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University Language Planning and Development Office

First Quarterly Report: 2015

INSPIRING GREATNESS

There are three highlights of the first quarter. The Strategic Planning Workshop, the creation of synergies with SABC and the KZN Legislature, and the conferences and workshop. More in the report.

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First Quarterly Report
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1. Introduction

The year 2015 promises to be an exciting year. The University Language Planning and Development (ULPDO) started the year with a Strategic Planning workshop in order to agree on, and map out an annual activity plan including clearly spelt-out targets, and most importantly to craft a five-year strategic plan. The five-year strategic plan articulates the ULPDO's vision and mission through strategic goals that underpin the provisions of the University's language policy and plan. The strategic plan provides a clear path towards the intellectualization of isiZulu at the University of KwaZulu-Natal. It provides clear steps and deliverables on isiZulu terminology development, isiZulu National Corpus (INC) building, the digitization and archiving program, and the production of serialised specialised dictionaries culminating in the production and publication of a specialized multi-disciplinary comprehensive bilingual (isiZulu-English) advanced dictionary. The five year strategic plan, once written up and complete, will be submitted to the University Language Board for consideration, approval and adoption.

The ULPDO continues to improve the quality of the documentation of isiZulu by providing platforms to share ideas on the contested area of orthography standard writing. It is the vision of the office to compile an instructional booklet on "the common errors in isiZulu" as a result of these writing and orthography workshops, which will help standardize orthographic conventions in the language.

2. ULPDO Strategic Planning Workshop

After a largely successful year in full operation, the ULPDO held a two day Strategic Planning (SP) workshop in order to map a five-year strategic direction, and establish key priorities for the office. The SP workshop was held on the 15th and 16th of January 2015.

In the picture are the seven ULPDO staff members and the ULB board member. From the left, Mr. K Mngadi (ULPDO Coordinator), Mr. N Manyoni (ULPDO language practitioner), Dr L Khumalo (ULPDO Director), Mr. S Nkontwana (ULPDO Researcher), Ms N Ngubane (ULPDO Administrator), Dr G Mazibuko (Language Expert), Ms Z Thembani (ULPDO Intern), and Ms R Mabuya (ULPDO Intern).

The major aim of the SP workshop was, *inter alia*, to define ULPDO's strategic goals, define ULPDO's view of success, and prioritize the activities that will make this view a success. The SP will make members of the office know what they should be working towards and ultimately put everyone on the same page. The workshop also discussed and sharpened the activity plan for 2015. The 2015 plan of action involved noting budgets for the workshops, events, staff establishment, and running projects. It was agreed that the SP document will be finalized and submitted to the University Language Board (ULB) in the second quarter for consideration and adoption. We thus highlight the strategic goals of the five-year plan hereunder:

The ULPDO strategic goals:

Goal One
A specialized multi-disciplinary glossary

- To develop specialized technical terminology in order to compile a specialized multi-disciplinary comprehensive bilingual (isiZulu-English) glossary.

Goal Two
IsiZulu as a language of science

- To develop and promote isiZulu to be a language of research, science, teaching and learning.

Goal Three
Language community engagement

- Empowering communities with linguistic and cultural skills in order to promote community engagement and foster social cohesion.

Goal Four
Human Language Technologies

- To build and develop isiZulu National Corpus (INC) for Human Language Technologies (HLTs)

Present at the SP workshop was ULB member and isiZulu expert from the department of African languages in the School of Arts, Dr. G. Mazibuko. Her knowledge and expertise was key in shaping the SP proceedings. Her role in this regard was commended by the ULPDO director at the end of the workshop. Other key areas of emphasis that were discussed was the promotion of research and scholarship in the broad areas that we work in such terminology, corpus linguistics and human language technologies. It was also emphasized that there is a need for the Office to be more visible to the entire University community across campuses. At the end the director re-emphasized the Office's commitment to the full implementation of the language policy and plan.

3. ULPDO Language Workshops

3.1 IsiZulu Orthography Workshop

The ULPDO successfully hosted a two day workshop on isiZulu orthography, which was held on the 11th and 12th of March 2015. The isiZulu orthography workshop is a follow-up on the proof reading and editing workshop that was successfully held last year. A call was made at the last year's workshop that ULPDO should host a similar workshop in isiZulu in order to share writing and orthographic practises in isiZulu in order to identify and eliminate "common errors" in the writing of isiZulu. The facilitators are experts in isiZulu who were careful chosen to meet with the objectives of the workshop. Professor A M Maphumulo, Dr G Mazibuko and Mr Z E Xala led the workshop on three key areas.

In the picture is Prof A. M. Maphumulo and Mr Z. E. Xala. Dr G Mazibuko is presenting (and is out of the picture). The rest are participants at the workshop.

