

Student expectations and perceptions of the usefulness of their linguistic repertoires for achieving social integration and academic success at an international university in Namibia

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Declaration

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Abstract

The study examined the perceptions and expectations held by students towards the usefulness of their linguistic repertoires in helping them achieve social integration and academic success at the International University of Management (IUM) in Namibia. The general aims of the study were to establish the nature of the linguistic repertoires of the students at the IUM who do not have English, the IUM's medium of instruction, as first language; to establish the extent to which students before entering the IUM expected such repertoires to assist them in their social adjustment and academic success; and to assess the students' expectations and perceptions of the extent to which their linguistic repertoires indeed assisted them to achieve social integration and/or academic success at the IUM. It also takes a specific interest in the nature of linguistic repertoires that students expected to need to adjust to university life at the IUM, both socially and academically.

The participants in this study were first-year students on the Windhoek campus of the IUM. The data was collected by means of a language background questionnaire, individual interviews and a focus group discussion. Questionnaires were completed by 44 participants, after which interviews and a focus group discussion were held with a sample of eight students who volunteered for these purposes on the questionnaires. The data of the study was transcribed, described, interpreted and thematically analysed to identify recurring patterns which ultimately informed the research questions.

The findings of the study are that students at the IUM are multilingual, able to effectively communicate in an average of three languages – mostly English (the medium of instruction), the individual's first language and another, third language. Also, IUM students employed different languages or language skill in different contexts to fulfil different purposes (e.g., communication or identification purposes). English is by far the most favoured language by the students, due its status as the medium of instruction at the IUM, the official language of Namibia, and the campus-wide lingua franca to interlocutors of diverse first languages, as well as the language of communication amongst different university stakeholders. The second and third most widely used languages on campus were respectively Oshiwambo, because it accounts for half of Namibia's population, and Afrikaans, due to its status of former official language in pre-independent Namibia. Other African languages and some foreign languages (such as French, Portuguese and Dutch) also formed part of the students' linguistic repertoires and were mainly used in informal domains. English, by contrast, was predominantly used in formal domains (such as in lectures, in offices and with university authorities), but also, to some degree, in informal settings (e.g., for conversation with strangers or at social gatherings). Finally, the study demonstrated that students have positive attitudes towards their

linguistic repertoires helping them to achieve social integration and academic success at the IUM. Particularly competence in English was seen as a valuable tool in meeting the students' social and academic needs, whereas first languages were seen as compensating in those academic areas where the students lacked sufficient proficiency in English.

Opsomming

Hierdie studie het ondersoek ingestel na studente se persepsies van en verwagtinge oor die nuttigheid van hul linguistiese repertoires in die bevordering van hul sosiale integrasie en akademiese sukses aan die Internasionale Universiteit van Bestuur (IUB) in Namibië. Die algemene doelstellings van die studie was om die aard van die linguistiese repertoires vas te stel van daardie IUB-studente wat nie Engels (die medium van onderrig aan die IUB) as eerste taal het nie; om vas te stel wat die studente se verwagtinge en persepsies was van die mate waartoe hul linguistiese repertoires hulle sou help om sosiale integrasie en/of akademiese sukses aan die IUB te bewerkstellig; en om vas te stel tot watter mate sulke repertoires wel studente se sosiale aanpassing en akademiese sukses bevorder het. Die studie fokus ook op die aard van die linguistiese repertoires wat die studente gedink het nodig sou wees om by die universiteitslewe aan die IUB aan te pas, beide sosiaal en akademies.

Die deelnemers aan die studie was eerstejaarstudente op die Windhoek-kampus van die IUB. Die data is ingesamel met behulp van 'n taalagtergrondsvraelys, individuele onderhoude en 'n fokusgroepbespreking. Vraelyste is deur 44 deelnemers voltooi, waarna onderhoude en 'n fokusgroepbespreking gehou is met 'n monster van ag studente wat op hul vraelyste aangedui het dat hulle bereid sou wees om hieraan deel te neem. Die data van die studie is getranskriebeer, beskryf, tematies geanaliseer en geïnterpreteer om herhalende patrone te herken wat die navorsingsvrae sou help beantwoord.

Die bevindinge van die studie is dat studente aan die IUB veeltalig is; hulle is daartoe instaat om effektief te kommunikeer in gemiddeld drie tale – meestal Engels (die medium van onderrig), die individu se eerste taal en 'n ander, derde taal. Verder gebruik IUB-studente verskillende tale of taalvaardighede in verskillende kontekste vir verskillende doeleindes (bv. vir kommunikasie- of identifikasie-doeleindes). Engels is verreweg die studente se voorkeurtaal weens Engels se status as die medium van onderrig aan die IUB, as die amptelike taal van Namibië, en as die kampuswye lingua franca vir gespreksgenote van verskillende eerste tale, sowel as die kommunikasietaal tussen verskillende rolspelers aan die universiteit. Die tale wat tweede en derde meeste op kampus gebruik word, is onderskeidelik Oshiwambo, want die helfte van Namibië se bevolking praat dié taal, en Afrikaans, weens Afrikaans se vorige status as amptelike taal in pre-onafhanklike Namibië. Ander Afrikatale en sommige vreemdetale (soos Frans, Portugees en Nederlands) vorm ook deel van die studente se linguistiese repertoires en word meestal in informele domeine gebruik. Engels daarteenoor word hoofsaaklik in formele domeine gebruik (bv. tydens lesings, in kantore en met universiteits-

bestuur), maar ook tot 'n mate in informele opsette (bv. vir gesprekvoering met vreemdelinge of tydens sosiale byeenkomste). Ten slotte het die studie aangetoon dat studente positiewe gesindhede teenoor hul linguistiese repertoires het om hulle te help met sosiale integrasie en akademiese sukses aan die IUB. Veral kompetensie in Engels is as 'n waardevolle instrument beskou om studente se sosiale en akademiese behoeftes te bevredig, terwyl eerste tale beskou is as kompenserend in daardie akademiese areas waarin dit studente aan voldoende vaardigheid in Engels ontbreek het.

Dedication

I dedicate this thesis to my late dad who did not live to see my achievements.

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Abbreviations and acronyms

ELF	English as a Lingua Franca
IUM	International University of Management
	L1
	first language / mother tongue
L2	second language
LoLT	language of learning and teaching
	MoI
	medium of instruction

CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

1.1 Background to the study

This study examined the students' expectations and perceptions of the usefulness of their linguistic repertoires for achieving academic success and social integration at Namibia's International University of Management (IUM). Many universities across the world are microcosms of culturally plural societies as they accommodate students who are diverse in terms of race, gender, culture, religion, and socioeconomic status, amongst others. As a result of this cultural and linguistic diversity, many university students are linguistically inadequately prepared for the language of instruction and communication in higher education. The IUM, a private university in Namibia, which is the research site for this study, currently enrolls over 10 000 local and international students from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds, many of whom do not speak the university's language of instruction as their first or even second language. After the IUM's establishment in 1994, the university's council adopted its first ever language policy, one that prescribed English as its sole medium of instruction (MoI) and language of education across all its study programs (International University of Management 1994). That being the case, the majority of IUM students do not have the MoI as their first language (L1). This research project seeks to investigate (i) students' expectations of their linguistic preparedness for the new environment they were about to enter and (ii) students' perceptions of how well their linguistic repertoires facilitated social and academic integration at the IUM.

1.2 Brief historical background of the research site (the International University of Management)

The IUM, the research site for this study, evolved out of a small tuition centre that operated from a garage in 1993 and grew over the years, culminating in the IUM being officially opened on 26 April 2002. The IUM is a solely Namibian initiative which started with one student and grew into an institution whose student population, both local and foreign, is currently more than 10 000. Apart from its main campus centred in the capital city Windhoek, it has four regional branches, namely in Ongwendiva, Walvis Bay, Swakopmund and Nkurenkuru. Since its inception, the university has had the reputation as a centre offering internationally benchmarked courses in the fields of Management

Science, Human Resource Development and Information and Communications Technology at all levels. The IUM, which prides itself as the first private university in Namibia, strives to train future managers and entrepreneurs who will be capable of taking Namibia's economy to greater heights. Due to its good reputation, the university is able to attract students with diverse national, cultural and linguistic backgrounds, not only from Namibia but also from other African and non-African countries. The university subscribes to English as its sole language of teaching and learning. In addition, the university also established English service courses tailor-made to meet the needs of prospective first-year students who lack sufficient English proficiency in one or more skills areas (such as reading or writing).

Almost all of the students at the IUM have languages other than English as their L1. The linguistic repertoire of some students will allow them to easily use the language resources at their disposal to facilitate their settlement in different social and academic contexts upon entering the IUM as students. However, studying at the IUM challenges international students as well as some Namibian students to discover ways to adjust in and succeed academically in their new environment, seeing that they do not necessarily have good proficiency in the language of teaching and learning and the languages of wider communication on campus.

Like many other tertiary institutions worldwide and in Namibia in particular, the IUM is characterised by a diverse ethno-linguistic and multilingual student population. This is because students of diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds, both within and outside the borders of Namibia, enter one and the same environment (the IUM) to access education. This has led students to use various linguistic varieties and codes to perform several communicative functions in their diverse domains of interactions, where they are able to do so. The IUM, despite being an international institution, is first and foremost home to several domestic students whose L1s are indigenous Namibian languages such as Oshiwambo, Otjiherero, Nama/Damara, Rukwangali, Silozi and also Afrikaans. Considering that 50% of the Namibian population is comprised of the Oshiwambo-speaking community (see NSA-Government of the Republic of Namibia 2012 for census data), there is a high possibility that Oshiwambo L1 speakers constitute the majority of local students. (Note, however, that no official demographic information on the languages of the IUM student population is available.) In addition to these indigenous Namibian languages, a number of foreign languages are also represented at the university. In this regard, the researcher had over the previous two years in his capacity as lecturer at the institution observed students speaking other, non-Namibian languages such as other African and colonial languages, mostly in informal domains on and around campus. Based on the researcher's observation, these languages include Portuguese, spoken mainly by Angolan students; Shona by

Zimbabwean students; Kiswahili by students from the Great Lakes region; and, of least frequency, Chinese. However, one also frequently observes situations wherein the majority of IUM students, irrespective of their L1 and origin, predominantly converse in English, especially in the more formal domains (e.g., during lectures and when interacting with university staff).

Given the linguistic diversity at the IUM, it is known (even in the absence of official demographic information on the L1s of the IUM student population) that the majority of IUM students do not have the MoI (English) as their L1. These include those students classified as international students: They are registered for a course at the university and are in Namibia on a study visa, do not have English as native language and in some cases do not have English as their second language (L2). It was the institution's nature as microcosm of Namibian society which motivated the researcher to select it as research site. It is for this reason that the current study aims to investigate students' expectations and perceptions in regard to the usefulness of their linguistic repertoires for achieving academic success and social integration at the IUM.

1.3 Statement of the problem

The IUM's cultural and linguistic pluralism is reflected in its diverse students, of whom the majority are local students whose L1s are local community languages such as Oshiwambo, Otjiherero, Nama, Damara, Silozi, Afrikaans and Rukavango. In addition to these local students, there are also a number of foreign students from Uganda, Zimbabwe and Angola as well as a small number of students from elsewhere in the world (mostly Western Europe and North America). Given this diversity, students at the IUM rely on English as their main shared means of communication, even though they have diverse and multilingual linguistic repertoires. It is for this reason that the current study aims to investigate students' expectations and perceptions of the usefulness of their linguistic repertoires for achieving academic success and social integration at the IUM. There are a number of studies that focus on the correlations between English proficiency, social adjustment and academic achievement in Australia and the United States of America (see, for example, Andrade 2006, Yeh and Inose 2010), and these studies report a correlation between social integration and academic success. However, none of the studies explore the students' expectations regarding their linguistic preparedness for the foreign environments that they were about to enter, nor do any compare student expectations of preparedness before arrival to student perceptions of their linguistic preparedness after a few months of immersion in the new environment. Further, the researcher could trace only one study (Shiweda 2013) that topicalised multilingual repertoires in a tertiary educational setting in Namibia. This study however focused on multilingual communication (predominantly code switching) in the classrooms

and not on the students' self-expected and perceived preparedness for communication in the classroom and in social settings. Thus, the current study aims to add to this body of work by investigating students' expectations and perceptions of the usefulness of their linguistic repertoires for achieving academic success and social integration at university.

1.4 Research questions

This study attempts to address the following questions:

1. What is the nature of the linguistic repertoires of the students at the IUM who do not have the language of instruction as L1?
2. To which extent did these students expect their linguistic repertoires to help them achieve social integration and academic success at the IUM?
3. Which linguistic resources did students expect to need to adjust and settle in at the IUM, both socially and academically?
4. What are students' perceptions of the extent to which their linguistic repertoires have helped them to achieve social integration and academic success at the IUM?
5. To what extent, if at all, do students at the IUM perceive their (lack of) social integration and/or academic success to be a result of their linguistic repertoires?

1.5 Theoretical areas of interest

There are three areas of research that provide relevant theoretical work of interest to this study, namely (i) linguistic repertoires and related aspects, (ii) English as a lingua franca (ELF) and its use in the classroom, and (iii) student perceptions and expectations of the language of instruction and their own linguistic preparedness. In the literature review given in Chapter 2 of this thesis, each of these areas will be examined in order to provide an explanation for and the basis for understanding the IUM students' expectations and perceptions of the usefulness of their linguistic repertoires in helping them to achieve social integration and academic success.

1.6 Methodology

The study is qualitative in nature. Data to inform the research questions was gathered using different methods in order to allow for triangulation. Questionnaires were distributed amongst first-year students. The questionnaire collected information on the students' linguistic repertoires, their expectations of the usefulness of their linguistic repertoires at the IUM before commencing their studies, and their perceptions of the usefulness of their linguistic repertoires after a number of months on campus. Individual follow-up interviews were conducted with four groups of students, consisting of individuals with a L1 of one of the following: Afrikaans; an African language indigenous to Namibia and widely spoken in the geographical area of the Windhoek campus; an African language indigenous to Namibia but not widely spoken in the Windhoek area; and a continental European (colonial) language. The interviews took place after these four groups of respondents had completed a linguistic profile. Further, a focus group discussion comprising the same sample of interviewed students was held. The three sets of data gathered were then thematically analysed to determine the participants' perceptions of the ways in which their linguistic repertoires assisted or hindered their adjustment on campus. The study thus used different data collection methods such as a questionnaire to reflect on linguistic profiles of the participants, and interviews and a focus group to reflect on the themes of the research questions, as is evident from the data presented in the data analysis chapter of this thesis (Chapter four). Finally, the analysis of the data was carried out using thematic analysis. The data analysis was descriptive, interpretive and explanatory, in line with the specific research questions set out in section 1.4.

1.7 Chapter layout

This thesis comprises five chapters. Chapter one is the introduction and provided the background and scope of the study. Chapter two provides an overview of relevant scholarly literature which lays the foundation for this study. Aspects of linguistic repertoires, ELF and its use in the classroom, and student expectations and perceptions of their language preparedness are discussed in Chapter two. Chapter three describes the methodological processes adopted to gather the data necessary to answer the research questions of this study. Chapter four comprises the presentation, analysis and description of the data. Lastly, the discussion of the findings and conclusions are presented in Chapter five.

1.8 Key terms used in the thesis

Given below is a list of key terms used in this study with their respective descriptions in order to provide clarity in terms of their use throughout this thesis.

ELF is an acronym referring to English as a lingua franca. A lingua franca is to be understood as a lingual means of communication (often a L2) shared by interlocutors of diverse L1s. House (2010: 363) refers to ELF as “a useful default means of communication used [...] by its now expert non-native users.” In the case of this study, though, English is often used as lingua franca by students who are not yet expert users thereof.

International students are students who do not have residency in their country of study. They are enrolled in tertiary institutions and are in their country of study on study visas or similar. In the case of this study, they rarely have English as their L1 or L2, and in some instances they do not have any English proficiency at their time of enrolment in the university.

L1/L1s denotes an individual’s first language(s). In the literature, the terms “first language”, “home language”, and “mother tongue” are used interchangeably by some scholars whereas others made distinctions between the three terms.

Language for identification refers to a language instrumental for a speaker in identifying his/her ethnic affiliation.

Language for communication conveys a particular language which can enable interlocutors with either the same or different first languages/mother tongues to communicate with one another.

Linguistic repertoires is defined by Shiweda (2013: 5) as codes or language varieties known by a speaker, which s/he has at her/his disposal, enabling him/her to fulfil specific social roles in everyday communication, in her/his speech community. Busch (2012: 504) uses the concept in association with a speech community and states that it encompasses all the accepted ways of formulating messages and means for daily communication depending on the speakers’ discretion and choice. The definition given in Blommaert and Backus (2013: 11) is in line with this: “totality of linguistic resources including both invariant forms and variables” that are available to members of a particular community.

Medium of instruction (MoI), also known as “language of teaching and learning” (often seen in the literature as the abbreviations LoLT or LOLT) or “language of instruction”, is the language in which instruction is given, i.e., the language in which teaching is provided and the language in which students are expected to complete their academic work. In the case of the IUM, this is English only, both officially and in practice. Note that the current study is interested in MoI only because the IUM’s MoI is known not to be the L1 of the majority of IUM students. Unlike the contributors to the 2014 book edited by Tollefson and Tsui, the researcher in this study does not deliberately consider the social, political and economic effects of MoI policies. English as MoI at a Namibian tertiary institution is thus not studied at a macro-level. Rather, English as MoI is studied at a micro-level, considering what perceived effect not having the MoI as L1 has on first-year students.

CHAPTER TWO

Literature overview and theoretical framework

2.1 Introduction

In this chapter, the relevant literature will be reviewed to provide an understanding of the framework within which this study was conducted. Studies that were carried out by different researchers and that are of relevance to this study will be examined with the aim of contextualising the current study. Furthermore, this chapter will show the link between the current study and existing works as well as the significance of these existing works to the current study. Theoretical considerations regarding ELF and its application as MoI, linguistic repertoires, and student expectations and perceptions of their linguistic preparedness for campus life will be examined critically to provide the basis and key point of departure for this study. Additionally, these works are to be evaluated and synthesized to provide a rationale and justification for the objectives of the current study.

2.2 ELF and its use in the classroom

Several scholars have studied the phenomenon of ELF and its adoption as a language of instruction. Some studies revealed that ELF and its adoption as MoI had proven to be a complex and contentious issue whereas others indicated that the use of ELF in the classroom can be a solution in many culturally and linguistically diverse contexts. One scholar, Seidlhofer (2004), explored the assumptions associated with using ELF in teaching. In this work, Seidlhofer (2004: 209) proposed that there are prerequisites that should be met before deciding on using ELF in teaching, namely “the consideration of speakers of ELF as language users in their own right” (meaning such interlocutors should be seen as having their own L1s beside ELF); “the acknowledgement of the legitimacy of ELF” (meaning that there is a need to recognise and formalise ELF teaching frameworks), and the need for a “content description of ELF”. It is only when these prerequisites are taken into consideration by the implementers that ELF can be implemented successfully as MoI.

From Seidlhofer’s work, one can conclude that there should be an emphasis on a clear pedagogical framework in which ELF is well defined before opting to introduce ELF as a MoI. This however remains a challenge to many institutions of higher learning worldwide due to a myriad of factors that need consideration before a decision can be made on which language to use as MoI. The IUM is no

exception to this. As stated above, English was chosen as MoI and lingua franca at the IUM. This choice of MOI and lingua franca was accompanied by many challenges which influenced the decision, such as the promotion of unity in diversity, linguistic disparities in the population, and maintaining high academic standards.

