The academic acculturation of francophone students to a multiculturally dissimilar academic institution in South Africa

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Abstract
This paper explores how French-speaking students (FSS) academically acculturate to a private provider of higher education (PPHE). It is a qualitative study that utilises semistructured interviews, focus group interviews and narrative inquiry as methods of data collection. Communities of practice (COP) theory and social identity theory (SIT) are engaged as theories of action to understand how the FSS began to acculturate to the PPHE. The South African Students (SAS) are in-group participants while the FSS are out-group participants in the COP. The SAS displayed positive characteristics towards the FSS because they saw the FSS as bona fide participants of the COP and did not discriminate against them. Four major findings emerged from the study. Firstly, FSS commenced their acculturation to the academic institution by translating curriculum content from English to French and back to English. Secondly, they began to adjust to unfamiliar accents, used by lecturers to facilitate learning. Thirdly, they became proactive by learning curriculum content ahead of lecture periods and gradually developed the boldness to ask questions in spite of their linguistic challenges in the language of instruction. Fourthly, they progressively developed a sense of belonging, utilised the small class size initiative of the higher education institution (HEI) and the positive student-lecturer relationships which existed at the HEI to their advantage. The paper concludes by making recommendations.

Keywords: Acculturation; communities of practice; higher education; social identity theory; sociocultural factors, more knowledgeable others (MKO).

Introduction

The purpose of this study is to explore how Francophone students academically acculturate to a Private Provider of Higher Education (PPHE) of South Africa (SA). Francophone students are French-speaking students (FSS). They have been identified as a cohort of students who purposefully travel to SA to study in an attempt to be bilingual. They returned to their countries of origin after completing their studies. Therefore, they do not qualify to be referred to as immigrant students (Adebanji, 2013). Acculturation is a process which describes how people adjust to a new culture (Berry, 2003). It is also defined as "the change in individuals whose primary learning has been in one culture and who take over traits from another culture" (Marden & Meyer, 1968:36). A lot has been explored about how immigrant students adjust to novel multicultural terrains in SA (e.g. Vandeyar, 2010; 2011). However not much has been researched about how non-immigrant students acculturate to dissimilar HE didactic cultures in SA. The study is addressed by considering the following. Firstly, a succinct background context of the study is presented to position the scholarly discussion. The moorings in the voluminous literature, in an attempt to consolidate an understanding of the dynamics of academic acculturation, and the implications thereof, are highlighted. The identified theoretical frameworks that assist in interpreting how FSS acculturate are discussed. This is followed by the

research strategy employed in the study. The emerging findings from the study are presented and discussed in relation to how the FSS acquired academic acculturation. The discourse is concluded by making recommendations fit for practice.

Motivation for the Study and Contribution

The drive to conduct this study emanates from the observation made in respect of the frequency of francophone students' registration at the research site, despite that they were not regular English-speaking students. It was the researcher's intention to study how these students adjusted to an unfamiliar academic culture, and how their adjustments translated to academic success. This paper is capable of assisting higher education institutions to develop instructional guidelines that could be of assistance to academic milieus where diversity is embraced.

Background Context

Nsamenang and Dawes (1998) have been identified as researchers who introduced the concept of academic acculturation, an extension of the concept of acculturation, initiated by Professor John W. Berry and other prominent researchers in the field of acculturation. Their paper addresses the challenge of Africanisation in terms of the unsolicited Eurocentric influences on the psychological development of the African child. They argue that Africa has been a key inheritor of outlandish influences that were imposed instead of implored. Academic acculturation was used in that paper in terms of the adjustment that the African continent had to make to foreign demands, which culminated in the hybridisation of cultures. Academic acculturation was referred to as educational acculturation by Shaw, Moore and Gandhidasan (2007). Shaw et al. (2007) conducted a case study of a subject aimed at enhancing the academic acculturative tendencies of foreign students and academic integrity in a public health program as students were being introduced to a novel academic culture. In that study, the skills learned by the students were indications of how they developed academic acculturation to the new academic culture. It was reported by the authors that the students cultivated skills which enabled them to advance to the next level. Despite being able to make academic progress, the study found that the students experienced challenges as assessment tasks became more difficult. Shaw et al. (2007) suggest that intermittent academic challenges may not indicate that students are not negotiating their acculturation to the host culture. According to Smith and Khawaja (2011) there are five major acculturative stress factors which constrain effective acculturation. Firstly, language (an inability to communicate with the same effectiveness or degree as with own language). Secondly, scholastic inequality (an inability to comprehend pedagogic principles or techniques of the host institution). Thirdly, social incompetence (for instance, an inability to be acquainted with people, not accepting the culture, loneliness, homesickness, etc.). Fourthly, prejudice/discrimination. And lastly, personal issues (such as finance, time, climate, and food.). Based on these findings in the literature, this paper attempts to unravel how FSS (Francophone students) develop academic acculturation in an attempt to broaden its meaning and to explore salient factors that can predict how it is negotiated.

