

**FORMS OF ADDRESS: THE CASE OF UNIVERSITY OF LIMPOPO.**

By

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## **DECLARATION**

I, Rebecca Ntshwaki Malatji, declare that this research report entitled **FORMS OF ADDRESS: THE CASE OF UNIVERSITY OF LIMPOPO** is my own work and that it has not been previously submitted by me for any degree at this or any institution, and that all the sources utilised for the purpose of the study have been acknowledged by means of a complete reference list.

.....

R.N. Malatji (Ms)

.....

Date

## **DEDICATION**

I dedicate this study to my late mother Ms Sewela Rachel Mahasha. Thank you for always being there for me when I needed you the most, I would not have been where I am today if it was not for your unconditional love, support, inspiration, and your guidance. Your love made me who I am today, I always wish you were here to witness my success and all you ever wished for your only daughter. To my son Tetelo Pusho Malatji, thank you for understanding my forever absence in your life, you are the best thing that has ever happened to my life.

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## **ABSTRACT**

The aim of this study was to explore the forms of address and terms of reference used by students to address their lecturers at the University of Limpopo. The study discovered that, there were many ways in which forms of address and terms of reference are used. The theory of pronouns of power and solidarity by Brown and Gilman (1960) is implemented. Data are collected using face-to-face and telephone interviews from a sample of fifteen (15) University of Limpopo postgraduate students majoring in languages and linguistics in Turfloop, Limpopo, South Africa, however, ten (10) participants satisfied the notion of data saturation. This is because the participants were giving slightly similar information. The study found that there are two types of forms of address which are used by the University of Limpopo students which are Names and Titles. Addressing lecturers by first name, last name, nickname or title plus first name symbolises closer relationship between student and lecturers whereas, addressing lecturers by title only or title plus last name represents a limited relationship between the lecturer and student. It is found that most of postgraduate students address lecturers depending on the relationship existing between them and the lecturers. It has been found that, the factors that influence choice of forms of address are setting, respect, degree of intimacy, age and culture; and factors that influence the use of terms of reference are setting and respect. The data obtained reveal that undergraduate students, especially first years are not aware of the importance of forms of address. And it has been found that students promote the idea of the implementation of a rule(s) or policy regarding the importance of forms of address.

Table of Contents	
DECLARATION.....	I
DEDICATION.....	II
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS .....	III
ABSTRACT .....	IV
<b>CHAPTER ONE: GENERAL INTRODUCTION .....</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1 INTRODUCTION .....	1
1.2 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY .....	1
1.2.1 Forms of Address .....	4
1.2.2 Terms of Reference .....	4
1.2.3 The relationship between Forms of Address and Terms of Reference .....	5
1.3 RESEARCH PROBLEM.....	6
1.4 THE ROLE OF THE THEORY .....	6
1.5 AIM AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY.....	7
1.6 OBJECTIVES.....	8
1.7 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS.....	8
1.8 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY .....	10
1.9 ORGANISATION OF THE STUDY .....	10
1.10 SUMMARY.....	11
<b>CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW.....</b>	<b>12</b>
2.1 INTRODUCTION .....	12
2.2 NAMES .....	12

2.2.1 First Name .....	13
2.2.2 Last Name .....	14
2.2.3 Nickname .....	15
2.3 TITLE .....	19
2.3.1 Title Only.....	20
2.3.2 Title plus Last Name .....	21
2.4 Kinship Terms .....	22
2.4.1. Consanguine/Consanguineal Kinships .....	22
2.4.2. Affilial or affinal Kinships.....	23
2.5 AVOIDANCE OF FORMS OF ADDRESS.....	24
2.6 FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE THE USAGE OF FORMS OF ADDRESS.....	24
2.6.1 Social Status.....	25
2.6.2 Sex .....	26
2.6.3 Age .....	27
2.6.4 Family relationship.....	27
2.6.6 Transactional Status .....	28
2.6.7 Race .....	29
2.6.8 Degree of Intimacy.....	29
2.7 SUMMARY.....	30
<b>CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY .....</b>	<b>30</b>
3.1 INTRODUCTION .....	31
3.2 RESEARCH APPROACH.....	31

3.3 RESEARCH DESIGN .....	32
3.4 POPULATION.....	33
3.5 SAMPLING .....	33
3.6 DATA COLLECTION.....	34
3.7 DATA ANALYSIS.....	36
3.8 QUALITY CRITERIA.....	38
3.8.1 Credibility.....	38
3.8.2 Transferability .....	38
3.8.3 Confirmability.....	39
3.8.4 Dependability.....	39
3.9 SUMMARY.....	39
<b>CHAPTER FOUR: DATA PRESENTATION, INTERPRETATION AND ANALYSIS....</b>	<b>41</b>
4.1 INTRODUCTION .....	41
4.2 REPONSES FROM PARTICIPANTS.....	41
4.2.1 Types of Forms of Address used in the University of Limpopo.....	42
4.2.1.1 Names .....	42
4.2.1.2 Titles .....	42
4.2.2 Types of Terms of Reference used in the University of Limpopo.....	43
4.2.2.1 Names .....	44
4.2.2.2 Titles .....	44
4.2.2.3 Names and Tittles.....	45
4.2.3 Factors that influence the use of Forms of Address.....	45



4.2.3.1 Setting.....	45
4.2.3.2 Respect.....	46
4.2.3.3 Degree of intimacy.....	47
4.2.3.4 Age and culture.....	47
4.2.4 Factors that influence the use of Terms of Reference .....	47
4.2.4.1 Setting.....	48
4.2.4.2 Respect.....	49
4.2.5 Differentiation from Professors and Doctors to other lecturers (Degree, Honours and Masters holders).....	50
4.2.6 The difference between postgraduate’s and undergraduate’s use of Forms of Address to Professors and Doctors. ....	50
4.2.7 The importance of addressing lecturers with suitable titles.....	52
4.2.8 The importance of implementing a rule(s) or policy regarding the importance use of appropriate Forms of Address.....	53
4.3 ILLUSTRATION TABLE .....	55
4.4 SUMMARY.....	56
<b>CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY, FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....</b>	<b>57</b>
5.1 INTRODUCTION .....	57
5.2 SUMMARY.....	57
5.3 FINDINGS.....	59
5.4 CONCLUSIONS.....	60
5.5 RECOMMENDATIONS.....	61

REFERENCES ..... 62

APPENDIX A ..... 69

APPENDIX B ..... 70

# CHAPTER ONE

## GENERAL INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 INTRODUCTION

Scholars of sociolinguistics seem to have done more research on forms of address in various perspectives such as; in various languages, academia, religion and culture. However, there seems to be little research on forms of address in academic spaces especially in the University of Limpopo. This gives other scholars the opportunity to further explore forms of address in different areas of academia. There also seems to be little information on the relationship between forms of address and terms of reference. Most scholars often focus only on the forms of address which grant this study fertile grounds for further research.

This chapter presents a description of the research topic and the background to the study. The background to this study provides the definitions and information that existed prior to this current study. Then the research problem is stated, and it elaborates the gap to be filled in the current study. It then describes the role of the theory, the aim and objectives, ethical considerations, and the organisation of the study.

### 1.2 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

In recent years, much sociolinguistic work has been done on forms of address, following the principles developed by Brown and Gilman (1960). Most of this work, like Brown and Gilman's original study, has focused on the use of address of pronouns and the distinctions of '*tu*' and '*vos*' (T/V) which derive from the Italian meaning 'thou' and 'you' in English. The use of '*tu*' and '*vos*' in European languages were ruled by two forces, namely, Power and Solidarity (Al Abdely, 2016; Brown and Gilman 1960). Solidarity is usually articulated in the reciprocal use of either the T (thou) or the V (you) pronoun, whereas power is articulated in the non-reciprocal use of the pronouns in interaction.

This implies that interlocutors choose to use forms of address depending on 'whom' they are addressing.

Since sociolinguistics is the umbrella of forms of address, so, it is useful to define the term: Sarwart (2019: 2) divides sociolinguistics into two terms, namely; "socio" or "pertaining to society" and "linguistics" or "pertaining to language". Similarly, sociolinguistics is mainly concerned with the study of relationships between language and society (Wardhaugh, 2006). It is obvious that language is involved in every society, and in that language there are interactions that involve forms of address as they are an introduction to start an interaction between interlocutors. In support of Wardhaugh, Brown and Gilman (1960) state that sociolinguists have shown a cumulative interest in the use of forms of address in various social domains such as politics, workplace, religion, and academia since they invented the study. In addition, Wardhaugh (2015:63) refers to sociolinguistics as "the study of language use within or among groups of speakers", these include forms of address. Again, forms of address are an important aspect of sociolinguistic studies (Hao, Zhang and Zhu, 2008). Sociolinguistics focuses on the roles in which language plays in society (Hickey, 1917).

A language is both a system of communication between people and a social phenomenon (Hickey, 1917). People can use spoken, written or sign language to communicate. Trudgill (2002) asserts that language is not only a means of transmitting information but also an important means of establishing and maintaining relationships with other individuals. Similarly, language is defined as a primary means of communication that always takes place in some kind of social context (Cramer, Amberg and Vause, 2012). Again, language is used differently by multiple interlocutors to express different thoughts and emotions while addressing different addressees, in each interaction (Ahmed and Isma'eel, 2011).

According to Wardhaugh (2006) a society is any group of persons joined together for a particular purpose (or purposes). Fromkin, Rodman and Hyams (2003) state that

people live in a world of language. Whether it is interacting with friends, colleagues, spouses, teachers, parents, rivals and even enemies or strangers; it can be face-to-face, via social media or over the phone, however, more interaction takes place. Each language has its specific way of using forms of address as language cannot be isolated from the society in which it exists (Widiatmaja, 2014).

Yang (2010) states that forms of address are an important tool for effective and successful interaction and are seen as an indicator of the status of relationships. This implies that by using a form of address, one may be able to show respect or affection, insult or belittle others. It is important for individuals to know how to address others to maintain a positive interaction as there are various ways of addressing people. Failure to address others appropriately can lead to a negative and unfinished interaction.

In most cases, the choice of using certain types of forms of address depends on the title of the addressee. Yang (2010) categorises the types of forms of address as follows:

(1) Names.

- (a) Full names (Thabo Simon Maluleke),
- (b) First names (John)
- (c) Nick names (Jonny),

(2) Titles.

- (a) Title of family/kinship (father, mother)
- (b) Title of occupation (administrator)
- (c) Title of rank (detective)
- (d) Honorifics (royal highness)
- (e) Other titles; (fellas, darling)

(f) Title plus name (Professor Malatji)

(g) No naming (greetings; good morning)

These forms of address are used in daily communication by interlocutors; they are more of an introduction to conversations. Knowing how to address individuals not only keep the conversation positive but also shows knowledge of language usage.