At the IUM, ELF is to be understood as a lingual means of communication (in almost all cases, the L2 at most) shared by interlocutors with diverse and mostly mutually unintelligible L1s. From this definition, two meanings of ELF in the context of the current study can be drawn:

- (i) English, by virtue of being the sole language of instruction (i.e., the language in which lecture and tutorial content is presented as well as the language in which student should complete their oral and written academic work), is seen as main medium of communication and the chosen foreign language of communication among the IUM students and staff members who share neither the same L1s nor the same ethnic or cultural background, and
- (ii) At the IUM, verbal interactions mostly take place in English amongst students with different L1s, where typically none of them has English as L1.

Similarly, a study by Smit (2010: 59) focused on understanding ELF and its adoption as a classroom language at tertiary institutions in German-speaking Austria. Her study explored the phenomenon of ELF and discussed English-medium tertiary education in contexts in which English is viewed as an additional language (as opposed to a L2) and in which tertiary education has a long history of being conducted in other, usually national, languages. Most importantly, her work addressed the research question of how classroom practices could be handled in this context when relying on English as the participants' lingua franca. One of the findings of this study was that the students' and teachers' views on the function that English fulfilled in their classes reflected a "community of multilingual sojourners" consisting of (i) the multilingual students who attended the hotel management programme in Vienna, (ii) the largely bilingual, mainly German-speaking, Austrian teachers of diverse professional backgrounds who lectured on topics of their professional specialisation, and (iii) the hotel management programme itself that is set in German-speaking Vienna, but is conducted in English specifically because it caters for international students aiming at obtaining specialised knowledge for an international line of business, namely, tourism. And all of them identified English as a major language of the business as well as the only language shared by the community (Smit 2010: 68). Using ELF was thus not merely a matter of being pragmatic (i.e., English was not only used because it was the one language in all participants' linguistic repertoires); English was also used as MoI to better prepare students for effective international communication in the business sector they were to enter. As stated in Chapter 1, the IUM offers advanced training in the fields of Management Science, Human Resource Development and

Information and Communications Technology, and this prepares its students to enter those sectors of the marketplace that are dominated by English as common medium of communication, with many multinational companies (such as Nokia, Samsung, Daimler-Benz and Renault) mandating English as their common corporate language (see Neely 2012). One could thus hypothesise that choosing English as ELF at IUM is, as in the case of the Vienna-based study, not merely a case of using a widely (if in some cases somewhat poorly) understood language in classes but also a way of preparing students for the business sectors they will enter after graduation.

In another study, Jenkins (2012) expressed the need to conduct research on ELF and its pedagogy while examining some of the current misconceptions about ELF. Similar to other scholarly works, this study viewed ELF in the context of a transactional language which enables linguistically diverse speakers to have purposeful interaction. From this study, Jenkins (2012: 487) observed two things that are of interest to the current study which was performed at the IUM where English functions as *lingua franca* because it serves a wider student community of different languages and social backgrounds. First, although students acquired in class the rules pertaining to the use of English, they did not seem to apply such acquired skills during their daily interactions – whenever these students had formal or informal conversations amongst themselves, they appeared to employ other means, which were a result of their respective mother tongues and some English-related factors. Second, often the utilisation of such means appeared to support effective communication, whether inside or outside the classroom. These observations are of interest to the current research, firstly in terms of demonstrating the influence of the L1s of ELF speakers', and secondly in terms of ELF users reverting to languages other than English in their linguistic repertoires with the aim to culturally identify themselves, to be polite and to accommodate and show solidarity with the speaker. As regards ELF pedagogy, Jenkins agrees with Dewey (2012) who states that the decision to incorporate ELF-oriented principles into ELF (or not) should be left to the teachers' discretion. One way of obtaining teacher buy-in for using ELF as MOI is by co-opting teachers in exploring viable possibilities for an ELF approach in education.

Although ELF remains the dominant preferred means of communication among the IUM student community, it has often come under attack for its perceived threat to students' indigenous languages (or L1s) and their linguistic repertoires. In Namibia, this belief is rife, particularly amongst those who have an interest in advancing the level of national languages' pedagogy and thus perceive English as a foreign and intruding language. The general view held by those Namibians who oppose the use of ELF as MoI is that using English as MoI will hinder the development of indigenous languages. The researcher could trace only one seemingly relevant study explicitly counteracting this argument, by House (2003). In this specific study, House (2003: 556) disputes the widespread assumptions that ELF

was threatening the existence of native languages and multiculturalism of Europe in particular and elsewhere in general. To provide an understanding of this argument, it is necessary to differentiate between language of communication and language of identification. “Language of communication” refers to a particular language which enables interlocutors who do not share the same L1 to communicate with one another. By contrast, “language of identification” is a language instrumental in identifying a speaker in terms of culture or ethnic affiliation. From the given distinction between these two concepts, it is evident that ELF qualifies to perform communicative functions which allow people to converse with others where their L1s are not mutually intelligible, and this allows people to overcome communication barriers. By contrast, a person’s own L1 is a repository of his/her identity, thus a person’s L1 plays an important role in determining membership of his/her cultural and linguistic group.

In this regard, Kramsch (2002: 98) gave a relevant example of an interlocutor’s personal testimony regarding language for communication purposes as well as identity purposes: The Vietnamese speaker, who lived abroad in Europe, relied on English to serve communicative purposes (as language for communication), while Vietnamese (the L1) mainly served as a language for identification. The same applies in the context of the IUM, where almost all students prescribe to English as their means of communication especially in formal settings (lectures, administration, etc.) although they still retain their various L1s which identifies their social groups and distinguishes them from others.

House (2003: 561) thus maintained that utilising ELF for educational purposes (as language of instruction) was not affecting national or local languages negatively as English and the national or local languages were used for different purposes. To amplify this argument, she refers to two cases. The first is an example from her native Germany where English in its role as a language with a high communication value was welcomed by many native Germans after the Second World War, while German retained its roots as an identificatory language. Here, English was regarded as an auxiliary medium to facilitate communication and not as a hegemonic language introduced to disadvantage and discard local languages. In this case, House (2003) maintains that the very spread of ELF is rather seen to stimulate members of minority languages to insist on their own local languages for emotional binding to their own culture, history and tradition. In view of this, it is evident that the spread of ELF can result in local varieties and cultural practices being strengthened. One example to this effect is the revival of German-language folk music and other songs in local dialects (such as Bavarian) to counteract pop music in English only.

The second case described by House (2003) to support her statement that using ELF as MoI does not necessarily affect national or local languages negatively was the case of Nigeria, where English plays a pivotal role to this day as the main language of choice in enabling its multilingual nation to communicate amongst each other, instead of being perceived as a dominant language meant to threaten the existence of native languages. In Nigeria, English has assumed a position of one of the alternative languages available for use, and it is because of its communication potential that Nigerians choose to use it to fulfil their various communicative needs. However, much as Nigerians frequently use English as their lingua franca to communicate with those who do not share their L1, they still adhere to their respective L1s for ethnic and cultural reasons. In light of this, it is again evident that languages have several purposes, amongst others as means of communication and identity. The conclusion from this is that ELF should not necessarily be presumed to uproot national languages or dialects; rather, ELF can complement indigenous languages.

2.3 Linguistic repertoires

As the current research is concerned with students' expectations and perceptions of the usefulness of their linguistic repertoires in succeeding academically and socially, it is of importance to discuss the concept 'linguistic repertoire' and relevant aspects related to it. Benor (2010: 2), in her study of variation in the linguistic repertoires of Americans of Jewish descent, defines "linguistic repertoire" as "a set of language varieties used by a given speaker or community", whereas Shiweda (2013: 6) describes a linguistic repertoire to be speakers' knowledge of a variety of language or codes, readily available to them for use in their daily conversations, in order to attain their communicative objectives. Benor (2010) extended her discussion of linguistic repertoire to include a branch she terms "distinctive linguistic repertoire" (alternatively "ethnolinguistic repertoire"), which denotes a pool of language tools which interlocutors sharing a similar culture can utilise to their advantage. To that effect, the concept 'ethnolinguistic repertoire' considers language as an important function in the establishment of interlocutors' social class, meaning that speakers rely on their linguistic resources to identify themselves with specific interlocutors and to be distinctive from others. For instance, based on the researcher's informal observations at the IUM, students whose L1 is Oshiwambo (who account for a high number of IUM students) are further classified according to dialect or language variety as Oshindonga, Oshikwanyama or Oshikwambi. This means that although some students share Oshiwambo as their common local language, they still from time to time reverted to their own dialects to fulfil their communicative needs or to distinguish them from the rest of the speakers of Oshiwambo. To explain "ethnolinguistic repertoire" further, further reference is made to Benor (2010: 1) who analysed the languages used by Jewish Americans in order to ascertain what ethnolect or language

variety features her respondents used. A total of 61 diverse respondents, all Americans from Jewish descent, were requested to complete questionnaires on their competence in and connection to Jewish-related languages. Her study revealed that the respondents largely made selective use of their repertoire to fulfil different roles. To signal the different varieties or dialects embedded within the American Jewish-speaking community (such as Hebrew and Yiddish) and that each of these qualified a certain function for the speaker, consider the example of the orthodox variety of Hebrew which was associated with the context of religious discourse. Her study is of importance for the current study because it demonstrated the conscious and subconscious choices made about the use of languages and their distinctive varieties to serve various communicative purposes.

Busch (2012: 504) refers to “linguistic repertoire” as “verbal repertoire” and views the concept to refer to linguistic forms or styles associated with a given speech community, which serve as means for daily interactions. This reflects a situation where members have linguistic resources at their disposal and choose to utilise them to suit their intentions or communication needs in their respective social settings. In another of her recent work entitled ‘Linguistic repertoire revisited’, Busch (2012) explores the linguistic repertoire using a language portrait. Here, she was interested in studying the linguistic repertoire of interlocutors without solely relying on observing interactions within the group. To showcase each participant’s linguistic repertoire, she used the approach of a linguistic portrait, where participants (in this case, schoolchildren) were requested to present all their languages by painting each language with a unique colour on an outline of a human body. With this exercise, participants were able to reflect their own complete linguistic profiles, such as the total number of languages or language varieties they spoke and the role performed by each in their everyday engagements or normal conversations with other speakers. One important conclusion reached by this work which is of interest to this study was that the representations that emerged through the portraits were taken to be true reflection of the interlocutors’ linguistic repertoires, despite such data being self-reported.

Kivinen (2011), in one of her works, provides a typical example of a linguistic profile of a student named Charlotta who was living in Brussels, Belgium at the time of the study. The student reported that the most important language for her was Danish because she originated from Denmark. Her family and almost all her friends spoke Danish. Then there were two other languages she spoke, namely Norwegian and French. Although she regarded them as being less important than Danish, she still used them frequently: she spoke Norwegian when she was with her friend from Norway, and a part of her family is French so she spoke French with them. This scenario demonstrated the linguistic resources that were in reach of the student, available for use in her different communicative events.

Hartford, Valdman and Foster (1982: 25) point out that the terms “linguistic repertoire”, “code repertoire”, and “verbal repertoire” are used more or less interchangeably to symbolise the totality of the languages in a speaker’s command which s/he can use in line with what s/he wishes to attain or convey. In the case of the current study, the “speech community” refers to the university community (students and academic and support staff) of the IUM of which the participants (who were all first-year students) form part. Although much has been written on linguistic repertoires, including the studies reviewed here, no scholar has yet provided a description of the students’ expectations and perceptions on the usefulness of their linguistic repertoire to achieve academic success and social integration, hence the objective(s) of this research.

2.4 Student experiences, expectations and perceptions of the language of instruction

There is a great deal of scholarly work on student expectations and perceptions of the language of instruction. For instance, Hengsadeekul, Hengsadeekul, Koul and Kaewkuekool (2010) focused on the use of English as language of instruction across universities in Thailand. Hengsadeekul et al. (2010: 89) studied the students’ perceptions regarding having their university courses taught in English and aimed to find out the reasons for these perceptions. The current study takes an interest in the Hengsadeekul et al. (2010) study as the researcher has informally observed a tendency amongst IUM students to demonstrate mixed reactions towards the IUM’s policy of using English as the sole language of instruction. To frame its relevance to the study at hand: Hengsadeekul et al. (2010: 89) uncovered some factors that influenced students’ point of views on the use of English for curriculum instruction. These were the following:

(i) “Language proficiency” – this pertained to the participants’ failure to master at the very least the basic skills needed for them to be proficient in the English language. The several factors which appeared to have contributed to this situation include the lack of a clear pedagogical approach, too much emphasis on drilling content at the expense of practising using real-life communicative styles, and the lack of a stimulating learning environment for students. In line with the aforementioned, Namibia’s education system finds itself in the same dilemma as far as poor English language proficiency is concerned. For instance, an article entitled ‘Education fails the nation’ which appeared in the New Era newspaper of January 2006 reveals that there has continuously been an outcry throughout the country about serious deficiencies in students’ skills in the language of instruction in Namibian high schools, and about the ill-preparedness of first-year university students in the MoI of their tertiary institutions (New Era

2006). According to this article, which published the opinions of the vice-chancellors of the two leading universities in Namibia, the majority of high school leavers fail to secure places in university or, if they do, they are required to upgrade their English proficiency before formally enrolling for the course for which they have been admitted. In particular, Dr Tjama Tjivikua, the vice chancellor of Namibia University of Science and Technology bemoans the many shortcomings and backlog in Namibia's education system. He states that it takes Namibia University of Science and Technology up to six months to prepare the approximately 5000 first-year students coming through the school system – addressing the academic backlog and bridging the disciplinary divide between secondary school and tertiary training. Whilst that backlog and disciplinary divide do not pertain to English exclusively, the improvement of English skills are indicated in order to increase the school-leavers' chances of academic success at university. Meanwhile, Professor Lazarus Hangula of the University of Namibia divulged that his institution makes full use of its language centre as part of its strategy to assist students with the problems they experience due to the university using English as MoI (New Era 2006). This being the case, the majority of students have started to develop resentment towards English as MOI, perceiving English as a barrier to their academic success.

(ii) “Perceived benefits of learning English” – There are certain benefits that some students associated with knowledge of English whereas other students did not seem to regard knowledge of English as important in their lives. For instance, some students associated English with higher social status, economic and career advancement, and access to global opportunities. By contrast, those who were negative towards the language viewed it as incompatible with their situation, foreign, difficult to learn, and a waste of time. In reference to the IUM students in this regard, informal observation indicates that the majority of them view knowledge of English as beneficial. For instance, they are of the opinion that English proficiency will lead to good career prospects for them after graduating, further studies elsewhere, respect, and a broadening of opportunities in their lives.

(iii) “Identity issues” – These issues have to do with the individual's cultural or linguistic association (e.g., ethnic group). It is important to know how students identify themselves as such self-identification might be relevant to finding answers on how and why students view and react to the position and role of English, both internationally and domestically. For instance, those individuals who view the world as a global village and therefore perceive English as global language are highly likely to develop a positive attitude towards English and a will to learn and use English. By contrast, individuals who adhere to and advance nationalistic or local language agendas only are highly likely to have a lack of interest in learning English, let alone a willingness to adopt it as part of their linguistic repertoire.

Other works, notably those of Andrade (2006) and Yeh and Inose (2010), studied the correlations between English proficiency, social adjustment and academic achievement in Australia and the United States. In particular, Andrade (2006: 146) identified other attributes, apart from lack of competence in English, affecting students and/or hindering them from succeeding academically, namely their desire to learn (or lack thereof), their own individual evaluation, and the assessment tools used to measure student performance. With regard to social adjustment of students, the study found that senior and scholarship-sponsored students had little trouble adjusting at university compared to other groups. Several factors were found to have no effect on students' adjustment. These included English listening/speaking proficiency, previous schooling, years of study and study programme, gender orientation and marriage regime, and social or economic status.

Other studies relevant to the current research include that of Pretorius and Small (2007) who explored the experiences of international nursing students visiting Namibia; Kandiko and Mawer (2013) whose research involved studying students' perceived stance to tertiary education; Brinkworth, McCann, Matthews and Nordström (2008) who studied the expectations of both the first-year students and teachers in regard to the language of education; and Thorton (2009) whose thesis focused on perceptions about foreign language learning amongst second-year South Korean university students of English and their native English instructors. However, none of these studies focused on students' own views on and experiences of the role of their linguistic repertoires in helping them achieve academic success and/or social integration. Of these four studies, the first two are the most relevant to the current study and therefore they will be discussed in some detail below.

Pretorius and Small (2007), academics in the field of nursing, explored and described the experiences of international student nurses who were on a study visit to Namibia, mainly from Scandinavian (i.e., developed) countries. They argued that in today's ever-changing world, one in which the culturally diverse population is quite mobile, there is a high probability that nursing interns/professionals and health workers in general will come in contact with a diverse clientele with diverse views on the different health system practices found in different parts of the world. And it is for this reason that educational visits by student nurses to regions or countries culturally different to their home region or home country are highly encouraged in order for them to gain the necessary clinical exposure to be able to care for this culturally diverse population. Pretorius and Small recruited 30 visiting student nurses as participants from an initial population of 152. They gathered data by asking the participants to describe the professional and personal experiences they had while in Namibia. According to Pretorius and Small (2007), their findings revealed three recurring themes (or three main experiences) emanating from the participants' narratives. The first thereof was that there were notable differences

in terms of care delivery between their home and host countries. For instance, the students described how discomfoting it was for them to observe how nurses in Namibia cared for patients compared to how patients were cared for in the student nurses' home countries. The students particularly expressed dissatisfaction about how aspects pertaining to general hygiene, pain control and communication were handled in Namibian hospitals. The second recurring theme was that participants experienced culture shock as a result of transitioning from their familiar cultural setting (in highly developed countries) to another, in this case Namibia which is a developing country, to embark on a nursing field visit. On assuming their tasks upon their arrival in the country and after being deployed to their duty stations, these students experienced some sort of culture shock emanating from several factors, such as exposure to unfamiliar food, money, accommodation facilities, languages and social etiquette and a climate to which they were not accustomed. The third recurring theme was that participants expressed appreciation for the clinical exposure that they received in Namibia. Here, the participants embraced the opportunity granted to them as part of a trans-cultural encounter which they deemed invaluable to both their professional and personal development. Although the study by Pretorius and Small (2007) did not focus on student perceptions and the role of their linguistic repertoires in adjusting at university, the results of this research – which focused on students and their experiences in a setting culturally and linguistically different to that of their home county – do provide insights of value to the current study. The reason for this is that many IUM students, like the student nurses in the Pretorius and Small (2007) study, move from familiar linguistic and cultural contexts to an unfamiliar one.