Problem Statement

In spite of the efforts embarked upon by tertiary institutions of learning to enhance foreign students' acculturation to a new academic terrain, a number of challenges still confront them (Kucking, 2011). Foreign students have been reported to experience homesickness despite being in regular communication with family members and associates through email, short message services, and telephone discussions (Gu, Schweisfurth & Day, 2009). Shyness (uncommunicativeness) has been implicated in terms of its capacity to limit interaction between people of dissimilar cultures (Tackett et al., 2013). With diminished interaction between foreign and host students, the challenge is how foreign students would be capable of acculturating to the academic setup for learning to take place. With these challenges confronting foreign students, the influx of FSS to SA warrants investigation, to learn how they acculturate to a new academic environment. Hence, the research question being asked and addressed in this study is: How do Francophone students acculturate to didactic cultures in the private Higher Education Institution?

Literature Review

In an attempt to address the important question identified in this paper, the following are discussed as predictors of academic acculturation:

The Dynamics of Language

The importance of language has been resounded by Salamonson, Everett, Koch, Andrew and Davidson (2008). They suggest that emphasis should be placed on recognising English-language acculturation among foreign students because of the impact it has on academic performance. This statement suggests that the acquisition of English is capable of impacting on how students understand curriculum content. It also suggests that there is a link between language learning and the development of strategic skills that describe the adjustment profile of foreign students to a new academic terrain. The language of communication is in one way or another linked to acculturation (Yeh et al., 2008) because it is required for interacting with the host culture. According to Chow (2006:109) "proficiency in English is a major consideration in the necessity, rapidity, and ease with which" foreign students acculturate "to a milieu dominated by English." Mouw and Xie (1999) contend that the extent of acculturation can be measured by the degree to which new entrants to a novel multicultural domain imbibe the linguistic tenets therein. Halic, Greenberg, and Paulus (2009), revealed the issue of accents as a major source of challenge to foreign students who could hardly understand what was being taught in the classroom. Therefore with regards to this paper, the following questions emerge: What is the impact of linguistic acquisition on the acculturation of Francophone students? What impact do unfamiliar accents have on Francophone students?

Life Satisfaction and Sense of Belonging

According to Chow (2007) life satisfaction is a measure of the acculturation negotiated by foreign students in an unusual community. Although Chow (2007) did not use the term "academic acculturation" in his paper, this paper perceives Chow's (2007) investigation of life satisfaction and sense of belonging as predictors of academic acculturation. Although immigrant students were the focus of his study, this paper draws upon some of the insights from his paper to present a case in terms of the concepts of life satisfaction and sense of belonging as predictors of academic acculturation. Factors which reflected life satisfaction in Chow's (2007) study were positive indications of friendship with host students, commendable academic experience and the absence of prejudice against foreign students. Although in the acculturation process, acculturative stress (Madhavappallil & Choi, 2006) is unavoidable and it does not mean that acculturation will not be achieved when there is acculturative stress. The lived experiences of foreign students in the long run and their home front predicaments are salient in their decisions to acculturate or not. Based on these findings, life satisfaction and the acquisition of a sense of belonging among the FSS are problematized for investigation.

The Mainstream Academic Culture

Brown (2008) suggests that it is vital for foreign students to comprehend the academic culture of the novel terrain. This is important because academic achievement is hinged on how well foreign students are able to acculturate to the tenets of the new academic terrain. According to Gill (2007) the feedback given by lecturers to students' academic engagements and the understanding demonstrated towards them in terms of their challenges are capable of facilitating acculturative tendencies to an unfamiliar academic terrain. The assistance offered to foreign students by academic staff members becomes salient when their acculturation to a novel scholastic milieu is explored (Wilcox et al., 2005). Cheng and Fox (2008) report that students who categorised their academic interaction as effective were capable of developing more tactical learning and social skills as part of their acculturation trajectories. The extent of integration of Francophone students to the mainstream academic culture becomes pivotal for exploration.

