THE STATUS AND ROLE OF MINORITY AFRICAN LANGUAGES IN SOUTH AFRICA'S NEW AND DEMOCRATIC LANGUAGE POLICY

by

NICHOLAS ELIJAH NXUMALO

Submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF EDUCATION

in the Department of

LANGUAGE METHODOLOGY

in the Faculty of Education

at the

UNIVERSITY OF THE NORTH

Private Bag X1106

SOVENGA

0727

NOVEMBER 2000

PROMOTER	:	**PROF A.L. MAWASHA**
CO-PROMOTER	:	**PROF N.C.P. GOLELE**

DECLARATION

I, Nicholas Elijah Nxumalo, declare that **THE STATUS AND ROLE OF MINORITY AFRICAN LANGUAGES IN SOUTH AFRICA'S NEW AND DEMOCRATIC LANGUAGE POLICY** submitted to the University of the North has not been previously submitted for a degree at any other University by me, that it is my own work in design and execution, and that all material contained therein has been duly acknowledged.

N.E. NXUMALO

DEDICATION

Dedicated to my father Samuel Xibakele, my deceased mother Messlinah Cuma N'wa Moyane and their children:

My deceased brother Calvin Isaiah "Yster"

My two sisters Constance Ester and Duduzile Nerence

My younger brother Zacharia Butana

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to express my sincere gratitude to the following:

Prof AL. Mawasha, my promoter, for his expert advice, encouragement, patience and critical comments that have inspired me to complete this work

Ke a leboga Kolobe. Le ka moso.

Prof N.C.P. Golele, my co-promoter, for her suggestions and constructive criticism which greatly assisted me.

Ndzi titwa ndzi ri wa nkateko ku va xin'wana xa swiluva swa n'wina lexi hatleke xi baleka entangeni wa n'wina.

Prof R.N. Madadzhe, Prof C.N. Marivate, Prof S. Louw, Prof S.P.P. Mminele, Mr M.F. Ralenala, Mr M.J. Mona, Mr P.H. Nkuna and **Mr H.T. Mashele** who always have shown interest in my work and for their encouragement.

The selected high school learners and teachers, students and lecturers from

questionnaires.

My dearest wife **Julia,** and our daughters **Mashudu, Mahlori** and **Nsuku**, for their prayers, encouragement and support throughout the years of my studies.

Mrs S. Van der Merwe, who neatly typed this manuscript.

Dr L. Kasanga, who spent hours editing this work.

M-Net, for the financial assistance towards the cost of this study.

Above all, my deepest thanks to God, who spared my life before and after the car accident which I was involved in on the 17th November 1999, till I saw this exacting task completed.

ABBREVIATIONS

ABET	:	Adult Basic Education and Training
ANC	:	African National Congress
CSIR	:	Council for Scientific and Industrial Research
CCV	:	Contemporary Community Values
D.E.I.C	:	Dutch East Indian Company
LANGTAG	:	Language Plan Task Group
LiCCA	:	Language in Contact and Conflict
M.O.I	:	Medium of Instruction
NEPI	:	National Education Policy Investigation
NGO	:	Non-Government Organisation
NQF	:	National Qualifications Framework
PANSALB	:	Pan South African Language Board
R.S.A	:	Republic of South Africa
S.A.B.C	:	South African Broadcasting Corporation
TBVC	:	Transkei, Bophutatswana, Venda and Ciskei
TUATA	:	Transvaal United African Teachers' Association
UNIN	:	The United Nations Institute for Namibia

TABLE OF CONTENTS **PAGE**

CHAPTER 1 : AIM AND SCOPE OF STUDY.......... 1

1.1 Study Orientation.. 1 - 8
1.2 Aims of Study... 9 - 15
1.3 Statement of Problem... 16 - 21
1.4 Delimitation of Field of Study...................................... 21
1.5 Research Methodology... 21
1.5.1 Questionnaires.. 22
1.5.2 Interviews... 22
1.6. Research questions undergirding thesis........................ 22 - 23
1.6 Study Lay-out.. 23 - 24

CHAPTER 2 : AN OVERVIEW AND COMMENT ON THE DISTRIBUTION OF THE MAIN LANGUAGES OF SOUTH AFRICA....................................... 25

2.1 Introduction...25 - 27

2.2 Distribution of the main languages of South Africa..................27 - 34
2.2.1 Statistical representation of language territories in South Africa.. 35 - 42

2.2.2 The Nguni group..42 - 44

2.2.2.1 The northern group.. 45

(a) The Zulu speaking people........................45 - 48

(b) The Swazi speaking people......................48 - 50

2.2.2.2 The southern group.. 51

(a) The Xhosa speaking people.....................51 - 54

(b) The Ndebele speaking people..................54 - 56

2.2.3 The Sotho group..57 - 58

(a) The Northern Sotho speaking people...... 58 - 61

(b) The Sesotho speaking people...................61 - 63

(c) The Setswana speaking people.................63 - 65

2.2.4 The Tshivenda speaking people.....................................65 - 67

2.2.5 The Xitsonga speaking people.......................................67 - 70

2.2.6 The Afrikaans speaking people....... ....70 - 73

2.2.7 The English speaking people..73 - 75

2.3 Conclusion...76 - 77

CHAPTER 3 : BRIEF OVERVIEW OF THE STATUS AND ROLE OF DIFFERENT LANGUAGES IN THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA 78

3.1 Introduction...78 - 80

3.2 Status and role of South African languages before liberation.. 80

3.2.1 The Dutch and Afrikaans languages: ±1652 - 1910................ 80 - 85

3.2.2 The English language : in South Africa 1806- 1910................ 86 - 88

3.2.3 African languages.. 89 -105

3.2.4 Minority vs majority languages...105 -106

3.2.4.1 Minority languages... 106 - 110

3.2.4.2 Majority languages...111 - 117

3.3 The status and role of South African languages after liberation.. 118

3.3.1 Introduction.. 118

3.3.2 Basic Constitutional Provisions of the New Language Policy... 119 - 121

3.3.3 Some comments on the Afrikaans and English languages... 122

3.3.3.1 The Afrikaans language.. 122 - 124

3.3.3.2 The English language... 124 - 126

3.4 Conclusion..127 - 131

CHAPTER 4 : SAMPLING OF DATA................................ 132

4.1 Introduction.. 132

4.2 Sample and sampling method.. 132 - 133

4.3 Design, structure, and administration of the questionnaire..... 133

4.3.1 Design..133 - 134

4.3.2 Structure and administration ....135 - 136

4.4 Analysis of the questionnaire and discussion of initial findings.. 136 - 137

4.4.1 **Responses by high school learners**......................... 137

4.4.1.1 In semi-urban communities.. 137 - 140

4.4.1.2 In urban communities... 140 - 143

4.4.1.3 In rural communities... 143 - 146

4.4.1.4 In cosmopolitan communities .... 147 - 149

4.4.1.5 Conclusion.. 150

4.4.2 **Responses by college students**.................................... 151

4.4.2.1 In semi-urban communities... 151 -153

4.4.2.2 In rural communities... 153 -155

4.4.2.3 In cosmopolitan communities .... 155 -158

4.4.2.4 Conclusion.. 158

4.4.3 **Responses from university students**.............................. 158

4.4.3.1 In the Department of Northern Sotho (Sepedi).................159 - 161

4.4.3.2 In the Department of Xitsonga...................................... 161 - 163

4.4.3.3 In the Department of Tshivenda................................. 163 - 165

4.4.3.4 Conclusion... 165 - 166

4.4.4 **Responses from high school teachers**......................... 166

4.4.4.1 In semi-urban communities... 166 - 168

4.4.4.2 In urban communities.. 168 - 169

4.4.4.3 In rural communities... 170 - 172

4.4.4.4 In cosmopolitan communities.. 172 - 174

4.4.4.5 Conclusion... 175

4.4.5 **Responses from college lecturers**................................ 175

4.4.5.1 In semi-urban communities... 176 - 177

4.4.5.2 In rural communities... 177 - 179

4.4.5.3 In cosmopolitan communities....................................... 179 - 180

4.4.5.4 Conclusion.. 180 - 181

4.4.6 **Responses from university lecturers**........................... 181

4.4.6.1 In the Department
of Northern Sotho.................................... ....181 - 182

4.4.6.2 In the Department
of Xitsonga... 183 - 184

4.4.6.3 In the Department
of Tshivenda.. 184 - 186
4.4.6.4 Conclusion... 186

CHAPTER 5 :FINAL DISCUSSION OF MAIN RESEARCH FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS.............................. 187

5.1. Main research findings and interpretation 187

5.1.1 Familiarity with the language provisions in the
Constitution.. 187 - 191
5.1.2 Awareness about the on-going language policy debate.......... 191 - 192
5.1.3 Involvement in language debate.. 193 - 194
5.1.4 Opinions on the attitude of the pre-1994 government
towards African languages.. 194 - 198
5.1.5 Opinions on the attitude of the post-1994 government
towards African languages.. 198 - 200
5.1.6 Opinions on the treatment of minority African languages........ 200 - 205
5.1.7 Attitudes of minority languages' speakers towards their
own languages... 205 - 209
5.1.8 Opinions on the future of the minority languages.................... 209 - 210

5.2. Final discussion of main research findings and
recommendations 210

5.2.1 Awareness of language rights.. 211 - 214

5.2.2 Awareness of on-going language debate.................................. 215 - 218

5.2.3 Involvement in the language debate... 218 - 222

CHAPTER 6 : CONCLUDING REMARKS AND POSSIBLE AREAS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH.. 223 - 224

BIBLIOGRAPHY.. 225 - 240

APPENDIX 1.. 1 - 10

APPENDIX 2.. 11 - 14

CHAPTER 1: AIM AND SCOPE OF STUDY

1.1 Study Orientation

Act No. 200 of 1993 not only tabled a new democratic Constitution for the Republic of South Africa but also effectively ended the apartheid era that had started in 1948 and introduced an era of democracy which was consummated on the 27 April 1994. Since any political change that occurs cannot but set off a chain reaction of changes in other domains commensurate with the new political philosophy, the demise of apartheid and the rise of democracy was no exception. Section 3 of Chapter 1 (the language clause) of the new Constitution, for example, introduced a revolution in the language policy of the Republic of South Africa. Whereas Act No. 32 of 1961, Section 108 Constitutionally identified English and Afrikaans as South Africa's

> ... official languages rated on a footing of equality, possessing and enjoying equal freedom, rights and privileges (Mawasha, 1982, p.25).

Clause 3 of Act No. 200 changed this language policy and replaced it with one in which

> Afrikaans, English, isiNdebele, Sesotho sa Leboa, Sesotho, Siswati, Xitsonga, Setswana, Tshivenda, isiXhosa and isiZulu shall be the official South African languages at national level and conditions shall be created for their development and for the promotion of their equal use and enjoyment (**Constitution of Republic of South Africa**,1994, p.4 para 3(1)).

As regards the occurrence of language in the domain of classroom instruction, Act No. 32 of 1961, Section 108 laid a basis on which to ground policy regarding the choice of a language of instruction for White learners. This policy was enacted by Section 2(i)(c) of the National Education Policy Act, 1967 (Act 39 of 1967) which stipulated, inter alia, that:

> the mother tongue, if it is English or Afrikaans, shall be the medium of instruction, with gradual equitable adjustment to this principle of any existing practice at variance there with (**White Paper on the Provision of Education in the Republic of South Africa**, 1982, para. 7.11.2(a)(1)(c)).

Act 200 of 1993 on the other hand follows through with a submission made by the ANC to the effect that 9 African languages (see "**Language Policy - Which way**?") be developed to be used as languages of education where the learners and the parent community so desires. This Act provides for:

> "The right of the individual to choose which language or languages to study and to use as language of learning. (medium of instruction) (see **ANC, A Policy Framework for Education and Training**, op cit, p.63).

The ANC's position on the policy of language parity between English and Afrikaans on the one hand and African languages on the other should not be confused with the recommendations contained in the Report of the Commission on Native Education 1949 - 1951 Chapter x(1) or the stipulation of the Black States Constitution Act of 1971 regarding the "elevation" of African languages (see Mawasha, 1982, p.25) since these were more of an operationalisation of the apartheid political philosophy than a language policy in the interest of the speakers of the languages concerned.

These major debates in language policy matters in the Republic of South Africa could not but interest me as a language educationist. In particular what interested me was the status and role of minority African languages in the whole scenario of language parity, language equity and empowerment through language. Hence

the present study.

Literature suggests that issues such as language maintenance and language shift or even language loss cannot be brushed aside in language policies involving majority versus minority languages in the same context (see for example Appel and Muysken, 1987, p. 32-42). Hence Baker (1991, p.47) says that when minority language speakers become bilingual and prefer the majority language, the penalty for the minority language may be language death. Such death is tantamount to language suicide since there is the element of choice, for example language maintenance even in a bilingual or multilingual model.

In the case of South Africa, the promulgation of Act No. 200 of 1993, especially the inclusion of clause 3, may, if not carefully interpreted have a similar subtractive effect on speakers of minority African languages. Verbal comments made by speakers of these languages suggest at best uncertainty and at worst fear regarding the status and role of these minority African languages in a democratic South Africa. The fear seems to emanate from a possibility that sheer language dominance by the majority African languages might marginalise the minority African languages to the detriment of the latter. Baker (1993, pp. 53 - 54) seems to suggest that such fears are not without foundation. He writes that language vitality is affected by the extent and nature of a minority language's use in a wide variety of institutions in regional and cultural organizations, mass media, commerce and industry, and not least education. The absence or token or minimal inclusion of a minority language in the mass media (television, radio, newspapers,

magazines, tapes and computer software) at the very least affects the prestige of the language.

Baker (op cit, pp. 53 - 54) also suggests on the basis of research evidence in Wales that it is the dominance of the majority languages in vital domains such as the mass media "that is the destroyer of a minority language and culture". Baker(ibid) is uncertain as to whether parallel occurrence of minority languages on, say, the radio and television will be "the salvation of the language".

As a mother tongue speaker of a minority language, (Xitsonga), and as a language educationist, I am sensitive to issues of language dominance even where Constitutional provisions purport to protect language rights and ensure language parity. Language policy models often encourage superiority of one language over the other(s) without consciously intending to promote such language dominance (see for example Rubin, 1977 in Baker, 1993, p. 40). It is my honest opinion that any attempt by government to give preference or special status and role to, for example, one majority African language over the other(s) or even to revert to the pre-democracy era and give preference or prominence to English and Afrikaans either overtly or covertly, consciously or unconsciously over the African languages as a whole, will not only constitute a violation of a basic human right, but may also lead to civil strife.

It is also interesting to note that the suppression (and dominance) experienced by African languages under the Nationalist Party government is to a certain extent

similar to the situation experienced by the Afrikaans-speaking South Africans under the British rule. To a certain extent one can say that the speakers of Afrikaans were exposed to one of the worst language suppressions and dominance under the British occupation of South Africa. Dekker (1966, p.10) states that

> Wat sy taal betref, het die Afrikaner in verdrukking gelewe. Vanaf die finale oorgawe van die Kaap aan Engeland het die goewerneurs daarna gestrewe om die kolonie in alle opsigte te verengels. Veral die taal - proklamasies van Lord Charles Somerset (vanaf 1822) is berug. Op alle tereine van die openbare lewe is Engels tot die enigste offisiele taal verklaar. Nederlands, wat die Hollandse koloniste nog as hulle moedertaal beskou het, is uit die goewermentskantore, uit die geregshowe, uit die goewermentskole verban. Ons het almal al verhale gehoor van die strawwe wat aan die skoolkinders opgele is as hulle hul eie taal gepraat het! Selfs word 'n aantal Skotse predikante ingevoer en sterk pogings in die werk gestel om ook die Kerk te verower vir Engels - nie sonder 'n groot mate van sukses nie!

Initially the then British Empire sought to annex and anglicize South Africa because of its strategic position as a gateway and sea-route to the riches of the East. Subsequently, in the 20th century, British conservatives in particular wanted to maintain a grip over South Africa in order, inter alia, to retain power over her minerals wealth. It was for this and other reasons that British conservative politicians such as Lords Milner and Chamberlain supported British armed conflict with the Boer republics (vide the Anglo-boer war, 1899 - 1902) that sought to drift away from the British grip and to go it alone. In this connection, Curtin et al (1978, p.470) observe that Milner, Chamberlain, and most British Conservatives - especially those with investments in the gold-mining industry - supported the war in the expectation that victory would be followed by a British migration on a large enough scale to "modernize" and "anglicize" the Afrikaners and reduce them to a minority in the European population of Southern Africa. They hoped and expected that the entire region would become a wealthy, powerful, and loyal bastion of the British Empire. But, as so often happens, the calculations of the war-makers were not fulfilled. There was no large- scale British migration to postwar Southern Africa; the Afrikaners continued to form a secure majority in the European population; and the long and arduous war only accentuated Anglophobic emotions and inspired cultural resistance among the predicants (clergy) and a vigorous outpouring of protest literature in Afrikaans.

Baker (op.cit.: p.41) emphasises the point when he notes that a language landscape engineer who is concerned only about majority language flowers will

regard protecting rare flowers to be expensive and unnecessary, and will wish to standardise on the variety of languages in the country. A landscape engineer who wishes to protect rare flowers and increase flowers in danger of extinction may encourage growth of such flowers alongside majority language flowers.

This study will support the thesis that minority African languages should enjoy equal treatment before the government on the grounds that:

> The destruction of minority languages is the destruction of intimacy, family and community, often involving oppression of the weak by the strong, subjugating the unique and traditional by the uniform and central. (Baker, 1993, p.55).

Language rights, like any other human rights, should be protected as enshrined in the new democratic Constitution of South Africa. This research will attempt to address the Constitutional protection of minority languages in some detail with a view to contributing towards a future language policy in South Africa which may evolve as part of the democratisation process.

1.2 Aims of the Study

South Africa is a multilingual country. Constitutionally 11 languages have been identified as official languages. These are: Afrikaans, English, isiNdebele, Sesotho sa Leboa, Sesotho, siSwati, Xitsonga, Setswana, Tshivenda, isiXhosa and isiZulu. **The ANC Policy Framework for Education and Training** (January, 1994, p.61) describes the situation as follows:

> South Africa is a country of many languages. A large number of South Africans of all races understand and use other language in addition to their own. In fact, multilingual communication is probably the normal practice of everyday life for most South Africans (see also De Cluver, 1993, p.26).

South Africa, like all other multilingual countries, faces certain language-related problems. The lack of ethnic, linguistic and cultural homogeneity is one such problem. In the past, the tendency among language policy designers, especially those with a Westminster-type government orientation, was to regard linguistic diversity as a criterion for nation-statehood.

Diversity was seen as incompatible with political integration of a people since domains such as education could not be addressed through monolingual

classroom language policies. Furthermore, lack of ethnic, linguistic and cultural homogeneity was seen as an impediment for national growth and harmony in government services. Most importantly governments do not always feel competent to guarantee equal language rights to all the languages comprising the citizenry. The spin-off of all these problems is that many otherwise multilingual, multicultural countries, especially in Africa misinterpret their multilingual nature as a problem rather than an asset and often adopt the languages of erstwhile colonial masters as "official" and "unifying" languages. De Cluver (1993b, p.26) summarises this complex linguistic scenario as follows:

> Politicians working within a Westminster-type democracy find it difficult to govern such a country democratically, since minority rights cannot always be accommodated in such a model. The application of the West-minister-model in these countries indicates one possible cause of difficulties that governments seem to have with the cultural and linguistic make-up of their populations: a western model is applied to African countries causing them to see possible assets as problem areas (see also De Cluver, 1996, p.20).

As regards the danger of minority languages either getting marginalised, swamped or swallowed by majority or dominant languages in multilingual settings, Baker (op.cit. pp.39-40) paints the following graphic picture:

> In a garden, some flowers and shrubs spread alarmingly quickly. Some majority languages, particularly English have expanded considerably during this century. When the garden is unkept, one species of flower may take over and a small minority flowers may be in danger of extinction. Therefore some flowers need extra care and protection (1993, p.39).

Garcia (as quoted by Baker, ibid) uses the following powerful and potent analogy to portray a language scenario apposite to the language policy debate in South Africa:

> ... if we travelled through the countries of the world and found field after field, garden after garden of the same, one-colour flower, how dull and boring our world would be. If a single colour flower was found throughout the world without variety of shape, size or colour, how tedious and impoverished the world

would be (ibid).

A thorny question that democratic South Africa will need to address sooner rather than later, especially as regards checks and balances to ensure the survival, growth and development of African minority languages in a language scenario where language domination is a strong possibility, is what De Cluver (1993b, p.27) so pertinently comments on:

> Language planners have noted that language policies tend to be formulated and implemented with limited consultation of the general population. Language planning therefore tends to be an elitist endeavour. This seems to be particularly true of South Africa where language planning up to now has been top-down, non-democratic and only done by so-called (White) experts (see also Reagan, 1981, p188 and De Cluver, 1992, p.1).

It is also important to note that South Africa's education system has been planned and designed by the dominant (White) group. This also had a great impact on the language policy of this country. Education is not culturally neutral. Modgil et al (1986, p.20) state that the educational system disseminates the dominant culture

among the young and ensures its preservation and reproduction across the generations. Its structure, organisation, ethos, pedagogical techniques, its views of what constitutes knowledge and what is worth teaching are all profoundly shaped by the dominant culture.

This is not surprising because language is inextricably linked with social and cultural patterns and the school as a domain in which these occur cannot but be relevant. Although this study is concerned with the status and role of minority languages in a democratic South Africa, it seems apposite at this stage to comment on the position of African languages in general if only to contextualise the problem more broadly. A comment by Mawasha (1991, p.2) is most appropriate here:

> Three hundred years of history have tended at best to marginalise, or at worse, to down-play African languages and, in consequence of this, in job situations and certain social interactions, Dutch, English and later Afrikaans were favoured or imposed by force of conquest and were given the status of official languages. With this status, their roles were made cardinal to all activities of state - without them you could neither get any schooling worth talking about or any job at

all. As a result of this marginalisation, majoring in an African language at University was referred to disparagingly as a "line of less resistance" or as "majoring in a half-course". African languages were (and still are) taught in English or Afrikaans in order to "internationalize them" (whatever that might mean) and, up to quite recently taught mainly by Whites who then became experts in African languages.

Given Mawasha's observation (ibid) a critical question could be: Given the political changes in South Africa and the disadvantaged history of African languages what will happen next? Baker (op.cit.: p.41) answers the above question appropriately:

Those languages that are strong will survive. The weaker languages will either have to adapt themselves to their environment or die.

The change of the political control from minority (White) group to majority (Black) group has led to the change of many structures of governance in general and language policy in particular. De Cluver (ibid) says that, however, during the last two years a grass-roots debate has gradually developed around the topic of a

new language policy for South Africa. If this debate leads to a language policy that is generally acceptable to most of the participants in the debate, we will have achieved a first in language planning in South Africa: a language policy that developed as a result of democratic debate and discussion (see for example **Towards a Language Policy in Education, Draft Discussion Document of Education**, November 1995).

South Africa is working towards a new democratic language policy. Given the new social and political order, in this important period of the history of our country, the aims of this study could be summarised as follows:

(a) To look at the status of African languages as accorded them by the new Constitution of the country.

(b) Given the new language policy Constitutional guidelines, what role should these African languages play in this new dispensation?

(c) What are the future prospects for African languages, locally, nationally and even globally?

This study will attempt to address these and similar and related questions.

1.3 Statement of Problem

The ANC's working document. **A Policy Framework for Education and Training** (op.cit.: p.61) and also ANC Press Release in **Language Project Review** (Vol. 7 No. 1 May 1992. p.2) accept multilingualism as a fact and comment on South Africa's capacity to function with some facility within this linguistic rainbow. Perhaps in anticipation of a "taalstryd" or a conscious or even an unconscious effort at language dominance of minority languages by majority languages in the country as a whole or in certain regions of the country. the draft democratic Constitution. true to its spirit of democracy and language parity. stipulates as follows:

> Rights relating to language and the status of language existing at the commencement of this Constitution shall not be diminished and provision shall be made by an Act of Parliament for rights relating to language and the status of languages existing only at regional level to be extended in accordance with the principles set out in subsection (9) (see Clause 3(2) of Act 200. 1993).

The consciousness of this possibility is expressed by the ANC's working document. **A Policy Framework for Education and Training.** (1994. p.61).

when it says that official language policy in South Africa has been interwoven with the politics of domination and separation, resistance and affirmation. Over the past two centuries, South Africa's colonial and white minority government has used language policy in education as an instrument of cultural and political control, first in the battle for supremacy between the British and the Boers, and subsequently in maintaining white political and cultural supremacy over the black majority.

The propensity to use language as a hand-maiden of political power or domination alluded to in the above quotation is much more than a surmise or linguistic paranoia. In 1907 when General Jan C. Smuts became the Minister of Education in the Transvaal he began the process of empowering Dutch in relation to English by introducing legislation that effectively gave Dutch a stake in the language in education power-game:

> Sy nuwe onderwyswet (Wet No. 25 van 1907) met sy 91 Artikels, tree vanaf 1 Oktober 1907 in werking. Betreffende die taalmedium bepaal hierdie Wet dat die huistaal of moedertaal - Hollands of Engels - tot en met standard Drie as taalmedium gebruik word. Daarna mag twee skoolvakke en Bybelgeskiedenis deur medium van Hollands aangeleer word. Engels word 'n verpligte

> skoolvak (**Verslag van die werkkomitee, Taal en taalonderrig**. 1981, p.31).

Although a telling argument could be advanced to the effect that Smuts's rationale for introducing Dutch L1 as the medium of instruction was fundamentally pedagogical, a possibility of the move having a language power-cum-language parity matrix cannot be ruled out altogether as irrelevant because one way of empowering a people is to use their language in various domains including the classroom. Perhaps it is this context that made Kunene (1995) to observe:

> As long as English remains the language of our everyday discourse, we still remain a conquered people (**City Press**, May 14, 1995, p.17).

In terms of Act (Wet 25 van 1907) parents were free to choose a language of instruction other than the L1. Ironically enough it was this very element of language choice that hampered the complete empowerment of Dutch in relation to English and perhaps in relation to African languages and other minority languages such as the Indian languages:

> Onderwys deur die moedertaal word in Transvaal en Natal vir etlike 'n strydpunt. Landswye uniformiteit oor die taalmedium

> word nie ten volle bereik nie, die kernverskil lê in verpligte moedertaalmedium of ouerkeuse wat die taalmedium bepaal. Die provinsiale administrasies is ook verantwoordelik vir die verskaffing van onderwys aan Kleurlinge, Indiers en die Swart bevolking. Hulle behartig dit hoofsaaklik deur afsonderlike skole of 'n subsidie aan privaatskole. Die twee amptelike tale dien as taalmedium maar Swart kinders gebruik hulle moedertaal as medium gedurende die aanvangsjare (**Verslag van die werkkomitee Taal en taalonderrig**, 1981, p.32).

Post-apartheid South Africa, too, seems to be heading for a similar problem where the Constitution seeks to remove language imbalance between African languages on the one hand and English and Afrikaans on the other by legislating for a national language parity policy while speakers of African languages themselves will, through their democratic right to choose the language of education for their children, do all in their power to gain placement for their children in traditionally White schools where African languages are at best taught as third languages or at worst marginalised to a status of communication level (see for example research report: Africans Opt for English, **BUA**, Vol. 9, no. 1 May 1994, p.2; Mawasha, 1995 - **The Role of English in Education in the New South Africa**,

Unpublished paper. Rainbow Communication Conference - 23-25 April 1995. Johannesburg).

The present study is apprehensive about the possibility that, in the same way as speakers of African languages in general gravitate towards the historically dominant English (and Afrikaans), speakers of minority African language might either gravitate towards more dominant African languages or would be forced towards that language option by socio-political, economic, demographic or educational pressures. The problem here is that if this should happen, minority African languages will suffer the same language dominance under democracy as they did under apartheid. This is a concern that cannot but spur researchers in language education, especially speakers of minority African languages, to research the new language policy vigorously and critically especially as regards its consequences on minority African languages. The central problem therefore is how to ensure language parity and allow for language choice while protecting minority languages from dominance by majority languages. To be seen to be coupling language to ethnicity in an attempt to protect minority languages will at best be interpreted as being contrary to the spirit of one South Africa, one Constitution, or at worst as reverting to the apartheid language model enshrined in the recommendations of the Commission on Native Education (UG No. 153/1951). If such interpretation should be made, efforts at preventing language dominance or even language loss will back-fire not only against the very languages that need protection but also against the advocates of such protection.

The problem a study such as the present one must of necessity brave and overcome, is how to describe a complex linguistic scenario with due consideration to all variables that characterise complex and multilingual contexts without disempowering any of the members of the language communities comprising the target citizenry.

1.4 Delimitation of the Field of Study

Although this study addresses the multilingual/multicultural scenario in South Africa as a whole, it makes a case for minority languages. Such a delimitation will enable the study to achieve focus by accentuating only those issues that bear on the status and role of minority African languages in post-apartheid South Africa. Indeed, a study of this magnitude and level of complexity can get so general that the thesis advanced gets defused, if great care is not taken to maintain a proper focus.