### **1.2.1 Forms of Address**

Kubayi (2013) describes forms of address as words that are used in addressing an individual in speech or writing to title that particular person they are speaking to during the conversation. Forms of address are “specific” words used by a speaker to address another person in speech”, (Kubayi, 2013:43). He further defined forms of address as specific “words used by a speaker to address another person in speech” (Kubayi, 2013:43). However, forms of address are used in the presence of interlocutors, although this does not necessarily have to be face-to-face as there are other technical means such as telephone, video calls or social media (Afful and Mwinlaaru, 2012). Additionally, forms of address are a key to understanding social concepts and people’s relationships in society (Yang, 2010). Furthermore, Quin (2008) refers to forms of address as vocatives. According to Hill (2013), vocatives are nouns and pronouns used to address individuals. In support of Qin (2008), Chao (1956: 217) says that vocatives are “terms of direct to call persons such as a name like Mary, title without a name, like sir and Doctor, or any word used to address person, like hey and man”.

### **1.2.2 Terms of Reference**

According to Dickey (1997) terms of reference are ascertained by the manner a word is used in non-address contexts. On the contrary, “Terms of reference is used to designate human referent who is either present or not in a communicative encounter; it

is usually nominative, rather than vocative (Afful and Mwinlaaru, 2012: 2)". Terms of reference are an important aspect of communication as they offer addressors a chance to express how they feel about the addressee without the addressee's absence. For example, students may refer to their lecturer based on their behavior or physical appearance. In most cases, interlocutors use negative references in the absence of the addressee as the terms may be offensive. On the other hand, interlocutors may directly use positive term of reference.

### 1.2.3 The relationship between Forms of Address and Terms of Reference

It is also important to focus on terms of reference since "[t]he address meaning of a word cannot be assumed to be the same as its referential meaning," (Dickey, 1997: 256 in Kubayi, 2013). This implies that it is not possible to address someone and not refer to them in their absence. Choosing an address term is informed by the relationship that exists between language and society and how an individual imagines their relationship with the addressee in the society (Özcan, 2016).

It is stated that the manner in which we directly address and refer to a person is not always the same; this is because the speaker has to take into account the relationship with the addressee and choose how to present the referent in an appropriate way (Nevala, 2004). One example of the terms of reference can be nicknames.

Fitch (1998) says nicknames can be terms referring to personal characteristics, ability 'nerd', or physical appearance (short person) 'shorty', such as color of skin (dark person) 'darky', hair, or eyes. The terms 'shorty' and 'darky' derive from the adjectives 'short' and 'dark'. However, Hao, Zhang, and Zhu (2008) and Fitch (1998) agree that other nicknames derive from first names such as 'Nicholas', 'John', 'Thomas' to 'Nick', 'Johnny' and 'Tom'.

### **1.3 RESEARCH PROBLEM**

Mogie (2002) acknowledges that it can be difficult to choose an appropriate form of address when interlocutors do not have sufficient cultural knowledge. In this study, the researcher has realised (throughout the years of studying) that most students use any form of address to address their lecturers which offends some of them. The ignorance and lack of social as well as linguistic knowledge on how to use the correct address term is a major setback for both students and lecturers because it can lead to conflicts. Lecturers as people can also be affected by the ignorance of their students as their titles are important to them because they worked hard for them. Misuse of titles can lead to awkward situations or even offend academics if the importance of using proper forms of address is ignored (Yang, 2010). In the academic world, lecturers have various forms of address based on their profession.

Watanabe (1998) in Mogie (2002) states that junior researchers in all Japanese institutions are required to address their professors by their academic title. However, in the case of the University of Limpopo there is no such rule. This implies that students are not aware of the importance of using forms of address. It is also important for students of the University of Limpopo to address their lecturers with appropriate titles because both students and lecturers will build their relationship based on professionalism and respect. If the issue of using forms of address appropriately is not resolved, there will always be emotional conflicts by lecturers towards their students.

### **1.4 THE ROLE OF THE THEORY**

This study adopts the theory of the pronouns of power and solidarity by Brown and Gilman (1960). Power is defined as a relationship between two people or more and it is non-reciprocal because it cannot be shared amongst two people in the same area of behavior (Brown and Gilman, 1960). Again, both scholars assert that there are different types of power namely, wealth, age, sex, institutional role in a church, the university, or



army. In this case, this study will dwell on institutional role or power because it focuses on the way students address their lecturers at the University of Limpopo.

This theory is based on superiority and inferiority. Moreover, this theory mentions that two people who are not on the same level of power cannot address each other as if they are the same. This means that students should address their lecturers in such a way that they realise that the lecturers are in a higher position than they are. However, the lecturers do not have to reciprocate because they have more power than their students. In the case of this study, lecturers have titles such as Mr., Ms., Mrs., Doctor and Professor. Consequently, students need to respect the superiority of lecturers by addressing them with proper titles. Furthermore, Alhassan (2010) states that Brown and Gilman (1960) proclaim that solidarity reflects closeness, familiarity, shared experiences and intimacies. In support, power in a conversation is usually influenced by several variables such as gender, status, age, and kinship which makes power a non-inheritable trait. (Al Abdely, 2016). This implies that sometimes proximity, familiarity, shared experiences and intimacies determine how these people know each other personally. Additionally, the distance between two interlocutors, can be used to identify the kind of relationship they have. For instance, if a student is friends with a lecturer, they may communicate in an informal way and at a closer distance. Since students in Japan may only address their junior academics by their titles, this does not mean that students do not have a strong intimacy towards their lecturers; they just have a stronger sense of respect than intimacy (Wanatabe, 1998 in Mogie, 2002).

### **1.5 AIM AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

The aim of this study was to explore the forms of address and terms of reference used by students to address their lecturers at the University of Limpopo.

## **1.6 OBJECTIVES**

The objectives of the study were:

- To identify and describe the forms of address and types of terms of reference used by the students of the University of Limpopo in addressing their lecturers.
- To determine the factors that influences the University of Limpopo students' choice of forms of address and terms of reference in addressing their lecturers.
- To explore the University of Limpopo students' stance on the importance of implementing a rule(s) regarding the importance use of appropriate Forms of Address.

## **1.7 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS**

Silverman (2009) states that universities go to great lengths to protect the dignity and safety of research participants. Ethics are based on the rights, dignity, safety and welfare of participants in research (Stuart and Barnes, 2005). Similarly, the main aim of ethics is to ensure that participants in research are not harmed by the researcher or the research procedure. Informed consent, privacy and confidentiality are the main principles that the researcher must consider (Masonto, 2019). The following ethical aspects were considered:

### **Permission to conduct research.**

Ethical clearance was obtained from the Turfloop Research Ethics Committee (TREC); this also included the consent form. The data collected from students by the researcher was kept confidential and the names of all participating students remained anonymous.

Before seeking for permission from the participants, the researcher sought permission from the Department of Linguistics, Translation and Interpreting to begin with her study.

This means that the researcher was required to comply with all rules and regulations pertaining to the success of her study. The researcher informed the participants about the aim of the study and their role in the current study. In addition, participants should be aware that participation in the study was entirely voluntary and therefore, there was no compensation for their participation.

### **Anonymity and confidentiality.**

The confidentiality of the participants was considered. Their contributions remained protected so that what they said remained between the participants and the researcher. Their names were also not mentioned. Participants were given the right not to disclose any information they did not wish to share with the researcher. They were allowed to withdraw from the study if they did not wish to continue.

### **Informed consent.**

“Informed consent is a mechanism for ensuring that people understand what it means to participate in a particular research study so they can decide in a conscious, deliberate way whether they want to participate” (Mack, Woodsong, MacQueen and Namey, 2005:9). According to Brink, Van der Walter and Van Rensburg (2006:37) and De Vos Strydom Fouche and Delport (2006:59), informed consent is obtained after participants have been effectively informed of the risks and benefits of the study. Moreover, participants must be informed (usually written consent) of the benefits, risks and procedures of the research and be informed that they are free to decide whether or not to participate (Stuart and Barnes, 2005). Before participants were asked to consent to participate in this study, a written informed consent form was obtained from the researcher and given to the participants. The form included the research title, full names of the researcher, research purpose, aim and objectives, and a brief description of the research study and procedures.

## 1.8 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The findings of this study will contribute to the understanding of both lecturers' and students' attitudes about the need to use appropriate forms of address and terms of reference in their interactions. Thus, this study will yield significant benefits, including the appropriate respect for due recognition of academic titles and in turn, this will fortify relations and interactions between lecturers and their students.

Language teachers and learners will benefit from this study and use it as part of learning more about language use. Language practitioners will use it to look for forms of address. Scholars of sociolinguistics will have an additional source for their research. It will enlighten other scholars who are interested in forms of address and socio-pragmatics related studies. This is the remedy to the lack of information in sociolinguistics.

## 1.9 ORGANISATION OF THE STUDY

**Table 1: The five chapters of the study**

<b>Chapter</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b>1</b>	General Introduction: This chapter consists of the introduction and background to the research, which includes definitions of forms of address and terms of reference, the relationship between forms of address and terms of reference and factors that influence the usage of forms of address. Thereafter, it states the problem statement, the purpose of the research and objectives of the research, the research questions, ethical considerations, significance of the study, the organisation of the study and the summary.
<b>2</b>	Literature Review: This chapter discusses both classical and current research works on forms of address. The review also focuses on the three objectives of the study. Therefore, the review is divided into the following

	sections; introduction, literature the types of forms of address, avoidance of the usage of forms of address and terms of references, locatives in African languages, the summary.
<b>3</b>	Research Methodology: This chapter looks at the research methodology used in the research to gather and to analyse data. The chapter is therefore divided into the following sections, namely: Introduction, research design and strategy, data collection and analysis, the quality criteria and summary.
<b>4</b>	Analysis and Interpretation of Research Results: This chapter analyses and interprets the research results.
<b>5</b>	Findings, Conclusions and Recommendations: This chapter brings the thrust of the research together by paying attention to the findings, conclusions and recommendations of the study. The chapter is divided into five sections, as follows: Introduction, findings, conclusion, recommendations and summary.

### **1.10 SUMMARY**

In this chapter, attention has been given to various headings. The first part of it presented and provided the description of the research topic, the background and motivation of the study. The aim of the background was to provide a brief overview of the current study, the problem statement is essential because it provides what prompt the study and the awareness of the gap left by other researchers. The aim and objectives of the current study. The significance and the benefits of partaking in the current study was also discussed. Finally, the organisation of the study was outlined.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.1 INTRODUCTION**

This literature review section presents existing research on forms of address. In Afful and Mwinlaaru's (2012) findings, the data revealed three main forms of address used by students for faculty, namely titles, kinship terms and nicknames. However, there are various forms of address, the following types of address are discussed in the chapter, names, titles, and kinship terms. The chapter also provides various examples supporting the given statements. Each type of form of address consists of its own types. Additionally, this chapter consists of four titles, firstly, the chapter discusses types of forms of address which consists of its own types which are as follows; names: first names, last names and nicknames; titles: title only and title plus last name; and kinships which includes consanguineal and affinal kinship. Secondly, avoidance of forms of address is discussed and thirdly, factors contributing to the use of forms of address are discussed. Finally, the conclusion is outlined.

#### **2.2 NAMES**

Names are given to persons at birth in order to identify and address them. A name is certainly the most important right for people who have a beautiful name with good qualities and should have an acceptable meaning in the society (Al-Qawasmi and Al-Haq; 2016). Moreover, Hudson (2001) in Alhassan (2010: 280) states that, "names, naming and practices are closely linked because names are available not only for identifying people, but also for addressing them." Similarly, Wardhaugh (2006:268-9) postulates that "names or naming people is used for addressing and to identify people". For instance:

(3)(a) That boy with a red hat is John.