Another study on student expectation and perceptions of higher education was carried out by Kandiko and Mawer (2013) at 16 institutions of higher learning across the United Kingdom. Although their work dealt with a general education topic, several points relevant to the current study were made, especially on students' opinions. One of the key findings in regard to student perceptions was that the majority of students wanted value for money. Here, the students expressed that they did not think they were getting their money's worth judging from insufficient contact hours, lack of resources, problematic learning spaces and generally limited investment in student affairs. In regard to student expectations to the learning environment, they reflected that institutions would be failing to fulfil their mandates if they do not meet student expectations in terms of sufficient facilities, resources, staff support and engagement. Regarding students' expectations about their employability upon graduating, many were of the opinion that the purpose of them entering university was to improve their career prospects. Thus students expressed a need for universities to offer them advice and guidance to support their employability beyond their degrees. The relevance of this study to the current one is that it covered a wide range of experiences and views from the students' perspective,

encompassing the entire campus and many aspects of student life. One conclusion of this study was that students believed that by addressing their expectations the institutions of higher learning would to a large extent be determining the level of academic and career success experienced by the students. It will thus be interesting to see how this manifests itself in the role of students' linguistic repertoire in helping them achieve social integration and academic success at the IUM, that is, whether IUM students refer more to the university's role in helping them settle in and achieve social and academic success or whether they refer more to the assistance (or lack thereof) of their linguistic repertoires in achieving such success.

Another, related research project, by House (2003), dealt with the use of English for classroom instructions at universities in Germany. Using Hamburg University as a research site, House (2003: 570) investigated students' perceived reaction to the communicative situation that prevailed in German universities, namely where two distinct codes – German and English – were used complementary as MoI. What informed the study was the fact that there was a notable, ever-increasing trend amongst universities to offer their programmes in English instead of in German, which was traditionally the only language of instruction. The use of ELF in German tertiary education, as House (2003: 570) argues, pointed to two phenomena. Firstly, it reflects the positive attitude that the German intellectual elite have towards ELF, and secondly, it is an attempt by German universities to internationalise their universities, to lure international students and to boost their enrolment figures which were notably on a decline over the previous years.

House (2003) then summarised the findings of her study as follows: Firstly, the results showed a preference amongst foreign, non-German-speaking students for initially having their courses taught in English, and then thereafter gradually transitioning to German as MoI once their German language proficiency was good enough to allow them to do so. Secondly, interviews with both teachers and students revealed that English was said to have played two main roles, namely (i) as crucial channel to easily facilitate instruction, especially at the start of tuition, and (ii) as a reliable alternative language readily available to overcome communication barriers. From this, it can be deduced that English should not be regarded as competing with German as it serves its own communication roles different from those of the native German language. Thus, the understanding in this regard should be that the two languages complement each other and, by doing so, makes the learning process meaningful to the students. In the Namibian context, as explained above, English has been regarded as a threat to the development (e.g., to the use in official domains) of national languages. It would thus be interesting to see whether the results of the current study are similar to those of the House (2003) study in terms of English being referred to positively as MoI at university level (despite the

contexts of the two studies being different in the sense that German and English are used as MoI at the German institutions whereas English only is used at IUM).

2.5 Concluding remarks

This chapter provided background to the various fields and theoretical considerations in which the current study is contextualised and forms the basis of analysing the data gathered for the current study. The following chapter will discuss the methodological aspects of the study.

CHAPTER THREE

Methodology

3.1 Introduction

This chapter describes the research methodologies that were used to conduct the current study. It pays special attention to the processes which were used by the researcher in gathering information from participants as well as to how such information was analysed. As this study is qualitative in nature, approaches relevant to qualitative research were engaged. The researcher administered questionnaires to 50 first years, held follow-up interviews with eight students and a group discussion with the same eight students. This was done in order to gather data to inform the research questions pertaining to students' perceptions of how well their linguistic repertoire facilitated their social integration and academic success at IUM. The specific questions that the research intended to respond to are repeated below:

1. What is the nature of the linguistic repertoires of the students at the IUM who do not have the language of instruction as L1?
2. To which extent did these students expect their linguistic repertoires to help them achieve social integration and academic success at the IUM?
3. Which linguistic repertoires did students expect to need to adjust and settle in at the IUM, both socially and academically?
4. What are students' perceptions of the extent to which their linguistic repertoires have helped them to achieve social integration and academic success at the IUM? and
5. To which extent, if at all, do students at the IUM perceive their (lack of) social integration and/or academic success to be a result of their linguistic repertoires?

After obtaining ethical clearance and institutional permission for conducting the study, participants were recruited by visiting first-year classrooms and explaining the purpose of the study and then handing out information leaflets, consent forms and questionnaires to those students who indicated that they would be interested in participating. The questionnaires, which the students completed in their own time, captured the students' linguistic profile, language knowledge and application in different domains and contexts. Follow-up interviews and discussions took place with four groups of students to verify and supplement responses to the questionnaire. (These groups volunteered by

indicating on their questionnaire their willingness to partake in a follow-up interview.) Purposive sampling was used to select participants on the basis of their shared characteristics of being first-year students at the IUM. These matters are discussed in more detail below.

3.2 Description of research participants

In order to provide answers to the research questions of this study, the researcher used two samples of first-year IUM students to provide three sets of data. For the first set of data, a sample consisting of 50 first-year students was used. They were requested to complete a language background questionnaire wherein they were required to reflect on various aspects of their language biography, patterns of language use and reasons for such use (as well as to indicate whether they would be prepared to be contacted by the researcher regarding follow-up interviews). The requirements for participation in this study were that the participants had to be registered for a first-year academic course, non-repeaters of the academic year and not belonging to any of the class groups taught by the researcher. There was no restriction in regard to gender, age, nationality or language background of the participants who completed the questionnaire. From the 50 questionnaires that were distributed, 44 were completed and returned with the signed consent forms (which rendered a response rate of 88%), while six students decided against participation.

Participants were required to indicate their gender on the questionnaire. Of the 44 questionnaires returned, a total of 21 respondents (48%) were female and 23 (52%) were male. Participants were also requested to indicate their date of birth on the questionnaire which was then used to calculate their age. The majority of participants (30; 68%) were born between 1996 and 1998, making them 18 to 20 years old at the time of data collection. The remainder of the respondents (14; 32%) was born from 1993 to 1995, thereby making them 21 to 23 years old at the time of data collection.

Most of the participants were Namibians (38; 86%), while three participants (7%) hailed from the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). Also, there was one participant from each of the following countries, collectively translating into 7% of the participants: Angola, Malawi and, South Africa. The 44 participants were enrolled in mainly four different courses at the IUM, namely Economics (32%), Computer Science (27%), Business Studies (23%) and Accounting and Finance (16%). One student opted not to indicate the course he was studying.

The returned completed questionnaires provided information on the population from which the researcher could select participants amongst which to collect the second and third sets of data to

complement data obtained from the questionnaire. This was done by identifying those students who indicated their willingness to partake in the follow-up interview (see section 2 of the questionnaire) and had provided either a cell phone number or email address where the researcher could contact them to schedule an interview appointment. A total of 32 participants had indicated their willingness to participate in a follow-up interview. From these, eight participants were purposively selected and enlisted for both a follow-up interview and group discussion.

3.3 Sampling technique

As stated above, this study used a sampling method known as “purposive sampling”. This is defined by Cousin (2011: 79) as “recruiting people on the basis of shared characteristics which will help in your enquiry”. In this case, 50 students, all registered first-years at the IUM who were not repeating any of their university subjects were approached to participate in this study. These participants were invited to fill in a questionnaire. By examining the questionnaire data the participants provided on their linguistic profiles, four groups were drawn from this group for a follow-up interview. Members of these four groups were selected on the basis of their L1, so that there was one group comprising L1 speakers of Afrikaans, a second comprising L1 speakers of an African language indigenous to Namibia and spoken widely in the Windhoek area, a third comprising L1 speakers of an African language indigenous to Namibia but not spoken widely in the Windhoek area, and a fourth comprising L1 speakers of a continental European language (i.e., a colonial language). It was initially planned that the groups would consist of speakers of Afrikaans, an African language indigenous to Namibia, an African language not indigenous to Namibia, and a colonial language, but such groups could not be formed from amongst those participants who indicated their willingness to be interviewed, as thus the plan had to be adjusted.

Although purposive sampling allows one to be focused on the themes of the study due to using a limited number of participants, the researcher is cognisant of the fact that it can also be limiting in the sense that the findings based on a sample of 44 students cannot necessarily be regarded as an accurate representation of all first-year IUM students’ views on the usefulness of their linguistic repertoire(s) in facilitating social integration and achieving academic success at university.

3.4 Research design

A research design entails a careful plan which a researcher has to draw up at the start of a research project to specify the appropriate approach to be taken. An appropriate approach is guided by amongst

others the objective of the study, implying that the research issue at hand determines which kind of research is to be employed (Bryman 2012: 50). Thus, the research approach largely depends on which research methods would suit the problem being investigated. The current study looked into whether the students' linguistic repertoires are useful in helping them achieve social integration and academic success at the IUM, and the research approach used is qualitative.

Kagwesage (2013),¹ a Rwandan scholar, in her thesis entitled "Coping with learning through a foreign language in higher education in Rwanda", distinguishes qualitative research from quantitative research. According to Kagwesage (2013: 43), qualitative research implies a research strategy that usually emphasises words rather than quantification in the collection and analysis of data. She adds that qualitative research predominantly emphasises an inductive approach to relationship between theory and research, places more emphasis on the ways in which individuals interpret their social world, and views social reality as a constantly shifting emergent property of individuals' creation. According to Berg (2004: 283), the purpose of a qualitative research approach is to gain information on facts about a situation that cannot be quantified in meaningful terms. Kagwesage (2013: 44) points out that one reason for using qualitative research is its ability to produce rich descriptive and detailed data about a much smaller number of people or cases – while this reduces the generalisability of the study, it increases understanding of the cases and situations being studied. By contrast, quantitative research has to do with quantification in the collection and analysis of information, and thus entails a deductive approach of numerical presentation of data. This method provides a broad, generalisable set of findings which can be presented concisely and economically in mathematical terms (Kagwesage 2013).

In light of the above differentiations, and considering the aim of the project, the current study ascribes to qualitative research approach. Notably, it means that the study relies on selected first-year entrants' questionnaires, interview responses and group discussion responses on how they expected and perceived their linguistic repertoire to help them integrate socially and succeed academically, before and after joining the IUM. The data gathered from the questionnaire and interviews are inductively and thematically analysed to determine participants' perceptions of the ways in which their linguistic repertoires assisted or hindered their adjustment on campus. Note that some of the collected data did lend itself to quantification (for instance, the researcher could count how many students spoke a certain range of languages as L1 or how many students expected their specific linguistic repertoire to benefit them during their social adjustment at university). In these cases, the responses were indeed

¹ The researcher deliberately chose to refer to an African scholar doing research in an African context here, rather than referring to seminal work of scholars conducting their research in so-called WEIRD contexts (i.e., Western, educated, industrialised, rich, democratic contexts) (see, amongst others, Henrich, Heine and Norenzayan 2010).

tallied and presented as percentages. However, the researcher was particularly interested in the themes emerging from the interviews and focus group discussion, and these were analysed qualitatively.

3.5 Data collection methods

In an attempt to address the research questions of this study, the researcher relied on three research instruments, namely a questionnaire, interview schedule and group discussion. These reasons for selecting these specific instruments over others are discussed below.

First, questionnaires were administered to first-year entrants in an attempt to capture their views with regard to the usefulness of their diverse linguistic resources in enabling them to socially integrate and achieve academic success at the IUM (see Appendix A). The researcher opted to use a questionnaire as data collection method for the following reasons: It captures specific information in one item; it allows one to easily obtain responses from a large number of people (Rowley 2012: 261); and therefore the data gathered from a selected sample may be seen to generate findings that are generalisable to other members of the same population. The questionnaire used in the current study comprised four parts. The first part captured the respondents' biographical information and contact details for a possible follow-up interview and group discussion. The second part collected information pertaining to the language background of the participants, whereas the third part captured data on the language profile and language proficiency of the respondents. The last part was concerned with information on language use patterns (specifically with what languages are used in different domains and why).

Second, interviews were another means of collecting data for the current study. Rowley (2012) states that interviews are generally used when conducting qualitative research, in which the researcher is interested in collecting facts or gaining insights into an issue as perceived by the participant. She therefore views interviews as "face-to-face verbal exchanges in which one person, the interviewer, attempts to acquire information from and gain an understanding of another person, the interviewee, on their attitudes, opinions, beliefs, behaviours, predictions or experiences about a particular issue" (Rowley 2012: 260). On this view, interviews are a useful tool in gathering data when the research objectives are focused on understanding experiences, perceptions and attitudes of participants, as in the case of the current study. Interviews are often classified on the basis of their structure (Rowley 2012). In the case of this study, semi-structured interviews were conducted: The researcher prepared a number of questions and posed these in the same order to every interviewee, but because the purpose of the interviews was to supplement the feedback received from the questionnaire, interviewees were

allowed to also discuss topics not asked about directly in the interview. Interview questions were drawn up in such a way as to capture narratives from the respondents on their perceived usefulness of their linguistic repertoires. The interview schedule appears in Appendix B.

Lastly, a focus group discussion was employed as another means of data collection. According to Hennink (2014: 1), a focus group discussion, as one can see from its name, involves a “*focus* on specific issues, with a predetermined *group* of people, participating in an interactive *discussion*” [emphasis Hennink’s]. Following Hennink’s (2014) description of a focus group – namely six to eight participants sharing their views over a 60 to 90 minute period – eight participants discussed for 60 minutes their linguistic repertoires and the usefulness thereof during adjusting to university life. The students who participated in the focus group discussion were the same students who were interviewed. The focus group discussion allowed the researcher to capture from the participants naturally occurring narrative responses pertaining to the research questions of the current study. The three research instruments are further explained below.

3.6 Research instruments

As mentioned before, as part of data collection for this study, three different research instruments were employed. These stated instruments were used in conjunction with and complementary to each other in order to provide answers to the research questions. In this section, the data collection instruments are discussed in detail.

3.6.1 Questionnaires

The researcher firstly administered a questionnaire (see Appendix A) to 50 first-year student participants between 18 and 22 July, 2016. The questionnaires were handed to the students after they were approached by the researcher at the start of their lectures, with permission from colleagues who taught the relevant classes, and were requested to complete the consent forms and questionnaire within a week should they indeed be willing to participate in the study. Upon completion of the questionnaires, the students were asked to drop them in a prepared box in front of the researcher’s office. This was done to ensure convenience and afford students optimal time to return the questionnaires, as well as upholding the anonymity of the participants. Overall, out of 50 students who received the questionnaire, 44 returned it completed (which translate into 88% response rate). The researcher is fully aware of the fact that the utilisation of a questionnaire to collect data in the current study has its shortcomings – for instance, participants’ failure to complete all the required

sections and sometimes providing artificial responses – which may impact negatively on the findings of the study. However, the questionnaire did enabled the researcher to gather much information from many participants about their gender, age, nationality, the region/province/home town they were from, where they were schooled, the course in which they were enrolled at the IUM, their language background, language ability, where they used their languages, as well as other language use patterns, which would have proved a challenge with other data collection methods.

3.6.2 Interviews

In addition to having completed and returned the questionnaire, only the participants who indicated on the questionnaire their willingness and availability to take part in a follow-up interview were eligible for the interview exercise. In this section, the researcher discusses the themes of language use that are either complementary to or were not at all mentioned in the language questionnaire, but emerged during interviews with students. The aim of this interview was to obtain the participants' rich perspectives on language use in narrative format. Prior to the interview sessions, the procedures of the interviews in terms of venue and time as well as the purpose of the interview were explained to the participants. Considering that the researcher was employed as lecturer at the university and therefore had an office on campus, it was agreed with the participants to hold the sessions in the researcher's office as it was quite and private. The sessions were held on an individual basis between the interviewees and the researcher to ensure non-interference and influence from other participants. Each interview lasted approximately 15 minutes. With the participants' permission, each interview was audio-recorded and later transcribed with the aim to identify key themes that can be traced to the research questions in order to provide answers to them. The eight interviewees are referred to here by code and pseudonym. Of these participants, five were male and three were female. It is expedient to note that the interview schedule was drawn up in such a manner that it prompted respondents to narratively express themselves on themes relevant to the research questions. To this end, an interview schedule was drawn up consisting of 11 questions to guide the sessions, which required participants to provide elaborative responses on the domains in which they mostly communicated, the language codes they used and why; language(s) perceived to facilitate their social adjustment and academic success; and language skills they needed to improve to cope either socially or academically. Below are interview questions posed to the participants. Note however that interviewees were not stopped when they started to provide information on a topic not addressed by any of the interview questions.

1. In what campus domains [e.g. lectures, admin. meetings with staff, conversations with friends, on campus, etc.] do you frequently communicate? What languages or codes do you use in such domains? Why?
2. Before commencing your studies, which of your language or language skills did you expect to be helpful to you in terms of adjusting and settling in at the IUM? Explain why this was the case.
3. Before commencing your studies, which of your languages or language skills did you expect to be helpful to you in terms of achieving academic success at the IUM? Explain why this was the case.
4. Which languages or language skills might have assisted you in settling in and adjusting socially at the IUM after a few months on campus? Elaborate on how these might have assisted you.
5. Which languages or language skills might have assisted you in achieving academic success at the IUM after a few months on campus? Elaborate on how these might have assisted you.
6. Which of your languages or language skills were useful for your adjustment and settling in at the IUM? Elaborate on how they assisted you.
7. Which of your languages or language skills were useful for your achievement of academic success at the IUM? Elaborate on how they assisted you.
8. Do you think that any of your languages or language skills hindered your adjustment and settling in at the IUM? Elaborate on how this might have hindered you.
9. Do you think that any of these languages or language skills hindered your achievement of academic success at the IUM? Elaborate on how these might have hindered you.
10. Which of your languages or language skills do you think need to improve in order for you to adjust and settle in better at the IUM? Explain your answer.

11. Which of your language or language skills do you think need to improve in order for you to easily achieve greater academic success at the IUM? Explain your answer.

The eight participants (three females and five males) in the interviews consisted of members of four groups who were selected on the basis of their L1, so that there was one group comprising one L1 speaker of Afrikaans; a second comprising three L1 speakers of Oshiwambo, an indigenous African language widely spoken in Namibia, including in the geographical area in which the Windhoek campus of the IUM lies; a third comprising one L1 speaker of Silozi and two L1 speakers of Otjiherero, both indigenous African languages not as widely spoken in the Windhoek region as Oshiwambo; and a fourth comprising one L1 speaker of French, the colonial language of the DRC. As mentioned under ethical considerations, for the sake of anonymity and confidentiality, the eight interviewees are referred by code and pseudonym in the data analysis and discussion chapter. All of these interview sessions were recorded using an audio-recorder. The recordings of these interviews were then transcribed verbatim to allow the researcher to reflect on the themes emerging, particularly those which would inform the research questions. The interviews were conducted on an individual basis, that is, between the researcher and each of the participants individually, and took place in a quiet room on campus. This arrangement was made to ensure that participants were at liberty to express their views unhindered or without being influenced by the responses of their fellow students. Whenever participants gave unclear or vague responses, the researcher rephrased the questions or posed follow-up questions in order to attain clarity from them.

The aim of using interviews was to capture authentic views in the form of narratives from the students in regard to their perceptions and experiences of the usefulness of their linguistic repertoires to enable them to achieve social integration and academic success at the IUM. The choice of interviews as a method of data collection in the current study is underscored by Kagwesage (2013: 46) who observed that interviews tend to elicit far more varied and rich data than questionnaires as the former provide the researcher with the reasons for the participants' thinking, whereas Thornton (2009: 29) maintains that interviewing is one of the most powerful tools to understand people's points of view, beliefs and attitudes. He adds that it is because of its interactive nature that an interview has many advantages over other types of data collection methods. For instance, an interview provides better understanding of contexts as it offers solid descriptions and explanations of the data (Thornton 2009). In line with this, the interviews afforded the researcher an opportunity to collect empirical data that provided answers to the research questions.