Scholastic interaction with peers

The academic acculturation of foreign students may depend on a number of factors such as the need to engage with host students (SAS) and other international students in class and during

leisure periods. According to Kucking (2011), the interaction between foreign and host students is usually a challenge faced by institutions. Kucking reports that as attempts are made by institutions to enhance the rapport "on both social and academic level" (2011:27), the relationship between foreign and host students still requires a lot of improvement. Despite concerted effort, foreign and indigenous students form their separate enclaves on campus, during lecture periods and when they are free (Kucking, 2011). If the FSS are not able to academically interact with peers, their academic acculturation may become questionable. Shyness is capable of leading to poor interaction (Tackett et al., 2013), thus delaying the acculturation of people to an unusual culture (Chow, 2007). This study therefore problematizes the extent of academic interaction between the FSS and other stakeholders at the research site.

Theoretical Framework

Two theories have been identified in this study to explore the academic acculturation of FSS. They are COP theory and the social identity theory (SIT). These theories are engaged because they deal with interaction among people.

Communities of Practice (COP) Theory

Communities of practice comprise groups of individuals who share a concern or a craving for what they do and work together frequently to gain expertise (Wenger, 1998). The COP framework has been chosen in this study based on Wenger's (1998:3) perception of learning as social membership, which does not only fashion what we experience, but also our identity and the interpretation we ascribe to our experience. The PPHE, which provides the research site, is viewed under the COP lens because it matches the description of COP. An academic institution complies with the suggestion of Otten (2009) as an Academic Community of Practice (ACOP) when lecturers facilitate learning to students as experts. The FSS are therefore regarded as apprentices (beginners). They (novices and experts) engage in active learning, via interactive communication with the curriculum. The FSS are regarded as newcomers because they came to study in another academic environment different from their usual academic environment. Academic staff members, SAS and other international students comprise communities of practice that FSS would have to interact with, in order to become academically successful. As long as the FSS interact with SAS, other international students and lecturers in the COP, they would be regarded as negotiating the course of academic acculturation.

Social Identity Theory (SIT)

Lecturers, SAS and other foreign students are synonymous to socialisation agents by virtue of their roles in academic communities of practice. Social identity theory lays emphasis on "*the group in the individual*" and conceptualises that a part of an individual's identity is defined by the individual's sense of belonging to social groups (Hogg & Abrams, 1988:3). In other words, SIT lays emphasis on the reflection of the group's ideals in individual members of that group. Lecturers, FSS, SAS and the other foreign students can be seen as different groups of people comprising the COP, brought together by a common goal. Based on this conceptualisation they can be seen as being under a social stratum. This study is particularly interested in how SAS perceive FSS in the COP because of the incessant report that the South African society is a highly xenophobic terrain (Doodson, 2002). Social identity theory places emphasis on an individual's perception of who s/he is, with reference to how that individual is identified in the group (Tajfel & Turner, 1986). This paper thus uses the SIT to learn how the SAS perceive the FSS in the COP. The theory advocates that an attempt by the in-group members to enhance their self-esteem culminates in discriminating against out-group members (Tajfel & Turner, 1986). Having a sense of belonging to the COP thus becomes a predictor of academic acculturation among the FSS. According to Tajfel and Turner (1986), points of view are fashioned by peoples' affiliations to social groups and the organisational perspective where they are located. Members of such groups boost their self-confidence by escalating the prestige of the groups with which they are identified.

Methodology

The meta-theoretical paradigm employed in this study is interpretivism. The methodological paradigm engaged is a qualitative case study and narrative inquiry .This research is an inquiry of understanding where an investigator constructs an intricate, full depiction of events, examines words, narrates in-depth interpretations of research respondents and conducts the research in a usual situation. As specified by Creswell (2007:37) data were gathered in the site where respondents negotiated the issue or problem under investigation. The data gathering process comprised in-depth semistructured interviews and focus group interviews with the respondents of this research. A total of 28 FSS were interviewed in this study via semistructured and focus group interview formats between 2012 and 2013 at a private provider of higher education in the Gauteng Province of SA. The interviews lasted between 30 minutes to an hour. Semistructured and focus group interview questions were designed to answer cogent questions that evolved from findings in the voluminous literature. These findings were posed as interview questions to the research respondents. The communities of practice theory informed the design of the data gathering instruments by providing a basis for an inquiry to know the extent of engagement between the FSS and the stakeholders within the academic institution. Social identity theory gave an indication of designing the interview protocols to ascertain a reflection of the stakeholders in the FSS. The questions that were asked in the interview protocols were designed to depict "*the group in the*" (Hogg & Abrams, 1988) FSS.