(b) The old woman with steel walking sticks is Jabu's grandmother.

(c) I know this handwriting is my lecturer's.

(d) That woman with grocery bags is my neighbour's friend.

(e) This bold voice is that of my cousin.

The above examples (3a-e) indicate that there are various ways to identify a person such as the clothes they are wearing, behaviour, handwriting, their belongings or speech. The following are types of names and their examples:

### **2.2.1 First Name**

The use of the first names by the addresser indicates equality, familiarity, and intimacy; It shows an effort to declare power to other people (Wardhaugh, 2006; Widiatmaja, 2014). Examples of first names are as follows:

(4)(a) John.

(b) Rachel.

(c) William.

(d) Matome.

The use of name on the other person indicates that both the speaker and the addressee are familiar with one another and have close relationship. Furthermore, Wardhaugh (2006:268) claims that the first name covers generic titles such as;

(5)(a) "Mack",

(b) "Buddy",

(c) “Jack”, or

(d) “Mate”.

Furthermore, Wardhaugh (2006:268-9) suggests that the use of the first names in communication indicates equality and familiarity, intimacy, while also showing an effort to assert some power over others. In most cases, the use of the first names indicates that both the addressee and the speaker are friends, colleagues, peers or partners. In Dickey’s (1996) study, it is found that most teachers address their students by their first names, regardless of whether the teachers are graduate students or senior faculty members or whether the students are graduates or undergraduates.

### **2.2.2 Last Name**

Chaika (1982:49) notes that the use of the last name designates that the speaker is superior to the addressee. She adds that the subordinate is addressed only by his last name while the superior is addressed by his or her title plus the last name. On contrary, Widiatmaja (2014) postulates that addressees with more power are likely to be addressed by their title plus the last name while those with less power are likely to be addressed by the last name only. The following are examples of last names and how they may be addressed;

(6) (a) Maluleke (Maluleke, can you type this assignment for me?)

(b) Williams (good morning, Williams?).

(c) Naidoo (Can you call Naidoo for me please?).

(d) Maja (Maja stop crying, you are old!).

(e) Nkuna (Let us order some pizza, Nkuna)



Moreover, it can be stated that the use of the last name in communication shows the unequal power between the speaker and the addressee (Widiatmaja, 2014). This means that the use of last name alone varies from 'whom' is addressing 'who'. For instance, a young person may address an older person by their last name to show respect.

However, if an older person addresses a person by last name, it may indicate that the person and the older person are peers or colleagues, or that he or she is older than the person. Also, in academic settings where lecturers or teachers prefer to use students' last names, the speaker may be older than the addressee, but this does not mean that lecturers or teachers are inferior to their students.

### **2.2.3 Nickname**

Wardhaugh (2015) states that the use of nickname shows more intimacy, "Nicknames are only used to address the addressees directly by friends or acquaintances", while members of society may use the nicknames in secret (Mashiri, 1999; 98). This implies that the interlocutors who use the nicknames to identify or address each other are usually close friends, colleagues, classmates or partners. This is for the reason that the nickname may be hurtful or offensive to the addressee. Also, Tlou (2018) says that people address each other by the nicknames derived from one's character, names; some are derived from one's structure, that is, height and body structure. For instance;

(7)(a) Characters may include being:

Funny or tragic.

Good singer or bad singer.

(b) Names include shortcut such as:

(Rivoningo, Rivo),

(Tetelo, Tete),  
(Johannes, Joe)  
(William, Willy).

(c) Height and body structure include:  
Very tall (Giant, Goliath or Lollipop)  
Very short (Shorty)  
Skinny (Sticks)  
Fat (Fats or Elephant)

(d) Colour such as:  
Dark skin (darky)  
Light skin (yellow bone)

Similarly, Starks and Taylor-Leech (2011) add that nicknames may relate to a person's physical appearance characteristics such as weight, height, or hair colour or to a person's personal habits or traits. For instance;

(8)(a) Hair colour such as:  
Blonde hair (Blondie, Sponge bob)  
Black hair (Black head)

(b) Habits or traits;  
Book readers (Bookworms)  
Drunkard (Drunken Master, Jonny Walker)

(c) Ability or lack thereof.

Chef (Master Chef)

Slow learner (Numbskull)

The above examples indicate that nicknames often carry some truth behind them, this can be positive through praise, compliments or negative carrying the meaning of demeaning, disrespectful, irony, sarcasm or ridicule (Tlou, 2018). This means that nicknames are not just names, but the people who give the nicknames do so because there is some kind of obviousness behind the name.

a. Positive nicknames

Positive nicknames symbolise compliments, praising, and endearments. Also, positive names derive from people's names that play a better role in their society such as good soccer players, actors or actresses, models, teachers, political members and good leaders of the community (Mashiri, 1999). The following are examples of positive nicknames:

(8) (a) Soccer players (Thembinkosi Lorch): (A South African popular soccer player that most of young soccer players are named after him) there is also a song about him as he is a good striker.

(b) Actors or actress: This may be influenced by the character's behaviour such as a gangster (Gadhafi or Jack Mabaso) from Generations the Legacy (South African soapie) are good actors as gangsters and unpopular people with similar behaviours may be named after them.

(c) Models: In most cases, models represent physical appearance and beauty also, some women with the same resemblance as that one of the model may be given the

model's name, for example, Zozibini Tunzi (Miss Universe). She influenced a lot of black women to be comfortable in their own skin and natural hair.

(d) Teachers: Learners may be given a teacher's nickname for the reason that he or she may be smart or look alike with the teacher.

(e) Politicians: The young generation that may be interested in politics may imitate a certain politician such as Julius Malema, and they be given a nickname after Malema.

Mashiri (1999) states that some individuals may decide to adopt a nickname; the choice of the nickname may be based on being impressed by the qualities, physical appearance and characteristics influenced of the original person. The self-selected nickname is always positive and has implications of self-praising and bragging. This implies that the self-selected nickname is the same as the positive one given by others.

#### b. Negative nicknames

“Negative nicknames are generally used for expressing disapproval, deriding, and insulting the addressee in order to discourage him/her from certain forms of behaviour” (Mashiri, 1999; 100). In addition, learners or students tend to give teachers nicknames from repeated use of certain words or terminology, from marked pronunciation, dressing, certain mannerisms or physical appearance (Tlou, 2018). For instance:

(9)(a) Repeated words or terminology: students or learners may give their teacher a nickname because of the repentance of a certain word or terminology by the teacher such as ‘precisely’ or ‘exactly’.

(b) Marked pronunciation: A teacher may be given a nickname according to the manner in which the teacher pronounces a certain word (children may be pronounced as *chil-dren*).

(c) Certain mannerisms: Some teachers get the nicknames due to twitching a lot (*panyapanya* [twitch-twitch]) or biting his or her lips more often.

(d) Physical appearance: A nickname based on physical appearance may be given to an individual looking at noticeable body part such as a big nose (lip sniffer or potato nose).

Afful and Mwinlaaru (2012) confirm that nicknames are strictly informal and are mostly used amongst students in halls, canteens, bus stations and other public places. This implies that students tend to refer to teachers by nicknames privately as their way of expressing how they feel about that particular teacher. This is also a safe way of gossiping without others knowing whom they are referring to. This is the reason why nicknames are used as terms of reference in most cases. Tlou (2018) further explains that the teacher may be aware of his or her nickname; but they take no offence as long as it is not directly called out in their presence.

### **2.3 TITLE**

Titles are commonly used to represent one's position in a society, community, workplace and church and achieved as one grows older; in most cases, these are taken from lifetime achievements like academic, professional, social and religious statuses (Tlou, 2018). The following are types of titles:

### 2.3.1 Title Only

The first type of title to be discussed is title only. Title only simply means that the addressee is addressed by their title. Tlou (2018; 37) points out some titles as follows;

(10)(a) Mr

(b) Miss

(c) Ms.

(d) Mrs.

(e) Doctor

(f) Professor

(g) Reverend

(h) Pastor

(i) Chief.

The use of title only in addressing other people indicates that both interlocutors are not familiar with each other (Wardhaugh, 2006). The use of title only in addressing an individual is a sign that there is no close relationship or intimacy between the addressor and the addressee. The following are examples of how titles may be used in daily life:

(11)(a) Good morning Sir, how are you doing?

(b) Excuse me Ma'am, I am still using the computer.

(c) Professor, can you clarify your statement, as I do not understand.

(d) Yes Doctor, I will see them tomorrow.

(e) Pastor, can you please pray for me?

Moreover, Afful and Mwinlaaru (2012) point out faculty terms (titles) which are used by students of University of Ghanaian which are Sir, Madam, Doctor (Doc) and Professor (Prof). In their study, they further state that the titles 'Sir' and 'Madam' are highly used, and students mostly use 'academic' titles such as Professor (Prof.) and Doctor (Dr.). Furthermore, the use of academic titles Doc and Prof is more popular among postgraduate students than undergraduate students, especially in formal settings; this is because postgraduates are more familiar and are close to their lecturers (Afful and Mwinlaaru, 2012). Moreover, Wanatabe (1998) in Mogie (2002) says that Japanese students are not allowed to call their teacher or ex-teacher without a title.

### **2.3.2 Title plus Last Name**

According to Chaika (1982:47), "the use of title plus last name in communication indicates social distance and unfamiliarity between the speaker and the interlocutor". Usually, speakers with lower status tend to address people who have higher status than them, such as patient to the Doctor or employee to the boss or employer. Furthermore, age is a factor that can affect people to use such type of address term (title plus last name). Younger people usually use title plus last name to address older people. Wardhaugh (2006:268) states that "this type of address terms indicates the unfamiliarity and unbalance power between the speaker and the addressee". For instance;

(12)(a) Good morning Mr. Mohale, how are you doing?

(b) I am here to see Ms. Sethole.

(c) Excuse me Ma'am Williams, you are talking too fast.

(d) Yes, Pastor Mathebula, she sent me to you.

Moreover, Widiatmaja (2014) postulates that title plus last name is also used to show respect towards the addressee and in most cases, people who have lower status tend to address people with higher status by their title plus last name. For example:

(13)(a) Professor Matheba, did you receive my email?

(b) How did you come with that conclusion, Reverend Sithole?

(c) Tell me more about it Pastor Nkuna.

(d) You are hard to find Doctor Mathebula.

The above examples indicate that not only the title plus last name can be used to address older people but also used to show respect to the addressee. The inferiority of the addressee has nothing to do with age however with the status in the community. Widiatmaja (2014) and Kubayi (2013) confirm that titles are forms of respect.

## **2.4 Kinship Terms**

Sells (2016) proclaims that kinship terms are one of the address forms reciting kin relationship in a tribal society. Additionally, a Kinship label launches a network of continuing relationships among persons and groups on the model of biological relationships among parents and children, among siblings and among wedded partners (Jackson, 2015). Furthermore, Kubayi (2013) points out two distinctive kinship relationships which are as follows:

### **2.4.1. Consanguine/Consanguineal Kinships**

It is as a kinship relationship which binds individuals through birth, blood and ancestry (Kubayi, 2013). Furthermore, Strathern (1992) points out three types of consanguineal kinships which are as follows;



(14)(a) Lineal/linear kins

These are the direct descendants of common progenitors in a vertical line, for example, grandfather-father-son-grandson-great grandson.

