

Exploring language practices on Namibian social media platforms

JULIA INDONGO – HAIDUWA

Abstract

This qualitative study aimed to explore language practices in social discourses on Namibian social media platforms through the lens of networked multilingualism. Namibian online spaces are multilingual due to the presence of users of diverse language backgrounds. However, there seem to be no studies that have investigated language practices in social discourses on Namibian social media platforms such as Facebook. The study population is made up of all FB comments on the Fishrot case by various Namibian media houses in 2019. The study's sample is made up of comments from 20 FB posts in response to 2019 articles on the Fishrot case by the Namibian Sun, New Era, NBC Digital News and The Namibian. From each media house, five first posts on the first case were selected in which the comments by the users in the comments section were observed, read, and studied using the digital ethnographic method. Only comments that were replied to by other users were included. Discourse analysis was used as a method to analyze the data. Other sources on languages and multilingualism in online spaces were also used to explain the data. The study revealed that the language of socialization in Namibia mainly remains the official language, English. Multilingualism in the country is not entirely reflected in the language practice of users in comments sections on the platforms that were studied.

Keywords: Networked multilingualism, linguistic repertoire, linguistic identity, online digital communications, languages, social discourses, language practices and social media platforms

Introduction

People now have access to vast information and can interact with others remotely on social networking sites (SNSs) using the internet (Solmaz, 2018). SNSs are spaces where conversations about trending and non-trending topics take place. As Vlachopoulos and Makri, (2019) explained, people have multiple opportunities to form communities online where they express themselves on various issues. People of different ages and social classes or residing in different countries can connect and interact on SNSs. The real usage of language infused with the contemporary technology trend is on SNSs. There are several SNSs, e.g., Facebook (FB), Twitter, and Instagram. In 2023, FB has over two billion users across the globe and there are more than 70 languages on the site which means FB is a multilingual site (Statista, 2023). There seems to be no data on the number of FB users in Namibia, but FB is one of the most popular SNSs in the country. News media houses in Namibia have FB accounts where they report breaking and non-breaking news that normally attracts many readers. The readers of the news can discuss the reported news further in the comments section with other audiences in whichever language they prefer. Due to the presence of multilingual users, SNSs like FB are rich spaces to study multilingual practices because online chats are like spoken language (Jonsson & Muhonen, 2014). Androutsopoulos (2015, p.18) explained that SNSs are “important sites of contemporary multilingual practices in a globalized and mediatized world”.

There seems to be no study that investigated multilingual practices in social discourses on Namibian online social media platforms. Therefore, this study aims to investigate multilingual practices in online social interaction on Namibian social media platforms such as FB. The Namibian news media where comments were selected are *The Namibian Sun*, *New Era*, NBC Digital News and *The Namibian*. The findings will likely inform language planners about the status of languages in the country in an attempt to revitalize language. The central question of the discussion is: What are the language practices of social discourse on Namibian social media platforms? The following sub-questions were used to answer the central question:

- What are the language practices of users in online social interactions with other users?
- How is the language used to index identity in the interaction among users?

Literature review

Language practices in online social discourses

Language practice refers to the way speakers or writers make use of the linguistic repertoire to engage in conversation in a multilingual setting (Lomeu-Gomes, 2022). In this study, those who contributed on FB by writing posts or commenting are referred to as writers while those who read the post as Networked audience. This study investigated how writers employ their multilingual repertoire in social discourse on FB. Multilingual practices are investigated through a Networked multilingual approach. Androutsopoulos (2015) coined the term Networked multilingualism in response to a need for a concept that explains complex multilingualism theoretical and methodological aspects in online interactions. Networked multilingualism requires the researchers to investigate the interaction of digital literacy repertoire, networked resources and networked audiences when studying digital practices in online interactions. The concept of networked multilingualism examines multilingualism practices that are shaped by the interaction of two processes: being networked and being in the network (Androutsopoulos, 2015).

To fully understand the notions, scholars must look beyond only examining multimodal and semiotic resources. They must also consider how linguistic resources flow, are appropriated, contextualized, and trans localized (Androutsopoulos, 2014). Background knowledge about the networked audience and linguistic resources has an important role to play in what is being shared and the style (Androutsopoulos, 2014 & Solmaz, 2018). The background knowledge includes knowing the language that other user is interacting with in the comments section are likely to have and the possible linguistic repertoire that users are likely to have on the platform but not necessarily the users' knowledge of each offline.

