



# Decolonising Teaching and Learning Practice: The Review of Curriculum and Pedagogy of Undergraduate General Linguistics Modules

Rivalani Xenon Masonto

University of Zululand, KwaDlangezwa, South Africa; MasontoR@unizulu.ac.za

## Abstract

Despite the burgeoning scholarship on the decolonisation over the last few years, this project remains contested by diverse ontologies, epistemologies and ideologies of Western, non-Western, South American origins. Thus, while higher education institutions all claim to be advancing decolonisation in their programme, in teaching and learning, the practice suggest divergent interpretations of what this process is. This paper is underpinned by an interpretive paradigm using document analysis to collect qualitative type data to examine the extent to which decolonisation is realised in the curriculum of the four undergraduate General Linguistics modules offered at the University of Zululand. It uses the postcolonial theory to frame the discussions arguing that the monolingual notion of “one nation, one language” is false in these multilingual societies where foreign languages are common and has become untenable as the strategy to further decolonisation in higher education. On the other hand, the article argues in favour of code switching, translanguaging, multilingualism in the classroom, and incorporating texts and perspectives from South Africa, that support materials written by African authors with Eurocentric materials as strategies to promote diversity and pluriversality of knowledge systems making the university content less foreign and more accommodating in their context. The article concludes that the current curriculum of the selected modules in Linguistics should be decolonised in ways that accommodates the lived experiences of students, African world views, epistemologies, recognition of diversities, indigenous knowledge and diverse linguistic practices.

**Keywords:** Linguistics, Pluriversality, Diversity, Inclusion, Decolonisation, Postcolonial Theory.

## 1 Background and Context

Globally, there has been an increase in the push to decolonise curriculum and pedagogy, especially in higher education. This movement is fuelled by the realisation that conventional curriculum design policies and practices are usually grounded on Western hegemony and epistemologies that suppress and marginalises non-Western hegemonies and epistemologies. As a response to this skewed picture, there has recently been an upsurge by academics and researchers to develop counter-hegemonic alternative frames and epistemologies that embrace diversities and pluralities that takes into account perspectives and experiences of marginalised and indigenous groups [1]. By affirming and empowering historically marginalised communities, this strategy not only improves the educational experience for all students but also advances social justice and equity.

While colonisation impacted all aspects of life including curricula and pedagogy in higher education and education in more general, language and the study of linguistics have specifically been used by colonial countries as an effective weapon to undermine non-Western hegemonies, indigenous knowledge system. This situation develops because language and linguistics have always been associated with questions of identity, power, and cultural legacy. The dominant Western hegemonies systematically undermined the rich linguistic diversities of non-Western languages and cultures that are often overlooked in favour of Western linguistic theories [2] and frameworks in curricula and pedagogies of linguistics.

In the light of the above claims, decolonising curriculum and pedagogy of linguistics modules in this paper has become imperative to make curriculum more inclusive and representative of global linguistic diversity by drawing examples from other languages and non-Western linguistic theories. It also promotes a more inclusive learning environment and deepens students' awareness and appreciation of various linguistic backgrounds [3]. It is further claimed that decolonising curriculum and pedagogy of linguistics courses has potential to empower students from marginalised communities of Kwazulu-Natal by acknowledging, recognising, and appreciating language contributions in class. This envisaged approach supports linguistic diversity and contests the historical value of their languages calls for among others, the use of code switching, translanguaging, multilingualism as part of classroom and integrating African-authored materials as pedagogical strategies to further the decolonisation project. The above-mentioned counterhegemonic strategies of decolonisation are difficult in the context of new

managerialism and performativity where only courses and programmes that appeal to the market and are financially viable are supported.