1.5 Research Methodology

Data for this thesis was collected in two ways, namely: questionnaires and interviews.

1.5.1 Questionnaire

In order to solicit information or data from the targeted samples and to make this study more solid and scientific, semi - structured questionnaires were employed (see Appendix 2).

1.5.2 Interviews

Unstructured interviews were also used to clarify some responses and to seek additional information which the questionnaire might not have covered.

1.6 Research questions undergirding thesis

Under the Dutch and the British colonial occupation of the sub-continent, the exoglossic languages Dutch and English were variously the dominant languages; the language of power in all public domains: Under the Boer-Briton joint rule, Afrikaans and English were the twin-languages of power. Endoglossic languages of the owners of the land were variously marginalised save as socio-economic and political cats-paw. Given this backdrop,

1.6.1. Precisely what manner of linguistic landscape characterised the subcontinent over the past 300 years? Who were the actors and who were the spectators?

1.6.2. Will this language scenario change in any way within shift in the political power relations from the Caucasian colonists and neo-colonists to the indigenous African folk? What of three centuries of institutionalised linguistic colonists of the minds of especially teachers and taught, students and intellectual leadership of these indigenous folk?

1.6.3. If a linguistic change of guards is to come to pass, what challenges, of what magnitude, of what complexity then face the drivers of the new democratic political transformation? In particular, if exoglossic languages were the mainstay of power across public domains, are there no possibilities that speakers of dominant (majority) endoglossic languages may inadvertently find themselves assuming the very dominant roles that were assumed by the erstwhile speakers of exoglossic languages? What do speakers of minority exoglossic languages feel?

1.6.4. Given the magnitude of the transformation, can a time-frame be posited?

1.7. Study Lay-out

This study consists of six chapters:

CHAPTER 1 outlines in detail the main aim and scope of this study i.e to look at the status and role of African languages in South Africa's new and democratic language policy with special reference to minority African languages.

CHAPTER 2 focuses on the distribution of majority languages and minority languages: the historically dominant white languages (English and Afrikaans) and African languages: including the dominant African languages (Sotho and Nguni) and minority African languages (Xitsonga. Tshivenda. isiNdebele and siSwati).

CHAPTER 3 provides an overview of the status and role of the main South African languages before and after liberation i.e after the installation of the new democratic government on the 27 April 1994.

CHAPTER 4 describes the sampling of empirical research data and analyses the views of the respondents as given in the questionnaires.

CHAPTER 5 final discussion of main research findings and recommendations.

CHAPTER 6 concludes this study by indicating some of the challenges facing all South African languages and in particular the minority African languages.

CHAPTER 2 : AN OVERVIEW AND COMMENT ON THE DISTRIBUTION OF THE MAIN LANGUAGES OF SOUTH AFRICA

2.1 Introduction

One of the most striking characteristics of the South African population is its linguistic and cultural diversity. Eleven of these languages have been declared official languages (see clause 3 of Act 200 of 1993). South Africa's eleven official/main languages are relatively few compared to other African countries. According to Spencer (1963, p.1), taken as a whole, Africa is the most multilingual area in the world if its population is measured against languages spoken. Most areas of tropical Africa are a linguistic patchwork of a minute and intricate pattern. An area as small as that which until recently was the Southern British Cameroons, for example, contains upwards of one hundred languages; almost all of them unwritten, unstudied and certainly incapable as yet of being counted with any precision.

Similarly, there are about 16 languages in Sierra Leone, about 30 in Sudan, (Spencer: ibid. pp. 43-45), about 400 indigenous languages in Nigeria (Akinnaso, 1991), and about 50 in Kenya (Sure, 1997). Spencer (ibid. p.1) adds that on top of this complex infrastructure of indigenous languages the Scramble for Africa, and the Colonial period which followed it, planted a bold but arbitrary superstructure of European languages.

The importance of noting this multiplicity of languages in Africa is to show that South Africa's multilingualism is neither unique nor unusual for an African country. Adopting a multilingual language policy model for a democratic South Africa is therefore natural given the multilingual nature of the continent as a whole.

This chapter deals with the territorial distribution of languages in South Africa. The importance of understanding territorial dimensions of language is explained by Van der Merwe and Van Niekerk (1994, p.1) when they say that the comprehension of the territorial dimensions of language is crucial if we are to penetrate its cultural, social and political meaning. The spatial dimension is interwoven with political, economic, ethnic, religious and other social phenomena, as well as the physical environment and communication network that go with these. Such a study is in the province of Geolinguistics. One cannot, therefore, fully understand the complexity of any human society without giving some attention to Geolinguistics.

It might be useful at this stage to explain briefly what Geolinguistics means and its relevance to the present study. Du Preeze (1987, p.2) quotes Gunnemark and Kenrick (1985, p.7) and suggests the following working definition which this study adopts:

> Geolinguistics is defined as the geographical distribution of languages and their political, economic and cultural status.

(For a more detailed exposition of Geolinguistics see for example Du Preeze, 1987). A general knowledge of Geolinguistics is very important for a study such as the one at hand because it focuses on the distribution of languages which is in part the task of this study. Such knowledge is also important in the domains of the political, economic and cultural status of languages which is the main aim of this research. A more detailed exposition of Geolinguistics was not thought necessary since knowledge of it was applied in various ways throughout this chapter.

2.2 Distribution of main the languages of South Africa

The study of language distribution in South Africa is an emotive study in that it has often been used to justify the northern expansion of colonialism by the early white settlers notably the Voortrekkers (see for example Harrison, 1987, p.15) and also to provide an "acceptable" rationale for the policy of separate development and the homeland system (see also Mawasha, 1993).

In addition to this emotive component there is the added difficulty of describing the language distribution with any degree of accuracy given variables such as migrations across language territories and issues of language maintenance versus language shifts. The difficulty is also acknowledged by Du Preeze (ibid) when she writes:

> Most of these languages are not limited to specific regional areas, but are encountered

> throughout the country. Within limit this is also true of the African Languages which have traditionally been associated with specific geographical regions for example. Zulu with Natal. Widespread migration of the African people has taken place throughout South Africa and Southern Africa with the result that their languages have infiltrated other so-called "traditional" areas.

The so-called "traditional" areas that Du Preeze alludes to here include: Mpumalanga which is associated largely with siSwati; the Northern Province which is associated largely with Northern Sotho, Xitsonga, Tshivenda and Sindebele; the North West Province, associated mainly with Setswana; and the Free State, associated with Sesotho.

Du Preeze (ibid) adds:

> Migration and distribution across language territories are a natural phenomenon since different needs, wants and preferences cause people to move from one territory to another to satisfy such needs, wants and preferences. What seems to be a problem is whether a firm statement can be made to the effect that territory A is firmly for language group A1, and B for B1 and so forth. Isoglosses are rarely neat and tidy in polyglot countries of Africa. Literature

seems to suggest that as early as the Late Stone Age, around 2000 BC some "Negroes" of the Bantu language group started migrating from Central Africa towards South Africa and by the 14th Century AD they had settled in South Africa as stable communities speaking languages of the Southern Bantu Group (**Africa South of the Sahara**, 1992, pp.3-4).

According to Rogers (1976, p.5) there is some convincing historical and archaeological evidence to suggest that the preceding interpretation regarding the early migration of Africans from the north to the south can be corroborated. Rogers(ibid) questions the argument of the now defunct apartheid government in South Africa which grounded the Bantustan policy on the rationale that when the white settlers trekked northwards of South Africa in the mid 1830's to settle there, they did not displace Africans but rather contested land with them. Rogers (ibid) avers that archaeological evidence has revealed that there were eminent African settlements including evidence of the mining of minerals such as copper in these areas that were officially regarded as white farming settlements or even cities that followed in the wake of the Great Trek and further subsequent white settlements to the interior of South Africa.

It is against this background that we should understand why from the very beginning of colonial settlement and occupation of greater South Africa, Africans had resisted the colonial encroachment on their land (see also Danzinger, 1983, p.6). Clearly, then, any attempt to plot isoglosses to capture and fix whatever language groups were involved will be hampered by the twin-variables of migration and distribution. The following statistical data in TABLE 1 shows just how difficult it will be to plot isoglosses that would firmly represent different

"traditional" language territories:

TABLE 1

PROVINCES: Home language distribution among blacks, 1993

Province	isiXhosa	isiZulu	siSwati	South Ndebele	North Ndebele	North Sotho	Sesotho	Setswana	Xitsonga	Tshivenda	Other	TOTAL
Western Cape	569 885	6 194	0	0	0	0	6 194	0	0	0	37 166	619 439
Northern Cape	33 479	2 391	0	0	0	0	2 391	167393	0	0	33 479	239 133
Free State	259 535	141 565	0	0	0	23 594	1 557 213	141 565	23 594	0	212 347	2 359 413
Eastern Cape	5663 498	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	175 160	5 838 658
Kwazulu/Natal	0	6 829 499	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	211 222	7 040 721
Mpumalanga Province	50 345	805 513	1 132 753	25 172	0	151 034	50 345	125 861	0	0	176 206	2 517 229
Northern Province	0	49 703	49 703	0	.49 703	2 882 771	0	0	1 143 168	596 435	198 812	4 970 295
Gauteng Province	287 956	1 206 975	86 213	172 425	43 106	656 594	689 700	517 275	258638	86 213	215 531	4 310 626
North West	478 963	63 862	0	0	0	0	287 378	2 203 229	63 862	0	95 793	3 193 087
TOTAL	**7 443 661**	**9 105 702**	**1 268 669**	**1 97 597**	**92 809**	**3 703 993**	**2593 221**	**3 155 323**	**1 489 262**	**682 648**	**1355 716**	**31 088 601**

Source. Development Information Group, 1994
Adapted from Languages for All, Conference Booklet, CSIR Conference Centre, 27-28 May 1994.

TABLE 1 shows clearly that except for the Provinces of Eastern Cape and Kwazulu-Natal which are respectively predominantly Xhosa (± 5 million speakers) and Zulu (± 6 million speakers), it is hardly possible to plot clear-cut isoglosses for the rest of the seven provinces. If we take the Gauteng Province as an example, we note a spread of practically all eleven official languages plus other minority languages which will defy any isogloss to separate any particular language territory from the rest. Constant migration and shifting distribution complicate the problem. Furthermore, Mpumalanga, which is often associated with siSwati (over a million) overlaps into isiZulu, isiXhosa, Northern Sotho, Sesotho and Setswana. Northern Province includes isiZulu, isiSwati in addition to Northern Sotho, Xitsonga, isiNdebele and Tshivenda. Even the Western Cape which is often associated with isiXhosa overlaps into isiZulu. Northern Cape which is often associated with Setswana and isiXhosa overlaps into isiZulu and Sesotho. Free State which is often associated with Sesotho overlaps into isiXhosa, isiZulu, Northern Sotho, Setswana and Xitsonga (see also Schuring, 1990, p.4)

In 1948 when the Nationalist Party came into power, they attempted to "justify" their apartheid policy by emphasising ethnolinguistic groupings in South Africa and so found a scaffolding for the policy of separate development (see Thompson, 1990, p.190-191; see also map in Rogers, ibid.1956, p.48(i)).

In fact, one of the tenets of the Group Areas Act (No 41 of 1950) consolidated (in 1966) by Act No 36 of 1966, was the allocation of specific residential areas in cities, towns and other places to different population or language groups. Act No

36 of 1966 was effectively a follow-up of the Promotion of Black Self-Government Act (No 46 of 1959) which sought to extend the "right of self-government" to the different Black language groups or tribes in South Africa. In 1959 Dr Hendrik Verwoerd, then Prime Minister of South Africa, announced that Act No 46 of 1959 would provide a foundation for the creation of fully independent homelands for the different Black language groups of South Africa outside the metropolitan areas.

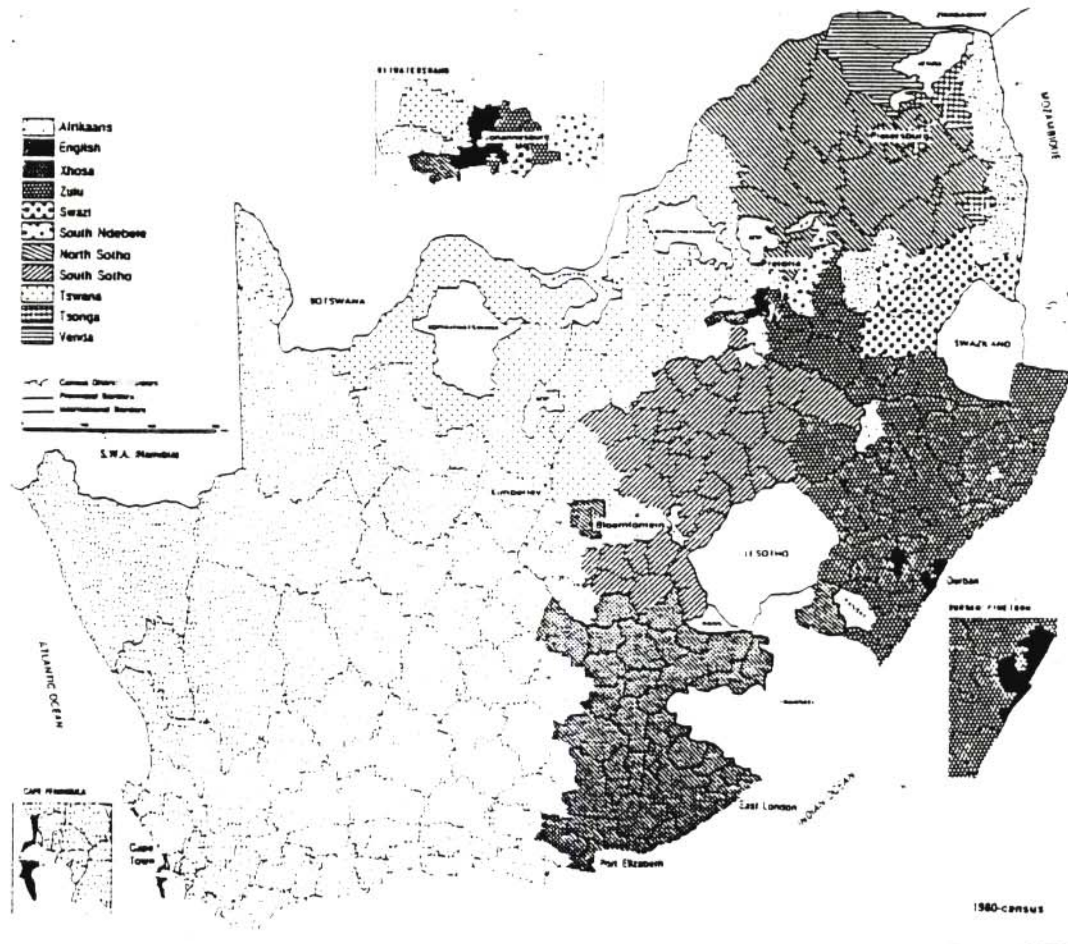
Although there were certain areas in South Africa which historically were the home of certain dominant language groups (e.g. Tshivenda in Venda, Xitsonga in Gazankulu and Northern Sotho in Leboa) Act No 46 of 1959 made it possible for the State to move people to areas designated as their "homelands" on a broad ethnolinguistic rationale alluded to above. This is evidently consistent with what Lemon (1959, p.9) meant when he averred that parallel with the movement of Africans from the rump white state to the homelands was the transfer of people between homelands to fit the nation-state ideal. Thus some South Sotho people had to be moved from the Bophutatswana enclave of Thaba Nchu to adjacent Botshabelo, which was originally intended to be incorporated into Qwaqwa. Even Xhosa speaking Ciskeians were moved from Transkei to Ciskei after the political transfer of the Glen Grey and Herschel districts between the two states (see Davernport, 1977, p.235).

But the fact that it is not always possible to have clear-cut isoglosses to pin down specific language groups into water-tight language territories does not mean that

geolinguistic studies cannot be undertaken among them at all. Indeed, Van der Merwe and Van Niekerk (ibid) for example aver that although considerable linguistic diversity occurs in South Africa, it is often possible to identify spatially segmented patterns, which suggests underlying processes of social ecology, interaction, ethnic segregation and assimilation. An analysis of the dynamic process of change places languages in their proper temporal context and permits us to evaluate the diffusion and vitality patterns associated with the processes of language spread and replacement.

It is probably in recognition of this possibility that Prinsloo (1987) as quoted by Du Preeze (1987, p.71) could, on the basis of data collected from census statistics, collate the following map:

TABLE 2: Dominant Home Language Per Districts In The RSA, 1980.



(Reproduced from Du Preeze, Esmé, **Language Atlas of South Africa: A Theoretical Introduction,** Page 71).

2.2.1 Statistical representation of language territories in South Africa

In this sub-section all tables showing the distribution and composition of languages and population were taken from the Language Atlas compiled by IJ Van der Merwe and LO van Niekerk (1994, December). At the time of writing this thesis, this was the latest available document on the distribution of languages in South

Africa. The language composition of South Africa can be shown as follows:

TABLE 3: Language composition of South Africa

LANGUAGE	NUMBER OF SPEAKERS			PERCENTAGE		
	1980	**1991[1]**	**1991[2]**	**1980**	**1991[1]**	**1991[2]**
isiZulu	6 051 200	8 343 590	8 343 590	25.1	26.9	22.1
Afrikaans	4 910 400	5 702 535	5 702 535	20.4	18.4	15.1
Sesotho sa Leboa	2 430 400	3 530 616	3 530 616	10.1	11.4	9.4
English	2 802 400	3 414 900	3 414 900	11.6	11.0	9.0
isiXhosa	2 193 900	2 503 966	6 646 568	9.1	8.1	17.6
Sesotho	1 884 800	2 420 889	2 420 889	7.8	7.8	6.4
Xitsonga	892 800	1 439 809	1 439 809	3.7	4.6	3.8
Setswana	1 364 000	1 431 569	1 431 569	5.6	4.6	9.2
siSwati	644 800	952 478	952 478	2.7	3.1	2.5
isiNdebele	471 200	477 895	477 895	1.9	1.5	1.3
Tshivenda	173 600	114 743	673 540	0.7	0.4	1.8
European Imm.	148 800	109 825	109 825	0.6	0.4	0.3
Oriental	99 200	25 505	25 505	0.4	0.1	0.1
Other	49 600	495 597	495 597	0.2	1.6	1.3
TOTAL	**24 117 100**	**30 963 917**	**37 716 404**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**

Source: RSA Population census 1980, 1991

1 Former TBVC countries excluded

2 Former TBVC countries included. Estimated populations are as follows: Transkei (3 292 602), Bophuthatswana (2 051 088), Venda (558 797) and Ciskei (850 000), totalling 6 752 487 persons in 1991.

TABLE 3 indicates the number of the main languages that are found in South Africa. Apart from the eleven official languages there are also European languages such as Portuguese, German, Greek, Italian and Dutch, and also oriental languages which include Gujarati, Hindi, Tarmil, Urudu, Chinese and Telegu. There are also other minority languages which are too small to be accurately documented but which form 1.3% of the total population of South Africa(see also **Constitution of the Republic of South Africa**, 1996, Founding Provision).

According to TABLE 3 isiZulu has the highest number of speakers, i.e. about 27% as compared to all other official languages in South Africa, while Tshivenda has

the lowest number of speakers i.e. about 1.8%.

It should also be noted that the former TBVC countries or states are excluded from TABLE 3. By TBVC countries we refer to Transkei, Bophuthatswana, Venda and Ciskei which were "independent countries" during the Nationalist Party government and by virtue of their "independence" enjoyed some autonomy. In other words they were not regarded as part of the South African population.

Another detail that can be extrapolated from TABLE 3 is that as is expected, the population of each language group is not static. If we look at isiZulu speakers, for example, in 1981 there were about 6 051 200, but by 1991 the number had increased to 8 343 590.

An interesting factor that could be read off from TABLE 3 is that although English is the dominant language in South Africa and effectively a lingua franca for many people, especially in the domains of education, economy, commerce, politics and international business and communications, it is nonetheless the L1 of only 9% of the population. Besides, these speakers reside mainly in the large metropolitan areas of South Africa. This fact seems to underscore the question of language and power i.e. a language might be a minority language in terms of the number of its speakers but might still be a language of power in terms of the domains in which it occurs. Conversely a language might be dominant in terms of number of speakers (e.g. isiZulu) but still fail to achieve the status of a language of power precisely because of the limited domains in which it occurs.

The Afrikaans language is another interesting case. Although it is the third highest language spoken in South Africa in both urban and rural areas, after isiZulu and isiXhosa it had not achieved the status of a lingua franca in the same vein as English. Efforts to enforce it to this status within the African language speaking school population contributed to a large extent to the 1976 school unrests (see Legodi, 1992). Perhaps it was the fact that Afrikaans had always been associated with political apartheid that reinforced resistance against it especially among the intelligentsia including the school-going population (see Mawasha, 1978).

As already seen, South African languages can be grouped into two: the endoglossic or indigenous languages and the exoglossic or colonial languages . The two main exoglossic languages that have been adopted as official languages of South Africa are English and Afrikaans, while the main indigenous languages that were made official languages by Act 200 of 1993, are isiZulu, Sesotho sa Leboa/Sepedi, isiXhosa, Xitsonga, Setswana, isiNdebele, siSwati, Sesotho and Tshivenda (see Christoper, 1983, p.24).

The Language Project's Review (Vol. No4, April, p.3) also identifies two main groups of African languages: which are Nguni and Sotho. Perhaps it is essential at this stage to explain briefly the Nhlapo-Alexander's proposal for the harmonisation of Nguni and Sotho languages in South Africa. The term "harmonisation" or "uniformation" as used by Nhlapo and Alexander refers to a process of bringing together the major varieties of the Nguni language group (which are isiXhosa, isiZulu, isiSwati and isiNdebele) on the one hand, and of the

Sotho language group (which are Setswana. Northern Sotho and Sesotho and others) on the other (see the Nhlapo-Alexander proposal for the harmonization of Nguni and Sotho languages in South Africa: **Background document for the National Language Project's International Conference on Democratic Approaches to Language Planning and Standardization**: 12-14 September 1991. p.3).

This idea of harmonization or uniformation of Nguni and Sotho language groups respectively was first mooted by Jacob Nhlapo within the liberation movement in 1944 and again in 1953. This idea was supported by Alexander who confirmed the suggestion of the creation of two written standards. essentially for use in schooling (textbooks). journalism and printing/publishing generally (the Nhlapo-Alexander proposal (ibid).

Some of the reasons advanced for the harmonization of Nguni and Sotho languages are the following:

(i) The number of African languages in South Africa is too big

(ii) As a result it is not very easy for people to understand each other

(iii) Too many African languages keep African people apart and create hatred among tribes

(iv) It is too costly to maintain many languages especially within the need for translators and interpreters

As indicated in the introduction to this chapter, Nigeria's multilingualism (to take only one example) with its 400+ languages, dwarfs South Africa's, with its eleven official languages. One of the popular myths in multilingual countries is the association of the multiplicity of languages with divisiveness. In spite of the prevalence of this myth, it is important to stress that it is not multilingualism as such that causes divisions, but the exploitation of ethnicity, by linking it with language differences. In some countries the myth of divisiveness has been used to oppress speakers of small language groups. Fortunately this has not happened in Nigeria (see BUA vol 10 No 1 December 1995, p.24).

The majority of the South African population know more that one language. This is why they code-switch with ease when the need arises. The view that because of too many African languages, African people cannot understand each other is not scientific.

According to Alexander (ibid), when the question of reducing Ibo to writing in Nigeria, led to the multiplicity of its dialects reared its head: each tribal group desired to have its dialect written. The government decided on `Union Ibo' which was a fusion of the various dialects whose vocabularies contributed to the combined language. `Union Ibo' was taught in schools and was used in the translation of the Bible. While the adults outside raised their voices in protest against this hybrid Ibo, the little ones silently imbibed it in the classroom. The adults died and the combined language obtained a permanent place as the literary and standard language of the Ibo family of tribes. The same thing was done with

the Shona dialects in the then Southern Rhodesia, now Zimbabwe.

It is essential, however, to draw a clear line of demarcation between dialects and fully developed languages. Unlike dialects which could be amalgamated to form one standard language, languages cannot just be amalgamated in the same way pieces of metals are put together. As Ndoma (1986, p. 172) has observed language matters are highly sensitive and emotionally charged, the Nigerian situation of cohesion and enforcing the so-called hybrid Ibo cannot work in South Africa but likely to repeat the 1976 crisis or provoke an even worse one.

Alexander (op cit.: p.7) goes on to say that if people in South Africa agree that there are two main groups of African languages, which are Nguni and Sotho, all the languages falling in these two language groups will have to be amalgamated and have one form of orthography.

Language standardisation means making decisions as to how words will be spelt, what definitions are given for words in the dictionaries, which grammatical forms will be considered right and which ones wrong. We see the effects of standardisation in our newspapers, on the television, in books, and at school (see the **Language Project Review** Vol. 5 No 4, April 1991, p.4).

My view is that the implications of harmonisation or uniformisation of the so-called major South African languages will have a negative impact on the minority languages. In the Nhlapo-Alexander's proposal nothing has been mentioned as to

what would happen to the minority languages such as Xitsonga and Tshivenda. These two languages may not only be relegated to the back stage, but may also lose recognition as languages in South Africa. If this should come to pass, it could be interpreted as the betrayal of the people if South Africa preaches democracy on the one hand, yet violate language rights on the other.

Having briefly looked at the implications of harmonisation, I now look at the distribution of the speakers of different languages in the RSA in some detail.

2.2.2 The Nguni group

Although speakers of the Nguni languages are spread throughout the nine provinces of South Africa (and Swaziland), the group is generally associated with Kwazulu-Natal. The historical heartland of South Africa's Nguni people has been the eastern region between the interior plateau and the Indian Ocean, stretching from present-day Ciskei to Swaziland. This group includes the speakers of isiZulu, isiXhosa, isiNdebele and siSwati. According to Maylam (1986, p.2) although the Nguni people share some common cultural traits, their classification as Nguni is based on a broad linguistic uniformity. The classification, however, recognizes therefore that these languages are closely related. For example, the slogan for PANSALB in English is "One nation many languages". For the various Nguni languages it is as follows:

Names of languages	slogans			
isiZulu	Isizwe	sinye	izilimi	eziningi
isiXhosa	Isizwe	esinye.	iilwimi	ezininzi
siSwati	Isitjhaba	sinye.	iinlimi	ezinengi
isiNdebele	Sive	sinye.	tilwimi	letinyeti

The importance of giving an historical overview of speakers of a particular language is to show the extent to which the Mfecane or Defecane wars which means "time of trouble" or "unlimited warfare" had moved people form one point to another.

Denoon and Nyeko (1972, p.6) state that information on the exact origin of the Zulu Kingdom is scanty and there has been little or no agreement about its exact location. The absence of adequate written historical data is perhaps one of the causes of the differences of opinions among historians.

Davenport (1977, pp.10-11) points out that during the sixteenth century when the Kgatla and Kwena were spreading across the Transvaal, the Nguni were already well established in the coastal regions of Natal and stretching into the Kingdom of Swaziland. Portuguese sailors shipwrecked off the Southern African coast, report coming across Bantu-speaking peoples in the coastal regions around the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. They got the impression that there were considerably

larger settlements of similar people on the coastal hinterland along the sweetveld pastures of Natal. These early explorers described these people on the occasion as "very black in colour with woolly hair", and on another occasion as "herdsmen and cultivators of millet, living in small villages in huts made of reed mats, practising circumcision (which was not a Khoikhoi custom), obeying chiefs called `ancosses' (nkosi, a Nguni term), and being prepared to barter cattle for iron and copper (see for example Danzinger, 1983, p.11).

Davenport (ibid) avers that although we do not have much recorded historical data of the early inhabitants of South Africa at our disposal, it is evidently clear that when the white settlers arrived at the southern part of Africa between the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, they found that Africans were already living in present-day South Africa (see also Soga, 1931, p.6).

Be that as it may, the Nguni group can be divided into two sub-groups, viz: the Northern and the Southern sub-groups. The Northern sub-group comprises the speakers of isiZulu and siSwati, while the Southern sub-group are the speakers of isiXhosa, isiThembu, Simfengu, Simpondo and Simpondomise (see Tyack, 1976, pp.46-47). It should be pointed out that these are small tribal groups which are classified under the Xhosa speaking group. Although Tyack (ibid) does not mention the Ndebele speaking people, they nonetheless belong to the Nguni group and hence their language, isiNdebele, will be discussed under the Nguni group.

2.2.2.1 The northern group

(a) The Zulu speaking people

Dingiswayo assumed the chieftainship of the Mthethwa in about 1795 at a time when two other contemporary Northern Nguni leaders (Zwide of the Ndhwandwe and Sobhuza of the Ngwane) were experimenting with the idea of amalgamating various small political units into larger entities. Dingiswayo's abolition of circumcision (an old Nguni practice), and the formation of age regiments embracing all young men in his chiefdom, to support previously existing Kinship groups, represented one such experiment with socio-political innovation (see Denoon and Nyeko, 1972, p.26).

