be interesting, as we currently do not have time to go on a general course offered by CLTD, let alone a language course that will take up more time and over a longer period.

- Training to be provided at Schools or at CLTD whereby staff can develop at their own pace by completing the module within a time frame using up-to-date technology

- Use of formal didactic learning as well as ongoing tutorial and 'talk' sessions. Access to support staff to assist.

- We need to accept that learning a language will require significant contact hours and so will require releasing students for courses. I want to emphasise that we don't need to train staff to speak a language, we need to ensure that we have the ability to translate extensively between languages.

- Where possible, especially in first year, student tutor(s) should be selected who can [speak] in each of the majority languages to be available to help students in the home language. These tutor(s) need to get training in how to support students.

- While, in theory, this would be good practice, in reality, staff probably already has full lives between work and home, so what time should be 'sacrificed' for language learning? I do not think that staff should be burdened with language learning in addition to work hours. Also, not everyone has an aptitude for learning languages – this language policy may prove a stress too much for many staff members.

- You cannot compel staff to be trained in a new language if they do not want, and it would be unfair to index work performance and salary on ability. Forcing one language beside English will negate diversity and would thus be discriminatory. I speak Dutch, English, French, Spanish, Russian, and have a good understanding of Ndebele. I do not want to be forced to speak Sesotho as well.

- You do realise this will mean taking time away from research production? While I appreciate that many people are multilingual and some people pick up languages very easily, not everyone can learn a language quickly. Personally, I struggle over many years to just get a basic grasp of a language.

- You make this sound fait accompli. The whole notion is not viable when we have students with 11 (and many more) home languages. You can never help every individual. Many students are already struggling with academic work, and now you want many (e.g. Sepedi speaking) to have to listen to lectures in Sesotho / isiZulu AND to learn this new language if they don't already know it? Some students come here to learn science, not to become multilingual.

- A curriculum on the preferred language should be set and taught as a crash course for 6 months with some entry and exit points within the course.

- Free courses should be offered to staff members to develop conversational proficiency in isiZulu or Sesotho. Note that in the short term this will have a massive impact on research and teaching output. This would need to be taken into account and by taking this course, other performance metrics would need to be adjusted. Learning a new language is not trivial.

- I do not think it is fair to impose a different language on a staff member, this should be optional. Not everyone has the extra time to learn a different language as many are working as well as studying towards degrees and postgrad, etc. Personally I do not have the time to learn a different language. It is not something I would give my attention to. It should be optional.

- I think this is a personal choice and based on needs and skills with languages. I think it should be promoted as an opportunity rather than be linked to punitive measures if they can't comply. This kind of training needs to start at schools and be phased up eventually, but implementing it overnight wouldn't be productive.

- Staff should be allowed to choose and willing to learn. If it is practical, to learn a preferred African language that will have a positive impact on their performance. Staff need to be very proficient in the language of choice to be effective in communication and teaching and [for] no misunderstanding... in the communication.

- Staff should be allowed to make their own choices in terms of the African language preference, i.e. for them to choose whether they want to learn Zulu/Sotho.

- Staff should be trained only if they are willing to learn another language. This should not be linked with either confirmation or promotion. Administrative staff dealing with first-year students, whose proficiency in English has not been established, are the people most likely to benefit the University.

- Staff should be trained over an extended period of time (e.g. ten years) without the training encroaching too much on their working hours. Learning a new language as an adult is much harder than learning it as a child, so staff should not be expected to become fluent within the same time frame.

- Staff should go to training for languages that they did not learn while at high school, and training should have a seminar taking place at least once a week and this should be offered as part of employment contract.

- The Linguistics Department, in partnership with Human Resources Development Unit, should develop workshop training opportunities for all staff, including sign language.

- There is already a language department at Wits, their services should be utilised. Need to recruit more African scholars with proficiency in African languages.

- There should be regular in-house training sessions and facilitators to assist staff and students.

- This will be difficult and I anticipate a lot of resistance. In an ideal world it is a great idea... but where do people find the time we already don't have and the money we already don't have?

Comments on how the Preferred African Language should be Developed for Scientific use

- A common language for science worldwide would be ideal. With that in mind, fixing the language issue will isolate and insulate. Science needs to communicate widely. A local language restricts this.

- By African scientists from all over Africa. Maybe a standard to be used by not only by South Africa, but by other African nations, could be established.

- By encouraging and promoting community-based research.

- By getting linguistic scholars involved in the project.

- By native speakers of such African language reporting their own research in their own languages and developing their own scientific registers for the purpose – nobody else has either the competence or the responsibility.

- By volunteers who believe strongly in it and not to detract from scholarly activities of serious researchers who want to promote development and passing on of knowledge.

- Clear policy stating what is requir ed and when – e.g. for research reports but not ethics clearance.

- Consider how it is currently being used in international circles as a scientific language, and learn from that.

- Construction of scientific vocabulary, introduction of abstracts in a preferred African language.

- Definitely not. Ability to communicate scientific material in English is essential for success in science anywhere in the world, and is becoming more, not less, of a requirement.

- Department of African Languages to be provided funding to develop terminology for different disciplines. Department to work closely with NLUs which have started work on these.

- At least two grants be added to the current workforce in African Languages to enable staff to engage in terminology research and expected volumes of students.

- Develop a technology project and implementation that can create an automatic translation system for everyone's accessible information.

- Developed with researchers who use that designated language in their research. Developed cumulatively as research emerges.

- English words should be adapted for use, e.g. thermodynamics.

- Even in the apartheid days when considerable effort was made to get Afrikaans-speaking academics to use Afrikaans, it failed in my discipline. There is enormous effort and cost to developing the terminology, especially if Wits does it on its own.

- First-language speakers well-qualified in the appropriate disciplines should be engaged.

- Firstly we would have to translate concepts, i.e. we would have to develop jargon in the preferred language. And then we would have to start publishing in such a language. I do not know of any DOE-accredited journals that would allow it, and it would be a waste of energy to publish in non-accredited journals, so some development in that regard may also be necessary.

- High investment in translation of core texts. That said, I am concerned that much of this will be unrealistic/pipe-dreams, given the huge variety and quantity in scholarly work/concepts for which no easy equivalents exist in *isintu* languages. Who will do the actual translating? Who will regulate or manage it? Quality control? And for what purpose exactly? Unless learning includes English, surely any scholar not proficient in English cannot be internationally competitive? I wish it were not so, but it is the hard reality of the 21st century.

- High-profile translation services – in the classroom.

- I am not sure that this will make a lot of sense. It should be voluntary and also, which journals are going to publish articles in these languages? One would require a strong language-development board for each language that will take the lead in developing the language. But, since there are so many different languages spoken on campus, not everybody will have the inclination to develop an underdeveloped language. The first-language speakers should also have the will to do so.

- I cannot imagine geology and geophysics being taught in an African language apart from French or Portuguese. In fact geo-language must be learnt as a matter of literacy in the discipline. It would be a massive task to find words that make sense in the discipline and massively difficult to enforce proficiency on staff. I do not have a recommendation here.

- I find the implication in this question that African languages are somehow 'underdeveloped' to be quite offensive. All languages change over time. If this is a question of vocabulary, surely it is possible to create new words using existing structures in the language in combination with borrowings from other languages. I suppose they will be developed for scientific use if there is an opportunity for them to be used in the sciences.

- I really don't see the point if our goal is to be a Top 100 University. The ISI journals and the academic public predominantly read in English. Developing an African language for scientific use, while socially admirable, deflects us from the University goal for everyone except the discipline where the African language is being developed. That's why so many English courses are being offered to Chinese academics.

- I see value in the scientific study of an African language, but I am strongly opposed to isolating Wits by studying other subjects in an African language.

- I think the implementation needs strategy and should be debated to avoid conflict.

- I think this is the elephant in the room. World experiences (e.g. Tanzania) have demonstrated that the development of an equivalent (in our case, to English) academic and scientific literature from scratch is virtually impossible. Whatever our multilingualism strategy, it must be built around this fact.

- In the international scientific community English is the only language of communication and so proficient use of this language should be encouraged.

- International scientific trends are for English as the language of communication and publication. I could not publish a paper in any black language in an international journal!

- It is not appropriate to develop a non-international language for tertiary level teaching or research. However, it should be developed to a point where it can be used by secondary school teachers. In this context, such language(s) should be closely aligned with English to facilitate a change to English at tertiary level.

- It is not practical to use an African language for scientific use as the journals are in English or other languages (not African).

- It might wise to wait and see if the idea is well received before developing it scientifically.

- It should not; science takes place in the language of the discipline and you cannot fight that wave. What we can do is ensure that people, especially in humanities and social science, can conduct research in multiple languages and report results without the basis of English. This makes sense in those areas because languages and translation is an issue that affects research results. In particular, interviews that take place in another language should not automatically (and often non-professionally) be translated.

- It should not be. The international language of science is English and scientific communication in any other language is not nearly as widely disseminated. All scientists from whichever country need to publish in English.

- It shouldn't – in this part of the world science is done in English. Any science done in an African language is going to have a very limited impact and is certainly not going to promote Wits's profile.

- Key terminology issues should be identified and translated.

- Text books for core curriculum objectives, research articles in that language.

- Language assistants to help staff with implementation.

- Look at the policy of the pre-94 government in promoting Afrikaans as a scientific language and learn from their costly mistakes.

- Look for concepts that are difficult for students to grasp and translate such in the designated African Language. Have what is called a linguapedia– a resource that has challenging English concepts in English translated into an African Language. The resource must be for each course offered at Wits and must be put on the web or WebCt for students to refer to when the concept is difficult to understand.

- Many African languages have already been developed with regard to scientific use, it's only application that is missing. Code-switching or borrowing is usually used.

- Mostly for the conducting of the science, but not for the writing since the majority of international journals only use English.

- Not at all. The scientific lingua franca is English – worldwide. With preference of one African language one automatically excludes all those people who do not speak this specific language and furthermore will make this science invisible for the majority, i.e. it is in vain. The lingua franca (English) is a compromise to enable worldwide communication – whether you like it or not.

- Once again, I do not believe that this should happen, but if it has to happen, then it should be the responsibility of the student intending to do research, who should learn the appropriate language, and Wits should develop an easy to learn-online course with telephone support.

- Only persons fluent in an African language should teach and be consulted in developing languages for scientific use.

- Only use the language if the subject is cultural-group specific.

- Perhaps by looking at best practices from other institutions that have had similar endeavours in the language policy. I would suggest looking towards other institutions in similar developing countries.

- Preferably in the publication of research which is then more accessible to school kids and other students.

- Provide enough support for all staff to learn the language in detail and train them use it when writing their papers. Papers should be written in the local language then translated into English and back-translated again.

- Providing training and classes for staff and academics, including students.

- Put together teams of people who speak that African language (both support and academic) and let them do original translations. Representatives from each department or school can be asked to volunteer or be appointed. Provide teams with dictionaries (English/Zulu or vice versa). They must have regular meetings to monitor progress. Once the original translations have been done, forward them to a team of academics who speak the language. They can look at the document critically and work towards finalising it.

- Researchers should be encouraged to write in African languages and to develop the necessary vocabulary which does not exist. We would need linguists in that particular language to be able to assist in this task.

- Researchers should be taught at least one South African language.

- Science's international language is English; hence the way to go about increasing the research profile of Wits is to actually give the necessary English competency to those who don't have it.

- Science is communicated in English around the world so please don't waste resources on trying to communicate science in an African language.

- Scientific terms should not be translated into African or any languages, as it is the case with English; Medulla oblongata remains as it is whether one uses English or French; the same should apply with African language(s).

- Seek guidance from international and South African experts in the field as consultants.

- Since much of scientific language has Latin or Greek etymology, I would suggest by identifying common Latin or Greek roots and developing/ adopting equivalent roots in the preferred African language. Scientific terms could then be developed by compounding these terms as was done to create the current English ones.

- Sometimes, things are better said in one language then another. Also, there is a certain degree of error that results when translating from one language to another. Furthermore, different languages have different root words and words can have many derivations... all said, if it is desired to use an African language for scientific use, there should be some guides on words to avoid which could have problems when translating into another language. Also, there should be a panel to review the work – the panel must [include] an expert in the language considered. Besides these, there must be some trial runs; this is why I recommend that the University only consider implementing the policy after 2018.

- Start translating student materials into the varsity African language of choice, then move on to the lectures. Train lecturers to be able to communicate in that language initially, then read and write the language.

- Start with the translation of teaching materials, and developing conversation skills among academics. That will make the language available for academic discussions in the research space.

- Stick to English. The science students struggle enough as it is. Why try to develop a new vocabulary when the rest of the world will not use it, and we will be putting all the time, effort and money into a policy that isolates us from the scientific community.

- Students don't understand their studies now, how will they perform in a mixed fruit class?

- The majority of scientific research is in English People need English as an international language, with English you can get around the world, be an international player in research. Where is any African language going to help you?

- Take one bite at a time, until such time that current material is converted and all new materials coming through be processed accordingly

- That is for the Language/Literature departments to tackle. But where relevant to particular disciplines/professions (community development, medicine, architecture & planning), language tutors should work closely with interested academics from those disciplines to develop the necessary language-teaching material.

- That will take time but the development can be taken step by step, e.g. terminology development, dictionary, and use on signage etc.

- The explanations should be in African language [with the] same materials in English as well, and have a dictionary.

- The language can be translated from English to an African language [in] the same way that Google translates.

- The more a language is used in a particular context the more it develops its vocabulary, etc. So encouraging its use will result in development.

- The preferred language should be built into a strong academic department and discipline and develop capacity for translation, teaching and research.

- The University can form partnerships with historically African institutions such as Fort Hare, University of Zululand, University of Limpopo and others to tap their expertise in these languages.
- The world has adopted English and Mandarin as the official languages.
- There are other universities that are already embarking on this venture. Perhaps collaboration or advice from them should be sought as to how they managed to do it.
- There has to be a translation facility to help turn abstracts into the required language.
- There is a choice between increasing human knowledge of reality, and promoting a language. They are not compatible. While promoting a language might be a noble aim, it should not be the aim of an entire University (increasing knowledge for the entire world should be the aim of a University). Rather try to grow that language by translating major works.
- There is a need to learn from experiences in other countries, e.g. New Zealand, where Maori has been adopted as a language of instruction. Much research and professional development should precede implementation for change to be sustained.
- This is not easy but perhaps running a pilot project would be a good point to start.
- This is tricky – in the business sciences we'd first have to develop the requisite scientific terms etc.
- This is unclear. For scientific communication the Afrikaans universities had to change their policies to publish in English if they were to have their research recognised. Please don't try and re-invent the wheel.
- This one can most difficult when it comes to science, but we can try and do it, like some of the things that can be done in science can also be [done in] the AFRICAN WAY, and even better.
- This should come from researchers who are interested in pursuing this in a way that makes sense to the objectives of the research.
- This will be a very long process and might not be wholly successful due to the diversity of languages and preference by many people speaking African languages to use English for literacy and academic purposes.
- Through organising communication clubs, and glossaries and translation.
- Through designing of term banks/dictionaries/development of field specific discursive registers.
- Through integrating the African languages at the undergrad levels.
- Through research and finding out from individuals who are part of the science community.
- Through teams consisting of both scientific and language experts, in relation to identifiable needs and demand.
- Together with language experts and experts in the field, to ensure all concepts and means are appropriately translated.

- Translation of key scientific concepts into another language could help in building an African language for use with scientific work.
- Very wide consultation in creation of accurate descriptive words and lingual concepts appropriate to the subject matter.
- We can follow the same models that use Afrikaans for scientific use.
- We need professionals in science who know the preferred language, and they have to work hand in hand with the professionals in that language since some of the words we use in science are already there. In short it has to be done by professors of the two fields (science and language).
- We need to develop our own unique research methodology to achieve these objectives.
- With assistance of competent mother-tongue speakers.
- You cannot develop an African language for scientific use as science by nature is better communicated in English/French etc.
- African language training should only be available as a subject towards obtaining a degree/diploma with the language as a major.
- African languages in science should only be a second priority, with English remaining the primary scientific language as is standard international practice. Third-party translation once the research has been completed should be considered, but it should not be a requirement of the student or academic to undertake the translation. The lexicon of most African languages does not contain the necessary words for describing scientific theory etc.
- All publications in international journals and all international conferences use English as the preferred means of communication. It is pointless to try and communicate science in an African language.
- All research and scientific outputs should be translated into English, isiZulu and French.
- An African language cannot be used to teach basic science for science degrees or medicine as the required vocabulary is not part of the language.
- Ask PhD students to publish their theses in both English and their preferred language.
- By establishing academic journals, especially in the sciences, which use African languages. Languages can't be developed for scientific use by a committee of linguists.
- Developing the language in the particular field of science.
- Difficult one, especially when everyone is trying to master English because it dominates the scientific community. I think this may be 'would like to have' but impractical in implementation.
- Doing proper research on the translated language because some words won't mean the same as [they do] in English.
- Get African or indigenous academic and non-academic persons to develop the language.

- Hire lots of African tutors, and/or even students can be trained to tutor both staff and students.

- I am just wondering whether the world will be prepared to accept journals in Zulu or Sesotho within the time line of the attainment of the Vision 2022... I don't think we need to implement the language policy in science as it is an internationalised subject. The answer is not in resonance with the question but truly in the bigger scheme of things we need to ask ourselves what is more important: to help academics: to be more research active, or to burden them with a language requirement that is only specific to South Africa?

- I am not convinced this should be done. I come from France where we used to have 10 different languages. I come from a region, Brittany, where the main language was Breton. It is nice to be able to learn the language but it is unrealistic to think this is going to be a future international trading language. However, in South Africa, it is really important to understand the wording for some of our research. Also, it helps building links with the local communities. And THAT is important. However I have no doubt English is the language of the future. The future of South Africa is to open itself, not stay enclosed on itself. And what this means is that we can preserve our local languages locally but should at no point try to use them in international or even national contexts. We will necessarily leave someone out which is not ideal either. The point of developing a local language is so that it makes our work better. However the publication research issued from this should be in English (in France, Russia, China, the only language of major publications is in English and English is not even an official language).

- I believe it should be kept to English as should the students travel, they [would not be] trying to translate into a foreign language.

- I believe that this is a short-sighted approach. Almost all good technical research is published in English. Publishing in any other language will not get the University the credit it needs to become a Top 100 university.

- I think African languages should be used as support for English-medium instruction, as is befitting a world-class university in an African context.

- I think it would be helpful if it could be used to help students to understand concepts (it should be developed to include all important concepts in a specific field).

- I was at a meeting on how teachers at the education campus are trying to convert English into an African language to teach. The vocabulary is limited and in the translation the true meaning and essence of English is being lost. There is such a danger of meaning changing because of interpretation being different! I really think that it should be the other way and people should be encouraged to master English.

- If teaching science communications, then proficiency in at least a single African language is ideal, but otherwise, internationally acclaimed science is done primarily in English.

- I'm afraid that I am of the opinion that since the global language of academia is English, although this might be imperialist and discriminating towards the South, we will expend energy in this area that will not be wholly constructive. My language preference would be Zulu since I am somewhat familiar with this and it overlaps with Xhosa, and then Sotho since this

is widely spoken in Gauteng – if I have to answer in terms of an actual language.

- In law we could start with key legal concepts as already used in legislation published in indigenous languages.

- Interact with language experts in the formulation of scientific names and terms.

- Involvement of all stakeholders/relevant constituencies, and in particular those currently impacted on by English (through history).

- *iNyuvesi yakwa Zulu isiluqalile lohlelo lokuqamba amagama ngokwesingisi ukuya Esizulwini*. By ensuring that all the components' names are converted from English to Zulu language.

- It should be developed [in a] similar way [to how] Afrikaans was developed. Experts in this field will certainly be better positioned on the technical requirement for scientific development of languages.

- Language advisers should be available to assist with developing vocabulary for specialised disciplinary terms. The deep structure of the language does not have to be changed.

- Need to get the Masters & PhD graduates in Linguistics majoring in Sesotho (should Sesotho be the University-preferred language).

- One cannot print research material in an African language as English is the universal language in the world. I am Swedish and a Professor and you give me the research in Zulu. How would I be able to mark it if I am from Sweden?

- Open spaces for development, e.g. promotion strategies like word competitions; short-article writing, etc.

- Print, radio or television - it is crucial to get information about science to wider audiences, allowing communities to learn about scientific developments in a meaningful way.

- Research and publishing should take place. Translation of already published research could be considered to aid this process and begin developing the language.

- Research should be conducted and because of language rules content has to be properly researched in order to get context right.

- Scientific language should develop organically from a language. If African languages have to develop in that fashion, then research questions, methods and fieldwork should be done in those languages and professional translators should assist and gradually terms will develop (e.g. there's an organic Zulu term for cell phone – *umakhal'ekhukhwini*).

- Some African languages like isiZulu and Setswana are much more developed than others and so it should not be difficult to use them for scientific purposes.

- The African language should be a basic one to enable day to day communication. There is no need for Wits to spend millions in teaching staff the complexities of that particular language.

- The international language of science is English. Any attempt to use an African language in terms of real international science will be ignored.

- The role of language and access to language skills is critical to ensure the rights of individuals to realise their full potential to participate in and contribute to the social, cultural, intellectual, economic and political life of South African society.

- The University must consult the National Department of Arts and Culture to get the whereabouts of the already written dictionaries of African languages' technical terms.

- The world has already settled on a number of languages for academic use. Papers written in a language other than English immediately have a lower impact factor and are not accessible to the general global academic community.

- This in itself is why I would be opposed to any other language but English being used as the medium of instruction or research. The rest of the official languages in the country are not used worldwide – it would be a disservice to researchers to force them to use a language other than English in which most scientific work is conducted. It could also lead to gross misinterpretation of concepts and data. Being able to speak another language is vastly different to teaching or conducting research in it.

- This is a political question, with political solutions (perhaps). It has no role in scientific use. This might have been possible decades ago, but is certainly no longer an option.