Solmaz (2018) investigated the multilingual and multimodal repertoire of international students as part of their identity on FB. The study revealed the following language practices among users on the platform: The first practice that was observed is the use of first languages (L1s) to communicate, which was motivated by the following: knowledge about the possibility of the networked audience to comprehend the L1s used; the writers finding their L1s to be convenient languages for them to write in; the writers being competent in their L1s which is similar to Androutsopoulos (2015) and wanting to show their native identities as L1 speakers of certain languages. When addressing issues of national concern, writers preferred to use the common language in the area (Androutsopoulos, 2015). For example, Spanish was used when talking about issues in the area where the community language was Spanish. Concerning the networked audience, the writers used their L1s when the audience was likely to understand the language. If a language like Spanish has a very large audience as an L1, the writers prefer to use it because the message is likely to reach a larger audience as some audience members will speak about it to other people. In the process, the message is being spread and reaches a larger audience. The writer's mood, the context of the post and the purpose of developing empathy were also determining factors for L1 usage. For example, some writers explained that they can only explain in detail and talk about their emotions and thoughts using their L1s. The use of the local language was also for exclusion purposes when the message is targeted at a few people who speak a certain language.

Secondly, in Solmaz's (2018) study, writers used second language (L2s) repertoires to a larger extent, like the use of their L1s. The writers singled out English as the L2 they used when writing and explained that writing in English shows that they are competent in using the English language – writing a post in English shows a global aspect of the users' identities. The networked audience was also a determining factor for writing posts in English (L2) in online social discourses. Since English was a common language in the region, writers assumed that many audiences could comprehend it – therefore the choice of writing in English – and many audiences had a multilingual repertoire. The writers explained that they prefer to write in English when discussing professional work-related or school-related issues. Therefore, it was reported that speaking English is an important cultural asset as it shows that one is educated. It was also explained that English is regarded as a more inclusive language and thus communication in English caters to a larger audience. English was also regarded as a medium of linguistic practices on FB and thus posts that are intended to reach a larger audience are written in English (Solmaz, 2018).

Thirdly, writers were creative in how they used language. For example, in some instances, writers mixed both L1 and L2 in their sentences or phrases. Translanguaging (Wei, 2018) practices were evident on the platform. Writers mixed languages to cater to different audiences with various language abilities or to identify themselves as multilingual individuals who can move between languages with ease (Solmaz, 2018; Li & Huang, 2021). Childs and Squires (2016, p.262) explained that in SNS communication, users adjust, refine, and hone their "online speech" to communicate in a way that they feel is stylistically appropriate for the conversational situation. Styling in online communications refers to the manners in which users gather their semiotic resources to create meanings (Androutsopoulos, 2014). King (2019) explains that users are linguistically creative in coming up with strategic styles that align with what is being communicated. These styles include code-mixing which is used to enhance many relations such as solidarity, relations and alignments (Pérez – Sabater, 2019), informal discourses, which include colloquial forms of address, jokes, localised humorous experiences, ungrammatical or simplified sentences and deliberate use of incorrect punctuations (Pérez - Sabater & Maguelouk - Mofo, 2020 & King, 2019), and formal styles refer to the grammatical use of language as taught in education.

Contextualising the linguistic scene of Namibia

After Namibia attained independence in 1990, the Constitution declared English the sole official language, replacing Afrikaans, which had been the official language before independence (Namibian Constitution, 1990). The aim was to reverse the effects of the colonial regime's language policy (cf. Gribanovskaya, 2020). The Constitution also allows other Namibian languages to be used together with English. English was quick to replace Afrikaans in all the public and social spheres of society (cf. Stell & Dragojevic, 2017; Namibia Statistics Agency, 2012; National Planning Commission, 2003). The spread of English in Namibia is mainly due to education (Stell, 2021).

English is the medium of instruction in Namibian schools. The language policy states that the mother tongue is the medium of instruction for grades 0-3, and English is only used from grade 4 onward (NCBE, 2016). In practice, many schools opt for English as the medium of instruction from grade 0, especially in multilingual communities where it is hard to decide whose first language to follow (Katukula et al., 2023). According to the Census of 2011, only 3.4% of the population speaks English as their first language. Mother tongue is only taught as a school subject beginning in the fourth grade

and continuing until the 12th grade.