(a) Siblings who are brothers and sisters i.e., children of the same parent.

(b) Collateral kins

These kins are not related in the single line but related indirectly through linking relatives, for example, father's brother or brother's daughter.

#### **2.4.2. Affilial or affinal Kinships**

It is a kinship relationship bound by marriage or generations (Kubayi, 2013). This implies that affinal relationships are not related by the bond of blood, and it is formed by spouses and their relatives on both sides arising from a legally defined marital relationship (Strathern, 1992). For instance;

(15)(a) Mother-in-law.

(b) Father-in-law.

(c) Daughter-in-law.

(d) Son-in-law.

(e) Sister-in-law.

(f) Brother-in-law.

## **2.5 AVOIDANCE OF FORMS OF ADDRESS**

According to Kubayi (2013) address avoidance or zero avoidance occurs in various situations, including when an interlocutor is unsure of which term to use in an interaction. Moreover, Ahmed and Isma'eel (2011) state that address avoidance guides interlocutors to say what is necessary to be said and let go of what is unnecessary to be said. An interlocutor may address a person without title or a name, for instance:

(16)(a) Good morning, I am here to borrow a book.

(b) Yes, I will do my research before submitting my assignment.

(c) Will you further explain what the theory is about?

(d) Can you elaborate what the assignment is about?

(e) Did you receive the email I have sent you?

In most cases, the avoidance of terms of address is necessary, especially when one is uncertain about the title or name of the addressee. Similarly, Wardhaugh (1992); O'Grady, Dobrovolsky, and Katamba, 1996 in Kubayi (2013: 43) opines that "the participant then chooses to avoid the address term altogether and/or uses nothing at all". Moreover, when an addresser is unsure of how to address people, they may avoid the difficulty by not using a term at all (Aliakbari and Toni 2008). Aliakbari and Toni (2008) further explain that the addresser may use getters such as excuse me, or pardon me, or greetings such as hello or good morning to avoid the usage of forms of address. Again, avoiding forms of address is still part of showing respect to the interlocutor.

## **2.6 FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE THE USAGE OF FORMS OF ADDRESS**

The way individuals address others differs depending on the context, whether they are in a formal or informal event (Widiatmaja, 2014). Wardhaugh (2006) points out several social factors that influence an individual's choice of terms of address, such as social

status, sex or gender, family relationship, occupational hierarchy, transactional status (which involves service encounter, or doctor-patient relationship), race, and degree of intimacy. Rahmadani and Wahyuni (2018) give an example of students at university in the west where they address their lecturer with the title plus last name although the lecturer is their neighbour; therefore, the way students address the lecturer at their neighbourhood differ from the manner they address the lecturer on campus. They further explain that the choice of forms of address should be appropriate to the context and situation when they have a conversation. This infers that failure to choose appropriate forms of address may hinder an interaction between the interlocutors. The fact that address forms are the first information to be conveyed to others means that they play a very vital role in face-to-face communication (Geng, 2015; Yang, 2010). This implies that forms of address are not only introductory to conversations, but also play an important role in face-to-face communication. The following are examples of factors:

### **2.6.1 Social Status**

This refers to a position or office usually recognised by a title, which a person obtains, and the possession which enables the holder to a certain degree of privilege and prestige reference (Tlou, 2018). For instance:

- (17)(a) Professor
- (b) Reverend
- (c) Chief
- (d) Pastor

Furthermore, people of the following classes are unique not only in their possession of wealthier assets, power, favourable regard, educational qualification or status but also in their speaking manner, style or linguistic features (Sodah, 2019).

This means that social status also stresses about how people use their language experiences with different people depending on the situation and who the addressees are. For instance:

(18)(a) A professor from a well-known College or University is not expected to speak like a person who works in a garment factory.

(b) A father expects his son or daughter to address him in a respectful manner, not in the way which they address their classmates or cousins.

(c) Students are expected to use professional language rather than casual especially in lecture session.

(d) A Pastor is expected to address his congregation in a religious manner, not in an academic manner.

(e) A businessman can never use a beggar's accent while talking to his partner.

Moreover, Salifu (2010: 277) states that "the possession of a title confers on the holder a higher status than a person without one, a man has a higher status than a woman of the same age and a husband has a higher status than his wife, even if (in a rare event) the woman is older. In verbal interaction respect and deference must be shown to those older than oneself and to people of higher status".

### **2.6.2 Sex**

American Psychological Association (2015) defines sex as a person's biological rank and is habitually classified as male, female or intersex. Furthermore, sex is defined as a biological classification based predominantly on reproductive potential (Eckert and McConnell-Ginet, 2013). In addition, titles of sex used to address females are more bias than those of males, for instance, Sir and Mr are titles that generalise all males, however, Mrs, Ms, and Ma'am are titles for females but not all females. Mrs is for a

married woman, Ms does not state a female's marital status, whereas Miss is used to address young females and Ma'am is used to address any female regardless of age. Moreover, titles like Doctor, Professor, Reverend or Chancellor does not reveal sex.

### **2.6.3 Age**

Young people usually address older people by tittle plus last name which is influenced by age, (Widiatmaja, 2014). They also use title only to show respect to older people. However, older people use first names and sometimes last names to address younger people. Peers, colleagues or friends may use first names or last names to address each other. Wardhaugh (2006: 271) postulates that "as you age and your family relationships change, issues of naming and addressing may arise. For example, knowing how to address your father-in-law or mother-in-law has often been a problem for many people: 'Mr Smith' is sometimes felt to be too formal, 'Bill' too Familiar, and 'Dad' pre-empted or even 'unnatural'". This means that as one continues to grow, even the manner in which they are addressed changes and arises, for example; a baby is called by his or her name by elders at home, when they grow up, they may be called 'brother' or 'sister' by younger siblings, and further called a 'husband' or 'wife', 'daughter in-law' or 'son in-law', to 'father' or 'mother', to 'grandfather' or 'grandmother'. Besides, family, strangers or community may call the very same person with a different term that is earned through character, or leadership skills, for instance, Pastor, teacher, or a nickname.

### **2.6.4 Family relationship**

The use of kinship terms such as father, mother, uncle and grandmother, is a must in most cases. This is because people are taught from birth and passed down from generation to generation. Wardhaugh (2006; 271) states that the "kinship system itself is generation- and age-oriented with terms for both the paternal and maternal sides".

Family relationships and age go hand in hand because as one grows, terms increase and also differ. A person can be addressed by different forms of address, for example, a child starts by just being a child or nephew or niece, then becomes a brother or sister, then becomes an aunt or uncle, and becomes a husband or wife, then a mother or father; however, they may still be addressed by first name, last name, nickname, title only, or by title plus last name depending on the situation and context.

### **2.6.5 Occupational Hierarchy**

Occupational terms are associated with a person's duty (Matloga, 2002). This means that the speaker addresses an interlocutor according to their job, for example, teacher, cleaner, nurse, police, lecturer, principal or administrator. Widiatmaja (2014) explains that it can sometimes be difficult, especially in cases where the superior is younger than the subordinate in case of occupational hierarchy. For instance, a lecturer may be younger than one of his or her students. However, Wardhaugh (2006) gives an example of the choice of the use of forms of address in the military, and states that younger employees tend to be less formal than older employees in their choice of forms of address; this leads to the subordinate trying to minimise their difference in status from superiors and it is the other way round when it comes to superiors.

### **2.6.6 Transactional Status**

Wardhaugh (2006) confirms that a transactional status is a relationship between two sides such as a doctor with patient or a priest and a penitent. Other examples may be a lecturer and a student, a prosecutor and a suspect and a cashier and a customer. Widiatmaja (2014; 27) states that “this kind of relationship indicates inequality power which presents in a certain institution like hospital or a church”. This also applies within the institutions such as a university or college, court of law and supermarket.

### **2.6.7 Race**

“A social construct that artificially divides people into distinct groups based on certain characteristics such as physical appearance (particularly skin colour) ancestral heritage, cultural affiliation, cultural history, ethnic classification...Racial categories subsume ethnic groups” (Wijeysinghe Griffin and Love, 1997; 88). Yang (2010) and Wardhaugh (2006) posit that white people are well known by calling blacks ‘boy’ to put them in their place in the United States. Yang and Wardhaugh further state that white individuals also addressed black people by their first names even where the use of the title is required, or they addressed whites with the title plus last name where is required. They also agree that the use of names is asymmetrical.

### **2.6.8 Degree of Intimacy**

Vendi (2008) refers to intimacy as a close relationship between participants. Furthermore, Vendi (2008) states that intimate language is used by people who already know each other well. Moreover, intimacy is clarified as situations where the speaker considers the listener as a member of an in-group, a friend or a person whose desires or a personality trait is known and admired (Aliakbari and Toni, 2008). Friends, partners or colleagues may use intimate terms such as honey, darling or use first names and nicknames. Moreover, the use of first name indicates a significant intimacy or at least a desire for such intimacy (Widiatmaja, 2014). According to Özcan (2016), the choice of first names is influenced by solidarity and familiarity factor as the participants may be familiar to one another and or from the same school, and they are students in the same school, they are from similar background they are of the same age. Again, the distance between the speaker and the addressee when addressing symbolise the relationship between them, for example, friends may stand close to each other whereas the boss and the employee stand apart.

## **2.7 SUMMARY**

In this chapter, attention was given to the existing literature on types of address forms, avoidance of forms of address and factors behind the usage of the forms of address. Again, it also focused on the literature of several scholars whose work is significant to this study. Moreover, Names (First Name, Last Name and Nicknames), Title (Title only and Title plus Last Name) and Kinships (Consanguineal and Affinal Kinships) were thoroughly discussed and relevant examples were also given. Furthermore, reasons behind avoidance of forms of address were also discussed with practical examples. Lastly, factors such as social status, sex, age, family relationships, occupational hierarchy, transactional status, race and degree of intimacy were explained thoroughly.



## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 INTRODUCTION**

This chapter provides the methodology used in conducting this study. Khothari (2004:8) defines research methodology as a “way to systematically solve the research problem”. Khothatri further states that research methodology can also be understood as a discipline that studies how research is conducted scientifically. On the other hand, methodology is a “systematic, theoretical analysis of the methods applied to a field of study” (Chinelo, 2016:5). Chinelo goes on to explain that methodology is a general research strategy that shapes a way in which a research project is to be undertaken and identifies the methods to be used in the process.

The chapter outlines the most significant elements of the research methodology, which are methodology, research design, population, sampling, data collection, data analysis, and quality criteria. Data collection and analysis are the key components of this study.

#### **3.2 RESEARCH APPROACH**

According to Mohajan (2017), research approach refers to a strategy of an act that provides direction for conducting research systematically and efficiently. Creswell (2009) points out three types of research approaches, namely; qualitative, quantitative and mixed methods strategies. This study adopted the qualitative research approach. Qualitative research is concerned with developing explanations of social phenomena, which aims to assist in understanding the social world (Hancock, Ockleford & Windridge, 2007). Moreover, “Qualitative research is an approach for exploring and understanding the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human

problem,” (Creswell, 2014: 32). There was a need to explore and understand the reasons behind the choice of forms of address by the University of Limpopo students. Furthermore, Hammond & Wellington (2013) state that a qualitative research method is intended for exploring, explaining, phenomena and for generating new theoretical insights. The phenomenon of the use of forms of address by University of Limpopo students towards their lecturers has never been explored before, hence the need to investigate and explore it.