- This is so ridiculous it is hardly worth commenting on. I work with scientists from all over the world. The only language we communicate in and publish in is English. The effort and resources required to TRANSLATE (not create) work from English will sink our efforts to promote science in South Africa. Science is an international language, it just happens to be communicated in English, which we consider ourselves lucky to be the case. If you really want another language in the system for the future then maybe consider Chinese.

- This would be to repeat a failed experiment by the Afrikaner government in apartheid days. Today the international language for science is English. No indigenous language will be of any use in achieving international competency and recognition.

- To support the globalisation initiative, a common global language should be adopted, like English. Our South African languages are understood in South Africa only and would not complement globalisation or internationalisation.

- Use linguists who are specialists in these languages together with educators highly proficient in these languages.

Students

4.1 Profile of Participants

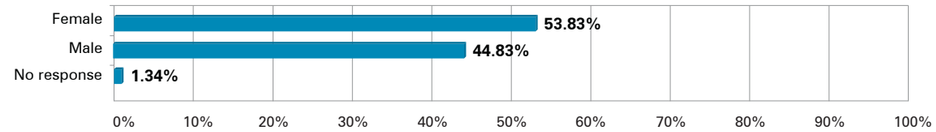

Figure 38: Profile by Gender

As stated in Table 2 of this report, the total number of student participants in this study was 6 425. Figure 38 provides a gender breakdown of the sample. The majority of participants in this study (53.83%) were female, and 44.83% were male. This trend is in line with the enrolment patterns of the University since 2009. It can therefore be argued that sentiments and views shared by students in this study can be generalised across the broader student population as the views were not biased towards a particular gender, but reflective of the general gender breakdown of the student population.

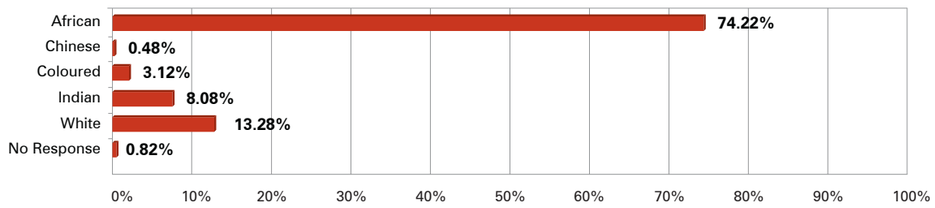

Figure 39: Profile by Race

Figure 39 shows that the majority of students who participated in this study were African (74.22%), followed by White at 13.28%, Indian (8.08%), Coloured 3.12%) and Chinese (0.48%). The racial pattern of participation does not conflict with the enrolment trends in the University; clearly African students are in the majority at Wits.

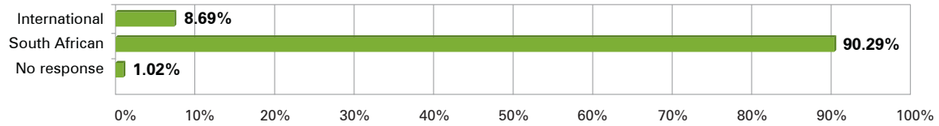

Figure 40: Nationality Profile

Figure 40 is also firmly in line with the general trend of University enrolment by nationality since 2008. Data derived from the University Business Information Systems Platform show that in the past five years the proportion of international to South African students has plateaued at 10%. Figure 40 shows that 90.29% of student participants in this study are South African, in line with the trends, and 8.69% are international students. It can be understood that the choice of African language for purposes of teaching and learning, research and business purposes would be dictated by the origins and nationality of the largest group of respondents in this study, in this case, South African students.

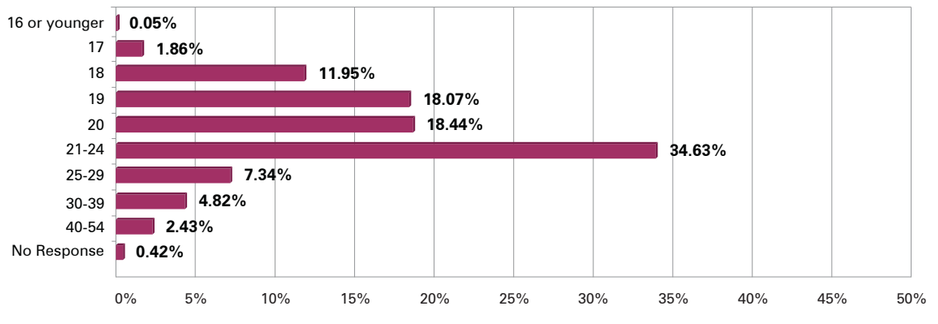

Figure 41: Age Profile

Figure 41 shows a balanced split of level of maturity among students who participated in the study. Half the participants – 50.32% – were below the age of 21, with 49.22% of respondents being mature students, 21 and older. This illustrates that this sample's choice of language that could be used for teaching and learning, research, community engagement and business processes is well informed by the different levels of readiness of the students making such choices. The levels of readiness in this case could be defined as those of students who are still pursuing a first degree (hypothetically younger than 21years) versus those students who could be in the final year/s of a first degree pursuing a second degree (hypothetically older than 21 years). It has to be noted that the biggest group of respondents in this study (34.63%) were between the ages of 21 and 24 years. The other two relatively high groups of participants were 19 years old (18.07%) and 20 years old (18.44%).

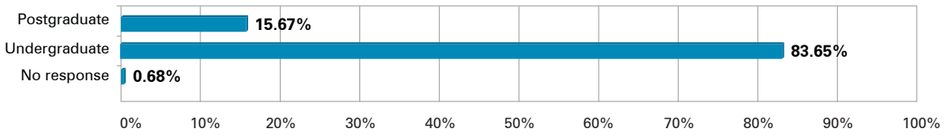

Figure 42: Level of Study

The analysis provided in Figure 41 is supported by data presented in Figure 42. While postgraduate students in the University constitute 30% of total student

enrolment, in this study only 15.67% of respondents were enrolled for postgraduate studies. A large majority of participants (83.65%) were undergraduate students.

It could be argued that the relevance of a language policy that aims to intervene in shaping teaching and learning engagements through innovative pedagogies is higher at an undergraduate level where the majority of students will be transitioning from high-school education and being prepared for professional life. The fact that the majority of participants in this study were from the undergraduate level speaks to the heart of the matter, where challenges presented by the complexity of working in second, third and foreign languages need to be mediated through a progressive language policy. Views in this study firmly sit within the area of concern where progressive and innovative teaching and learning modalities mitigated by affirming language policies need to be put in place.

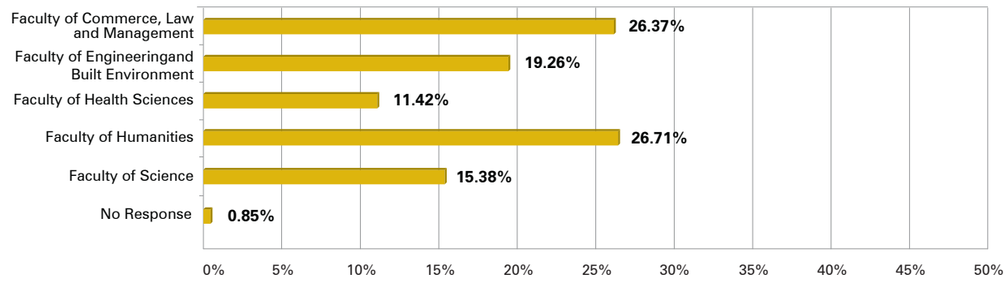

Figure 43: Faculty of Affiliation

It is quite clear from Figure 43 that all faculties were relatively well represented in the student sample of the study. While the Faculty of Commerce Law and Management (26.37%) and the Faculty of Humanities (26.71%) had the largest representation, no faculty had less than 10% representation in this study. The Faculty of Engineering and the Built Environment had 19.26% representation, the Faculty of Science had 15.38%, and the Faculty of Health Sciences had 11.42%. It can therefore be argued that the preferences expressed by students can be generalised across different knowledge domains as represented by the different faculties.

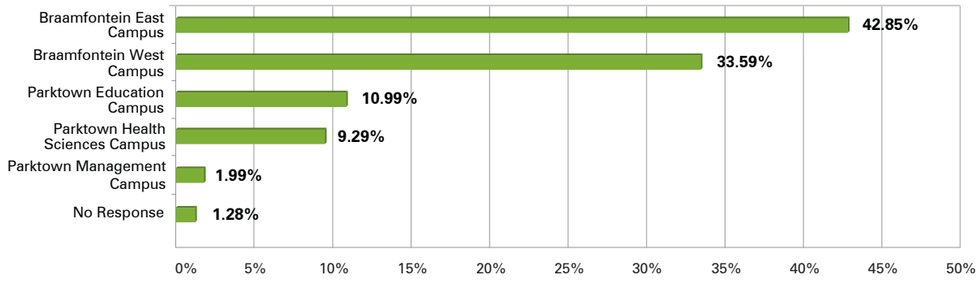

Figure 44: Campus of Affiliation

While the majority of participants were based at the Wits Main Campus (Braamfontein East Campus at 42.85% and Braamfontein West Campus at 33.59%), all key campuses were fairly represented in the sample. The data show that 10.99% of participants were based at the Parktown Education Campus, 9.29% were from the Parktown Health Sciences Campus, and a small number (1.99%) were from the Parktown Management Campus.

4.2 Preferred Language

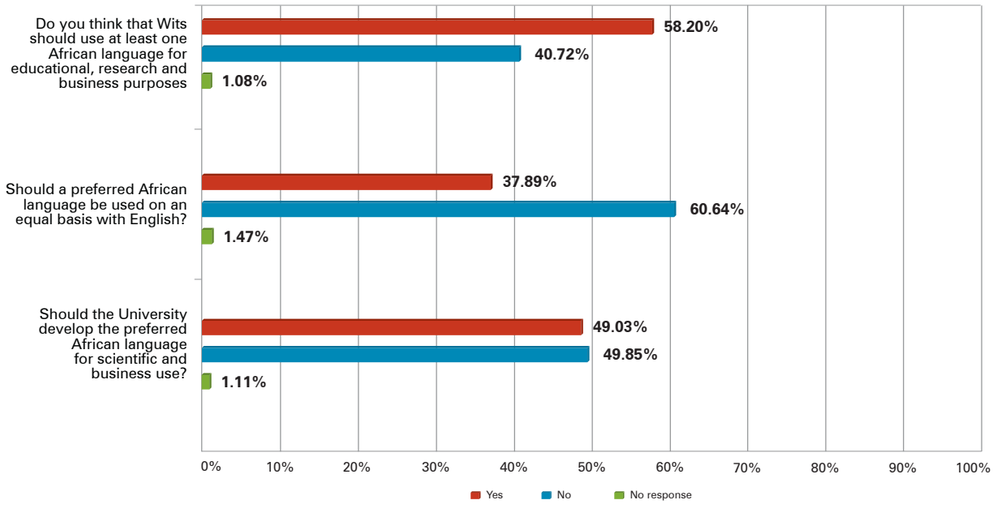

Figure 45: Usage of Preferred Language

Figure 45 presents an interesting scenario. The majority of student participants (58.20%) felt that it was important for Wits to use at least one African language in teaching and learning, and research. Only 40.72% did not share this view. However, when asked whether a preferred African language should be used on an equal basis with English, the majority (60.64%) did not agree. Only 37.89% felt that it should. There was a balanced split of opinions in relation to whether the University should be required to develop a preferred African language for scientific and business use, with 49.03% agreeing that it should, and 49.85% saying that this was not necessary. From data presented in Figure 45, very clear point pointers have emerged: first, the majority of students feel that the University should introduce at least one African language for educational, research and business purposes. It could be argued that the voice of students in this study constitutes the voice of University clients. It is also clear from this data that students are not underestimating the relevance of English as medium of communication and instruction. Views expressed by students are directly linked to those views widely shared by University staff, which clearly indicates that the majority of respondents are not of the view that such a preferred African language should be used on equal basis with English. When comparing the views of students to those of staff on developing an African language for scientific use, it appears as if students are advocating for an African language to be developed for scientific use to a greater degree than staff members are.

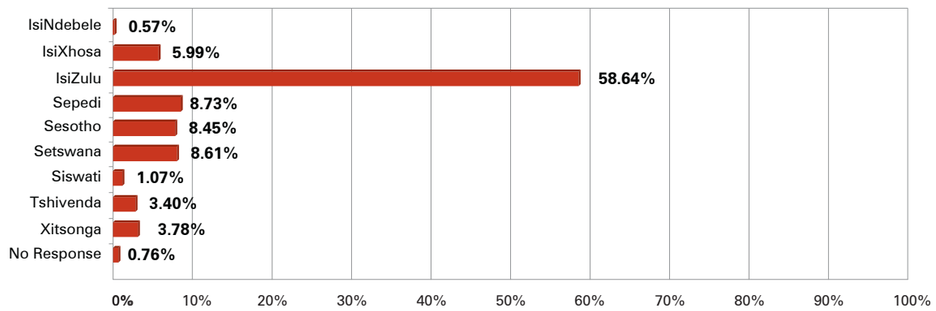

Figure 46: Preferred Language

In contrast to the data presented in Figure 23, showing that 21.50% of the 732 staff members who participated did not choose a preferred language, Figure 46 shows that almost all of the 6 425 students expressed an opinion on the matter. Only 0.76% did not choose a preferred language. It is clear from Figure 46 that the majority of students in the University choose isiZulu as a preferred African language to be introduced as an official means of teaching and learning, research, and business communication, together with English. The choice made by students clearly nullifies any attempt to consider another language for such purposes, given the fact that all other languages received less than 10% support from students.

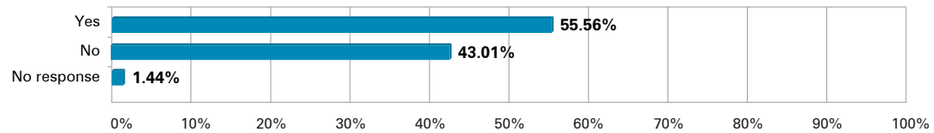

Figure 47: Requiring Students to Enrol for a Communication Course in a Preferred African language

It is important to understand how students think that isiZulu could be developed and used for educational and research purposes. Figure 47 shows that 55.56% of participants felt that students should be required to enrol in a communication course in a preferred African language. Less than half – 43.01% – felt that this was not necessary. It could therefore be argued that the majority of students called for a structured learning approach to the development of a chosen African language as, quite clearly, the majority supported instituting enrolment in an African language course as a requirement for all students. This calls for the integration of such a language-development course into the mainstream curriculum at Wits.

While the majority of students have supported the use of isiZulu as an official language at Wits, and are also calling for it to be used as a part of the structured curriculum, it is important to note that they were cautions about the extent to which this language should be made part of official teaching and learning, research, and community-engagement arrangements. While it could be argued that the difference between those who think that an African language should be used in designing the University curriculum and those who disagree with that view is not large, it must be stated that the majority of participants (54.91%) disagreed. The proposal attracted support from only 42.31% of respondents.

Figure 48 also shows that the majority of students (51.83%) disagreed with the view that the chosen African language should be used in designing learning materials. Only 45.95% agreed that this should be done. A majority of participants (55.08%) also disagreed with using a chosen African language for code switching during lectures. Only 41.40% supported the idea.

A larger majority of participants (61.66%) were against the idea of using a chosen African language for formal assessment of students; only 34.89% supported it.

The evidence gleaned from the analysis of data in Figure 48 suggests that while students are calling for the introduction of an African language (isiZulu) to be used as a second official language in the University, the majority are not ready to have that language fully integrated into the University's educational and research arrangements. Clearly, however, the majority of students do want this language to be used for general communication with students, without necessarily extensively developing it for scientific use. The data show that 66.24% of these respondents supported using a chosen African language for general communication, while 35.03% did not.

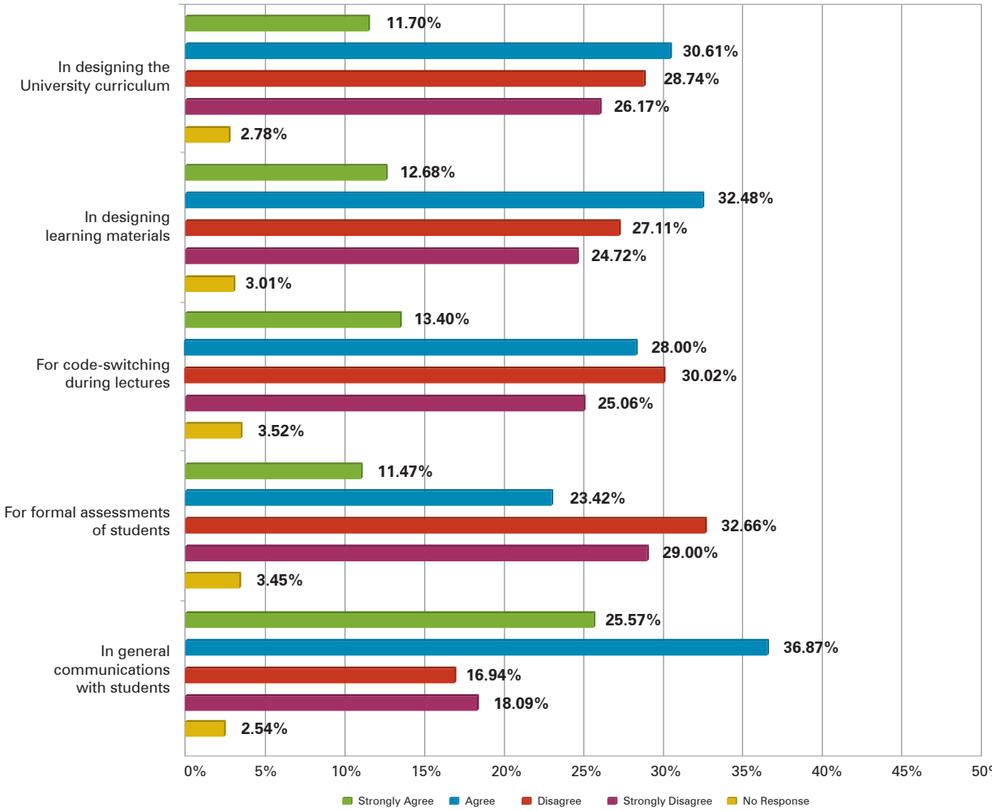

Figure 48: Using an African Language in Teaching and Learning

Bearing in mind that the majority of these respondents were undergraduate students, as depicted in Figure 42 above, it is interesting to realise that a large number of respondents suggested that a chosen African language should be used as an option when conducting research. Figure 49 shows that 59.78% of respondents supported this view, and only 36.82% disagreed.

However, the majority (54.65%) did not believe that such a language should be used in writing research reports. Only 41.46% of respondents thought it could. Furthermore, a majority of participants (54.29%) did not support the view that a chosen African language should be used in publishing scholarly work in Wits-based journals. Only 41.41% supported such a view. There was also no majority support for the use of an African language in code-switching during research discussions. Most respondents (52.39%) disagreed with this option and 43.25% supported it. However, just as with teaching and learning, the majority of respondents (55.31%) felt that it was important to recognise a chosen African language in general communication with researchers.