Namibia is a multilingual, multi-ethnic, and multicultural country with more than 28 languages. The 28 languages of Namibia are Afrikaans, Diriku, English, German standard, Hai//om, Herero, Ju/'hoan, Khoekhoe, Khwe, Kuhane, Kung-Ekoka, Oshikwambi, Wambi, Kwangari, Oshikwanyama, Lozi, Sifwe, Mashi, Mbalantu, Mbukushu, Namibian sign language, Naro, Oshindonga, and Northwestern !kungu, Tswana, !xoo, Yeyi and Zemba (Ethnologue, 2022). Twenty-three of these languages are indigenous, while the other five are non-indigenous. All these languages are living, and some are endangered, especially the Khoisan languages (Indongo, 2019).

The knowledge of language among the people in Namibia differs. Some people know up to four languages, while others are monolingual speakers of their first language (L1), especially in rural areas (Prah, 2010). Most of the ethnolinguistic data for Namibia is provided in the national Census reports of 1991, 2001 and 2011 (National Planning Commission, 2003 & Namibia Statistics Agency, 2012). All three housing reports established the language spoken in most homes in Namibia. Oshiwambo is the language spoken in most households, followed by Khoekhoegowab, and the official language, English, is the least spoken language in households.

Methodology

Study context and participants

The fishrot case, as it is known in Namibia and abroad, particularly in Iceland, involves former ministers Bernhard Esau and Sacky Shanghala, as well as four other Namibian co-accused, who are charged with fraud, bribery, and money laundering in connection with the Icelandic fishing company Samheriji. The case involved billions of Namibian dollars and became public news in November 2019 through an Al Jazeera reporting documentary called *Fishrot*. The case is still ongoing at the time of writing this article. Local media has been reporting on this case both offline and online, including on Facebook, wherever discoveries were made or during the accused's bail trial hearing (cf. Coetzee, 2021).

This case attracted the attention of many people in Namibia and outside. People gave their views either offline through radio programmes or online mainly on social media platforms such as Facebook. The data that was used in this study was obtained from FB in the comments sections. The contribution per FB post was massive because, with every post on *Fishrot* in 2019, a single post could attract more than 300 comments, making the platform appropriate for multilingual practices in Namibia. As observed by Banda and Bellononjengele (2010), online chats are the closest that one can get to ordinary conversation, therefore, the study opted for Facebook comments because language is used naturally, making it possible to establish language practices of users in social discourses in an online setting. The *Namibian Sun*, *New Era*, NBC Digital News and *The Namibian* are the media houses where comments were obtained because of their popularity in the country, and they are local media houses that attract a local audience.

Population, sample, data collection and analysis

The population of the study is all comments about the Fishrot case on FB posts written in 2019 by the four local media houses. Purposive sampling was used to select the first 20 report articles by the said media houses. From each media house, the first five articles on the Fishrot case published in 2019 were studied. Only comments where users replied to each other or discussed a comment further in

the comment sections were included. Digital ethnography was used whereby the researcher remotely observed, read, and analysed the users' language practices as they interacted with each other through discussions on FB in the comment threads. Kaur-Gill and Dutta (2017) define the digital ethnography research method as a method that adapts ethnographic methods to the study of online community practices and cultures by conducting computer-mediated research. Although the case was also reported by international news media on Facebook, such as Al Jazeera, this study only focuses on comments under the posts aired by local media houses because the comments on Namibian news media are more likely to be by users who are based in Namibia than those on Al Jazeera, where international people are likely to comment. The discourse analysis method was used to identify the language practices and review the literature on language practices and online multilingualism to discuss the practices and linguistic identity indexed in detail. The discussion was made using the Networked Multilingualism theory. The data were presented under emerging themes and the comment writers' names were replaced with "user" to hide the identity of contributors.