## 2 Decolonisation in Linguistics

Linguistic decolonisation is a transformative and urgent endeavour that seeks to overcome ingrained Eurocentric biases and promote the inclusion of other linguistic traditions. Throughout history, colonialism has had a significant impact on the study of linguistics, frequently elevating European languages while marginalising indigenous languages. Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o, a foundational voice in this debate, contends that colonial languages were not just vehicles of communication but also of cultural oppression. His seminal work [4] demonstrates how the implementation of colonial languages has weakened indigenous cultural identities and expression. Mazrui and Mazrui (1998) agree, emphasising the need for reclaiming indigenous languages, culture and tradition, to rethink the curricula and ensure that it reflects African realities [5]. In reaction to these injustices, researchers propose an unprecedented reimagining of language as a constantly socially produced phenomenon. [6] challenge inflexible and hierarchical language approaches and rather propose a flexible definition of linguistic activities that embraces linguistic diversity and rejects static categorisations. This viewpoint is consistent with the appeal of [7] for research approaches that acknowledge and incorporate indigenous knowledge systems, highlighting the relationship among epistemology and cultural settings.

Human rights are also critical when examining the effects of language that has been weaponised by colonisers to subjugate indigenous languages in post-colonial countries. This subjugation has resulted in linguistic genocide of marginalised minority languages thereby robbing societies of their linguistic and cultural legacy [8]. As part of the counterhegemonic debates, it is argued that decolonising knowledge systems, including languages, is necessary for Africa to achieve full epistemic freedom [9]. In her research, [10] observed how language and identity interact in multilingual settings. These arguments suggest that decolonisation has to consider the power structures affecting language use. This work demands that pedagogies and curriculum challenge established power systems and reflect multilingual reality.

Over the years, there has been an expansion on the scholarship of decolonisation agenda to the South Asian formal education systems, emphasising the value of doing so for the preservation of linguistic variety and the advancement of educational justice. In particular, [11] make the case for the inclusion of native languages in South Asian formal education. [12] focuses on language policies in South Asia, advocating for the acknowledgement and advancement of

regional languages that have been marginalised by frameworks of colonialism and post-colonisation. In *Ecological theories in comparison*, [13] makes an important contribution to this subject exploring how decolonial pedagogies have affected language instruction and argues in favour of curriculum that include indigenous languages and knowledge. Similarly, [14] highlight the need of valuing multilingualism in international educational environments, [15] explore how digital technologies might amplify marginalised languages and create global linguistic variety.

The decolonisation of syntax has benefited from the work of [16]. They critically explored ways in which colonial viewpoints have influenced conventional syntactic ideas. They further advocate for changes in research methodology, teaching practices, and publishing standards to reflect the linguistic realities of marginalised populations, and argue for a decolonial perspective on syntax that integrates varied syntactic structures from under-represented languages. [17] adds value to the conversation by exploring the meaning of "decolonising ourselves" in the context of contemporary languages and cultures. She highlights the importance of critical introspection to understand ways in which colonial legacies continue to influence modern practices. Her work emphasises the criticality incorporating various approaches and points of view within scholarly frameworks.

In summary, the project of decolonising linguistics is dynamic and continuous, aiming to address past injustices and promote linguistic fairness and social justice. A thorough grasp of how the discipline can develop is provided by the insights from academics like [4,6,16,17] and others. A more equitable and inclusive discipline requires addressing colonial biases, valuing linguistic variety, and standing up for the rights of speakers of indigenous languages and making their voices heard. This dynamic approach demonstrates a dedication to building a fairer social and academic environment for all linguistic minorities.

### **3 Theoretical Framework**

The discussions of how decolonisation of curricula and pedagogy of the identified modules on linguistic offered at the University of Zululand may be realised is grounded in postcolonial theory, which expose the long-lasting effects of colonialism on knowledge production and educational practices in higher education. Postcolonial theory makes an important contribution to conversation on the enduring effects of colonialism on culture, politics, and the economy. The postcolonial scholars underscore the significance of societal changes for successful

decolonisation and aims to comprehend how colonial influences continue to exist in postcolonial cultures. The harbingers of the decolonisation project like [4,18] share this viewpoint, arguing that meaningful reforms in a variety of societal systems, including education, should be part of the process of decolonisation. According to postcolonial historians, local knowledge systems were marginalised and erased as colonial powers imposed their own epistemologies and cultural norms on colonised countries [7]. This criticism is further developed in discipline of decolonial studies which promotes the proactive demolition of these colonial legacies and develop counterhegemonic structures inside modern institutions. This entails challenging Western-centric hegemony and promote the coexistence of diverse epistemologies that promote and accept society that acknowledges and acknowledges pluralities of intellectual traditions [19].