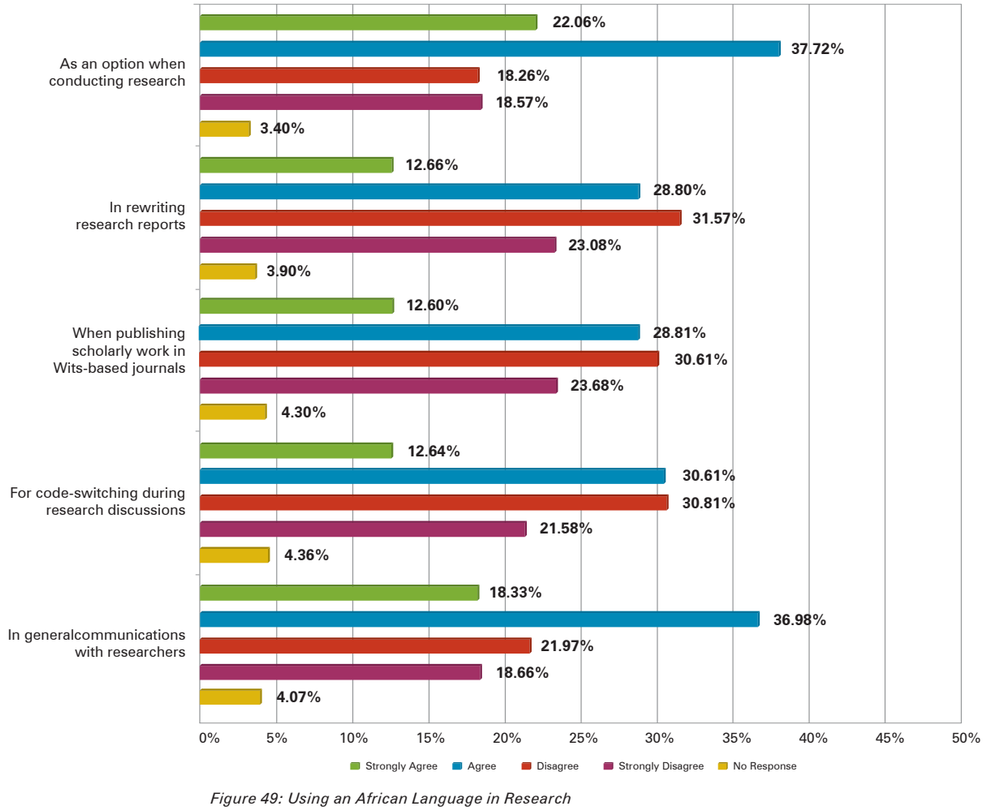

Figure 49: Using an African Language in Research

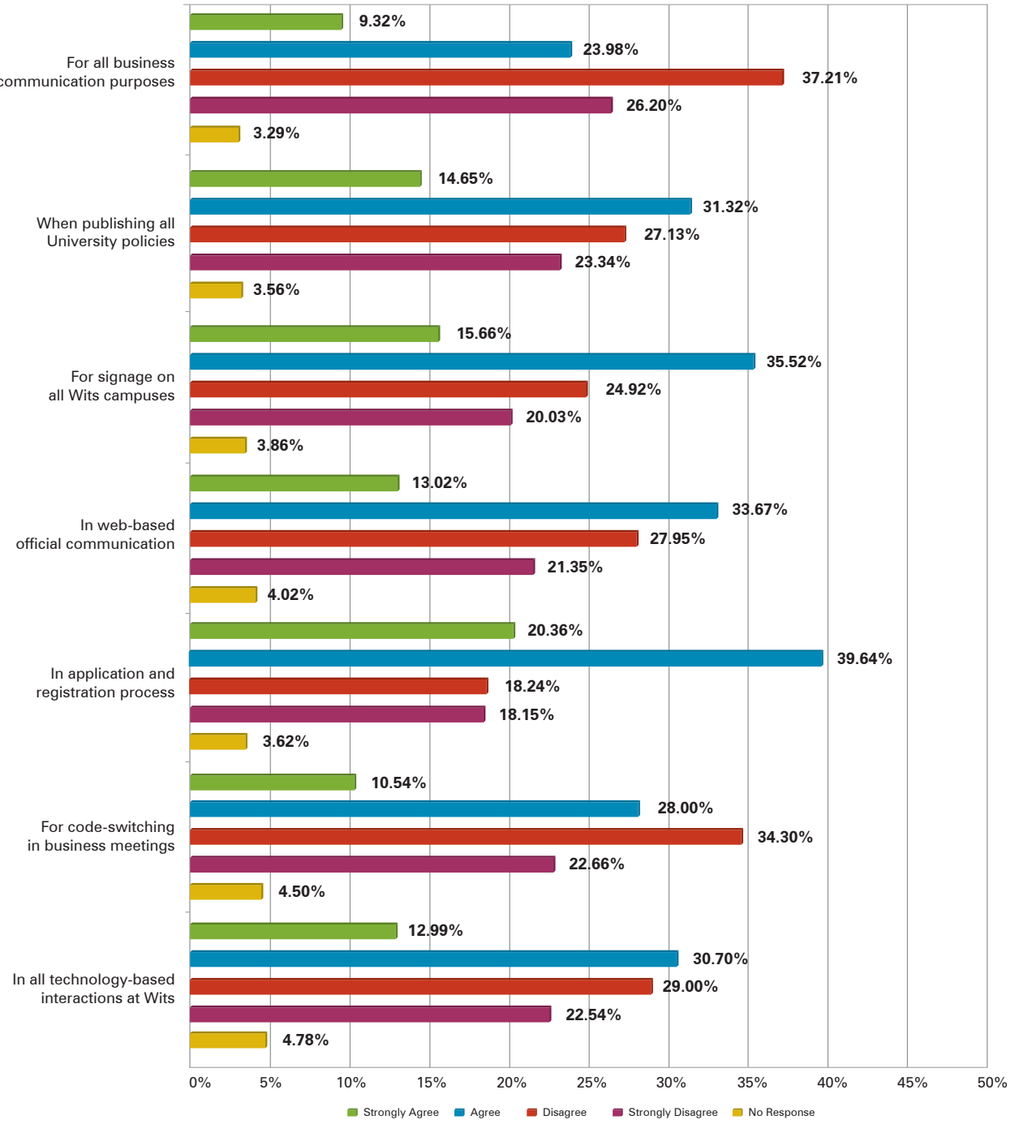

Figure 50: Using an African language in General University Business

Figure 50 shows prevailing confusion regarding the purpose of introducing an African language as the second official language in the University. Clearly, as is the case with staff, students have mixed views on how the African language can be used for business. A large proportion of respondents (63.41%) did not agree that an African language should be used for business communication purposes. Only 33.30% agreed with this view. However, a relatively high number of students, although still in the minority (45.97%) felt that the University could use an African language to publish all University policies, with a bare majority (50.47%) feeling that it was not necessary. Nevertheless, in addition to general communication with students regarding teaching and learning and research arrangements, as suggested in Figure 48 and 49 above, a new area of approval of the African language use emerges in this data. Though not a large majority, 51.18% supported the view that an African language should be used for signage across all campuses; 44.95% disagreed.

Data presented in Figure 50 also shows a marginal split of opinion regarding whether or not an African language should be used in web-based official communication. At 49.30%, a slightly larger number of participants disagreed with this usage, and 46.68% agreed. An area that received large support for the use of an African language was the application and registration processes. The data show that 59.99% of respondents felt that an African language should be used in application and registration, and only 36.39% of respondents did not agree.

The majority of participants (56.96%) did not support the view that an African language should be used for code-switching in business meetings, while 38.54% did. Lastly in this section, 51.54% did not agree that that an African language should be used in all technology-based interactions in the University, while 43.69% supported this view.

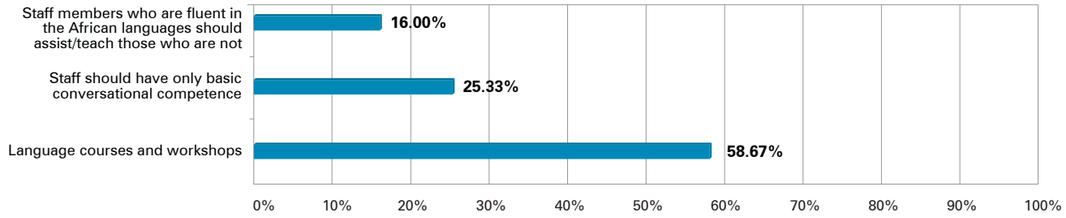

Figure 51: Training Staff to use a Preferred African Language

The questions illustrated in Figure 51 gave students a choice of three scenarios to solicit their views on how they thought academic staff could be trained and developed to use a preferred African language. It is clear to see that the majority of students (58.67%) favoured the view that language courses and workshops should be designed for academic staff to acquire the required proficiency in the preferred African language. However, 25.33% suggested that this should not be an official requirement, but that staff should be assisted to develop basic conversational competence in the preferred African language. Only 16% were of the view that the University should use existing resources in the form of staff members already fluent in an African language to provide assistance or teaching for those who are not.

Students' comments on how Staff should be Trained

- I think the Wits staff should be trained through making available compulsory African indigenous books to read, often for pleasure, and also they need workshops with experts on African indigenous languages.

- It would be easier to learn specific language that would mostly occur in their specific work setup, than the whole language. It would also be helpful to have staff that do speak the language, but not fair to hire based on that fact.

- Professionals in an African language should be appointed to teach the staff on a regular basis through engaging them in different easy and exciting activities for them to enjoy learning of the language – Sepedi.

- A certain number of staff in every department should be fluent and able to assist students and other people in any way they need through the African language.

- A certain number of staff should be trained through taking a language course. It should be mandatory for those willing to teach in isiZulu.

- A computer program can be established which will translate what the lecturers are actually saying. But the system should also help them to understand the African languages.

- A curriculum should be developed and they must be taught, and a proficiency assessment must be passed prior to them applying it.

- A deeper understanding of said language should first be achieved before engaging in formal conversation. Staff members should be taught to pronounce, read and write in the said language in a formal lecture.

- A dictionary/book should be written which will include English translations of the language. Free lectures should be conducted on weekends for the language.

- A full two-year training course should be implemented in conjunction with other academic training material. This can be done either before or during their time as lecturers. It should also be necessary to make the expected training course run over a period of two years so that staff may be fluent in both the basics and intermediates of the language. Perhaps an online training course on African languages provided by Wits would make it flexible and effective for staff to do this at any time.

- A professional in that particular African language should be employed to assist in training the staff in all basic fields of the usage of that language.

- A starting point would be to hire or make use of existing lecturers with proficiency in the specific language. Workshops and training programmes would be necessary to assist lecturers to get used to teaching/researching using the selected language. The language should be introduced in a reasonable manner and not rushed as it can be overwhelming and unsupported.

- A teacher who is qualified to teach an African course should be hired to teach the African language to the staff.

- A workshop of general language familiarity should take place for a period of 2–5 weeks, video lessons should be distributed to staff and international students and a 2-week conference where staff and international students teach, learn, and communicate in the African language they have been learning.

- African-language classes should be offered to staff on beginner, intermediary and advanced levels much in the same way that the modern languages are taught to Wits students.

- African language should not be introduced on the basis of becoming an alternative to English but rather as a means to eradicate communication barriers between lecturer and students. I think the staff should be taught an African language to accommodate us African students as not all of us attended Model C schools. It would help many students to adapt to University [rather] than to see everything as a difficult challenge even to understand the content of the lecture.

- African languages are difficult to understand even to Africans themselves, e.g. the Zulu spoken in Johannesburg is not the original spoken in KwaZulu Natal. Therefore I think staff should be trained to understand the African languages spoken in Joburg for a start, then they can further the understanding with time.

- African languages can be learnt just like English is learnt by Africans. The staff can use African languages to communicate with students and fellow colleagues. However, I feel that it should be a choice for one to communicate in any African language. This means that the use of African languages should not infringe on anybody's rights.

- At least there must be a one-year course, for every degree or diploma. Students who think they should do the language for more than a year must be allowed to do so.

- After the first language is agreed upon, they should be given continuous courses run over the course of say, 6 months, attending for about an hour once a week where they will be given lessons in literacy and given progressively more advanced diction in the language. They should be encouraged to communicate to each other in this language and should be excited about this endeavour. They will be involved from the beginning so they understand, support the cause and so you have their full support.

- Everyone should be taught in English and taught to use the English language correctly so as to form a proper standard to use on a global, world-wide platform to avoid any misconception or misunderstandings.

- All members of the staff should have timeous training during non-working hours, regarding learning and being able to articulate their thoughts and feelings in their preferred African language.

- All staff members must enrol for the African language at the University on a part-time basis during the lecture block and holiday period of the students.

- All staff members should be required to complete a short course in an African language so that basic phrases can be communicated to students – this promotes awareness on campus that Wits welcomes the use of African languages.

- All staff must know enough of the language to hold a conversation with students for whom it is a first language. Other lecturers should know enough to lecture in the language.

- All staff should take at least one African-language full-year beginner's course which allows them to have basic communication skills to accommodate the use of another language spoken in South Africa.

- All the staff must do any preferred language, more especially the popular one. They can do [it] part time, but the most important thing is that at the end of the day they will be able to communicate using that language.

- An African language can be used when conducting research and researchers are required to be familiar with African languages. The only way to train them is to teach them.

- An African language programme should be set up which would be overseen by lecturers who are thoroughly literate, knowledgeable and fluent in speaking and in the usage of a particular African language.

- An African language should just be added in the curriculum for people to choose. Lessons should be given to staff members who are willing to learn an African language.

- Attendance of a basic course would be adequate. This African language should be an alternative to English, or even complement English where necessary.

- I do not think that it would be necessary for the staff to now be immersed in a course that requires too much of them. As long as the basics are covered, that shall suffice.

- Appoint a content manager responsible for all communication in an African language. Not all staff needs to be trained to use an African language but rather made aware of the policies and person responsible for implementation.

- As a communication medium with students in the early stages, as the aim should be to encourage students to be able to speak one African language which will help in the business environment, and improve communication between South Africans in general.

- As a matter of understanding the student, but not a priority as it is a well-known and accepted fact that Wits is an English-medium school.

- As a means of communicating information to students who are struggling with the English used during lectures. It should not become the primary means of communication, but more as a manner of making information more accessible to students who are struggling with English.

- As a secondary language to English using computer-aided software. Perhaps attend a volunteer course in the subject at the Wits School of Language.

- As [we have] a very diverse population I believe that an African language should be implemented through the empowerment of multilingual staff. Weekly or monthly courses could be made a part of staff training, as well as classes encouraging future students to participate in multilingual conversations in the working world, giving us the opportunity to encourage a future generation that allows for a medium to be created for the use of an African language.

- As much as I like the idea of engaging in tertiary spaces using an African language, I think that this should be limited to casual conversation and explanation on the part of the lecturers. As such, conversational isiZulu training might be useful for the staff.

- As much as it is not easy to learn English in rural areas I know that many people will have trouble adapting to this certain language. Special programmes should be initiated around Wits campuses and it should be compulsory to everyone.

- As South Africa is a diverse country with 11 official languages, it is vital to promote indigenous languages. Therefore original speakers of the language may be considered for the duty, as well as a one-year training course in the language offered by the African languages department in the University, known as elementary Zulu.

- As we constantly learn from the Wits staff how things are operated, the staff should also learn from us students throug h communication via the African language.

- Ask the professors from humanities and other language-based degrees

to train other professors teaching other courses. Possibly a setup similar to UKZN.

- At the Education campus we do the additional language as a compulsory subject so I think it will be easy for the staff, too, to learn the language as compulsory for them. That will make them at least know the language.

- Attend a course which will teach them to master the language and preferably have some background history or experience in the language itself.

- Attend a full-year workshop and be given relevant material to train in the specific language. Skilled experts in the language must also be accessible to make the learning much easier on campus for all stuff members after hours or during school hours (the University will have to decrease the number of lectures and activities for the staff in order to create space for the programme).

- Attend workshops whereby they are taught the basics of the language, and they should be encouraged to interact with students in other languages than English because for most of us our first year at Wits was a horror because we did not have the opportunity to do home language at school. Students should also be involved in this initiative; this can be done by adding this subject for all first-year curriculums just to break the racial boundaries than still exist on campus.

- Attend workshops/training classes where they are taught the basics in the African language. The progress can be monitored by the proficiency increase in the language of the people learning it.

- Attending courses held by lecturers of the preferred African language, or also giving 1st priority to those staff that already know the language, and try to better their skills.

- Attending extra classes should be one way of getting the staff members to acquire the language and be able to use it.

- Attending language schools on campus and getting to speak it with the African staff members just for general communication.

- Basic command of the language will be a great help to students who did indigenous languages as first languages throughout high school. This way students are able to communicate with staff effectively.

- Basic communication skills and vocabulary relating to the nature of their work must be taught at workshops and centres of instruction and training at the University – Wits should be resourceful in applying its wealth of language schools and academics towards designing a course for this purpose.

- Basic communication (how to speak) – nothing complicated. I love my home language but most students don't know how to read or write it.

- Basic courses, as with any language. Language barriers can cause problems, especially with such a vast variety of different cultures at Wits. It will be mutually beneficial for the University & students as a whole.

- Basic knowledge of the language, or at the very least tolerating the use of the African language by people communicating with them in that said language.

- Basic language courses that are structured in a way that will allow staff to communicate and respond to the African language.

- Basic language rules should be taught simply and slowly by those staff members fluent in the language. Simple things like pronunciation and basic vocabulary such as parts of speech like basic nouns, prepositions etc.

- Basic language should be done in a formal class and then a computer-based course on a bi-weekly basis should be compulsory, with activities at end, and if one has not completed the module he/she cannot go on to the [next] one, and it has to be rated as part of performance.

- Basics are essential, being able to communicate with students, for example when students consult, could ensure that the students understand concepts better. This could result in much growth in the student and thus the University as a whole.

- Before a staff member is employed they should first have a period of training in the language, [then] read more materials in the language to prepare them to be able to read and write the language properly.

- Both black and white staff members should get a training course where they are taught at least one official African language because in some instances the students struggle understanding a concept in English and it would be better if the staff members knew at least one African language whereby they can then be able to understand each other better. There is also this racial divide between staff members where you will find white lecturers with other white lecturers and black lecturers also associating with other black lecturers. If all staff members were then required to meet at least twice a week, in the same venue, to be taught how to communicate in this one African official language, not only will this 'racial gap' be breached, the lecturers will also learn to work together for achieving one goal. So it would have to be made compulsory that all staff members attend this lecture twice a week, where one staff member of the Wits Language School will be teaching the lecturers how to communicate in one African official language.

- By firstly teaching them the basics of the African language i.e. Sesotho 'home language'. Moreover teaching them about the culture and ways of the language speakers in order to relate to students who speak the language. In addition to make it easier for the non-speaking students to learn the language, and also familiarise themselves with the culture, and ways to speak the Sesotho language. Staff should also be taught on Sesotho 'home language' literature. They should be given a set of Sesotho books ....Staff should be made to learn *mekgabisopuo ya sesotho puo ya lapeng* (in english that would be the style of language; personifications; metaphors; etc.). Moreover I think staff should acquaint themselves with Sesotho-speaking students such as myself, if there are words or any problems they might face with the language. Last but not least I suggest that the students who know Sesotho tutor the staff. This in my point of view would lead to an end of students having to be shy or scared before asking important questions that would help them in their academics. Also this would improve lecturer and student relationships. I know that the number of hands that would be up to ask lecturers questions or give lecturers answers would be high.

- By providing them with booklets that deal with the basics of the specific language, also find someone who is an expert on that specific language to co-ordinate or facilitate the training procedure.

- By taking extra classes or enrolling for a course which teaches the

language, and they can also train or improve their language communication by participating with students in lectures with that specific language.

- By writing documents with both English and the preferred African language, and in this case it is isiZulu, so that students can be accommodated.

- Campus must produce an institution that encourages staff to learn the African language and produce a workshop for the African language.

- Choose one staff member who is good in at least 3 African languages who can be allocated to a class of students who have difficulties with understanding English, esp. first-years, instead of training every staff member.

- Classes on the language should be held for the staff, where basic concepts of the preferred language can be taught. The highest qualified for that particular African language should then be allowed to implement lessons in the language.

- Classes should be given to them on a regular basis and once in a while to brush up on some of the language-usage skills.

- Competence in at least one African language should suffice as they can switch while interacting with students.

- Considering that some people may be clueless on how to speak the preferred language, a similar strategy that is being used on the Education campus for 2nd-years can be used to train the staff. Organised classes are most effective. Participants may be given tasks to translate English text to an African language. This will obviously need the understanding of how African languages and culture are like a bolt and nut. Therefore, cultural activities may be organised just to give the essence of the nature of that African language. This will help to avoid the misuse of the particular language.

- Do not make things hard on them. Learn general basic words and sentences to help parents, learners and other persons who are interested about the varsity and aren't good English speakers.

- During the study break the staff should invite Tsonga-speaking people who are highly qualified in this language in order for them to help teach the staff the Xitsonga language.

- During the weekend all staff members can have lessons to be taught Tshivenda by the employees.

- Each member of the staff should at least do a basic course in the preferred language in order to have a basic understanding of the language.

- Each staff member must be taught at least the basics of each and every South African language.

- Each staff member should at least know and be able to communicate in at least one native language other than their own language, hence accommodating a vast amount of learners.

- Each staff member should choose one or two languages they can be comfortable with to interact and teach.

- Education students who are familiar with the language may be used to

teach and train the staff. This will be part of their training.

- Employ staff who knows the language. And obviously for some positions they will need to be able to speak and write it clearly, but some just [need to be] able to speak most of it.

- Everyone should undergo a compulsory course in which they learn the language together to ensure no further breakdown in communication. In addition, they should be given assignments for that course in order to strengthen their understanding of the language.

- Firstly by conducting research on the language to be used, bringing [together] what the professionals and researchers know about the matter, then assist the staff by doing a link between what the staff know [and new] information about the language. The staff must be introduced to information that is available through learning pathways that are better developed, so that it will be easier for the staff to understand and use the language.

- Firstly by learning the language to ensure that they too understand it fully, and are able to communicate with students and staff alike. Approaches used to teach the English language could be adapted for training in the preferred language.

- For communication purposes, because it is not always easy to understand something that is said to one in a language one is not too good at. The African language should be used to consolidate what has already been said in English to ensure there are no misunderstandings.

- With regard to the training of staff members, I think a system should be put in place where, if a lecturer cannot provide the lecture in the preferred African language, that a video lecture with the necessary notes and support should be provided for the students that CHOOSE to work in the preferred African language on the official student website where we would normally get notes and videos, i.e. Sakai. It should be as easy to get the 'translated' material as it is to get the English material. And for cases where students have problems and would like to consult with a lecturer then there SHOULD be at least one lecturer that can provide assistance in the preferred African language, i.e. that individual speaks the language well enough to communicate with students at a level that will assist them in understanding the material taught better.

- I think it would be more appreciated if staff is employed on the basis of ability to use multiple languages, including the language I have chosen to be the subject matter. Because training of staff could come out costly, then employ new staff who are eligible to meet the requirements of being able to code switch between languages.

- Most universities in South Africa are already using an African language for communication; suggest the Wits staff keep up to par by, firstly, learning to speak the African language that dominates both the institution as a whole and the business world. I would suggest intensive training for the learning of African languages by the staff, mastering the scientific jargon in terms of the language, and then transfer of such skills to the students.

- Nelson Mandela once said if a man is spoken to in a language he understands, it goes to his head, but if you talk to him in his language it goes to his heart, meaning that sometimes it is easier to comprehend and understand things in your own home/mother-tongue language. For example, if one is getting shouted at, if the shouting began in English, it switches from that to an indigenous home language to enforce and emphasise whatever it may be.

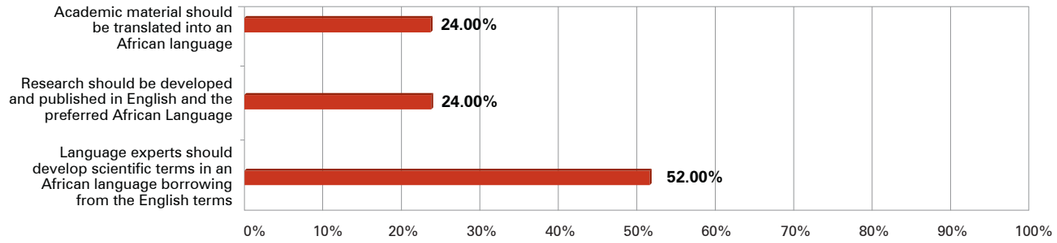

Figure 52: Developing the African language for scientific use

Open-ended questions on means through which a preferred African language should be developed could be classified into the three major categories depicted in Figure 52. A majority of participants felt that the process should be led by language experts who should construct terms and vocabulary for language advancement. Two other areas that emerged were 'publishing research on knowledge frontiers in an African language' and developing academic material in an African language.