Results and discussions

Use of the official language English

The study discovered the following about language practices in social discourses on platforms of selected media houses on FB: Firstly, English was found to be the most used language in the comments threads that were studied. The media wrote their FB posts in English, and most of the replies by audiences in the comment sections were in English. Extract 1 below resembles the language used by many audiences in the comment sections who discussed the news further. In Extract 1, users 1 and 2 were discussing entirely using the English language. Androutsopoulos (2014) explained the importance of the networked audience as a determining factor in the linguistic choice of FB users when interacting. In this context, as the original post that users replied to was in English and the platform is for a local media house in a country where English is the official language, these were signals to users to conduct their discussions in English. Also, the choice of English goes with Stell (2021) observation that English is the lingua franca in Namibia. The audience of local media news is diverse and multilingual; this could signal the users to write in the country's lingua franca, English. Most people in Namibia can speak English because it is taught at school (NCBE, 2016). Based on prior reasons, most users saw it fit to interact in English to achieve linguistic inclusivity in a multilingual Namibian space (Solmaz, 2018).

Extract 1: User 1 and User 2 chat over the post.

User1: The world is watching until you get to the roots of Fishrot, only then they appreciate the country's effort to root out corruption that they will continue funding most projects otherwise SUCTION will be applied!!

User 2: exactly my dear or else we will be Zimbabwean as well

User 1: (Name of user 2) They must take this Fishrot seriously, nobody involved should be left out!!

User 2: (Name of User 1) true that

(Obtained from the comment section of the breaking news post in *The Namibian* newspaper of November 27).

Linguistic stylistics

Users employed stylistically refined semiotic resources to discuss and create the desired mood (Childs & Squires, 2016). Some of these resources are linguistic, while others are visual. The visual form

includes, for example, the use of punctuation marks that deviate from the correct use to add an effect to the message; the use of emojis to show emotions; the use of memes to imply what the user could have said; and some reactions to the comments with emoticons such as "like, love or hug" and many other appropriate emoticons to show their stance. Extract 2 shows an example of how some of the visual resources were used in the chats. As shown in Extract 2, the message is not entirely written, as some messages are given in visual resources that the interlocutor unpacks to understand. Extract 2 shows how some visuals were used: user 3 doubles the full stops that are written together with a question mark (underlined for depiction) to communicate that the main post is not clear. Also, user 3 used the surprised emoji to react to the information that user 6 gave that one of the accused, Shanghala, has a wife. There is great awareness of the networked audience because the conversation flow is uninterrupted. As per Thurlow (2018) observation, this study found that users understood the signs that were used without written language because there was no clarity required on the used signs or confusion shown by other users.

Extract 2: Users 3, 4 5 and 6 chatting under the comment section on a post.

User 3: Women and men without names or what are you trying to tell us? if you don't wanna say their names, please just do not tell us at all. Ooo...

User 4: @User 3 they are yet to appear!

User 3: Someone tag Madam Kauna Shikwambi already. She knows the names and people are already arrested 🤔

User 5: @User 3 the names will be released after they appear in court

User 6: Shanghala wife

User 3: @User 6 is he married 😬😬

User 6: @ user 3 fiance

(The comments were obtained from the *Namibian Sun* post of 24 November 2019.)

Mixing languages, translanguaging and the use of L2s

There were instances where users mixed sentences, phrases or words from vernacular languages into English sentences which could be for various reasons, as outlined by Solmaz (2018) and Li and Huang (2021), to show linguistic relations to those they speak the same vernacular language with and to align with the previous writers' comments they are replying to For example, user 7 wrote in a vernacular language the phrase "Kwathe inge ike ombili" to which user 8 replied in the same vernacular language to match the trend of mixing that user 7 started. It was not observed where vernacular words, phrases or sentences were used to cater to the different linguistic abilities of the audiences, as explained by Solmaz (2018) and Li and Huang. (2021).

The Namibian vernacular languages observed on the site were Oshiwambo, Otjiherero and Afrikaans but there are many vernacular languages in Namibia (Ethnologue, 2022). Oshiwambo and Afrikaans topped the list. The observed Namibian vernacular languages were used as part of code-mixing or translanguaging and not as first replies to posts. The limited usage of Namibian vernacular languages could be explained by the concept of audience awareness whereby the users understood the multilingual complexity in Namibia (Ethnologue, 2022) and opted to discuss in the language that will include everyone. To be specific, English was used because is the language that most users understand as it is the official language; Oshiwambo was used as it is the most spoken L1 in Namibia, and Afrikaans

because is one of the most spoken languages because it is the country's former official language for before independence (National Planning Commission, 2003; Namibia Statistics Agency, 2012). Extract 3 illustrates how Namibian vernacular languages were mixed with English in the conversation. In extract 3, both users mixed Oshiwambo sentences in the conversation that started in English, and later they returned to English.