Postcolonial theory therefore accentuates the recognition and legitimisation of indigenous knowledge and languages as a crucial component of decolonisation. The "one nation, one language" philosophy, which privileges European languages as the medium of instruction while marginalising native languages and knowledge systems, has been the dominant one in many African countries. Scholars such as [20, 21] have criticised this approach for undervaluing the rich linguistic and cultural legacy of indigenous groups while maintaining the dominance of colonial languages. The epistemological pluriversality as an element of postcolonial theory underscores the need to acknowledge and value the variety of knowledge and learning practices that are firmly ingrained in the cultural contexts of many groups. This calls for a fundamental change in the way knowledge is viewed and valued, which goes beyond just incorporating indigenous knowledge into pre-existing frameworks. An intentional and inclusive effort to accept these varied epistemologies is critical if education and other societal systems are to be fully decolonised. It takes a deliberate, flexible, and inclusive approach to create an inclusive knowledge ecosystem. This might mean that adding indigenous content to the curriculum is insufficient; instead, a structural shift that puts indigenous epistemologies on par with Western paradigms is required.

Moreover, indigenous groups ought to actively participate in decision-making processes as part of the decolonisation of education. This will ensure that their opinions and needs are taken into consideration and that their voices are heard. Learning institutions may more effectively assist diverse student groups and further the larger objective of social justice by establishing a collaborative environment.

Decolonising language as especially as a medium of instruction can benefit and be realised through multilingualism, which in addition to assisting students' cognitive and cultural growth, it also contests linguistic hierarchy created by colonial governments. One useful linguistic tool that reflects the constantly changing and flexible nature of bilingual and multilingual cultures is code-switching; the practice of switching between two or more languages during a discussion. As part of postcolonial discourse, code-switching and other linguistic attitudes and practices is central to fostering positive attitudes towards diverse languages among educators and students and ensuring. This strategy is important to ensure that indigenous languages are not viewed as less valuable than colonial languages

The other strategy of decolonising colonial legacies in education is translanguaging, where speakers use various languages within a single conversation. Some authors have reflected on translanguaging as a linguistic tool to advance the decolonisation project. [22] observed how language instruction can perpetuate colonial ideas and suggests translanguaging as a powerful tool to fosters racial and linguistic inclusion in classrooms while [23] focused on transformative potential of translanguaging in bilingual and multilingual education underscoring the potential in translanguaging to develop more equitable educational practices and acknowledge students' cultural and linguistic identities. Translanguaging in multilingual education is also supported to advance inclusive and decolonial pedagogies [24]. Thus, translanguaging is a powerful tool to address colonial legacies in education.

In summary, postcolonial theory therefore provides a useful framework to comprehend and resolve the enduring impacts of colonialism. This framework assists in addressing sociocultural structures, promoting indigenous knowledge, and aiming for an inclusive knowledge community founded on epistemological pluriversity in the decolonisation project. Postcolonial theory therefore promotes inclusivity, flexibility and intentionality, in order to acknowledge and appreciate diversities of knowledge and learning styles. This step can be a long way towards creating a more just and equal society that values the whole range of human knowledge.

#### **4 Methodology**

This study relied on interpretive paradigm to collect qualitative type of data on the selected modules of General Linguistics at the University of Zululand. The selected four undergraduate modules offered in the Department of General Linguistics and Modern Languages are: Oral

and Written Communication Skills, Introduction to Language, Language and Learning, and Introduction to Morphology and Syntax.