3.6.3 Group discussion

The focus group discussion was yet another method which was employed to collect data for this study. The eight research participants took part in a form of group interview amongst each other in order to generate complementary data to the data obtained from the questionnaire and individual interview. The researcher opted for focus group discussion because of its several advantages over other forms of data collection. As Kitinger (1995: 299) observes, first, focus group discussion is a quick and convenient way to collect data from several people simultaneously and encourages interaction among participants where they can talk to each other; ask questions, exchange anecdotes and comment on each other's experiences and points of view. Second, such views can be explored and clarified by participants themselves in ways that would be less easily accessible in individual interviews. Finally, focus group discussions also help the researcher to tap into the many different forms of communication that people use in their day-to-day interaction, including jokes, teasing and even non-verbal cues. This way, focus group discussions allow the researcher to capture real-life experiences from the participants. She adds that this method is particularly useful for exploring people's knowledge and experiences and can be used to examine not only what people think but how they think and why they think that way. Thus the method enabled the researcher to explore first-year IUM students' perceptions or attitudes in regard to the usefulness of their linguistic repertoires in the context of achieving social integration and academic success.

3.7 Data analysis

There are key activities that were performed by the researcher in as far as analysing the transcribed data is concerned, such as organising the data set; becoming acquainted with the data; classifying, coding and interpreting data; and finally presenting and writing up the data (Rowley 2012: 268). The qualitative data gathered in the current study was analysed using both thematic analysis and theme development (Braun and Clarke 2006; Fereday and Muir-Cochrane 2006; Kagwesage 2013). According to Fereday and Muir-Cochrane (2006: 82), thematic analysis entails the search for themes that emerge as being important to the description of the phenomenon, and a form of pattern recognition within the data, where themes become the categories for analysis. Braun and Clarke (2006) view thematic analysis as a method for identifying, analysing and reporting patterns or themes within data, whereas Kagwesage (2013: 51) ascertains that thematic analysis is a flexible and useful tool for "encoding qualitative data". In the data analysis of the current study, thematic analysis was a useful tool in recognising and describing patterns or themes emanating from data collected through questionnaires, interviews and group discussion.

Apart from thematic analysis, an inductive method was also engaged to analyse qualitative information of this study. This approach was useful, because it constitutes, amongst others, the process involving recognizing (seeing) an important moment and encoding it (seeing it as something) prior to a process of interpretation; and organising the data in order to identify and develop themes from them. This then acts as a means of organizing text for subsequent interpretation (see Fereday and Muir-Cochrane 2006: 83). Moreover, the inductive approach is data-driven, meaning the themes identified are strongly linked to the data themselves (Braun and Clarke 2006). By using this method, themes were developed from the interview narratives and patterns were identified which were then interpreted.

3.8 Ethical considerations

Before the commencement of data collection, the researcher obtained permission from the relevant authorities at the IUM (the research site) to involve their students in this research. The researcher also applied for ethical clearance from Stellenbosch University Research Ethics Committee (Humanities) and was granted such clearance (reference SU-HS-D002428). Further, written informed consent was obtained from all student participants for collecting questionnaire data as well as for conducting follow-up interviews and for them taking part in the focus group discussion (see Appendix C). The researcher took advice from Bryman (2012), who points out that for any study involving the participation of human beings, there is a need for the researcher to inform such participants on the objectives of the study and about any possible risks or discomforts associated with participation in the study. In line with this, participants were explicitly informed that their participation was voluntary and that they would reserve the right to withdraw from the process at any moment without providing reasons or facing any negative consequence for doing so.

The researcher is a lecturer at IUM and teaches first-year students. All students at a particular educational institution could be said to be subordinate to any lecturer at the institution. Because the researcher wanted to reduce the possibility of students feeling obliged to take part in the research simply because it is a lecturer asking them to do so, the researcher deliberately avoided inviting any of his own students to participate in the study. Rather, he arranged with colleagues that he would invite their students, who were unknown to him and did not know him as one of their lecturers, to act as participants. Whereas this would not solve the problem of subordination, it was an attempt to reduce the size of said problem.

Because students for the interviews were selected based on the data given on their completed questionnaire and then had to be contacted by the researcher to make arrangements regarding follow-up interviews, those who were willing to take part in the interviews could not remain anonymous; they had to write their names (or a pseudonym) and their real telephone number and/or real email address on the questionnaire. Those not willing to be interviewed could however remain completely anonymous. All participants (even those who gave the researcher their real names) were given participant codes, and these codes were used during data analysis and when reporting findings. This was done to ensure that the respondents' privacy was upheld and their identities remained concealed when reporting the data and the findings based on the data. Those students who took part in the interviews and focus group discussion were furthermore given a pseudonym. The researcher also made it clear to the participants that access to raw data will be restricted, made only available to the researcher and his supervisor at Stellenbosch University.

3.9 Concluding remarks

The current chapter explained the research design, the data collection instruments, sampling techniques, the participants of the study, the data analysis method and lastly the ethical considerations of the study. In the next chapter, the data is presented and analysed.

CHAPTER FOUR

Data analysis and presentation

4.1 Outline of the chapter

This chapter contains the presentation and interpretation of the data of the research study. The first section reports the results of the language background questionnaire. In the section that follows, the results of interview, which are complementary to the questionnaire, are presented and discussed. The last section presents the results of the group discussion, by paying attention to recurring themes and themes not captured by the questionnaire data. The three sets of results will be presented in such a manner that they address the research questions set out in section 1.4.

4.2. Data from the questionnaire

The data from the questionnaire will be organised into themes that will seek to inform the research questions of the current study. The themes will be discussed and further illustrated with graphs and tables.

4.2.1 Participants' province/home town and period of stay

In this section, the researcher mainly presents an overview of the participants' home provinces/regions, how long they have been living in these provinces and their educational mobility before coming to the IUM. The aim is to shed light on student mobility: Were they mostly living in one area or did they move around? The reason for considering student mobility is that students who move around would have had the experience of attending new educational institutions of which the norms would possibly have differed from those to which they had previously been exposed.

First, as seen below in Table 1, the questionnaire results revealed that participants hailed from six provinces/regions within Namibia (namely, 30% from Oshana, 25% from Omusati, 14% from Khomas, 11% from Ohangwena region, 5% from Otjozodjupa province; 2% from Kunene province) as well as from four other countries (7% from the DRC), and 2% each from Angola, Malawi and South Africa. Recall that the research site is in Windhoek, the capital city of Namibia. The questionnaire results thus show that the majority of the students at the IUM came from elsewhere

within the country, meaning they would move from one region to another, for instance from Oshana to Khomas (Windhoek) where the IUM is located. Also, evidence of the world becoming a global village is found in a noted number of foreign students who had come from their respective countries to access educational opportunities in Namibia.

Table 1: Participants' home provinces

Home province (and country)	Percentage of participants
Oshana (Namibia)	30
Omusati (Namibia)	25
Khomas, Windhoek (Namibia)	14
Ohangwena (Namibia)	11
Kinshasa (DRC)	5
Otjozodjupa (Namibia)	5
Blantyre (Malawi)	2
Gauteng (South Africa)	2
Kunene (Namibia)	2
Luanda (Angola)	2
Lumbambashi (DRC)	2

Table 2 below gives an overview of how long the participants had resided in their home provinces/regions before joining the IUM. The results showed that most participants (66%) have been living in their home provinces since birth, followed by 14% who indicated an average residence of 12-16 years. A further 11% indicated an average period of 6-11 years and 7% indicated an average residence of 0-5 years. One participant did not indicate the period of residence. Note that the same results answer the question of whether the participants went to school in their home provinces. Those participants who had stayed in their home provinces are presumed to have attended educational institutions within the province, whilst those participants who indicated the averages of period of stay to be less than 12 years in their home provinces had an opportunity to attend educational institutions elsewhere. This “provincial mobility” exposed the participants to norms of education institutions possibly different from those they were exposed to previously, which might have prepared them somewhat for their move from their familiar school context to the IUM where the norms might be different from what they were in their school.

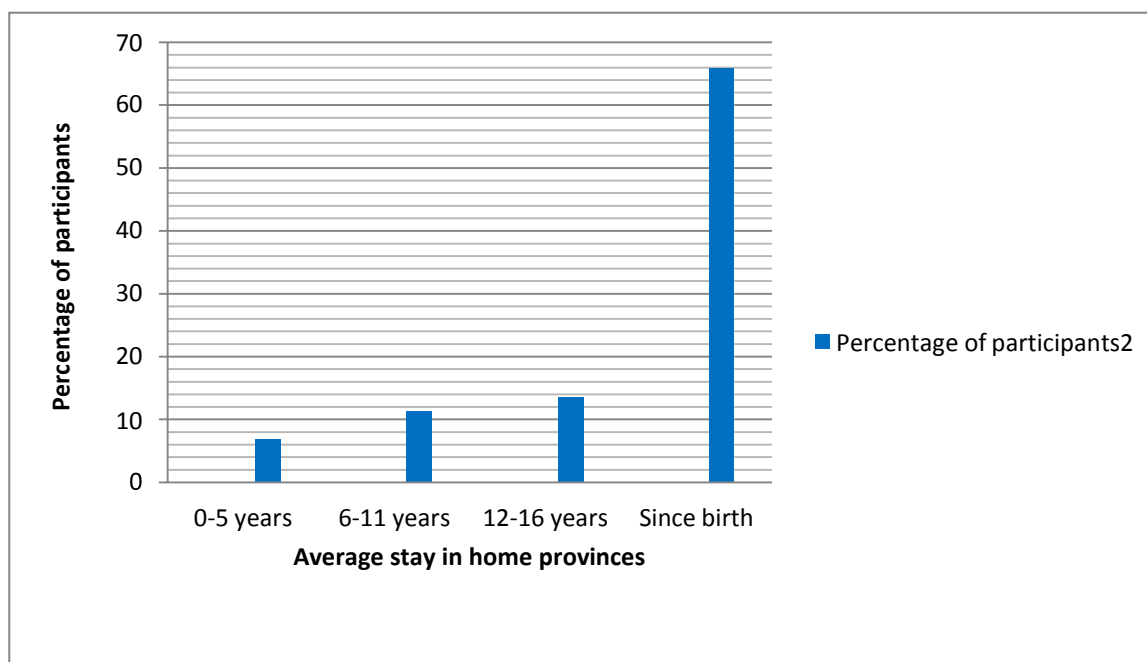


Figure 1: Average stay in home provinces/regions

4.2.2 Language background of participants

Table 2 summarises participants' response to the question of which languages they spoke as L1 and L2. This section will help to address one of the research questions which seek to unravel the nature of the linguistic repertoires of the students at IUM who do not have the language of instruction (i.e., English) as L1. This data is important to this study due to the fact that the participants' language resources have implications for both their academic achievement and their social adjustment at the IUM. In regard to the number of L1 speakers, Oshikwanyama and Oshindonga had the highest numbers with each accounting for 25%, followed by other Oshiwambo dialects with 16%. The Oshiwambo dialects referred to here are mainly spoken by Aawambo people but are not documented as either curriculum or national languages, as in case of Oshindonga and Oshikwanyama, which are also spoken by the same indigenous group. French, Silozi, Portuguese and Oshimbalantu took third position in terms of L1 speakers, while the remaining 11.5% of the participants were L1 speakers of a combination of five other languages. In terms of L2, English was the most spoken language, with 86% of the participants indicating the language as their L2, while six languages (French, Oshindonga, Chichewa, Kiswahili, Lingala and Otjiherero) came second with equal numbers of participants (2.3% each) who were L2 speakers. The rest of other languages had no L2 speakers. There were 12% of the participants who did not list English as either first or second language.

Table 2: Languages indicated as L1 and L2 by participants

Language	Percentage of participants	
	Speaking the language as L1	Speaking the language as L2
Oshikwanyama	25	0
Oshindonga	25	2.3
Other Oshiwambo dialects	15.9	0
Damara/Nama	4.5	0
French	4.5	2.3
Oshimbalantu	4.5	0
Portuguese	4.5	0
Silozi	4.5	0
Chichewa	2.3	2.3
Kiswahili	2.3	2.3
Afrikaans	2.3	0
Nyemba	2.3	0
English	2.3	86
Lingala	0	2.3
Otjiherero	0	2.3
Total percentage	100	100

To sum up, the questionnaire results revealed that the student population at the IUM is cosmopolitan in a sense that it constitutes students from diverse geographical backgrounds, different languages, different ethnic groups (based on L1) and different nationalities. Most of the participants originate from the Aawambo-speaking regions, and a small number are speakers of other indigenous Namibian languages as well as foreign languages.

Another question requested the participants to indicate how many of them spoke English as first, second, third or fourth language, respectively. Table 3 below shows the percentages of participants who indicated English as “which” language. As can be seen from the table, the largest number (86%) of participants were English L2 speakers. Those participants for whom English was their third language numbered 11%, and only one respondent was a L1 speaker of English.

Table 3: English indicated as “which” language

English listed as “which” language	Percentage of participants who indicated English as this language
1 st language	2.3
2 nd language	86
3 rd language	11.4
4 th language	0
Total percentage	100

In Table 4 below, the results pertaining to the age at which the participants started to learn English are presented. Some participants acquired English before the onset of formal schooling (18% before pre-primary school and another 18% in pre-primary school), but the highest number of participants (61%) started to learn English at the beginning of primary school, between the ages 5 and 7 years. Seven percent appear to have learned English somewhat later in primary schooling, as their age in years coincides with that of children in the senior primary phase. Those participants who started learning English at high school accounted for 9%, and these could mostly represent international students whose L1s were indicated as French (4.5%) and Portuguese (4.5%), respectively (see Table 2 which shows the list of participant L1s). In this regard, note that, given the fact that IUM’s language policy prescribes to English as the sole language of instruction across its programs, international students who lack English competency are obliged to undergo a bridging course offered by the English Service Courses Unit before they can be allowed to pursue the academic course of their choice.

The questionnaire also requested participants to indicate in which context they learnt English; the results to that question are summarised in Table 5 below. From the table, it is evident that the largest number of students (71%) learnt English at school. This is due to the fact that in the Namibian education system English is the official language through which the curriculum is taught. Eleven percent claimed to have learnt English at home, whereas another 11% indicated having learnt English at both home and school. Only 5% of the students indicated that they learnt English across all the context (including in the street, which was not one of the options provided on the questionnaire). One student did not respond to the question.

Table 4: Ages at which participants started to learn English

Age of learning English	Number of participants	Percentage of participants
3 years	6	13.6
4 years	2	4.5
5 years	8	18.2
6 years	15	34
7 years	4	9
8 years	3	6.8
19 years	2	4.5
20 years	2	4.5
No answer	2	4.5
Total	44	100

Table 5: The context in which participants learnt English

Where participants learnt English	Number of participants	Percentage of participants
At home	5	11.4
At school	31	70.5
At home and school	5	11.4
At home, school, workplace, church community, street	2	4.5
No answer	1	2.3
Total	44	100

In the table below (Table 6), the researcher gives an overview of the context in which the students use their different languages. The different linguistic resources of students will be explained and the context in which they use them will be discussed. The contexts that were surveyed in regard to students' language varieties' use were as follows: at home, at family gatherings, at university, at social gatherings, at work, on social media and at religious gatherings. The languages which students used at home and family gatherings are presumed to be predominantly their L1s. However, this might not be the case in contexts such as university, social gatherings, work places, social media and religious gatherings due to the diversity of persons likely to participate in such context. This summary illustrates the notion of students' linguistic repertoires playing a pivotal role in a culturally diverse environment such as that of the IUM. The results as summarised below in Table 6 show a scenario that one would have expected, where English is the language of choice in domains such as university

and social media (recording 100% usage each), whereas social and religious gathering contexts reflected 98% and 64%, respectively. Also of note is the fact that in every context English is used by a higher percentage of participants than any other language, including in the contexts of the home, family gatherings and work places. This dominance of English across such contexts is attributed to several factors, amongst others, that it is the main shared means of communication among students with different L1s (i.e., the main lingua franca) at the IUM, an official language and language of business in Namibia, and the language of teaching and learning at the IUM.

Table 6: Participants' language use in different domains

Languages used	Percentage of participants using the language in given domain						
	At home	At family gatherings	At university	At social gatherings	At work	On social media	At religious gatherings
English	43	27.3	100	97.7	27.3	100	63.6
Oshikwanyama	27.3	27.3	0	2.3	2.3	2.3	15.9
Other Oshiwambo dialects	18.2	22.7	9.1	11.4	2.3	4.5	18.2
Oshindonga	18.2	11.4	2.3	2.3	2.3	0	11.4
Afrikaans	13.6	4.5	13.6	18.2	4.5	6.8	2.3
French	6.8	6.8	2.3	2.3	0	6.8	2.3
Portuguese	6.8	6.8	0	2.3	0	6.8	4.5
Oshikwambi	4.5	6.8	0	0	0	0	2.3
Chichewa	4.5	4.5	0	0	0	0	2.3
Nama/Damara	4.5	4.5	0	0	0	0	2.3
Oshimbalantu	4.5	0	0	2.3	0	2.3	2.3
Silozi	2.3	2.3	0	2.3	0	2.3	2.3
Sisubia	2.3	2.3	0	2.3	0	2.3	0
Kiswahili	2.3	2.3	0	0	0	0	0
Nyemba	2.3	2.3	0	0	0	0	0
Lingala	0	2.3	0	0	0	0	0
Otjiherero	0	2.3	0	0	0	0	0
German	0	0	0	2.3	0	2.3	0
Others	0	2.3	0	0	0	0	2.3

In contrast to English, indigenous languages such as Oshikwanyama, Oshindonga, and other Oshiwambo dialects appear to be mostly used in homes, at family gatherings and at religious gatherings. This trend emanates from the fact that in such domains speakers of the same language group usually engage with each other, and that the Oshiwambo language, which is comprised of several dialects, is spoken as L1 by almost 50% of the Namibian population, making it highly likely that a large number of Oshiwambo L1 speakers would have taken part in the questionnaire part of the study. Note that the percentage of participants who indicated that they use English at work happens to be low (at 27.3 %) due to the fact that most of the participants are full-time students and thus have no workplace in which to use English. Afrikaans seems to be frequently used at home, in university and at social gatherings, possibly because of its history of being an official language of Namibia during apartheid era when Namibia was under South Africa's administration. The other minority languages indigenous to Namibia, namely Silozi, Otjiherero, Nama/Damara and so on, only seem to be popular in contexts where speakers are of the same language groups or related. In many cases, several languages were listed by participants in a given context and that explains why for some languages percentages exceed the 100% mark for some contexts.

Overall, it appears that while English is prominent across all contexts, the indigenous and foreign languages (French and Portuguese) are, by contrast, mostly used in contexts where speakers are either family members or predominantly of the same language group and same country.

4.2.3 Patterns of language use of students at the IUM

The following section will provide an overview of the languages of teaching and learning. Specifically it will pay attention to patterns that might emerge in the process of students applying their linguistic resource(s) to different communicative contexts to fulfil different purposes.