Mack et. al (2005:1) define qualitative research as a “type of scientific research which consists of an investigation that:”

- Seeks answers to a question.
- Systematically uses a predefined set of procedures to answer the question.
- Collects evidence.
- Produces findings that were not determined in advance.
- Produces findings that are applicable beyond the immediate boundaries of the study.

Mack et al. (2005) proclaim that, qualitative research approach shares the above characteristics. They add that it also seeks to comprehend a certain research problem or topic from the perceptions of the local population it comprises.

### **3.3 RESEARCH DESIGN**

Prashant (2013) asserts that qualitative research design is a general manner of thinking about conducting qualitative research. “The research design serves a plan, structure and execute the research to maximise the validity of findings. It gives directions from the underlying philosophical assumptions to research design and data collection”, (Mouton, 1996: 175). This study employed the exploratory research design. An exploratory research design is used to make initial investigations into comparatively unknown areas Blanche, Blanche, Durrheim and Painter, 2006. Furthermore,

“exploratory research is undertaken when few or no previous studies exist, the aim is to look for patterns, hypotheses or ideas can be tested and will form the basis for further research”, (Neville, 2007: 2). Exploratory research design is suitable to this study, for the reason that it allowed the researcher to discover innovative insights as far as forms of address and terms of reference. Therefore, the study on forms of address in the University of Limpopo need to be discovered and explored as they have never been researched before.

### **3.4 POPULATION**

Polit & Hungler (2004:290) define population as “an aggregate or totality of all the objects, subjects or members that conform to a set of specifications”. In this study, the population is all students and lecturers from the University of Limpopo, Polokwane, Limpopo, South Africa from which the researcher created a sample. The researcher selected postgraduate students majoring in languages and linguistics.

### **3.5 SAMPLING**

Mason (2002) states that sampling is a principle and procedure used to identify, choose, and gain access to relevant data sources from which the researcher generates data using methods of their choice. Moreover, Mack et al. (2005) assert that only a sample that is subset of a population is selected for a given study. The research adopted purposive sampling. This is because purposive sampling is selective and subjective (Kubayi, 2013). Moreover, Walliman (2001) argues that in purposive sampling the researcher selects what he or she thinks is a typical sample. This implies that the researcher makes decisions about who or what should be sampled, what form the sampling will take, and how many people or sites should be sampled (Creswell, 2007).

Moreover, the researcher has the authority to select or pick-up data that is suitable and remove the data that is not suitable. The sample size of this study is fifteen (15), which

are postgraduate students majoring in languages and linguistics. The assumption was made that limiting the number of fifteen (15) students will satisfy the notion of data saturation. Data saturation is reached when there is enough information to replicate the study (O'Reilly & Parker, 2012). Moreover, "once the researcher is satisfied that 'enough' informants have been interviewed to account for address usage, and that no new data are being generated, no new subjects will be recruited to participate in the study (Matthews & Ross, 2010 in Kubayi, 2013:113).

### **3.6 DATA COLLECTION**

Data collection is a procedure of gathering information based on the research questions in order to acquire an outcome (Charles & Mertler, 2002). Furthermore, Kabir (2016:202) states that "the goal for all data collection is to capture quality evidence that then translates to rich data analysis and allows the building of a convincing and credible answer to questions that have been posed". Moreover, Hancock, Ocleford & Windridge (2007) identify seven types of data collection, namely; interviews, focus group, observation, collection of documented materials such as letters, diaries and photographs, collection of narratives and questionnaires. According to Mason (2002) qualitative interviews may include face-to-face interactions, larger group interviews or focus group, and may take place or over the telephone or the internet. This study uses face-to-face interviews, reason being that they are an effective qualitative method for getting people to talk about their personal feelings, opinions, and experiences (Mack et al. 2005).

This study's main aim is to investigate about the students' addressing towards their lecturers and factors that influence their choice of forms of address; and lecturers' feelings, opinions and experiences on the usage of forms of address by their students at the University of Limpopo; therefore, face-to-face interview is relevant to getting trustworthy information from both students and lecturers. Additionally, if the researcher

opts for the interviews, it may be that their study suggests that participants' knowledge, views, understandings, interpretations, experiences, and interactions are meaningful properties of social reality which the research questions are designed to explore (Mason, 2002). Students were able to give reliable information as they both have practical experiences, and they engage in this matter on daily basis.

Moreover, Creswell and Tashakkori (2007) states that it is important to use suitable recording procedures when conducting face-to-face interviews, reason being that the researcher can be able to use the information as evidence and to transcribe it. The researcher used telephone recording to record the interviews with the participants for evidence purposes and transcribes the information.

Due to Coronavirus (COVID-19), the researcher decided to add telephone interviews, reason being that other participants were still at home, also, to ensure participants' safety. It is confirmed by Carr and Worth (2001: 513) that "studies which directly compare telephone and face-to-face and interviewing tend to conclude that telephone interviewing produces data which are at least comparable in quality to those attained by the face-to-face method". Moreover, Phellas, Bloch and Seale (2011: 184) outlines the advantages as follows:

- Because the researcher does not have to travel, interviews can take place over a wider geographical area.
- There are fewer interviewer effects – that is, the personal characteristics of the researcher will be less obvious than in face-to face situations and is therefore less intrusive. The participants
- The physical safety of the interviewer is not compromised.

- Telephone interviews are subject to greater levels of monitoring because supervisors can unobtrusively listen in to interviews to ensure that they are carried out correctly.

### **3.7 DATA ANALYSIS**

“Data analysis in qualitative research consists of preparing and organising the data (i.e., text data as in transcripts, or image data as in photographs) for analysis, then reducing the data into themes through a process of coding and condensing the codes, and finally representing the data in figures, tables, or a discussion. Data analysis is a pool of data obtained from interviews, field notes of observations and analysis of documents”.

(Creswell, 2007: 148). Liamputtong (2009) identifies five types of data analysis namely, thematic analysis, content analysis, narrative analysis, discourse analysis and semiotic analysis. This study employed thematic analysis, which “is a method of identifying, analysing and reporting patterns (themes) within the data and is perceived as a foundational method for qualitative analysis” (Flick, 2014; 42). Since the purpose of this study was to reveal themes, this method served this purpose well. After collecting data, the researcher transcribed the data from the recorder, organised and sorted them according to themes. The data was analysed and transcribed, and then conclusion was drawn. Braun & Clarke (2006: 16) identify a guide to the 6 phases of conducting thematic analysis:

- Become familiar with data.

This implies that after collecting data, the researcher must transcribe the data from interviews into a written form. Data transcription helps the researcher to develop thorough comprehension of data. This will assist the researcher to recognise conceivable themes and codes related to the objectives of the study which is concerned with forms of address (Gupta, Shaheen & Reddy 2018).

- Generating initial codes.

This second phase of data analysis involves the organisation of data in a meaningful and systematic technique. This implies that, coding diminishes lots of data into small chunks of meaning which have different ways to code, the method of coding is determined by the researcher's perspective and research questions (Maguire & Delahunt, 2017).

- Searching for themes.

This third phase "re-focuses the analysis at the broader level of themes, rather than codes, involves sorting different codes into potential themes, and allocating all the relevant coded data extracts within the identified themes (Braun & Clarke, 2006: 16)".

- Reviewing themes.

The fourth phase starts when a set of themes have been developed and it also involves the enhancement of those themes (Braun & Clarke, 2006). This indicates that the researcher has to review themes at the level of coded data in order to consider if they appear to form a coherent pattern (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

- Defining and naming themes

The fifth phase starts when the researcher defines and enhances the themes for analysis, and analyse data within them (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Define and refine means identifying the 'essence' of what each theme is about and determining what feature of the data each theme captures (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

- Producing report.

Phase six starts when the researcher has finally acknowledged the themes and is equipped to start with the ultimate analysis and writing the report (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Producing thematic analysis report is ought to deliver a brief, comprehensible,

logical, non-repetitive, and attention-grabbing description of the data express in and through the theme.

### **3.8 QUALITY CRITERIA**

The hallmark of a good research is that the findings are trustworthy, that they are applicable to practical settings, consistent, neutral, and unbiased (Frambach, 2013). The trustworthiness of qualitative research can be conventional by means of four strategies: credibility, transferability, dependability, and conformability (Creswell, 1998). This study provided its findings based on trustworthiness as it focused on the University of Limpopo, which is a practical setting for both the researcher and the participants. In addition, the researcher followed the following four strategies:

**3.8.1 Credibility:** Tracy (2010) states that credibility refers to the trustworthiness, truthfulness, and plausibility of the research findings, and the need for credibility, though not always by that name, is noted by many qualitative researchers. The researcher has acknowledged all the sources that are used in this study to confirm credibility. The researcher has also substantiated the findings and information agreed to by the participants in an accurate and appropriate manner.

**3.8.2 Transferability:** “Transferability requires researcher to provide sufficient data and context to enable the audience to judge whether the findings can be applied to other situations and contexts” (Cameron, 2011: 6). This means that the study must be able to be compared to other studies. The researcher has insured transferability by making sure that the findings of the study were able to be compared to other studies. If



an alternative research was to be done on the same topic, similar results will be expectantly found.

**3.8.3 Confirmability:** confirmability refers to ensuring that the study's findings are the result of the experiences of the informants rather than the preferences of the researcher and can be achieved through the audit trail of the raw data, memos, notes, data reduction and analysis (Cameron, 2011). "The researcher should not provide information from their own imagination or feelings; they should link the findings with the data that was gathered" (Creswell, 1998:206). To ensure conformability, the researcher presented the information systematically and all the information was analysed and interpreted, acknowledge sources where possible.

**3.8.4 Dependability:** dependability assures that the research outcomes are reliable and could be repeated. This is ensured by the quality in which the research is conducted, analysed, described, and presented. Cameron (2011) claims that dependability refers to having sufficient details and documentation of the methods employed so that the study can be scrutinized and replicated. The researcher has insured this criterion by being certain that the methods used for gathering data are traceable and can be evaluated.

### **3.9 SUMMARY**

This chapter focused on to the research methodology used in the study. The chapter dealt with the research approach and research design and they were also discussed with thorough details. The section of research sampling was discussed thoroughly, and sampling was purposive as the researcher intentionally selected participants who have thorough knowledge and practical experience about the phenomenon in the study. The researcher also paid attention to data collection, data population and data analysis. On

the section of data collection, methods of gathering data from participants were discussed. Face-to-face and telephone interviews were selected as one of the reliable methods of collecting information. In the section of data analysis, the researcher selected thematic analysis as the suitable and applicable method for this study. Quality criteria was discussed in detail to show the researcher's understanding of the importance of considering credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **DATA PRESENTATION, INTERPRETATION AND ANALYSIS**

#### **4.1 INTRODUCTION**

This chapter presents, interprets, and analyses data of the study gathered during face-to-face and telephone interviews. It also. The chapter is divided into five parts, namely: it discusses types of forms of address used in the University of Limpopo between Students and Lecturers, secondly the chapter alludes to the types of terms of reference in the afro-mentioned institution. Thirdly, factors influencing the use of forms of address are outlined, including, factors influencing the use of terms of reference are discussed. Moreover, the differentiation of Professors and Doctors from other lecturers is elaborated. Furthermore, the difference between postgraduates' and undergraduates' use of forms of address to professors and doctors is also discussed. This chapter also makes an extensive discussion about the importance of addressing lecturers with appropriate titles and the importance of implementing a rule(s) or policy regarding the use of appropriate forms of address is thoroughly elaborated. Finally, a summary is given.

