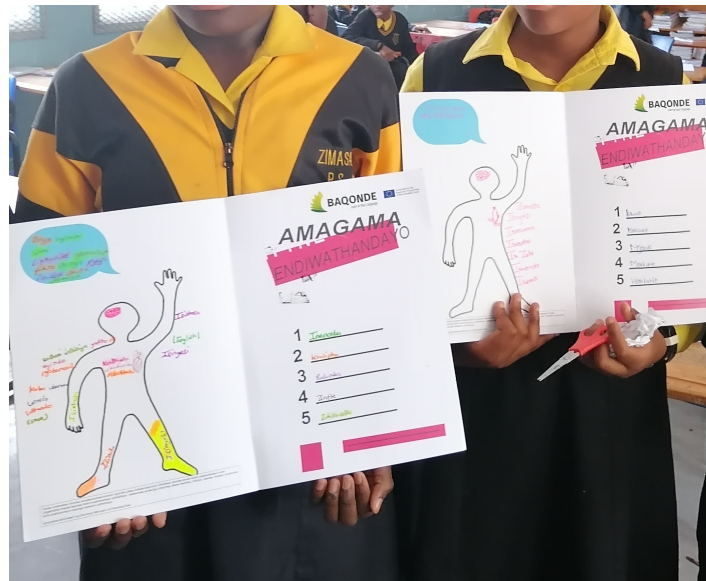


BAQONDE Teacher Guidelines



Be a part of South Africa's future!

USE YOUR LANGUAGES!

Did you know that it is a universal human right to speak our mother tongues?

Mother tongues matter

Our mother tongues play a very important part in our lives - they are not only a badge of belonging, but also a resource for creativity...

Don't lose it

Guidelines for teachers on advancing African languages in schools in South Africa

Authored by the BAQONDE project consortium

<http://baqonde.usal.es>



BAQONDE
Learn in Your Language



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Guidelines for Teachers

Introduction

The [BAQONDE project](#) has drafted guidelines for schools about languages and multilingualism in South Africa. These guidelines covers topics including language and identity, human rights, language learning, and job opportunities. The guidelines are accompanied by a set of teacher resources including slides, activities and worksheets for use in the classroom. These guidelines address topics of language rights, languages as a resource, and how to incorporate important and up-to-date information about languages and multilingualism into classrooms.

BAQONDE is a [collaborative project](#) between four South African and three European and universities, co-funded by the European Union. Its project members are working to promote the use of indigenous African languages as a medium of instruction in higher education. The project members, drawn from different areas of academic specialisation, assert the need for African languages to be recognised, used and valued in universities in South Africa.

What the BAOONDE project is all about

The BAOONDE project and its members across seven universities are united in their mission to address the undeniable fact that language continues to be a barrier to access and success for many students at South African higher education institutions. The cause of this problem is the fact that indigenous languages have been denied space to function academic and scientific languages. Through the project, training has been provided and an open access multilingual repository ([Polokelo](#)) to share high quality university teaching materials in the languages spoken as a mother tongue by South Africa's university students.

However, the story starts much earlier than at university. It starts in schools and in homes. It starts with school pupils who speak the dozens of different languages that make up our communities. It starts with the parents, grandparents and caregivers who help nurture our children and these languages. It starts with all of us. That's why we have created these practical guidelines which provide concrete guidance on the use of indigenous languages in the field of education. These guidelines accompany a comprehensive schools outreach pack that can be downloaded for free from the [BAQONDE website](#) and adapted to local needs. The pack's activities are also included at the end of these guidelines.

Language and identity are so fundamentally intertwined. You peel back all the layers in terms of what we wear and what we eat all the things that mark us, and in the end, what we have are our words.

Jhumpa Lahiri

Language as a right and as a resource

Did you know that it is a universal human right to express ourselves in our mother tongues? Language is a human right that is referred to in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948). The Declaration has been translated into more than 500 languages. A United Nations resolution calls on all Member States to promote the preservation and protection of all languages used by peoples of the world.

Everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration without distinction of any kind such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status.

Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948)

Language rights refer to our rights to enjoy the use of our languages in our society. There are certainly many challenges to the free use of some languages, especially African languages. These include limited opportunities for children to learn and receive education through their family's preferred language, lack of formal recognition, and limitations on opportunities to use that language in public life.

As well as seeing language as a right, we can also see language as a resource. For instance, different languages provide us with different ways of understanding the world, as well as interacting with friends, family, community and strangers. Languages are also an intellectual resource, and speaking several languages can improve our creativity, assist literacy and numeracy, and even delay the onset of dementia symptoms in later life. Our mother tongues play a very important part in our lives - they are not only a badge of belonging, but also a resource for creativity, for mental health, and for career prospects.