Some of the Students' Comments

- By having lexicographers that can develop the resources regularly so that the terms used can be the recent ones.

- Countries have done this, and we can learn from countries like China and Germany who have developed their language [for] scientific use.

- In both research and scientific use, a lot of jargon is used. These technical terms have been developed and derived over decades from languages that include Latin.

- It should be developed through further research into its dialectical-origins relationship to the socio-cultural values which are prevailing.

- Run free language course in which the ratio of students speaking an African language increases, especially with white students. This would allow a better community and a way in which the scientific section can be studied in the African language.

- Scientific terminologies should stay the same, but as for communication, the African language should be put to use.

- Specific scientific terms can be in English until they are created for that African language.

- Hold a forum with Sotho experts and agree on universal terms to be used for scientific purposes.

- Do not think we despise it, principal. It speaks to us of our land and our people.

- A dual system makes more sense as it is accommodating to people from all walks of life. Like Stellenbosch University, people should be given the

option to study their desired course in an African language and not be disadvantaged in the global society.

- A group of scholars that know the language should be assigned to come up with certain scientific words that are not in the language itself.

- A home language when taught in high school makes it easier for one to understand the basis of a theory and thesis. Theories should be translated to the African language to make it easier for students to conduct experiments and lab practicals.

- A joint partnership including the Science and Language schools.

- A language course can be introduced and workshops held to help people enjoy this course. It would be helpful to do research work to communicate with people who are not able to speak English.

- A lot of terms may need to be generated which probably do not exist yet, so a lot of research on the language and maybe recognition of borrowings as part of the language may need to be involved too.

- A lot of the languages don't have scientific words, so develop those words as English words are being used to describe scientific things. And it's important if research is to be conducted in the languages.

- A panel of experts in the language and science can get together to develop a sort of dictionary, and then this can then be disseminated to the general population of the University.

- A preferred African language can assist students to learn better, especially those who are not well versed in English as a first language.

- A preferred African language should only be developed for scientific use if it serves to benefit a majority of the people who speak that indigenous language so as to ensure that they can read and have access to the scientific research information/reports.

- A student should have an option of getting a project or research brief in a language they fully understand.

- A way of incorporating it into Wits could be for postgraduate students that have advanced skills in the language to submit a thesis in the preferred language, if possible, as well as with an English thesis.

- Enable some scientists that can develop the language by explaining each and every sentence in English and interpreting it in isiZulu.

- Academics is an international field, if we are to incorporate a new language it should be French as it is spoken more in Africa and the rest of the world.

- Academics that are fluent in the African language should be encouraged to write material in African languages and begin the process of developing accepted terminology for scientific use.

- Acquire the skills of scholars who excel at both science and African languages. The scholars would then figure out how to develop the preferred African language for scientific use.

- Adapted to suit the academic environment and international standards.

- Adequate or proper use of the language, use of words and practices that are already in place.

- Africa has diversity and we know that because of all the types of people we have that live in harmony. I think that having an African language used for science would just emphasise our unity and diversity.

- African countries are lying behind western countries in science and technology, it is difficult to use an African language in a scientific work.

- African languages have already developed to an acceptable level. The scientific use of the language should not be a problem.

- African language can be used in scientific research... conducted in rural areas so that they can get the right information from the villages as they would understand everything.

- African language can help those [who have] the basic idea of science but don't understand English very well.

- African language could be used as part of research to collect information from those who do not speak English. However, as English is the internationally standardised language for publication, any published research should still be written and presented in English.

- African language experts should be consulted and research words from the African language should be found, developed, or created, or English words should be incorporated into the African language.

- African-language guide books/manuals can be published based on the science field.

- African language must be developed in such a way that it is easier to describe and define terms which may be difficult to describe, explain or define which may arise from English, Italian or Spanish etc.

- African language should be used as an option for scientific journals and other related texts.

- African languages and science do not go hand in hand, for one thing, translating science terminology into an African language the meaning gets lost in the translation. Hence I do not think it is worthwhile to even think of developing an African language for scientific use.

- African languages are complicated, however they are part of our culture, but most South Africans do not understand the importance and meaning of language. So if we are firstly able to grasp that aspect it will encourage African languages to be embraced rather than forgotten. There is a need to understand the complex spectrum of the indigenous languages of South Africa.

- African languages are spoken by a very small percentage of the world's population. When in that percentage are some of the least educated in the global society, international readers will be severally set back when trying to source 'African research'.

- African languages are used primarily in South Africa and Africa and will not benefit the world population It will cost more to translate.

- African languages as a general rule do not have the vocabulary required to be used for scientific purposes.

- African languages can be developed for scientific use as most traditional medicines are processed and named in English, but if the original African name is used to describe and formulate the necessary equation it remains true.

- African languages lack a lot of scientific concepts so translation would really be difficult, almost impossible.

- African languages should be added on to research, academics must be allowed to research studies in their ethnic languages so as to allow them to develop the proposed language model.

- African languages should be given room to evolve as they had always done before the use of text. They need to accommodate scientific development, just like English. Scientists may develop new terminology with African originality. For example, names for scientific components may be discussed by intellectuals and be used in text. In time, people will have to eventually be familiarised to these terms and use of language.

- African languages won't be developed for scientific use since some of scientific terms are not there in African languages and, for example, [some of] the equipment we are using when conducting our experiments is not manufactured here in Africa, we import it from overseas. So it will take a lifetime to use African languages for scientific purposes.

- African names should be developed to name scientific terms.

- African people have skill and most of them are very good when it comes to science programmes, but the problem is they are not able to verify themselves in it. [If the languages are developed] people can participate using their language in science programmes.

- African professors who specialise in the field and are fluent in the preferred language should help with the development.

- African tradition has a lot to offer to science, but unfortunately a lot is left unrecognised simply because there is no English term for it. Africans always had a way of growing their own food, producing their own maize meal, preserving their foods so that they don't get rotten, and also finding medicines to heal different diseases and what they use to clean wounds. Engage with that culture and understand their way of doing things, and invite intellectuals speaking that language to write reports, and from there ask how they can link what they learned with modern science. It might not be a fast, easy process but it can be very effective.

- Africans are known for being cultured and very traditional (rituals and *muthi*), therefore certain herbs/*muthi* can be tested for scientifically using an African language for better understanding between herbalists/traditional healers and scientists. Also, scientists could find African herbs interesting and they could probably want to perform experiments, so a language barrier could be removed and herbalists would be able to work with scientists.

- Afrikaans has been used successfully in the field of science. It can attribute its success to heavy borrowing from the English language and then adapting the words into Afrikaans. English itself is so rich because it has over centuries borrowed and adapted words from Greek, Latin and French. Therefore to develop an African language for scientific use would require the same approach: borrow and adapt. An academic institution is the best place for such development. It has the linguists who can foster such development and scientists who can give continuous feedback on the effectiveness of the language being developed in expressing concepts clearly, and its scope for abstractness.

- After the research has been completed in the researcher's preferred language, it should be made available in an African language.

- Again, as above, it should be optional, based on the students' preferences and the number of students who select this option.

- Again it would be useful for the research aspect within South Africa. However, as Wits strives to be an internationally ranked University it would be in its best interest for the material it publishes to be accessible in a format and language that numerous countries throughout the world communicate in.

- Again, it should be available as an option for research purposes.

- Like any other language, it will grow on its own to incorporate academic or any other new concepts.

- Again, the language should be used when situations allow, e.g. when a researcher is going to present in front of people who use that language primarily. The worst thing would be imposition of the language on people who don't know it or understand it. It should be 'use upon preference and as situations dictate' kind of situation.

- Again, this is a huge jump and the use of an African language would have to be alongside that of the University's English mode of communication – I would suggest that all research etc. is rather translated.

- Alignment of African languages to academic and scientific use.

- All academic material that is to be published should be published in English for the sake of international readers and researchers.

- All articles written in English should be at least being translated to the chosen African language for easy scientific use. In everything written in English or any language there must be the chosen African language translation beneath it.

- All first-year University students in all departments should have the opportunity to learn the basics fundamentals of the language, then further learn the language in detail for communication purpose and academic use.

- All languages can be used in scientific terms, words that can be used alternatively with English.

- Everyone should be taught in English and taught to use the English language correctly so as to form a proper standard to use on a global, world-wide platform to avoid any misconception or misunderstandings.

- All personnel must be familiarised with the language to make scientific communication easier.

- All research material should at least be translated to African languages so that even people on the streets can have access.
- All scientific words should also be translated into one of the African languages for better understanding.
- All scientific concepts given in English should be published by the University so that [they] could be of use [for understanding].
- All scientific documents created by Wits should be written in English and in Tsonga.
- All scientific names must be used in our language! E.g. chemicals, *ikhemikhali*.
- All scientific research must be translated into this African language.
- All scientific terms and explanation should be translated in the most accurate and transparent manner, so as to avoid any confusion and misinterpretation.
- All scientific terms should remain as they are, developing African terms would actually retard the rate of progress as learning new terms takes time, and the possibility of such terms being adopted on a national basis is highly unlikely due to the fact that there are numerous official languages that will also demand recognition.
- All stakeholders should be consulted. New words or terms should be developed in consultation with the general public and language specialists.
- All the computers, for example, must have one African language that students will be able to understand because it's not everyone that understands English.
- All the science materials should have information written in the preferred official language and also in English, so that if the students do not understand they can just refer to the English version and get the whole picture. That way they will get to know and understand the language easily.
- All the terminology that exists in science has its own wording in every African language. This is mostly the names of traditional plants used in traditional medicine.
- All topics should have a version written in the language.
- All written scientific documents must have at least one or two words having the same meaning as the scientific term, so it will be easier for students to relate it to their language.
- Allow reports and thesis to be translated into [the African languages].
- Allow research and computational questions to be answered in vernacular if the point of opinion can be portrayed better.
- Alternative languages for research and scientific use would allow the research to reach a greater target audience and be more appealing to the audience. I feel that research should be published in English as well as an African language.

Outsourced Staff

5.1 Personal Information

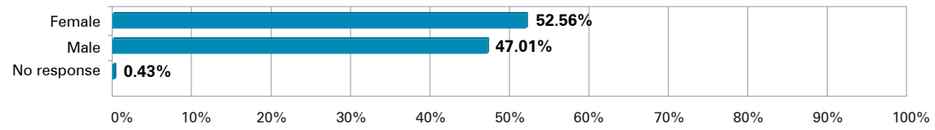

Figure 53: Profile by Gender

Given the fact that staff working for outsourced services spend much of their time at Wits, even though they are not part of the Wits staff, it was important to solicit their views on the preferred African language that could be used in addition to English. One of the reasons is that they engage with staff and students during their stay at Wits. That communication has to be supported by their expectations in relation to a medium of communication that makes them comfortable. The majority of employees in outsourced services do not have a high level of education that would enable them to communicate fluently in English, which is the main medium of communication at Wits. Introducing an African language as a second official language will therefore also be of advantage to workers in outsourced services, allowing them to communicate in a language that they are comfortable with. Secondly, some workers in outsourced services are sending their children to study at Wits. Having this option available may improve the chances that they will opt to do so. From a practical point of view, the views of these staff members were considered important in shaping the new language policy. As previously shown in Table 1 and 2, 234 staff from outsourced services, including Wits Security Staff, participated in this study.

Figure 53 shows that the majority of participants (52.56%) were female, while 47.01% were male.

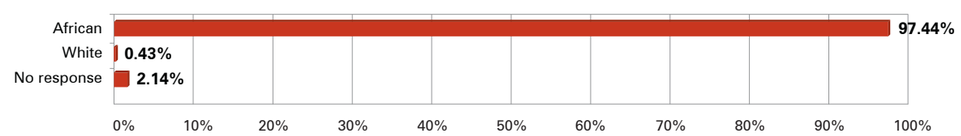

Figure 54: Profile by Race

As presented in Figure 54, it is quite clear that the overwhelming majority of participants in this study were African. This means that views on the choice of an African language to be used in the University by staff in outsourced services will

largely be based on views and preferences of African staff working in this area.

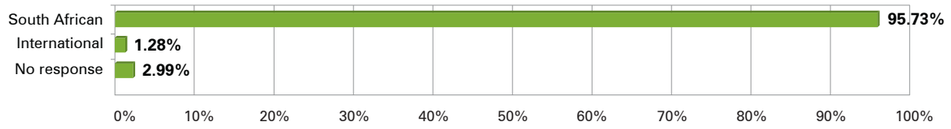

Figure 55: Profile by Nationality

Figure 55 shows that an overwhelming majority of participants in the study were South Africans (95.73%). It is, however, interesting to note that a small proportion of participants were international staff members, which suggests that the views of international staff (although in the minority) who work in outsourced services at Wits University were also considered.

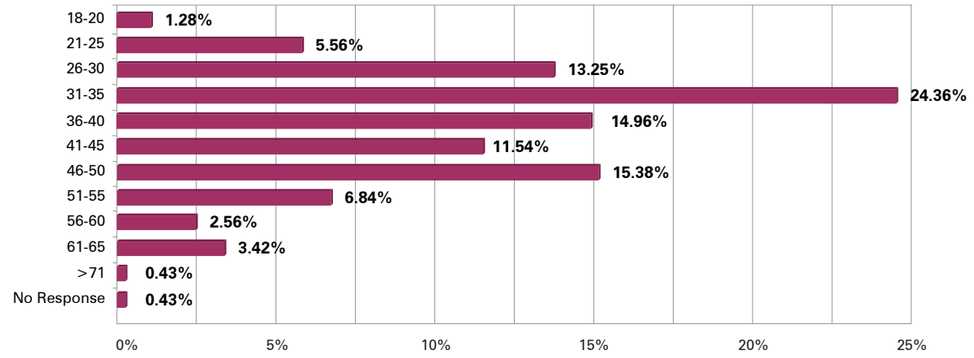

Figure 56: Profile by Age

Figure 56 shows that the majority of participants were between the ages of 26 and 50, suggesting that these are mature employees who understand the implications of making the particular language choices.

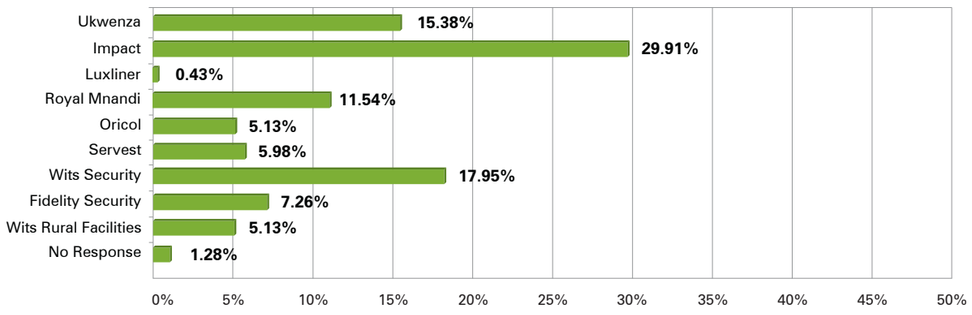

Figure 57: Company of Affiliation

While all companies in outsourced services were represented in this study, Figure 57 shows that companies that received a high representation were Impact (29.91%), Ukwenza (15.38%) and Royal Mnandi (11.54%). It is noticeable that Wits Security staff constituted 17.95% of respondents. There was a conceptual reason why Wits Security staff was grouped with outsourced services employees; firstly,

they do not have access to internet and computer facilities that would allow them to participate in the online survey. Hard copies had to be printed, as was the case for all outsourced employees. Secondly, the issue of language was an important consideration in the design of the research questionnaires. Given the fact that some staff members in Wits Security were not fluent in English, it was necessary to translate the questionnaires into various African languages, as stated in Chapter 2.

Organisationally, it was also important to choose a data collection platform which was also accessible to Fidelity Security Guards, and Wits Rural Facility security staff. The whole security staff cluster was combined and included under combined outsourced services for convenience purposes. As witnessed in Figure 57, data collected from Wits Rural Facilities reflect the participation of 5.13% of total participants.

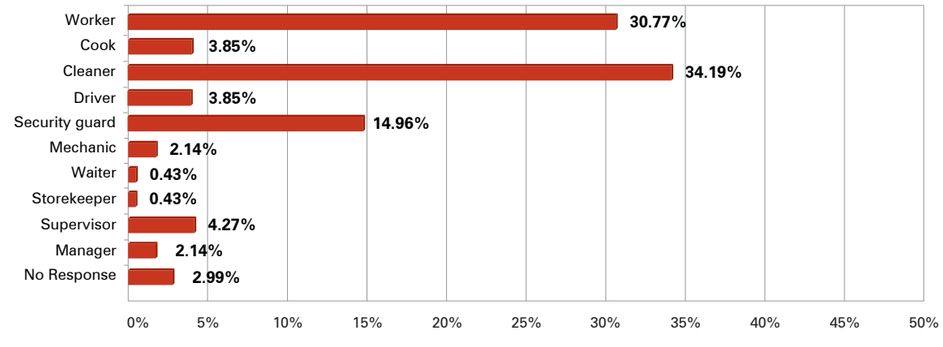

Figure 58: Designation

Data presented in Figure 58 show that the three big categories of participants were cleaners (34.19%), general workers (30.77%) and security guards (14.96%). Other staff categories were represented in this study to a lesser degree, including managers and supervisors.

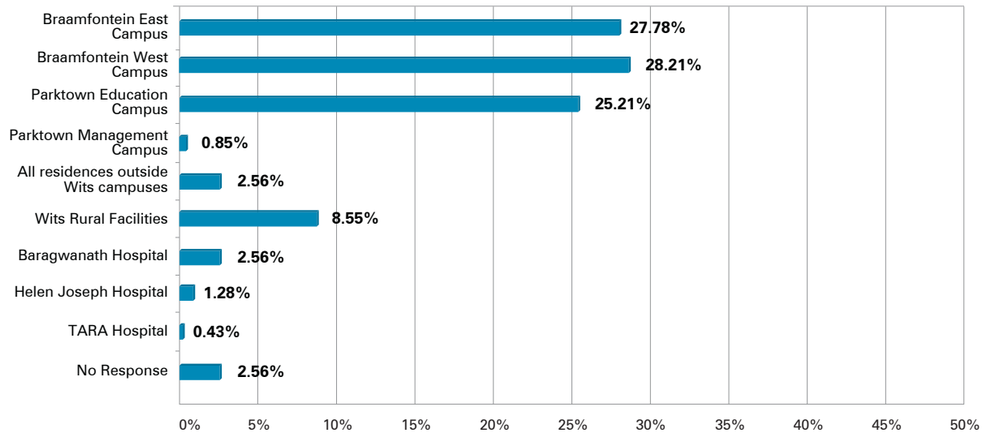

Figure 59: Campus of Affiliation

Data presented in Figure 59 show that almost all campuses where employees in outsourced services are placed were represented in this study. High levels of participation came from staff located on the Wits Main campus (East at 27.78% and

West at 28.21%) and Parktown Education Campus (25.21%). Staff based at the Wits Rural Facility constituted 8.55% of total respondents.

5.2 Views on Current Language Policy

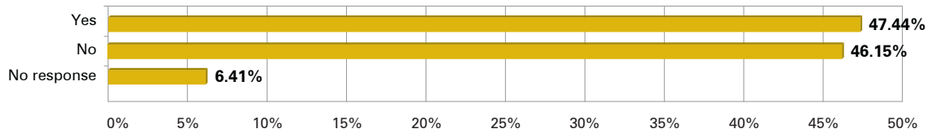

Figure 60: Familiarity with the Current Language Policy

It was important to know whether staff in outsourced services was familiar with the current language policy, and it was established that almost half of them were. As seen in Figure 60, 47.44% were familiar with the Wits language policy, and 46.15% were not.

Figure 61: Appropriateness of the Current Language Policy

The response analysis of the opinions on the appropriateness of the current language policy, depicted in Figure 61, was based on the 47.44% of respondents who indicated their familiarity with the policy. A large majority, 70.27% of these respondents, felt that the policy was appropriate. Only 9.01% felt that it was inappropriate, 12.61% did not know, and 8.11% gave no response.

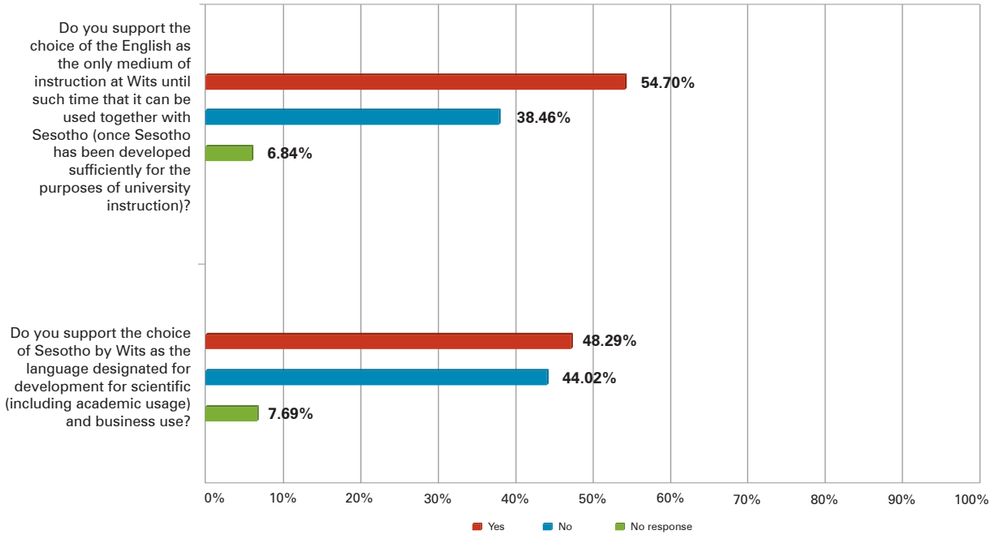

Figure 62: Support for the Choice of English and Sesotho

Given that in the design of this study there was doubt that the majority of employees in outsourced services would be familiar with the Wits language policy, as clearly indicated in Figure 60 above, questions providing information about the current language policy were presented, and these are analysed in Figure 62. It is clear that the majority of participants (54.70% of the 47.44% who declared familiarity with the current language policy), as shown in Figure 62, were not in support of English as the only medium of communication/instruction at Wits until such time as Sesotho was well developed. Only 38.46% of participants felt it should be. Furthermore, 48.29% supported the use of Sesotho as language for development of scientific and business use. Only 44.02% did not support this proposal. (Note that in this question Sesotho is specifically mentioned, so this result does not indicate a preference for Sesotho over other languages.)