These innovations yielded positive results in the military domain and as a result the Mthethwa gained great power advantage over the neighbouring smaller African groups. Consequently, the Mthethwa were now able to conquer and absorb the other groups systematically. By the end of his rule in 1818, Dingiswayo had succeeded in transforming the Mthethwa chiefdom into a comparatively large multi-chiefdom confederacy, that extended from the Mfolozi River in the north to the Tugela in the South (see Denoon and Nyeko, 1972, p.26).

According to Curtin et al (1978, pp.304-305) by 1795, land for occupation was no longer readily available. It was no longer easy for groups of people to hive off from the chiefdom to occupy unclaimed land beyond the established settlements. The

Sotho, for example had reached the borders of the Kalahari desert in the West and the foothills of the Maloti mountains in the south. The Nguni were wedged in the narrow strip between the Drakensberg escarpment, the Indian Ocean, and the Cape Colony. The customary cattle raids among neighbouring villages and chiefdoms were developing into lethal contests for control of water, pasture, available land, and hunting grounds, and innovative leaders were beginning to amalgamate previously separate chiefdoms. The social and political order that had been a natural concomitant of centuries of expansion was incapable of meeting the challenge now presented by population growth and the need for expansion.

It is against this background of scarcity of resources that the Zulu people had to mount campaigns to obtain the much needed room for expansion. If the region targeted was occupied, they had to fight their way through in order to defeat the inhabitants and occupy that region. If they were victorious the conquered nation was absorbed and this increased their numbers as well as their language territory.

When Dingiswayo died, Shaka, who was an illegitimate son of the Zulu Chief Senzangakhona, who had been a client of Dingiswayo, seized power over the Mthethwa whose armies he commanded (Okoth, 1979, p.288).

In the second year of his reign, Shaka led Dingiswayo's old armies in a successful and devastating war against Zwide and so extended his power over all the Nguni in what is now Kwazulu-Natal, and his influence extended over a vast area including Swaziland in the north and the Transkei in the south and from the

Drakensberg mountain to the Indian Ocean (Denoon and Nyeko, 1972, p.27).

According to July (1992, p.210) the upheavals in Zululand greatly intensified the social and political instability of the Southern Bantu, tearing peoples from their lands, sending them scrambling for safety, both pursued and pursuer, both refugees and aggressors. Throughout the Plateau west of the Drakensberg escarpment ran the shock waves of the Mfecane, gathering intensity as they proceeded, dealing death and destruction, emptying habitable land, drawing together fugitives of diverse backgrounds into centres of desperate defence and dispatching others in a flight from fear that begot violence and bloodshed.

July (ibid) goes on to say that the early skirmishes between the Ndhwandwe and Mthethwa soon involved other people .for example, the Hlubi, costing them their cattle and their grazing grounds and forcing them over the scarp and up onto the plateau where the Sotho speakers predominated. At once the Hlubi fell on the Tlokwa, ousting them from their territory and sending out an extended migration in search of survival and marked by warfare and pillage. Among those attacked in turn by the Tlokwa, were a Sotho group, the Kololo, who lost their cattle in defeat and fled across the Vaal, starving but determined to recoup their losses at the expense of others.

The extent of isiZulu territorial language expansion is captured in today's South Africa as shown in TABLE 4 below:

TABLE 4 : Distribution by province: isiZulu

PROVINCE	Number of isiZulu speakers, 1991	Percentage of total
Northern Province	34 946	0.4
North West	16 458	0.2
Gauteng	1 190 743	14.3
Mpumalnga	651 648	7.8
Northern Cape	1 926	0.02
Free State	133 069	1.6
Kwazulu-Natal	6 308 717	75.6
Eastern Cape	3 432	0.04
Western Cape	2 648	0.03
SOUTH AFRICA	8 343 590	100%

* Excluding former TBVC states

(Adapted from Language in South Africa, 1994, P.14)

As it can be seen from TABLE 4 above, Kwazulu-Natal Province is the heartland of the isiZulu language, followed by Gauteng. Although the early expansion of the territory of the speakers of isiZulu from Natal into the hinterland was largely military and land-driven, subsequent migrations into areas such as present-day Gauteng Province was motivated by the quest for socio-economic empowerment, especially in the mines and factories that characterise industrial and metropolitan Gauteng Province.

(b) The Swazi speaking people

Mpumalanga Province and the present-day Kingdom of Swaziland have been associated mainly with speakers of siSwati. According to Schapera (1937, pp.50-

51), before Shaka's reign the present Swaziland was partly occupied by various Sotho tribes about whom virtually nothing is known, but who are best represented today in the Pai and Pulana dialects referred to in the Sotho group. The southern part of Swaziland was occupied by clans of Nguni origin, mostly of the variety characterised by the Tekeza commonly associated therewith. Commencing with the increasing power of the Ngwane chief Sobhuza (ca. 1820), "the Swazi" people gradually began to come into being, especially through the conquest of Sobhuza's descendent Mswazi (ca 1840-1875), after whom they were named. The latter subjugated the Sotho clans of what is today Swaziland, or drove them out of the Kingdom, and by extensive raiding increased his wealth and power.

Tradition has it that the Swati speaking people, as part of the Nguni expansion southward from east-central Africa, crossed the Limpopo River and settled in Southern Tsongaland (Mozambique) in the late fifteenth century. Their leader was chief Dlamini, a man of Embo-Nguni background. Other Nguni speakers akin to the Swati speaking people, notably the Xhosa speaking people and the Zulu speaking people, migrated further south, the Zulu speaking people settling in the neighbouring areas of what is now north central Natal. But Swati speaking people, led by Dlamini's descendents, remained for over two hundred years in what is now Southern Mozambique in the region of Maputo (Booth, 1983, p.7).

Booth (ibid) adds that the original inhabitants of modern Swaziland, the San, had by the sixteenth century, given way to the Sotho. Not until about 1750 did the Swati speaking people challenged the Sotho primacy there. Then for reasons still not clear,

King Ngwane III (ca.1780) led his followers (Swati speaking people) across the Lubombo mountains and settled on the northern bank of the Pongola River, not far from present-day Nhlangano in Southern Swaziland. There he built his capital, Lobamba, which is still celebrated as the birthplace of the nation and the wellspring of the "true" Swati.

On the basis of the above historical overview of the Swati speaking people, it is understandable why siSwati in South Africa predominates in the province of Mpumalanga and the adjacent Northern Province, Free State and North West. The large occurrence of siSwati in Gauteng could be partly the result of historical factors noted above and partly due to modern migration and shifts for purposes of employment and settlement. TABLE 5 below summarizes the distribution of the speakers of siSwati throughout the nine provinces of present-day South Africa:

TABLE 5 : Distribution by province : siSwati

PROVINCE	Number of isiSwati speakers 1991	Percentage of total
Northern Province	36 540	3.8
North West	7 752	0.8
Gauteng	82 369	8.7
Mpumalanga	817 513	85.5
Northern Cape	58	0.0
Orange Free State	5 203	0.6
Kwazulu-Natal	2 586	0.3
Eastern Cape	168	0.0
Western Cape	289	0.0
SOUTH AFRICA	952 478	100%

* Excluding former TBVC states.

(Adapted from Language in South Africa, 1994, p.46)

2.2.2.2 The southern group

(a) The Xhosa-speaking people

The former Transkei and Ciskei homelands have been associated mainly with speakers of isiXhosa. Even today the Eastern Cape and the Western Cape are still the heartland of the Xhosa-speaking people. If the views of Soga (1931, p.8) are taken as a starting point, any statement about the exact origin of the Xhosa speaking people can only be tentative.

Davenport (op.cit.: p.62) opines that the political system of the Southern Nguni, by contrast to that of the Zulu or Zulu successor-states, was very loosely structured. Though the former possessed a common language and culture, they belonged politically to distinct tribal clusters of which the Xhosa, Tembu, Mpondo, Mpondomise and Bomvana (all of whom occupied the area between present-day Kwazulu-Natal and the Eastern Cape since at least the sixteenth century), were the most important.

Davenport (loc.cit) remarks further that the Southern Nguni never seemed to have formed a single political unit. The lack of coherence of chiefdoms was in turn affected by a tendency at segmentation or fission, the former term implying the emergence of divisions within a common polity and the latter an actual break-up of the chiefdom into politically separate units. Political divisions among the Cape Nguni in the face of settler-pressure from the Western Cape in the mid 1830's were

particularly marked between the Ndlambe and Ngqika Xhosa at the beginning of the nineteenth century, and between the Gcaleka and the Rharhabe Xhosa during the wars of the mid-nineteenth century, and between the Xhosa, the Tembu and the Mpondo during the 1870's.

Up to 1811 the Xhosa were well established on either side of the Fish River. Although the Xhosa were far more numerous than the colonists, the latter had the advantage of war-horses and fire-power which the Xhosa did not have (Soga, 1931, p.13). This military imbalance tended to tilt the scale in favour of the trekkers and the colonists who were either on trek inland or were already beginning to settle there. According to Curtin et al (op.cit.: p313) the Southern Nguni put up a prolonged resistance against the colonists. At the beginning, the frontier was the Fish River, but in 1819 it was pushed back to the Keiskamma River, in 1847 to the Kei River, in 1858 to the Mbasha, and in 1878 to the Mthatha river. When the Mpondo country was finally annexed in 1894, the Cape boundary met the boundary of the Natal along the Mtamvuna River. This effectively brought all the Southern Nguni under European administration.

The foregoing historical sketch explains why the speakers of isiXhosa tended to predominate in the area currently comprising territories for the Province of Eastern Cape, Western Cape and Kwazulu-Natal. But like speakers of other languages, migration and shifts in subsequent years led to the spread of the territory of the speakers of isiXhosa further and further inland up to the Free State, the North West Province and Gauteng Province.

TABLE 6 below summarises the distribution of the speakers of isiXhosa throughout the country in the late 1990's:

TABLE 6 : Distribution by province : isiXhosa

PROVINCE	Number of isiXhosa speakers 1991.	Percentage of total
Northern Proince	8 440	0.1
North West	119 445	1.8
Gauteng	397 878	6.0
Mpumalanga	42 311	0.6
Northern Cape	44 635	0.7
Orange Free State	240 390	3.6
Kwazulu/Natal	93 533	1.4
Eastern Cape	5 177 061	77.9
Western Cape	522 875	7.9
SOUTH AFRICA	6 646 568	100%

* Including former Transkei and Ciskei, but excluding Venda and Bophuthatswana
(**Adapted from Language in South Africa, 1994, p.30)**

There is yet another a possible explanation for the wide distribution of speakers of isiXhosa beyond their historical mainstay. Around 1857 a young girl named Nongqawuse claimed that she had a dream in which her ancestors told her to instruct the Xhosa people to slaughter their cattle and destroy their stock in the expectation of the resurrection of ancestral spirits, accompanied by the provision of food from heaven. Most Xhosa people obeyed the prophecy and the consequence was that nothing happened after the people had destroyed their belongings: only starvation and hunger occurred that resulted in many deaths. Most Xhosa left their homes seeking food and employment from the colonists (see Davenport, ibid, p.122).

One cannot rule out the possibility that during these hard times of starvation and

hunger some of the Xhosa people migrated to different parts of South Africa in search of food, shelter and a new start in life, and in the process expanded the territory of isiXhosa.

(b) The Ndebele speaking people

The former Kwa-Ndebele homeland was associated mainly with the isiNdebele language. According to Schapera (op.cit.: p.53) the Transvaal Ndebele tribes must not be confused with the Ndebele now living in Matabeleland, Southern Zimbabwe. The latter left the confines of Zululand only a century ago under the leadership of Mzilikazi, whereas the former had by that time already been settled in their present territory for at least several centuries. Living as they did surrounded by various Sotho tribes, they could not avoid being influenced considerably by Sotho culture and language. Some of them have in fact become almost entirely Sotho in everything but name. This explains what happens when a minority language and a majority language occur side-by-side. The tendency is that the majority language dominates the minority language. This results in language shift, ie. the speakers of the minority language use or speak the language of the majority speakers. The shift may be partial or complete, depending on the rate and extent of dominance.

The Ndebele tribe can be divided into two groups: the southern and the northern. The Southern group comprises a single senior tribe the Manala, and a junior tribe, the Ndzundza, which was broken up fifty years ago and is now represented by over half a dozen sub-groups. The tribes of the Southern group trace their descent from

the tribe of Msi, who long ago lived near what is today Pretoria, where the Manala still are. A rather vague tradition which may, however, be accepted, states that before Msi's time, the Southern group had come from the direction of Natal. The same origin may be postulated for the Northern tribes. The Northern group is composed of the Ndebele Langa commonly termed, in Sotho pronunciation, "Laka", represented by several sections mostly in the present-day town of Potgietersrust in the Northern Province, and of the Maune of Letwaba, likewise represented by several sections. The Seleka living on the border of Botswana are also said to be of Ndebele stock. This group finally includes the Moletlane of Sebitiêla, who according to some traditions, trace their origin to the parent of the Southern Ndebele. They appear to have trekked away to the North very many years ago, and settled near the great bend of the Olifant River. An earlier offshoot of the Moletlane are the Mokôpane just outside Potgietersrust. There is also a recent off-shoot under Johannes Kekana, now settled very near the ancient home of this tribe in Hammanskraal district in present-day Gauteng Province (see Schapera, loc.cit).

TABLE 7 below provides a summary of the distribution of the speakers of isiNdebele throughout South Africa by the mid-1990's:

TABLE 7 : Distribution by province : isiNdebele

PROVINCE	Number of isiNdebele speakers 1991.	Percentage of total
Northern Province	76 131	15.9
North West	1 973	0.4
Gauteng	88 850	18.6
Mpumalanga	303 702	63.3
Northern Cape	183	0.0
Free State	6 290	1.3
Kwazulu-Natal	491	0.1
Eastern Cape	105	0.0
Western Cape	170	0.0
SOUTH AFRICA	447 895	100%

* Excluding former TBVC states.
(**Adapted from language in South Africa, 1994, p.50)**

From TABLE 7 above it is clear that the Mpumalanga is the heartland of isiNdebele language. According to Davernport (ibid) the consolidation of the Afrikaner rule in the Mpumalanga, involved the overthrow, not only of the Pedi, but of their neighbours in the Middelburg district, the Sotho-speaking Kopa chiefdom of Maleo, and the Ndzundza chiefdom of Mabhogo (Mapoch), who descended from the original Ndebele inhabitants of the region.

This brief historical background tries to explains the distribution of isiNdebele language as indicated on TABLE 7 above.

2.2.3 The Sotho group

The Sotho language groups have always been associated territorially with the former provinces of the Transvaal, Orange Free State and the North-Eastern Cape. Outside South Africa these language groups are found in Lesotho and Botswana.

According to Maylam (1986, p.42) `Sesotho' is another broad generic term. It designates one group of people who display linguistic and some cultural similarities. They occupy the interior plateau of South Africa, and they can be distinguished from the Nguni in a number of ways. The Sotho can conveniently be subdivided into three major groups: the Western Sotho or Batswana, the Northern Sotho often referred to as Bapedi i.e. people of the north or Bopedi, and the Southern Sotho or Basotho who occupy mainly the present Free State (Lombard and Mokgokong, 1985, p.5).

The early history of the Sotho tribes, like that of any other early history of Africans, in Southern Africa, is still largely enveloped in the haze of conjecture. That they all come from across the Limpopo in the North seems quite certain since similarities among the traditions of a number of these tribes contain indications to that effect. What seems to be a moot question, however, is the exact route they followed as they migrated southwards across the Limpopo and the exact period of this migration. Equally uncertain is the fact as to whether the Sotho language groups have always been a separate and different linguistic cluster as they are today or whether, somewhere in the distant past, they were in fact descended from a parent tribe (see

Schapera, op.cit. : p.58). The uncertainty as adumbrated by Schapera is corroborated by Magema as quoted by Maylam (1986, p.22) who also comments on this information gap in terms of certainty and exactness of the very early history of the Sotho language groups. Clearly, an interdisciplinary research effort is required to document and interpret this part of history of Africans in Southern Africa. In addition to archaeology, research could probe traditional praise poetry that often alludes to names of persons, their family-trees, areas of domicile, reasons for movements, totems, rituals and rites etc. content and/or explanation of riddles, idioms and expressions, songs, ways of dance and reasons for certain dance-movements, dance regalia and music instruments. Such cultural artifacts, if scientifically analysed and interpreted, could yield valuable information as to the exact origin, routes followed, settlements and distribution of the different language groups in South Africa.

(a) The Northern Sotho speaking people

The former Lebowa homeland which now falls under the Northern Province has been the heartland of the speakers of Sesotho sa Leboa . According to the historian Davenport (1977, p.141), the Bapedi (Maroteng) or Northern Sotho were less successful in their conflicts with the white authorities in the Transvaal. They had endured tribulations at the hands of the Zulu, Swazi and above all the Ndhwandwe. Kgosi Sekwati I made some kind of agreement with the voortrekker leader Hendrik Potgieter in 1845, (the details of which have been lost), under which Sekwati almost certainly granted the Boers a right of settlement without relinquishing lordship over

the land. The issue of the lordship ultimately led to the sour relationship between the Bapedi and the Boers. The Boers attacked the headquarters of the Bapedi ba Maroteng at Phiring in 1852. Although the Bapedi lost much stock, they withstood the siege and later decided to retreat and settled in Thaba Motsega in the vicinity of the Leolo mountains.

According to Schapera (op.cit.: pp.61-62) the bulk of Northern Sotho consists of the tribes of the centre, that is those of Sekhukhuneland, Phokwane, and neighbouring districts. These are the tribes who were under the Bapedi (ba Maroteng) control and influence for a long time. These include tribes such as Batau, Bakwena i.e. (Bamongatane and Bakopa) BagaNtwane, Bakone (both tribes are the offshoots of Matlala who migrated hither the present Pietersburg, and those other small groups with totems *tlou, phiri, phuthi, nare, nkwe, tau* and *tshwene* which of quite different origin), and Roka form across the Olifants River. Further north, in the Pietersburg district, are the tribes of Mphahlele, Tshwene, Mathabatha, Matla and Dikgale, all of whom are related to Bakone from the east, who scaled the mountains around Heanertsburg and settled on the plains of Pietersburg. In the North-East are the Phalaborwa, the tribes of Masisimala, of Mamidja and of Sekororo. Below the Drakensburg escarpment in the Pilgrimsrest district there are the Kutwes, Pai, and Pulana tribes.

The above historical sketch of the geographic movements of the speakers of Northern Sotho explains in part the reason why the majority of these speakers are found in the Northern Province, Mpumalanga and Gauteng which overlaps into the

present Free State Province.

TABLE 8 below summarises the distribution of the speakers of Northern Sotho by mid-1994:

TABLE 8: Distribution by province : Sesotho sa Leboa

Province	*Number of Sesotho sa lebowa speakers, 1991**	*Percentage of Total*
Northern Province	*2 645129*	*74,9*
North Westt	*24854*	*0,7*
Gauteng	*566527*	*16,6*
Mpumalanga	*261390*	*7,4*
Northern Cape	*1292*	*0,1*
Free State	*23575*	*0,7*
Kwazulu-Natal	*5085*	*0,1*
Eastern Cape	*610*	*0,0*
Western Cape	*2154*	*0,1*
South Africa	*3 530616*	*100%*

* *Excluding former TBVC states*

(Adapted from Language in South Africa, 1994, p.22)

A further comment on TABLE 8 above: it is clear that the Northern Province is the heartland of the Sesotho sa Leboa language. Lombard and Mokgokong (1985, p.6) concur with this assertion when they write:

> Geographically Northern Sotho is confined to the Northern and North Eastern Transvaal in an area which is more or less bordered by an imaginary line running from Pretoria, through Springs, Middleburg, Groblersdal, Lydenburg, Sabie and from the north from the Sabie River to Bosbokrand up to Klaserie and the Olifants

River. From there it extends northward up to the Tsonga area, westward to the border of Botswana and then back towards the south, through the Potgietersrus district, to Warmbaths and finally to Pretoria.

(b) The Sesotho speaking people

In recent years, the former Qwaqwa homeland in the Free State has been associated mainly with the Southern Sotho language or Sesotho (see Rogers, 1976, p.23). During the eighteenth century numerous chiefdoms of Sotho speakers belonging to both the Bafokeng and Bakwena language clusters settled along the fertile Caledon valley . outnumbering the Nguni speaking communities in the region. This was a harbinger of the settlement in Lesotho. The origins of the Lesotho Kingdom dates back to the period of the Lifaqane (as the Mfecane is known to Sotho-speakers). The invasion of the Hlubi, the devastations of the marauding Tlokwa and the impact of Matiwane's Ngwabe created an opportunity for the Mokoteli chief, Moshoeshoe, to bring the remnants of many chiefdoms together in a single kingdom. Abandoning his first base on the fortified hill top of Butha-Buthe, he found in the larger and almost impregnable mountain stronghold of Thaba Boshiu, the perfect base of his nation-building (see also Davenport, 1977, pp. 54-55).

The destruction caused by wandering (Mfecane) bands resulted in appalling conditions in the Transorangia high veld. Much of the area was temporarily deserted as survivors took refuge in more mountainous areas. Starvation was widespread and

some were forced to cannibalism. This community forced many Sotho refugees to pour out of Lesotho into the Cape Colony where they provided much needed cheap labour supply for the white farmers of the Eastern Cape districts. Some of the tribesmen who were driven from their homes in the course of the upheavals and starvation fled across the Vaal River and formed wandering armed bands, raiding the Batswana chiefdoms in the region (see Omer-Cooper, 1987, p.60).

When the wave of Mfecane subsided, the Basotho returned to Transorangia. Omer-Cooper (op.cit.: p.62) writes:

> As the worst of the turmoil in Transorangia died down, the Sotho who had taken refuge in the Cape returned to the area. They were often accompanied by the cattle they had earned while in the service of the whites. Many of them placed themselves under the protection of Moshoeshoe who settled them on the fertile lands between the Orange and Caledon Rivers where they increased his following.

This brief historical background attempts to account for the distribution of Sesotho speakers mainly in the Free State, Eastern Cape, Gauteng, Northern Province and Mpumalanga (i.e. former Orange Free State, Eastern Cape and Transvaal).

The distribution of the Sesotho language can be seen in TABLE 9 below:

TABLE 9: Distribution by province: Sesotho

Province	*Number of Sesotho speakers, 1991**	*Percentage of Total*
Northern Province	*1703*	*0,5*
North West	*88021*	*3,6*
Gauteng	*724422*	*29,9*
Mpumalanga	*57486*	*2,4*
Northern Cape	*4730*	*0,2*
Free State	*488097*	*61,5*
Kwazulu/Natal	*25482*	*1,0*
Eastern Cape	*12460*	*0,5*
Western Cape	*84891*	*0,4*
South Africa	*2 420889*	*100%*

* *Excluding former TBVC states*

(Adapted from Language in South Africa, 1994,p.34)

With regard to the Sesotho speakers found in the Gauteng Province it could be postulated that the rich mineral resources of this province contributed to the attraction of many Sesotho speaking immigrants who came from the Free State and Lesotho in quest of work, especially in the mining industry.

(c) The Setswana-speaking people

In recent times the former Bophutatswana homeland (which attained nominal "independence" on 6 December 1977 from the Nationalist Party Government) has been mainly associated with the Setswana language.

According to Schapera (op.cit.: p.61), "the history of the Western Sotho or Tswana tribes is imperfectly recorded and scant in volume." It appears that many centuries

ago the forefathers of the present Batswana migrated southwards along the edge of the Kalahari. Other Batswana immigrants degenerated into Kgalagadi of today (see also Danzinger. 1983. p.12 and Schapera. op.:cit. p.60).

Historically the Batswana of the Kalahari border fell into three main groups: a southern group consisting of the Tlharo. Tshidi-Rolong. Tlhaping. Hurutse. Ngwaketse. Kgatla (Mmanaana) and some Kgalagadi: a northern group. which include the Ngwato. Tawana and the bulk of the Kgalagadi: and an eastern group to which the Lete. Tlokwa (unrelated to the Tlokwa of Sekonyela). and Kgatla (Kgafela) belonged (see Davenport. op.cit.:p.57).

Geographically. the Batswana were distributed mainly over the central plateau of South Africa which included the western parts of the former Transvaal Province. the Northern Cape (particularly the present North West Province) and the present Free State Province. The main home of the Batswana. however. is the adjacent country of Botswana.

Historically the Batswana are associated with the dry and arid conditions of the Kalahari semi-desert. which explains in part the sparsity of settlements over the vast Kalahari and the relative concentration around where water is relatively available. TABLE 10 below summarises the distribution of Setswana speakers in the mid-1990's in Southern Africa. Notice the large concentration of 76.3% of the Batswana in the North West Province which probably maps the beach-head of the Southern migration of the Batswana from Botswana into South Africa. The other large flanks

of migration were in the further southward movements into the Northern Cape, the Free State and Gauteng.

TABLE 10: Distribution by province: Setswana

Province	*Number of Setswana speakers, 1991**	*Percentage of Total*
Northern Province	*69897*	*2.0*
North West	*2 658[illegible]*	*76.3*
Gauteng	*466811*	*13.4*
Mpumalanga	*22917*	*0.7*
Northern Cape	*136774*	*3.9*
Free State	*24599*	*3.6*
Kwazulu-Natal	*1034*	*0.03*
Eastern Cape	*418*	*0.01*
Western Cape	*11643*	*0.05*
South Africa	*1 3482657*	*100%*

* *Excluding former TBVC, Transkei, Venda and Ciskei, but including Bophuthatswana*
(Adapted from Language in South Africa, 1994, p.42)

2.2.4 The Tshivenda speaking people

The former Venda homeland which now falls under the Northern Province has been the heartland of the Tshivenda language. On the 13th September 1979, the Venda homeland was granted nominal "independence" by the then Nationalist Party Government (see Rogers, 1976, p.32; see also Davenport, 1977, p.413) Historically the main area of the Vhavhenda habitation has been the fertile land around the Soutpansberg mountains to the north of South Africa: 88.4% of the speakers of Tshivenda are found in this area. It seems that the Vhavenda did not migrate any further south of the region. Available literature seems to suggest that until recently it was commonly held that the true Vhavenda were in fact Shona immigrants who

established themselves in the land of the original non-Venda inhabitants, i.e the Mbedzi and the Ngona. Beach, as quoted by Maylam (1986, p.52), maintains that it is now known that the basic Vhavenda speaking people have been present in the Soutpansberg from very early times, and that they have absorbed a number of groups of Shona immigrants (see also Schapera, op.cit.: pp.63 - 65).

It appears that historians agree that the Zoutpansberg which is found in the present Northern Province has been the heartland of the Tshivenda language probably for centuries.

The Vhavenda may be divided into three subgroups: the western sub-group, which is found in Vhuilafuri (Kutama, Sinthumule areas), and which has been subject to Sotho influences, the southern sub-group which is found in Vhuronga and which has been historically associated with the north-eastern Sotho tribes around the Bolobedu area. These southern most Vhavenda of Groot Spelonken, Tzaneen and Pietersburg districts, who were living far from the Zoutpansberg mountains, could not retreat thither when the Shangaan-Tsonga immigration to the Northern Transvaal commenced; and in the end, their culture and language were swamped, so that little remains of either; and the Eastern sub-group, which has been fortunate enough to escape being influenced in any way whatever, except, of course, by the thin trickle of immigrants and traders from the north and east, an influence so weak that it escaped direction and was lost to tradition. This last sub-group has therefore been able to keep traditional Venda culture almost intact (see Schapera, loc cit).

TABLE 11 below indicates the distribution of the Tshivenda language:

TABLE 11: Distribution by province: Tshivenda.

Province	*Number of Tshivenda speakers, 1991**	*Percentage of Total*
Northern Province	*59512*	*88.4*
North West	*3684*	*0.6*
Gauteng	*69702*	*10.4*
Mpumalanga	*3372*	*0.5*
Northern Cape	*57*	*0.0*
Free State	*1110*	*0.2*
Kwazulu-Natal	*267*	*0.0*
Eastern Cape	*23*	*0.0*
Western Cape	*133*	*0.0*
South Africa	*6 73540*	*100%*

* *Excluding former Transkei, Ciskei and Bophuthatswana, but excluding Venda*
(Adapted from Language in South Africa, 199, p.54)

TABLE 11 above clearly indicates that the largest concentration of the Vhavenda is the northern part of the present Northern Province in the vicinity of the Soutpansberg mountain. The relatively large settlement of the Vhavenda in the Gauteng area could be ascribed to migration that is job-related since the historical settlement of the Vhavenda is in a largely rural area.