Twenty-eight (28) FSS were purposively drawn from the pre-degree program to the third-year degree program. These comprised citizens of Cameroon, Gabon, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Chad Republic and Benin Republic in West Africa. Ethical clearance was sought at the research site before the study was conducted. The researcher considered the counsel of Patton (2001) to enhance the trustworthiness of the study by not being biased about the interview process. The interview process navigated its normal trajectory. The transcribed data substantiated the trustworthiness of the study (Savin-Badin & Van Niekerk, 2007) because the researcher kept abreast of the detailed responses provided during the data-gathering process by the research respondents. The researcher's strategy to personally transcribe the interviews was to further ensure the credibility of the study (Fade, 2003). The interviews were recorded, transcribed and coded to identify themes and categories that provided evidence of academic acculturation. As the transcribed interviews were read, attention was given to emerging themes by listing them in the margin. Themes were identified in the study as attention was given to statements that captured vital aspects of the obtained data.

Findings

The findings are presented by considering the emerging themes obtained from the study:

Translation of Curriculum Content from English to French and back to English

The following narratives from the semistructured interviews conducted with the FSS between 2012 and 2013 reveal that FSS strategically devised means of understanding curriculum content in an attempt to succeed academically. Almost all of them translated curriculum content in this manner, especially at the pre-degree level. A number of them also interacted with the curriculum by translating from English to French and back to English. Agatha, a female pre-degree student from the DRC, was admitted to study accounting. The pre-degree program is an initiative to prepare students who could not achieve sufficient grade points to commence a first year degree program. They are required to study for a minimum of one year at the pre-degree level before being allowed to start degree programs. Before they were allowed to study at the private HEI, they had to study English for one year in SA. The following vignettes are presented to showcase their experiences:

Agatha: I do translate words from English to French, and back to English when it is too difficult to understand the words in English, I try to understand it in French because I think in French. It is slowing my learning experience down a lot, but I have to do that for now until I improve.

Evelyne is a female French-speaking student from Gabon, admitted to the pre-degree program to study Biomedicine. She had been a student at the academic institution for 8 months as at the time of

this study. The following vignette draws attention to how she communicated with peers and the curriculum at the school:

> Evelyne: I would pass my examinations better, if we are taught in the medium of French because I study twice. For example in the maths class, it took me time to understand what was being said. I had to translate to French first before I could understand what the lecturer was saying. For the human development module, I also translated to French before I could understand.

Development of A Sense of Belonging, Influence of Small Class Size and Positive Student-Lecturer Relationships

The following narratives from the focus group interviews indicate how the FSS developed a sense of belonging. It showcases the impact of small class size and the significance of positive student-lecturer relationships at the HEI. These are regarded in this paper as the predictors of the commencement of academic acculturation.

> Miriam: I find that here, life is a bit easier than in my country. I have met students who are very kind so I can fit into the school here. My classmates are helping me to learn, and my English is getting better and better every day. During group discussion sessions I learn by asking questions with the little understanding that I have in English. My vocabulary is becoming better. I use my dictionary a lot when I don't understand words in English.

> Elijah: It is better to study here than to study in Gabon because the environment of this institution is friendly and I enjoy it a lot because it is very comfortable for me. There are not many of us in class and our lecturers explain to us as many times as we require them to do so. This kind of service is not common back home. We study in groups and learn from one another. I think this happens because we are in a private institution.

Adjustment to Unfamiliar Accents and the Speed at Which the white Lecturers spoke English

The following monograph conveys how the FSS adjusted to accents used by lecturers to facilitate learning and how they learned to adjust to them. The data emerged from one of the focus group interview sessions.

> Anthonia: When I was in my first year, I used to have problems with the accents of white lecturers but not anymore because I have grown to the extent of knowing how they speak and now I understand their accents.