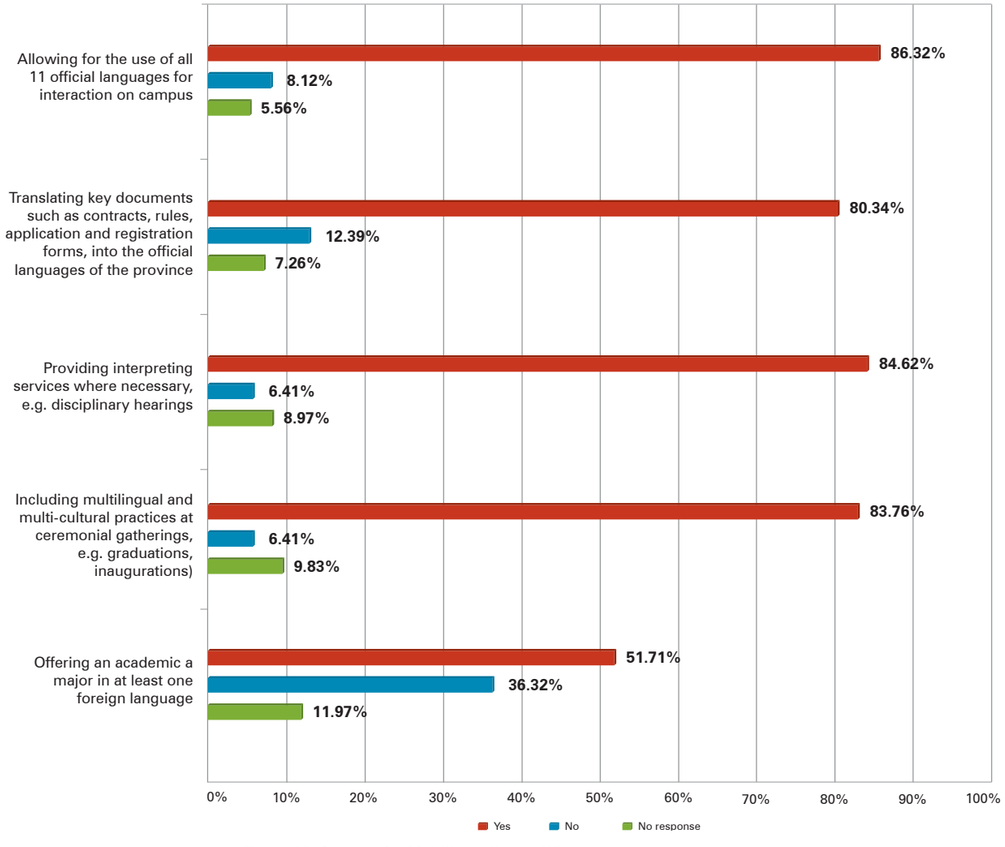

Figure 63: Support for Multilingualism at Wits

As shown in Figure 63, there was strong support for the use of all 11 languages for communication and interaction on campus. The idea was favoured by 86.32% of participants. Most of these participants (80.34%) also felt that all languages should be used to translate key documents such as contracts, rules, and application and registration forms. Only 12.39% did not agree. When it came to providing interpreting services in all official languages as a general University service, 84.62% were in favour, and 6.41% were not. A large number of participants (83.76%) felt that the use of all 11 official languages should be included in all multicultural ceremonial gatherings and practices, such as graduations and inaugurations. Again, 6.41% did not support this view.

Figure 64, below, provides data on the views of staff in outsourced services on how the general development of linguistic abilities in a chosen African language or languages could be supported by the University. It is quite clear that the majority of staff (61.54%) thought that it was important for academic staff to have full competence in one of these languages before confirmation of permanent employment; 31.62% did not agree. A large majority of participants (76.92%) supported the view that the University should provide courses for all administrative and support staff to acquire the English competence needed to perform their duties. Only 14.10% did not support this view.

The data further show that 64.10% supported the view that the University must require English competence for staff within two years of their appointment, and only 27.35% disagreed. The majority of participants (66.24%) also supported the view that the University should provide English courses for foreign staff members coming from environments where English is not the medium of communication. There was also a widely shared view (58.55%) among participants in this category that the University should provide courses in Sesotho and isiZulu to all academic, administrative and support staff in the University. Participants felt that it was necessary to require staff who do not speak an African language to become communicatively competent in Sesotho or isiZulu – 66.24% supported this view, while 26.07% did not.

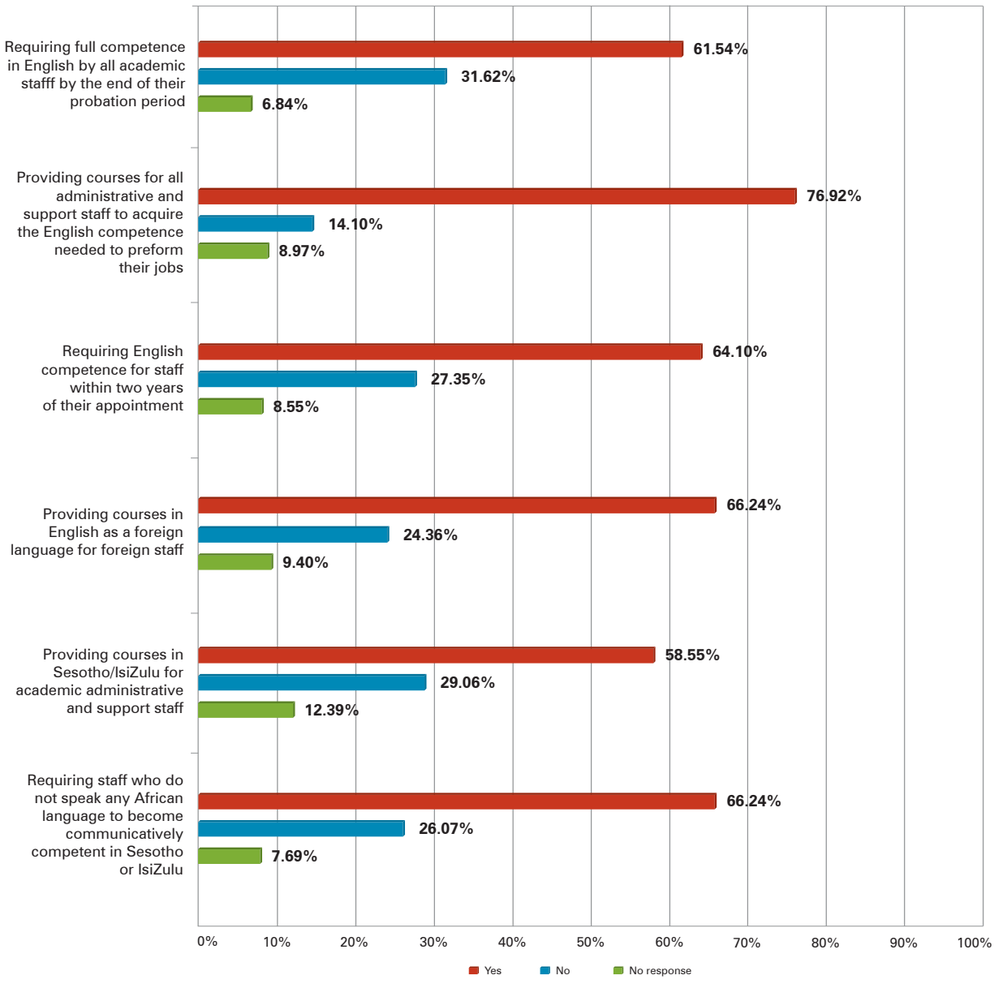

Figure 64: Developing Linguistic Abilities of Staff

5.3 Internal & External Communication

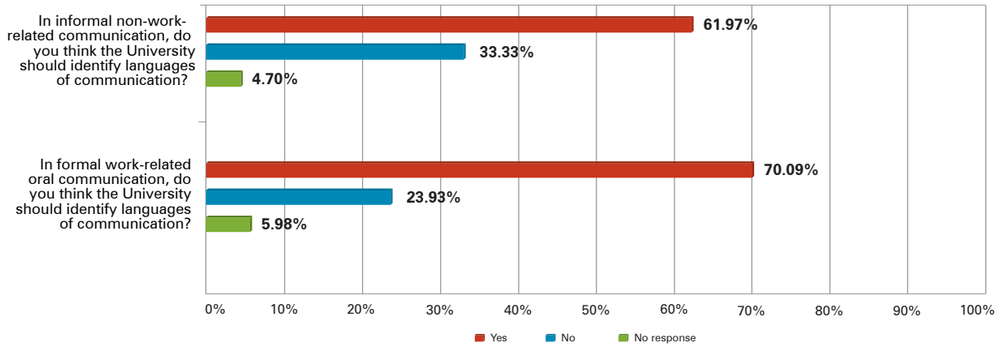

Figure 65: Languages of Communication

Figure 65 shows that staff in outsourced services prefers the University to identify languages to be used for communication across the board. Between 60 and 70% of participants felt it necessary to identify the languages, whether for informal or formal communication contexts.

Figure 66: Formal Work-related Public Internal Communication

More than half the employees in outsourced services are of the view that all 11 official languages should be used for work-related internal communication purposes. The data show 55.13% of respondents as being in favour of all 11 official languages being used, while 17.09% felt that English and another South African official language should be used, and 11.54% felt that English should be used exclusively.

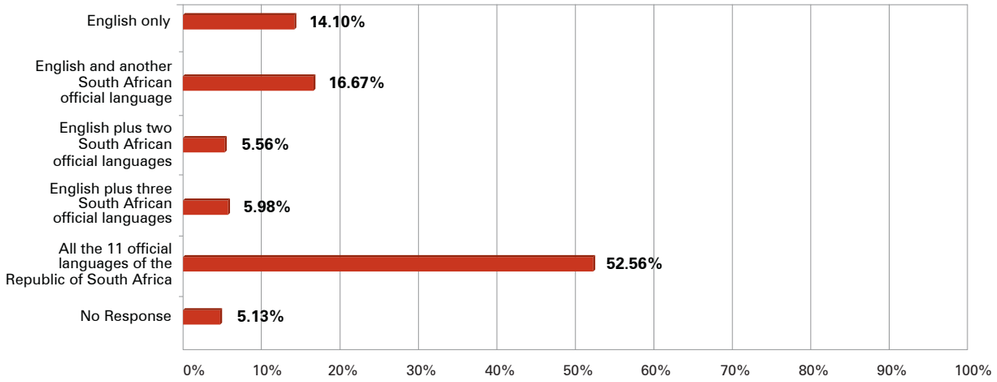

Figure 67: Local Marketing, Communication and Branding

There is a pattern emerging in the data analysis which consistently suggests that employees in outsourced services prefer all 11 official languages to be used in all University interactions. In marketing, communication and branding, 52.56% of respondents felt that the University should use all 11 official languages, a further 16.67% felt that English and another South African language should be used, and 14.10% felt that English should be used exclusively.

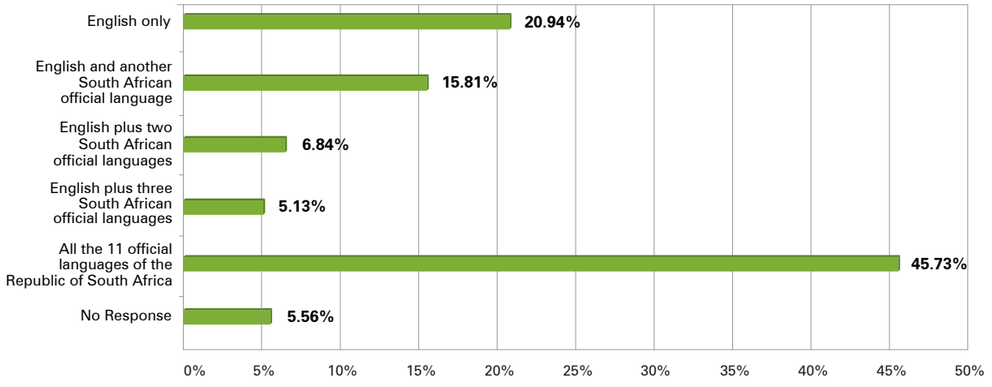

Figure 68: Public Signage

As the trend has been in Figures 66 and 67, the largest group of employees in outsourced services (45.73%) feel that the University should use all 11 official languages in public signage across all campuses. Only 15.81% felt that the University could use English and one other South African language, and 20.94% felt that it was adequate to use English only for public signage.

5.4 Preferred Languages

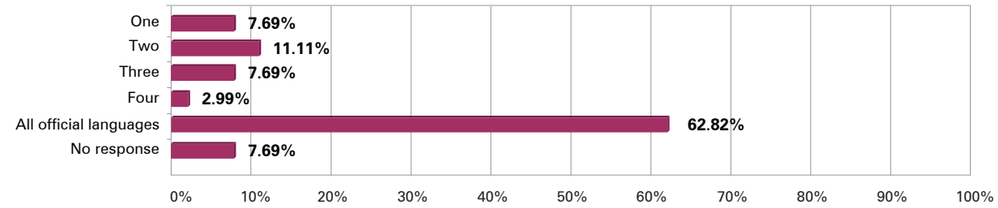

Figure 69: Designated Lanuages

Data presented in Figure 69 carries forward a consistent view that employees in outsourced services would prefer the University to use all 11 languages.

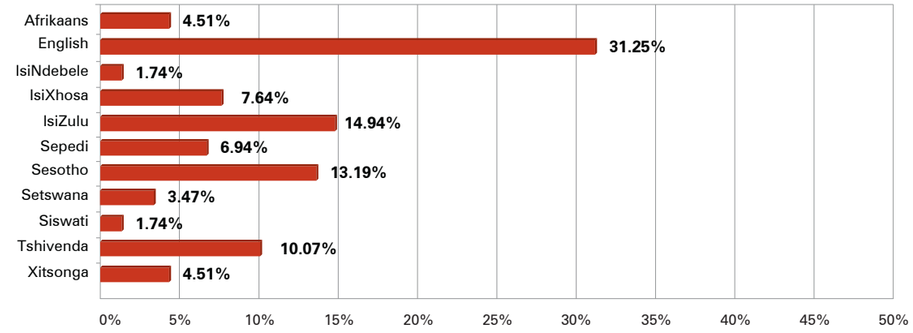

Figure 70: Languages to be Designated as Official Languages

Although the majority of respondents (62.82%) felt that all 11 languages should be included in the Wits language policy, when they were asked for individual language preferences, English emerged as the most preferred designated official language among employees in outsourced services. Second to English was isiZulu (14.93%), followed by Sesotho (13.19%) and Tshivenda (10.07%). All remaining African languages were favoured by less than 7% of participants.

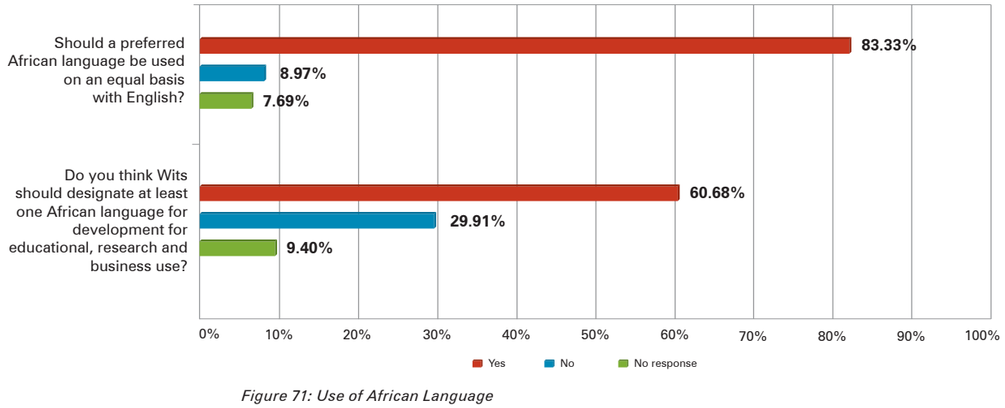

Figure 71: Use of African Language

The data presented in Figure 71 show that 83.33% of participants were of the view that a preferred African language should be used on equal basis with English, while 60.68% of respondents felt that, if all else failed, the University should select one African language in addition to English to be developed as an academic and business language.

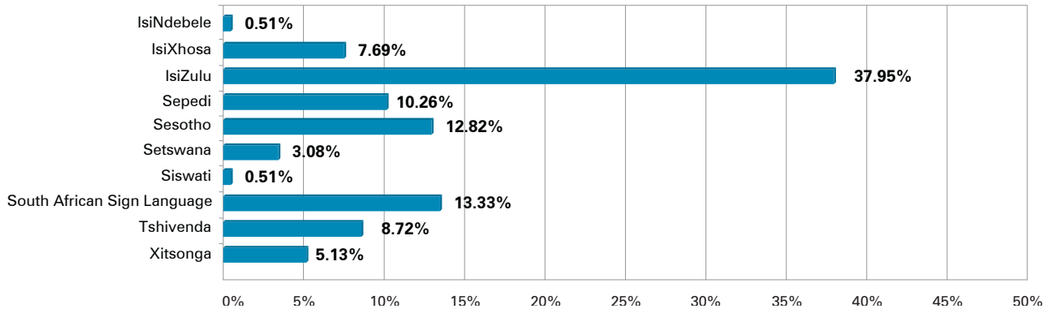

Figure 72: Languages to be Designated for Scientific Use

If one particular language were to be chosen for scientific development, the majority of employees in outsourced services suggest that it should be isiZulu. Many respondents chose more than one language, but 37.95% chose isiZulu, 12.82% Sesotho, 10.26% Sepedi and 8.72% Tshivenda. Other languages receive preference of less than 8% each. A large number of respondents 13.33% suggested that the South Africa sign language should be designated as of the preferred languages.

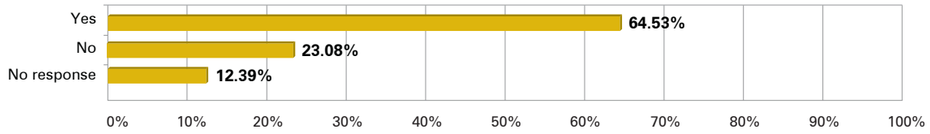

Figure 73: Enrolment for a Communication Course in a Preferred African Language

Figure 73 suggests that the majority of participants (64.53%) felt that it was necessary for the University to enrol staff in communication courses in a preferred African language to develop their competence. It was only 23.08% who disagreed with this view.

5.5 Language Policy Implementation

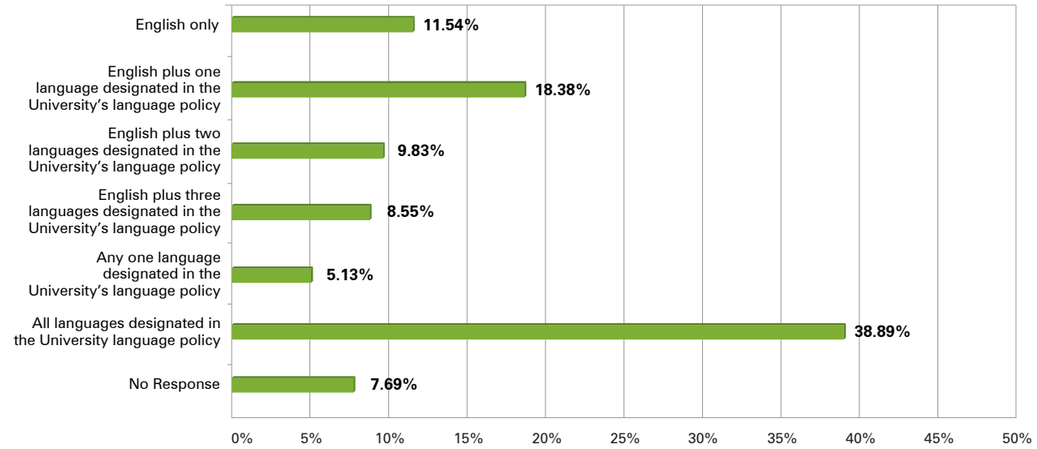

Figure 74: Language Usage in the Administrative Context

As presented in Figure 74, show that 38.89% of respondents supported the view that all South African official languages should be developed for official usage in administration in the University. This was followed by 18.38% of respondents who believed that English and one African language should be used for administrative purposes in the University. Data shows that 11.54% of respondents supported the use of English only, while 9.83% supported English plus two African languages, and 8.55% supported English plus three African languages.