2.2.5 The Xitsonga speaking people

The former homeland of Gazankulu which now falls under the Northern Province has been associated with the Xitsonga language. During the Nationalist Party Government this homeland was further fragmented into six districts, which were Giyani, Ritavi, Malamulele, Hlanganani, Mhala and Lulekani, all in the northern

part with the exception of the controversial Mhala under Bushbuckridge, whose residents were campaigning in 1997 for its integration into the present Mpumalanga Province. At the time of writing this thesis, the Premiers of Mpumalanga Province and the Northern Province were negotiating with the relevant stakeholders to find a Constitutional solution to the controversy.

Davenport (op.cit.: p.12) states that the Vatsonga occupying the coastal area from the Save River in Mozambique as far south as St. Lucia Bay, spoke a language very different from Zulu. Their control of the hinterland Delagoa Bay gave them a special role in the promotion of trade during the eighteenth century, with iron and copper, ivory and slaves as the main commodities.

Although the Vatsonga claim to have come from all points of the compass (see Junod, 1927, p.21), there is a general agreement among scholars that the Vatsonga appear to have come from an area around most probably today's Mozambique.

Mathumba writes (1993, p.57):

> Nghunghunyana and his sons, as well as his uncle Mpisane were captured by the Portuguese for deportation, but Nghunghunyana secured the release of his sons as well as his uncle Mpisane in exchange for diamonds. When Nghunghunyana had been deported and the whole of Mozambique placed under Portuguese rule, Mpisane

decided to move into the Transvaal and, between 1897 and 1900, many Shangaans followed him. They settled in the Bushbuckridge area with Mpisane as their chief.

Mathumba (op.cit.: p.60) maintains that the man who played a significant role in settling the Vatsonga refugees in the Northern Transvaal was Joao Albasini, a Portuguese merchant who had been appointed Vice-Consul by the British Government (see Jacques 1971, p10; Sihlangu, 1975, p.14). This man, whom the Vatsonga called Juwawa, virtually ruled over the Vatsonga people as their chief. He allocated land to the refugees who streamed into the Northern Transvaal, so that besides the well-known Vatsonga chiefs Xikundu, Mhinga, Xigalo and N'wamitwa, there were scores of smaller units under so-called independent headmen scattered in this area (see Van Warmelo in Schapera 1937, p.15) then known as Spelonken. It seems that the Vatsonga stayed there relatively undisturbed like other tribes until they were hit by the storm of Mfecane when Zulu armies went on a rampage as a conquering force (Schapera, op. cit.: p.56).

Schapera (op cit.: p.57) adds that the Nhlanganu of the Lowveld of Pilgrimsrest district, composed of the tribes of Shobiyana, Njhonjela and some others whose following however, much mixed with Shangaan. The name Shangaan actually designates only those Nguni who came from Zululand with Soshangana (one of the Nguni generals), and their descendants, who are, of course, largely of mixed blood; but it also embraces a number of Tsonga who have adopted their masters' language and customs.

According to Mathumba (op.cit.:pp.54-58) the Nkuna moved further north and settled near the confluence of the Limpopo River until they reached the east coast of Mozambique not far from the Limpopo. (For a more detailed exposition of the history of the Vatsonga people, see Jacques, A.A. 1971; Junod, H.A. 1927; Junod, H.P. 1977; Van Warmelo, N.J. 1935; Sihlangu, A.B. 1975). TABLE 12 below illustrates the distribution of the Xitsonga langauge:

TABLE 12: Distribution by province : Xitsonga

Province	*Number of Xitsonga speakers, 1991**	*Percentage of Total*
Northern Province	*1 052920*	*73.1*
North West	*23860*	*1.7*
Gauteng	*248399*	*17.3*
Mpumalanga	*96177*	*6.7*
Northern Cape	*1002*	*0.1*
Free State	*16470*	*1.1*
Kwazulu-Natal	*1267*	*0.0*
Eastern Cape	*59*	*0.0*
Western Cape	*655*	*0.0*
South Africa	*1 439809*	*100%*

* *Excluding former TBVC states*
(Adapted from Language in South Africa, 1994, p.38)

The Vatsonga that are found in Gauteng have been attracted by the rich mineral resources which offered job opportunities.

2.2.6 The Afrikaans speaking people

Cape Town was the first part of South Africa which the Dutch-speaking people first "touched" or settled in. Jan van Riebeeck arrived at the Cape on the 6th of April 1652. The aim of the coming of Jan van Riebeeck to the Cape was to set up a

station which would be used as a watering place by English and Dutch vessels on their way to and from the East Indies. This was the beginning of a formal arrival and gradual occupation of the Cape which ultimately resulted in the entire occupation of South Africa by whites (see Omer-Cooper. op.cit.: p.18).

The arrival of Dutch-speaking people at the Cape was not without problems to the early or original inhabitants of the Cape. The attitude. and the political intolerance of the Dutch East Indian Company (which sent Jan van Riebeeck and his colleagues) to suppress the society at the Cape into a common nation was the main source of the problems. Non-Dutch settlers had been forced to abandon their own languages and culture. and a large measure of social uniformity was imposed on the white community by the church and the state: the slaves and the Khoikhoi had their distinctive cultures crushed and contributed to the emergence of the creolized Dutch later known as Afrikaans (see NEPI document. 199. p.4).

When the Dutch people lived in close proximity to the Khoi. mixed marriages between the two groups became the norm. According to Omer-Cooper (op cit.: p.30) Jan van Riebeeck raised an orphaned Khoi girl. Eve in his home. In 1664 she married Peter van Meerhoff. the surgeon of the settlement. and as a sign of company's approval. he was given promotion. and a marriage feast in the then commanders home. Willem Adriaan. most prominent of the colony's early governors. was himself of mixed descent. As white men outnumbered white women in the Colony. sexual relationships between persons of different races were very common. Three quarters of the children born to slave women at the Cape up to 1671

were of mixed descent (see also Christopher. 1982.: p.23). It was out of these mixed marriages that coloureds were born and since Afrikaans or Dutch was the only language. this increased the population of Afrikaans speaking people at the Cape.

Between 1835 and 1841. about six thousand Dutch men. women and children trekked north-eastward from their homes in the eastern districts of the Cape Colony. crossing the colonial boundary in the vicinity of the village that was later founded at Aliwal North. Later. this emigration became known as the Great Trek. and the emigrants as Voortrekkers. They travelled in organised groups of kinsfolk and neighbours with their coloured servants and their ox wagons. cattle. sheep and other movable property. determined to establish new homes for themselves beyond the limits of British control. either in Natal or on the Highveld on either side of the Vaal River (see Curtin et al. op cit.: p.316).

These Dutch speaking people emigrated for a variety of reasons. Some felt they were not properly treated by the British Administration and the emancipation of the Khoikhoi and the slaves led to a labour shortage. Around 1834 and 1835 some Dutch speaking people had reached Natal and the Highveld. They also crossed the Drakensberg mountain. and made their homes on the Highveld. By the late 1840's many whites had scattered across the Highveld. near the Orange River in the southwest to the foothills of the Soutpansberg mountains near the Limpopo in the north (see Omer-Cooper. 1994. p.85).

The distribution of the Afrikaans language can be seen in TABLE 13 below:

TABLE 13: Distribution by province: Afrikaans

Province	*Number of Afrikaans speakers, 1991**	*Percentage of Total*
Northern Province	*122536*	*2.2*
North West	*266431*	*4.7*
Gauteng	*1 349885*	*23.7*
Mpumalanga	*252803*	*4.3*
Northern Cape	*476326*	*8.4*
Free State	*38455*	*6.7*
Kwazulu-Natal	*150379*	*2.6*
Eastern Cape	*557020*	*9.8*
Western Cape	*2 142300*	*37.6*
South Africa	*5 702535*	*100%*

* *Excluding former TBVC states*
(Adapted from Language in South Africa, 1994.p.18)

From TABLE 13 above it is clear that the Western Cape is the heartland of the Afrikaans language. Again it should be pointed out that although some of the Afrikaans speaking people trekked to different parts of South Africa, the majority remained in the Cape, in particular the Western Cape. It should also be noted that the Afrikaans speaking people were farmers and as a result they also trekked in search of grazing pastures for their cattle and sheep.

2.2.7 The English speaking people

The first British fleet arrived in the Cape in 1795. The reason for the British occupation of the Cape was that Holland fell to the forces of the French Revolution. Just like the arrival of the Dutch speaking people in 1652, the arrival of the British in the Cape was not without problems. They were viewed with suspicion and

hostility by the Boers or the Cape Dutch. Obviously the Boers regarded the Cape as their own land as they were among the first whites to arrive, and also they were sensitive and conscious of their language and culture.

To facilitate the spread of the English language and culture the London Missionary Society arrived in the Cape in 1799. These missionaries were moving out and settling among the indigenous communities beyond the frontiers of the Colony as well as amongst the Xhosa along the east coast. The aim of the missionaries was to 'convert the heathen', which entailed civilizing them and encouraging them to adopt a way of life similar to that of nineteenth-century British and European people (see Omer-Copper op cit.: p.39).

According to the NEPI (ibid) attempts were made to establish English-medium schools. From 1812 the Government tried to accelerate this trend. In that year public education was introduced in the country districts. Free public schools, giving organised instruction through the English language were set up in the Cape, reporting to the so-called Bible and School Commission. These schools, established in 1813 under the patronage of Sir John Cradock, drew their funds directly from the Colonial Treasury, and bonuses were offered in 1822 to competent teachers who undertook to teach English.

Many measures were taken to try to encourage the adoption and spread of the English language and culture. This move and others initiated and supported by the British Government facilitated the spread of the English language in the whole

South Africa.

The NEPI (ibid) states that the Colony of Natal was annexed to Britain in 1843. English schools were opened in Pietermaritzburg and Durban in 1848 - 49. In 1858 the Governor constituted the chief Central Board of Education, and the first superintendent was appointed the following year. The distribution of the English language can be seen in TABLE 14 below:

TABLE 14: Distribution by province : English.

Province	*Number of English speakers, 1991**	*Percentage of Total*
Northern Province	*20586*	*0.6*
North West	*30816*	*40.9*
Gauteng	*1 048612*	*30.7*
Mpumalanga	*54016*	*1.6*
Northern Cape	*19174*	*0.6*
Free State	*39220*	*1.1*
Kwazulu-Natal	*279955*	*37.5*
Eastern Cape	*230526*	*6.7*
Western Cape	*691995*	*20.3*
South Africa	*3 414900*	*100%*

* *Excluding former TBVC states*
(Adapted from Language in South Africa, 1994, p.26)

From the TABLE 14 above it is clear that there is no particular province that can claim to be the heartland of the English language. The reason is not far to find. The British agents, the London Missionary Society travelled throughout South Africa in an attempt to anglicise the inhabitants of this country. Also the fact that Gauteng Province, Western Cape and Kwazulu-Natal show some high numbers might be due to the lifestyles of the English speakers as they were city dwellers.

2.5 Conclusion

Once again it should be noted that this was a brief attempt to outline the geographical distribution of South African languages as given by Van Der Merwe Van Niekerk (1994) in their book on the distribution of South African languages. The bulk of the historical data on the geographical distribution of South African languages cannot account accurately for why a particular language group is distributed the way it is in South Africa.

Perhaps one of the reasons why the history literature cannot account for this is that people have been moving and are still moving from one area to another. Several factors can be attributed to the movement of people. For the sake of convenience. I will classify these reasons as external and internal factors. By external factors I refer to those factors that are beyond one's control. while the internal factors are factors that stem from one's will.

With regard to the British. their movement was caused by internal factors. They wanted to anglicise South Africa and the discovery of diamonds attracted them to these cities. The same can be said of the Boers. Their own feeling of insecurity around the British made them to trek northwards and to parts of the Cape.

The movement of Africans on the other hand was largely due to external factors. Africans had to leave the Kwazulu-Natal Province. Mozambique and other places during the Mfecane which was caused by the Zulu chiefs. Again the wars which

took place between the Voortrekkers and the Africans resulted in African leaving their places to seek refuge elsewhere in search for greener pastures for their cattle and sheep.

CHAPTER 3 : BRIEF OVERVIEW OF THE STATUS AND ROLE OF DIFFERENT LANGUAGES IN THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

3.1 Introduction

The history of the languages struggle or "taal stryd" in South Africa has been characterized by political manipulation by the governments in loco. The NEPI document (1982, p.9) avers that the position of African languages in the South African territories was closely determined by the political situation. Thus in the territories of the Boer republics, Dutch was imposed on the educational system, while the African languages of the peoples with whom the Boers came into contact, were disregarded. The British colonial governments on their part, used to take decisions, according to the circumstances of their rule, on how and why the African languages should or should not be introduced in education. Such decisions were influenced by the interplay of three main groups amongst the British: officials of the colonial government, settlers, and missionaries.

Since the language policy was planned and determined by the government of the day, it also implied that the official language of the country which was also the medium of instruction, was determined by the government of the day. When the Cape was under the Dutch East Indian Company, from ± 1652 to 1806, Dutch was the official language of the Cape. And when the British annexed the Cape from the Dutch around 1806, the English language superseded Dutch and became the official

language of the country. After the Union between the Afrikaners and the British in 1910. English and Afrikaans were accorded equal status and role. According to the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa. Act No 110. of 1983. p 34-35. "English and Afrikaans shall be the official languages of the Republic. and shall be treated on a footing of equality. and possess and enjoy equal freedom. rights and privileges. All records. journals and proceedings of parliament shall be kept in both the official languages and all bills. laws and notices of general public importance or interest issued by the Government of the Republic shall be in both the official languages" (see also Rose and Tumner. 1975. p.188).

The above linguistic stipulations are not surprising as. according to Reagan (1981. p.188). the selection of national language (or national languages. as is actually more commonly the case) as a component of the language planning process is a highly political and ideological reminder that social scientists in general. and language planners in particular. are never far removed from controversy. and that our decisions are never truly "objective". This is nowhere clearer than in the case of Southern Africa. where the social and political tensions of a fragmented official racist social order not only filters into the language planning process. but permeates and to a very large extent. directs it. Despite the presence of a large number of indigenous African languages both in the Republic of South Africa and in Namibia. the real controversy in the language planning debate in Southern Africa has been between those who advocate the adoption of English as the official language of the area and those who advocate the continued maintenance of Afrikaans (in general alongside English).

The preference for either English or Afrikaans or both resulted in the undermining and marginalisation of indigenous African languages throughout the Republic of South Africa. The norm was that, as exoglossic languages were accorded a higher status, they continued to dominate the endoglossic languages in all spheres of life: be it in politics, in the economy, in socio-cultural activities, education and training and in other public domains. All in all, English and Afrikaans languages were accorded a higher status while African languages assumed a marginalized status (see Young, 1987, pp.63 - 63; Nkondo 1981, p.1).

3.2 Status and role of South African languages before liberation

3.2.1 The Dutch and Afrikaans languages : ± 1652 - 1910

The introduction of the exoglossic languages in the southern tip of South Africa can be traced back to the early colonial occupation of the country by the Dutch settlers. The dominance of Dutch over the indigenous languages then obtaining in the Cape was summed-up in the following conditions for the freeing of a non-Dutch speaking slave:

> "Dat... in 1685 ... 'n slaaf sy vryheid vir 100 guldens kon koop "sprekende prompt die Nederduytsche taal en doende of gedoen hebbende die beleijdenisse van die Gereformeerde religie" (**Taal en Taalonderrig**, RGN, 1981, p.14)

It is interesting to note that the capacity to pay (i.e. the economy), education (i.e.capacity to learn the Dutch language) and religion were seen in one eye-sweep as part and parcel of colonisation. It is perhaps in this context that Alexander (1989, p.12) observed that the conquest of South Africa by Holland in the 17th and 18th century was an integral part of the process of colonial-imperial expansion.

Although there is evidence in the literature to suggest that under Governor Janssens and Commissioner-General J.A. de Mist (1803 - 1806) of the Batavian Republic, efforts were made to include endoglossic languages in the schools for slaves and to seek to use these languages for classroom instruction, the degree of success in this venture was minimal to zero (see for example, **Taal en Taalonderrig**, RGN, 1981, pp.14 - 15; Davenport, 1977, p.41). Evidently as a result of this limited or zero success, Dutch became both "die enigste amptelike taal aan die Kap" (loc.cit) and a medium of instruction for all and sundry to boot. The NEPI document (ibid, p.4) expands on the idea as follows:

> The Cape Colony culturally was a backwater with no newspaper, a small but little used library and a few church schools run by the Dutch Reformed Church and attended by the Company's employees children as well as those of the slaves. These schools did little more than prepare children for confirmation. Dutch was

made a M.O.I. in schools.

During this era, education comprised basically the knowledge of the Bible and singing of hymns. Only a few indigenous people could communicate in Dutch. In this connection Alexander (1989, p.12) observes:

> Thus, during the first few years of the rule of Dutch East Indian Company (D.E.I.C) at the Cape, the officials were completely dependent on the linguistic skills of Autshomoa ("Harry"), Krotoa ("Eva"), Doman ("Anthony") and a few others for their very survival at this Cape of Storms.

It seems that (perhaps unwittingly) the early Dutch settlers suffered from a serious negative language attitude towards the endoglossic languages they found at the Cape. Alexander quotes Leonard Thompson and Monica Wilson as having observed that "the Europeans found Khoikhoi phonetics impossible. They could not pronounce the clicks"! Also, in order to reduce the cost of learning an indigenous language(s) by the Dutch settlers, the Dutch East Indian Company decreed that "the natives should learn our (Dutch) language rather than we theirs" (ibid, p.12 - 13). Against this negative language attitude background, efforts at developing indigenous languages equally to Dutch could only at best be minimal or at worst zero.

In terms of status planning, corpus planning and acquisition planning of endoglossic languages in the Cape and later further inland, the period of the Dutch occupation of the Cape could be referred to as the "Dark Ages" for the growth and development of the indigenous languages. According to Reagan (1988, p.4), language was not an issue in schooling during this period since the vast majority of the White population during the first century and a half of colonization of the Cape spoke Dutch (albeit of a number of disparate dialects) and so the use of High Dutch as the sole education medium was not questioned. The seeds of hegemony of exoglossic languages over the endoglossic languages were sown to a great extent.

The fact of the deliberate marginalisation of indigenous languages in favour of European (exoglossic) languages was underscored by the fact that when one hundred and sixty Huguenot families arrived at the Cape as settlers in quest of religious freedom, the Dutch administration under Governor Simon van der Stel, inter alia, allowed them to start French medium schools, but settled them along the Berg River among the Dutch settlers "requiring them so far as possible to learn, worship and communicate with the authorities through the Dutch language" (Davenport, op.cit.: p.23). Davenport concludes: "French gradually died out" (loc cit: see also Reagan, ibid).

It seems Afrikaans (as against Dutch) began to come on its own around 1707 when a certain Hendricle Bibault "described himself as an Afrikander" (Davenport, loc cit). Afrikaans is an amalgamation of a number of languages including Dutch, French, German, Malay and some indigenous languages. It could therefore be seen

as an Endoglossic language which grew and developed in South Africa. That it was soon adopted as an L1 by speakers of mixed European and African parentage (now called Coloureds) helps to make a case for its Africanness.

A detailed exposition of the origin of Afrikaans is not necessary for this study since it will take us too far away from our thesis but it is necessary to note that from Hendricle Bibbault's declaration that "Ik ben een Afriaander" referred to above, followed a development of "Afrikaaner nationalism". This development, coupled with resentment towards British rule that took over from the Batavian Republic around 1806, led to farmers such as Stephanus Johannes du Toit, a journalist and author emerging as a "champion of the Afrikaans language" around the 1870's to 1884. In August 1875 he formed Die Genootskap van Regte Afrikaners, and in 1876 he followed through with the establishment of a newspaper, Die Afrikaanse Patriot to champion the interests of Afrikaans and the Afrikaner. In 1877 he published a history book entitled Die geskiedenis van ons land in die Taal van ons Volk. Both the newspaper and the book "hammered away at the concept that Afrikaners were a distinct people, occupying a distinct fatherland and a God-given language" (**Reader's Digest : Illustrated History of South Africa**, 1989, p.196)

It is hardly surprising, therefore, to see how vigorously the Afrikaner fought when Lord Alfred Milner wanted to "knock the bottom out of the Afrikaner nation" (after the defeat of the Boers in 1902) by using the English language as a weapon. "The Boers were to be made into British subjects, speaking the King's English" (Harrison, 1987, P.48). The British kragdadigheid as manifested, inter alia, in the

attitude assumed by Lord Milner and his British predecessors regarding the Afrikaner over the years, was perhaps also at the bottom of Dr Andries Treurnicht's (the erstwhile Deputy Minister of Bantu Education) utterance of words that contributed in no small way towards the language policy in African schools that led to the 1976 riots and, indirectly, to the fall of the Nationalist Party rule:

> In the White areas of South Africa where the government provides the buildings, subsidies and pay the teachers, it is surely our right to decide what the language dispensation should be (translated) (Hartshorne in Young, 1987, p.75).

The language to be imposed in teaching and learning was Afrikaans. In terms of language and politics, Dr. Treurnicht's position represents a perfect example of political pig-headedness since he should have known that in the same way as Lord Milner had failed in trying to impose English on the Afrikaner, the Afrikaner too were doomed to failure if they tried to impose Afrikaans as the medium of teaching and learning in African schools.

When writing about language planning models for a post-Apartheid South Africa, De Cluver (1992) asked a question: "What will the position of Afrikaans be?" (ibid). Only a future government language policy and the South African citizenry at large will answer this question.

3.2.2 The English Language : 1806 - 1910 in South Africa

Commissioner-General de Mist's effort to support the pivotal role of L1s especially in education and related fields, clearly did not succeed in the case of the indigenous languages. When the era of the Dutch East Indian Company at the Cape ended with the second British occupation of the Cape in 1806, not only the indigenous languages but also the erstwhile official language, Dutch, was undermined in favour of English (see for example **Taal en Taalonderrig**, ibid).

On the 5th July 1822, despite the fact that the Dutch outnumbered the English by 8:1, Lord Charles Somerset, then British Governor at the Cape proclaimed that "English shall be the only official language of the Colony in all activities". Specifically from 1 January 1823 English was to be the sole language of all documents of the Colony and from 1 January 1825 it was to be the sole language of Law and the Courts of Law. By 1853, Dutch was no longer used as a language of debate in Parliament (Harrison, 1987, p.48).

In order to place the hegemony of English beyond any challenge, English was decreed the medium of instruction in all state schools. Scottish missionary-teachers were imported on purpose to put their stamp on English education and religion. The Cape Dutch-speaking children found themselves learning "in a language that they did not understand" (Harrison, 1986, pp.48-49). Syllabuses were a replica of those used in England at the time. "Children were forbidden to speak anything else", except English. Although many Dutch parents resisted the imposition of English,

this "formal insistence on English succeeded in Anglicising many of the Cape colonials" (Harrison, op.cit.: p.49).

The hegemony of English over the other languages is explained by Alexander (1989, p.16) when he says:

> That the British authorities saw the importance of language is apparent from the steps periodically taken to compel the public use of English. They applied pressure first in the schools; they extended it by proclamation to the courts from the late 1820's onwards; in 1853 they made English the exclusive language of Parliament; and by 1870 they appeared to be triumphing on all fronts. By the middle of the 1870's the chief justice, J.H de Villiers, could tell an audience that "although the time is still far distant when the inhabitants of this colony will speak and acknowledge one common mother-tongue, it would come at last, and when it does come the language of Great Britain will also be the language of South Africa".

Christie (1986, p.34) adds to Alexander's explanation by saying that the British authorities paid far more attention to education than the Dutch had done. They wanted to use education as a way of spreading their language and traditions in the colony - and also as a means of social control. They declared English to be the

official language, and they attempted to anglicize the Church, the government, and the schools. They set up a number of schools in the British tradition, and they brought over teachers from Britain. In 1839 they set up a proper Department of Education, and also gave financial help to local schools. Incentives for good English teachers were made available and free English public schools were started to accelerate the anglicization process.

All means at the disposal of the British governments were used to anglicise all the inhabitants of the Cape Colony. The Dutch saw this as an attempt by the British government to destroy their language and culture. This process of anglicization met with strong resistance among the Dutch community which led to scattered attacks on the British by the Dutch. The Dutch-speaking people began Dutch medium schools as a means of preserving their language and culture. Somerset's Anglicization policy is cited as one of the causes of the 1836 Great Trek.

Since the hegemony of English in all domains has been so dominant and has influenced the position of other South African languages so much over the last two hundred years or so, this limited exposition will suffice on the understanding that it will be read together with 3.2.1 above and 3.2.3 below. In addition, Rose and Tumner (eds) (1975) give details that may be referred to.

3.2.2 African Languages

As already indicated, during the reign of the Dutch in the Cape the codification, elaboration and general promotion of the indigenous languages was not pursued beyond the attempts by de Mist, who decided to use these languages in African schools, since, in any case, the medium of instruction was Dutch and its very existence was by and large not threatened. Schools were influenced by the Reformed Church and covered rudiments of the three R's and religious education. Africans who were servants to the Dutch masters were taught mainly to recite psalms and sing religious songs from the hymn book. The Dutch language was the only medium of instruction in this informal schooling and no effort was made by the masters to learn the languages of their servants or slaves (see Alexander, ibid).

As was pointed out in 3.2.1, the early Dutch settlers did not only have difficulties in mastering the phonology of the endoglossic languages they found at the Cape and which their servants and slaves spoke, but they also did not see the need to invest too much money in the effort of learning these languages. They preferred the easy option, i.e. to get all and sundry to learn Dutch both as the lingua franca and as the language of education. But, as the Verslag van die Werkkomittee, **Taal en Taalonderrig** (ibid) observed:

> Die slawe kon die Nederlaandse onderwyser egter nie verstaan nie en die skool het tot niet gegaan.

Also the Khokhoi servants could not cope with Dutch as the language of teaching and learning and so the effort at formal schooling "was egter 'n mislukking" (**Taal en Taalonderrig.**. ibid)

As already stated. when the British government annexed the Cape in 1806 all attempts were made to anglicise all the inhabitants of the Cape colony. The first step was to assimilate the mainly Dutch into the British fold. and by so doing. reduce the Dutch language's influence in the Cape. The second effort was to anglicise the Africans and absorb them into the English culture and traditions.

In 1855 Sir George Grey. then Governor of the Cape. said the following words in parliament:

> If we leave the natives beyond our borders ignorant Barbarians. they will remain a race of troublesome marauders. We should try to make them part of ourselves. with a common faith and common interests. useful servants. consumers of our goods. contributors to our revenue. Therefore. I propose that we make unremitting efforts to raise the natives in Christianity and civilization. by establishing among them missions connected with industrial schools. The

> native race beyond our boundary, influenced by our missionaries, instructed in our schools, benefiting by our trade would not make wars on our frontier (see Christie, op.cit, p.37).

It is evidently clear from Sir George Grey's words that the main aim of educating Africans was to convert them into semi-Europeans, assimilate them and ultimately control their lives. African culture and traditions were dismantled and the European culture was imposed on Africans. In the process, African languages got undermined.

At the level of colonisation, therefore, the British Empire, as exemplified by the words of Sir George Grey, sought to convert the indigenous populace into semi-Europeans first by westernising and evangelising them and finally taking control of their lives as subjects of the British Empire. That the school, with English as the main language of instruction was to be used as a point of thrust, is too obvious to belabour. The English missionary teacher, therefore, was an important agent in this anglicising drive.

But the missionaries soon realized that indigenous languages had to be used as hand-maidens to the evangelisation and westernisation process. For that reason, they set about learning African languages in order to translate the Bible and other religious books into the languages of their charges. In this connection, Alexander (1989, pp.18 - 19) maintains that on the other hand, the need and desire to spread the gospel among the heathen made it necessary to reduce the indigenous languages

to writing and to teach these written languages as widely as possible. Although literacy in the Nguni and Sotho languages became the possession of only a handful of African people, it has to be stressed that the missionaries became invaluable agents of colonial rule in that they helped to train a core of people who could spread the knowledge of the Bible among the colonized people and, when necessary, could act as interpreters in courts and in other government institutions. Again, it must be stressed that in most cases the missionaries were only or primarily concerned with evangelisation. But because of their position on the side of the ruling class, it was impossible to expect that they would do anything to undermine the system. Indeed they inevitably facilitated the conquest, dispossession and subjugation of the indigenous people.

Although the missionaries must be credited with the good work of reducing the different African languages to writing, it is not easy to divorce their work from the colonisation drive as a whole. But this latter role should not overshadow the work of missionaries in the genesis and development of education for Africans in South Africa (For a detailed exposition of the role of Christian missionaries in education, see for example Kgware, 1955; Lekhela, 1970; Van der Mescht, 1953; Mminele, 1989; Mphahlele, 1978; Mawasha, 1969). For tthe missionaries, interest in African languages was largely a means to an end rather than an end ion istelf.

As already indicated in the preceding paragraphs, the anglicization process by the British to remove the Dutch language was not without obstacles. The Dutch people fought for the maintenance of their language. It was only after a long protracted

battle between the British and the Dutch, that an agreement was reached in 1910, which resulted in the establishment of a union between the two groups. This union of 1910, inter alia, placed Dutch and English on a footing of equality (see Reagan, 1988, p.9).