> Violet: Here a major problem I have is that all the lecturers here have different accents, and the white lecturers are too fast for me to understand. I am adapting now that I have been a student for some time.

> Rachel: The white lecturers speak with accents that I don't understand. I am trying to understand them better now that I am in first-year. When I was in pre-degree it was tough for me to understand them.

Proactivity and the Courage to ask Questions

The FSS were proactive by preparing for lectures ahead of lecture time to keep abreast of previously learned content and to prepare for upcoming topics. The researcher inquired about their academic life and whether they had been bold enough to ask questions during learning facilitation and engagement with peers. These narratives emerged from the focus group interview session:

> Fernandez: If I don't study ahead of time, it means I will lag behind in my studies and it will be more difficult to understand my studies. This helps me to ask questions from my classmates and the lecturers. I have been doing this since I was in pre-degree.

> Ornella: It is better for me to read before going for a lecture. If I go to the class without preparing, and the lecturer starts to explain, it would be hard to understand. Personally, I study before going to class so that I can understand better. This also helps me to ask questions although I am shy at times because of my English which is not so good.

The following narratives are presented to reveal the impediments to the development of academic acculturation among them. A number of them could not briskly negotiate the linguistic transition they were required to make because of protracted shyness and a lack of boldness to ask questions in the lecture room, homesickness, and the speed at which the white lecturers spoke English during learning facilitation. The cases are presented one-by-one:

Shyness and the Lack of Boldness to ask Questions in the Lecture Room
The following narratives specify the impediments to the brisk acculturation of FSS to the HEI. These data were taken from the semistructured interviews.
Marthe: I am shy because when I speak English, I am afraid that the other students will laugh at me because of my French accent. English is a challenge that is slowing my learning down. I am in third year and my situation is still not improving as I would have wanted. I can say that it is because I don't chat to SAS as I should.

Ennigrace: I am very shy because of the English. I don't want the other students to laugh at me when I don't speak English correctly. This is a challenge that I am not yet able to overcome and this is my third year at this school. It also has to do with my personality. I interact more with French speaking peers more than I do with SAS.

Homesickness
The following narratives showcase the impact of homesickness on the development of academic acculturation among the FSS (from the semistructured interviews):
Lucas: The problem I face is homesickness. As a foreigner, I always miss home. Since I came here it is normal for me to miss home. This is a kind of distraction because I cannot focus when I am homesick.

Brenda: I miss home a lot. My attention is always drawn to my parents and siblings who are thousands of kilometres away from me. There is no place like home. Homesickness competes with my attention to learn English the way I should learn it. Sometimes the SAS are not very friendly. They speak Zulu all the time and I am excluded.

The Speed at which white Lecturers spoke during Learning Facilitation
A number of the FSS had issues with the speed at which white lecturers spoke during teaching and learning periods. This challenge seemed to have slowed them down in terms of how they understood concepts (data obtained from the focus group interviews):
Anita**:** I have issues with the speed at which the white lecturers speak.

Beatrice: I am not finding it easy to adjust to teaching and learning at this school because the white lecturers speak too fast.

Precious**:** In my first-year it was the speed at which the white lecturers spoke that was a real challenge to me. Whenever they spoke very fast I always had to go see them to explain what they meant in class.

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Discussion of Findings

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The FSS began to acculturate to the ACOP by strategically adopting ways of understanding curriculum content. They began to acculturate by translating curriculum content from English to French and back to English. This technique was cumbersome but it initially assisted them to learn curriculum content. Their adjustment profile resonates the findings of Cheng and Fox (2008) because they began to cultivate tactical learning and social skills which assisted them to learn. Their experiences seem to corroborate Wenger's (1998:3) ideology that learning in COP can be visualised as social membership which does not only show our experience, but also our identity and the interpretation we offer to our engagement. The FSS' engagement with peers and lecturers was an indication of their participation in an academic-social community which assisted them to define who

they are and their reasons for belonging to the ACOP. The acknowledgment of the importance of learning English by FSS echoes the significance of Salamonson et al.'s (2008) suggestion that emphasis should be placed on recognising English-language acculturation. English is required for interpreting academic information and for developing a sense of belonging to the institution. The engagement of the FSS in COP assisted them to learn English. The FSS recognized English as an important factor, capable of determining their understanding of concepts and values necessary for academic acculturation.