User 7: And I don't want to hear that they are released because the warrant of arrest was invalid. Please, Kwatheinge like ombili.

User 8: @user 7 Ihaya landula nee 🤔🤔

User 7: @ User 8 Oshili nee, later you will hear.

"they were released because no strong evidence to defend their arrest" nonsense

User 8: @user 7 oh! People we are sharing this peace of planet earth which can stress you.

The use of vernacular languages index affiliation to local native groups and mixing languages or translanguaging shows the users' multilingual identities.

(Obtained from NBC Digital News's report on the Fishrot case on 15 December 2019.)

Informal discourses

The language was deliberately used to create humor (Pérez Sabater & Maguelouk -Mofu, 2020 & King, 2019). In extract 2 above, user 3 wrote the sound "Ooo" which is mostly made by the actors in Nigerian comic movies mainly for amusement purposes. In extract 4, the users used the word "NEEMU," which they wrote in capital letters to stand out. The deliberate use of the word "Neemus" is an indication that the users were aware of their networked audience as people who are based in Namibia because this was a joke in the country at that time. The word "Neemus" means "name" in the accent of the Silozi speaker a cabinet minister who appeared on the local news on television pronouncing the word as "neemus" and from there it became a comic. The two users are jokingly using the word "neemus," and they seem to know its meaning because user 10 was able to continue to use the word without asking user 9 for its meaning. This way, users localized the Namibian experiences of what they heard to have fun with each other while interacting online.

User 9: @NBC digital news this is no longer a secret. So report it as it is. Or are you also paid this time around not to mention NEEMUS? HalooNEEMUS, please

User 10: @User 7 They should report with NEEMUS

User 9: @User 7 exactly. Like they have been doing it.

(Obtained from the post by the *Namibian Sun* of 28 November 2019).

Language register

Finally, both formal and informal registers were used by users. The users concentrated more on making the message clear than on using the register. For example, in extract 3, user 3 used the word "wanna" which is slang for "want", and in the same extract, user 4 replied formally by saying "They are yet to appear". The users also used slang words such as "mafia". Other non-Namibian words were also used, such as the word "Igwe", which is usually used in Nigerian movies. The users concentrate more on making the message clear than the register. Therefore, English on social media platforms is a local standard infused with local and African meanings and words (Mukherjee & Gries, 2009; Schröder, 2021). Despite English being an international language, it was infused with Namibian and African words to signal the local identities of users being Namibian and African.

Conclusion and recommendations

In conclusion, English is the most visible language in Namibia both offline, as observed by Stell (2021), and online, as discovered in this study. People observe the benefits of knowing English above any other language because it is the country's official language (Katukula, 2023). Therefore, there is a need to uplift the social position of Namibian indigenous languages in social interactions because it is in social interaction where people mostly become familiar with other people's languages. The country's national identity comes from its people and their languages (Siregar, 2021) and the Namibian identity that is carried in Namibian vernacular languages is not visible enough if Namibian linguistic spaces online are dominated by English. The study recommends revitalization plans for all native languages that will make people aware of the benefits of knowing the country's native languages.