When the Nationalist Party government came to power in 1948, all efforts were made to develop and promote the Afrikaans language nationally above African languages so that the former may compete with English. The government tried by all means to protect and promote the Afrikaans language and culture (see De Cluver, 1996, p.15). It was during the Nationalist Party government that the policy of separate development was introduced. This meant that Africans were demographically divided along ethnolinguistic lines. Vatsonga were given Gazankulu as their homeland. Northern Sotho speakers were given Lebowa. Venda was allocated to Vhavenda (see Rodgers, 1976, pp. 7 - 8). To strengthen this divide-and-rule system, language boards for each and every ethnic group were established in 1962 (see De Cluver, ibid).

As regards English and Afrikaans, the Nationalist Party government passed the National Education Act of 1967 and the implementation of the relevant parts of the Act with Proclamation E809 on 16 May 1969. The main aim of this Act was to enforce English and Afrikaans mother-tongue instruction in white schools. This resulted in the segregation of Afrikaans and English-speaking white learners in South Africa. The main objective of the government was to ensure maintenance and protection of the Afrikaans language and culture (see Reagan, ibid). The rationale

was that alongside English, there was a possibility that Afrikaans might play second fiddle.

Unlike in white schools, mother tongue instruction in African schools had a different aim. Reagan (ibid) states that mother tongue schooling for Blacks had been expanded and emphasised from the passage of the Bantu Education Act of 1953 onwards to support Verwoedian-style apartheid, and no amount of sugar coating can change this. The government used apartheid political philosophy to reinforce ethnic and tribal identity among black schoolchildren, seeking to "divide and conquer" by encouraging ethnolinguistic divisions within the black community. The resultant programmes, by their nature, in a setting such as that of contemporary South Africa, entail racially segregated schools.

The introduction of mother tongue instruction in African schools was clearly politically motivated. As a result the Nationalist government's decision met strong opposition and challenge. The opposition was not against the occurrence of African languages in education per se especially during the initial stages of education, but rather against the imposition of such a measure. A TUATA statement (1973) captures this distinction very clearly:

> ... our languages are self-sufficient to express our thoughts, feelings and aspirations. We use them in our gatherings to express certain poignant and related ideas. But we do not accept

> the imposition of these languages over us by officialdom. It is not our intention to down-grade our languages. But we deplore it when they are used to divide and separate us as a people.

This distinction is very important to make since Africans who opposed the Verwoedian language policy of accentuating the role and status of African languages are often mischievously seen as being anti African in favour of European languages. This is not so. The opposition has a socio-political basis rather that a national or linguistic one (see for example Interdepartmental Committee on Native Education, 1935 - 1936, pp. 83 - 85).

It is also important to note that the Report of the Commission on Native Education of 1949 - 1951. (UG No 53/1951) which emphasised African languages in African education was more concerned with the policy of separate development than language parity or the empowerment of Africans in schools by teaching and learning through the languages they knew best, i.e. their mother tongues. The political agenda underlying the above Commission was highlighted by its composition and life-view:

> The next step in the evolution of a strict language policy for African education was the appointment on 14 January 1949 of a

> government Commission on National Education, chaired by Dr. W.W.M. Eiselen: anthropologist, former chief inspector of Native Education in the Transvaal, `separate development' theorist, and descendent of German Lutheran missionary stock. The all-white Commission which sat for two years, visited over one hundred and fifty education institutions and took evidence either orally or in writing, from well over hundred individuals and bodies. However, in the end, it reported in terms of its own ideological stance and disregarded the weight of evidence from African witnesses (Young, 1987, p.68).

Judging from the composition of the Commission and its political perspective, it was obvious that its findings would be biased, unfair, discriminatory and supportive of the policy of separate development. The Commission reported, inter alia, as follows to the government:

> Your commission is of the opinion that the question of mother-tongue medium in Bantu schools is vital to the whole system. We realize that in this connection we will have to face

> grave difficulties and that the public opinion, especially among the Bantu, is to a large extent still unenlightened, and that it would consequently possibly be hostile to any drastic change in the use of the medium of instruction. (Commission on Native Education, 1949 - 1951, p.16)

The word "unenlightened" portrays the bias of the Commission's report. Instead of addressing the two important educational questions:

(a) whether learning through a foreign language in the primary schools had a harmful effect on the general progress of the pupil,

and

(b) at what stage of development the child is best able to learn through a foreign language,

the Commission defends itself by saying:

> Although there has been a good deal of research in South Africa and other bilingual countries, the published results differ so greatly that apparently no final answer can be given to either

of these two questions (ibid).

It is surprising that this Commission could not accept the views of "the Bantu" population on the question of medium because "the Bantu" were "unenlightened". On the other hand, with regard to official languages, the same "unenlightened" community was competent to express a view acceptable to the Commission. The Commission's views clearly portray the discriminatory nature and the racial attitude held by the Nationalist Party government towards African people in general and their education in particular. The education system as provided by the Nationalist Party government did not equip African learners with knowledge and skills to compete with their white counterparts:

> There has been in South Africa (and, to a decreasing extent still is among certain sections of the white community) a fear that education might transform Africans into successful competitors with the White for limited job opportunities (see Rose and Tumner, 1975, p.201).

Unlike the Commission on Native Education of 1949 - 1951, the ANC's **A Policy Framework for Education and Training** (May 1994) is more concerned with reconciliation and the protection of the rights of an individual (including his/her language) based on democratic principles. The ANC document emphasises the need

for broad consultation before a decision is taken on matters relating to language policy in different domains:

> Language policy in education should be the subject of a nation-wide consultative process to ensure that proper changes in policy have the broad consent of language communities which will be directly affected by them. No person or language community should be compelled to receive education through a language of learning they do not want. No language community should have reason to fear that the education system will be used to suppress its mother tongue. Language restrictions should not be used to exclude citizens from educational opportunities(ANC, **A Policy Framework for Education and Training**, 1994, p.62).

The above quotation clearly distinguishes the ANC's democratic position on language policy matters from that of the **Commission on Native Education** of 1949 - 1951, when the latter says:

> We also wish to point out that witnesses, particularly the Bantu, laid great stress on the

> need to teach official languages. We are therefore of the opinion that provisions should be made for instruction in both these languages even in the lower primary schools, and this should be done in such a way that the Bantu child will be able to find his way in European communities, to follow oral or written instructions and to carry on a simple conversation with Europeans about his work and other subjects of common interest.

Looking at the Commission on Native Education of 1949 - 1951 vis-à-vis the ANC's **A Policy Framework for Education and Training**, and also the entire language scenario in a historical perspective, I concur with NEPI that:

> Language policies were not only devised by the bureaucracy of the state, but also by the economic powerful sectors as well as the privileged white ruling class always had a vested interest in the decisions on language and education policies for Africans... The language-related mobilization against Bantu education in the mid-50's and the Soweto uprising, in 1976, constituted a rejection to instruments of

> domination in the hands of those wielding power (NEPI, 1992, p.1).

The ANC Framework(1994, p.62) further states that:

> The legacy of past language struggle cannot be ignored by the future democratically elected government. It is of utmost importance that the correct lessons are learnt and that the circle of language oppression and resistance be broken: in the interest of building peace in our schools and communities and a common South African nationhood. We envisage a time when all education institutions will be implementing multilingual education in order to facilitate learning and to enable all students to be confident, proficient and fluent users of at least two South African languages. In moving towards this goal, we shall be building on the linguistic strengths of learners and teachers, harnessing the rich multilingual reality of South Africa for effective participation in social, political and economic development.

From the foregoing observations, it is clear that language has often been manipulated as a political tool to further the aims of the apartheid regime. There was no conscious effort on the part of the government to improve, develop and empower African languages outside a socio-political, socio-economic agenda. Any effort or endeavour that appeared to be geared towards the development of African languages was planned and determined to fit-in with the Nationalist Party government's policy of separate development. The same could be said of the establishment of separate language boards for different ethnic groups in 1962. As already stated, these separate language boards were established specifically to deal with issues such as orthography, spelling, materials writing as well as recommending books for prescription in schools in the different indigenous languages.

According to the NEPI (ibid) the demise of the apartheid policy towards African languages and its consequences can be summarised as follows:

(i) The main instrument of the Apartheid Language policy is Bantu Education, a surrogate of "Christian National Education".

(ii) Almost the entire African population who should have been instrumental in developing their own languages are marginalized.

(iii) Illiteracy is widespread among the Black population

(iv) African languages are mainly used for primary education, while secondary education follows the imposition of state bilingualism.

(v) Banning and censorship have a profound and negative effect on the publication of African literature of any kind, tending to have either a

prohibiting or deterring effect.

(vi) Communication media, especially the electronic ones are used to foster language exclusivism and finally the so-called Bureaux for Language and Culture have been instrumental in setting limits to technical vocabulary and bringing the African languages to further differentiation.

It is against this background that African languages were accorded a marginalised status. They functioned as regional languages while English and Afrikaans assumed official national status.

As far as African literature is concerned, Maake (1994, p.77) observes that literature written in African languages (Maake uses the term "Bantu" languages) has inherited an unfortunate legacy imposed upon it by the Nationalist Government's policies of the past, so that the reaction to the language policy turned the literature into an embattled field of discourse, resulting in turn, in the association African languages with all that was negative in the post-1948 era. Since then, literature written in the African languages has always been marginalised, as for instance, at the symposium on 'Book Publishing in South Africa for the 1990's', held at the South African Library in cape Town on 22 - 23 November 1990. Virtually nothing was said in that context about publishing in the African languages. The Conference thus denied the existence of African languages by their omission.

It seems that whatever support some publishing companies gave towards publishing in African languages was motivated largely by financial gain. Profit is important in

all types of businesses, but if profit is all there is, unfortunate side-effects are inevitable. In the case of publishing in African languages, only manuscripts that targeted the lucrative school market saw the light of the day , while others tended to fall by the way side. This unfortunate bias has created a situation in which the bulk of reading matter in African languages is for the classroom and virtually nothing for the adult reader. African languages now face a backlog of suitable material for the adult reader, spanning centuries.

This backlog may continue to be felt even more acutely as Adult Basic Education and Training (ABET) efforts by the new democratic government begins to bear fruit. There is a real danger that adults will be taught how to read by using elementary materials because there will be no suitable adult material for them to read further for enjoyment and for edification. If this should come to pass, government, writers, NGO's and publishing houses will stand challenged to put their heads together in order to meet this need.

Indeed the whole concept of lifelong learning enshrined in the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) document will not be entirely possible for adult neo-literates if there is virtually nothing for them to read in order to effect the intention of life-long learning. The implications of this possibility for the democratic government's efforts at reconstruction and development and related issue is, to put it mildly, herculean.

A further comment on the missionary era:

We cannot deny the valuable contribution made by the missionaries towards publishing in African languages in particular (e.g. Lovedale Press and Morija Press) and education in general. but in order to meet evergrowing challenges. more aggressive writing. reading and publishing strategies in African languages must be put in place. According to Christie (ibid) there's no doubt that the church has done a lot of good. Missionaries were humane people who spread the Christian faith among the African tribes. And at the same time. they brought education and Western medicine. Missionaries were the main teachers of Blacks in South Africa before Bantu Education forced them to close schools. Certainly. there were problems with some of these schools. But without these mission schools. blacks would have received no education. The mission schools educated many people. Most of the really prominent Black people went to mission schools. The missionaries deserve praise for what they did.

3.2.4 Minority vs majority languages

Having looked at the status and role of South African languages before democracy. it may be useful to examine briefly a linguistic scenario where minority and majority languages occur side by side. This. I hope. will throw some light and understanding on a language may be dominated by others.

From the foregoing discussion of how governments plan and implement language policies. it is apparent that there is a power relation with regard to the choice of

languages employed in a country. The government of the day either overtly or covertly imposes its favourite language on the masses. And so, for example, as already discussed, when the Dutch were in power in the Cape, Dutch was the dominant official language; when the British ousted the Dutch in 1806, English became the dominant and official language despite the fact that the speakers of Dutch were numerically stronger than the speakers of English at the time. When the Dutch/Afrikaner were revived and came into their own politically after the Anglo-Boer war, they insisted on getting Dutch/Afrikaans as a twin-official language alongside English on a footing of equality. What we saw was thus much more than an innocent language policy; it was politics of language and language and power.

3.2.4.1 Minority Languages

This study will, however also recognise the fact that according to Haugen and Derrick (1980, p.202) minority languages are languages "at risk" because they are not culturally dominant and are not used in all areas of activity, indulged in by their speakers. Minority languages are spoken by a limited number of speakers who are relatively powerless to extend the domain of their minority language-use beyond the boundaries established by the encroachment of a dominant majority language.
If we interpret Haugen and Derrick's(ibid) definition of "minority languages", in the context of the history of language policies in South African general an in the context of this study in particular, then Sepedi is a "minority language" vis-s'-vis isiZulu and isiXhosa. This is the reason why although Xitsonga, Tshivenda, siSwati and Sindebele were initially indicated as the minority languages in this study, Northern

Sotho is also included. This is the reason why Northern Sotho will be discussed alongside Tshivenda and Xitsonga in this study. We note also that in 3.3.4.2, Northern Sotho is indicated as about even with two other African languages, viz: Setswana and Sesotho. However, Sesotho and Setswana are not included for the purpose of this study.

The fact that minority languages are accorded official status in terms of the new Constitution (October 1996) does not necessarily imply that in practice they will be treated on a footing of equality with the majority languages. Haugen and Derrick (op.cit.:p.204) state that political independence by itself does not necessarily lead to linguistic autonomy. Consequently, a language planning programme should focus on extending minority language use to those domains where literacy is required but which are at present dominated by majority languages.

This implies that political independence should be followed by the protection of minority rights(see the Commission for the Promotion and Prosecution of the Rights of Cultural, Religions and Linguistic Communities, established in terms of ss185 and 186 of the Constitution). Minority language speakers should fight for their rights as enshrined in the Constitution. During the struggle for the liberation of people from linguistic oppression, resistance by prominent TABLE from government, and even the public in general, may occur. In this connection Kunene writes:

> Gradually a colonial elite emerges. Such an elite

rejects its own cultural traditions and looks down on all those who persist in asserting the relevance of these traditions (**City Press**. 14 May 1995).

Africa has been colonised for a long period and the results are disastrous. African traditions, values and norms have been diluted by European ones. The African elite regard African traditions as "backward". This further complicates the problem of minority African languages because when speakers of these languages fight for their language rights, they do not only face opposition from Whites, but also from their fellow Africans whose minds have been colonized.

Minority languages are beset with various forms of discrimination and marginalization. Williams (1984, p.104) states that:

> Minority communities be they indigenous or recently established, have to contend with pressures that rarely engage the majority. Their basic problem is to find a balance between the heart and the head or, put another way, to make 'progress' and 'survival' compatible concepts. Most minority communities(especially Africans in colonised countries) need to learn a language with wider currency, in order to gain access to

> the most recent developments in science and technology. The question is whether this is possible whilst retaining individuality or whether it is necessary to deny one's own inheritance to attain success. Within all such communities, some believe that economic advancement is more important than linguistic and cultural survival (see also Appel and Muysken, 1987, p.60 - 63).

Malimabe (1992, p.5) echoes Williams's views when she says:

> African languages are not languages which will give socio-economic mobility to the Africans, as they are not used in business. Most Africans are unable to study an African language to a higher level because it cannot provide them with opportunities associated with the admired and respected groups, and to participate in the lucrative market.

The fact that successive colonial administrations over the past 300 years or so elected to promote first Dutch, then English, and later Dutch/Afrikaans alongside English, depending on which colonial power was in administration, contributed to

a large extent towards the present state of affairs where African languages lag behind in terms of corpus planning. This gap also affects growth and development in skills such as lexicography in comparison to English and Afrikaans. It is not difficult to appreciate the fact that if all African languages were marginalized for various reasons by speakers of the exoglossic languages who were in powerful administrative and political positions, then minority African languages would have borne an even heavier brunt of marginalization. The exclusion of Xitsonga as a school subject in Tshama-hansi (Potgietersrus), where the number of speakers justifies the introduction of this language as a school subject, is a practical example(see Nxumalo, 1998, pp.168-179). In his research with official minority languages, Hachipola (1992, p.34) observed that at times:

> Some people who ethnically belong to a minority language do not even know their language. They speak one of the major languages.

This said, I now proceed to the examination of the scenario following independence in 1994. Will the ANC government follow in the foot steps of the previous governments, i.e. impose an African language(s) on all and sundry as did the Dutch, the English and later the Dutch/Afrikaners? Or will they opt for a more democratic language policy of creating equity and parity among the main languages of the country? These questions refer to practice only, since Constitutional provision is made for all eleven languages.

3.2.4.2 Majority Languages

In view of the Language Plan Task Group (hereafter LANGTAG) (1996, p.218) the term "majority language" does not necessarily refer to the language spoken by the numerical majority in an area or country. It is to refer to the language of the most powerful group in the area/country. This group is then known as the majority language community. In this study, however, the term 'majority' will refer to numerical strength , while the term 'dominant' will reserved for the language of the most powerful group(s)' in the country by virtue of their different roles and status economically. According to this working definition, therefore, languages such as isiZulu and isiXhosa will be classified as majority languages by virtue of their numerical strength vis-a'-vis Xitsonga, Tshivenda, siSwati and Sindebele which shall then be referred to as "minority languages".

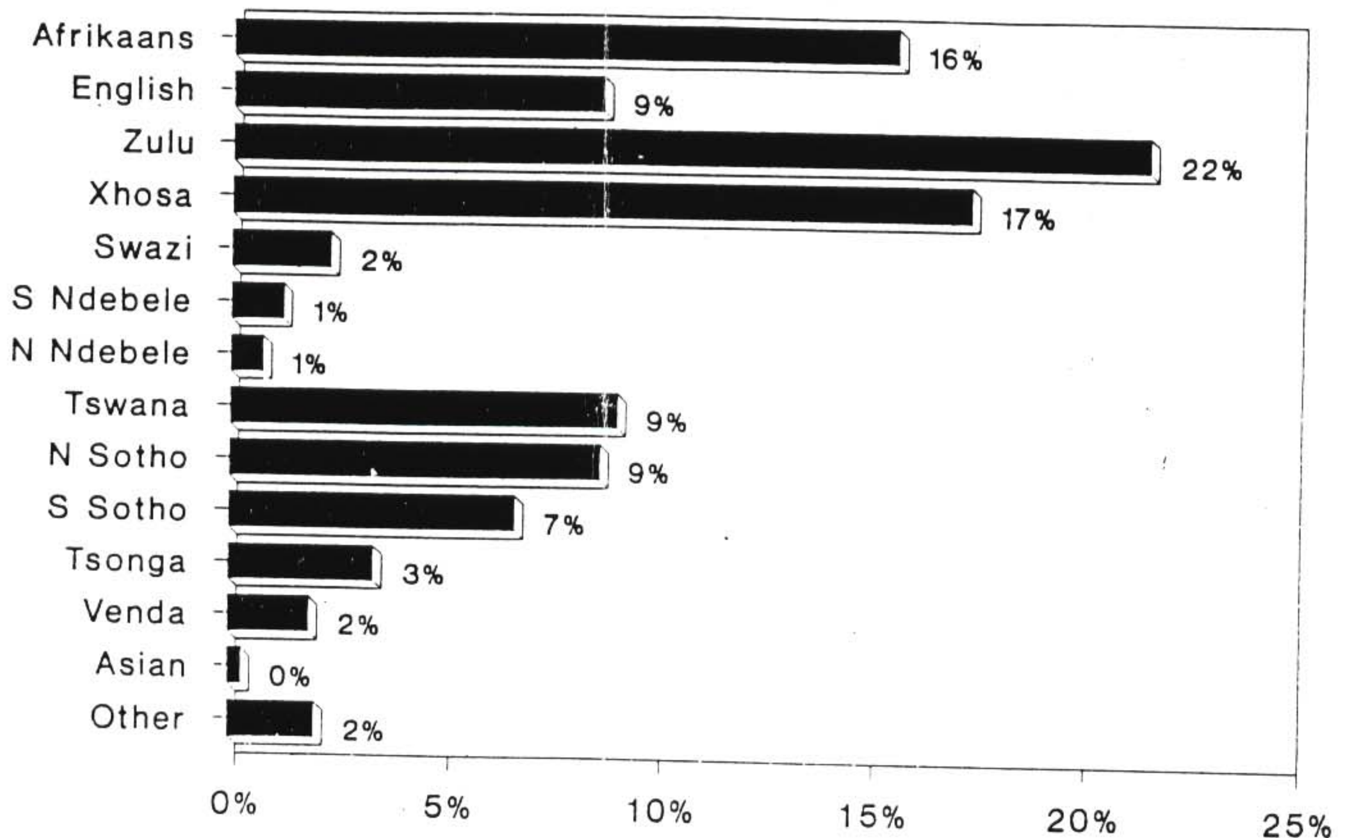
The "dominant languages" will refer to English and Afrikaans which are the languages spoken by "the powerful groups in the country" (see LANGTAG, ibid). They are described as dominant because they are used most frequently in almost all domains in the country as of the turn of the 20th century and beginning of the 21st century. The dominant currency effectively "overshadows" their numerical minority.

It becomes obvious, therefore, that in a multilingual country like South Africa, majority languages and minority languages will have different roles and status economically, socially, judicially and politically. Kloss (1966, p.7) observes that "it is commonly assumed that as the number of languages in society increases, the

inequality in their official status also tends to increase".

Beukes(1991) provides the following graphs to illustrate majority and minority languages in South Africa:

TABLE 15: Majority and minority languages

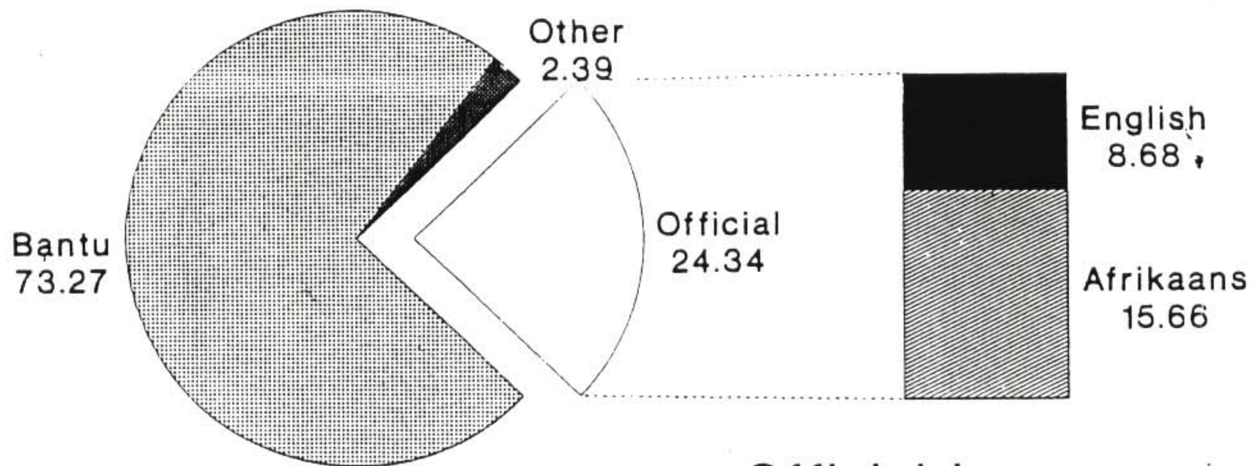


According to this graphs, isiZulu is by far the majority language, followed by isiXhosa and Afrikaans. English, Setswana, Northern Sotho/Sepedi and Sesotho are about even. Xitsonga is only marginally higher than Tshivenda with siSwati and isiNdebele way down. (see Beukes, 1991, ibid). In terms of groupings, Beukes (ibid)

provides the following useful graph:

TABLE 16: Language groupings

Major Linguistic Groups : SA



Official Languages (as of 1991)

Major Groups

If endoglossic languages are put together alongside the exoglossic ones. (taking Afrikaans to be exoglossic by virtue of its Germanic/European origin). the former exceed the latter by far. numerically . Normally where majority languages and minority languages occur in one country or community. the former usually dominate the latter in all domains of life. such as education. health. politics. media and so on. The following report on development of African drama and film production attests

to this:

> Local scriptwriters, actors, actresses and film makers are in for a wonderful time. The SABC drama Committee's recommendation of a R320 million budget to be spent over the next three years on TV1 and CCV has been approved by the SABC board. The productions will be in Nguni, Sotho, English and Afrikaans (see the **New Nation**, 10 April 1994).

As can be seen from this report, nothing is said about minority languages such as Tshivenda, Xitsonga, isiNdebele and siSwati. This omission occurs despite the fact that all these minority languages were listed as official languages in Act 200 0f 1993 and were to be on a footing of equality alongside the majority languages. My thesis is that if all the eleven languages listed in the Constitution as official languages are equal, then none of these languages should be accorded any form of priority regardless of the number of mother tongue speakers it has.

The Ministry of Education and Culture of Namibia, in formulating its language policy, around 1992 - 1996, was guided by several fundamental understandings. One of them is that:

> all languages are equal regardless of the number

> of speakers or the level of development of a particular language. All language policies must be constructed to this principle (see **Toward Education for All**, 1993, p.65).

Since South Africa's language policies and their implementation over the past 300 years or so have been bedevilled first by the Dutch and the British colonialism and in recent years by the notorious ghost of apartheid, it would be unfair and incorrect to assume that the opportunities of the majority languages and minority languages were the same.

In a country where majority languages and minority languages occur side-by-side, there exists a tendency of oversimplification of the situation. Indeed, it is generally assumed that minority language speakers do understand the majority languages. An example of this perception is found in a letter from SABC Group Manager: Correspondence and Administration, dated 17 October 1991 sent to Mr. BJ Mtileni, a member of Xitsonga Concerned Group [1]. When he evaluated the issue of providing equally for all official languages he avered:

> Most Tsonga people understand Zulu and Xhosa programmes offered on TV2 and the SABC

1 Footnote
The Xitsonga Concerned Group was formed in 1982 by Vatsonga living in Mamelodi and neighbouring locations. The aim of the group is to fight for the introduction of Xitsonga in schools, in the media and the equal recognition of Xitsonga as a language in all domains

provides cultural service for them on Radio Tsonga

Perhaps it is essential to pose the following questions: What percentage of the Vatsonga in fact understand isiZulu and isiXhosa. Did these Vatsonga learn to speak isiZulu and isiXhosa voluntarily or were these languages imposed on them?

It should be indicated that the ability of minority languages speakers to speak more than one or two languages emanates from the pressure of the dominant group and this should not be interpreted as not having a language of their own; they do.

When discussing the disadvantages of bilingualism, Haugen and Derrick (1980, p.203) state:

> Greene's examination of a range of minority languages suggests that "to choose bilingualism is to choose the road which led Cornish and Marx to decay and extinction". Claiming the right to be monoglots seems at least in the long run, the only guarantee of survival.

Although I agree with Haugen and Derrick (ibid) to a certain extent, I think that, in the South African context of the spirit of reconciliation, reaching out and mutual respect, multilingualism should be the foundation for oneness: Oneness seen and

interpreted in the context of rainbowness where different colours form one rainbow despite their difference. Therefore language parity and language equity should be encouraged and promoted among all South Africans. But of course whilst people should be proud of their languages, it is also important for them to learn other languages that are spoken in South Africa. It is for this reason that I am extremely uncomfortable with the following statement by Prof SME Bengu, then Minister of Education, on the new Language in Education Policy (14 July 1997; see also the Constitution of Republic Of South Africa, 19671):

> You will notice that we have modified our view on multilingualism in the (language in education) policy itself, where we describe multilingualism as the learning of more than one language rather than more than two languages...

The position taken by the Minister might unfortunately encourage white South Africans to continue learning and using English and Afrikaans only as they have done since the days of the Union in 1910 and feel legally protected not to learn an African language (see also Mawasha for criticism of Bengu, 1996).

3.3 The status and role of South African languages after liberation

3.3.1 Introduction

The election of a democratic government in 1994 ushered in a new political dispensation in South Africa. For one thing it spelled the end of apartheid as the world had come to know it over the past four decades (1948 - 1994). For another it set the stage for, inter alia, a new language policy to replace the old ones.

As already indicated at the beginning of this study, Act no 32 of 1962, Section 108 which recognised English and Afrikaans as the only official languages of the Republic of South Africa was repealed and replaced by Clause 3 of Act No 200 of 1993 which recognised Sesotho sa Leboa, Sesotho, siSwati, isiNdebele, Xitsonga, Setswana, Tshivenda, isiXhosa and isiZulu as official languages alongside English and Afrikaans. According to the new dispensation nine main indigenous African languages were elevated to the status of both national and official languages to be on a par with English and Afrikaans. Under the old apartheid dispensation, in terms of the Black States Constitution Act of 1971, indigenous African languages could be "elevated" to the status and role of official languages alongside English and Afrikaans in those territories that were designated homelands. They could be designated "official" (within the homeland) but not nationally in the same sense as English and Afrikaans. (Mawasha, 1982). This limited status and role of African languages was consistent with the second-classness of the speakers of these languages as intended by the apartheid philosophy.