#### **4.2 REPONSES FROM PARTICIPANTS**

Fifteen (15) participants were supposed to be interviewed, however, Ten (10) participants satisfied the notion of data saturation. This is because participants were giving slightly similar answers. Data accumulated disclose that these participants have provided enough information that replicate the study. Most of these participants provided information that is likely to be the same, as such, the researcher concluded that the remaining participants would likely provide the same data. Six (6) participants

were interviewed using face-to-face interviews, whereas four (4) participants were interviewed using telephone interviews.

#### **4.2.1 Types of Forms of Address used in the University of Limpopo**

The researcher has found that there are two types of forms of address in the University of Limpopo which are Names and Titles.

##### **4.2.1.1 Names**

The use of names in this research reveals familiarity between participants and lecturers, there is only one type of name used in the University of Limpopo which is first name. Only single participant, which is participant one confirmed that they address lecturers by first name.

According to the results obtained, participant one prefers to address most of the lecturers by first names, which is not an issue to them as they see postgraduate students as matured and future academics just like them. The participant further elaborates that, they are friends with most of the lecturers, as such, they are used to addressing them by first names.

##### **4.2.1.2 Titles**

The data attained reveals that nine out of ten participants, namely, participant two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine and ten indicated that they address lecturers by their appropriate titles. The data further indicates that there are two types of titles used in the University of Limpopo, which are title plus last name and Title only. Out of nine participants, seven use title only, namely Participant two, four, five, six, seven, nine and

ten. Only two participants which are participant three and eight address lecturers by title plus last name.

According to the results obtained, it is found that participants use title only, for formality purposes. Participant two, three, five, nine and ten postulate that they address lecturers by suitable title only, and further explain that if the lecturer is a Mr, Mrs or Ms they address them as such, and the same applies to Professors and Doctors. Participant four also indicates that they address their lecturers depending on the academic title they are holding, explaining that they address Masters holders as Sir, Mr, Ms or Mrs. Moreover, participant six and seven confirm that they address their male lecturers as Sir and female lecturers as Ma'am unless they have a higher qualification, in which case they address them as Doctor or Professor. Furthermore, it has been found that, participant three and eight prefer to address lecturers using Title plus Name because they believe it is formal and professional.

#### **4.2.2 Types of Terms of Reference used in the University of Limpopo.**

The researcher has found that most of the participants use terms of reference depending on who they are with. There are two Types of terms of reference which are as follows; names and titles, however, the researcher has added names and titles to accommodate participants who use different terms of reference depending on the individuals they are with. It is also evident that participants use first names, last names and nicknames when they are with friends and close classmates, and they use title only and title plus last name when they are interacting with other individuals such as staff members and lecturers.

#### 4.2.2.1 Names

According to the information obtained, four participants (one, three, eight and ten) use Names to refer to lecturers. Participant one and three use nicknames and participant eight and ten use First Name and Last Name.

The results indicate that, participant one states that students tend to give lecturers nicknames, not to belittle them but to enlighten their conversations. This implies that students use nicknames to express their feelings or emotions towards lecturers. Additionally, respondent three refers to nicknames as 'funny' names which is the reason why they prefer using them in the lecturers' absence. The respondent further explains that they give lecturers nicknames based on how they act and conduct themselves before students. Moreover, it has been found that participant eight and ten refer to the lecturers by first name and last name. participant eight elaborated that they use first or last name to refer to the lecturers especially when they are with friends or classmates.

#### 4.2.2.2 Titles

Three out of ten participants, namely, respondent two, four and six address their lecturers using appropriate titles.

Participant two reveals that the academic relationship they have with their lecturers, does not change according to where or who they are with, they still use the lecturers' appropriate titles. Additionally, participant four states that they address their lecturers by title plus last name, they also outlined that it is important to refer to lecturers the same way they are addressed. Moreover, the information attained reveals that participant six prefer referring their lecturers by title plus last name so that the individuals they are engaging with know who they are referring to.

#### 4.2.2.3 Names and Tittles

The respondents (five, seven and nine) in this context use terms of reference based on the individuals they are interacting with. It has been found that they use different types of terms of reference referring to the same lecturer.

The data reveals that, participant five and nine elaborated that they have certain names for their lecturers which are nicknames, as such, they refer to them by nicknames when they are with close friends or classmates. On the contrary, the same participants outlined that they refer to the lecturers by title plus last name when they are with classmates they are not close to, and when interacting with other lecturers and staff members. Additionally, participant seven stated that they refer to lecturers using Titles only especially when they are with classmates because the lecturer is known to both of them. Furthermore, the participant states that when they are with friends, they use last name without the Title. However, when they are interacting with other lecturers and staff members, they refer to them by appropriate titles.

#### **4.2.3 Factors that influence the use of Forms of Address**

According to the results found, it is confirmed that there are five types of factors that influence the use of Forms of Address which are setting, respect, age and culture, and degree of intimacy. The information reveals that out of ten participants, three participants fall under setting factor, four under respect, one under degree of intimacy and two participants under age and culture factor.

##### 4.2.3.1 Setting

In terms of the setting or environment, the data obtained reveals that three participants which are participant one, three and nine, address lecturers depending on where they

are. The researcher has found that these students tend to be formal in academic premises and informal outside academia.

The information obtained from participant one discloses that students tend to address lecturers depending on the subject matter at hand, for instances, when they are in an academic context or engaging on academic issues, they are obliged to address lecturers with their appropriate titles. However, when the very same student and lecturer engage in a casual conversation, they address them by first names. Additionally, participant three hypothesises that relationship and context play a major role in a face-to-face interaction. The participant further elaborated that they address lecturers by Title plus Last Name in an academic setting, however, they address the same lecturers by first name or nicknames outside the working environment; and gave an example by saying “if we are in a casual setting such as soccer field, I address them by their soccer nickname. Of course, there are those I address by titles regardless of where we are”. With participant nine, it has been found that their manner of addressing is influenced by the formality of the setting, the participant particularised that they address lecturers by titles in a formal setting and use last name in an informal setting.

#### 4.2.3.2 Respect

The information accomplished discloses that participant two, six, eight and ten address lectures out of respect, as such they address them by titles.

The information elaborates that, respondent two explained that lecturers earn their Titles through hard work hence they should be respected, and further says that they would expect other people to address them according to their achievements. Additionally, participant six articulates that a ‘title’ is important because it is based on hard work, hence, addressing a Professor by name is a sign of disrespect. Participant eight and ten stated that they respect is the only aspect that address lecturers by academic lecturers, hence, they use title plus last name.



#### 4.2.3.3 Degree of intimacy

According to the information obtained, some University of Limpopo students use forms of address depending on how close they are with their lecturers. Only one participant which is participant five address to their lecturers depending on the degree of intimacy.

The results from participant five elucidates that they address their lecturers according to the relationship they have with them. The participant further emphasised that there are some lecturers who are too formal, as such, they address them by titles. On the contrary, the same participant disclosed that they address lecturers they have a close relationship with by last name.

#### 4.2.3.4 Age and culture

Only two participants (five and seven) stressed about age and culture as factor, they use Title only or Title plus Last Name, unless told otherwise by the lecturer.

The results from participant four discloses that culture and age play a vital role as they confirm that they have been taught to respect elders as part of their culture, and as such, lecturers must be addressed according to the way they introduce themselves to students and be addressed the way they expect to be addressed. Moreover, with the information obtained from participant seven, age goes hand in hand with respect, as such, they opt to address lecturers accordingly.

#### **4.2.4 Factors that influence the use of Terms of Reference**

It has been found that there are two factors of reference used, which are setting and respect. Seven out of ten participants use names influenced by setting factor, and only

three participants fall under respect factor. The data obtained shows that, most of the participants use nicknames in an informal setting.

#### 4.2.4.1 Setting

In this context, the data obtained discloses that seven participants give lecturers nicknames deriving from different things such as behaviour and pronunciation, mostly outside academic setting. Tlou (2018: 43) asserts that “nicknames always carry a certain truth behind them which can be positive through praising, complimenting or negative by carrying the meaning of derogatory, irony, sarcasm and satire”.

According to the data obtained from participant one, they refer to lecturer using nicknames deriving from the lecturer’s behaviour, for example, they refer to a certain lecturer as ‘*Pekwa*’ which means an eagle, it symbolises the lecturer’s power over students that they take advantage of. The nickname derived from his style of teaching and class management, where students often feel like they are to keep quiet the whole time until the class ends. So does an eagle, the chicks are to keep quiet and hide themselves.

With participant two, the manner in which lecturers conduct themselves before students is a major factor, and they give most of the lecturers nicknames deriving from the lecturers’ actions. Additionally, respondent three claims that their classmates gave a certain syntax lecturer a nickname deriving from the way the lecturer pronounces the word ‘syntax’, as he or she pronounces it in a foreign manner. The participant further explains that they refer to the lecturer as ‘syntactician’, mimicking his or her articulation to make it funnier. Also, the name is only known amongst these classmates.

According to the results from participant five and eight, the lecturer’s absentia is the reason behind the use of nicknames, because the lecturers will not be offended. The results gathered expose that the respondents are aware that nicknames are not for

addressing as they may be offensive most of the time, and further explained that they are influenced by the lecturer's behaviour or looks.

Participant nine says that their way of referring is influenced by the lecturers' educational level and social behaviour, as such, they refer their lecturer as "Caesar", named after Caesar's story book that he or she taught them from second year to honours level, and the lecturer loves the book. The participant further explains that there is another lecturer they address and also refer as 'Mr Original', this is because the lecturer introduced themselves as 'Mr Original', and the students have no idea where it originated from. Mashiri (1998) confirms that there are positive nicknames which can symbolise compliments and treasured values. This implies that not all nicknames are meant for referring, but also to address the addressee by them as they may also be a symbol of praise.

#### 4.2.4.2 Respect

The researcher has found that three participants (four, six and seven) use titles when referring to the lecturers which is a form of respect.

According to the results from participant four, their choice of term of reference is influenced by respect as they still refer to the lecturers the same way they address them (title only or title plus last name). Additionally, participant six and seven also refer to lecturers the same way they address them. Participant six further explicates that it is about reputation of the lecturers, as such, they deserve to be referred the same way they are addressed.

#### **4.2.5 Differentiation from Professors and Doctors to other lecturers (Degree, Honours and Masters holders).**

The information attained reveals that all the ten participants can differentiate from Professors and Doctors and other degree or honours and Masters holders. This is for the reason that, most of them grew to be closer to the lecturers.