Using African languages as a medium of instruction in education improves literacy and numeracy, enhances creativity, reduces dropout rates, and fosters more family and community involvement in the lives of students and their schools.

The majority of South African students in the primary, secondary and tertiary education system are home-language speakers of languages other than English. Yet, apart from Afrikaans, other languages (indigenous African languages) have still not been widely used as a medium of instruction. In other words, the majority of learners do not receive education in their home language(s). Research has underlined the extremely negative impact that this situation can have on students' performance throughout the system, from basic education onwards.

Full transformation cannot be achieved without taking indigenous African languages on board... If we view multilingualism in South Africa as a problem, we will not go anywhere.

Professor Nobuhle Hlongwa, Dean & Head of School of Arts, University of KwaZulu Natal
BAQONDE project UKZN Lead

Language and participation in education

"Language is a co-determinant of students' attitudes, participation and performance. We all have experienced, haven't we, friends who are usually, you know, exciting and lively in their familiar surroundings (and that includes when they are using familiar languages). But in settings or for topics that require the use of a somewhat unfamiliar language, these friends become like fish out of water – they are completely out of their depth and are forced to withdraw or to adopt a reduced personality.

This is what happens in countless classrooms every day. Language contributes to the sense of estrangement many African students experience, some of the questions they ask about whether they belong to the higher education environment.

Language may be a factor in determining who participates and does not participate in whole-class interactions.

Language may be a factor in determining who understands how much from reading that has been prescribed.

Language may be a factor in who goes beyond the minimum reading requirement.

Language may be a factor in how well the lecturer is understood.

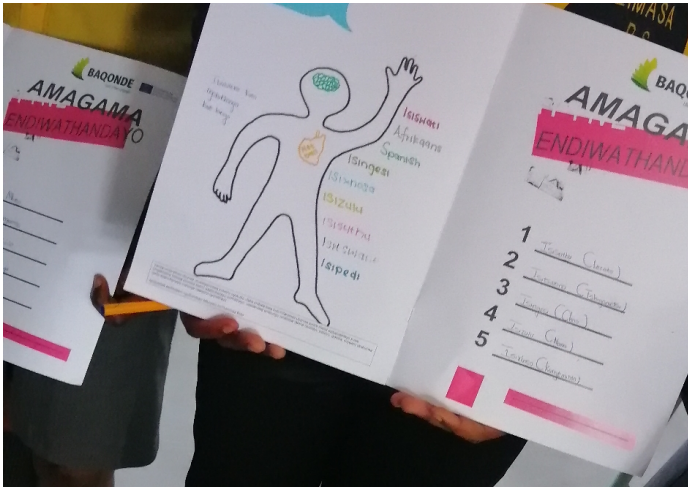
Language may be a factor in who understands the assessment question.

Language may be a factor in who can communicate their answers and be rewarded adequately for the knowledge they possess."

Professor Bassey Antia, Professor of Applied Linguistics, University of the Western Cape

Quote from [Litnet online interview](#), 2021-09-08

Sample activity: Language Portraits



How many languages do you speak, and how would you describe how you use them and feel about them to others? Do you have a special relationship with one particular language? Are you trying to learn a new language? It is a simple task that can be completed with all ages of students.

The activity asks students to colour in an outline of a 'language' body representing themselves and their languages (template provided in the appendix). Students decide which colours to use on which body parts and which adaptations the portrait may need to fully reflect their own language repertoire. They can use different labels and symbols to reflect this, including, for instance, the languages that they think in, dream in, do maths in, the language(s) of their heart, of their hands, the languages they do sport in, and so forth. The creativity of students in this exercise will always exceed any prompts or expectations!

Pupils may then present their portrait to the class or write a short piece about their portrait. This activity allows students to provide a visual and narrative first person account of their languages, and allows them to explore their own repertoire from their subjective, lived experience. Typically it yields very engaging outcomes in the classroom and is an activity that pupils enjoy completing.

Teachers can read more about this [activity](#) here. If you'd like to know more about this area of research, you can read this article by Prof. Busch here. The language portrait activity was initially created in carried out by Professor Brigitta Busch and her colleagues at the University of Vienna on multilingual repertoires.