In line with the chosen interpretive paradigm, document analysis has been chosen as an instrument to collect qualitative type of data in the form of themes, patterns and issues. The documents analysed include student guides, assessment tool- tests, assignments, examinations, teaching materials (slides), and prescribed textbooks. Predetermined themes and issues emerging from the thematic exercise were: decolonisation and decoloniality discourses; bilingualism and multilingualism; code-switching and translanguaging; and linguistic diversity and plurality in the decolonisation discourses that are part of the decolonial narrative. The purpose of the analysis was therefore to establish the extent to which the themes all considered to challenge the exclusive use of English as a monolingual language of education, and an extension of colonialism in diverse multilingual, multicultural settings in the South African higher education are used and encouraged in the documents.

The purpose for analysing these documents was to establish the extent to which the modules mention or encourage decolonisation and decoloniality discourses including but not limited to the promotion of bilingualism, multilingualism, code-switching, translanguaging, linguistic diversity and plurality indigenous languages, and language education more broadly.

## **5 Findings**

This article provided an extensive document analysis of the four general linguistics modules from the Department of General Linguistics to determine how if any of these modules represent discourses promoting decolonisation agenda that is also the University of Zululand priority and higher education sector in more general. The following themes and issues emerged from the analysis: decolonisation and decoloniality discourses; bilingualism and multilingualism; code-switching and translanguaging; and linguistic diversity and plurality in the decolonisation discourses. The findings are discussed below.

### **5.1 Decolonisation and Decoloniality Discourses**

The study revealed that none of the four courses explicitly mentioned decolonisation or decoloniality. The "Oral and Written Communication Skills" module primarily focusses exclusively on providing students with instructions, description of assessments, assignments, tests, examinations and presentations, and specifying referencing styles, rather than mentioning

decolonisation or decoloniality issues. Similarly, the module "An Introduction to Language" does not expressly mention decolonisation or decoloniality in its module description. However, Outcome 1.2.5 in the guide for students, which examines how various speaking settings affect language use, may be broadened to include considerations of how power dynamics and colonial histories influence language and communication.

The "Language Variation" topic in Week 22 focuses on linguistic variation and the historical settings that influence language practices. Week 23, titled "Speech Situations," contains critical talks about how particular speech contexts are privileged, using examples from English and isiZulu. One of the activities encourages students to investigate indigenous language practices and examine the effects of colonialism on language use and education. Although the mandated materials do not expressly promote decolonialism or decoloniality, one assessment titled "Language Variation" can be examined from a decolonial viewpoint.

Similarly, the "Introduction to Morphology and Syntax" module makes no categorical mention of decolonisation or decoloniality. The guide in this topic outlines structural components of morphology and syntax, while traditional linguistic principles serve as the foundation for the learning modules and examinations. The prescribed and recommended literature do not also seem to promote decolonisation in Morphology and Syntax.

Likewise, the "Language & Learning" module does not include decolonisation or decoloniality discourses but rather focusses on basic linguistics and language use in educational settings, with assessments based on standard linguistic principles such as identifying auxiliary verbs and discussing independent clauses, but without a decolonial lens.

## **5.2 Promotion of Bilingualism and Multilingualism**

The modules show different levels of support for bilingualism and multilingualism. The "Oral and Written Communication Skills" module promotes neither bilingualism nor multilingualism. In contrast, the "Introduction to Language" module helps students understand these concepts by examining linguistic diversity and dialects. The module outcomes include analysis of various languages, which promotes bilingualism and multilingualism. For example, the exam includes an essay topic about dialects and languages, prompting students to explore their differences and similarities, fostering a respect for multilingualism.