3.3.2 Basic Constitutional Provisions of the New Language Policy

According to the new Constitution of South Africa:

> Provision shall be made by an Act of parliament for the establishment by the Senate of an independent Pan South African Language Board to promote respect for the principles referred to in subsection (9) and to further the development of the official South African languages (ibid).

It is in terms of this provision that the Pan South African Language Board (PANSALB) was subsequently formed (Act No 59 of 1995). Its objects are cited in ful hereunder for the sake of a complete research record:

(a) To promote respect for and ensure the implementation of the following principles referred to in section 3(9) of the Constitution:

   (i) the creation of conditions for the development and for the promotion of the equal use and enjoyment of all the official South African languages;

   (ii) the extension of those rights relating to language and the status of languages which at the commencement of the Constitution were restricted to certain regions;

   (iii) the prevention of the use of any language for the purposes of

exploitation, domination or division;

(iv) the promotion of multilingualism and the provision of translation facilities;

(v) the fostering of respect for languages spoken in the Republic other than the official languages, and the encouragement of their use in appropriate circumstances; and

(vi) the non-diminution of rights relating to language and the status of languages existing at the commencement of the Constitution;

(b) To further the development of the official South African languages;

(c) To promote respect for and the development of other languages used by communities in South Africa, and languages used for religious purposes;

(d) To promote knowledge of and respect for the other provisions of and the Constitutional principles contained in the Constitution dealing directly or indirectly with language matters;

(e) To promote respect for multilingualism in general; and

(f) To promote the utilisation of South Africa's language resources (ibid : 4)

From the foregoing provisions and the duties and responsibilities of the PANSALB, it is clear that the new democratic government is determined to protect and promote all languages spoken in South Africa. Act No 59 of 1995 Subsection (8)(9) of the Act states that:

The Board shall in the manner prescribed by notice in the Government Gazette and the Provincial Gazette establish -

(a) a provincial language committee in each province to advise it on any language matter in or affecting any province or any part thereof where no such provincial committee exists or where an existing provincial language committee has jurisdiction only with respect to the official languages of a particular province, and such a committee is, in the view of the Board, sufficiently representative of the languages used in the province, that committee shall be deemed to have been established in terms of this subsection for as long as it remains so representative (ibid).

It is abundantly clear from the above provisions that the PANSALB was not intended to be a bureaucratic monolith with centralised powers but rather a body based on participatory democracy. To this end it was empowered to establish Provincial Language Committees whose responsibilities would be to look after the interests, needs, aspirations and grievances of different speakers of the languages in different provinces. This move has been welcomed by many people as language distribution differs from province to province, and as a result the needs of provinces also differ.

The Pan South African Language Board has since issued two notices, viz: Board Notice 120 of 1997 which spells out conditions for the Recognition and Establishment of Language Bodies. The former are a provincial competency and the latter a national one (see Appendix 2).

3.3.3 Some comments on the Afrikaans and English languages

3.3.3.1 The Afrikaans language

According to Golele (1991, pp.5-6) Afrikaans has always been viewed as an instrument of apartheid and oppression. This feeling culminated in the well-known sad events of 1976. (see also **Report of the Commission of Inquiry into the Riots at Soweto and Elsewhere from the 16th June to the 28th February 1977, Vol 1,** 1977). However, as with all languages, it is the use they put to that matters, not the language as such. For example, "Tsotsi taal" which is used by many people, (especially the youth) in South Africa is based on Afrikaans, (see also Mawasha, 1977, p.4) and there is no ill-feeling towards it. Afrikaans is also the home language of many Black South Africans, i.e the coloureds. On the other hand Mawasha (1990, p.12) states that apartheid bedevilled the position of Afrikaans as a language in black South Africa; the death of apartheid should redeem the situation.

In terms of Act 200 of 1993, as we have already seen, no privileges or rights of the Afrikaans language are taken away or violated; instead the new democratic Constitution re-affirmed the official status of Afrikaans. This implies that the Afrikaans language still remains one of the official languages in South Africa.

According to Rubin and Jernudd (1971, p.35), depending on the language policy, it is even conceivable that the group speaking the dominant language may feel aggrieved, for example, because it is persuaded that too much is being done for the

minority or lesser languages. In South Africa speakers of Afrikaans might be ill-disposed to a language policy that seeks to redress past language inequalities through affirmative action for fear that such a policy might disempower their language, and in the process even impose a new burden on the speakers to learn African languages (Mawasha, 1996).

In fact we have seen in South Africa immediately after the democratic government was in place that the White Afrikaans-speaking people demanded a Volkstaat and also separate Afrikaans medium schools. This was nothing else but an attempt by the White Afrikaans- speaking South Africans to secure and protect their Afrikaans language and culture.

I wish to indicate at this stage that the Afrikaans language was, in later years of its existence, largely developed by qualified linguists, some of whom were supported financially by the government (A good example of this is the legislature on the Woordeboek van die Afrikaanse Taal, Act No 50 of 1973, together with its amendments, Act No 9 of 1986 and Act No 22 of 1991, which openly support the development of the Afrikaans language). On the other hand the different missionary societies who took the initiative to codify and develop the African languages worked within their own limited abilities and resources. This often had obvious unfortunate side effects (see De Cluver, 1996, p.16). With only so little available, only so much could be done.

Despite this advantage to Afrikaans, the new Constitution does not address the issue

of language equity by means of "an-eye-for-an-eye" rule: rather the new Constitution seeks to redress the past linguistic imbalances by means of reconciliation. Whether the Afrikaans language was advantaged in the past, it is not the issue for the new democratically elected government which seeks to promote mutual respect, understanding and reconciliation among all South African citizens. This reconciliatory stance (by the democratic Government now in power) plays the ball squarely into the court of speakers of Afrikaans for them to accept that the days of Afrikaans as a dominant language and as a language of oppression are over. Speakers of Afrikaans must now see themselves not in the context of separateness but in the context of multilingualism or, what might be called, "linguistic rainbowness".

3.3.3.1 The English Language

Just like the Afrikaans language, English still enjoys widespread use and preferential treatment as one of South Africa's official languages. Although the English language seems to enjoy more attention and use than all other official languages in South Africa, Ndebele (quoted in LiCCA 1991, p.27) warns us about the danger of an uncritical adoption of the English language as a lingua franca when he writes:

> I think we cannot afford to be uncritically complacent about the role and future of English in South Africa, for there are many reasons why it cannot be considered an innocent language.

> The problems of the dominant language in society, is that it is the carrier of a range of social perceptions, attitudes and goals. Through it the speakers absorb entrenched attitudes. In this regard, the guilt of English then must be recognised and appreciated.

There has been and there still exist among the general public the perception that a language is just a tool for communication. While I agree to a certain extent with this position, I can concur with Ndebele that a language is not an innocent tool. Young (ed) (ibid), too supports our thesis when he says:

> Language as so many people have pointed out, is not merely a means of communication, it is a repository of values, standards, beliefs and past achievements. It is a social · instrument of consequence.

African languages' practitioners are also not comfortable with the fact that the English language dominates all other official languages in South Africa. The United Nations Institute for Namibia's (UNIN) publication **Toward a Language Policy for Namibia** (1981, p.54) states that:

> Experiences of other African countries have

> shown that where English has been the vehicle for communicating the affairs of government, law, education and politics, the development of African languages has all too often been retarded if not overlooked altogether. This seems to be largely due to the lack of an integrated language policy at the beginning which can lead to indigenous peoples developing attitudes of indifference to their own language(s).

It is against this background that any effort by government to place English above other official languages of South Africa will not only be unfair but will also be in contradiction to the spirit of democracy as enshrined in Act No 200 of 1993 and confirmed by the new Constitution (1996). Too much usage of the English language by government officials and political leaders in parliament does not only affect the Afrikaans-speaking people who ultimately develop a feeling of resentment and a feeling that their language is relegated to a regional language, but African language speakers too feel the government's approach is assimilationistic or monolinguistic rather than geared towards multilingualism.

4. Conclusion

As we have seen successive administrations in South Africa (before 1994) tended to use language as a handmaiden to their policies. The Dutch (1652 - 1806) and the British (1806 - 1910) used their respective languages as tools to aid and advance colonialism and occupation: the Dutch/Afrikaaner and the English (1910 - 1948) used their languages to consolidate white partnership as an aid to white rule in broad terms; the Afrikaner (1948 - ± 1990) used Afrikaans as a rallying point and African languages as a rationale for the policy of separate development (see also Leon, 1998, p.1). The new Constitutional dispensation (1996) has corrected some or parts of all these anomalies.

As discussed earlier, before the present dispensation English and Afrikaans enjoyed official status in the whole country. The African languages were "official" in the respective homelands of their speakers. Among the African languages themselves some were dominant by virtue of their numerical strength. At present Clause 3 of Act No 200 of 1993 and subsequent Clauses of Chapter 1 of the 1996 Constitution recognise eleven official languages. In addition, the Pan South African Language Board has been established to monitor the language situation in the country. In spite of all these developments, in practice the language situation is still largely what it was prior to 1994, if not somewhat worse, because of the tendency towards English monolingualism by government. There exists a great disparity between theory and practice, intention and practice. The intention of the South African language policy is extremely good but what actually happens in our day-to-day life is in direct

contrast to what the Constitution espouses. The dominant languages continue to dominate the less dominant ones (see Nxumalo, 1998, p.3).Given the new political changes in South Africa, one might assume that much has changed with regard to government's attitude towards the significance of official languages. The majority African languages continue to dominate the minority languages. The minority African languages are more disadvantaged during this period of transition. The situation is exacerbated by the fact that in the past there were language boards for specific languages, which although established by an unacceptable policy, served the people as far as language matters were concerned albeit in a limited manner. It is this small contribution by the language boards that made it a sensible proposition to suggest a language policy encompassing nine African languages. The PANSALB could only be established on the basis of 11 official languages which were in fact viable in terms of corpus planning and acquisition planning. This should not be interpreted as a defence for the ethnically divided language boards but rather an acknowledgement of a contribution made under very trying circumstances. The problem now seems to be how to get PANSALB, together with its provincial language councils or committees and language bodies, to start to function. By 1998, the process was still in progress and very little work in language development was actually being done. In the meantime, the erstwhile dominant languages continue to be dominant over the less dominant languages.

Recently there were reports in the press that Parliament was to decide on the printing of the Hansard - the official record of parliament proceedings - in English only. In respect of the Afrikaans language, Golele, the then chairperson of PANSALB, states

that "it will be a terrible violation of human rights as enshrined in the Constitution. It would be outrageous to scrap Afrikaans, for the PANSALB Act, as written down in the Constitution, stipulates that there should be no diminution of human rights related to language" (see Sowetan, 10 February 1998).

It seems that if the government can succeed in scrapping Afrikaans in this domain, the prospect of taking on board African languages seems remote indeed. This means even more pressure on the more marginalized "minority languages".

If one looks at how important events and, in particular, sporting activities, are named, there is no doubt that the situation of minority languages is becoming worse. The general trend is that Nguni and Sotho names are used. The national soccer team is called *Bafana Bafana*, while the national rugby team is known as the *Amabokoboko*. Even the name of the aeroplane which carried participants to the Olympic bid is called *Ndhinzani*, which is a Nguni name. The national women soccer team is called *Banyana Banyana* which is a Sotho name. The sport programmes which appear on television are known as *Mabaleng* and *Laduma* which are Sotho and Zulu names respectively. None of these names is drawn from a minority language. There is no doubt that the Nguni and Sotho languages dominate minority languages in most areas. It is in isolated cases that names are given from the minority languages. We could refer to the language campaign initiative which was given the Xitsonga name *Hoyozela*, and the presidential residence which been named *Mahlambandlopfu* in the same language; the educational programme which is given the Tshivenda name *Takalani* sesame. The renowned educationist, scholar and

author. Ezekiel Mpahlele sums up the situation depicted here in very poignant terms. He writes in the **City press** of the 24th of November 1996:

> Look at SABC. Nguni languages and English are dominant where Afrikaans and English formally ruled the roost. Tsonga. Venda. Sotho-Tswana come struggling behind. often looking pathetic when presenters sit uselessly side by side to announce a programme. Slogans are loudly English and Nguni: and Afrikaans often pushes out Tsonga. Venda and Sotho-Tswana.

As already indicated. Mphahlele sums up the situation aptly. To me this is a clear indication that for some languages special efforts are necessary to reach language parity.This means that for some languages special efforts are necessary to reach language parity.

Another problem retarding the development of African languages is equating them with Apartheid. It should be indicated that these languages existed long before Apartheid (see Mawasha. 1991. p.50). and should be considered in their own right. It is sad indeed to note that the more dominant African languages are allowed to function in whatever domain the speakers choose but the use of Xitsonga. a minority language is quickly labelled as tribalism.

With the new democratic Constitution and the new language policy much has been achieved in terms of language matters in South Africa but a long, long way still lies ahead for all the eleven languages to achieve true and practical parity and equity.

CHAPTER 4: SAMPLING, ANALYSIS AND INITIAL DISCUSSION OF RESEARCH DATA

4.1 Introduction

After stating the research problem, outlining the aims and objectives, and drawing from the discussion of language policies over the past three centuries, I shall now analyse the questionnaire data. Findings from this data set will both provide insights into current views and opinions about language choice and policy, and form the basis for suggestions and recommendations in shaping future language policies or improving on the current language policy.

Before discussing the results in detail, I shall describe the sample and sampling method, the participants, the main data collection instrument, i.e. the questionnaire, the procedure followed in the data collection, attendant problems or limitations of the instrument used and how these problems were solved or minimized.

4.2 Sample and sampling method

Given the complexity and sensitivity of the issue of language choice and language policy, it was necessary to gather views from as varied a cross-section of the population as possible. Therefore, a stratified random sampling method was used. The sample included: secondary school learners and teachers, students and

lecturers at colleges of education, and university students and lecturers mainly from departments of African languages. Further stratification was applied to obtain a sample which would be representative of urban, semi-urban or peri-urban, rural, and "cosmopolitan" populations (the latter being defined as a mixed population of urban, semi-urban, and rural characteristics).

4.3 Design, structure, and administration of the Questionnaire

4.3.1 Design

In designing a questionnaire for use in an important survey such as the one on which the present thesis is based, especially when it is the sole or main data gathering instrument, careful planning and field-testing or "piloting" are of utmost importance. Therefore, care was taken to pilot a draft of the questionnaire with the following aims in mind:

(i) to test its validity and reliability, i.e. whether the questionnaire would serve the purposes it is intended for, and whether the same questionnaire would elicit the same responses when administered more than once;

(ii) to identify possible logistical problems arising out of length of the question for the administration, clarity and level of language and type of terminology used, and find solutions to remedy these problems;

(iii) to pre-empt any other research problem that might reduce the reliability and objectivity of the data sampled; and

(iv) more importantly, to find out to what extent the reliability and validity of the data might be affected by the "Hawthorne effect" among the respondents given that "it is possible for subjects to be so pleased at being included in a study that the results of the investigation are more closely related to this pleasure than to anything that actually occurs in the research" because "after all, people are people" (Brown 1993, pp. 32-33). Language choice being an emotive issue in post-apartheid South Africa, it was necessary to bear in mind the risk that people would be carried away so much that emotions would overshadow objectivity.

In piloting the draft questionnaire, valuable information was obtained which was then utilised as a basis for the design of the final questionnaire and to draw guidelines for use by research assistants in the administration of the questionnaire.

In addition, samples of unstructured interviews were also conducted as part of the piloting of the questionnaire to maximize the quality of the data that would be used for the study. More insights from the interviews were obtained on how to establish rapport with the respective respondents. Furthermore, against expectations, the interview samples provided additional information which would most likely not have been obtained by means of the questionnaire alone (see also Van Dalen, 1979, Chapter 6).

4.3.2 Structure and administration

The questionnaire used was largely an opinion-eliciting questionnaire. It consisted of 20 simply worded semi-structured items (see Appendix 2). This format was preferred because of its simplicity and to allow for flexibility, and to minimize any potential intimidating effect on the research samples. Furthermore, the format of the questionnaire was suitable for quantification which was needed for the formulation of a thesis.

A decision was made to use a self-administered questionnaire procedure which was the most cost-effective method. For the same reasons, use was made of research assistants for the distribution of the questionnaires to be completed and the collection of the completed questionnaires in the Venda, Giyani and Nkowankowa areas, while I personally distributed the questionnaires to be completed and collected the completed questionnaires at the University of the North and vicinity, Mankweng, and in the outlying areas, viz.: Potgietersrus and Bushbuckridge.

Despite the benefit of cost-effectiveness, both the use of a self-administered questionnaire and of research assistants, and even the survey itself, had its disadvantages. The disadvantage of using research assistants was the possibility of a discrepancy between the way the questionnaire might be administered by me and by the research assistants. Precautions were, therefore, taken to (i) adequately train all the field workers prior to the administration of the

questionnaire, (ii) involve them in the piloting, and (iii) only select those who had shown enough motivation, and enthusiasm for carrying out the field work. The administration of a questionnaire in itself constituted a problem, especially for teachers who viewed it with suspicion, perhaps as a "back door" reintroduction of the inspection of schools which had been abolished. Some teachers feared that the survey would expose their pupils' poor language skills and, thus, cause them embarrassment To allay these fears, thorough explanation of the aims and procedure of the survey was provided to participating teachers and a pledge of the guarantee of confidentiality of their responses given. A third problem arising out of the choice of a self-administered questionnaire procedure was that it was in English, a language in which not all respondents would feel confidently fluent. As a solution, respondents were allowed to comment in their preferred language in which they were most comfortable and, where needed, explanation and clarification of any point in the questionnaire were provided to individual respondents. In respect of the latter precaution, care was taken not to influence responses in anyway.

4.4 Analysis of the questionnaire and discussion of initial findings

As was mentioned earlier in this chapter, the sample comprised a cross-section across the population of native speakers users of African languages, namely: high school learners and their teachers; lecturers and students at colleges of education and university students and lecturers. Similarly, drawing on the analysis and discussion of the results also be done in a stratified fashion, taking into account

each of the three strata (i.e. high schools; colleges of education; university) the cleavage between, on the one hand rural areas, and on the other hand urban, semi-urban or cosmopolitan ones. In each stratum, the views of the respondents will be analysed across these four types of environments.

4.4.1. Responses by high school learners

4.4.1.1 In semi-urban communities

It is useful to operationally define "semi-urban communities" at this stage. The term will refer to communities situated between urban and rural areas, both of which constitute their catchment area for both student and staff.

Two-thirds (66.7 %) of the respondents from semi-urban schools were reportedly not aware of the current debate on language policy. Surprisingly, none of the respondents in this group had been involved in any debate on language policy.

The same proportion of two-thirds (66.7 %) of the respondents from semi-urban areas reported not to have ever seen the country's Constitution. In addition to the respondents who stated not to have ever seen the Constitution, about a third (23%) of all the respondents said they had never thought it necessary to acquaint themselves with the Constitution, while 10% of all the respondent said they actually thought that the Constitution was not meant for high school learners like them.

More than half (56.8%) of the respondents in this group unfortunately elected not to express an opinion on the present government's attitude towards African languages. This may, however, only emphasise the sensitivity of the issue. Of those who expressed their opinion, 20 % said that the post-1994 government had a positive attitude towards African languages, and less than half these respondents (6.7%) thought that the government's attitude towards African languages was rather negative. Although this might be seen as a sign of support of the present government's attitude towards African languages — notwithstanding the relatively high number of undecided or those with no opinions —as stated before that up to 16.7 % of all the respondents gave a qualified (presumably dismissive) opinion of the government's perceived positive attitude towards African languages which they thought was politically motivated.

Asked if they would, henceforth, want to be informed about past language policies, close to two-thirds (66.3%) of the respondents did not seem to bother to be informed, and only slightly more than a third (36.7%) of them expressed some interest in being informed in future about language policies.

Respondents were also asked to express their opinions on the pre-1994 government's attitude towards African languages to verify any possible changes in the general perceptions of government attitude and policy. More than half of the respondents (60%) stated that the previous government's attitude towards African languages was negative. This seems to be the general view held by many respondents who believed that the previous government neglected (30%).

despised (26.7 %), or marginalised (10%) African languages. A tiny minority (3.3%), equal to that of the "indifferent" (3.3%), but even much smaller than the "undecided" (13.3 %), held the opposite view that the previous government had a positive attitude.

The previous government's attitude towards African languages was further probed by distinguishing between their treatment of "majority" and of "minority" African languages. The view that these two groups of languages were treated equally by the previous government was shared by only 10 % of the respondents. In general, respondents felt that minority language were marginalised (10%), despised (26. 7%) or neglected (30%) before democracy. Of the remaining number of respondents, a sizable proportion (20%) expressed no particular opinion, whereas another 3.3 % were indifferent.

Given the general perception that minority languages have been neglected more than majority ones, the attitude of speakers of minority languages towards their own languages was also investigated. Surprisingly, it was discovered that speakers of minority languages had a dim view of their own languages, presumably as a result of the low esteem given to these languages by speakers of majority languages. Indeed, more than half of speakers of minority languages polled either stated that they were not proud of their languages (20 %) or were openly ashamed to speak them in public (33.3%). Only 26.7% of the sample of speakers of minority languages declared that they were proud to use their languages in public. This finding is disturbing and may even extend to some of

those who declared their "indifference" (10%) towards or had "no opinion" (10 %) about the use of minority languages in public.

A ray of optimism was, however, raised by the finding that the majority of the respondents (66.7%) were confident about the future of African languages in South Africa. The remaining third (33.3%) of the sample were pessimistic. The optimism expressed by two-thirds of the respondents was even strengthened by the fact that the overwhelming majority of all the respondents in this group (96.7%), i.e. including many of the "pessimists", believed that as long as speakers of a language use it, would survive. Only 3.3% of the sample remained staunchly pessimistic.

4.4.1.2 In urban communities

Urban communities are communities which are surrounded by urban and most of their staff and particularly students are drawn from these areas.

In comparison to learners from semi-urban areas, the level of unawareness of language matters among the learners polled in urban high schools was much higher. Indeed, all the respondents (100%) from these schools acknowledged that they were unaware of the debate on language policy. It is no wonder, then, that none of them was involved in any debate whatsoever on language policy.

As to their familiarity with the Constitution, the pattern seems to be the same as

that for learners from semi-urban schools. Like the latter, two-thirds (66.7%) of the learners from urban schools had never seen the country's Constitution at the time of the administration of the questionnaire. Another 13.3 % stated they had never thought it necessary to acquaint themselves with the Constitution. Even worse, 20% believed that the Constitution was not meant for high school learners like them.

The views on the present democratic government's attitude towards African languages differed markedly from those of the respondents from semi-urban schools in several respects. Firstly, the proportion of the "undecided" among urban schools learners was much smaller (20%) than that among semi-urban school learners — almost a third of the latter (56.6%). Secondly, more than half of those who expressed an opinion (43.3%) approved of the present government's attitude towards African languages which they found positive, in contrast to 30 % who felt that the present government's attitude was rather negative. Thirdly, only 6.7% of the total number of respondents in this sample, in comparison to 16.7% among the learners from semi-urban schools, thought that any perceived favourable attitude towards African languages by the present government would be politically motivated.

The learners from urban schools also differed from their counterparts from semi-urban schools in their feeling towards past language policies in two respects. Firstly, unlike the learners from semi-urban schools who, in their majority (66.3%) were indifferent, less than half (47.7%) of the respondents from urban

schools expressed indifference towards past language policies. On the other hand, a majority of them (53.3%) indicated that they felt concerned by past language policies. Secondly, there were no "undecided" respondents. All the learners polled from urban schools expressed an opinion.

In this sample, the attitude of the pre-1994 government towards African languages was overwhelmingly (90%) seen as negative. Only a tiny minority (3.3 %) indicated that in their opinion the previous governments showed a positive attitude towards African languages. Another tiny minority of 3.3 % of learner-respondents opined that any interest in African languages shown by the apartheid governments was in pursuit of their discriminatory policies, namely the idea of providing separate amenities for different language and ethnic groups. Only 3.3 % of the respondents did not express any opinion.

As regards the issue of minority as against majority African languages, a small minority (3.3 %) of the respondents felt that minority and majority African languages were treated the same. In general, however, respondents indicated that African languages were neglected at national level (50 %), marginalised (26.7 %) and despised (6.7 %). 13.3 % indicated that they did not know.

As was the case with learners from semi-urban areas, nearly half the respondents among speakers of minority languages in urban areas seemed to have a dim view of their own languages either because they were not proud of them (10%) or they were ashamed to use them in public (43.3%). The feeling of pride in speaking

their own languages in public was, however, shared by a slightly higher percentage (33.3%) of speakers of minority languages in this stratum of high school learners than was the case with those from semi-urban schools (26.6%). The proportion of indifferent (6.7%) and of those with "no opinion" (6.7%) was also lower here than among semi-urban school learners.

Like their compatriots in the semi-urban areas, the majority of urban respondents (56.7%) were confident of the future of African languages in South Africa. Only 43.3% were negative. This confidence about the future of African languages was also evident in the perceptions among this sample of learners of the link between the actual use of these languages and their potential for survival: in their great majority (90%), urban learner-respondents were confident that these languages would survive as long as they were used regularly by their speakers.

4.4.1.3 In rural communities

Rural communities are communities which are surrounded by rural areas and most of their staff and particularly students are drawn from these areas.

Contrary to expectations, there was far greater awareness of the debate on language policy among rural learner communities than there was among the other two groups of learners discussed earlier, i.e. semi-urban and urban. Indeed, the great majority of rural learner-respondents (70%) were reportedly *au fait* with the debate on language policy in contrast to 30% who indicated that they were not

aware of the debate. This stark contrast between on the one hand rural learners and on the other hand their urban and semi-urban counterparts gives food for thought. Although there is no empirical evidence on the reasons of such a differential level of awareness about language policy, it can be speculated that despite their rural nature, some schools in rural areas do have teachers or educators who are well versed with language policy issues and who pass this information to their learners.

A greater percentage (80%) in this sample of learners than among semi-urban and urban learners (66.7% in each of these two groups of respondents) had never seen the Constitution. This is not surprising, given the rural environment in which there is general deprivation of reading material at school and in the community. Although they might have heard about it in some way, 15% of the respondents from rural schools never thought it necessary to acquaint themselves with the Constitution while 5% actually thought that the Constitution was not within the study area and knowledge competence of secondary and high school learners and did not, in the heavily exam-driven school system see it necessary to acquaint themselves with it.

Unlike their compatriots in the urban school communities, the majority of the rural learner-respondents (70%) felt that the present government seemed to have a negative attitude towards African languages. Only 25 % of the respondents rated the attitude of the present government towards African languages as positive. A tiny minority (5%) indicated that whatever interest the government may show in

African languages, it is for political reasons bearing language parity and language equity which is part of the very essence of a democratic dispensation.

A much higher percentage (85%) than was the case with urban learner-respondents (47.7%) indicated that they were bothered by past language policy issues while 15 % said they were not. This is understandable if we consider the fact that in rural areas, African languages are still the medium of communication *par excellence* in all domains of human activities.

The view of learners from semi-urban and urban schools that before democracy in South Africa, the government's attitude towards African languages was largely negative was shared by the majority (75 %) of rural leaner-respondents. Only 15 % among these respondents indicated that the previous government had a positive attitude towards African languages—more than four times as many as the respondents in the semi-urban and urban samples (3.3%) in each group who held the same view. A level of skepticism was found among the rural learners (10%) similar to that of their semi-urban and urban counterparts about the good intentions of the apartheid government on its perceived positive attitude towards African languages which was believed by the respondents as being politically motivated.

Another point on which rural learners thought almost the same way as their semi-urban and urban counterparts was the issue of perceived government's attitude towards minority vs. majority African languages. Indeed, only 5% of the

respondents felt that minority and majority languages were treated equally by the previous government. This reinforces the general view that African languages were pitifully or not at all looked after because they were, according to 85% of the rural learners, neglected, or simply despised, as 5% believed. The level of "indifference" towards the attitude of the previous government towards African languages was relatively low (5%).

It was surprising to learn that the negative perceptions of speakers of minority languages of their own languages seem to be sharper among rural learners than among semi-urban or urban learners. Indeed, up to 75% were ashamed to use their languages in public and another 10% were simply not proud about their languages. Less than a fifth of all the respondents from rural schools (15%) stated that, as speakers of minority languages, they were proud of these languages.

The relatively stronger perception of the lack of attention towards African languages by the previous government may have impacted on their view about the future of these languages. Indeed, unlike their compatriots in semi-urban and urban areas who sounded fairly optimistic, the rural learner-respondents were overwhelmingly (80%) pessimistic about the future of African languages in South Africa. Only 20% of the respondents were confident about it. However, when asked if there was any hope, like their compatriots from semi-urban and urban areas, the majority of the rural learner-respondents (80%) were confident that as long as speakers of a language used it, the language would survive. Only 20% disagreed with this view.