4.2.3.1 Languages used in primary school by both learners and teachers, and official medium of instruction in primary school

Table 7 below provides a summary of the languages that were used by participants and their respective teachers in primary school. Further, it also outlines the official language of instruction (MoI) of the primary schools they had attended. As can be observed from this table, English was by far the most used language by learners (at 89%) and teachers (at 86%) in primary school. English was also the official academic language in primary schools for 86% of the participants. These results reflect the status of English as the MoI and language of education in Namibian schools. Also, note that the language policy for schools in Namibia supports the use of mother tongues for teaching and learning

in conjunction with English at primary level. It is for that reason that some indigenous languages were listed as having been used by learners and teachers in primary school, but not as official language of instruction, namely Afrikaans, Oshindonga and Oshikwanyama. Meanwhile, foreign languages (French and Portuguese) and other indigenous Namibian languages (Otjiherero and Silozi) maintained their status quo as languages that were used by learners and teachers as well as official languages in primary schools. Once again, one observes a situation where one or more languages were listed alongside English by learners across the three facets outlined by the table, hence percentages exceeded 100.

Table 7: Languages used by learners and their teachers in primary schools, and the MoI of the primary school

Language	Percentage of participants who indicated		
	to have used the language in primary school	their primary school teacher(s) used the language	that this was the official language of instruction in primary school
English	88.6	86.4	86.4
Oshindonga	13.6	9.1	0
Afrikaans	9.1	9.1	0
Oshikwanyama	6.8	9.1	0
French	6.8	6.8	6.8
Portuguese	4.5	4.5	4.5
Silozi	4.5	4.5	2.3
Other Oshiwambo dialects	2.3	11.4	2.3
Otjiherero	2.3	2.3	2.3
Kiswahili	0	2.3	0

4.2.3.2 Languages used in high school by both learners and teachers, and official medium of instruction in high school

This section focuses on the languages that were used by both learners and teachers at high school, and official language of instruction at that level. As was the case in primary school, English had high figures (93%) and was the most used language in high school (see Table 8). Its prominence stems from the fact that it is officially the sole language of teaching and learning in Namibian high schools, unlike in primary schools that accommodate other languages. Apart from English, only Afrikaans and Oshikwanyama seem to have been used by high school learners and their respective teachers,

presumably in informal learning and teaching settings. The foreign languages French and Portuguese remained the same as in primary school because of their status as the main lingual means in which the curriculum is taught in the countries of the participants who listed them. Dutch, by contrast, was indicated as an official language of instruction alongside English by a student from Malawi. In summary, English was frequently used by both learners and teachers by virtue of its status as official language of education in Namibia.

Table 8: Languages used by learners and their teachers in high schools, and the MoI of the high school

Language	Percentage of participants who indicated		
	having used the language in high school	that their high school teacher(s) used the language	that this was the official language of instruction in high school
English	93.2	93.2	93.2
Afrikaans	9.1	9.1	0
French	9.1	6.8	9.1
Oshikwanyama	4.5	6.8	0
Portuguese	2.3	2.3	2.3
Oshindonga	2.3	0	0
Otjiherero	2.3	0	0
Dutch	0	0	2.3
Other Oshiwambo dialects	0	0	0
Silozi	0	0	0

4.2.3.3 Languages used by students during academic activities at university

This section reports on languages used by participants in academic-related activities such as taking lecture notes; completing group assignments in class; and working on group activities outside of class.

Table 9 below summarises the participants' language preferences at university when carrying out academic activities. The questionnaire results showed that all the students (100%) who completed the questionnaire rely on English in all three academic activities, namely when taking lecture notes and doing group work both inside and outside of class. Note that the dominance of the English language is probably related to its status of both the MoI and the lingua franca at the IUM. Although English is prominently used, prominent locally used languages such as Oshiwambo and Afrikaans appear to

be used by students, especially during group work. In fact, a combination of Oshiwambo dialects are the second frequently used languages by students when doing group work in class (11%) and outside of class (18%), while Afrikaans comes distant third in terms of use. The reason why Oshiwambo dialects are used as second favourite language during group work both inside and outside of class is possibly because these languages have more L1 speakers than the other languages (see Table 2 indicating participant L1s). The frequency for indigenous languages increases when students are engaged in academic activities outside of class, possibly because students can then freely interact with each other as acquaintances without being monitored by lecturers.

Table 9: Languages used when taking notes in class and during group work in and outside of the classroom

Language	Percentage of participants who indicated		
	using the language when taking notes in class	using the language when having group work in class	using the language during group work outside the classroom
English	100	100	100
Any Oshiwambo dialect	0	11.4	18.2
Afrikaans	0	4.5	6.8
Others	0	0	0

Recall that the questionnaire required participants to indicate language(s) used when talking to their lecturers as well as other people on campus. In Table 10 below, the results of the languages used by students in communicating with lecturers and other people on campus are summarised. All students (100%) claimed to use English when communicating with both lecturers and other people on campus. This is not surprising as communication with lecturers takes place in the MoI (English), and English appears to be the lingua franca on campus and is thus the preferred medium through which people of different backgrounds or strangers can communicate. To qualify the statement as to why English is a popular means of communication by students with other people on campus, one of the participants (P#4) said the following:²

P4. Everybody knows English at IUM, but if you want to talk to someone in another language it is a bit challenging cos not everybody can speak, e.g. Oshindonga, so I try to approach everyone

² Note that all written comments were copied without any changes to grammar or spelling and that all spoken comments were transcribed verbatim, without alternation.

Other patterns worth noting (as shown in Table 10) are the use of Oshiwambo dialects (25%) and Afrikaans (11%) when communicating with other people on campus, whereas other languages were less frequently used. In summary, it appears that English and Oshiwambo languages were the prevalent languages in on-campus communication by students.

Table 10: Overview of languages used with lecturers and other people on campus

Language	Percentage of participants	
	Languages used when talking to lecturers	Languages used when talking to other people on campus
English	100	100
Oshiwambo dialects	0	25
Afrikaans	0	11.4
Others	0	6.8

While the focus is still on the language(s) used at university, the participants were also asked if they found it difficult to utilise different languages at different times at university. The question required them to answer with a “yes” or “no” and then provide reasons for their answers. The response to the question was that 59% of the participants answered “no” and 36% “yes”, whereas 5% were indecisive or “in-between”. Thus, based on the results shown, most students reported that it was easy for them to use different languages by switching from one to another when fulfilling particular communicative purposes in both formal and informal settings. For instance, most of these participants who indicated that it was easy for them to employ code switching reported being knowledgeable in many languages and therefore being able to express themselves in such languages whenever there was a need to do so. Also, they were motivated to have new experiences and had prior exposure to different cultures similar to ones they encountered at the IUM. The participants’ responses validate the notion of the IUM being a rather diverse society as different language codes are represented on campus. The main reason as to why some students found it difficult to switch between languages was a lack of competence in the relevant languages (see below). Note that research on which the prevalent languages involved in code switching were was not part of this study; this study was limited to whether participants found it difficult to switch between languages, thus the area of languages involved in code switching in various contexts is open for future research. Below are some of the reasons provided by participants to validate that switching between languages on campus was not difficult for them:

P22. No it's not difficult as for me I can speak English to other people and switch to Subia and Silozi. This is not difficult for me at all. I like to learn more.

P3. I find it easy to switch when I meet different people, some people from home and others from here. I can speak English and Chichewa fluently so it's easy to switch.

P26. I find it easy, because there are students of different tribes and they can also speak my languages.

P23. Easy, not only English is spoken at our university so when am with a different group of my mates I join the language they are using to speak at that time as well as am with another group.

P29. No, being exposed to different cultures and people while I stayed in Malawi, it was a sort of training to prepare me for my stay in Namibia, so switching languages is not difficult.

P32. No. I don't, since I understand four languages find it very easy.

Meanwhile, those who said switching between languages was a challenge reported limited or lack of knowledge of particular languages and that they were not used or exposed to such communicative situations. Among this group were foreigners whose language backgrounds were different from that of most of their IUM classmates, and therefore they were not familiar with the local languages. Consider the following reasons as provided by the participants:

P41. Difficult, because if one gets used to a language it would be difficult to switch to another that you are not exposed to.

P33. Difficult, because we are not using same languages, especially those that I have no knowledge about.

P6. Difficult, because some people don't speak the language that I speak.

P37. Yes, because I'm DR Congo where the official language is French and have completely different first languages from Namibia.

P6. Yes, first I had to learn English when I came to Namibia, not alone other languages.

4.2.4 Participant perceptions of the usefulness of their language resources for both academic success and social integration before and after joining the IUM

This section provides a summary of data that informed the research questions of this study. Overall, the data in this section aim to reflect the students' expectations of their linguistic preparedness for the university environment that they were about to enter, as well as to compare student expectations of preparedness before arrival to student perceptions of their linguistic preparedness after a few months of immersion in the new environment. Note that the data in this section are important to this study

because it answers the following research questions:

- i) To which extent did these students expect their linguistic repertoires to help them to achieve social integration and academic success at the IUM?
- ii) Which linguistic repertoires did students expect to need to adjust and settle in at the IUM, both socially and academically?
- iii) What are students' perceptions of the extent to which their linguistic repertoires have helped them to achieve social integration and academic success at the IUM?
- iv) To which extent, if at all, do students at the IUM perceive their (lack of) social integration and/or academic success to be a result of their linguistic repertoires?

I now turn to the questionnaire questions that sought to address the stated research questions. Note that in all the four questions that are reported below, students were provided with three options, namely “yes”, “no” and “unsure”. Also, they were requested to provide reasons for the option they chose.

4.2.4.1 Before entering university, did you think the language(s) that you know would allow you to achieve academic success at the IUM?

The rationale behind this question was to investigate the perception held by students of the language(s) they knew before joining the university, and whether such language(s) would help them succeed academically. This question was purposefully designed to answer the above research question. The fact that the question interrogated the participants' language background and abilities was crucial in understanding their academic performance at the IUM. As indicated earlier, first, students were provided with three options to choose from. These were “yes”, “no” and “unsure”. Second, they were to provide reasons for their choice. The response to this question is outlined in Table 11 below. Here, the questionnaire results showed that most participants (84%) were of the opinion that the language(s) they knew prior to entering university would enable them to perform well in their respective studies at the IUM, whereas 14% of the participants were not sure or were indecisive and only one participant (2%) said he did not think that his language repertoire would place him in good stead to succeed academically at IUM.

Table 11: Participants' responses to whether their language repertoire would prepare them for academic success at the IUM – their thoughts before entering the IUM

Answer	Percentage of participants
Yes	84
No	2.3
Unsure	13.6
Total	100

Below are samples of answers given by some of the many students who answered “yes”, to qualify their positions.

P7. English is an official language, plus lectures are done in English. Oshindonga helps me to figure out some terms in English that I don't understand, by simply translating those particular terms in Oshindonga, thus increase my understanding.

P12. I speak English very well and understand it properly. At IUM, information and knowledge is transferred in English therefore my academic success will be achieved.

P43. All the lessons are done in English at the IUM; this means it's easier to get everything the lecturer is teaching in a specific lesson.

P4. I was not worried because English is the official language and all along I have been taught in English, so I knew it will not be much of a hustle in my academic work.

P31. I learned English from primary school, until now.

P9. English is the MoI in Namibian universities, so I am not really interested in my Oshiwambo mother language to achieve academic success at IUM, because it's not used in lessons.

P21. English was my second language and I knew that it will still be using it at university.

From the responses given above, the following patterns can be identified. As one would expect from students who would be attending a university like the IUM whose sole MoI is English, many students believe that their proficiency in the official language (English) was good enough for them to succeed in their academic career at this institution. However, besides learning through English, some students indicated that their L1s are also important in facilitating academic achievement, especially through translations and code switching when faced with learning difficulties in the MoI. Given these responses, it can be assumed that the majority of students perceived that their language knowledge before university would permit them to do well in their studies once they have joined the IUM. Most importantly, it appears that almost all participants (refer to the responses above) perceive future academic success to be linked to their knowledge of specifically English.

Turning to those who were not sure whether the language(s) they knew before entering the IUM would guarantee them academic success at the university: The following responses were given as reasons by some participants to support their “Unsure” answer.

P6. I have been learning through French all my life. So I only changed from French to English when I came to Namibia.

P10. My English was not good at all.

P2. I was not really sure if I will be able to communicate with my lecturers for help in my studies or my fellow students to ask information.

Note that the first two respondents (P6 and P10) are students from DRC whose MoI had been French all along, since the inception of their schooling. According to the IUM enrolment policy, such students had to enrol for an English bridging course known as Communication and Study Skills, aimed at increasing their proficiency in the MoI, before they could register for an academic course. It is therefore not surprising for them to have been “unsure” if their language knowledge before entering the IUM would facilitate academic success. Strikingly, most participants regard their level of knowledge in the English language as the determiner of their academic success once at the IUM. For instance, some participants had doubts about succeeding academically due to the fact that they felt their English proficiency was not good enough for use in lectures or to seek information from friends on campus (see P2). One can thus deduce that English is indeed manifesting in most of the participants’ responses and that signifies the importance that participants assign to English in different academic situations.

Meanwhile, the only participant (P37) who stated that he thought before entering the IUM that the language(s) he knew at that time would not guarantee his academic success once at IUM is a foreign student from the DRC. According to his language profile, French and Lingala were his L1 and L2, respectively, while English was his third language. From this, it appears that P37 did not share a familiar language background like those participants who answered “yes”, where English is prominently used alongside other local languages. And this is evident in the participant’s reason given below.

P37. At IUM, they mostly use English because it is the official language in Namibia. The languages that I know very well such as French, Lingala and Kiswahili are not spoken at IUM that’s why they will not help me enough in my studies.

From these results, it emerges that the majority of the students perceived their language knowledge prior to university – specifically their proficiency in English – as crucial in enabling them to do well in their studies.

4.2.4.2 Now that you have been at the IUM for a while, do you think the languages that you know allow you to achieve academic success?

Unlike the first question that investigated whether students thought their languages would facilitate academic success, the current question aimed to find out whether the students thought the languages they knew indeed enable them to perform well in their studies now that they had been part of the university community for a while. Once again, the respondents were given three options, just like in the first question above, and were to substantiate their positions. The results that emerged from the questionnaire show a similar trend as the one above, wherein the vast majority of participants (86%) agreed that the languages they know are indeed instrumental in their academic success, now that they have been at the IUM for a while. Eleven percent of the participants were not sure and one participant abstained from answering the question. No participant selected the “no” option.

Table 12: Participants’ responses to whether their language repertoire did prepare them for academic success at the IUM – their thoughts after entering the IUM

Answer	Percentage of participants
Yes	86
No	0
Unsure	11.4
No answer	2.3
Total	100

Those who articulated “yes” provided several reasons. Amongst others is the fact that the majority of students speak languages known to them, therefore it was easy for them to communicate and exchange academic ideas amongst each other. Also, all their courses are taught in one of the languages (English) that they know and that is widely spoken among students and staff on campus. Consider the following representation of the participants’ responses:

P35. I have knowledge of what people are speaking on campus and I can make conversations around me.

P31. Because all the subjects that I’m doing are taught in English.

P33. Yes, because students, lecturers and other workers usually speak English and other languages that I'm good at.

P8. We frequently use the same languages when having tests, assignments, discussion and when doing presentations.

By contrast, those participants who were not sure reported that not all lecturers speak the languages they know (e.g., Oshiwambo) and that the most frequently used language in academic activities is English, which poses a challenge to some students, especially foreign students whose previous MoI was not English. Recall that previous results of this chapter already indicated English as the most preferred language used on campus. This encompasses engagements with lecturers, fellow students, other university workers and strangers.

Overall, what can be summarised from the discussions above in both variables (before and after joining the IUM) is that students hold the strong belief that the languages they know play a pivotal role in them performing well in their respective academic programmes at the university.

4.2.4.3 Before coming to IUM, did you think the languages that you know will help you to adjust socially to university life?

While the two questions above discussed data on participants' perception on language knowledge to achieving academic success, before and after coming to IUM, the current ones pertain to students' social adjustment at the university. The first of the current questions sought to find out whether the students thought, before coming to IUM, that the languages they know would assist them in adjusting socially to university life. The answers to this question are summarised in Table 13 below. As can be seen from the table, slightly more than half of the students who took part in the questionnaire part of the study (55%) were convinced that the languages they know would be instrumental in facilitating their social adjustment at university. There was a slight increase (36%) in the number of those who were unsure of the role their language knowledge would play in their social integration. Only two students believed that the languages they know would not be important as far as their social adjustment to university life is concerned. One student did not answer this specific question.

Table 13. Participants' responses to whether their language repertoire would prepare them for social adjustment at the IUM – their thoughts before entering the IUM

Answer	Percentage of participants
No	6.8
Yes	54.5
Unsure	36.4
No answer	2.3
Total	100

Some of the reasons given by the “yes” respondents varied from them being able to easily make friends as they are competent in several languages spoken locally (the majority being Oshiwambo); to that most universities across the world has English as a lingua franca and MoI respectively. Some students were of the opinion that the student population would have background knowledge of English as they are required to validate their competence in English by having obtained at minimum a D symbol for this language at school in order to be admitted to university. Based on these reasons, most participants assumed that everyone on campus would be able to speak and understand the language(s) they know, thereby making it easy for them to engage and socialise with one another. Consider the following remarks as a representative of the participants' views:

P11. Yes, because English is mostly spoken in Namibia. It is the primary language at IUM.

P5. Because I personally assumed that everyone on campus would speak and understand English as one should at least have a D or higher symbol in English to get admission at IUM.

P4. Every student and lecturer at the IUM speaks English. Thus engaging and meeting friends won't be a big deal. So I knew I would fit anywhere.

P12. I always made friends due to my language capabilities, with me speaking many languages I was able to socialise with different people. Therefore, I knew I would adjust to university life.

Next to be discussed are those students who were skeptical, before coming to IUM, about whether the languages they know would help them adjust socially to university life. From the reasons given, it appears most students were not sure due to “the fear of the unknown”, meaning many expressed to have no clear idea about the environment they were about to enter and whether they would fit in well. Some, presumably foreign students considering the languages they mentioned, reported that they thought they lacked competence in the common medium of communication (i.e., the English language) and that languages they knew from their countries were not at all spoken in Namibia in

general and at the IUM in particular, for instance French, Portuguese, Kiswahili and Lingala. Here are few sample responses as provided by the participants:

P41. I heard many people speak Afrikaans in Windhoek, which I still don't know and I thought it was also the domain at IUM.

P39. I believed foreigners wouldn't understand me properly when I would want their help and didn't know how to approach strangers.

P6. I was not confident with my English competence.

P10. I wasn't sure because where I come from I learnt only French and Lingala.

Meanwhile, the few participants who said “no” reported that they knew (before coming to IUM) that they would not be able to adjust socially because of their “alien” status to the environment they were about to enter. This means that they thought their lack of competence in locally spoken languages and culture would prove to be a major obstacle to their social integration.

4.2.4.4 Now that you have been at IUM for a while, do you think the languages that you know allowed you to adjust socially to university life?

Table 14 below provides an overview of answers to the above question. According to the results, now that they have been at the IUM for a while, the majority of participants (84%) were of the opinion that the languages they know enabled them to easily fit into university life. However, a few participants (5%) stated that the languages they know were not a useful tool in helping them to socially adjust, and 11% of the participants were not sure.