The "Introduction to Morphology & Syntax" module encourages bilingualism and multilingualism by analysing the structural aspects of words and sentences in



different languages. This comparative approach emphasises both similarities and contrasts between African languages, increasing students' understanding of linguistic diversity. Teaching materials, particularly slides, incorporate examples from both isiZulu and English to illustrate ideas, such as comparing the morphological structures of prefixes in these languages.

The "Language & Learning" module unquestionably promotes bilingualism and multilingualism due to its emphasis on language policy in education. The module covers themes connected to multilingual education policies, and the examination contains questions about multilingualism in higher education, discussing its benefits and drawbacks. This suggests that the module includes debates about multilingual education policies and supports bilingualism and multilingualism throughout its curriculum.

### **5.3 Code-Switching and Translanguaging**

None of the four modules specifically mentions or addresses code switching and translanguaging as strategies that can be used to advance decolonisation agenda in the Linguistics Department at the University of Zululand. These themes are not even incorporated in the student guides or teaching materials, indicating a curriculum deficit concerning these contemporary linguistic phenomena.

### **5.4 Linguistic Diversity and Pluriversality**

The extent to which language diversity and plurality are addressed varies among the modules. The "Oral and Written Communication Skills" module focusses on improving individual communication skills without specifically addressing language diversity or plurality.

In contrast, "An Introduction to Language" discusses dialects and language variation, allowing students to grasp linguistic diversity. The "Introduction to Morphology & Syntax" module, while examining various morphological and syntactic structures, does not directly address linguistic plurality. The "Language and Learning" module on the other hand explicitly encourages linguistic diversity and pluriversality, particularly through discussions of multilingual education and language policies. This module provides a more explicit engagement with these topics, highlighting the importance of language diversity in education.

Overall, while not all courses overtly address decolonisation, bilingualism, or multilingualism, three of the four modules to some extent, do contain characteristics of linguistic diversity and plurality.

## 6 Discussions

The analysis of the Department of General Linguistics' four general linguistics modules provides important insights into how these modules address topics such as decolonisation, bilingualism, multilingualism, code-switching, translanguaging, and linguistic diversity. Notably, none of the modules directly address decolonisation or decoloniality, highlighting the larger problem of incorporating these critical viewpoints into traditional linguistic curricula. The conceptualisation of decolonisation as not only rectifying past injustices but also challenging the epistemic dominance of colonial viewpoints [25] is critical in the decolonial discourses. The modules' absence of explicit mention of these themes suggests an opportunity to include conversations about how colonial histories and power dynamics influence language and communication. This discussion addresses integrating a South African perspective into slides, prescribed books, and assessments.

### 6.1 Decolonisation and Decoloniality

Currently, the modules do not explicitly address decolonisation as significant area for improvement. For example, in the "Introduction to Language" module, the inclusion of South African perspectives could be very beneficial. The teaching slides could include instances of how colonial histories have influenced language use in South Africa for example studies of indigenous languages like isiZulu and isiXhosa, which demonstrate how colonisation affected their status and use. Visual aids and charts could successfully represent South Africa's linguistic landscape before and after colonialism, giving students a clear knowledge of the historical backdrop and its long-term implications.

Prescribed materials play an important role in developing the curriculum. Publications such as "Language and Decoloniality in Higher Education: Reclaiming voices from the South" by Bock, Heugh, Stroud, and Van Avermaet, "Decolonising the Mind" by Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o and "The languaging of higher education in the global south: De-colonizing the language of scholarship and pedagogy" by Makoni, Severo, Abdelhay, and Kaiper-Marquez provide valuable insights into decolonising language and education.

These readings provide students with a firm theoretical frameworks and practical examples for understanding and challenging the colonial legacies of linguistics. Assessments can also be structured in such a way that assists students to interact critically with these topics. For example, an essay question can urge students to look into the influence of colonialism on South African languages. Such an assignment could inspire students to explore how colonial language

policies have influenced the growth and status of indigenous languages, resulting in a more in-depth understanding of decoloniality in a particular context.