4.4.1.4 In cosmopolitan communities

Cosmopolitan communities are understood here as drawing their students from urban, rural and semi-urban, the three having an influence on one another.

The level of awareness of the current debate on language policy may be said to be a function of the level of "sophistication". I assumed that cosmopolitan school communities would be, by comparison, more "sophisticated" than rural school communities. However, contrary to expectations, fewer respondents, or half (50%) of the learners from cosmopolitan communities than among rural communities (70%) were aware of the debate on language policy, and the other half were not. However, a significant departure from the learners from rural communities is that those from cosmopolitan communities were all involved in debates relating to language policy issues at school or in the community.

The relatively high level of sophistication among learners from cosmopolitan communities is further reinforced by the results of their familiarity with the Constitution at the time of the survey. Indeed, most learners from the cosmopolitan school communities (66.7%) had never seen it. Yet, as was noted above, they were all involved in debates on language policy. 20% never thought it necessary to know about the Constitution, while 3.3% thought that reading and knowing about the Constitution was not a matter for high school learners like them.

Unlike their compatriots in the other school communities discussed earlier, 6.6% of the respondents from cosmopolitan school communities indicated that the present government seemed to have a negative attitude towards African languages. Far more respondents (50%) from cosmopolitan communities than in the other groups were dismissive of the government's true intention in showing its appreciation of African languages. The respondents felt that the government's perceived positive attitude was politically motivated. Only 16.7% of the learner-respondents believed the attitude of the present government towards African languages was genuinely positive. It was disturbing to find that 20 % of the learner-respondents withheld their opinion, and 6.6% were indifferent on this matter.

Most of the learners from cosmopolitan school communities (86.7%) indicated that they were concerned about past language policies. Only a small minority of 13.3% were indifferent to past language policies.

Like in almost all the other three groups discussed above, two-thirds of the respondents (66.7%), felt that the previous government had a negative attitude towards African languages. Only a small minority of 10% found the previous government's attitude towards African languages rather positive. The dismissive attitude of the government's perceived support for African languages was shared by 13.3% of the respondents who thought that this support served the government's political purposes. A tenth (10%) of all the respondents polled in this sample were undecided.

The general view reported by learners in the three previous samples that minority African languages were held in low esteem was also shared by learners from cosmopolitan communities who stated that these languages were marginalised (40%), despised (26.7%), or neglected (10%), a view that is borne out by the fact that only a negligible number (6.7%) of the respondents in this sample thought that minority and majority languages were treated equally. There was, however, a significant proportion of the undecided (13.3 %) and of the indifferent (3.3 %).

A proportion of speakers of minority languages from cosmopolitan communities (almost four fifths) similar to that of learners from rural schools had a rather negative attitude towards their own languages as they either did not feel proud of their languages (53.3%) or alternatively were ashamed to speak them in public (26.7%). Only 13.3% indicated that they were proud to use their languages in public. A tiny minority of 6.7% indicated that they had no particular opinion on the matter.

The level of optimism about the future of African languages in South Africa was quite high among learners from cosmopolitan communities: two-thirds majority (66.7%) of them were confident about the future; the remainder (33.3%) were not. Consistent with this response distribution, the majority of respondents (86.7%) were confident that as long as speakers of a language used it, the language would survive. Only 13.3% disagreed.

4.4.1.5 Conclusion

There seems to be a large measure of agreement among all the learners across the four types of communities or schools on several issues: in their majority, learners are unaware of the debate on language policy, many had never seen the Constitution, and among them, not many would like to be more informed. Likewise, learners in general found the previous government's attitude towards African languages more wanting than the present government's. This may suggest that there is more optimism among the learners on the future of African languages in South Africa. However, some differences, which have more to do with the level of sophistication among different groups, were found. Hence, for example, learners from cosmopolitan communities were by and large conversant with language policy issues and debates than their rural or semi-rural counterparts.

This said, I now analyse and interpret the responses by students from colleges of education located respectively in semi-urban, rural, and cosmopolitan communities.

4.4.2 Responses by college students

4.4.2.1 In semi-urban colleges

Students at semi-urban colleges were in their great majority (85.7%) unaware of the current debate on language policy. Those who stated that they were aware of the debate constituted less than a fifth (14.3%) of the whole sample in this group. This unawareness of the debate on language policy may explain their non-involvement at all in any current debate on the subject.

Perhaps more surprising is the fact that all the respondents used in this study i.e 110 in the sample, i.e. 100% indicated that they had never seen the country's Constitution. This was quite against expectations, given the level of education of the respondents and their prospective profession as teachers.

A negligible proportion of the respondents (14.3%) considered the present government's attitude towards African languages as positive, whereas twice as many (28.6 %) of the respondents in the sample felt that the present government's attitude towards African languages was negative. It was not surprising that almost half of the sample (42.9%) were dismissive about any perceived positive attitude towards African languages by the present government which they thought may simply be politically motivated. Given this low approval rate of the government's attitude towards African languages, one wonders whether the 14.3% of the respondents who had "no opinion" on the issue did not merely withhold their

views as a sign of their lack of appreciation of the government's attitude.

The majority of the student-respondents (71.4 %) indicated their concern about past language policies and another 28.6% indicated their interest in these policies.

Asked for their opinion about the previous government's attitude towards African languages taken together, a significant majority (64.3%) of the respondents in this sample felt that the previous government had a negative attitude towards African languages. Only 21.4% indicated that the previous government had a positive attitude towards African languages. A tiny minority of 7.1 % felt that whatever interest was showed by the previous governments towards African languages was for political reasons. Another 7.1 % indicated that they had no opinion on this matter.

As regards the issue of the previous government's attention (or lack thereof) towards minority vs. majority African languages, 21.4 % of the respondents felt that minority and majority African languages were treated equally. In general, however, respondents indicated that in the pre-democratic era, African languages were neglected (57.1%) or marginalised (14.3%). This constitutes a weight of opinion against the previous government's treatment of African languages, given that only a tiny minority (7.1%) reserved their judgment, as it were.

Among the speakers of minority languages in this sample, a significant majority reported that they felt uneasy in public when they used their languages: 28.6% of

them said they were ashamed to use their own languages in public, and another 42.9% were simply not proud about these languages. Only 21.4% stated that they were openly proud to use their languages in public. The remaining small number (7.1%) were "undecided".

With regard to the future of minority languages in South Africa, respondents were split in the middle: 50% were confident of the future, the other 50% were not.

The majority of the respondents (64.3%) were confident that as long as speakers of a language used it, the language would survive. Only 35.7% were sceptical about the continued existence of minority languages.

4.4.2.2 In rural communities

Unlike their compatriots from semi-urban college communities, the majority of the rural student respondents i.e 90% were aware of the current debate surrounding language policy issues in South Africa. Only a small minority of 10 % were unaware of this important language policy debate. None of the respondents were involved in debate relating to language policy issues.

It was interesting to learn that there was a high proportion of (70%) those of had read the language provisions in the new Constitution while 10% of them said they had never seen such language provisions. Another 10% of the sample felt that it did not really matter if they had not seen the Constitution because they

thought it could not affect people like them. On the other hand, 10% reported that they were indifferent about language policies.

Like their compatriots from semi-urban colleges, half of the rural college students (50%) felt that whatever interest the present government may have showed towards African languages was merely to advance their own political aims. This is an overwhelming indication of the respondents' dissatisfaction with the present government's attitude towards African languages because only 20% felt that the present government's attitude towards African languages was genuinely positive, the other 30% of the respondents indicated that the present government had a negative attitude towards African languages.

Regarding their concern about past language policies, students from rural colleges indicated similar level of concern as that shown by their counterparts from semi-urban colleges. Indeed, in their great majority (80%), these students said that past language policies were of concern to them, whereas for 20% of the sample, these policies were not a concern at all.

The disapproval of the previous government's attitude towards African languages observed among the students from semi-urban colleges was expressed by an even greater majority (90%) of rural college student-respondents who stated that the attitude of the previous government towards African languages was negative. Echoing students from semi-urban colleges, rural college student-respondents indicated that African languages were marginalised (20%) or despised (30%) by

the previous government (especially at national level). Only a small minority (10%) indicated that the previous governments had a positive attitude towards African languages.

Perhaps this may well explain the perception shared by most respondents in this sample that before 1994, speakers of minority African languages themselves were not proud of their languages (40 %) or were ashamed to speak their languages in public (60%).

Unlike their counterparts from semi-urban college communities, the majority of the respondents from rural college student-respondents (80%) were optimistic about the future of African languages in South Africa and the remaining 20%, pessimistic. Like their compatriots from semi-urban college communities, most rural college student-respondents (90%) were also confident that as long as speakers of a language used it, the language would survive.

4.4.2.3 In cosmopolitan communities

Like their counterparts from rural college communities, a significant majority (60%) of the cosmopolitan college student-respondents were aware of the current debate surrounding language policy in South Africa. Only 40% were unaware of this important language policy debate. Despite the awareness by a significant majority of language policy issues, none were involved in any debate on these issues. A proportion of the students from cosmopolitan colleges (30%), similar

to that of students from rural colleges, withheld their view on why they had not read the language provision clauses in the new Constitution, this being perhaps an indication of their unawareness of the relevant issues. Worse still, 40% said they had never thought it necessary to know about language provision clauses in the new Constitution; 20% said they actually thought that the Constitution was not meant for them, and 10% indicated that they had never seen the Constitution.

In contrast to the majority of respondents from rural and semi-urban areas, a significant majority (60%) of the respondents from cosmopolitan colleges were more appreciative of the present government's attitude towards African languages which they found positive. Only 10% thought the opposite, and another 10% dismissed any government's positive attitude towards African languages as politically motivated. The remaining 20% were undecided.

Unlike their counterparts from the semi-urban colleges, but like those from rural colleges, the cosmopolitan college student-respondents overwhelmingly (90%) indicated their concern about past language policies. This concern was shared by only a small minority (10%) of the respondents in this sample.

Like in the samples from semi-urban and rural areas, respondents from the cosmopolitan colleges in their great majority (80%) felt that before democracy in South Africa, the government's attitude towards African languages was negative. Another 10% held a no less unfavourable view of the previous government's attitude towards African languages which, regardless of any perceived positive

aspect, was dismissed as solely for the purpose of serving the government's own political agenda. Only a small minority (10%) held a favourable opinion of the pre-1994 government's attitude towards African languages which they found rather positive.

Echoing the view of their counterparts from semi-urban and rural areas in general, cosmopolitan college student-respondents were of the opinion that prior to the advent of democracy in South Africa, minority languages were marginalised (50 %), despised (20%), or neglected (20%). Only a small minority of 10% felt that minority and majority African languages were treated equally.

Asked for their own attitude towards their own minority languages, a great majority (80%) of cosmopolitan college student-respondents reported to have a largely unfavourable attitude: some (40%) were not proud of being speakers of minority languages, others (40%) were even ashamed to use them in public. Only 20% of the respondents in this sample stated that they were proud to be speakers of the minority languages.

Unlike their compatriots from semi-urban and rural areas, the cosmopolitan college student-respondents were largely pessimistic about the future of minority languages in South Africa: the great majority (80%) stated that these languages had no future. Only a small number (20%) of the respondents in this sample expressed confidence about the future of these languages. Of these optimists, 90% were confident about the survival of these minority languages, provided they were

used regularly, while 10% were not confident at all.

4.4.2.4 Conclusion

The responses by the students of colleges of education from the three types of living areas (i.e. semi-urban, urban, and rural) show a trend similar, but not identical, to that of responses by high school learners polled from four different living areas. On the whole, many were unaware of the current debate on language policy, they had not, in their majority, read the Constitution, a possible explanation of their unawareness of the debate on language policy and even of the lack of interest shown by a significant proportion of the respondents to familiarize themselves with language clauses of the Constitution. This finding is, to say the least, disturbing given that the respondents are prospective teachers who not only ought to be abreast of, but should also be articulate on, language issues.

4.4.3. Responses from university students

The respondents among university students were grouped in three distinct samples corresponding to the three main departments of African languages in the Northern Province, namely: Northern Sotho, Xitsonga, and Tshivenda.

4.4.3.1 In the Department of Northern Sotho (Sepedi)

A clear difference emerged between university students and all the respondents from high schools and colleges of education. Indeed, respondents from the Department of Northern Sotho were largely (80%) aware of the current debate on language policy in South Africa. The opposite would have been very surprising, given the high level of literacy and awareness of language issues among this sample. Even the fact that there were some who were unaware of the debate on language policy, small though their proportion may be (20%), is a cause for concern. Furthermore, it is also surprising that none of the respondents were involved in debates relating to language policy, in spite of their wide awareness of these issues.

40% of the respondents in this sample indicated that they had read the language provision clauses in the new Constitution, while half the respondents (50%) had not read the Constitution at the time of the survey. However, only 10% of the sample indicated that they did not pay attention to language matters, perhaps an encouraging sign that the majority would show some interest.

The relatively high level of awareness of matters of language policy among this sample is reinforced by the relatively high rating given to the present government's attitude towards African languages which the majority of the respondents (60%) in this sample found quite positive. Only 20 % disagreed. 10% were dismissive of the true intention of the government's positive treatment

of African languages which they thought was politically motivated, and the remaining 10 % were undecided.

Also a positive sign was the fact that the large majority of the respondents (80%) in this sample indicated that they were bothered by the past language policies, leaving only a small minority (20%) of indifferent.

There is clearly a difference of opinion of the respondents in this sample on the treatment of African languages by the current and the previous governments which suggests a positive change in governmental attitude. Indeed, while the great majority of the respondents said that they found the attitude of the current government towards African languages quite positive, they, in contrast, largely (90%) negative. Only a small minority of 10% were of the opinion that the previous government's attitude towards African languages was positive.

The unfavourable rating of the previous government's attitude towards African languages is also reflected in the responses to the item on the distinctive treatment of minority and majority languages. In general, most respondents stated that African languages in general were given short shrift, through neglect (70%), marginalisation, (20%), or disdain (10%) by the government. These negative attitudes towards African languages may have also created the same attitudes among speakers of African languages in general.

Greater optimism than in the samples of high school and college learners on the

future of African languages was expressed by students in the Department of Northern Sotho: all the respondents (100%) said they were confident about the future of minority languages in South Africa and all agreed that this would be the case provided these languages were used regularly and in several domains.

4.4.3.2 In the Department of Xitsonga

The results on the respondents' awareness of the debate on language policy found among the students from the Department of Northern Sotho were replicated here: students from the Department of Xitsonga, too, were largely (80%) aware of the debate on language policy; the remaining small number (20%) not having been aware. As in the case of their peers from the Department of Northern Sotho, none of the respondents from the Department of Xitsonga was involved in any debate on language policy.

Once more, it was as surprising as in the case of the respondents from the Department of Northern Sotho, to find that a great majority (80%) of respondents from the Department of Xitsonga had not seen the country's Constitution at the time of the survey. Similarly, it remains a moot question even why there would be some (10%) who could ignore the value of their own Constitution and think that it was not meant for people like them, or should simply remain indifferent as 10% openly said they were.

The rating of the present government's attitude towards African languages dipped

considerably in the sample of students from the Department of Xitsonga: in contrast to their peers from the Department of Northern Sotho who found the government's attitude largely (60%) positive, the respondents from the Department of Xitsonga found it largely (60%) negative: half as many respondents (i.e. 30%) were dismissive of any government's perceived positive attitude as simply to serve the government's political aims; and only a tenth (10%) found the government's attitude genuinely positive. However, the same overwhelming concern about past language policies shown by the respondents from the Department of Northern Sotho is equally shared by their peers in the Department of Xitsonga: all the students polled said these policies mattered to them.

Another point of agreement between the students from these two departments is their total (100% of the students polled) of the previous government's attitude towards African languages which both groups termed "negative". However, respondents in the Xitsonga sample differed markedly with their peers from the Northern Sotho sample on the treatment of minority and majority languages in South Africa before 1994. Only 10% of the respondents in the Xitsonga sample, in contrast to 90 % in the Northern Sotho sample, felt that majority and minority languages were treated equally before democracy in South Africa. In general, however, the respondents in the Xitsonga sample concurred with their peers in the Northern Sotho sample on the widespread lack of proper attention to all African languages by the previous government through marginalisation (30%), disdain (20%), or neglect (30%).

The respondents in the Xitsonga sample also shared the view by their peers in the Northern Sotho sample that speakers of minority languages did not value their own languages in the apartheid era. In the Xitsonga sample, respondents thought that before 1994, 60 % of the speakers of minority languages were ashamed to speak their languages and 40 % were not proud of them.

However, contrary to their peers in the Northern Sotho sample, all respondents in the Xitsonga sample were pessimistic about the future of minority languages in South Africa, although all were "cautiously" optimistic in the sense that they all still believed that regular practice and wide use of these languages could ensure their survival.

4.4.3.3 In the Department of Tshivenda

The overwhelming level of awareness of the debate about language matters among the respondents in the Northern Sotho and Xitsonga samples was also found among their peers from the Department of Tshivenda: all the respondents indicated that they were aware of the current debate on language policy in South Africa. Nonetheless, none of the respondents were involved in debates relating to language policy issues.

Also similar to their counterparts from the Departments of Northern Sotho and Xitsonga is the fact that a significant majority (60%) of the respondents in the Tshivenda sample had never seen the country's Constitution at the time of the

survey. It was encouraging to learn that the number of those who indicated that they had read the language provision clauses in the new Constitution was relatively high (40%).

Regarding their views on the present government's attitude towards African languages, respondents in the Tshivenda sample differed from those in the Xitsonga sample, but had a similar opinion as those in the Northern Sotho sample: the majority (60%) of the respondents in the Tshivenda sample felt that the attitude of the present government towards African languages was positive. 20 % indicated that the attitude of the present government was negative. The remaining 20% were sceptical about the sincerity of the present government's treatment of African languages: they thought that anything positive from the government towards African languages was rather politically motivated.

Regarding the level of concern about past language policies, respondents in the Tshivenda sample concurred with their counterparts in the Northern Sotho and Xitsonga samples in the sense that they all stated that they were bothered by the past language policies. In the same vein, they all concurred with their peers in the other two samples, i.e. Northern Sotho and Xitsonga that before the advent of democracy in South Africa, the government's attitude towards African languages was negative.

As regards the treatment of minority vs. majority African languages, 20% of the respondents from the Department of Tshivenda shared the view that before 1994,

minority and majority languages were treated in the same way. Indeed, they felt, in their majority that all African languages were despised (60%) or marginalised (20%). The attitude of speakers of minority languages in this sample towards their own languages did not differ from that of their peers in the other two samples: 60% of the respondents in the Tshivenda sample said they were ashamed to speak their languages, 40%, that they were not proud of their language.

As to their opinion about the future of African languages, the respondents in the Tshivenda sample differed markedly from their counterparts in the Xitsonga sample, but concurred with those in the Northern Sotho sample: all were pessimistic about the future of minority languages in South Africa. It was, however, interesting to note that, like their peers from Northern Sotho and Xitsonga departments, all the respondents in the Tshivenda sample said they were confident about the survival of these languages provided these languages were used.

4.4.3.4 Conclusion

It can be tentatively concluded that, in spite of differences in opinions among the samples of university students on some points, there is a lot of common ground and shared views, namely: the overwhelming level of awareness of the debate about language matters, which, unfortunately, is not matched by similar awareness of the language provision clauses in the Constitution, or even of the Constitution itself; and their strong concern about past language policies. In the next sections,

I analyse the responses from high school teachers.

Having concluded this section, I now proceed to analyse the responses of high school teachers

4.4.1 Responses from high school teachers

Teacher responses are analysed in a stratified manner, that is, grouped according to the same four living areas from which they were sampled, viz.: semi-urban, urban, rural and cosmopolitan communities.

4.4.4.1 In semi-urban communities

The majority of respondents (66.7 %) from the semi-urban schools in the sample said that they were aware of the current debate on language policy issues in South Africa. However, up to a third (33.3%) in the sample were not aware. This result is surprising both given the status and profession of the respondents. None of the respondents were involved in debates on language policy issues.

Worse still, a significant majority(66.7%) of the teachers in this sample had never seen the country's Constitution at the time of the survey. Up to 16.7% even thought that the Constitution was not a matter for people like them, while 16.6% had read the Constitution.

Although 50% of the respondents elected not to express an opinion on the present government's attitude towards African languages, 33% opined that whatever interest the government may show in African languages, it is for political reasons. Only 16.7% thought that the present government has a positive attitude towards African languages.

It was surprising that a great majority (83.3%) of respondents never bothered to inform themselves about language policy issues of the past. Only a small minority of 16.7% showed interest.

Respondents generally felt that before democracy in the RSA, the government's attitude towards African languages was negative: 83.3% held this view. Only a small minority of 16.7% felt that before democracy, government had a positive attitude towards African languages.

The majority of the respondents indicated that before democracy in South Africa, African languages were neglected (83.3%) or were even despised (16.7%).

With regard to the attitude of speakers of African languages towards their languages, all the respondents, unfortunately, abstained from expressing an opinion.

One positive finding was that all the respondents in this sample were confident of the future of minority languages in South Africa. Consistent with this response

was the fact that the majority of respondents (83.3%) were confident that as long as speakers of a language used it, the language will survive. Only a small minority of 16.7% thought otherwise.

4.4.4.2 In urban communities

Like their colleagues from semi-urban areas, most respondents (66.7%) from urban schools were aware of the current debate surrounding language policy matters. Only 33.3% were not aware. None of the respondents were involved in debates relating to language policy issues.

Similar to their peers from semi-urban areas, all respondents used in the sample of this study i.e 100% had never seen the country's Constitution.

Unlike their counterparts from semi-urban school communities, the majority of respondents i.e 66.7% felt that the present government hd a positive attitude towards African languages. Only 33.3% opined that the attitude of the present government was negative.

As was the case with respondents in the semi-urban school sample, most respondents (66.7%) in the urban school sample never bothered to inform themselves about language policy issues of the past; only a small minority of 33.3% showed interest.

Expressing the same sentiments as their counterparts from semi-urban school communities, the majority (66.7%) of the teachers in the urban school sample felt that before the advent of democracy in South Africa, the government's attitude towards African languages was negative. In contrast, the remaining 33.3% felt that the previous government had a positive attitude towards African languages. In the same proportions, the respondents in the urban sample said in their majority (66.7%) that before democracy African languages were neglected or were even marginalised (33.3%).

Contrary to the teachers in the semi-urban school sample, who all abstained to answer the item on the attitude of speakers of minority languages towards their own languages, the respondents in the urban sample were clear about their views: 33.3% of respondents felt that speakers of minority languages were ashamed to speak their languages while 66.7% were not proud of them.

Similar to their peers from semi-urban areas, all the respondents in the urban schools sample were optimistic about the future of minority languages in South Africa. Consistent with this response distribution, all the respondents were confident that as long as speakers of a language used it, the language would survive.

4.4.4.3 In rural communities

Teachers in the rural schools sample, in their great majority (83.3%), were aware of the current debate surrounding language policy in South Africa, as much as their counterparts from semi-urban and urban schools were; only less than a fifth of them (16.7%) said they were not aware of anything regarding language policy. None of the respondents, including those who said to be aware of the debate on language policy, were involved in debates on these matters.

The unfamiliarity with the country's Constitution found to be widespread among the respondents in the semi-urban and urban schools samples was shared by a large majority (83.3%) of the respondents from rural schools who acknowledged that they had never seen the Constitution.

Unlike their peers from semi-urban schools who all abstained, two-thirds (66.7%) of the teachers from rural schools, like those in the urban schools sample, were quite clear about their view on the attitude of the present government towards African language which they found positive; 16.7% of the sample were sceptical about the true intention of the government in being positive towards African languages which they considered to be politically motivated; the remaining 16.6% were undecided.

Unlike their counterparts from semi-urban and urban schools, the majority (83.3%) of teachers from rural schools polled for this study were concerned about

the past language policies. Only a small minority of 16.7% had never bothered to inform themselves about language policy issues of the past.

It seems reasonable to surmise that this strong concern was motivated by their perceptions of the previous government's attitude towards African languages. Indeed, like their colleagues in the semi-urban and urban schools samples, most (83.3%) respondents from rural schools felt that prior to the advent of democracy in South Africa, the government's attitude towards African languages was negative. This sentiment is further strengthened by the belief by 16.7% of the respondents in the sample that even when the previous government showed any positive attitude towards African languages, this was done mainly for their own political benefits.

In response to the question whether minority and majority African languages received differential treatment from the previous government, respondents from rural schools concurred with their colleagues in the semi-urban and urban schools samples: they stated in their great majority (83.3%) that prior to democracy, minority languages were neglected or (16.7%) marginalised by the previous governments.

Whereas teachers in the semi-urban school samples all abstained when asked what they thought about the attitude of speakers of minority languages prior to 1994, 16.6% of the respondents in the rural schools sample stated that speakers of minority languages were ashamed to use their languages, thus echoing their peers

in the urban schools sample. An almost equal percentage (16.7%) of the respondents believed that speakers of minority languages were rather proud to speak their languages. and 16.6% were undecided.

Consistent with their counterparts from semi-urban and urban areas. the majority of the respondents from rural communities i.e 83.3% were confident of the future of African languages. Only 16.7% were negative. Like their companions from semi-urban and urban area. all respondents used in the sample of this study i.e 100% were also confident that as long as speakers of a language used it. the language would survive.

4.4.4.4 In cosmopolitan communities

Like their counterparts from semi-urban. urban and rural areas. most (66.7%) respondents from cosmopolitan areas were aware of the current debate surrounding language policy in South Africa. Only 33.3% were not aware of this important language debate.

The unfamiliarity with the country's Constitution observed among teachers at semi-urban. urban and rural schools was also shared by most respondents in the cosmopolitan schools sample. who either had never seen the Constitution (33.3%) or did not care to see it (33.3 %).

On the question of the present government's attitude towards African languages.

the respondents in the cosmopolitan schools sample clearly expressed their opinion, as did those in the urban and rural schools samples, but unlike those in the semi-urban school sample, who abstained, half (50%) of the respondents in the cosmopolitan schools sample felt that the present government has a positive attitude towards African languages. Only a small minority of 16.7% were of the view that the present government had a negative attitude towards African languages. 33.3% opined that whatever interest the present government may show towards African languages, it was for political reasons.

Contrary to their counterparts from semi-urban and urban areas, the teachers in the cosmopolitan schools sample were bothered by the past language policy issues as were those in the rural schools sample: the great majority (83.3%) of the respondents from cosmopolitan areas were bothered by the past language policy matters. Only a small minority of 16.7% opined that they were not bothered by the past language policy matters.

Similar to their peers from semi-urban, urban and rural communities, most (66.6%) respondents from cosmopolitan areas felt that before democracy in the RSA, the government's attitude towards African languages (especially at national level) was negative. 16.7% opined that whatever interest the government showed towards African languages, it was for political reasons while another 16.7% indicated that they did not know.

On the issue of the general attitude towards minority languages in the pre-1994

era. respondents from cosmopolitan schools were largely in tune with their counterparts from semi-urban. urban and rural communities in observing that these languages were marginalised (50%). despised (33.3%). or even neglected (16.7%).

The respondents from cosmopolitan areas were also in tune with their peers from urban and rural schools by expressing their view on the attitude towards minority languages by their own speakers. but not with those in the semi-urban areas who all abstained on this issue. Indeed. teachers in the cosmopolitan schools sample indicated that speakers of minority languages were ashamed to speak their languages (50%). or were not proud of them (16.7%). The remaining 33.3% of the respondents. however. said they were proud and willing to use their own languages.

The optimism about the future of minority African languages in South Africa expressed by the majority of teachers in the semi-urban. urban and rural schools samples was also shared by two-thirds (66.7%) of the respondents from cosmopolitan schools. However. this optimism was not shared by the remaining third (33.3%) of the sample. The strong optimism is also extended to the possibility of survival of these languages but provided. as was stated by the great majority (83.3%) of the respondents. that they will be widely used. Only a small minority of 16.7% were pessimistic about the survival of minority languages in South Africa.

4.4.1.5. Conclusion

The responses by the high school teachers from the three samples (i.e. semi-urban, urban and rural areas) show a lot more similarities than differences. Statistically, it could be said that more than 90% of the views of the respondents were the same while about less than 4% differed with the majority. The majority of the respondents were aware of the current debate surrounding language policy issues though were not involved and had not seen the country's Constitution. They were once again in their majority agreed that the previous government had a negative attitude towards African languages while the present government displays a positive attitude towards these languages. Although they indicated that African languages were neglected and despised by the previous government, they were however positive that minority African languages would survive as long as their speakers speak them.

Having concluded this section, I now proceed to analyse the responses from college lecturers.

4.4.5 Responses from college lecturers

The responses of lecturers at three colleges of education were grouped into three samples representing semi-urban, rural and cosmopolitan areas and three main languages spoken in the Northern Province, viz.: Northern Sotho (Sepedi), Xitsonga and Tshivenda.