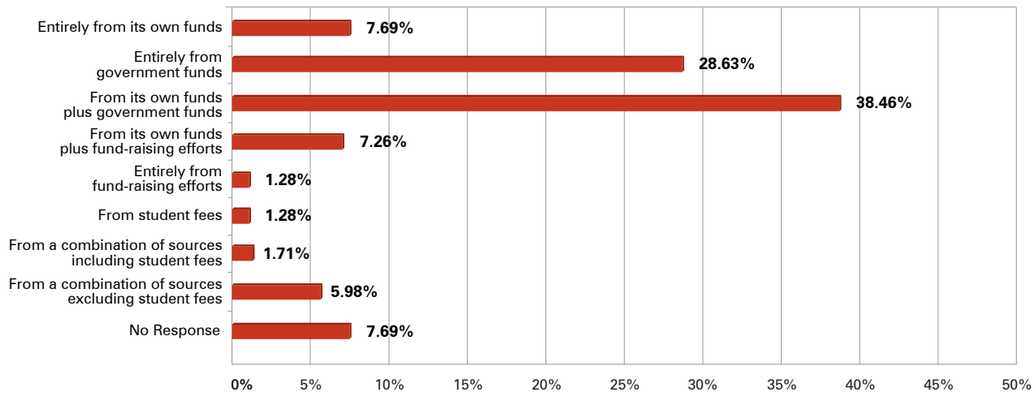

Figure 75: Funding of the language Policy Implementation

As presented in Figure 75, the majority of outsourced workers (67.09%) felt that the University should use either government funds or a combination of government funds and its own funds for the implementation of the suggested language policy. Other strategies favoured by a small but notable number were using its own funds exclusively (7.69%), and the combination of University funds and fund-raising efforts (7.26%). Other forms of suggested funding received less than 6% support each.

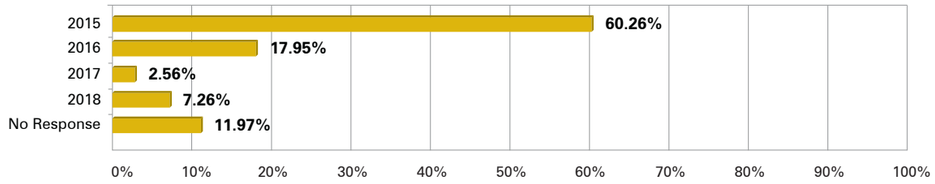

Figure 76: Year of Implementation

Figure 76 shows that outsourced workers felt that the use of all 11 official languages should commence from year 2015. A large majority (60.26%) supported that view, while 17.95% felt that it could be introduced in 2016, and 7.26% favoured 2018. Only 2.56% suggested 2017.

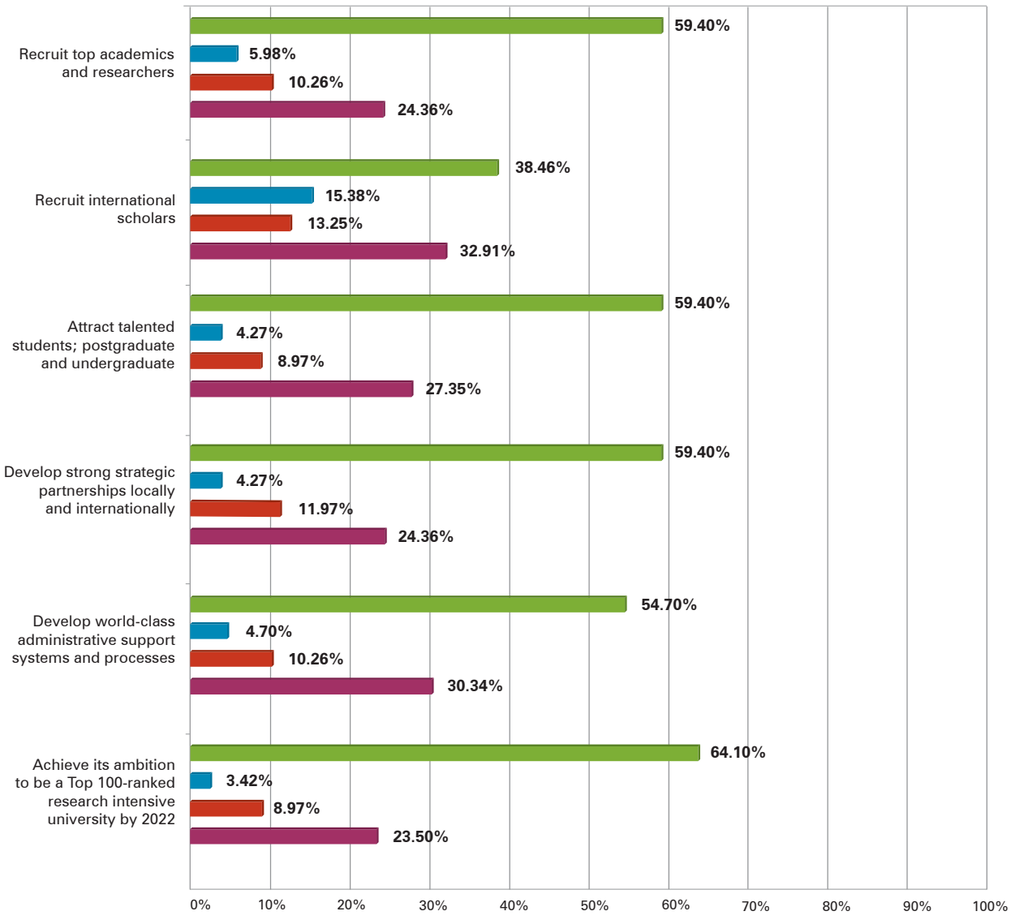

Figure 77: Impact of the Policy on University Strategic Objectives

In spite of an unusually high number of 'no response' answers, analysing the data in Figure 76, makes it clear that staff in outsourced services believed that a new multilingual policy would have a significantly positive effect on the University. The majority (59.40%) felt that such a policy would have a positive impact on

the recruitment of top academics and researchers to the University while only 5.98% felt that it would have a negative impact. To a lesser extent (32.91% of the group did not respond), they shared the view that such a policy would have a positive impact on the recruitment of international scholars to the University, with 38.46% of the group being of this opinion, while only 15.38% disagreed. Staff in outsourced services also felt that the policy would attract talented undergraduate and postgraduate students, at a majority of 59.40%, while only 4.27% disagreed.

The same number, 59.40% of respondents, felt that such a policy would have a positive impact on the development of strong strategic partnerships locally and internationally, while 4.27% felt that it would not. Further, 54.70%of participants felt that the policy would help to develop world-class administrative support systems and processes, while 4.70% felt that this would not be the case.

A larger majority of participants felt that a multilingual policy would help the University to achieve its ambition to be a Top 100-ranked research-intensive University by 2022. At 64.10%, this was the highest positive reaction in this section. Only 3.42% did not support this view.

Tensions and Contestations

One respondent argued (citing references) that multilingualism in universities and the success of strategies in doing this remains a widely researched area in South African with no conclusive findings. The respondent argues as follows (direct citation):

> A wide variety of initiatives addressing the challenges of linguistic hybridity in South African institutions of higher learning can be found in the current literature. Many of these initiatives address the question of the viability of including African languages as languages of learning and teaching, or at the very least address the issue of taking cognizance of the home language of the students. For example, De Kadt and Mathonsi's (2003) research addresses the issue of students speaking English with an African voice, and the degree to which academic staff are positioned to be able to relate to this. Ramani and Joseph (2006) discuss the production of glossaries and the use of African languages to enhance pedagogic processes and cognition at the University of Limpopo. Further studies on this issue have been conducted at the University of Cape Town (Bangani & Kapp, 2005; Paxton, 2009). The issue of code-switching and use of multiple languages in higher-education pedagogy has been addressed by Terzoli et al. (2005) with reference to Rhodes University and Deyi et al. (2007) with reference to the Cape Peninsula University of Technology. The need for language development of academic and administrative staff, in terms of enhanced cross-cultural communication strategies, has also emerged as an issue to be addressed. All the experimental research represented in the current literature, supports some aspects of the multilingual and multimodal model suggested. However, most of the initiatives are driven from 'below 'and initiated through the use of outside funding. No complete survey of multilingual and multimodal language development initiatives at South African universities is yet available (*Southern African Linguistics and Applied Language Studies* 2011, 29(1): 31–42 39). It is therefore difficult to assess to what degree the findings so far suggest any clear distinction between 'successful' and 'unsuccessful' strategies, or to what degree a clear formulation of generic guidelines is possible.

The tensions and contestations that continue to emerge in any public discourse on African languages development in South Africa are often linked to race and power. These tensions and contestations are often linked to funding implications, trivialisation of the cultural and economic value of African languages in the global village, perceived reverse marginalisation of 'non-African black" minority groups, the advancement of modern technology which has not taken along African languages, the lack of enthusiasm to shoulder the burden of the underdeveloped nature of African languages in universities and the misunderstood role of African languages and mother tongue in widening pedagogical access.

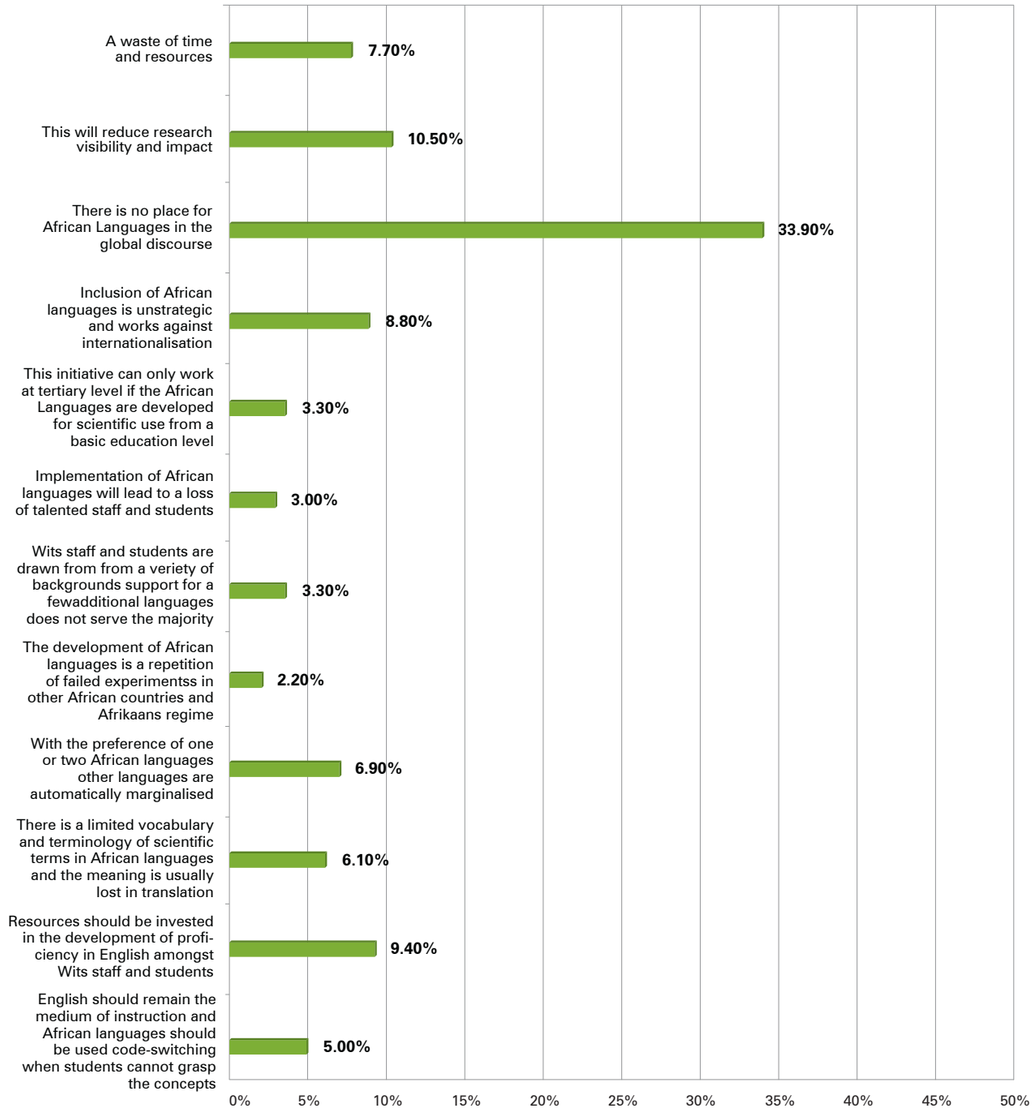

Figure 78: Reasons Why People don't Support use of African languages

The reasons why certain staff members feel that it is not necessary to use African languages in the University were analysed in line with themes as reflected in figure 78. It became clear that the majority of those who opposed the use of African languages at Wits felt that there was no space for African languages in discourses on globalisation. Those respondents felt that African languages do not have a role to play in the 21st century global village imperatives; economic development of countries; and advancement of technology. The analysis of data shows that the majority of those respondents trivialised to role of language and communication in economic development and technology advancement. Others felt that using African languages would undermine envisaged international visibility and impact of Wits research. It is clear that such an argument was made in the context where English remains the dominating medium of high level scholarship in the world. As shown in figure 78, 17.10% of respondents who argued against the use of African languages felt that such a move would signal a waste of resources. Data also shows

that 9.40% of those respondents felt that if the university had enough resources to support language development, those resources should be channelled towards improving English proficiency of staff and students, not in the development of African languages.

The further analysis of qualitative data revealed that there were various contestations raised by Wits staff through responses to open-ended questions. These follow below as direct narratives articulated by staff:

- The change process should not be radical – new students and staff should be required to have at least one course in conversational African language and it should ultimately be a compulsory module for students and staff to have to complete a 6-month course, but it should not be a prerequisite to getting a job at Wits.

- The needs of deaf students and staff must be taken into consideration. This group can have a written but not a spoken competence in an African language.

- I am fully in support of scientific training in mother tongue at primary and early high-school level. I think the switch to English should be made by University.

- I feel that since students are drawn from a wide variety of backgrounds, support for a few additional languages is not going to be particularly helpful to the majority of students.

- I do not believe that our classes are consistently dominated by students from the same language group from year to year.

- A lot of energy and financial resources will be spent to accommodate all languages, while these resources can be used to provide a platform for all students and staff to become proficient in English. English is what the world out there expects of us. As a second-language English speaker, I am convinced that all second-language English speakers will benefit from extra language training. At international congresses, the language of instruction is mainly English. Is it not better to improve the African students' English? It will empower them immensely.

- A University needs to communicate at a wide level in order to be recognised. This is not a school but needs to publish. One has to use a language that gains the most recognition, i.e. English then French (rest of Africa), and thereafter? Portuguese (Angola and Mozambique). Language proficiency in someone teaching, e.g. isiZulu, is a completely different question, and this makes most of the questions above inappropriate. Are we talking about teaching languages or science?

- Adopting and implementing the language policy would contribute to issues of nation building and cohesion.

- All science books are in English. All high-rated international science journals are in English. If this University wants to increase its publications, English is the only option.

- Appreciate the University's effort to try and give its best to promote African languages in their research and developing of languages.

- Are academics going to get additional resources to teach their classes while they learn a language?

- English – Spanish and French should be the language of choice to be one of the top 100 universities in the world.

- English is the 'world' language and as such all should strive to be proficient in this language.

- Learning additional African languages should be a personal choice and should not be forced. Implementing proficiencies in African languages will restrict the employment of some top-rated international scholars and will negatively affect the number of international students. Changing the policy to include additional languages for documentation, tests, exams, etc. will significantly increase the workload and will also require proficient people to be employed.

- English is the business language of the world. To stop people from developing it is only detrimental to themselves!

- English is the de facto international language of academia – hence we should concentrate mainly on developing all stakeholders' ability in this language. We do not have the resources to cater for all 11 of our languages – if we try we will never make it into the top 100.

- English is the lingua franca of most of the academic world. Trying to force academics and students learn a new language where the majority of the research of their chosen fields does not exist in that language, is unnatural and wasteful of precious time better spent on research.

- English is the recognised international language and thus should remain the main focus of Wits. Other languages if introduced should remain optional.

- English is used world-wide; therefore we should teach and research, etc.
in English.

- English must be the only University language. Any other idea is impractical and counter-productive. English and only English unites SA.

- English should remain the official language of the University as it is the most renowned and well-known international (global) language that is familiar to students, support staff and academics.

- English will generally cater for all people, having too many languages as official might create chaos, esp. for those who want to learn all the languages, they will not know how to choose. With one language, one just enrols for the official English course if they use other languages back home.

- Expecting people to be fluent in many official languages is impractical Willingness to attempt communication in an African language is the best that can be expected of people past their optimum language-learning period – specifically, if they are to remain on top of and further their understanding of their subject. Communication is important and in many subjects English is the only feasible language for South Africa.

- First start with training all staff to be proficient in English as they are the face of Wits for all forms of interaction.

- For me the problem is focusing on language as a communication tool. The focus should be on culture and transformation. Every effort should be

made to make all in the Wits academic community feel comfortable and that their culture is valued.

- Foreign students (who already speak another language other than English) should not have to learn a local African language. The ability to speak a local African language outside of South Africa is meaningless.

- I am not sure about the choice of French as the international language of choice. While it is spoken widely in West and Central Africa, and some other parts of the world – particularly Europe, I think Portuguese would also be a good choice, allowing stronger relationships to develop with Mozambique, other parts of West/Central Africa and Brazil. Of course Mandarin would be another option!

- Throughout the world, efforts are being made to internationalise the curricula by introducing English as the medium of instruction at universities because they understand that their mandate is to prepare students for the globalised knowledge society. Wits does not seem to understand this (and many, many other essential issues!). Introducing this ridiculous language policy will have the following results: 1. competent staff will leave and students will start going elsewhere; 2. students will not be able to participate, let alone compete internationally, in any scientific endeavour; 3. the prevailing incompetence, corruption, and racism will get further entrenched at Wits; 4. as Wits is already in the process of disintegration – everyone can see it except those who should see it – SET – this proposed language policy will certainly hasten Wits's extinction. The way things have going at Wits for the past 10 years; this would be a very appropriate outcome. So, I say go for it, introduce this ridiculous policy; I will watch Wits disappear into oblivion.

- I believe that general communication could be translated into one other African language, but that main language of the University should stay English.

- I believe that maintaining English as a universal language has been working well in the past. It is easier to make a person English literate than to introduce any other language to the global sector. As I mentioned earlier, interpreting another language into English will result in confusion, uncertainty and a less valued document. If a research document or any communication is completed in English, there is less confusion and the result will be equality in language. For anyone wanting to maintain his/her native tongue, it should be his/her [personal] responsibility.... By resisting the English language, the result is reactive not pro-active.

- I do not agree with using African languages at University level, the new generation do not have problems with English; they were not trained to study in order to have good marks.

- I have carried out surveys of my class over a number of years, and all official languages are spoken as a mother tongue, and I generally have a number of foreign students in my class as well. I would be disadvantaging most students if I forced them to learn my discipline in an additional African language.

- I have looked at some of the language short courses provided by Wits, but I found them unaffordable. I am really keen to learn a foreign language and another African language, but money is a serious deterrent for me.

- I have wanted to learn Zulu for the past 6 years through Wits, but the cost is prohibitive. It should be free as it would be part of the essential improvement

of communication between staff and students.

- I personally feel that adopting another 2 languages into the Wits Language Policy (Afrikaans/isiZulu) will not prove beneficial for the University as a whole but further enhances the platform of diversity and transformation.

- I see the inclusion of African languages as an important political gesture indicating a desire to serve the people of South Africa better. However, I see that it will consume considerable energy and the impact on research output in my field will be negative.

- I speak English 1st language and Afrikaans second. I approached my boss about 2 years ago to do Zulu through language school to help me in my job. I was told that I will have to pay for it myself as Wits only pays for full-time studies. I was astonished that this was the case if we are expected to work with people from all different backgrounds. I thought this would assist me in my job. I therefore strongly believe that if a staff member wants to further themselves in languages, the University should assist with the funding to study those courses.

- I teach at University level in 3 languages, and can be understood in another 4. Thus 7 languages. Why should anybody be forced into a position where their University career is dependent on this policy?

- I think all 11 African languages should be used by the University. Most students that come to Wits are from model C schools where they don't learn African languages. I think it would be wise for Wits to make it compulsory for 1st-years to have at least one African language.

- I think considering the evolving local and international environment, language cannot be considered the barrier in sculpting a high-quality, internationally recognised University.

- I think it is a good idea to provide courses in the other African languages but I cannot see them as a means of instruction if Wits wants to be in the top 100.

- I think it's a fantastic idea to be inclusive in a sense that all 11 languages get a fair share in academics. Proficient use and mastery of a language is key to developing good skills. By allowing other languages besides English, those that are non-native English speakers get a fair chance to compete. Language development is one of the keys to achieving equality as well as promoting greater unity in our beautiful country. Thanks so much for starting such an important survey. Compliments to the organisers behind Wits.

- I think this policy has merits, but should not be enforced to the detriment of current staff – we don't want to lose good people because they are forced to learn an African (or any other) language. I also fear that we would create a barrier to attracting international researchers and academics if we require that they learn another language to work here.

- Ideally all 11 official languages should be included, because how do you prioritise one language over the other? Someone is bound to feel marginalised in some way or another. Including all 11 languages is going to be a costly exercise, but may ultimately be the most 'peaceful' choice.

- For the policy to be successful, research should be conducted from high-school level for language preference by future Wits Students.

- I'm very happy that the University is looking into amending its language policy so that all 12 official languages, including sign language, can be easily accessible by the Wits community at large.

- Interested in following this debate... I support more use of *isintu* language(s), but it should be concomitant with, and not a replacement of, concerted efforts to improve English-language expression among students, which is often very poor at 1st-year levels.

- Finally, instead of just 'French' as a foreign language, why not others equally deserving/relevant? Swahili, Arabic, Spanish, Chinese, etc.

- It strikes me as rather ironic that a policy designed to correct western European colonial legacies, chooses another western European language as its main area of focus?

- Internationalism requires communication in English: if Chinese children from the age of 5 have to learn English, it's for a very good reason. The University must avoid parochialism: this does not imply being against African languages, it means being realistic and attracting people from all over the world. It should NOT be compulsory to learn an African language: this will insulate the University and put off many potential students and staff.