How to help to advance the use of African languages in schools

Top 10 tips for teachers

1. **Build a positive approach towards languages.** All languages are a resource, rather than a barrier, obstacle or deficit. Languages are a form of human capital. Mother tongues play an especially important role in healthy identity development and wellbeing.
2. **Leverage the strengths** in your classroom: your languages, students' languages, the languages of their families and the local neighbourhood
3. **Think of your school as a living language lab.** Find ways to make all of the languages spoken in your classroom as visible as possible, on the walls or the blackboard. Consider multilingual word lists of key terms
4. **Focus on languages whilst teaching different topics.** Integrate mother tongues and the content you are teaching in simple but regular ways. Ask pupils for their favourite words in their mother tongue when working on a new topic (worksheet in appendix)
5. **Incorporate proverbs, idioms and metaphors** from pupils' languages into the classroom. Ask them to bring in a favourite saying from their family and to explain what it means
6. **Focus on students' language repertoires** (see language portrait activity) – *all* of their languages contribute to the development of student literacy
7. **Don't compartmentalize** languages, or prevent students from drawing on or mixing different languages. Don't try to create a monolingual classrooms. All students' languages are a valuable resource and switching between languages
8. **Start with what your students know and build from there.** Use their existing linguistic knowledge in their mother tongues as a basis for questions and activities in class. Don't ignore the languages they speak at home, find ways to incorporate them into school life through materials and questions.
9. **Raise awareness and curiosity** about language and languages – the different sounds, structures and rules. Use dictionaries and word lists,
10. **Enable your students to aim high.** Share our project's [repository](#) of mother tongue materials for higher education. Let them know that universities in South Africa are working seriously on the intellectualization of African languages.

Appendix – Pack for Schools



Be a part of South Africa's future!

USE

YOUR

LANGUAGES!

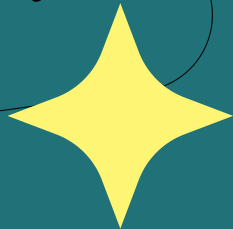


Did you know that it is a universal human right to speak our mother tongues?



Don't lose it

All of the languages that we speak are important for our future development, including for our friendships, our families, our jobs and even for our brains and our health! So, don't lose the languages you speak at home - you'll certainly regret it later in life if you do!



Mother tongues matter

Our mother tongues play a very important part in our lives - they are not only a badge of belonging, but also a resource for creativity, for mental health, and for career prospects.



Get a great job

African language speakers have a crucial role to play in the future. Speaking indigenous languages brings lots of career opportunities in technology, research, business, the creative arts, journalism and much more!



Use it if you don't want to lose it!
#AfricanLanguages



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DID

YOU

KNOW?



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LOTS of languages

SOUTH AFRICA HAS 12 OFFICIAL LANGUAGES, 9 OF THESE ARE AFRICAN LANGUAGES. THE MOST RECENTLY ADDED OFFICIAL LANGUAGE IS SOUTH AFRICAN SIGN LANGUAGE! BUT IN FACT, THERE ARE SOME 30 INDIGENOUS LANGUAGES SPOKEN IN SOUTH AFRICA.

Language families

Linguists group languages into 'families' to study them. In South Africa, there are two main language groups:
Nguni-Tsonga languages (isiNdebele, isiXhosa, isiZulu, siSwati, Xitsonga) and
Sotho-Makua-Venda languages (Sesotho, Sesotho sa Leboa, Setswana, Tshivenda).

Endangered languages

Some languages that used to be spoken in South Africa have sadly become extinct, these were part of the Khoisan language family. Let's make sure that ALL of our languages continue to thrive!



Use it if you don't want to lose it!
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DID YOU

KNOW?



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Language & maths

Using all the languages we speak - being bilingual or multilingual - is linked to better mathematical ability and higher levels of creativity. So don't give up the languages of your parents or grandparents, use them for your own future.

Languages are GOLD
SPEAKING DIFFERENT LANGUAGES IS A REAL ASSET, LEADING TO INCREASED SALARIES AND BETTER CAREER PROSPECTS. THIS INCLUDES AFRICAN LANGUAGES!

Your brain

Did you know that being a bilingual or multilingual person delays the onset of dementia in later life? Speaking different languages enhances brain activity!



Use it if you don't want to lose it!
#AfricanLanguages



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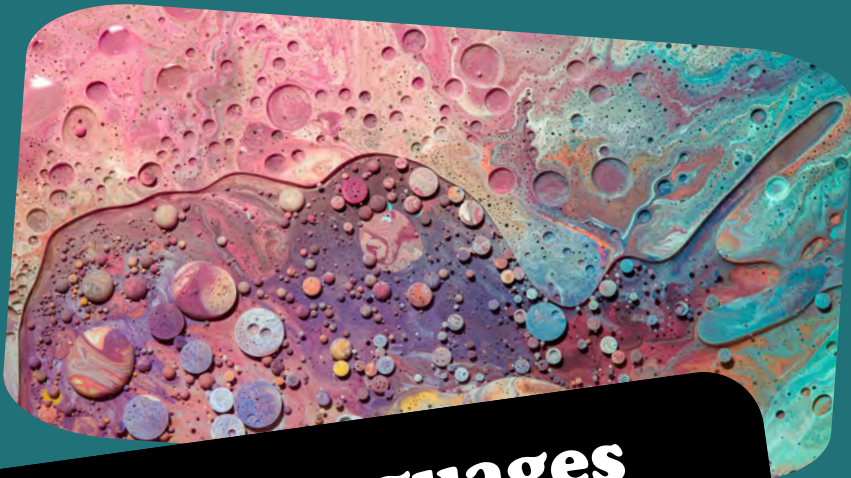
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Be a part of South Africa's future!