### **6.2 Bilingualism and Multilingualism**

The modules demonstrate varying degrees of support for bilingualism and multilingualism. The "Introduction to Language" and "Introduction to Morphology & Syntax" modules provide foundational understanding, yet there is room for enhancement. Lecture slides could incorporate examples of multilingual education policies within South Africa. Highlighting successful case studies, such as schools in KwaZulu-Natal that implement multilingual teaching strategies, could offer practical insights. These examples would not only illustrate the benefits of multilingual education but also inspire students to think critically about language policy and planning.

The selection of prescribed books is important for deepening students' understanding of bilingualism and multilingualism. Including texts such as "Bilingualism in Schools and Society" by Sarah J. Shin, which provides relevant theories and practical examples for multilingual South African classrooms, could enhance the curriculum.

Assessments could be designed to further engage students with these concepts. Projects that require students to design a multilingual education program for a South African school, incorporating local languages alongside English and Afrikaans, would provide practical application of theoretical knowledge. Comparative analyses of bilingual education policies across different South African provinces could also be an insightful assignment, encouraging students to explore and critique existing policies.

### **6.3 Code-Switching and Translanguaging**

The absence of discussions on code-switching and translanguaging indicates a significant gap in the curriculum. Incorporating these topics is essential for a contemporary understanding of language use. Lecture slides could be enriched with real-world examples of code-switching and translanguaging in South African contexts. Videos or transcripts of South African students and teachers engaging in code-switching during classroom interactions or lessons would provide concrete cases for students to analyse and deliberate on.

Also, prescribed books such as "Translanguaging with Multilingual Students" by García and Kleyn should be included to offer both theoretical and practical insights into these phenomena.

This text would provide a comprehensive understanding of translanguaging, enhancing students' ability to apply these concepts in real-world settings.

Assessments could be planned to explore these phenomena in-depth. For instance, assignments that involve analysing instances of code-switching and translanguaging in South African media or classrooms could provide practical insights. Students could be given an assessment to observe and document code-switching practices or instances in their local communities, in order to reflect on the sociolinguistic implications and to develop a broader understanding of multilingual communication dynamics.

#### **6.4 Linguistic Diversity and Plurality**

To broadly address linguistic diversity and plurality, the curriculum needs to incorporate diverse linguistic practices and perspectives. Lecture slides could feature content highlighting the linguistic diversity of South Africa, including maps and demographic information presenting the distribution of various language speakers. Case studies of linguistic diversity in multilingual cities such as Johannesburg and Cape Town could provide relatable examples, demonstrating the vibrant multilingual sites of South Africa.

Furthermore, prescribed books such as "The Multilingual Edge of Education" by Piet Van Avermaet, Stef Slembrouck, Koen Van Gorp, Sven Sierens, and Katrijn Maryns (2018), which discuss language diversity in classrooms, should be included to provide theoretical foundations and practical examples. This would assist students comprehend the value of reflecting linguistic diversity in educational settings.

Assessments should be designed to assist students engage with the concept of linguistic diversity. For example, an assessment could include conducting field research in a multilingual community. In the Kwazulu-Natal context, this would mean documenting how different dialects are used and valued. This type of practical assessment would provide students with first-hand experience with linguistic diversity, improving their understanding and appreciation of multilingualism.

The analysis emphasises how the curriculum of general linguistics modules need to adopt a more inclusive and restructured approach. Enhancing the focus on bilingualism, multilingualism and linguistic diversity while incorporating conversations on decolonisation, code-switching, and translanguaging. This can improve students' learning experiences and help create a more equitable and representative language education. By implementing the above-

mentioned recommendations into practice, we may be able to close the existing gaps and align the curriculum with contemporary linguistics, which will ultimately promote a more inclusive and inclusive understanding of language from a South African viewpoint.

With this approach, students are likely to be more prepared to engage with and contribute to the dynamic and diverse linguistic landscape of South Africa.