- It is an unfortunate reality that in my field (science) English is the language of discourse internationally. This is unfortunate because it is a difficult language to become proficient in as a second-language learner. But that does not change the reality. In the sciences, the effort should be to assist all students to become proficient in English as a medium of communication in science.

- It is extraordinary that the University's language policy has been left in abeyance this long, but good to see that it is being taken up again now and full credit to the DVC for pushing it forward.

- It is very difficult to learn another language at the age of 40! SA should go with international standards, i.e. English only.

- It is important to maintain and enhance the African languages in SA and Wits should play an important role in this regard. I am concerned that the gap between the African languages and the international languages (e.g. English, French, and German etc.) is extremely wide and that the resources required to develop them sufficiently for academic communications will be enormous.

- It won't be easy, with 11 official languages to consider. Perhaps the historically black universities should run the language policy model first as a dry run and then, only after that, can we see how it can be incorporated into the Wits culture.

- It's interesting that Afrikaans, the mostly widely spoken language in this country and the third-largest mother tongue in the country, is not considered at all in this survey. Afrikaans is a language of European origin, but it is an African language.

- It's way long overdue that the University is still making attempts to introduce African languages at the institution. The majority of African kids are well versed in their indigenous language, thus coming to an English-medium institution like Wits, resulted in subtle exclusion. And this eventually led to a high failure rate from African kids who have to adopt and adjust to

a new learning environment that seemed hostile through [an unfamiliar] language. It was former President Nelson Mandela who said: 'Speak to a man in his language then it goes to his heart.' So in order to improve the calibre of scholarship in the country we need to invest in an indigenous language. If I am not mistaken Wits was determined to introduce this in 2010, and I was furious when it did not happen, so the sooner this project is implemented the better for our country.

- Jonathan Jansen in a recent article in the Star newspaper said we must stop thinking of English as the language of the oppressor, but think of it as the most practical national and international means of communication. I am Hungarian, and when people want to know why I did not teach it to my children, my reply: whatever for? Let us be practical, stick to English, and leave language studies to be a personal choice, not an emotional issue legislated by the University.

- Knowing several languages is a good thing for any individual but I don't believe it has to be enforced on people.

- Language and the ability to communicate is important. We need to promote this in all aspects of the University without discouraging those that cannot use more than one language.

- Languages should be implemented to encourage smooth communication for internal and external stakeholders, especially at all entry points to Wits University and all reception and information desks, including security offices. We communicate with elderly and rural visitors from time to time who appreciate it when we speak in languages they understand rather than English. This includes consideration for staff and visitors who are illiterate or with minimal level of education.

- Making Wits a dual-medium institution is a poor use of resources.

- Please think about what you are suggesting and realise how seriously you will be disadvantaging staff and students (many of whom are already struggling to cope) if you force them to learn in another language which they do not know. A language takes YEARS to learn, and now you want to force students [who speak] Sepedi, isiXhosa etc. to learn another African language. Why? What is the sense, other than to be politically correct?

- Nice idea – not sure we will be able to agree at Wits which one it should be and also whether the creation of yet another layer of complexity in the University will work. I doubt it!

- Not all scholars coming out of the high-school system have had the opportunity to learn other languages besides English and Afrikaans. The change should therefore be implemented at primary and high-school levels, hence taking off the added stress from a tertiary student. Effectively this will take between 12 and 10 years. So Wits's language-policy change should ideally be implemented some 12 to 15 years to come i.e.: 2028 or so (that is if we want to be realistic). English is universally spoken; why rock the boat for one country/nation? Do we or don't we want to attract international applicants?

- Our School comprises >80% black African students, most of whom enter multi-national companies upon graduation, many of which will work outside of SA at some point. Proficiency in English is essential. Secondary proficiency in Spanish, Portuguese or French is a plus. Students themselves are almost equally derived from isiZulu, Sesotho and Tshivenda groups and have overwhelmingly in the past rejected any diversion away from their

studies and developing English oral and written communication skills, by having to study a second language. Black lecturers and tutors in the school are able to respond in a local language where it is absolutely clear that a student has a problem, however, such communication is almost always 1-on-1, as other students in a strongly multilingual group may not follow adequately. A lecturer with only an elementary command of the language is likely to do more harm than good. Finally, the instruction in the discipline requires a significant technical vocabulary, for which no words exist in most non-English languages in SA; only Afrikaans has developed a dictionary of terms.

- With a large number of foreign staff, a formal requirement of a second language may be a turn-off, and detracts from valuable research time for all academic staff.

- The accessibility of learning and lecturers is not improved by imposing superficial attempts at learning to speak in a second language in the classroom, it is about the openness of all staff to really 'seeing' each student as an individual, irrespective of language barriers (so much communication is non-verbal – change attitudes rather than technicalities), and of getting staff to invest the time in helping our students to master the international language of communication, both in terms of their patience and in being aware of, and directing students to, excellent language-support facilities (in a pro-active rather than punitive way). Rather address how we can avoid situations where issues with language are used to avoid inadequacies in either student abilities to learn or lecturer abilities to teach effectively, and at all costs avoid linking language to cultural baggage.

- Policy must be implemented flexibly and in a voluntary way to avoid negative consequences and maximise positive potential. It is important that students be polled too for their views.

- I don't think it is feasible in a globalised world for Sesotho or isiZulu to become scientific languages. But everyone on campus should have to have an African language competency for everyday communication.

- Questions on the economic impacts of an African-language policy and access to employment internationally should be considered.

- Robert Mugabe managed to realise that English is the language of the world, why cannot Wits?

- Roll-out and implement slowly – first require basic proficiency, limited settings, then scale up.

- IsiZulu, Sesotho and South African Sign Languages together with English to be made official languages of Wits. Statistics to support these can be obtained from the departments of African Languages for confirmation. Sign language is also very important.

- Shouldn't we rather try to improve the often shockingly poor English skills of our students? Nowadays, a graduate who is not able to communicate in English is not suitable and employable for the (international and often even national) market. We live in a globalised world which uses mainly English for international communication. That does not mean to ignore own languages, particularly in the Humanities and Arts, but every student and graduate has to have English skills. Wits wants to become 'top 100' – with graduates who struggle to write a proper text in English? Academic staff will be forced to learn another language within a short period – but how is time allocated by the University for doing this, considering all the other duties which already require overtime and consume evening hours and weekends? Many researchers may prefer to leave instead. Instead of internationalisation, such a language policy rather leads to nationalisation, even regionalisation.

- Since Wits is an international university it should adopt English as its official language. It can't get away from this. Singapore and Malaysia are good examples. Singapore chose English whilst Malaysia chose different languages. Today Singapore is far ahead of Malaysia because everyone is proficient in English and can deal with anyone in the world.

- Some changes need to be made, but it must be borne in mind that in science English transcends other considerations.

- Steps should be developmental, beginning with the more accessible fields and staff development. A supportive multilingual environment should be promoted.

- Students not speaking English as a first language should be given extra time in examinations and access to a dictionary.

- The African Languages Department tends to be excluded from some of these plenary sessions and yet we are willing to participate. We are just simply excluded as though we have no contribution to make. I hope that this situation will be corrected, unless of course the Department as a whole is not taken seriously. If so, why bother keeping it?

- The concept of multilingualism in the context of Wits's diversity makes absolute sense and is hugely desirable. However, the practical implications and costs make the possibility of real competence in an African language by all academic, support and administrative staff a dream. If the schooling system succeeds in producing competent speakers of African languages in addition to English, and this is included as an admission requirement, the University should then continue to support this by incentivising continuing with language classes for all students. Postgraduate students entering academia would then realistically be able to live the dream of competence in communication in English and an African language. Other universities include other languages in their official documents, and this gives the impression of inclusivity. This may be a good place for Wits to start.

- The language issue is a sensitive one and needs to be managed accordingly. Wits needs to move in the direction of multilingualism for all, and at the same time, maintain the English language, especially internationally. Many students at Wits are at risk because they are inadequately prepared in English at tertiary level. This gap also needs to be prioritised.

- The language of science is English. We should enable students to do their job in English. The use of African languages in science is not compatible with the international standing Wits desires!

- Free language courses for international staff would be nice for integration purposes, but the business language must be English.

- The only elements of this proposal that I would support is making arrangements to allow staff and students to become more proficient in English.

- English is the most spoken additional language in the world it is therefore a reasonable choice of language for business, research and educational

instruction in an increasingly global society.

- If Wits wants to prepare students for the business world it should concentrate on supporting students to be proficient in English so that they will be competent in their working environment.

- Also research needs to be conducted in English if we wish the research to be internationally recognised.

- Translating material into preferred languages will be a very expensive exercise and students will need to communicate in English in the working world.

- Moving to an African-language and foreign-language policy will only isolate Wits and will hamper its rating alongside international universities.

- I think that Wits is losing sight of the international nature of the business and academic environments and that the language policy should take this into account.

- The University has a very diverse environment, different cultures and nations. I would like to believe it is important for staff to know at least one African language.

- The University has to take a bold decision about which language it wants to establish as the official language for study and business, and then a second language from amongst the indigenous languages as an alternative.

- The use of an African language will be so helpful the new students coming from remote (rural) places and it will help them settle with ease in the University, especially when it comes to signs and instructions, and even in class, so that they do not somehow feel left out.

- The whole objective of focusing on languages other than English should be to facilitate learning and communication to language groups better... thus creating better understanding and learning... of subjects and policies.

- The world language of science is English, so although I encourage diversity it should not be at the expense of excellence in English.

- There has been an improvement in terms of language communication amongst students and staff... maybe with little incentive (certificates) we can have better results.

- There was Zulu course previously offered at Language school in 2009, mostly for academics, but it lacked funds and it never continued. Transformation Office was in charge of this.

- This is a big task and requires a lot of time to implement. I would suggest that this African language of choice for Wits be implemented in stages, firstly by starting to have all written material in English and that particular language, just as almost everything is written in English and Afrikaans.

- This is a foolish mission to undertake. Let us support non-English speakers to increase competence, and focus on core business rather than trying to deliver localised content.

- This is a good initiative, I hope it is not going to create problems with other people feeling that their languages were not considered.

- This is a major project, and people must be made to appreciate the reasons behind the effort, for example: contribution to improving our pass rates; promotion of inclusivity; promotion of the idea of a rainbow nation; encouraging better relations between different people.

- This is a retrograde step. The internet is, for practical purposes, only in English. All scientific papers and journals of any merit are published in English. Wits is an English-speaking University. The questions in this survey are heavily slanted towards the outcome that Wits must become multilingual.

- This is a valuable policy that will provide the framework needed to embrace a human-rights culture in the University community.

- This is an excellent idea, but needs to be implemented in the University carefully as the financial aspects may continue to be a challenge.

- This is an internationally recognised institution, with English as the medium of instruction – why fix something that is not broken. Think about the costs!!!

- This is long overdue, and needs to be fast tracked.

- This is ridiculous. Imagine if you have a class of 400 students and the lecturer starts explaining a concept in Hebrew, which 70 students understand (this is not unrealistic given my student-mix). The other 330 miss out on this explanation, placing the 70.

- Currently, we have French-speaking members of staff who the majority of the students cannot understand. It seems unfair to disadvantage our current study body for some expansionist agenda.

- I have some proficiency in other languages but will not feel comfortable explaining highly technical material in French because I didn't learn the material in French myself (and in fact, dealing with numbers in French is extremely challenging for dialect-related reasons and is extremely hard for non-mother-tongue-speakers).

- What if staff struggles to learn other languages? Do we jettison brilliant scientists because their Sesotho is poor?

- We need to get our primary and secondary educational facilities up to scratch with all 11 official languages before we can hope to provide quality tertiary education in all 11 languages.

- This project will most likely result in better academic performance by African students.

- This proposal has potential to cause divisions and issues, particularly on which language to choose to promote/develop, hence let's stick to neutral languages like English (of course, other things being equal).

- This survey is an embarrassment. It is filled with leading questions and options which only allow desired options. I sincerely hope that it will not be used to dictate policy.

- Trying to incorporate all 11 languages into the operations of the University is a mammoth task.

- University rankings have always favoured English-language universities,

wasting time on adding African languages will be harmful to generating an internationally successful research environment.

- Using an African language, which is limited in region and user base, may limit the internationalisation of the knowledge generated by Wits. Due to the large number of African languages available, the selection of one will cause the exclusion of another. The international language of business and general communication is English. Also having lectures in different languages will put a strain on available resources due to duplication in venue use, lecturing times and generation of course content. These resources could be put to better use.

- We are heading in a right direction, so let us keep up with the good work.

- We can only be strengthened by building confidence in, and use of, key official languages in provinces and the country.

- We cannot expect to make a global mark by creating language barriers.

- We live in a globally connected world where English is dominant, or used throughout. Local language use will cut us off from the international community.

- We need to take on board the need to have African languages at Wits. The language policy has been shamefully neglected to date. Having said that, the linguistic reality of South Africa is more complex than the 11 official languages (plus sign language) suggests. The most common language in South Africa is unwritten: Sekasi (or one of its many other names), the lingua franca of townships and villages. I don't think the current language policy, nor this questionnaire, really engages with this reality.

- We need to take the development of African languages more seriously. We have the human resources within the University to do it. All we need is commitment from the University and the relevant academics.

- Where I haven't ticked a question (above) the question was not clear to me. But on the whole this is a useful questionnaire. Unfortunately in a globalising world English proficiency will have to dominate, but language diversification should be encouraged and enabled (but targeted to where it will actually be used most). A further survey should follow to establish actual demand from disciplines, and to prioritise where the limited resources should best be targeted (i.e. to which disciplines).

- Wits aims to be part of the international community, ranked in the top 100 and attracting international postgraduate students. Any language policy other than English only handicaps this desire and is counterproductive.

- Wits also needs to consider providing editing assistance for research purposes, but also for quality assurance in the production of study material and course outlines. Translation services are also necessary in some subjects, such as law, where the sources of the law are in languages other than English – for instance, Afrikaans, Dutch and Latin.

- Wits has got to have an indigenous language policy. Staff (like me) who can only speak a few words in an indigenous African language are at a serious disadvantage, particularly when it comes to informal interactions with fellow staff, students and workers on campus. Our students, however, have to be fluent in academic English, which is (sadly, in some ways) the language of international academic discourse.

- Wits is behind with the development and implementation of the language policy. It would add value for the University to have the surrounding communities recognising that Wits is not just for the selected masters of the Queen's language.

- Wits is in Gauteng and is one of the top universities, so it would be great if it can accommodate both Sesotho and isiZulu as these are the most-spoken languages in Gauteng.

- Wits must decide if it's going to be a dual/multi-language-medium University or an English-medium University that allows for use of all 11 official languages for interpersonal communication amongst staff and students, plus one or two African languages for academic use. Ultimately, academic competence and excellence must be demonstrated in English, especially if the University or graduates want to compete globally. I think French is a waste of time because it is very specific to certain countries and nowhere near as international as English. However, many African countries utilise French as the overall language of communication, so if Wits wants to communicate with these specifically, French may prove useful. The ability to communicate in Mandarin may prove a more useful idea long term.

- Again, a caution – how can the University justify pressurising staff to learn additional languages in order to perform their duties? It takes years of solid practice to become proficient in a new language.

- You would help all staff members to attain international recognition if they were fluent in English, and able to understand all scientific material world-wide. This is one way to help the students, otherwise what is the purpose of Wits?

- Zulu and Sesotho must now take a back seat. It is time for Tswana, Sepedi, Venda, and IsiNdebele.

- 99% of the internet is in English. All jobs in the field that I teach require proficiency in English. There are no textbooks in any 'African' languages.

- A commitment to the understanding of culture and not just language needs also be considered.

- A metalinguistic approach in developing the Wits language policy will be to the benefit of Wits, and attract top local and international students in line with the Wits 2022 vision.

- African languages are essential. But don't confuse this with 'essential' and 'necessary' in the Wits sense. Wits develops its staff and students and any other support employees so that they will be equipped to further themselves in the future. The business world and the scientific community use English as their official language and, for that reason alone, trying to implement language policies and prepare separate documentation and teaching in a secondary language (the preferred African language) are counterproductive. When people leave the institution, they will be working in, most likely, an environment based on English as its official operating language. So rather develop all staff and students to be proficient in the English language and stop wasting time in trying to adopt and translate official documents into different languages. It is also a waste of money and resources and it will not be job creation. With our literacy at such an abysmal level in this country, do you really think the uneducated and the under-educated can actually read the preferred language proficiently? Even if it is in their own language?

- African languages need to be implemented to foster an equal-footing academic environment.

- African languages should be a voluntary thing if any individual wants to learn them and it shouldn't be compulsory.

- Although it is highly desirable that admin staff who interact with first-year students should have some knowledge of an African language, if the secondary-school system is going to teach in English then it would be practical for the University to go for maximum proficiency in English – knowledge of another language (local or foreign) is always desirable.

- An African language may work in certain academic fields but may not in others.

- As an African, I find this unnecessary. English has already been developed as a formal language for research. Most students enrolling at Wits will expect to be taught in English. Introducing other languages complicates teaching and learning for everyone, staff and students. It also introduces a lack of consistency due to losses of meaning when translating. I think the language policy should be focused on helping those that don't have good enough English to develop it to a sufficient standard to allow them to benefit from the programmes at the University whether they are teachers or learners, and perhaps [Wits could] introduce more SA languages into the signage on campus.

- Communication is vital, thus this will enable people to hear and be able to interpret according to their understanding and make satisfactory decisions.

- Considering that the language of academic research, internationally, is English, I doubt that forcing academic staff to learn an African language will help either to boost Wits's research profile, or attract decent academics from abroad.

- Difficult to change conditions of employment. Will be lots of negativity. See very little benefit in trying to be world class. Universities largely work in English the world over. The lack of a vernacular in most disciplines will be a difficult obstacle.

- English is a [universal language], let us just try to balance [it with] another language. What is the use of having a language department which is not more involved with running of Wits language policies?

- English is an international language, and the best international journals are in English. If students want to study at Wits, they must accept that Wits is an English university and therefore all tuition, correspondence etc. will be in English.

- English is currently the international scientific language of choice, followed by Russian and Chinese. Introduction of an African language can only damage our international edge.

- Everyone has the right to receive education in the official language or languages of their choice in public educational institutions, where that education is reasonably practicable.

- Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University (NMMU) in Port Elizabeth, like many other universities in South Africa, provides clear guidance in relation to the issue of cultural and linguistic inclusivity in its Refined Vision 2020 Directional Statement of 18 August 2009:

> We adopt a humanizing pedagogical approach that respects and acknowledges diverse knowledge traditions and engages them in critical dialogue in order to nurture a participative approach to problem-posing and problem-solving, and the ability to contribute to a multi-cultural society… and infuse humanizing pedagogic approaches in all academic programmes in order to liberate the full potential of students from diverse backgrounds with varying levels of academic preparedness (NMMU, 2009: 3).

- Language development in higher education is best addressed by viewing it as part of existing institutionalised diversity management and community-building strategy. In South Africa, multiple discourses impact on institutional domains of practice, and many languages and variants of those languages co-exist in some form or another. For decades, the onus has been on the learners to negotiate a cacophony of discourses, with no recognition of responsibility on the part of educators to repackage their goods and to examine their perceptions of, and positions in relation to, the way they conceive of the identity of their students. An institutional language policy can be informed by a variety of different perspectives. For instance, a monolingual perspective would mean exchanging the language of learning and teaching for another one. For instance, the language of learning and teaching would be isiXhosa, instead of English. However, in terms of global economics, that may be too simplistic and inward-looking. Secondly, an accommodations stance would imply trying to please everyone. This may result in nothing more than a symbolic gesture. It could also be perceived as patronising and pandering to particular language groups because of misguided human rights stances. This, too, might end up being purely symbolic, with no real strategic implementation plan, because of lack of real information on what may really be in the interest of the students' economic futures. Thirdly, research-informed decisions about communities of practice on the ground could uncover how local demographics and global linguistic trends interface. However, it must be kept in mind that scientific approaches and discourses are, in all cases, based on ideological frameworks and perspectives.

- The problem with implementation of successful multilingual policy stems from the absence of multiple, variable, deeply processed scientific data on community profiles, within the University as well as in the region and globally. Political will and emotional energy alone cannot provide the know-how to put economically advantageous language policies into practice. The questions we should be asking are thus: What kinds of needs analysis should been done on the 'communities of practice' which represent our staff and our students? How can all of the participants with, in all cases, multiple linguistic identities, be affirmed within the institution to ensure long-term benefits?

- One cannot discuss institutional statistics without looking at the students' demographics alongside the staff demographics. By this I mean accurate statistics on their cultural affiliations, discourse communities, religions, and language usage for different purposes and situations. Variables such as the nature of linguistic hybridity and spontaneous bilingualism need to be described. Most students at NMMU are bilingual, with varying degrees of competence in at least two languages (e.g. isiXhosa and English or English and Afrikaans). All of them would say they are Africans and would be able to qualify exactly what they mean by this, and the answers would be widely divergent.

- Offensive, outdated entrenched and stigmatised labels still appear all around us. While we all agree that extracting racial statistics is necessary, I suggest, alongside those, detailed language statistics be extracted,

reflecting statistics on bilinguals, multilinguals, individuals' preferred language of learning, and the most used languages of social interaction, albeit specifying how and why and in which contexts languages are actually used.

- The youth move over trajectories and domains faster than we do because of their age and connectedness to media. They are not only subjected to the 'McDonaldisation' of discourses, but actively use these to enhance their own positions in the social networks within which they seek to gain status. They are good at it. They are resilient. Much of the rap music which we perhaps find difficult to relate to, is shaping global youth culture as we speak and strongly critiques the socio-political status quo, much in the way Bob Dylan's music did in the 1960s. Students bring hybrid identities into the institution. If these are blocked and labelled and a thick line is drawn between those discourses and those of the institution, students' hybrid discourses cannot be channelled into discipline-specific critical practices.