Table 14. Participants' responses to whether their language repertoire would prepare them for social adjustment at IUM – their thoughts after entering IUM

Answer	Percentage of participants
Yes	84.1
No	4.5
Unsure	11.4
Total	100

To provide some contexts to the participants' perceived standpoints, the researcher now provides some remarks given by participants in three different options: “yes”, “no” and “unsure”. We start by focusing on the reasons given by the participants who seem to agree with the above notion. First, the participants believe it was easy for them to settle into university life as the university community

mostly communicates in English of which they have background knowledge. Thus English enables students to interact across language and cultural barriers. Second, the fact that some students are bilingual or multilingual makes it easy for them to interact with other students by indexing the different repertoires at their disposal:

P29. I was coming from Malawi where English was official language. I then moved to South Africa where I learnt Afrikaans, so upon coming to Namibia for studies at IUM, I was able to interact in both languages without any difficult. For instance, if I wanted to be accepted by Afrikaans speaking students I would introduce myself in Afrikaans to break the language barrier before it could be built.

P33. Definitely, because all people are using English, Oshiwambo and other languages that I am good at.

P31. Because everyone here at IUM can speak English, so I can socialise with people of different languages.

By contrast, the participants who did not think the language they know allows them to adjust socially maintained that the language(s) in which they are competent leave much to be desired as it did not at any given moment help them to settle into university life during their immersion period. Some reasons provided include that the majority of students prefer to interact in Afrikaans and Oshiwambo, which are frequently used languages on campus after English. Also, they claim that one has to know English to be accommodated by the university community, rather than the L1s they are fluent in and used to. Meanwhile, the participants who were unsure point to the fact that, unlike their home environment where they are exposed to only one language and one cultural group, university life expects students to function in a culturally diverse society. They claim that students on campus prefer to interact along shared ethnic and language associations, which leaves most students disadvantaged in as far as social integration is concerned.

In summary, as was the case with the first two questions that dealt with academic success at the IUM, the overall results of the current section shows a similar trend where most students who completed the questionnaire held strong convictions about the language they know as being crucial in creating an environment conducive to social integration at university, before and after joining IUM. Those participants who were not sure mentioned either not being familiar with the new environment they were about to enter or still lacking competence in the languages spoken at university after a period of immersion.

4.2.5 Conclusion

This section discussed the findings of the language questionnaire in its several subsections. The first part discussed at length the background findings, while the second focussed on the data that inform the research questions of this study. In the next section, we turn to the data from individual interviews and focus group discussions in an attempt to both complement the shortcomings of the language questionnaire and amplify the discussions of the questionnaire data.

4.3 The interviews conducted with IUM students

4.3.1 Description of interviewees and their linguistic profiles

Before discussion the responses of the students to the interview questions, the interviewees themselves need to be introduced. In this section, a detailed description of each of the eight interviewed students and information on their linguistic profiles is provided.

The first participant is **Tuli**, who is 22 years old and enrolled for a course in Economics. She is an Oshiwambo L1 speaker and her current home town is Ongha, which is in the Ohangwena region of Namibia. She had lived there since she was 17 years old. She completed her primary schooling in Keetmanshoop, where her family lived before moving to Ongha, where she completed her secondary school. The MoI at her primary school was English and Afrikaans from Grades 1 to 3, and subsequently English only from Grade 4 onwards. This is in line with the *Language Policy for Schools in Namibia* (Namibia Institute for Education Development 2003) which dictates that in the first three years of primary school (Grades 1 to 3) instruction shall be carried out in the L1 or another predominant local language. It is only in Grade 4 where a transition to English as MoI takes place while the L1 plays a supportive role, whereas Grades 5 to 12 are taught exclusively in English. The rationale behind the use of the L1 in the lower primary phase is that “education in the mother tongue, especially in the lower primary phase of basic education, is crucial for concept formation as well as literacy and numeracy attainment” (Namibia Institute for Education Development 2003: 1). That said, Keetmanshoop is the capital town of the Karas region in southern part of Namibia, and the predominant “local language” in this part of Namibia is Afrikaans, which is the lingua franca of the region. Also, there are a number of mother tongues of the Khoekhoegowab language family (e.g. Nama/Damara, Khoisan, etc.) frequently spoken in this region. In light of this, Tuli’s primary school teachers alternated between Afrikaans and English when teaching, even from Grade 5 onwards.

The MoI in her high school was English only. She reported that her teachers always “stuck to English” when teaching but that she herself would code switch to Oshiwambo at times in class and to a large extent outside class when talking with her friends. She mentioned that she can understand, speak, read and write both English and Oshiwambo well. As for Afrikaans, she can only speak and understand the language well but struggled to read and write it. Before joining the IUM, Tuli thought her knowledge of English would enable her to do well in her studies because she knew that English was the sole MoI at the IUM. She also thought her linguistic repertoire would help her to adjust well socially as she anticipated that there would be many students who spoke her Oshiwambo L1, Afrikaans and English as a lingua franca at the IUM. At the time of the interview, after having spent about half a year at the IUM, Tuli reported that her English is indeed allowing her to perform well in her studies. In the same vein, she was convinced that her social integration is going well as her three languages allow her to interact with anyone on campus without language barriers. That said, she mentioned the need to learn to write and read in Afrikaans so that she could exchange mobile text with her Afrikaans-speaking friends.

Wilbard is a 20-year-old who studies Accounting and Finance. He speaks Afrikaans as L1. He lives in Windhoek (in the Khomas region, in which the research site is situated) and had been doing so since birth. He completed both primary and secondary school in Windhoek. The MoI at his primary school was Afrikaans for the first three years after which it was English. While the MoI at his high school was English, he also learnt French as a foreign language at high school. Considering that his high school is a former so-called “coloured school” where Afrikaans was frequently used (more so than any other language) on the school premises, he reported that most of his teachers would code switch between English (the official MoI) and Afrikaans. He would also code switch between Afrikaans and English in and outside of the classroom, although predominantly outside of class. Apart from the three languages that he reported to understand, speak, read and write well, he also understood and spoke Portuguese, mostly learnt informally through friends, but he said he could not read and write it. Before coming to the IUM, Wilbard thought he possessed enough languages or language skills to assist him to progress academically, because he was competent in English which he knew to be the only language of instruction used at the IUM. Also, he thought his additional languages would allow him to seek information from others pertaining to his studies. Consider the following comment made by him: *“Knowing English is already a benefit to my studies as it’s the official language in which we are taught at the university. And knowing the other additional languages just make the communication even easier and better for me when I need help in my courses”*.

However, Wilbard was somewhat sceptical as to whether his linguistic repertoire would assist him

well in adjusting socially. This is because he was going to study in an environment which is completely different from the one he had known at school and he was going to meet many students who spoke languages different from his. At the time of the interview, now that he had been at the IUM for a while, Wilbard was quick to mention that English is indeed allowing him to succeed in his studies, but that academically and socially it would have been beneficial to speak Oshiwambo in addition to English, Afrikaans, French and Portuguese, to enable him to interact with his Oshiwambo-speaking classmates in their L1s, as he had no knowledge in Oshiwambo, which hampers communication between him and them at times.

The third participant was **Mweti**, a 21-year-old studying Computer Science. His current home town is Katima Mulilo in the Zambezi region in north-eastern Namibia. He had lived there since birth, and therefore attended both a primary and secondary school in the same region. The MoI at his primary school was Silozi, which is his L1. The official MoI at high school was English only although he said his teachers did code switch to Silozi at times to explain some information during lessons. As for him and the other children, they mostly spoke Silozi outside of class. He was bilingual as he can effectively communicate in English and Silozi only. Before coming to IUM, Mweti believed his knowledge of English alone would enable him to study with success at the university, because tuition at the IUM takes place in English only. In the same vain, he was confident that English would also help him to settle in socially at the IUM as he knew it was spoken by virtually everyone who would be admitted to the university. After having spent almost six month on campus, Mweti reported that English is indeed, without a doubt, facilitating his academic progress at the IUM. But he had reservations about his social adjustment as he could not speak the commonly used codes; and he would have liked to learn Oshiwambo and Afrikaans to enable him interact with the majority of his classmates as these two languages are widely used on campus.

Nangula is a 21-year-old who is studying towards a Bachelor of Economics. Her current hometown is Oshikuku in the Omusati region. She had lived there since she was 11 years old. She completed her primary school in Oshikuku before moving to Ongwendiva where she completed her high school. Just like the previous participant, she is bilingual – able to understand, speak, read and write English and Oshiwambo well. The MoI at her primary school was Oshiwambo, whereas at high school it was English. Before entering the IUM, Nangula thought that her linguistic repertoire would assist her well in adjusting socially, because she could speak English and Oshiwambo, which are languages widely used in Namibia. She was also convinced that she would succeed academically as she knew English was the only language for teaching and learning at the IUM. After having spent almost half a year at the university, Nangula reported that, in her opinion, English and Oshiwambo are indeed allowing

her to attain academic success at the university. Although she reported that she had integrated well socially, she wished she had known Afrikaans as it was one of the languages commonly used on campus to interact with many students.

Oiva is a 22 year old foreign student from the DRC. She completed her primary and secondary schooling in Lubumbashi, in the south-eastern part of the DRC. The MoI in both her primary and high school was officially French, but she reported that her teachers would code switch between French and Kiswahili. She would mostly use French in class but “mix” French and Kiswahili outside of class. Apart from these two languages that she can effectively communicate in, she has an “average” knowledge of English as she only started learning English upon her arrival in Namibia in preparation for admission to the IUM. Before entering the IUM, Oiva thought that her limited linguistic repertoire would jeopardise her academic success at the IUM, because she was not yet confident with her English proficiency. She also thought that she was not well prepared for social integration because she did not speak any locally spoken languages. At the time of interview, after having been at the IUM for a while, Oiva reported that she still struggled to cope with her studies due to her limited knowledge of the MoI. In the same vain, her linguistic repertoire hindered her socially because of her lack of knowledge of the local languages. She reported that it would have been beneficial for her to speak fluent English and other widely used local languages so as to allow her to socialise better with others.

Errol is an Otjiherero L1 speaker who studies Accounting and Finance and is a multilingual student. His current home town is Otjiwarongo. He was taught through medium of Otjiherero in primary school and English in high school. He completed his primary school education in Otjiwarongo and then moved to Windhoek to complete his high school education there. He can understand, read, speak and write four languages well (English, Afrikaans, Otjiherero, and Oshiwambo). He reported that at school he did code switch between English, Afrikaans, Otjiherero and Oshiwambo in class, and to a larger extent outside of class. Before coming to the IUM, Errol thought that his linguistic repertoire would assist him well in adjusting socially, because he spoke all the languages that are widely spoken in Namibia, so he was likely to meet many students at the IUM who are conversant in the same languages. He also thought that his diverse repertoire of languages, which include the MoI, would allow him to succeed in his studies. At the time of the interview, having spent some time at the university, Errol reported that, in his opinion, his language repertoire was indeed allowing him to meet both his social and academic needs, without any problem.

Tangi is a 21-year-old who studies Business Administration. He resides in Otjiwarongo, his home town where he had lived since birth. He completed his primary and high school at the same school in his home town, where he was taught through the medium of English from primary until high school. This is because he went to a private English-medium school. Apart from English, he can effectively communicate in Otjiherero (his L1) and Afrikaans. He reported that, depending on the need, he did code switch between the mentioned languages. Before his immersion at the IUM, he was convinced the language resources at his disposal would work in his favour as far as social integration was concerned. He was also of the opinion that his knowledge of English would enable him to pass his courses as he knew it was the sole MoI at the IUM. Now that he had been at the IUM for a while, he confirmed that English is indeed assisting him well in his studies. As for social integration, he again alluded to his knowledge of English and Afrikaans helping him to interact with other students on campus. However, he is disturbed by the fact that some students (especially those who cannot speak Afrikaans and are not very well proficient in English) prefer to speak their Oshiwambo L1, thus “disadvantaging” him in the process.

The last participant is **Musa**, whose language ability is restricted to only English and Oshiwambo. His current home town is Ondangwa where he had completed both his primary and high school education. The MoI in his primary school was Oshikwanyama, a dialect of Oshiwambo. While at high school, he was taught through medium of English. He reported that his teachers had a tendency to switch between English and Oshiwambo during lessons. He also stated that he used English only in class and mostly Oshiwambo outside of class, as almost all the students in his school were speakers of Oshiwambo as L1. Before joining the IUM, Musa thought that his ability to speak, write, understand and read English well would allow him to do well in his course. Consider his response: P8. *“Most of the students who come to university have a background in English, so it is easier to communicate across cultures”*.

Further, before joining the IUM, he felt that knowing English and Oshiwambo would be ideal to make friends because he could use the two languages interchangeably depending on the circumstances in which he found himself. And at the time of the interview, like others who knew English well, he agreed that English is indeed facilitating his studies. He also reported that he is, to some extent, coping well as regards his social adjustment, the reason being that most students speak Oshiwambo as L1 and English as lingua franca on campus. However, he admits that his interaction does not overcome the language and cultural barriers as he much as he would have liked, because other students tend to socialise along ethnic lines.

4.3.2 Recurring themes emerging from the interviews

The responses to the questions stated above will be summarised in the table below into recurring themes according to their similarities. This means that responses that appear to refer to the same theme(s) are grouped in one cell. The participants' transcribed utterances will then be thematically analysed to illustrate points either underscored during the discussion of the questionnaire data or not captured by the questionnaire, in order to provide answers to the research questions.

Table 15: Overview of participant responses during interviews

Theme	Participant narratives
Students use English on campus	<p><i>"Mostly class, with lecturers and group work. I most of the time use English as official language, but sometimes Afrikaans and Otjiherero to other students because it's common".</i></p> <p><i>"That is in class, friends and offices and I use two different languages such as the official language during lessons and offices, and mostly Oshiwambo to friends because English is the MoI and Oshiwambo is my mother tongue".</i></p> <p><i>"I rely on English in class and on campus cos I'm from Malawi".</i></p> <p><i>"When speaking to my lecturers in and outside class I communicate in English. I also speak Oshiwambo and Afrikaans to other students around university as I know they understand it".</i></p>
Students expected English as well as their bilingualism/multilingualism to aid them in their academic activities	<p><i>"English of course, as all the courses are taught in it".</i></p> <p><i>"Obviously English, because it is the medium of instruction in Namibian schools and it the same as in university".</i></p>
English as well as their L1s aided students in their academic activities	<p><i>"English I guess, although at times I would also use my own language to people I know or used to from high school, especially if I don't understand a particular thing in class, I would ask it in my mother tongue".</i></p>
Students need English to succeed academically	<p><i>"I grew up speaking French because I am from the Democratic Republic of the Congo and they don't use it for lessons here. I only learnt English when I arrived in Namibia. Because of this I struggled to cope in my studies".</i></p>

<p>Students expected English as well as their bilingualism/multilingualism to aid them in their social adjustment</p>	<p><i>“The official language English because everybody communicate in the language”.</i></p> <p><i>“English and Oshiwambo. They are many students who can speak the two languages in Namibia”.</i></p>
<p>Being bilingual/multilingual indeed aided students in their social adjustment</p>	<p><i>“The fact that I can speak two languages was of great help to me as I could use both languages any time”.</i></p> <p><i>“My ability to speak three languages such as English, Oshiwambo and Afrikaans. Because everyone on campus understands English and most of my friends are conversant in Afrikaans and Oshiwambo”.</i></p> <p><i>“Being multilingual helped me to be flexible in interacting with others”.</i></p> <p><i>“Probably my own language (mother tongue), obviously in the beginning I would not follow people I did not know from my previous school. Like at first I would hang with people that I came with from my high school or region that I already know and share the same language with. It’s only as time went on that I started finding friends from other cultural groups to whom I started using English more to communicate”.</i></p>
<p>Students need certain languages to socialise widely</p>	<p><i>“Yes the fact that in the beginning I would just interact with students who spoke my mother tongue really prevented me from socialising with other students of different languages and cultures”.</i></p> <p><i>“As a foreign student I can only communicate in English, so it was not easy for me to make friends with other students cos they only accommodated people with whom they can speak the same languages with, like Afrikaans and others”.</i></p>

Students think their knowledge of English and local languages need to improve for them to function well at the IUM	<p><i>“I think as a student besides being able to communicate in English, I think I tend to struggle more with writing skills. Because there is a big difference between communication and writing skills. Producing good written pieces is a challenge to me and I realise I tend to directly translate things from my mother tongue into the MoI because of lack of knowledge in it”.</i></p> <p><i>“I guess I need to improve how to express myself in English because I still do not know the meanings of some words and also pronunciation is a problem”.</i></p> <p><i>“From what I have seen, learning Oshiwambo will help me a lot. It seems almost everyone speaks it here on campus, it’s like second to English”.</i></p> <p><i>“I think I need to learn some languages used in Namibia”.</i></p>
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Based on the responses reflected in the table above, some students that took part in the interview confirm that they make use of different languages in different situations. The most common domains in which students tend to be involved much are lectures and conversation with friends, followed by office meetings and group work chats. For instance, Tuli (P1) whose L1 is the dominant Oshiwambo language, reported that she relied mainly on her L1 to interact with friends and other people with whom she shares the same language while reverting to English during lessons and when seeking information from the administrative staff. Tangi (P7) claims to use English during lectures only, his L1 Otjiherero to peers, Afrikaans to other students that do not speak Otjiherero, and a mixed code of the mentioned languages when the need arises. Oiva (P5), a foreign student from DRC, strictly relied on English to perform her communicative acts in all the domains as it remains the only language she knows in the Namibian contexts. Her other languages are Kiswahili (her L1) and French (her L2) which she can only use at home with family members and not on campus.

Nangula (P4) maintained that she expected English and Oshiwambo to be helpful to her in terms of settling in before commencing her studies at the IUM. She asserted that the two languages are widely used in Namibia because of their virtue of being MoI and the dominant L1, respectively. Similarly, Errol (P6) thinks him being able to speak more than two languages, namely English, Afrikaans, Oshiwambo and Otjiherero, puts him in a good position as he can easily switch from one language to the other depending on the circumstances in which he finds himself. For Mweti (P3), the only essential skill to enable one to adjust socially upon commencement of studies at the IUM is knowledge of English

as it is assumed that everybody admitted to the university possesses some degree of proficiency in the MoI (e.g., at least a D symbol as per IUM admission policy).

When asked about which languages or language skills they expected to be of help to them in terms of achieving academic success, the participants were in unison as all held English in high regard. This is due to the fact that English is the MoI in Namibian schools as well as at university.

The researcher also wanted to know what languages or language skills might have assisted the interviewed students in settling in at the IUM after few months stay on campus. In this regard, Musa (P8) responded that it was mostly his L1 Oshikwanyama (a dialect of Oshiwambo) and to some extent the English language. Oshikwanyama, for instance, allowed him to socially adjust as he would use the language to socialise with peers he knew before coming to IUM as well as with other students who were conversant in any of the Oshiwambo dialects. Note that although the Oshiwambo language has several dialects, speakers of such distinct varieties are able to understand each other. In addition, he would use English to interact with people from other language or cultural groups. Thus, depending on the circumstance that confronted him, he was able to switch between these two languages to overcome communication barriers. Nangula (P4) was convinced that her speaking, writing and reading skills in both English and L1 Oshiwambo were beneficial to her in as far as academic success was concerned. She stated that whenever she was confronted with difficulties in comprehending academic content in the MoI, she would refer to her L1 for clarity.

