



**UNIVERSITIES
SOUTH AFRICA**

CoPAL REPORT ON LANGUAGE ACTIVITIES

UNIVERSITY: Walter Sisulu University

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1. TEACHING & LEARNING MATTERS

WSU is slowly adopting bilingual teaching and learning, through translanguaging in tutorials. As part of the implementation of the language policy in teaching and learning, the Transformation and Language Directorate contracted eight (8) (which will be further extended by additional six (6) from April 2025) postgraduate language students to be employed as translator interns to provide translation services. The students underwent rigorous training on translation and terminology development. Thereafter, WSU embarked on the translation of the key concepts (glossaries) for all faculties. There was a call for faculties glossaries of 30% of their modules for translation into isiXhosa. The 30% is composed of 20% being first year modules and 10% being 'high risk' modules. At the same time, the School of Law was chosen as the department to pilot multilingualism within the institution. Student Module Guides for the first-year modules have been translated from English into isiXhosa, thus ensuring that students access information in at least two languages. Furthermore, doctoral and master's final research project abstracts have been translated into isiXhosa, presenting bilingual abstracts for the 2024 graduates. The translations undergo verification by language and subject specialists and will later be verified by PanSALB before they can be given to the students.

The institution purchased a machine translation software (SDL Trados), which is usable by 20 translators. This will make translation and terminology management easier to the current and future translators. Translators are yet to be trained on using the software.

2. TERMINONOLOGY DEVELOPMENT/GLOSSARIES

The institution has employed intern translators to work on translations. During each translation and validation process, the translators collect terminology and thus develop an in-house terminology. Glossary lists were collected from all the faculties and were translated for use by students. The purchase of SDL Trados will assist WSU in building in-house terminology which will be used in internal translations for consistency in terminology usage.

3. LANGUAGE POLICY MATTERS

The Revised Language Policy has been submitted to various structures. However, it got lost into the cracks because of structural inconsistencies. As such, it is yet to be tabled to the Senate. However, the language policy implementation However, the Language Policy Implementation Plan for the revised language policy is being implemented. Hence the establishment of the Directorate for Transformation and Languages and the Languages and IKS Unit in 2023. The Seven Faculties of WSU have established Faculty Transformation and Languages Committees (FTLCs), whose mandate is to spearhead the implementation of the language policy. Guided by the committees, the faculties developed Faculty Language Implementation Plans that are aligned with the Institutional Language Policy Plan as to execute the mandate of the policy. These Faculty Language Policy Implementation Plans have been developed after intense engagements with different faculties lead by the Executive Deans and Head of Departments.

Additionally, the Department of Justice has shown its recognition of the importance of the use of African languages for in legal matters. Hence, the School of Law has embarked on translation of its glossaries, module guides and learning material. This shows that WSU is participating in national imperatives on multilingualism in higher education and producing graduates who are well informed. Translation of legal documents is an act towards decoloniality

4. RESEARCH RELATED ACTIVITIES

Students, especially those in the Department of African Languages, were encouraged to write their research in their respective languages. As such, 15 students chose to write their MA research projects in isiXhosa. Furthermore, all honours students in African Languages Department conducted their research in isiXhosa and Sesotho. Their proposals were presented purely in isiXhosa and the Ethical Clearance Applications were submitted written in isiXhosa, with no translations. An article from student research was published in 2025:

- Dilayi, N & Madolo, Y. 2025. Abafazi njengeentsika zesizwe: Ukutyhilwa kwabalinganiswa abangabafazi kwiidrama ezimbini ezibhalwe ngababhali bezini ezahlukeyo. *South African Journal of African Languages*, 45(1). <http://www.dx.doi.10.1080/02572117.2024.2395841>.
- Nokutywa, S. & Tshongolo, X. 2025. Izithuko nezenyeliso ziyinxalenye yoncwadi lwemveli nentlalo kaNtu. *ULwimi kwezeMfundo kwiNtlalopolitiko noLuntu*. Sunpress: Stellenbosch. Abahleli: Xeketwana, S & Kwatsha.
- Nokutywa, S. & Mbatyoti, Y.P. 2025. Ulwimi ngumhlaba, umhlaba lulwimi: Ukuthiywa kweenyanga zonyaka zesiXhosa. *ULwimi kwezeMfundo kwiNtlalopolitiko noLuntu*. Sunpress: Stellenbosch. Abahleli: Xeketwana, S & Kwatsha.

Furthermore, publicising masters and doctoral projects with multilingual abstracts also shows WSU's involvement in intellectualizing isiXhosa (and later Sesotho). The translated abstracts are a way of showing that African languages can be used as languages of research. And that will positively influence the use of these languages in teaching and learning.

5. LANGUAGE EVENTS HOSTED/ORGANISED

Mother Language Day Celebration: WSU has a privilege to host Mother-Language Day for the first time on the 20th of February 2024. The day was graced by external stakeholders

like the Eastern Cape Provincial Department of Education, and members of the university community. The work celebrated by the launch of four isiXhosa fiction books written by WSU academics. This has developed amazing interest even for students to work with academics in writing in African Languages

6. LANGUAGE RELATED PROJECT/S

None at the moment.

7. OTHER ACTIVITIES (IF NOT ALREADY MENTIONED ABOVE)

None.