The information attained from participant one reveals that even, though they address lecturers by suitable titles (especially in an academic setting), there are Doctors or Professors, nonetheless, they may prefer to be addressed by first or last name. Participant two, three, five and ten claim that they can differentiate Doctors and Professors from degree, honours and Masters holders. According to participant four, six, eight and nine, Professors and Doctors titles are specific academic titles, as such, they are easy to differentiate from other ordinary titles. Moreover, participant seven stated that they never confuse titles.

#### **4.2.6 The difference between postgraduate's and undergraduate's use of Forms of Address to Professors and Doctors.**

The researcher believed it is important to question participants' undergraduate experiences concerning Forms of Address, because it would grant this study evidence on whether it is important to teach students the importance of addressing lecturers according to their academic achievements or not. According to the information attained from the participants, it is evident that most of them were in some sort of confusion, as such, they addressed lecturers as sir or ma'am. Additionally, only three out of ten participants were aware of academic titles, whereas seven participants were unaware. However, the results shows that all postgraduate participants use Forms of Address accordingly.

According to participant two, seven, and eight, they still address lecturers the same way they did during their undergraduate level, which means they never confused the titles. This implies that these participants were aware that lecturers have different titles.

It has been found that, participant one, used to address lecturers as Ma'am and Sir in their undergraduate level, however, as years went by, they discovered that not all lecturers are 'Ma'am' and 'Sir'. The participant (one) further explains that they address lecturers differently depending on the titles since they are on postgraduate level. Moreover, the information achieved from participant three discloses that, they used to address lecturers with any Title regardless of their suitable academic title.

Participant four says as first year students, in most cases, when lecturers introduced themselves as Professors or Doctors, it did not seem to be something much important, and they did not take it into consideration. The participant further elaborate that they usually addressed all male lecturers as 'Mr' and all females as 'Ms', reason being that they forgot about their real academic titles. However, the participant confirms that they got to understand how the academic world works, as such, being a postgraduate student made them realise these academic titles.

Participant five outlined that the years they spent on the university granted them the opportunity to understand how academic titles work. Additionally, Participant six postulates that they used to address male lecturers as '*Meneer*' and female lecturers as 'Ma'am', because they were influenced by how they used to address their primary and secondary teachers. The participant also asserts that they were not aware that one could be a qualified Doctor unless they are a Medical Doctor, as a result, they did not understand nor see the need to use academic titles, however, the participant emphasises that they currently address lecturers accordingly. The information attained from participant nine and ten reveal that they used to address all female lecturers as 'ma'am' and male lecturers as 'sir' or 'Mr', however, that has changed since they are a postgraduate student.

#### **4.2.7 The importance of addressing lecturers with suitable titles.**

The information obtained reveals that all the participants agree that it is important to address Professors and Doctors accordingly, reason being that these lecturers worked hard to earn their titles.

Participant one pointed out that most lecturers tend to argue or correct students when they address them by incorrect titles, as such, it is important to use suitable titles because it creates an ongoing interaction between the lecturer and student. On the other hand, participant two proclaims that it depends on the student-lecturer relationship, for instances, other lecturers are comfortable with being addressed by their names outside the working environment; reason being that they have developed some sort of a friendship with their students.

Participant three says that one day they will expect to be addressed as a Doctor or as a Professor, hence they are alert about the importance of addressing with the correct academic titles. The participant further gave an example of addressing the Vice Chancellor of University of Limpopo as 'Mr Mokgalong' instead of 'Professor Mokgalong', this is regarded as disrespect and undermining. This implies that most postgraduate students not only see the importance of appropriate addressing, but also see it as a motivation and enthusiasm to reach where their lecturers are at. Similarly, respondent four stated that these lecturers have earned their academic titles, as such, it is important to address them accordingly. The participant further explained that they would like to be acknowledged as a Doctor when they finish their Doctorate, as they are still pursuing their studies. Moreover, participant five stated that lecturers have worked hard to obtain their titles, it is important to acknowledge them.

The information obtained from participant six confirms that it is important to address lecturers with their suitable titles, though, sometimes it depends on individual's preference. The participant further explains that most lecturers that are students' peers,

are likely to prefer to be addressed by their first names as they feel like students treat them like elders by using titles on them. On the contrary, others prefer to be recognised by their academic titles.

Participant seven says that there is no use in working hard for a title only to be addressed anyhow. They further elaborate that since this is an academic setting, addressing Professors and Doctors as such will not only give students motivation to study further but also inspire their colleagues holding lower degrees to get out of their comfort zone and study further. Moreover, data obtained from participants eight and nine shows that addressing those with Doctorates and Professorships as 'Mr' and 'Ma'am' pose as disrespect, as such, forms of address in general assist in comprehending social concepts to human relationship in society. Participant ten outlines that acknowledging one's Title is important.

#### **4.2.8 The importance of implementing a rule(s) or policy regarding the importance use of appropriate Forms of Address.**

It has been found that, participant six and eight disagreed with the introduction of the rule or policy, however, eight out of the ten participants, namely; participant one, two, three, four, five, seven, nine and ten postulate that it is important for the University to implement a rule (s) or policy regarding the importance use of forms of address. This relates to Wanatabe (1997) in Mogie (2002), as he states that students in Japan are only allowed to address their junior researchers by their Titles regardless of the strong intimacy towards their lectures, they must maintain their academic relationship with them.

Participant one and four assert that the academic world operates like any other institutions such as hospitals where there are Nurses and Doctors and the court of law that have Judges, Lawyers, Interpreters and so on; as such, the academic world also

has lectures, Doctors, Professors and Reverends. Moreover, the participant further elaborates that it is important for students to understand the importance of addressing appropriately, and a better way to do it is through teaching (rule) students about the importance of forms of address and the importance of addressing lecturers accordingly. Similarly, participant two's response illustrates that without formality, there is no academic progress, as such, students cannot address lecturers by whatever form they feel like addressing. The participant further explains that introducing a policy would be the quickest way to teach students about the importance of formal addressing.

The information from participant three outlined that forms of address and their importance should be part of the University's policy. Moreover, participant five stated that the implementation of the rule will be a sort of an honour to lecturers as their hard work is acknowledged.

The data attained present that participant seven, conditions that it is important for rules or policy to be implemented by the university, however, they must leave space for those who do not mind being addressed by their First Name. However, the rule or policy should emphasise the importance of using titles when addressing lecturers, reason being that this is an academic setting which is a professional world. The participant further explains that if the lecturer earns the academic title, then it automatically means that they must be addressed by that particular title. Additionally, Data attained from participant nine also shows that it is important to address lecturers by their titles, as it improves effective communication and also shows professionalism. Moreover, participant ten postulated that the implementation of rules is important and lecturers have worked have to earn them.

On the contrary, the information obtained from participant six discloses that it might be a bit challenging to implement a rule(s) or policy as there are other lecturers that prefer to be addressed according to their comfortable forms of address, others prefer to be addressed by their first names or last names. Data obtained from participant six, further



elaborate that implementing a strict rule or policy will accommodate lecturers who strictly want to be addressed by their academic titles. As such, the rule or policy must give a room to lecturers who prefer to be addressed anyhow. However, the participant declares that it would be important if undergraduate students were to be introduced to the importance of forms of address including the knowledge of proper environment for addressing. Furthermore, the data reveals that participant eight do not think it is important for students to address their lecturers with apposite titles because, students who do not want to address their lectures by their correct titles must not be forced to do so.

**4.3 THE TABLE BELOW SERVES AS AN EXAMPLE ILLUSTRATING HOW FORMS OF ADDRESS AND TERMS OF REFERENCE USED IN THE UNIVERSITY OF LIMPOPO:**

THEME	NAMES	TITLES
PROFESSIONAL	1. LAST NAME	1. TITLE ONLY a. Professor (Prof) b. Doctor c. Mr d. Sir e. ma'am f. Ms  2. TITLE + LAST NAME a. Prof Mohale b. Doctor Mamba c. Ms Lebogo
SOCIAL	2. NICKNAME a. <i>Pekwa</i>	3. TITLE +FIRST NAME a. Dr Lebo

		b. Syntactician c. Mr Original d. Caesar	
PROFESSIONAL SOCIAL	AND	3. FIRST NAME a. Dr Lebo b. Mr Original	4. TITLE+NICKNAME a. Prof Syntactician b. Dr. Caesar c. Dr. <i>Pekwa</i> c. Mr Original

#### 4.4 SUMMARY

This chapter presented various types of forms of address and terms of reference. The chapter identifies two types of forms of address which are Names (first name, last name and nickname) and Titles (title only, title plus first name and title plus last name). The chapter has shown that academic title 'Professor' is shortened as 'Prof' and 'Doctor' as 'Dr'. The titles Prof, Dr, Mr, sir, ma'am and Ms are mostly used as forms of address. The factors that influence choice of forms of address are setting, respect, degree of intimacy, age and culture; and factors that influence the use of terms of reference are setting and respect. It is concluded that most of the undergraduates are unaware of the importance of the use of forms of address. This chapter confirms the importance of implementing a rule(s) or policy regarding forms of address.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **SUMMARY, FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **5.1 INTRODUCTION**

Chapter four presented the results of the study. It has been established there are different types of forms of address and terms of reference used in the University of Limpopo. The results showed factors that influence the use of forms of address and how terms of reference are used in various ways depending on the factors. This chapter discusses the findings, conclusion remarks and recommendations of the study.

#### **5.2 SUMMARY**

The summary is about what each chapter from the study has discussed. In chapter one, the background of the study on sociolinguistics was discussed. Definitions of sociolinguistics, language, society, forms of address and terms of reference were given. The relationship between forms of address and terms of reference were discussed, and research problem was also explained. Additionally, the chapter discussed the role of the theory, wherein the theory of The Pronouns of Power and Solidarity by Brown and Gilman (1960) was related to the study. Moreover, the aim and objectives were clarified, and permission to conduct a research, anonymity and confidentiality, and informed consent were discussed under ethical considerations. Additionally, an explanation of ethical consideration was given, organisation of the study, which is the summary of the five chapters of the study was illustrated. Lastly, summary of chapter one was provided.

In chapter two, which is literature review, entails presentation of well-structured reports of academic works accomplished on topics which are comparable to the topic of the recent research. Literature on Names and types of names which were as follows; First Names, Last Name and Nick Names (positive and negative nicknames), Titles and

types of titles such as, Title Only and Title plus Last Names; Kinship Terms and types of Kinship terms which were as follows, Consanguine/Consanguineal Kinships and Affilial or affinal Kinships were thoroughly discussed. Moreover, literature on avoidance of forms of address was explained. Furthermore, factors that influence the usage of forms of address which were social status, sex, age, family relationship, occupational hierarchy, transactional status, race and degree of intimacy were discussed. Lastly, summary was given.

In chapter three, the research methodology was discussed thoroughly. The research approach was selected, the researcher opted for the qualitative research as the study focused on the exploration and comprehension of social or human daily problem. Additionally, this chapter focused on research design, the researcher opted for explorative research resign because the study has few or no previous studies done, especially in South African Universities in particular. The population of the study were postgraduate students majoring in languages and linguistics, and sampling was purposefully selected, and fifteen (15) postgraduate students majoring in languages and linguistics were selected using purposive sampling. Face-to-face and telephone interviews were selected under data collection. Additionally, thematic analysis was chosen as data analysis to identify, analyse and reporting patterns within the data perceived as a fundamental method for qualitative analysis. Furthermore, credibility, transferability, confirmability and dependability were discussed. Lastly, summary was given.