Oiva (P5), who hails from a French-speaking country, admitted that her lack of good command of English as a lingua franca and MoI of her host country hindered both her social adjustment and academic achievement at the IUM, mainly because tuition at the IUM is in English only and it is also the only medium to use when interacting with the majority of students with different L1s on campus. Mweti (P3) believes that being knowledgeable in English alone was just good for one's academic work but inadequate for social adjustment to university life. For the latter, he explains that most interactions among the university community take place in Afrikaans and Oshiwambo, in which he lacks competence. Although he is equipped with Silozi as L1, he admitted that the language had helped him neither academically nor socially.

Meanwhile, a number of people speak Afrikaans because it used to be a MoI and lingua franca in Namibia during the apartheid era. However, at independence, it lost its status as an official language to English because it was associated with colonialism. And the Oshiwambo popularity emanates from the fact that it is the language spoken by half of Namibia's population. It is for this reason that

Afrikaans and Oshiwambo are the most used languages on campus, after English. What can be observed from the discussions of the results in both the questionnaire and interviews is that those students who can speak Oshiwambo and Afrikaans in addition to English thought that they were in a better position to easily settle in at university compared to those who were equipped with only English and other, minority languages.

In this regard, Oiva (P5) expressed the need to learn some local languages for easy social adjustment to university life. As for Wilbard (P2), he stated that learning Oshiwambo will improve his chances of easily fitting into campus life. It can therefore be assumed that their perceptions is due to, firstly, the majority of students at the IUM being locals speaking local languages, and secondly, that the Oshiwambo language is widely spoken on campus thus making it easy for one to socialise if one has a command of that language.

In regard to the last interview question, the researcher prompted interviewees to explain which languages or language skills they think they need to improve in order to easily attain greater academic success at the IUM. Participants who responded identified English academic writing, standard English pronunciation and communication skills in English as crucial areas for improvement to enable them to succeed academically. This might be the case due to the fact that spoken and written English is required for the successful completion of academic courses at university. The following section presents data from the group discussion.

4.4 Group discussion with IUM students

Using the same population as that of the interviews, a group discussion was conducted wherein naturally occurring expressions of participants were recorded. Considering the scope of this study, only significant responses that were complementary to the data of the questionnaire and interviews, and which sought to answer the research questions (see section 1.4) of the current study, were transcribed and analysed. The researcher's prompts during the discussion were aimed at engaging the participants to reflect on their diverse linguistic repertoires; domains in which they mostly took part while they went on with their usual engagements on campus; languages that they perceived helpful in social and academic contexts; and languages that were hindrances to their social and academic functioning. The mentioned sub-themes were purposefully designed to complement data from the questionnaire and interviews, in order to consequently answer the research questions posed in this study. In the end, for the sake of more insight and focused discussion, the discussion was divided into three themes, namely "what languages are used in what domains"; "languages perceived as helpful

for social integration and academic success”; and “languages that were hindrances to social integration and academic success”. Again, the comments were transcribed verbatim and were thematically analysed to draw conclusions pertaining to the research questions.

4.4.1 Domains, languages used and reasons for using said languages

Because it could be observed that the focus group participants were initially hesitant to start collaborative deliberations, the researcher prompted them to reflect on contexts in which they are frequently engaged, in order to gauge the various domains in which they interacted with others. It is only after they had responded to this first question and were at ease that the researcher posed a follow-up question pertaining to the languages that they used in such situations and why. Mwetl (P3) was first to respond by saying that the domains he frequently communicated in were in lectures and with friends. One of his peers, Tuli (P1), mentioned class, campus corridors and meetings with friends as domains. Errol (P6) and Nangula (P4) seemed to be flexible as they indicated to frequently engage in any place on campus, which is, to refer to all the domains. When prompted by the researcher to elaborate on languages used in such domains and reasons for doing so, their collaborative responses indicated that the English language, similar to the pattern observed from the questionnaire and interview data, took centre stage as the most popular language used in formal domains and to some extent informal domains. This in itself consolidates the position and the critical role of English at the IUM as part of the students’ linguistic repertoire. Reading from their interactions, the researcher could observe that all participants seemed to acknowledge the status of English as an official language, MoI and lingua franca at the IUM. Other languages, such as Oshiwambo, Afrikaans and Otjiherero, also came into play, especially in informal domains like having conversations with peers and general workers around campus. In this regard, consider Errol’s (P6) contribution: He reports being a multilingual person as he is able to speak four languages depending on the context. He indicated that he uses English in lessons but rely on the other three languages in non-academic domains as long there was “common ground” with other speakers. He uses English in lessons because it is the prescribed language of teaching and learning at the IUM, whereas other languages allow him to socialise outside of class as they are common in such informal domains. Oiva (P5), by contrast, narrated that she “sticks to English” in all the domains because of being a foreign student; as a result, she cannot speak any other language spoken locally. Such data is pertinent to this study when one recalls that one of the research questions seeks to investigate the nature of the linguistic repertoires of the students at the IUM whose L1 is not English. Consider the following excerpt in this regard:

- Researcher:*talk about the platforms you frequently communicate in while on campus.
- Mweti (P3):* [staring at peers, appearing hesitant] as for me [pause]... mostly during lessons and in company of my friends.
- [Silence from the whole group]
- Researcher:* ...and the rest of us?
- Tuli (P1):* Hmm, I think class, corridors, friends...yeh.
- Errol (P6):* I guess everywhere... cos it depends.
- Nangula (P4):* Yes, it can be anywhere, but mostly during our lessons...yes [laughs] cafeteria too.
- Researcher:* And what languages do use in such platforms and why?
- Errol (P6):* Errrrr...like I said, I can speak English, Oshiwambo, Otjiherero and Afrikaans. But in class...yah, I use English because we learn in it. And I use the other languages anywhere on campus as long I'm understood by the person I'm speaking to.
- Oiva (P5):* English, sir...It is the official language in Namibia [pause] and being a foreigner, I don't speak any Namibian language except English.
- Musa (P8):* [smiling] As for me it is English in class and Oshiwambo when I meet friends.
- Wilbard (P2):* Hmm, let me see [looks down] English, I guess, most of the time. I...I know everyone uses it whether in class, offices, however I also speak my language to my friends – we are from the same place.
- Tuli (P1):* Everyone knows English, the official language in Namibia, so I use it most times with my lectures and students who don't speak Oshiwambo.

4.4.2 Language or language skills perceived helpful for social adjustment and academic success and reasons for that

In this interaction, participants highlighted some languages or language skills that they perceived as helpful to facilitate either their social adjustment or academic success, before and after joining IUM. Firstly, the researcher asked them to mention the languages that they thought assisted them socially and academically. Languages such as English, Oshiwambo and Otjiherero were suggested by various speakers. When requested to elaborate, they pointed to the fact that English was the language of instruction and therefore everyone on campus could understand the language. As for the other languages, the students indicated that they were widely used on campus thus they would use them to socialise, seek information and approach other students on campus. Consider the following excerpt:

- Researcher:* Are there languages you think helped you to settle in and assist you academically?
- All participants:* Yes, sir.
- Researcher:* Okay, good. Tell me, which ones do you think assisted you socially, say before and after IUM? And why so?
- Nangula (P4):* I think English and Oshiwambo. Like I said before, most people understand the two languages, so I could speak with anyone using the two languages.
- Errol (P6):* I speak four languages, three are common languages on campus, except Otjiherero which in a minority. Yes, I use them to interact with fellow students. If I realise one does not speak the local languages, I will approach them in English and will get along fine.
- Oiva (P5):* Yes, English, like when I came to Namibia...speak it to anyone...class or outside. But...but...sometimes some students want to talk to me in their languages. I tell them I don't understand and they look at me in a funny way, yah, I'm used now.
- Mweti (P3):* Of course English is helpful for my studies. Ehe, also, uh, now that I'm at IUM for a while I'm learning how to greet in Oshiwambo and Afrikaans through my classmates – yah, they laugh at me but I feel to be part of them than before.
- Researcher:* How about academic success? Is any language found helpful?
- All students:* Yah, English
- Nangula (P4):* [tapping a peer on the shoulder] XXX [peer's name], it is obvious...it is English. I would say, "No English no progress".

4.4.3 Languages or language skills that hindered either your social integration or academic success

In this interaction, participants suggested a number of languages or language skills that they thought hindered their social adjustment or academic progress. Mweti (P3) bemoaned his own L1 (Silozi) to have been an obstacle as far as settling in was concerned as it had no speech community on campus except him. In addition, his lack of proficiency in widely used local languages like Oshiwambo and Afrikaans was also mentioned as hindrances. As for Musa (P8), the fact that he could not speak Afrikaans proved a challenge for him as he could not hold conversations with the majority of students and therefore felt left out. Although being bilingual is an advantage in some cases, Tangi (P7) who speaks only two languages (English and Oshiwambo) felt it was inadequate for him to support his social adjustment. Note that the issues that were mentioned as hindrances were almost the same issues that the participants suggested they should improve on; hence there was no need for a separate

discussion of the latter.

Errol (P6): Uh, hmm, I was fine, no problem at all.

Mweti (P3): You hardly find a person speaking Silozi on campus, very few, so I am forced to learn other people's languages, like Afrikaans and Oshiwambo.

Musa (P8): I think I don't know how to speak Afrikaans, but other students do, so I stay away and feel shy to hang with them, as a result I want to learn it.

Oiva (P5): I only speak English; sometimes I am lonely because I cannot make friends that much like would wish.

Tangi (P7): I'm only limited to two languages which is quite a problem when it comes to interacting with other who are not speakers of my mother tongue.

4.5. Concluding remark

This chapter presented and interpreted data from the language questionnaire, interviews and group discussions. The data revealed a number of findings pertaining to the research questions of the study, which the next chapter will dwell on. The next and final chapter will discuss the key finding and conclude the study.

CHAPTER FIVE

Discussion and conclusion

In the first section of this chapter, the key findings of this study are discussed with reference to the data presented in Chapter four. Thereafter the findings of the current study are compared to those of related previous studies. By doing so, the researcher will also be addressing the five research questions that guided the current study. The second part of the chapter states the limitations and strengths of the study and makes suggestions for future research.

5.1 Discussion of key findings

Recall that the five research questions to be addressed in the study were: (i) What is the nature of the linguistic repertoires of the students at the IUM who do not have the language of instruction as L1? (ii) To which extent did these students expect their linguistic repertoires to help them achieve social integration and academic success at the IU? (iii) Which linguistic repertoires did students expect to need to adjust and settle in at the IUM, both socially and academically? (iv) What are the students' perceptions of the extent to which their linguistic repertoires have helped them to achieve social integration and academic success, and (iv) To which extent, if at all, do students at the IUM perceive their (lack of) social integration or academic success to be a result of their linguistic repertoires? In this section, these research questions are answered explicitly.

With regard to the **first research question**, which sought to find out about the nature of the linguistic repertoires of the students at the IUM who do not have the language of instruction as L1, the study revealed that most students at the IUM are multilingual. This is the case as the linguistic profile of the IUM students showed that, on average, most students were able to effectively communicate in at least three languages, mostly English, their L1 and another language. In terms of L1, the Oshiwambo language appeared to have most users on campus with 70% of the participants having reported it as their L1, while other remaining local languages combined were spoken as L1 by 14% of the participants; and English and some foreign languages recorded 2.3% and 13.6%, respectively. The dominance of the Oshiwambo language did not come as a surprise, because half of Namibia's population is part of the Aawambo ethnic group hailing from the four "O" origins of the northern part of Namibia, namely the Oshana, Omusati, Otjikoto and Ohangwena regions. As for L2 statistics, the study showed that English is the most common L2 amongst IUM students, making up 86% of all

languages spoken as L2s amongst the participants. The prevalence of English as L2 among students was due to the fact that it is the MoI in Namibian schools, and most of the participants were Namibians who received their school education in Namibia. However, English is also the sole MoI at the IUM and lingua franca of the university, so even students who did not speak English before entering the IUM had to learn English in order to study at the IUM. It was therefore expected that all participants would have some command of English, and this expectation was borne out by the data. Further, due to multilingualism prevailing at the institution (amongst students and staff members), students were able to use their languages in different contexts. Considering the various domains, it is evident that English appeared to be the highly preferred language, for instance in formal settings like lectures, individual interaction with administrative staff members or lecturers in their offices and during the completion of group assignments, as well as in other, more informal domains such as on social media platforms (Facebook, Twitter and so on) and during certain social gatherings. Although English had high importance, students also acknowledged the important role that their L1s played in different aspects of their academic journey. One example was the translation of difficult terms from English into the L1 in order to gain better understanding of the terms. While English appeared prominent in many domains on campus, the local and foreign languages were mostly prevalent in platforms where interlocutors were friends, family or from the same language community. The data also revealed that many students (59% of them) would code switch between languages, especially between the MoI and their L1, to facilitate either their academic integration or social adjustment while at the IUM.

The **second research question** that this study sought to answer was to which extent the IUM students expected their linguistic repertoires to help them achieve social integration and academic success. By using the data from the questionnaire, interviews and group discussion, the study found that there was a high expectation among students of their languages or language skills in as far as helping them succeed in their respective courses and settle in well to university life. Recall that there were questions that required students to reflect on what their expectations were of the usefulness of their linguistic repertoires to academic success and social adjustment, before and after commencement at the IUM. Interestingly, in both instances, the questionnaire results revealed that students were strongly convinced that the languages or language skills they knew would help them achieve both academic success and social integration. For instance, before entering the IUM, 84% of the students felt the languages they knew would allow them to perform well in their studies; while after having been at IUM for a while, 86% of them believed the languages they knew helped them to do well in their studies. Again, there was a similar positive response as regards social integration, where before joining IUM, 55% of the students were of the opinion that their language repertoire would help them to adjust socially to university life; whereas after their immersion in the IUM, 84% of the students

strongly felt that their languages were of significant help in settling into university life. Overall, the student responses in the study confirmed that indeed students had high expectations of their linguistic repertoires to enable them to achieve study objectives and create environment conducive to integrating into university life. Those who thought that the languages in their linguistic repertoires would not and/or did not assist them in achieving academic success referred to them lacking sufficient proficiency in English, and those who thought that the languages in their linguistic repertoires would not and/or did not assist them in adjusting socially to university life mostly referred to them lacking knowledge of the locally spoken indigenous languages or of Afrikaans.

The **third research question** was “Which linguistic repertoires did students expect to need to adjust and settle in at the IUM, both socially and academically?” From the onset, students articulated the importance of being proficient in more than one language. They considered this to be a valuable resource for both social integration and academic performance. The responses given in this study revealed that, apart from English as MoI and other foreign languages such as Portuguese, French and Dutch, several African languages such as Oshiwambo, Otjiherero, Silozi, Nam/Damara, Kiswahili, Chichewa, Lingala and Nyemba formed part of the repertoire of languages of the IUM students. From this pool of languages, some languages (notably English, Oshiwambo and Afrikaans) were prominently referred to by the students as languages believed to be of utmost importance in their process of adjusting to campus life and making academic progress. Importantly, students reported that the use of different L1s alongside English, the MoI, would help them to learn and socialise while at the university. Particularly, Oshiwambo and Afrikaans often served as languages which helped students mediate comprehension when they were faced with learning difficulties in the MoI. Switching to a local language, for instance, was used by students as means to grasp the meaning of some content or to compensate for their limited knowledge in English. Those students with limited knowledge of English but no knowledge of the locally spoken languages did not have the opportunity to engage in such code switching for academic purposes. Also, besides specific languages known, skills such as verbal communication, writing and code switching were identified as language skills that students needed for academic success.

The **fourth research question** sought to find out what the students’ perceptions were of the extent to which their linguistic repertoires have indeed helped them to achieve social integration and academic success at the IUM. The study revealed that most students had positive attitudes towards their diverse repertoires of languages in assisting them both academically and socially at the IUM. As stated above, they felt strongly that their language knowledge or language skills, to a large extent, played a vital role in their academic progress and social adjustment. A case in point is the appreciation of the roles

that some languages play in the students' lives while at the university. Particularly, English was identified by far the majority of students as (i) an academic enabler, (ii) the language needed for social contact amongst speakers with different L1s, and (iii) the language meant to overcome cultural and language barriers. Its varying domains of use included, amongst others, tuition (lectures), discussions with lecturers, interaction with other university staff, hallway conversations and social gatherings. In the same vein, the students' L1s were also deemed significant, especially in helping students mediate and clarify meaning (to compensate lack of competence in the MoI) during the teaching and learning process. This is in line with what Vygotsky (1978) stated, in the context of the current study, that the application of "unofficial" instructional languages at the students' disposal played a pivotal mediational role in as far as generation of ideas was concerned. Also, the L1s' role in informal domains was emphasized, in facilitating social contact among friends, family, and people of the same speech community and L1 background.

The **last research question** was "To which extent, if at all, did students at the IUM perceive their (lack of) social integration and/ or academic success to be a result of their linguistic repertoires?" The study has clearly shown that students held strong convictions that how they fared socially and academically at the university had a direct link to their language abilities. Students felt that there was indeed a positive correlation between the two variables. Thus the 'extent' to which their language resource(s) were useful (or not) had great implications for both their social integration and academic success. For instance, by reference to interviews and group discussions, some students (especially foreign students) strongly felt that their settlement and academic progress at the IUM was negatively impacted by amongst others, (i) their lack of competence in the MoI; (ii) no knowledge of frequently used local languages, particularly those with more users, such as Oshiwambo and Afrikaans; and (iii) language skill deficiencies in the target language (English) such inadequate English academic writing skills, limited oral communication skills in English and limited English vocabulary. By contrast, students who felt linguistically prepared for the university environment were highly enthusiastic about their academic and social lives. What was deduced from the findings was that students who were in possession of "the right" language resources for university life exhibited a positive perception to attaining academic success and social adjustment as opposed to those whose language abilities were "wrong"; the latter group did not agree with the former that their linguistic repertoire was beneficial to their adjustment to university life.

5.2 Comparison with previous studies

The current study revealed that IUM is home to students from varied speech communities, different language backgrounds and different nationalities that came to share one lingual means of academic communication (ELF). This notion was also asserted by Shiweda (2013) whose study was on multilingual communication in university classrooms in northern Namibia and not, like the current study, on the student's self-expected and perceived preparedness for communication in the classroom and social settings. The current study also found that IUM students are multilingual in that, on average, they speak three languages effectively. A similar finding was also arrived at by Bam (2016) and Smit (2010). Bam studied the linguistic repertoires of second-year students at the Vaal University of Technology in South Africa and found that 10% of her participants were bilingual and 90% multilingual. Her participants on average spoke four languages, but some spoke up to 10. In Austria, Smit's (2010: 68) work addressed the research question of how classroom practices could be handled when relying on English as the participants' lingua franca. One of her findings significant to this study is that the tertiary students' and their teachers' views on the function that English fulfilled in their classes reflected a "community of multilingual sojourners".