OUR African

Languages



Did you know that it is a universal human right to speak our mother tongues?

African Languages are unique

PEOPLE WHO STUDY LANGUAGES DESCRIBE HOW THE LANGUAGES SPOKEN IN AFRICA ARE UNIQUE. SOUTH AFRICA IS VERY SPECIAL, WITH 12 OFFICIAL LANGUAGES.

Kaaps

Kaaps is a unique language that evolved in the Western Cape of South Africa. It emerged as a new language following on from contact between the Khoi and San languages, South-East Asian languages, Dutch, Portuguese and English. Isn't that amazing?

Language & culture

African languages contain really important and specific information about cultural practices, beliefs and knowledge. When we lose those languages, we lose that knowledge and our identity too.



Use it if you don't want to lose it!
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OUR African

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Nguni languages

Nguni languages are part of the bigger Bantu language family. Nguni languages include Xhosa, Zulu, Ndebele, and Swati. These languages are special because of their clicks. These clicks were introduced a very long time ago due to contact with Khoisan language speakers. Languages change due to contact between people!

South African Sign Language (SASL)

SASL IS ONLY ONE OF MANY DIFFERENT SIGN LANGUAGES USED BY DEAF AND HARD OF HEARING COMMUNITIES IN SOUTH AFRICA.



Languages are fluid

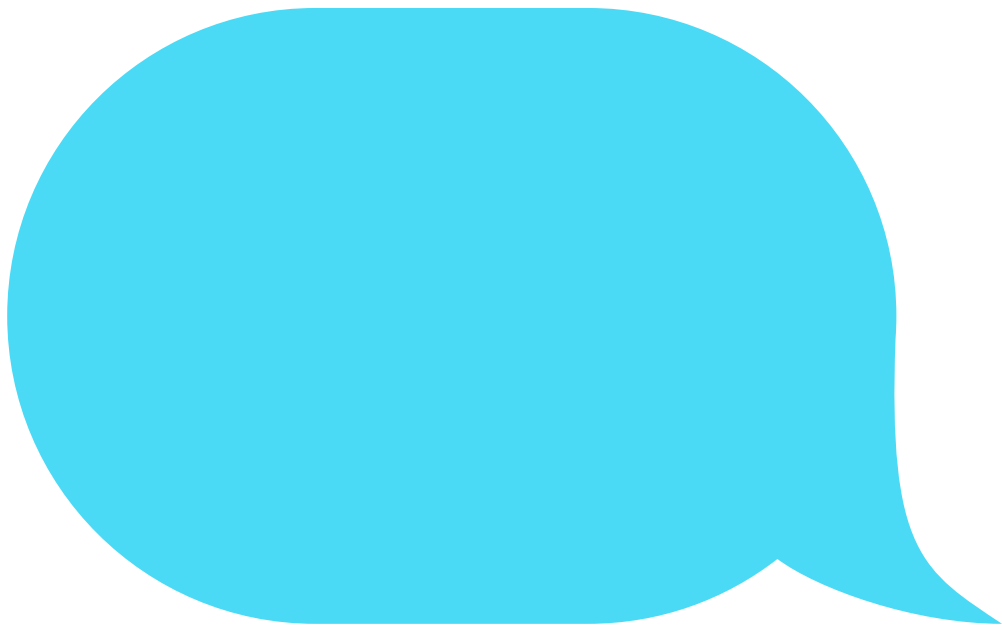
Languages are more like a liquid than a solid. They change all the time when speakers are in contact with each other. People switch between languages for different purposes and mix their languages. This is all a normal part of human life!

Use it if you don't want to lose it!
#AfricanLanguages



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Make a language portrait by colouring in this picture to represent all the languages that are important to you. You can choose colours that fit the different languages that you speak and use parts of the body (like head, heart, hands, feet) to represent different things about your languages.



BAQONDE LANGUAGE CHAMPION CERTIFICATE

This certificate is proudly presented
for honourable achievements in
championing African languages to

_____ ◻ _____

Awarded This Day Of

SCHOOL NAME

TEACHER NAME



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My **FAVOURITE** WORDS

1

2

3

4

5

in



Quiz true or false?



-
1. South Africa now has 12 official languages **true** **false**
 2. South African Sign Language is not an official language **true** **false**
 3. The official languages include 5 African languages **true** **false**
 4. Some languages in South African are now extinct **true** **false**
 5. There are about 20 indigenous languages spoken in South Africa **true** **false**
-