The following were specific themes:

- Ulimi olukhulunywayo nolubhalwayo *"spoken and written language: exploring orality and literacy"* by Dr G Mazibuko.
- Ubhalomagama *"IsiZulu orthography"* by Mr. Z E Xala
- Imibhalo yocwaningo *"academic writing in isiZulu"* by Prof A M Maphumulo

The workshop was attended by language practitioners, academics and students. Dr Ndlovu attended the workshop from UNISA. Other key stakeholders that were represented at the workshop included the KZN Department of Arts and Culture, PanSALB, Ethekwini municipality, Ukhozi FM, and UKZN lecturers and students from the School of Education and the School of Arts. A total of about 35 people attended the workshop in both days. The workshop proceedings went very well as reflected by one of the participants who commended the Office for organizing the workshop. One of them shared the following sentiments:

"Cha ngingathanda ukubonga indlela enenza nenihlela ngayo izinto. Impela uma nizozihlela kanje njalonje ngeke sanqena ukuza emicimbini yenu elandelayo. Siyabonga." *"I would like to thank your Office for organizing these workshops. In fact if your office continues to organize these events in this fashion, we would not hesitate to attend them. Thank you."*

The workshop delegates recommended that the Office organize more of these workshops in order to entrench these writing conventions in the process sharing important knowledge. The office is convinced that such workshops contribute significantly to the development of isiZulu as a standard language.

4. Running Projects

4.1   Bua Lenna sessions continues

The first Bua Lenna (Sesotho for '*speak with me'*) session was held at John Bews and Ansell May Residences. These sessions were held on the 12th of March 2015.

An evening of Sesotho. Students who participated in the Bua Lenna with their language champions and the ULPDO staff members.

The students have shown noticeable interest in the Bua Lenna 2015. They welcomed with great excitement the first Bua Lenna session for 2015. It is also worth mentioning that some students were new both at the University and in this residence but nonetheless participated fully in the sessions. One of the objectives of this year's sessions is to attract more students into the project and further expand it so that it can be embraced by the entire University community. Judging from the warm acceptance of the project in our first meeting in these two residences, the office is confident that the number of students interested to participate will grow and our objective to foster social cohesion will be enhanced.

5   Corpus building

The building and maintenance of the isiZulu national corpus remains one of the key activity of the Office. The Office has set the target of 5 million running words by the end of the year. As a result corpus work has started in earnest. At the end of January we took delivery of the corpus designated scanner, which is expected to enhance the corpus collection exercise. In the first quarter and since the arrival of the scanner we have scanned and processed 14 800 running words. Strategies are being put in place to significantly improve the output. The offices has also embarked on the process of visiting relevant institutions in order to introduce the corpus project as a national imperative and to appeal for corpus materials. To this end we have written to Shuter and Shooter Publishers to establish a memorandum of understanding in access the vast amount of publications in isiZulu, which range from the classical writings to contemporary ones.

6.   Conferences and workshop attendance

The University of the North-West, Potchefstroom campus, hosted the Digital Humanities Workshop from 23-25 February 2015. The workshop brought together a team of leading international experts in Digital Humanities to share expertise in new media and information technologies and their role in advancing research in the broad area of human sciences. Scholarship in DH is inherently multidisciplinary and collaborative in nature and involves designing information systems and technological platforms to ensure the long-term sustainability of digital data. The ULPDO director was identified and invited on the strength that ULPDO is building an isiZulu national corpus, and plans to create a digital library which will document and archive language resources developed in isiZulu so that UKZN becomes a world centre for the study and documentation of isiZulu. The creation of a national corpus and a digital library is supported by cutting-edge software and platforms some of which were discussed and shared at the DH workshop such as WS Tools, python language, ATLAS.ti etc.

In the picture is Professor Ray Siemens, Research Chair in Humanities Computing and Distinguished Professor in the Faculty of Humanities at the University of Victoria, Canada.

The workshop was a huge success. Proponents for the Alliance of Digital Humanities Organizations and leading Digital Humanities research professors in North America and Europe presented a paradigm shift from traditional humanist approaches to modern, digital and scientific approaches to the teaching of humanities and social sciences in Higher Education. At the end of the first day of the workshop the initial proposal was to form Digital Humanities South Africa Chapter as a member of the DH alliance, but it was decided by the international assembly that instead we form a Digital Humanities Association of Southern Africa (DHASA), to encompass some of the participants who are not necessarily based in South Africa. The DH alliance consists of the following current members:

- The European Association for Digital Humanities (EADH)
- Association for Computers and the Humanities (ACH)
- Canadian Society for Digital Humanities / Société canadienne des humanités numériques (CSDH/SCHN)
- centerNet
- Australasian Association for Digital Humanities (aaDH)
- Japanese Association for Digital Humanities (JADH)

A four member working group was nominated by the assembly to spearhead the formation of DHASA. The ULPDO director, Dr L. Khumalo was chosen to be one of the

four members, which include Professor Justus Roux, Professor Lawrence Wright and Dr Pam Maseko. Professor Attie de Lange was nominated as the working group's admin officer. It is an amazing feat for ULPDO to be part of the creation of this association and be partly responsible for bringing Digital Humanities to this sub-region.

Dr L. Khumalo was in February also invited to deliver a keynote address at the National Multilingualism conference to be held at UNISA on the 20-21 August 2015 in Pretoria. The conference theme is: Towards Multilingualism in Teaching and Learning in Higher Education in South Africa: Issues, Challenges and Opportunities.