Through expanding the curriculum to contain a more explicit focus on these essential themes, the department of general linguistics can better prepare students to navigate and contribute to a linguistically diverse society. For instance, integrating case studies of post-colonial linguistic settings and incorporating readings from scholars engaged in decolonial linguistics would further enhance the curriculum. This comprehensive approach guarantees that graduates are not only knowledgeable in linguistic concepts but also equipped to critically interact with the socio-political elements of language. This alignment with contemporary research and practice will eventually promote a more inclusive, informed, and dynamic discipline of general linguistics.

## **7 Conclusion**

In this article, I argue for the integration of South African perspectives into the General Linguistics curriculum. More broadly, it is argued that existing gaps in the current modules regarding decolonisation, bilingualism, multilingualism, code-switching, translanguaging, and linguistic diversity present a significant opportunity to enrich and improve the educational experience of students and promote a more in-depth comprehension of the socio-political aspects of language. Addressing these gaps will equip students to critically engage meaningfully with the linguistic realities of South Africa.

These additions would provide students with concrete, relatable material that demonstrates the historical and contemporary influences of colonialism on South African dialects and languages. This, in turn, facilitates critical deliberations and reflections on power dynamics and linguistic justice, important components of a comprehensive linguistic education.

In addition, assessments grounded in a South African context are equally crucial. Designing projects and assignments that require students to analyse multilingual policies, document code-switching practices, and explore linguistic diversity within their communities will provide practical, hands-on experience. Such tasks not only reinforce theoretical knowledge but also develop the skills necessary for students to navigate and influence the complex linguistic

landscape of South Africa. This approach will ensure that students emerge not only as scholars of linguistic concepts but also as critical, engaged participants in the discourse on language and power.

Practical examples and comparative analyses will illuminate the cognitive, cultural, and educational benefits of multilingual competence, fostering an appreciation for the rich linguistic diversity of South Africa. Integrating discussions on code-switching and translanguaging is imperative for a contemporary understanding of these phenomena and their role in enhancing communicative competence and cognitive flexibility.

Moreover, addressing linguistic diversity and pluriversality through varied linguistic practices and perspectives is non-negotiable for a holistic linguistic education. This focus not only mirrors the multilingual reality of South Africa but also prepares students to advocate for and implement more inclusive and equitable linguistic policies and practices. Such an approach is essential for developing a nuanced, critical understanding of language in its social and political contexts.

By fostering a curriculum that is inclusive, reflective of local realities, and aligned with contemporary research, the Department of General Linguistics will be able to produce graduates who are academically proficient and socially and culturally aware. Finally, it is concluded that a comprehensive and updated curriculum will empower students to become critical thinkers, effective communicators, and linguistic justice advocates, opening doors for a more representative and equitable discipline of general linguistics.

## **8 Recommendations and future research**

### **8.1 Recommendations**

In the light of the discussions above, it is recommended that:

First, South African case studies and examples should be incorporated into lecture rooms as these will enhance effective pedagogy on languages. Second, prescribed books focusing on decolonising the curriculum should be carefully selected to provide theoretical and practical experiences, stimulate students to critically examine and challenge the dominant epistemologies that have historically marginalised indigenous knowledge systems. Third, the proposed enhancements to the General Linguistics curriculum should not take the form of mere additions, but rather substantial reforms. These enhancements are fundamental to cultivating a generation of linguists capable of engaging with and contributing to the dynamic and diverse

linguistic landscape of South Africa. Last, the focus on bilingualism and multilingualism within the curriculum of General Linguistics must be robust, unequivocal and intentional.

## 8.2 Further research

First, future research is required to explore how decolonial shifts impact students, how their engagement with language from their own cultural backgrounds shapes their academic journey. Second, there is a need to investigate how multilingual teaching methods affect students' confidence, creativity and participation and ability to think beyond the classroom. Last, studies comparing inclusive approaches across South African higher education are required to identify which methods are effective in creating an inclusive and meaningful learning environment.

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