References

- Androutsopoulos, J. (2014). Moments of sharing: Entextualization and linguistic repertoires in social networking. *Journal of pragmatics*, 1(73), 4-18.
- Androutsopoulos, J. (2015). Networked multilingualism: Some language practices on Facebook and their implications. *International Journal of Bilingualism*, 19(2), 185-205.
- Banda, F. & Bellononjengele, B. O. (2010). Style, repertoire, and identities in Zambian multilingual discourses *Journal of Multicultural Discourses*, 5(2), 107-119.
- Childs, R., & Squires, L. (2016). Who I am and who I want to be: Variation and representation in a messaging platform. In L. Squires (Ed.), *English in computer-mediated communication. Variation, representation, and change* (pp. 261-278). De Gruyter Mouton
- Coetzee, J. (2021). An analysis of the depth of corruption in Namibia's political system, with reference to the fishing industry scandal known as 'Fishrot'. *Journal of Namibian Studies: History Politics Culture*, 30, 131-152.
- Ethnologue (2022). *Namibian languages*. <http://www.ethnologue.com/country/NA>
- Gribanovskaya, I. S. (2020). Some peculiarities of the English language in the Republic of Namibia. In Z. Tom (Ed.), *Functional aspects of Intercultural communication. Translation and interpreting issues*. (pp. 374-379). <https://doi.org/10.22363/2686-8199-2020-7-374-379>
- Indongo, J.N. (2019). Language and mobility: a study of migrants' linguistic repertoires and discourses in Windhoek, Namibia. Unpublished Doctoral dissertation, University of Johannesburg South Africa.
- Jonsson, C., & Muhonen, A. (2014). Multilingual repertoires and the relocalization of Manga in digital media. *Discourse, Context & Media*, 4, 87-100.
- Katukula, K.M., Set, B., & Nyambe, J. (2023). Language ideologies and the use of mother tongues as the medium of instruction and learning in junior primary schools: a case study of parents and teachers in a Namibian school. *Innovare Journal of Education*, 11(4), 70-79.
- Kaur-Gill S. & Dutta M. (2017). Digital Ethnography. In C. Davis & R. Potter (Eds.), *The international encyclopaedia of communication research methods* (pp. 1–11). Wiley.
- King, B. (2019). *Communities of practice in language research: A critical introduction*. Routledge.
- Li, L., & Huang, J. (2021). The construction of heterogeneous and fluid identities: Translanguaging on WeChat. *Internet Pragmatics*, 4(2), 219-246.
- Lomeu-Gomes, R. (2022). Talking multilingual families into being: Language practices and ideologies of a Brazilian-Norwegian family in Norway. *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development*, 43(10), 993-1013.
- Namibian Constitution*. (1990). VerLoren van theemaat centre for public Law studies. The University of

South Africa.

- National Planning Commission. (2003). *2001 Population and Housing Census: National*. Available from: <http://nsa.org.na/page/publication>
- Pérez-Sabater, C., & Maguelouk-Moffo, G. (2020). Online Multilingualism in African Written Conversations: Local, Global Identity and Alignment. *Studies in African Linguistics*, 49(1), 141-159.
- Pérez-Sabater, C., & Moffo, G. M. (2019). Managing identity in football communities on Facebook: Language preference and language mixing strategies. *Lingua*, 225, 32-49.
- Prah, K. K. (2010). Multilingualism in urban Africa: Bane or blessing. *Journal of Multicultural Discourses*, 5(2), 169-182.
- Siregar, I. (2021). The existence of culture in its relevance to the dynamics of globalization: Bahasa Indonesia case study. *International Journal of Cultural and Religious Studies*, 1(1), 33-38.
- Solmaz, O. (2018). Multilingual and multimodal repertoires as part of identity management on Facebook: A case of international students. *Journal of International Students*, 8(4), 1662-1680.
- Statista (2023). Facebook: global daily active users 2023. <https://www.statista.com/statistics/346167/facebook-global-edau/>
- Stell G. (2021). English in Namibia: A socio-historical approach. In Schröder A. (Ed.), *The dynamics of English in Namibia* (pp. 22–41). Benjamins.
- Stell, G., & Dragojevic, M. (2017). Multilingual accommodation in Namibia: An examination of six ethnolinguistic groups' language use in intra-and intergroup interactions. *Journal of Language and Social Psychology*, 36(2), 167-187.
- NCBE (The National Curriculum for Basic Education) (2016). *Okahandja: National Institute for Educational Development*. Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture.
- Thurlow C. (2018). Digital discourse: locating language in new/social media. In J. Burgess, T. Poell & A. Marwick (Eds.), *The SAGE Handbook of Social Media* (pp. 135–145). Sage.
- Vlachopoulos, D., & Makri, A. (2019). Online communication and interaction in distance higher education: A framework study of good practice. *International Review of Education*, 65(4), 605-632.
- Wei L. (2018). Translanguaging as a Practical Theory of Language. *Applied Linguistics* 39(1), 9–30. <https://academic.oup.com/applij/article/39/1/9/4566103>

About the Author

Julia Indongo-Haiduwa is a Namibian-born female sociolinguistic researcher. My research interest is in linguistic empirical studies that aim to uplift the linguistic situation in the country. I am a teacher by profession, and part of my research is in language education, curriculum development, and technological integration in language teaching. I believe Namibia will only be able to achieve its vision of 2030 if all societal challenges are addressed, and thus my contribution is to find solutions to the language-related problems in Namibian society through empirical research.