7.   Building Stakeholder Relationships

The ULPDO continues to establish synergies with relevant stakeholders. The office has since the beginning of this year embarked on a process of visiting different institutions to foster collaboration on programs that are of mutual interest. The institutions that have thus far been visited are the SABC and the Legislature. These meetings were attended by the senior management who pledged their unwavering support for our programs, particularly the corpus building and terminology development projects.

7.1   The SABC Meeting

The meeting between the ULPDO and the SABC team was held on Thursday 19th of February 2015 at the SABC boardroom at 10h00. Present in this meeting were: Dr L Khumalo, UKZN (Director: ULPDO), Ms Z Mkhize, SABC (Management), Mr. N Zulu SABC (News and Current Affairs), Ms V Masuku SABC (Ukhozi FM), Mr. K Mngadi UKZN (Coordinator: ULPDO) and Mr. N Manyoni UKZN (Language Practitioner: ULPDO). At the top of the agenda was the point to strengthen synergistic relations between the two institutions. The ULPDO director delivered a presentation on the isiZulu national corpus and the terminology development projects, whilst Mr. Mngadi presented the UKZN language policy and plan.

Other crucial issues discussed include the dissemination of standardized terminology through the news desk and announcing department of the SABC. The news bulletin and announcements could infuse the newly developed terminology. Another area of mutual interest was the need to inculcate the culture of reading and writing in isiZulu. An agreement was reached that SABC will pilot a reading program in isiZulu and UKZN will assist with careful selection of books for the target listenership. A slot on the Tuesday show on poetry was identified as a pilot slot that could be exploited for reading classical isiZulu books.

The two institutions agreed to convene a workshop with a broader representation from both parties, and executive leadership in order to concretize our partnership. There was a commitment to assist with materials for the corpus building although it was noted that there is limited audio materials available due to lack of proper archiving. SABC will provide ULPDO with those materials that are readily available.

7.2 The meeting with the legislature

The ULPDO successfully held a meeting with the KwaZulu-Natal legislature. The meeting took place on the 11th of March 2015 in Pietermaritzburg, at the KZN legislature's offices. The meeting was between Mr Sibisi, the Chief Operations Officer and Mr Ngcobo, the Director of language services at the Legislature, and Dr Khumalo (ULPDO Director) and Mr Nkontwana (ULPDO Researcher).

The legislature welcomed the ULPDO visit and allowed the Dr Khumalo to deliver his presentation. The presentation focused on the overall responsibility of the ULPDO, the UKZN Language Policy and Plan, corpus building, terminology development and the possible partnership between ULPDO and the legislature. The presentation was well delivered and the legislature showed keen interest in contributing to our programs after the presentation. We are proud to report that the legislature happily accepted the proposed partnership without any hesitations. This means that the ULPDO has full access to all the isiZulu materials available in the legislature. Furthermore the legislature, through the COO, undertook to engage other institutions such KZN department of Arts and Culture and the Premier's Office in order to allow ULPDO access

to other isiZulu materials that are achieved there. Overall the meeting was a huge success and achieved its objective: that of initiating collaborative partnerships with relevant institutions.

8.   Publications

Research and publication is also encouraged at the ULPDO. It was emphasized at the SP workshop earlier in the year that members of the Office must undertake research and publish in the areas that we work in. The following are publications that have just been submitted as 2014 research productivity.

Book

1. Khumalo, L. (Ed). 2014. *African Languages and Linguistics Theory*. Cape Town: CASAS

DoHET Accredited Journals

2. Khumalo, L. 2014. On the reciprocal in Ndebele. Nordic Journal of African Studies **(NJAS)** 23(3).

3. Khumalo, L. 2014. On subject agreement in isiNdebele. South African Journal of African Languages **(SAJAL)** 34(2).

Book Chapter

4. Khumalo, L. 2014. Generative grammar and cognitive grammar: a case of the passive construction in Ndebele. In L. Khumalo, editor, 2014. *African Languages and Linguistics Theory*. Cape Town: CASAS.

Peer-reviewed Proceedings

5. Keet, C. and Khumalo, L. 2014. Basics for a grammar engine to verbalize logical theories in isiZulu. In A. Bikakis *et al.*, editors. *Proceedings of the 8th International Web Rule Symposium (RuleML'14)*, volume 8620 of *LNCS*. Springer. August 18-20, 2014, Prague, Czech Republic.

6. Keet, C. and Khumalo, L. 2014. Toward verbalizing logical theories in isiZulu. In B. Davis *et al.*, editors. *Proceedings of the 4th Workshop on Controlled Natural Language (CNL'14)*, volume 8625 of *LNAI*. Springer. 20-22 August, 2014, Galway, Ireland.

9.   Conclusion

The program for 2015 looks exciting. We started the year with an SP workshop in order to anchor our work on a mutually agreed and shared program of activities. Every single member of the team is a stakeholder in the process and is bound by the shared vision. Thus far we have made tremendous progress in bringing partner institutions on board in order to support our programs. This bodes well for our overall targets for 2015.