Furthermore, the current study has found that students used different languages, in different contexts, for different purposes. This finding is supported by the findings of Kramsch (2002: 98), House (2003) and Bam (2016), who also found that language use seems to be domain-oriented and that different languages serve different purposes, with English being used mainly in formal domains for communication purposes, whereas the L1 is being dominantly used in informal domains for identification purposes. In the current study, English was reported to play a crucial role in the students' repertoires of languages, especially in the academic and social settings, due to the many advantages of using English in these settings. For instance, all the students pointed to the fact that English is the official language in Namibia; the sole language in which courses are taught at the IUM; the lingua franca of diverse students whose L1 was not the MoI; and/or the language of economic and career opportunities after completing tertiary studies. This finding was also echoed by Hengsadeekul et al. (2010) who studied students' perceptions to having their university courses taught in English and the reasons for such perceptions. As in the current study, these scholars found that students held a strong positive attitude towards English because of the "perceived benefits of learning English"; for instance, they associated English with higher social status, economic and career advancement, and access to diverse opportunities globally. Similarly, the IUM students also regarded English as a language of progress offering good future prospectus such as improved employability. Apart from the participants holding English in high regard, the study also revealed that student's L1s equally

played a pivotal role in their social and academic lives. A case in point is where participants credited their L1s for acting as compensatory languages in the teaching and learning process. Here, students were found to employ skills such as code switching and translanguaging in order to ease complexity in the MoI and seek clarity and explanations for seemingly difficult content in MoI. A similar finding was also made by Shiweda (2013: 35) whose focus was predominantly on code switching as a communicative practice in northern Namibian university classrooms. Amongst her findings was that different students engaged in different communicative practices during classroom interactions. One such practice occurred when students sometimes uttered words or phrases in Oshiwambo while speaking English, in order to negotiate meanings in their academic work.

Moreover, the current study found that the participants held strong positive perceptions towards their linguistic repertoires helping them achieve both academic success and social adjustment. Recall from the previous data analysis chapter that more than 80% of the participants had reported having confidence in their language abilities in as far as facilitating their social adjustment and academic performance was concerned. The only traceable studies with related findings were those of Pretorius and Small (2007) who explored the experiences of international students visiting Namibia; Kandiko and Mawer (2013) whose focus was on students' perceived stance to tertiary education in English; and Brinkworth et al. (2008) who focused on the expectations of both the first-year students and teachers in regard to the language of education. It is important to note here that, relevant as these studies may be in the sense that they all studied "perceptions and expectations of participants", none of them studied students' views and experiences towards their linguistic repertoires. Therefore, such studies cannot be exclusively treated as conclusive findings relevant to the current study.

In their studies, Andrade (2006) and Yeh and Inose (2010) found correlations between English proficiency, social adjustment and academic achievement in Australia and the United States, respectively. In this regard, reference is made to Andrade (2006: 146) who identified some attributes hindering students to succeed academically, namely lack of a desire to learn, own individual evaluation, and assessment tool used. However, the current study found that there was a correlation between the achievement (or lack thereof) of social integration and academic success, on the one hand, and linguistic repertoires, on the other. This means that students strongly believed that certain language resources were prerequisites to the attainment of social adjustment and academic success at the IUM, and those who possessed such resources reported expecting to fare well academically and socially at university whereas those who did not possess such resources expected the opposite.

Lastly, the current study found that there are languages or language skills that student admitted to need to improve in their quest for academic excellence and/or social adjustment at the IUM. Amongst others these were to learn the widely used languages other than English on campus (Oshiwambo and Afrikaans having being singled out in this regard) to enable them to interact with the majority of the students; writing and oral communication to enhance their competence in the English MoI for use in learning and to overcome language barriers; and start to appreciate the language diversity they found themselves in in order to use that to their advantage.

5.3 Strengths and limitations of the study

Any research project is bound to have limitations and the current study is no exception. First, some responses given to specific questions in the questionnaire might have been subjective in that they might not be true reflections of the reality. A case in point is the participants' indication of having used English (instead of the obvious L1) frequently at home. One would assume, especially in an African context that in family settings people will tend to "stick" to their L1s to hold conversations amongst themselves. Second, one would be hesitant to conclude that a sample of 44 students (as in the current study) could be used as an exclusive representation of the views of a large population of first-year enrolled students at the IUM on their perceptions pertaining to the usefulness of their linguistic repertoires. The number of participants was limited by the researcher in order to make the scope of the thesis manageable given the limited time available to the researcher. Obtaining institutional permission to conduct the study was an unexpectedly lengthy process, and such permission was necessary before ethical clearance could be granted, and only after receiving ethical clearance could data collection commence. This left limited time for data collection and analysis. Because the focus in the current study was on student perceptions, the researcher chose to spend the majority of the data collection and analysis time on interviews and the focus group so as to be able to collect sufficient qualitative data to allow for answering the research questions in an informed manner.

However, the study also has its strong points. The use of several instruments ensured that data collection processes were reinforced and complemented each other in areas where there would be shortcomings. For instance, interviews and group discussion were purposefully employed to either add more weight to or amplify the data collected through the questionnaire. Also, this appears to be the first study on student expectations of the benefit of their linguistic repertoires conducted amongst multilingual African students.

Despite the noted limitations, the researcher hopes that the current study would make a meaningful contribution to our knowledge on how students can use their language repertoires as a valuable resource to ease their stay, socially and academically, at universities.

5.4 Possible directions for further research

The scope of the current thesis was limited to examining the perceptions of the IUM students, particularly those whose L1 is not the language of instruction, towards their linguistic repertoires in helping them achieve academic success and social integration at university. It is recommended that a similar research study be pursued in other institutions of higher learning but from a different perspective, mainly where the students' L1 is the MoI. It is highly likely that the outcome that might emerge will be different from the one of the current study. The question there would be how well students' L1 prepared them for academic success at a university of which the MoI is the same as the L1. It is not uncommon to find such studies amongst academically “underprepared” students, for instance those admitted to an extended degree programme, but more work amongst mainstream students in non-WEIRD contexts are still needed in this field.

Also, considering that the current study focused on first-years in their first academic level, research on other academic levels could yield important results on student perceptions of their linguistic repertoires. For instance, what were Master's or doctoral students' perceptions of the potential assistance that their linguistic repertoires would provide them in doing their research and adjusting socially at their new university? Future studies could investigate this.

Moreover, in the literature review of this study, reference was made to an article entitled “Education fails the nation” that appeared in the New Era newspaper in January 2006, where the leaders of Namibia's two leading tertiary institutions – the Rector of the Polytechnic of Namibia and the Vice-Chancellor of the University of Namibia – bemoaned “the persistent multiple flaws and inherent weaknesses in the country's school system causing these tertiary institutions to bend over backwards to accommodate the mostly academically ill-prepared students before they go into the job market” (New Era 2006: 4). One area in which these students lacked was in proficiency in English as a MoI. In this respect, research could be encouraged at pre-university levels (i.e., at primary and secondary school levels) to address this seemingly persistent knowledge gap threatening the entire Namibian education system and consequently to develop remedies informed by empirical results in order to arrest the prevailing situation.

5.5 Conclusion

This study has examined the perceptions and expectations held by IUM students as to the usefulness of their linguistic repertoires to help them achieve academic success and social integration. Several conclusions emerged from the current study. It was found that IUM students were multilingual as they were competent in an average of three languages. It was also found that participants used different languages in different contexts. The preferred languages in order of importance among the IUM students were English, Oshiwambo, Afrikaans and lastly foreign and other languages indigenous to Namibia. English was the prestigious language by virtue of being the official language of the country, the sole MoI at the IUM and the lingua franca on campus; and is credited for its critical role mainly in formal domains but also in informal settings. Oshiwambo is the L1 of half of Namibia's population which explains its prevalence on campus after English. Other local L1s and foreign languages appeared lesser used in formal contexts and predominantly used in informal domains where the speakers shared a L1 background. In the end, as study reveals, these diverse languages were significant, in one way or the other, as part of individual students' linguistic repertoires in as far as social adjustment and academic progress was concerned at the IUM. Given this scenario of multilingualism, it confirms that the different languages co-exist at the IUM.

Moreover, the study found that the IUM students had high expectations of their language repertoires in helping them to socially integrate and succeed academically. Of those surveyed, more than 80% strongly believed in their languages or language skills as enablers of both social adjustment and academic success. These participants were mostly those who could express themselves well in more than two languages of which one was English. However, a few students (mostly foreign students) were either "in-between" or had reservations about their repertoires being valuable resources towards achieving social adjustment and academic performance at the IUM – the reason being that they were regarded to be 'monolingual' in the Namibian context, in that the languages they knew from their countries were not spoken locally, except (in the case of some of the students) for English MoI. Lastly, it was revealed by the study that the participants were in unison and strongly agreed with the notion that achievement (or lack thereof) of social integration and academic success at university was to a large extent determined by one's language repertoire.

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Appendix A: Language background questionnaire

Participant code						
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MASTER'S STUDY FOR BEVEN KAMWI (UNIVERSITY OF STELLENBOSCH)

RESEARCH TOPIC: The Student expectations and perceptions of the usefulness of their linguistic repertoires for social integration and academic success at an international university in Namibia

BACKGROUND QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Biographical information on the respondent:

Gender: ☐ Female ☐ Male Date of birth: Home town:..... In which province is your home town? How long have you been living in your home town or in the area of your home town?

☐ Since birth ☐ For years

In which town/area did you live before? (if applicable)

Which primary school did you attend? (name of school and place/town):

.....

Which secondary/high school did you attend? (name of school and place/town):

.....

What course are you enrolled for at IUM?.....

2. Contact details (optional)

You might be contacted to take part in a follow-up interview. Please indicate whether you are willing to be contacted (even if you are not yet sure whether you would want to take part in the follow-up interview) and whether I should do so via email or cell phone.

☐ I **am willing** to be contacted about taking part in a follow-up interview.

Name and Surname:

☐ You can contact me on my cell phone. My number is You can

☐ contact me via email. My email address is

OR ☐ I **am not willing** to be contacted about taking part in a follow-up interview.

3. Language background of the respondent (please complete this about yourself):

My first language is My
second language is English is
my language (example: third) I started to
learn English when I was..... years old.

I received the following symbols for languages done in matric (Grade 12):

Language	Symbol
e.g. Silozi	C

The environment in which I learnt English: (tick appropriate boxes)

- ☐ At home ☐ At school ☐ In my workplace ☐ In my church community In
☐ another environment (please specify):

I currently use the following language(s)

at home at
family gatherings at
university at social
gatherings
at work (where applicable)
on social media (Facebook, Twitter, etc.)
at religious gatherings (e.g., at church, mosque)

4. Language proficiency and profile of respondents

Please specify your ability in each language using the following numbers:

1 = very good (like a mother-tongue speaker or almost as good)

2 = good

3 = fair / OK

4 = poor / not good at all

5 = no knowledge

Languages	Listen and comprehend/ understand	Speak	Read	Write	WHEN / WHERE you use this language (e.g., in class/lectures / at the shops)
English					
Afrikaans					
Portuguese					
Oshindonga					
Oshikwanyama					
Other Oshiwambo dialects					
Silozi					
Rukavango					
Setswana					
Nama/Damara					
Other Khoekhoegowab					
Other (please specify)					

5. Patterns of language use

Please answer the following questions:

- 5.1 What language/s did you as learner use in primary school for learning?
- 5.2 What language/s did the teacher use in the classroom in primary school?
- 5.3 What was the school's official language/s of instruction in primary school?
- 5.4 What language/s did you as learner use in high school for learning?
- 5.5 What language/s did the teacher use in the classroom in high school?
- 5.6 What was the school's official language/s of instruction in high school?
- 5.7 What language/s do you use when taking notes in class here at university?
- 5.8 What language/s do you use when you work in a group in class (e.g., when a group of students is completing a class assignment together)?
- 5.9 What language/s do you use when you work in a group outside of the classroom (e.g., when a group of students is co-preparing for a test or assignment)?
- 5.10 What language/s do you use when you talk to your lecturers?
- 5.11 What language/s do you use when you talk to other people on campus?
- 5.12 Before entering university, did you think the languages that you know will allow you to achieve academic success at IUM? ☐ Yes, definitely ☐ I wasn't sure ☐ No, I thought they wouldn't

Please provide reasons for your answer.

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

- 5.13 Now that you have been at IUM for a while, do you think the languages that you know allow you to achieve academic success? ☐ Yes, definitely ☐ I'm not sure ☐ No, I don't think they do

Please provide reasons for your answer.

.....

.....

.....

.....

5.14 Before coming to IUM, did you think the languages that you know will help you to adjust socially to university life? ☐ Yes, definitely ☐ I wasn't sure ☐ No, I thought they wouldn't

Please provide reasons for your answer.

.....

.....

.....

.....

5.15 Now that you have been at IUM for a while, do you think the languages that you know allowed you to adjust socially to university life? ☐ Yes, definitely ☐ I'm not sure ☐ No, I don't think they did

Please provide reasons for your answers.

.....

.....

.....

.....

5.16 Do you find it easy or difficult to use different languages at different times at university (i.e., to switch between languages)? Give reasons for your answer.

.....

.....

.....

THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION.

Appendix B: Interview schedule

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR STUDENTS

Student expectations and perceptions of the usefulness of their linguistic repertoires for social integration and academic success at an international university in Namibia.

The interview is a follow up to the questionnaire students answered on their expectations and perceptions of the usefulness of their linguistic repertoires for social integration and academic success at the International University of Management (IUM). The answers will be used to complement the data gathered with the questionnaires.

A. BACKGROUND OF STUDENT(S)

Age: [] 18-24 [] 25-30 [] 31 or above

Gender: M F

First Language/Mother-tongue:

Nationality:

B. LANGUAGE USE

1. In what campus domains [e.g. lectures, admin. meetings with staff, conversations with friends, on campus, etc.] do you frequently communicate? What languages or codes do you use in such domains? Why?
2. Before commencing your studies at the IUM, which of your language or language skills did you expect to be helpful to you in terms of adjusting and settling in? Explain why this was the case.
3. Before commencing your studies at the IUM, which of your languages or languages skills did you expect to be helpful to you in terms of achieving academic success? Explain why this was the case.
4. Which languages or language skills might have assisted you in settling in and adjusting socially at the IUM after a few months on campus? Elaborate on how these might have assisted you.
5. Which languages or language skills might have assisted you in achieving academic success at the IUM after a few months on campus? Elaborate on how these might have assisted you.
6. Which of your languages or language skills were useful for your adjustment and settling in at the IUM? Elaborate on how they assisted you.
7. Which of your languages or language skills were useful for your achievement of academic success at the IUM? Elaborate on how they assisted you.

8. Do you think that any of your languages or language skills hindered your adjustment and settling in at the IUM? Elaborate on how this might have hindered you.
9. Do you think that any of these languages or language skills hindered your achievement of academic success at the IUM? Elaborate on how these might have hindered you.
10. Which of your languages or language skills do you think need to improve in order for you to adjust and settle in better at the IUM? Explain your answer.
11. Which of your language or language skills do you think need to improve in order for you to easily achieve greater academic success at the IUM? Explain your answer.

-Thank you for answering these questions-

Appendix C: Consent form



UNIVERSITEIT • STELLENBOSCH • UNIVERSITY
jou kennisvenoot • your knowledge partner

STELLENBOSCH UNIVERSITY CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

TITLE OF THE RESEARCH PROJECT: Student expectations and perceptions of the usefulness of their linguistic repertoires for achieving social integration and academic success at an international university in Namibia.

REFERENCE NUMBER: 19685971

RESEARCHER: Mr Beven Kamwi

CONTACT NUMBER: XXXXXXXXXXXX

Dear Student

My name is Beven Kamwi and I am a Masters of Arts student in Intercultural communication at the University of Stellenbosch. I would like to invite you to participate in a research project entitled: **Student expectations and perceptions of the usefulness of their linguistic repertoires for achieving social integration and academic success at an international university in Namibia.**

Please take some time to read the information presented here, which will explain the details of this project and contact me if you require further explanation or clarification of any aspect of the study. Also, your participation is **entirely voluntary** and you are free to decline to participate. If you say no, this will not affect you negatively in any way whatsoever. You are also free to withdraw from the study at any point, even if you did agree to take part.

This study has been approved by the **Humanities Research Ethics Committee (HREC) at Stellenbosch University** and will be conducted according to accepted and applicable national and international ethical guidelines and principles.

The study is conducted by Mr Beven Kamwi at the International University of Management for fulfilment for the requirements for the degree of MA Intercultural Communication at the University of Stellenbosch.

By participating in this study, you will be required to complete a questionnaire in which basic questions are asked about your language background and knowledge; language pattern of use in different domains or contexts; as well as your perceptions of how your linguistic resource is able to help you socially integrate or achieve academic success. You will also be asked to indicate what languages you speak by mapping out your languages in colour during a short colour-in activity (full instructions to this effect will be provided). In addition, four groups comprising three students each from the same student population will be recruited after having volunteered, to take part in a follow-up interview.

Your participation in this study is on a voluntary basis, which means you can choose whether to or not to take part. If you choose not to participate, there will be no negative consequences. In case you choose to participate, you are welcome to withdraw from the process at any given moment without having to explain the reasons for doing so. You may also ignore to answer any question you do not want to answer and complete those that you are comfortable with. Participation in this study is **without payment**, which means it is free of charge and you will also not be paid. There are **no identifiable risks or discomforts** associated with participation in this study. There is no direct benefit to you for participation; however your contribution will greatly assist the researcher in obtaining a better understanding of the usefulness of students' linguistic repertoires in facilitating their social and academic lives at tertiary institutions.

Any information that is obtained in connection with this study and that can be identified with you will remain **confidential** and will be disclosed only with your permission or as prescribed by law. Confidentiality will be maintained by means of safe storage of data by the university, restricted access to the information, by only the researcher and the supervisor. As for those students participating in follow-up interviews, they need not to identify themselves by their real names but will be assigned **participation codes** from the onset to serve as their reference throughout the process. This is meant to ensure their privacy and anonymity in this exercise.

If you have any questions or concerns about the research, please feel free to contact:

Beven Kamwi at XXXXXXXXXX or email beavenbilly@gmail.com; or my supervisor, Dr Frenette Southwood at 021 8082010 or email fs@sun.ac.za

RIGHTS OF RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS: You may withdraw your consent at any time and discontinue participation without penalty. You are not waiving any legal claims, rights or remedies because of your participation in this research study. If you have questions regarding your rights as a research subject, contact Ms Maléne Fouché [mfouché@sun.ac.za; 021 808 4622] at the Division for Research Development. You have right to receive a copy of the Information and Consent form.

If you are willing to participate in this study please sign the attached Declaration of Consent and hand it to the researcher.

Yours sincerely

Beven Kamwi
Principal Investigator

DECLARATION BY PARTICIPANT

By signing below, I agree to take part in a research study entitled:
Student expectations and perceptions on the usefulness of their linguistic repertoires for achieving social integration and academic success at an international university in Namibia and conducted by **Beven Liswani Kamwi**.

I declare that:

- I have read the attached information leaflet and it is written in a language with which I am fluent and comfortable.
- I have had a chance to ask questions and all my questions have been adequately answered.
- I am taking part in this study **voluntary** and I have not been pressurised to take part.
- I may choose to leave the study at any time and will not be penalised or prejudiced in anyway.
- I may be asked to leave the study before it has finished, if the researcher feels it is in my best interests, or if I do not follow the study plan, as agreed to.
- All issues related to privacy and the confidentiality and use of the information I provide have been explained to my satisfaction.

Signed at (*place*) on (*date*) 2016.

.....
Signature of participant

SIGNATURE OF INVESTIGATOR

I declare that I explained the information given in this document to _____ [*name of the participant*] [*He/she*] was encouraged and given ample time to ask me any questions. This conversation was conducted in [*Afrikaans/*English/*Other*] and [*no translator was used/this conversation was translated into* _____ by _____].

Signature of Investigator

Date