How do these findings engage with the theoretical framework of the research? It was expected that the attitudes of SAS towards the FSS would be shaped by individuals' participations in the communities of practice. Based on the SIT, it was also envisaged that SAS would enhance the prestige of their group in order to discriminate and hold prejudice against the involvement of FSS (out-group) such that the ACOP would be stratified into "them" and "us," founded on a course of social categorization. Instead the SAS accepted the FSS as active participants of the COP. The acceptance and support experienced by FSS in the COP enabled them to become active participants of the ACOP. The impact of small class size initiative at the academic institution and the constructive student-lecturer relationships became invaluable in assisting the FSS to begin to acculturate. There were encouraging indications of friendship and commendable academic experiences between the FSS and the SAS. These were factors which reflected satisfaction with life in Chow's (2007) paper. The FSS likely began to develop academic acculturation because they engaged with learning in classes with few students (a maximum of 60 students in a class) as compared to what was found in the public tertiary institutions of SA. The willingness of lecturers to engage with them also likely enhanced their acculturation experience. Therefore FSS began to engage with academic engagements, tantamount to the development of a sense of belonging despite the initial struggle they had with having to learn English.

The FSS strategically developed academic acculturation by adjusting to unfamiliar accents and the speed at which the white lecturers spoke during learning facilitation. The fact that FSS struggled with the accents of white lecturers and the speed at which they spoke while they taught them corroborates the findings of Halic et al. (2009). Having to devise the means of adjusting to accents and the speed at which the white lecturers spoke were likely indications that they were willing to acculturate because they wanted to be bilingual. They began to comprehend the accents of white lecturers by willingly engaging with them from the pre-degree level to the third year level. This suggests that the participation of FSS in COP is capable of evolving the capacity to learn unfamiliar academic culture as long as there is a sense of belonging. The FSS attempted to acculturate by becoming proactive and asking questions from lecturers and peers. Their proactive initiatives tally with the suggestion of Cheng and Fox (2008) that students who categorised their learning as effective were capable of developing strategic learning and social skills. Their capacity to ask questions of lecturers and peers was an indication of engagement between them and their peers.

The academic acculturation of FSS is not a simple task. It involved negotiation and renegotiation between both usual and unusual ways of learning. Three impediments to their negotiation of academic acculturation were identified. First, some students were very shy to ask questions in the class. Second, a number of students were intermittently distracted by the realities and effects of homesickness. Third, the speed at which white lecturers spoke became a challenge to their brisk understanding of words. The FSS who were very shy to ask questions were slowed down because they were unable to effectively engage with stakeholders in the ACOP. Although they were accepted by peers, some of them became outlandish, being unable to effectively communicate in English. Furthermore the presence of SAS and the other international students could not be effectively utilised by some of them. Consequently some of the FSS could not demonstrate learning at the pace at which those who briskly engaged with peers did. Homesickness likely prevented certain FSS from conscientiously engaging with academic tasks. The speed at which white lecturers spoke possibly led to the exclusion of some of the FSS from academic engagement – an indication of delayed academic acculturation. Although a number of them coped with this challenge, after a period of time some of them did not seem to cope till the third year degree level. Again this phenomenon can be argued to have created scenarios which excluded them from engagement at intervals of time. Consequently their academic acculturative tendencies were likely slowed down when they began to learn at the HEI.

Conclusion and Recommendation

The acculturation of FSS to the PPHE was a complex phenomenon because of the different factors involved. Acquisition of the language of instruction was pivotal to the acculturation of FSS. The acceptance of FSS by SAS challenges the SIT because the FSS were accepted as if they were in-group members. The impact of constructive engagement in the COP, facilitated by lecturers to all the students likely became the strength of COP. To enhance the acculturation of foreign students to an unusual academic terrain, the following recommendations are made:

- Tertiary institutions should embark on the incorporation of distinct language programs to enhance the prior linguistic knowledge of foreign students.
- The South African higher education institutions should be fully internationalized.
- Regular training of academic staff should be encouraged, particularly with regard to the requirement that lecturers should become sensitive to the academic needs of foreign students in terms of accents and the speed at which they facilitate learning.
- Foreign students should be encouraged to communicate regularly in English with English-speaking students.
- Prejudice and discrimination against foreign students must be consistently discouraged so as to enhance the engagement of foreign students with peers and lecturers in the COP.

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