Chapter four consisted of data presentation, interpretation and analysis from the participants. The following data from participants was presented, interpreted and analysed; types of Forms of Address and Terms of Reference in the University of Limpopo, factors that influence the usage of Forms of Address and factors that influence the usage of terms of terms of reference, differentiation from Professors and Doctors to other lecturers (Degree, Honours and Masters holders), the difference between postgraduate's and undergraduate's use of Forms of Address to Professors

and Doctors, the importance of addressing lecturers with suitable titles, and, the importance of implementing a rule(s) regarding the importance use of appropriate Forms of Address. Additionally, a table illustrating forms of address and terms of reference that exists in the University of Limpopo. Lastly, summary was provided.

Chapter five included the summary which summarises all chapters of the study from chapter one to chapter five; findings which focus on chapter four's data; conclusion and recommendations on possible future studies.

### **5.3 FINDINGS**

As introduced in chapter one, the purpose of this study was to identify and describe the forms of address and types of terms of reference used by the students of the University of Limpopo in addressing their lecturers, and upon the completion of the research, the researcher has found that there are various types of forms of address and terms of reference that the students of University of Limpopo use to address lecturers. The study found that students use names (first name, last name and nickname) and titles (title only, title plus first name and title plus last name) as forms of address and terms of reference. The researcher also found the types of titles that are used by the students are Professor which they shorten it as Prof, Doctor, Mr., Sir, Ma'am and Ms/Mrs. According to the findings of this research, most of the students that use the first names, last names and nicknames to lecturers they have a close relationship with. On the contrary, this study's findings revealed that, students use titles on lecturers to signify professionalism and honour to the lecturers. Moreover, the study found that the manner in which most students use to address the lecturers differ from the manner in which they refer to them, however, there are those who address lecturers the same way they refer to them.

The second purpose of this study was to determine the factors that influences the University of Limpopo students' choice of forms of address and terms of reference in

addressing their lecturers. According to this study's findings, there are several factors behind the choice of forms of address which are respect, degree of intimacy (close and limited relationship between the lecturer and students), setting (environment), age (culture). The researcher found that students' use of forms of address particularly the title only or title plus last name signifies a limited relationship between the lecturers and students, however, the use of first names, last names, title plus first name and positive nicknames when addressing lecturers symbolises a close relationship between a lecturer and a student. In terms of the terms of reference, the study found that most of the students use nicknames to express how they feel about the lecturers, and there are also those who address lectures the same way they refer to them.

The third which is the last purpose of this study was to explore the University of Limpopo students' stance on the importance of implementing a rule(s) regarding the importance use of appropriate Forms of Address. This study's findings revealed that, most of the students agreed that it is important for the University to implement a rule/policy regarding the importance of forms of address and appropriate usage. The research found that participants stressed about the hardwork and dedication lecturers have committed to earn those academic titles (Professors and Doctors. The study found that there are few participants that disagreed with the importance of implementing the rule (s) regarding the importance use of appropriate forms of address, reason being that students must not be forced to address lecturers but address them as they prefer.

#### **5.4 CONCLUSIONS**

In conclusion, the summary of all the chapters of this study has been given. The research findings revealed that the students of University of Limpopo use forms of address and terms of reference depending on the relationship they have with their lecturers. Moreover, these postgraduate students claim that they did not understand the importance of addressing lecturers using appropriate titles when they were still undergraduates. Most of them are aware of the importance of forms of address, hence

they agreed that it would be a great course to implement a rule regarding the usage of forms of address by the students of University of Limpopo.

## **5.5 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- The researcher recommends a study on the lecturers' stance on the usage of forms of address by their students when addressing them.
- A research on the lecturer's opinion regarding the importance of forms of address is recommended.
- Recommendation on the study focusing on how lecturers address one another.
- A study on forms of address in other settings such as hospitals, court of law and municipalities should be conducted.

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## APPENDIX A

### LETTER OF INFORMED CONSENT

Dear Participant

My name is Rebecca Ntshwaki Malatji (student numberXXXXXX). I am Masters candidate in the Department of Translation and Linguistics studying at the University of Limpopo.

**The title of my research is:** Forms of Address: A Case of University of Limpopo.

It is important to participate in this study as it will assist the researcher to achieve the aim of the study, which is to identify and describe the forms of address and types of the terms of reference used by the students of the University of Limpopo in addressing their lecturers, to determine the factors that influences the University of Limpopo students' choice of forms of address in addressing their lecturers, to explore the University of Limpopo lecturers' stance on the forms of address used by their students when addressing them.

The interview will take a minimum of 10 minutes. The researcher will explain and clarify some of the questions that you do not understand. This is voluntary, and you will not be asked in anywhere during the interview to mention your name. The information that you share with the researcher during the interview will remain confidential. Your participation is thus important!

I can be contacted at: School of Languages and Communication Studies, University of Limpopo. Email: XXXXXXXXXX or rebeccantshwaki@gmail.com Cell: XXXXX.

My supervisor is Doctor (Dr) TA Makamu who is located at the School of Languages and Communication Studies, University of Limpopo. Contact details: email XXXXXX  
Phone number: XXXXXXXXXX

## **APPENDIX B**

### **INTERVIEW QUESTIONS**

1. How do you address your lecturers in lecture halls, in their offices, and outside the working environment?
2. How do you refer to your lecturers with your classmates, with your friends, other students and other lecturers or staff members?
3. What determines the choice of forms of address in a face-to-face interaction with your lecturers?
4. What determines the choice of terms of reference in your lecturer's absence? (If different from forms of address)
5. Do you address Doctors and Professors differently from the other lecturers? If not, what are the reasons?
6. Now that you are a postgraduate, is the way you address your lecturers differ from the time you were still an undergraduate?
7. In your opinion, is it important to address the lecturers with their suitable titles? State your reasons?
8. Do you think it is important for the university to implement a rule (s) regarding the importance of forms of address especially for addressing lecturers? State your reasons?





University of Limpopo  
Faculty of Humanities  
Office of the Research Professor  
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---

**To** : Research Development and Administration Director, Dr T. Mabila  
**Via** : Executive Dean, Professor R.S. Maoto  
**From** : Research Professor  
**Date** : 25 November 2019  
**Subject** : Faculty endorsement of proposals approved by School

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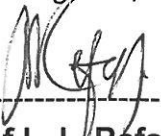
Dear Dr Mabila

This is to confirm that proposals of students specified below should serve at TREC. They were approved by the School of Languages and Communication Studies, authorised to do so by and on behalf of the Faculty Executive Committee (FEC). The FEC has adopted the new approach of identifying where disciplinary expertise lies. Depending on this, the proposal approval route was shortened by not tabling all proposals at three levels of the Department, School and Faculty. The names of the two students are:

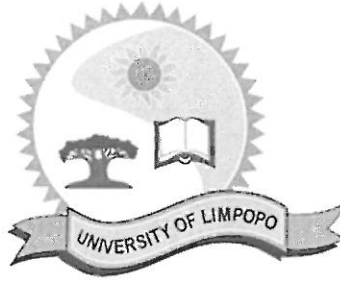
2. Malatji RN [REDACTED]

I thank you in advance for your support.

Kind regards,

  
Prof L.J. Rafapa

  
Prof RS Maoto  
Executive Dean



University of Limpopo  
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22 November 2019

NAME OF STUDENT: Malatji RN  
STUDENT NUMBER: [REDACTED]  
DEPARTMENT: Translation, Linguistics and CEMS  
SCHOOL: Languages and Communications Studies  
QUALIFICATION – MA Coursework

Dear Student

**SCHOOL APPROVAL OF PROPOSAL (Mini Dissertation)**

I have pleasure in informing you that your MA proposal served at the School Senior Degrees meeting held 13 November 2019 and your title was approved as follows:

TITLE: Forms of Address and Terms of Reference: A case of University of Limpopo

Note the following:

Ethical Clearance	Tick One
In principle the study requires no ethical clearance, but will need a TREC permission letter before proceeding with the study	
Requires ethical clearance (Human) (TREC) (apply online) Proceed with the study only after receipt of ethical clearance certificate	√
Requires ethical clearance (Animal) (AREC) Proceed with the study only after receipt of ethical clearance certificate	

Yours faithfully

Director: School of Languages and Communication Studies  
Supervisor: Dr TA Makamu  
Co-supervisor:



**University of Limpopo**  
Department of Research Administration and Development  
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**TURFLOOP RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE**  
**ETHICS CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE**

**MEETING:** 05 November 2019

**PROJECT NUMBER:** TREC/491/2019: PG

**PROJECT:**

**Title:** Forms of Address: A Case of University of Limpopo  
**Researcher:** RN Malatji  
**Supervisor:** Dr TA Makamu  
**Co-Supervisor/s:** N/A  
**School:** Languages and Communication Studies  
**Degree:** Master of Arts in Translation and Linguistics

**PROF P MASOKO**  
**CHAIRPERSON: TURFLOOP RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE**

The Turfloop Research Ethics Committee (TREC) is registered with the National Health Research Ethics Council, Registration Number: REC-0310111-031

**Note:**

- i) This Ethics Clearance Certificate will be valid for one (1) year, as from the abovementioned date. Application for annual renewal (or annual review) need to be received by TREC one month before lapse of this period.
- ii) Should any departure be contemplated from the research procedure as approved, the researcher(s) must re-submit the protocol to the committee, together with the Application for Amendment form.
- iii) PLEASE QUOTE THE PROTOCOL NUMBER IN ALL ENQUIRIES.



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**TURFLOOP RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE**  
**ETHICS CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE**

**MEETING:** 18 November 2020

**PROJECT NUMBER:** TREC/491/2019: PG - Renewed

**PROJECT:**

**Title:** Forms of Address: A Case of University of Limpopo  
**Researcher:** RN Malatji  
**Supervisor:** Dr TA Makamu  
**Co-Supervisor/s:** N/A  
**School:** Languages and Communication Studies  
**Degree:** Master of Arts in Translation and Linguistics

**PROF P MASOKO**  
**CHAIRPERSON: TURFLOOP RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE**

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- ii) Should any departure be contemplated from the research procedure as approved, the researcher(s) must re-submit the protocol to the committee, together with the Application for Amendment form.
- iii) PLEASE QUOTE THE PROTOCOL NUMBER IN ALL ENQUIRIES.

**University of Zululand**  
**KwaDlangezwa Campus**

**Faculty of Arts**  
**Languages and Communication Studies**  
**Department of General Linguistics and Modern Languages**



RESTRUCTURED FOR RELEVANCE

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21 December 2021

**TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN**

This letter serves to certify that I have edited the research thesis titled: **Forms of Address: The Case of University of Limpopo by Ms. RN Malatji** (██████████). To my knowledge, the work has been thoroughly edited. Unless tampered with prior to your reception of the edited work, I trust you will find the editing quality in order.

Regards



---

**MS RX MASONTO (EDITOR)**