- If we view the institution within a new capitalist (global) framework, we need to admit that English is the global lingua franca for the foreseeable future, with Arabic, Spanish and Chinese hot on its heels as languages of international trade. At the same time, strong arguments are being made for building local African languages for local economic purposes, a process driven by the African Localisation Project which is supported by a Canadian development organisation. This project is fast putting all minority languages of Africa onto the interface and building lexical banks and enhancing local economic networks, thereby increasing the chances of marginalised communities to connect with the World Wide Web. IsiXhosa, being the major language in the region, can tap into this resource, given the political will, to the benefit of the region.

- The National Party also tried to push Afrikaans journals and Afrikaans science – the net result is that the small pool of people who prefer to support those journals exclusively are irrelevant to science.

- I do think it will be good for staff to develop conversational skills in say, Sesotho. *Ke kgona go bolela Sesotho ka gonyane!* And that is because I think it is important for reconciliation, not for science.

- I am aware that my sentiments are 'conservative' and I have real sympathy for students who are compelled to produce work in a language that is unfamiliar to them, especially in their own country. However, I think that we will 'parochialise' our academic community if we expend too much energy and resources on language material and skills development. I also think that if I were to choose to go to study in South America or France, for example, I would anticipate having to skill myself in a foreign language and that foreigners coming to work or study here also need to appreciate that English proficiency is required at Wits.

- I am concerned that South African sign language has not been given a greater option in this survey. The Centre for Deaf Studies is the only centre of its kind in Africa and the SASL department has grown and is becoming a strong leader in this field as well. We attract both deaf staff and students and internationally there are many highly respected deaf academics and postgrad students who would come to do post grad degrees if this were more available. Bearing in mind the Zuma interpreter debacle and the fact that Wits is the leading institution in deafness, there is much interest and possibility for expansion and growth. Just in the last year we have attracted 2 PhD students from African countries (both hearing, in fact) that were specialising in disability and hearing loss in their research.... Africa is an open market for this specialism.

- I believe everybody has the right to choose. English has become the medium through which we all communicate. However, we have a diverse range of languages, choosing any one could intimidate the other. Careful consideration must be given when doing so.

- I do not see the point in having the language policy applying to all disciplines in the University. It's perhaps a 'worst of times' for the sciences like Mathematics, Physics, Chemistry, etc.

- I do strongly believe that, as academics, it would be great to be able to somewhat converse in Sesotho/Setswana but not to the point that we should be using those for teaching/giving material unless Wits opens satellite campuses in rural areas where it could make sense. Here in Johannesburg, all primary and secondary education is done in English. And the reality is people in Johannesburg make the deliberate choice to change to English (as I made that choice when I immigrated to South Africa). It is not an unhappy choice. It also enables more flexibility in job search. For those who already speak African languages, this will always be an added bonus in South Africa and, of course, specialised courses (Setswana economics, for example, or political science or social studies) could be offered in Setswana/Sesotho. But it should never be made mandatory. This does not make sense to me. I teach French-speaking students and am a native French speaker but we never speak in French, even in private conversations. I don't see the necessity or the point. The language of communication is English. Trying to split the language of teaching just makes it more complicated. Colleagues at the University of Pretoria mention the nightmare it is to prepare dual courses in English and Afrikaans. Then they are left with no time to do research. And this department has pressed to stop teaching in Afrikaans. This is also how I see it, it would just make things complicated and I am not sure what we would be achieving. Learning a language as an adult requires such effort that it should be a voluntary decision, not forced upon them.

- I encourage the promotion of local African languages but am against the promotion of one language to the detriment of other languages. Doing so will simply alienate students and staff who speak other languages. Besides, the Constitution guarantees all 11 [official] languages spoken in SA. The Constitution has to be changed first if Wits Language Policy is to be legal. Furthermore, there are other nationalities now resident in South Africa in millions, and contributing to the economic growth of SA, therefore their languages should also begin to receive attention.

- I had in the past given some students [the opportunity] to do their consultation in the first language (they felt compromised doing it in English). The result was the same – if you do not know your work, the language does not make it easier.

- I have worked extensively with second-language English master's and doctoral students over the past year and I am absolutely horrified at the level of English proficiency. If these students are attending a compulsory English course, then there is very little evidence of this. I cannot speculate as to why this is the case. However, I feel that when students need to pay thousands of Rands to have theses edited because their language skills are unacceptable, and would result in an immediate and certain fail from an external examiner, then there is clearly a problem. Furthermore, some of the research I have seen requires such extensive editing that I feel it disingenuous if the student presents it as 'my own, unaided work' as required by the plagiarism policy. I think English tuition is required throughout the degree by second-language students and that Wits should make editing services (paid at market rates because editing these works is extremely time-consuming as one often

needs to change every sentence) available for students. If the language of the University is to be English, then students should be required to work much harder at achieving competence, as this is not demonstrated often in my opinion. In fact, I sometimes feel rather embarrassed that my name is associated with an institution where proficiency in English – which is really the language of international communication – is so poor. One cannot accept research papers written in a language other than English, especially at doctoral level where examiners are overseas.

- I'm very sure that enrolment section can provide an accurate number of students per home language for the last 10 years, and from there we can accurately see which language dominates and we can conclude on which official language could possibly be added to the current ones.

- I personally do not support the use of a South African language, e.g. Sesotho, isiZulu etc., as an official language. English is an international language and should be used in all correspondences. In South Africa, thousands of people cannot speak Sesotho, so that will deprive them. Let's stick to English.

- I personally think African must not be implemented at Wits or in all the institutions as this will completely confuse our academic staff, because only some of us will be able to explain in that language.

- I really enjoyed and learned an immense amount from the isiZulu course presented at Wits but the lack of funding for the next-level course really impacted on my ability to converse in any but the most basic conversations.

- I strongly believe that Wits should consider using English as medium of instruction and not use any other language in order to avoid discrimination. Let all other languages be equal.

- I think it is a great initiative, spreading the use of African languages. However, I think it would be unreasonable to expect all staff to be fluent in multiple languages, especially older staff members who would struggle to learn a new language. I think it best to implement the new strategy over a number of years so that new staff and students entering the University have the opportunity to learn new languages, whilst existing staff and students are not required to learn new languages with the threat of expulsion/ retrenchment should they not be successful.

- I think that it makes no sense to develop an African language as language of instruction and as a science language. Science and business in the world are conducted and practised in English.

- From what I can see young people aspire to that standard and want to communicate on international platforms. Indigenous languages are not the way to do that. Young people (and their parents) abandon their home languages in favour of English. I am not sure if this can be turned around and even whether it is desirable.

- I think the initiatives should ... enable the learners to enhance their proficiency in English as we need to internationalise and graft the institution amongst other universities. Strategically speaking, we must use resources wisely in the key drivers of growth or economy in science, mathematics and engineering. Of course these require a medium in which they can be transmitted, and the question is, do we go English or African languages... if indigenous language, [the question is,] when we shall reach a steady state, or shall we fall into the trap or endless refinements just as we change coaches in football? The choice is yours to tick.

- I think this is definitely an option for the University to assist our black students in excelling academically, as part of the courses offered by the University will be offered in their vernacular, i.e. the tutorial classes.

- I would like to see admin functions provided in as many languages as possible, no 'official' choice, just provide as good a service as you can. This would impact the recruitment of admin staff. Personally, I would love to improve my service by taking courses in additional local languages, but unless this is backed up by staffing resources (so I can find the time to do the courses), it won't happen.

- If you want to be in the top 100 you need to have your research available to the rest of the international academics, which implies the use of English only. International business is conducted in English.

- In order for any person to become an accomplished degree student and to progress in his/her career, English is vital. The internet and every recorded book is more easily available in English. My argument is, why try to create and grow a language that does not have enough vocabulary to cover research, etc.? Rather spend that energy teaching English. The individual will benefit the most from that. In as far as keeping the country's culture alive, there are other ways of doing that. I am Indian and I know how difficult it is to translate from Hindi, Gujarat and Afrikaans to English. I also see how Afrikaans has adopted so many English words because of lack of vocabulary of its own.

- It is beyond me why a University that hopes to attain an international profile in any aspect (especially science) would even consider not making English its main language. Allowing students not to be proficient in English will severely limit their ability to compete on an international scale as well as present Wits in a positive and progressive manner to the international community. Further, the ability to attract international students (from the US & Europe) will surely diminish, as both have done away with incorporating a foreign language into their postgraduate and research programmes due to the overwhelming use of English. Why Wits would not recognise this is quite surprising.

- It is hard to answer this because most of the answers are context specific. For example, if you are doing a thesis on Afrikaans or French it is appropriate to write in those languages.

- It is long overdue, twenty years in democracy it is a long time. Let's continue with Dr Nelson Mandela's legacy. *Phambili kulapho siyakhona.*

- It is very short-sighted to expect lecturers to be fluent in another language. There is huge pressure on faculty already present and I suggest that implementation of such a policy will be a tipping point, leading to mass resignation. In addition, students need to be fluent in English in order to read the literature. This is not a 'nice to have' but is imperative in the health sciences. By even partly teaching (not by offering support though) in another language the drive to perfect their English will be diminished.

- By choosing any particular additional language you are discriminating against a sector of the population – at least there is a rationale for using English as the most international of languages.

- It will be a dangerous step to move any of the Wits academic programmes away from an international language to a local language. It will isolate the research we publish, the theses in the archives, and ultimately the ability to

join international universities. At the moment Wits students can enter most of the top universities in the world without the need of a language test. Any decision to make non-English a standard will jeopardise this, and, in my opinion, cost Wits dearly in international rankings. Already our students are barely proficient in English, coming from the school system, and we as supervisors spend literally weeks correcting Basic English in their reports, papers, and dissertations. There is no internationally read journal that publishes in isiZulu, Afrikaans etc. All internationally read and recognised journals are English. Our teaching, irrespective of what government policy may be, needs to prepare students to contribute on that basis. Likewise at conferences. The majority of international conferences in science use English as the medium. Students not properly prepared in that will simply not be able to contribute.

- Language generally is a complicated issue as over the years African indigenous languages have been ignored, modified and now they are being introduced back to people lives in conjunction with English. However there is a gap that has to be [filled in] primary schools, in order to ensure that our future generation learns the importance of 11 official languages at an early age.

- Language is dynamic. Instead of making requirements, the Wits community should first see signs and document headings in different languages and get used to the idea. For example, we still use English to designate Wits in official documents. If we also add, say, Sesotho, then it's visible to people and gradually becomes 'normal'.

- Many questions, such as 11, are ambiguous. In other questions, such as 41, it is impossible to select more than one language. The Wits policy should be English mainly, with support in the interim in isiZulu and Sesotho until such time as they have been developed into academic languages. Moreover, Wits must liaise with other universities in Gauteng as well as with UFS (for Sesotho) and UKZN (for isiZulu). I am currently the Chairperson of the English National Language Body as part of the Pan South African Language Board. I am happy to be consulted on all matters to do with language and with the development of the Wits Language Policy.

- May the University try to involve all the stakeholders in the consultations, resource acquisition and the implementation of this policy.

- Most of the time people are scared to face change and challenge. They must not think negatively, just have open minds and look forward, and start learning the African languages that make South Africa different from other countries. Let's become proud South Africans.

- My answers were based purely on Wits 2022 vision. English is the business language of the entire world, and if Wits students and staff are not 'trained' competently in English, we will lose out. All [the other] 10 languages in the country belong purely to us, and don't help a bit on the international front.

- Wits staff finds everything to complain about, this is a fact – so forcing people to learn another language (which is already extremely difficult to attain after the age of 12) might encounter resistance. Just my untrained opinion.

- My one concern is that if too much emphasis is placed on local languages, Wits students and researchers will struggle to place themselves on a world stage where English is the lingua franca. Proficiency in English should therefore still be one of the University's top priorities. I agree that the development of African languages is important to reach a wider group of students, but it could confuse communication rather than enhance it (since there are so many different languages). I think it is important for all staff to have some competency in African languages and the artistic and scientific development of the languages themselves should be nurtured; but when considering how they should be present on the academic scene I think that we should proceed with caution and that English has to take priority (if we want to reach an international audience).

- Personally, I see this as yet another administrative nightmare. If we can ever get to the point where the systems we have actually work in one language, then and only then should we be looking further on. Even then, it should be an international language such as French or Chinese.

- The best example I can use for language policies is Sweden. I work with colleagues from Lund University. They all speak English (and Swedish, despite two of them being Australian). They teach in Lund in English, they publish in English and they don't feel threatened in any way by English. If you want to cripple every endeavour at this University, then go ahead with the introduction of a second language (even Afrikaans, which I note was not considered as African enough). It will destroy the science we do here.

- Sign Language should be a key component of the development of this policy. That is, it should be added as a fifth language of the policy.

- Staff should be able to take a short course in an African language without charge. Perhaps facilitators could run courses directly in the school?

- The implementation of alternative means of communication will move this University so rapidly from the top 100 we will not be able to see it! This will be doing our students absolutely no favours and they will not be able to compete with the remainder of the world – English is the international language of communication and all other nations adapt. If we introduce this requirement, it places yet another layer on expectations on academics and will severely retard the rate at which information is handled during contact time. I see absolutely no benefit to asking this institution to fix something which should be handled in primary and secondary schooling. Even the contemplation of such a step breathes of mediocrity. As a final comment – this University has a proud history of resisting government over the really important issues but now seems to have lost its autonomy over issues that will definitely impact on its credibility – is this really the way it should go?

- The implementation of everyone learning at least one African language should be given priority and started as soon as possible.

- The trend throughout the world is to use English as the means of communication for science. Everyone who wants to be involved in scientific research has to master English.

- The University should consider development of support staff despite the fact that whatever courses they choose to study are not relevant to their daily work tasks/activities. We need to build careers, and not to serve as though we do not have dreams just because we cannot afford to pay for our own education to become better people.

- There is a view shared among Africans that their languages are undermined, and to counter this view the development of these languages will bring a sense of pride to African students. It will allow them to participate freely in public discourse.

- There should be more public forums to discuss this matter – I find I am unable to answer many of the questions since I do not know the cost and other implications of a new language policy. It would be useful to hear submissions from experts in this field. I also do not know how a new language policy would affect the ability to recruit, since I do not know what that language policy would look like.

- This is long overdue. To cite the case of Afrikaans, initially Afrikaans had no technical terms equivalent to English but today learners are taught in Afrikaans from birth till Doctoral level. This doesn't mean that such learners/ students cannot communicate in English. They do communicate in English when they do business. The talk of English as a lingua franca is an excuse to prolong the issue of other groups struggling in English while the English are in a comfort zone. They also must struggle to learn other languages. Our constitution is clear on official languages. The law was passed in Parliament where almost all parties are represented. What is being delayed is the implementation of the law. We need to start to implement it.

- Twenty years down democracy lane, and as an institution that is striving to be among the top 100, we should already be showing our seriousness about incorporating African languages into our institution because charity begins at home. Other countries show pride in their languages and it is about time that we speak African languages with pride and there is no better place to show that pride than to incorporate African languages into the curriculum.

- We should not meddle with such a large and internationally recognised English-medium university by creating another language medium of teaching/ instruction. This will drop standards, as in time to come it will also exclude some academics from the selection process. This facility should be created at selected smaller universities, such as Transkei.

- We want to be global, so we need to think global – cater for local cultural needs but operate using standard communication platforms that are common across the globe. Second to English, the other common languages are Mandarin and Spanish with respect to business. Perhaps these can be considered. There are no African languages that I am aware of that are on the global stage (perhaps I am wrong here).

- Whichever policy we adopt, we need to inform schools about it, so that in the long term we may not have to finance the project.

- While I fully support the use of and development of African languages, if Wits is to produce internationally competitive graduates, they need to speak confidently in the language(s) which can be understood outside this country.

- While it may be nice to change road signs to include an African languages, or even to open an address in a formal setting with a traditional African language, teaching courses, administrative or business communications or student assignments in an African language would benefit very little (unless as previously mentioned, it was for a communications course). If students are given the opportunity to be proficient in an African language rather than English, how will they interact with other African countries, let alone on a wider international scale? I support trying to create an inclusive atmosphere, but to an extent that does not jeopardise a student's future career.

- Wits has a multilingual-speaking staff and students, both academically and in support. Why can't it co-ordinate all different cultures within the University and start something like a cultural event? There is a cultural month and we don't even know what the University is doing about it. And there are a lot of things that can be done in conjunction with the use of African languages.

- You should strengthen English and forget about African languages – that is, if you want to move forward. If you want to become a tribal backward University, then go for it.

From the above list of direct assertions made by respondents, it is clear that there are unresolved tensions and contestations about the development and use of African languages at Wits. While negatives views expressed in this chapter are held by minority respondents, issues raised in these arguments cannot be ignored. There is a need for dialogue and constant discussion among all university stakeholders if the development and use of African languages has to find wider support in the University.

Recommendations and Concluding Remarks

While the study shows that participants were predominantly critical of the lack of recognition and official development of African languages at Wits, there are a number of recommendations and suggestions made about the revision of the language policy and the development of African languages. These include the general culture of the University in handling the development of African languages and allocation of resources for such purposes.

The study made the following major findings:

- The University needs to keep English as the main medium of communication in the University. This view was supported by 80% of staff; 95% of students and 31.25% of workers in outsourced services. It is one of the fittest communicative media for a large variety of societal and inter-societal communication needs in the global village (Dhamija, 1994). In South Africa and elsewhere in the world most of the research data is published in English and the majority of higher-learning institutions make their programmes available through the medium of English. The majority of modern states run their affairs in English and conglomerate world-class business operates largely in English. Those with poor or no command of English have no or delayed access to these reservoirs of human knowledge and development. It is the indisputable reality that to position South Africans to benefit from these enormous sources of information, knowledge and opportunities, the school curriculum should be largely in English.

- Support for replacing Sesotho with another language was confirmed by the choice of isiZulu as the preferred language to be used officially with English and developed for wider use in the University. IsiZulu received the greatest support in all clusters of respondents (40.40% of staff; 58.64% of students and 37.95% of employees in outsourced services).

- Sesotho came as a second preference (26.20%) by staff; third among students (8.73%); and third place among employees in outsourced services at 12.82%. As argued by Kadenge (2014) in his unpublished critique of the Wits Language policy, "To select Sesotho to be developed as the medium of instruction undermines the very notion of language equity and the promotion of multilingualism. Why should the University effectively choose to serve the interests of only 11% of the student population? Is Wits going to be perceived as an institution that favours Sesotho speakers above others? At the very least, the University should accept the dominant language –isiZulu - as the medium of instruction in order to provide a more fully multilingual teaching and learning environment". This view is supported by the suggested preference of isiZulu by the majority of respondents.

- The University therefore needs to revise its existing language policy, which identifies Sesotho as a preferred language.

- The University needs to identify various modalities through which the chosen African language can be phased into the mainstream communication fabric of the University and its core business.

- The University needs to identify means through which the development of a chosen language can be supported. This could include a combination of various funding sources, including government and donor funds.

Further research needs to be undertaken to establish how local languages can be developed for scientific purposes and inclusion in mainstream and official communication platforms. It lacks credibility for the new language policy politically to grant African languages equal status to English in education matters because African languages are not adequately developed to meet the demands of modern education concomitant with global trends. The state has demonstrated limited deliberate intention to institutionalise the development of African languages by funding language-development initiatives and providing infrastructural support to the growth of these languages. African languages enjoy only political liberation, with no political and economic power. Although African languages have been granted equal status with English, it is an indisputable fact that English already has a head start compared to any other language.

That the equality of languages is engendered in the South African Constitution remains a political token that brings no reforms and deliberate development of African languages. Any school language policy that incorporates the national policy, with its blatant political correctness, but ignores the political and economic power English has achieved as a competitive advantage of South Africans on a global stage of enterprise, will cause damage worse than that caused by the apartheid and segregation regimes. To enable all learners to be confident, proficient and fluent users of South African official languages, institutions of learning should make provision for differentiated language instruction. In order to achieve this ambition, learning materials and human resources required to support the individual learner's language of choice should be well developed and made readily available. A debate about the importance of African languages in teaching and learning, research, community engagement and organisational administration needs to become an integral part of the conversation on student-centredness; improving graduation throughput; developing indigenous knowledge systems; improving research productivity; transformation and social inclusion; and social and cultural diversity, as defining features of Wits. These debates should be informed by newly developed knowledge frontiers on the role of African and indigenous languages in teaching and learning, and knowledge generation.

While it is true that South Africa has been celebrated as a country with a strong constitution and language policy with a legal backing Bamgbose (2003) argues that the country "shares some of the weaknesses of language planning practices in Africa, especially lack of a detailed plan of action for the implementation of proclaimed policy" (cited in Kamwendo, 2006). It is time that the University of the Witwatersrand as a leading institution in the country stops congratulating and celebrating some tenets of the constitution that remain unimplemented and instead take a leading role in implementing them especially the language policy. The constitution or a policy cannot implement themselves, they need to be implemented. Thus a proper clearly outlined policy will ensure that the chosen languages will have a definite and specified role in a multi-lingual setting that Wits envisages to be.

Taking into consideration the context and findings of this study, the University may consider:

- Conducting stakeholder consultation through focus groups to establish details and more meaningful ways to make the new language policy relevant and meaningful.

- Revising its existing language policy which identifies Sesotho as a preferred African language. The new language policy will have to make isiZulu a preferred African language of business, or opt for a combination of isiZulu and Sesotho while placing more emphasis on the development of isiZulu as the most preferred African language.

- Identifying various modalities through which the chosen African language can be phased into the mainstream communication fabric of the University and its core business.

- Identify means through which the development of a chosen language/s can be supported. This could include a combination of various funding sources, including government and donor funds.

- Investing resources to ensure that the chosen African language is well developed and institutionalised into the mainstream communication framework of the University.

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"*Nathi sisho kugcwale umlomo ukuthi i-Wits inyuvesi yethu*"