4.4.5.1 In semi-urban communities

All respondents in the semi-urban colleges sample stated that they were aware of the current debate on language policy in South Africa. Most respondents i.e 75 % were, however, not involved in language policy debates, the remaining 25 % were.

In this sample, half (50%) indicated that they had never seen the country's Constitution, a quarter (25%) said they had never thought it necessary to acquaint themselves with the Constitution, the other quarter (25%) indicated that they had read the language provision clauses in the new Constitution.

Interestingly, the great majority of the respondents (75%) were unimpressed by the present government's attitude towards African languages which they considered to be negative, the other 25 % opined that whatever interest the government may show towards African languages, is for political reasons.

The majority of the respondents in the proportion of 75% said they were bothered by the past language policies. Only 25 % never bothered to inform themselves about language policy issues in the past.

Half (50%) the sample felt that before democracy in South Africa, the government's attitude towards African languages was negative because these languages were neglected (50%), marginalised (25%) and despised (25%); 25%

opined that the previous government had a positive attitude towards African languages; and the other 25% indicated that whatever interest the government showed towards African languages, was for political reasons.

A disturbing finding was that all the speakers of minority languages in the sample had a dim view of their own languages, feeling ashamed to use them (75%), or not proud at all about these languages (25%).

With regard to the future of minority languages in South Africa, respondents were split right in the middle between the "optimists" and the "pessimists". The proportion of optimists improved when respondents were asked if these languages would survive if they were used: (75%) were optimistic, 25% remained staunchly in the camp of pessimists.

4.4.5.2 In rural communities

The level of awareness of the current debate surrounding language policy in South Africa among lecturers in the rural colleges sample was the same as that among their peers from semi-urban colleges, i.e. at 100%. However, none of them were involved in debates relating to language policy issues.

Similarly, lecturers at rural colleges in the same proportion of 75% as lecturers from semi-urban colleges stated that they had never seen the country's Constitution. The remaining 25 % indicated that they had read the language

provision clauses in the new Constitution.

However, lecturers from rural colleges differed from their peers from semi-urban colleges in their opinion about the present government's attitude towards African languages: It seems that the government attitude has been expressed as positive.

Like their counterparts from semi-urban college communities, all respondents from rural college communities indicated that they were bothered by past language policies.

Like their colleagues at semi-urban colleges, all the respondents in the rural colleges sample felt that before democracy in South Africa, the government's attitude towards African languages was negative.

Echoing the views of their peers from semi-urban colleges, lecturers from rural colleges were of the opinion that prior to democracy African languages were neglected (50%) or marginalised (50%).

In the same way as their colleagues at semi-urban colleges, lecturers at rural colleges indicated that speakers of minority languages themselves were not proud of them (50%) or were even ashamed to speak their languages (50 %).

Unlike their colleagues at semi-urban colleges who were divided on the future of minority languages in South Africa, all the lecturers in the rural colleges sample

were optimistic. Consistent with this response distribution and like their companions from semi-urban colleges, all respondents from rural colleges were optimistic about the survival of minority languages provided speakers of these languages continued to use them.

4.4.5.3 In cosmopolitan communities

Like their counterparts from semi-urban and rural college communities, all respondents in the cosmopolitan colleges sample were aware of the current debate on language policy in South Africa. None of the respondents were, however, involved in debates relating to language policy issues.

Similarly, half of them, as was the case with their peers from semi-urban and urban colleges, had never seen the country's Constitution; the other half said they had never thought it necessary to acquaint themselves with the Constitution.

Unlike their colleagues from rural colleges, but like those from semi-urban colleges, the majority (75%) of the respondents from cosmopolitan colleges felt that the present government had a negative attitude towards African languages. The other 25% in the sample thought that whatever interest the government may show towards African languages, is for political reasons.

Concurring with their other colleagues from semi-urban and rural colleges, all respondents from cosmopolitan colleges indicated that they were bothered by the

past language policy issues.

Lecturers in the cosmopolitan colleges sample, in their great majority (75%), echoed the feeling of those from semi-urban and rural colleges that before the advent of democracy in South Africa, the government's attitude towards African languages was negative. The remaining 25% indicated that whatever interest the government showed towards African languages, was for political reasons.

They also concurred with their colleagues from the other two samples that speakers of minority languages were themselves not proud of them (50%) or ashamed to speak their languages (50).

Unlike their colleagues from semi-urban colleges, but in agreement with those from rural colleges, all the lecturers from rural colleges were confident of the future of minority languages in South Africa. Consistent with this response distribution, they all expressed their optimism about the survival of minority languages provided that speakers of these languages continued to use them.

4.4.5.4. Conclusion

Again, like the responses from school teachers (though a little less), most respondents were in agreement in most responses. Responses indicated a high level of awareness with regard language policy issues although they were not involved in and have not seen the country's Constitution. Unlike the responses

from high school teachers who saw a difference between the past and the present government, college lecturers felt that the attitude of both governments is negative towards African languages. They, however, in their majority indicated that minority African languages have a bright future provided that the speakers of these languages continue to speak them.

4.4.6 Responses from university lecturers

Three university departments of African languages, viz.: Northern Sotho, Xitsonga and Tshivenda, in the Northen Province region, constituted three other samples which I analyzed separately.

4.4.6.1 In the Department of Northern Sotho

All respondents used in the Department of Northern Sotho sample were aware of the current debate on language policy in South Africa. Interestingly, 66.7 % of them were involved in debates relating to language policies, the other 33.3% were not.

Although 66.7 % indicated that they had read the language provision clauses in the new Constitution, 33.3% never thought it necessary to acquaint themselves with the Constitution.

It was also interesting that some respondents (33.3%) opined that the present

government's attitude towards African languages was negative. 66.7 % of the respondents opined that whatever interest the government may show towards African languages, it is for political reasons.

The majority of the respondents (66.7 %) indicated that they were bothered by past language policy issues. Only 33.3 % were not bothered.

Most respondents (66.7%) felt that before democracy in South Africa, the government's attitude towards African languages was negative because they were despised (66.7%) or marginalised (33.3%). Only 33.3% thought otherwise.

Regarding the attitude of speakers of minority languages towards their own languages, the respondents in the sample thought that speakers of these languages were ashamed to use their languages (66.7%) or were not proud of them (33.3%).

The majority of the respondents (66.7%) though by definition not from a minority language group, were pessimistic about the future of minority languages in South Africa, the other 33.3 % were optimistic.

All respondents in the sample, however, rallied the camp of optimists that these minority languages might survive provided that the speakers of these languages continued to use them.

4.4.6.2 In the Department of Xitsonga

The level of awareness of the debate on language policy in South Africa among lecturers of the Department of Xitsonga was the same as that among their colleagues in the Department of Northern Sotho: all indicated that they were *au fait* with the said debate, but they were not all involved in such debates: 66.7 % were, 33.3 % were not.

Similarly, they, like their colleagues in the Department of Northern Sotho sample, all respondents indicated that they had not read the language provision clauses in the new Constitution.

Contrary to their colleagues in the Department of Northern Sotho sample, most (66.7%) respondents in the department of Xitsonga sample indicated that in their opinion, the present government had a positive attitude towards African languages. Only 33.3 % thought that the government's attitude towards African languages is negative.

Agreeing with their colleagues from the Department of Northern Sotho, all the respondents from the Department of Xitsonga stated that they were bothered by past language policy issues.

Echoing the views of their colleagues in the Department of Northern Sotho, most (66.7%) respondents in the Department of Xitsonga felt that before democracy in

South Africa, the government's attitude towards African languages was negative. Indeed, they generally agreed that prior to democracy, minority languages were marginalised (66.7%) and even neglected (33.3%). Even those (33.3%) who did not judge harshly the government's attitude towards African languages conceded that even though the government might make some overtures in favour of African languages, such a gesture was merely to serve the government's political interests.

Like their colleagues in the Department of Northern Sotho, lecturers in the Department of Xitsonga indicated that prior to democracy, speakers of minority languages were ashamed to speak their own languages (66.7%) or were simply not proud of them (33.3%).

They were also in agreement with their colleagues in the Department of Northern Sotho by all being pessimistic about the future of minority languages in South Africa, but conceded that these languages would survive if their speakers continued to use them.

4.4.6.3 In the Department of Tshivenda

Like their colleagues in the departments of Northern Sotho and Xitsonga, all respondents in the Department of Tshivenda sample indicated that they were aware of the current debate on language policy in South Africa. It was also interesting to learn that all respondents were involved in these debates relating to language policy issues.

Unlike their colleagues from the department of Northern Sotho but like their colleagues from Xitsonga, all the respondents from the Department of Tshivenda stated that they had read the Constitution.

Their opinion about the present government's attitude towards African languages differed from that of their colleagues from the Department of Xitsonga, but was closer to that of their colleagues in the Department of Northern Sotho. Indeed, they found negative, in their majority (66.7%), the present government's attitude towards African languages. Only 33.3% opined that whatever interest the government may show towards African languages, is for political reasons.

Similar to their companions from the department of Northern Sotho and Xitsonga, all respondents from the department of Tshivenda said they were bothered by past language policy issues.

Another point of agreement with their colleagues from the Departments of Northern Sotho and Xitsonga was on the pre-1994 government's attitude towards African languages. In their majority (66.7%) they felt that before democracy in South Africa, the government's attitude towards African languages was negative. The other 33.3% indicated that whatever interest the government showed towards African languages, was for political reasons.

Echoing once more their counterparts from the other two departments (i.e. Northern Sotho and Xitsonga) respondents in the Department of Tshivenda

sample felt that prior to democracy, minority languages were marginalised (66.7%) or despised (33.3%).

Finally, the respondents in the Tshivenda sample also shared with their colleagues from the Departments of Northern Sotho and Xitsonga the general pessimism on the future of minority languages in South Africa, but were optimistic about the survival of these languages on the proviso that they continued to be used.

4.4.6.4. Conclusion

Responses from University lectures from the three samples (i.e. Department of Northern Sotho, Department of Xitsonga and department of Tshivenda) although showing some similarities also indicate some differences from the high school teachers and college lecturers's responses. Most respondents were aware and involved in the current debate surrounding language policy issues. Again in their majority they felt that the previous and the present government's attitude was negative. They also felt that in the past minority African languages were despised and marginalised. On a positive note they, like high school teachers and college lectures, believe that minority African languages would continue to exist as long as their speakers use them.

CHAPTER 5 : FINAL DISCUSSION OF MAIN RESEARCH FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1. Main research findings and interpretations

In the previous chapter, raw data of the survey for individual samples were presented. In this chapter, a more synthetic description is attempted to give a bird's eye view of the patterns of the results. Such a view will serve (i) to explain and interpret main research findings in greater detail and (ii) to draw implications on which to base recommendations. To achieve clarity, the discussion will, of necessity, be based on a grouping of variables.

5.1.1. Familiarity with the language provisions in the Constitution

The new Constitution contains ample provisions on the eleven official languages. Familiarity with these language provisions is one of the crucial elements for participation in informed debates on language policy. An item in the questionnaire explored the level of the respondents' familiarity with the language provisions by asking them if they had read the language provisions in the Constitution.

Below is a tabular representation of the results across the samples:

TABLE 17: Familiarity with language provisions (in %)

	High schools		*Colleges of Education*		*University*	
	Teachers	Learners	Lecturers	Students	Lecturers	Students
Read	13	-	16.7	29	88.9	27
Not read	87	100	83.3	71	11.1	-
Abstentions	-	-	-	-	-	73

Against expectations, the great majority of lecturers at colleges of education had not read the language provisions in the Constitution. This is very surprising because as teacher-trainers, they ought to be well read on an issue of national importance such as language rights. In contrast, the high percentage of high school respondents (a massive 87% of teachers and all the learners surveyed) who reported not to have ever read the language provisions in the new Constitution is fairly consistent with what could be expected of respondents in this sample. The less interested they are to do additional reading outside their textbooks for their own information, the less likely they will encourage their pupils to read for general information. It is no wonder, then, that none of the learners had ever read the language provisions in the new Constitution. The assumption of differential levels of interest between language issues and matters of basic survival seems to concur with the responses of a good number of the high school respondents, especially learners, in comparison with their counterparts in the other two samples

on their reasons for not having read the language provisions in the Constitution (see TABLE 18 below).

TABLE 18 : Reasons for unfamiliarity with language provisions (in %)

	High schools		*Colleges of Education*		*University*	
	Teachers	Learners	Lecturers	Students	Lecturers	Students
Not necessary	8	18.2	25	12	11.1	-
Not likely to affect me	8	17.7	-	9	-	3
Do not care	-	1.8	-	3	-	7

Approximately two-fifths (37.7%) of the high school learners (in contrast to 25% and 10% of students respectively at colleges of education and university) expressed a lack of interest in being informed about the language provisions because: (i) they never thought it necessary to know about them; (ii) they did not think the language issue could affect people like them; or (iii) they did not care about language matters. These responses confirm the assumption that rural dwellers might be more preoccupied with issues of daily survival and improvement of their living conditions than with what they perceive to be a "non-issue". In passing, it may be inferred that rural dwellers are less likely to take active part in debates on language policy unless they are strongly encouraged to do so.

The fact that almost a quarter of the lecturers at colleges of education, too, expressed a lack of interest was an unexpected result. Lecturers at colleges of education would, indeed, be expected (or even required) to be more informed about the language provisions, given their relatively high level of education and the importance of the issue of language policy in the teaching career for which they are supposed to prepare their students. Perhaps also somewhat unexpected is the higher percentage of students of colleges of education (24%) than that of high school teachers (16%) who showed a lack of interest in knowing more about the language provisions in the Constitution. Students would, indeed, be expected to be more *au fait* with the new democracy, including language rights, than high school teachers who, because of a generation gap of some sort, might rather be inclined to have a laid-back attitude on these matters.

University lecturers did not to do seem exceedingly well. Unexpectedly, indeed, slightly more than a tenth of them had not read the language clauses in the Constitution. Their relative lack of interest or "ignorance" about the Constitutionally enshrined language rights seems to have rubbed off on to the students. It would seem that the relatively high level of abstentions among the students when asked to say whether or not they had read the language provisions in the Constitution is rather some sort of face-saving strategy. Indeed, they may have been embarrassed to acknowledge their unfamiliarity with the language provisions and have preferred to "abstain" instead. Such a high level of ignorance is not unusual, given the propensity of students to read for examination purposes and hardly for general information.

In-depth knowledge of the Constitutional provisions regarding languages is also important and necessary for the purposes of engaging in an informed debate. The level of interest in, and knowledge of the language rights in the Constitution may have important implications for the debate on a future provincial language-in-education policy (and its implementation). In this respect, an additional issue to consider is the level of awareness of the on-going language policy debate among the users of African languages as represented in the samples.

5.1.2 Awareness about the on-going language policy debate

TABLE 19 below gives percentages of those who reported to be aware of the on-going debate on the official languages vs. those who were not.

TABLE 19 : Awareness about the on-going language policy debate (in %)

	High schools		*Colleges of Education*		*University*	
	Teachers	Learners	Lecturers	Students	Lecturers	Students
Aware	62.5	62.7	100	79.4	100	86.7
Not aware	37.5	37.3	-	20.6	-	13.3

As can be seen from the data above, across the samples there is greater awareness of the language policy debate than there is awareness of the language provisions in the Constitution. One may, thus, conclude that the two are not necessarily inextricably linked. Indeed, unsurprisingly all university lecturers surveyed

reported to have been aware of the on-going debate on language policy. Unexpected, however, is the fact that teachers and learners at high school may have the same level of awareness about the debate, unlike in colleges of education and at university.

There seems to be a pattern of distribution of the level of awareness across the education spectrum and types of living environment: the level of awareness about the debate on language policy decreases as one moves from tertiary to high school level and perhaps from urban to rural. Given this pattern, it can be surmised that the rural-urban cleavage will also determine the level of involvement in the debate: those living in the rural areas may be much less enthusiastic about participating in debates on language issues than their compatriots in the urban areas.

5.1.3 Involvement in language debate

TABLE 20 : Involvement in debate (in %)

	High schools		*Colleges of Education*		*University*	
	Teachers	Learners	Lecturers	Students	Lecturers	Students
Involved	-	-	8,3	-	22,8	-
Not involved	100	100	91,7	100	77,8	100

The data in TABLE 20 above depicts an uneven, patchy picture across samples of the respondents' involvement in the language policy debate. At school level, the level of involvement in the language debates is nil. It increases as the level of education increases. The highest reported level of involvement is, as expected, that of university lecturers (22,2%), against only 8,8% of lecturers at colleges of education. While other respondents across the three main samples (especially high school learners and students at colleges of education) may not have as many opportunities to engage in the language debate, university lecturers have by far the most opportunities to be involved in language policy debates and are in a privileged position as specialists in African languages, literature and/or linguistics.

Another important section of the survey, is the respondents' opinions on the attitudes of both the pre-1994 and post-1994 governments towards African languages in general, and minority languages in particular.

5.1.4 Opinions on the attitude of the pre-1994 government towards African languages

TABLE 21 below shows the results of the survey on the respondents' opinions on the attitude of the pre-1994 government towards African languages in general.

TABLE 21 : Opinions on the pre-1994 government's attitude towards African languages (in %)

	High schools		*Colleges of Education*		*University*	
	Teachers	Learners	Lecturers	Students	Lecturers	Students
Favourable	4	7,4	8,3	14	11,1	3,3
Unfavourable	75	72,7	75	77	66,7	96,7
Political gimmick	17	11,8	16,7	6	22,2	-
Don't care	-	0,9	-	-	-	-
Abstentions	4	7,3	-	3	-	-

As expected, across the samples, the overwhelming majority of the respondents thought the apartheid government had a negative attitude towards African languages in general, for reasons discussed later in this section. A sizable proportion even dismissed as a mere "political gimmick" any action taken by the government to legislate in favour of the use of African languages. These respondents (who considered any action by the apartheid government "in favour

of African languages as a (mere) political gimmick") may well be lumped together with those who expressed their outright unfavourable opinion on the government attitude towards African languages. In this way, the proportion of unsatisfactory opinions on the pre-1994 government's attitude towards African languages increases further. The picture may be as follows, if the views are reduced to "positive" versus "negative" (without taking into consideration abstentions and other neutral views) (see TABLE 22 below):

TABLE 22 : Positive vs. negative opinions on the pre-1994 government's attitude (in %)

	High schools		*Colleges of Education*		*University*	
	Teachers	Learners	Lecturers	Students	Lecturers	Students
Positive	4	7,4	8,3	14	11,1	3,3
Negative	92	84,5	91.7	83	88,9	96,7

University students were the harshest critics of the pre-1994 government: 96,7% of them said the attitude of the apartheid government towards African languages was negative. It may be speculated that their unfavourable opinion of the pre-1994 government's attitude towards African languages in general may have played some role in their choice of major subject of study. On the other hand, it would be hoped that their dissatisfaction with the previous government's attitude towards African languages may translate into an incentive to participate actively in language policy debates in order to shape more adequately fairer language

policies for the country.

Respondents were all quite vocal on what they thought were the main reasons for the neglect or marginalisation of, or disdain towards African languages in the apartheid era. One of these reasons is the previous government official English-Afrikaans bilingual policy which was to the detriment of African languages. This sentiment is echoed by many scholars who recognise the negative consequences of such a language policy. In this respect, using the description of a quasi Babel tower scenario in a court of law where the magistrate, the prosecutor, and even interpreters brought in to translate to both parties who do not share a common language, Ramaite observes (1997, p.12):

> There has in the past been an unhealthy response to language diversity in South Africa. This response was characterised by a policy of state bilingualism which was shaped to cater for English and Afrikaans speakers and to ignore the needs of the speakers of African and other languages.

Another example is that of official documents, which, as some respondents remarked, were written exclusively in either English or Afrikaans, or both.

Perhaps a more long-lasting impact of the official bilingualism imposed on all was

felt in education. The medium of teaching and learning in schools was either English or Afrikaans. Even in schools reserved for Africans, the African languages were used as media of instruction only up to the fourth year of schooling, after which a forcible switch was made English or Afrikaans or both. Many respondents cited this fact as an important reason for the neglect of African languages. Indeed, education being one obvious way to climb up the social ladder, the language/s in which it is achieved is perceived with equal prestige. Clearly, as some respondents observed, the imposition of Afrikaans in 1976, (which had never been a colonial language) in African schools as a medium of instruction on a 50-50 basis with English (a colonial heritage) only showed the government's insensitivity towards African students who hardly spoke Afrikaans at home. (For details regarding problems of medium of instruction in African schools, see for example Macdonald, 1990)

Furthermore, the imposition of Afrikaans on non-Afrikaans speaking African students was compounded by the absence of a similar requirement for native speakers of Afrikaans and English, at least at school. Respondents pointed out that when African languages were ever prescribed in the syllabus in schools for whites, their provision was inadequate and the requirement very lax. Indeed, it was seldom prescribed as an examination subject in these schools. That the language in Education Policy (1997) provided for only two of the eleven official languages to meet the requirements for the new official policy of multilingualism in education hardly helped the case for the inclusion of African languages in the curriculum of erstwhile whites-only schools.

5.1.5. Opinions on the attitude of the post-1994 government towards African languages

As much as it was useful to obtain the respondents' opinions on the attitude of the apartheid government towards African languages to estimate their level of enthusiasm for any changes in language policy, it was also important (perhaps even more so) to canvass the opinions of the respondents on the attitude of the current government which is responsible for future language policies and their implementation. Indeed, it is useful to see whether there has been any change in the opinions of speakers of African languages which would be conducive to fruitful debate on language policies and ultimately their successful implementation.

TABLE 23: Opinion on post-1994 government's attitude (in %)

	High schools		*Colleges of Education*		*University*	
	Teachers	Learners	Lecturers	Students	Lecturers	Students
Favourable	50	26	33,3	32	22,2	60
Unfavourable	4	24,5	50	21	44,4	23,3
Political gimmick	29	21	16,7	35	33,3	13,3
Don't care	-	2	-	-	-	-
abstentions	17	26,5	-	12	-	3,4

Clearly, the approval rating of the current government's attitude towards African languages is much higher than that of its predecessor. Indeed, the highest rating shot from 8,3% (students at colleges of education) who thought the pre-1994 government had a positive attitude towards African languages to 60% (university students) of maximum favourable rating of the post-1994 government. It is reasonable to expect that a government associated with democratic changes (even if it was no longer in a period of honeymoon) receive a better rating than a government that was identified with every evil.

However, one would have expected an even higher rating, considering that all the respondents should identify themselves with the new democratic government. If the percentages of all the groups who did not give an outright approval of the

current government's attitude towards African languages were lumped together (that is those who either found the government's action in favour of African languages as mere "political gimmick" or simply abstained to give their position) these somewhat "negative" perceptions would mitigate the apparent plaudit given outright, except among university students of whom 60% gave the government's attitude towards African languages the thumbs up.

5.1.6 Opinions on the treatment of minority African languages

In addition to surveying the respondents' opinions about the attitudes of the pre- and post-1994 governments towards African languages in general, it was important to gather their perceptions of the treatment of minority African languages in comparison to majority African languages. Indeed, one of the points of departure of this thesis is the assumption deriving from daily impressionistic observation and anecdotal evidence that minority African languages have not yet been accorded the de jure equal status provided for in the new Constitution. The focus of attention in this respect was the period before democracy, that is before 1994.

Like for African languages in general, respondents expressed unfavourable views of the pre-1994 government's treatment of minority African languages (see TABLE 24 below).

TABLE 24 : Opinion on treatment of majority vs. minority languages (in %)

	High schools		*Colleges of Education*		*University*	
	Teachers	Learners	Lecturers	Students	Lecturers	Students
Treated the same	-	6,36	-	12	-	10
Minority languages marginalised	25	38,18	41	26	55,6	23,3
Minority languages despised	12,5	14,54	16,6	15	33,3	30
Minority languages neglected	62,5	27,27	41,7	44	11,1	33,3
Don't care	-	2,72	-	-	-	-
Abstentions	-	10,9	-	3	-	3,3

Across all the samples, the great majority of the respondents clearly indicated that they believed minority African languages had been treated less favourably than majority African languages, either because they had been simply "neglected", or worse, "marginalised", and even worst "despised".

One example cited by respondents is that of the use of languages among Africans at the workplace, especially in large metropolitan areas. Indeed, in their words, "minority" African languages were rarely used as languages of communication at the workplace since the majority of employers either spoke English or Afrikaans, or, in certain cases, had a smattering or fluency of one of the majority African languages. Even "boss-boys" or foremen rarely (if ever) spoke in Xitsonga or Tshivenda."

Another factor which lowered the status of minority languages, according to respondents is the fact that the electronic media, for example, did cater for some African languages, the big two (isiXhosa and isiZulu) and (Northern Sotho and Setswana) but ignored all other African languages, such as Xitsonga, which were considered as "minnows". Similarly, the divide-and-rule policy of the apartheid government which established ethnically divided language boards may have only compounded the perilous state of minority African languages. With hindsight, the creation of these boards were not a favour, but a poisoned chalice for minority languages, in that instead of targeting language parity and language equity regardless of the numerical strength of the speakers of language, they were matrixed in ethnicity and linguistic/cultural separation which inadvertently left power in those languages that were either strong by virtue of their numbers (e.g. isiZulu. And isiXhosa) or those which were strong by virtue of their dominant or hegemonic position (e.g. English and Afrikaans)

The overwhelming view among the respondents was that, that minority languages

had received a raw deal is not surprising given that they mostly come from areas of origin where minority languages may have experienced neglect for whatever reason. Some may even have often had personal experiences, as speakers of these languages or persons who claimed loyalty to these languages, of the negative attitude of others towards them, especially in large metropolitan areas where majority languages (isiZulu and isiXhosa) predominate. Research has shown that speakers of isiXhosa and isiZulu perceive speakers of minority African languages as "inferior". In their empirical study of language and identity among speakers of Nguni versus Sotho languages, Slabbert and Finlayson (1995, p.148) found, among other things, that as far as branding was concerned, "the only derogatory remarks about other languages came from Zulu and Xhosa speakers with reference to Sotho speakers and also with reference to each other". The dominance of these majority languages seems to have created perceptions among speakers of minority languages that native speakers of majority languages have some special qualities. Indeed, it has been found that the "Sotho associate both Zulu and Xhosa with strength and authority (...) Related with the fighting spirit of the Zulus (...) and the perception about the Xhosa relates more to their political power" (Slabbert & Finlayson, ibid). Speakers of minority languages who make up the bulk of the respondents in this study would presumably be hungrier for justice and fairness towards their hitherto neglected languages and harder to satisfy than those in urban areas and who speak majority languages.

The spread of these perceptions among speakers of majority and minority languages may have been facilitated by the language policies of the past, as

respondents variously asserted. For example, they suggested that the neglect of minority African languages in all walks of life in general and concomitantly the relative promotion of majority African languages were too visible to be ignored. When business and government notices were written in African languages, only majority African languages were used, even in areas where these minority African languages were supposed to be spoken natively.

Respondents also cited the disincentives of majoring in African languages generally at university or college. Some believe that applicants were even threatened with unemployment should they take one of the minority languages as their major subject of study. As evidence of this, respondents mentioned the absence of bursaries for applicants who chose to major in minority African languages in particular — although majors in African languages in general were scarcely awarded bursaries. Under these circumstances minority African languages suffer even more.

Another significant reason for the continued neglect of minority African languages is the absence of minority African languages from the syllabus as subjects, let alone as media of instruction. Respondents pointed out the discrimination between majority African languages such as isiZulu and isiXhosa which were on the syllabus of some urban schools and minority African languages which were not. One poignant case is that of isiNdebele and Xitsonga speaking schoolchildren in Potgietersrus who must take Northern Sotho as a subject together with speakers of this language. Likewise, in certain urban schools (in,

say, Gauteng Province) one is most likely to find offerings in majority languages rather than minority African languages.

In brief, in the views of the respondents, the artificial linguistic barriers which the apartheid regime so successfully created here had a lasting impact on attitudes towards majority and minority African languages by speakers of both sets. **TABLE** 25 below and the accompanying write-up elaborate on the attitude of speakers of minority African languages towards their own languages vis-a'-vis the majority African languages.

5.1.7 Attitudes of minority languages' speakers towards their own languages

The existing perceptions of various African languages and attitudes towards speakers of different African languages noted by Slabbert and Finlayson (1995) affect the way speakers of minority languages evaluate their languages and themselves in comparison to other languages and their speakers. Because language is often used to express one's identity (see, for example, Appel & Muysken 1990; Le Page & Tabouret-Keller 1985), the fact that speakers of minority African languages might not feel at ease to use their languages is potentially a threat to their identity. Let us examine what they themselves think about their languages.

TABLE 25 : Attitudes of speakers of minority languages towards their languages

	High schools		Colleges of education		University	
	Teachers	Learners	Lecturers	Students	Lecturers	Students
Proud	12.5	22.7		15		
Not proud	21	24.6	41.7	41	33.3	40
Ashamed in public	37.5	41.8	58.3	41	66.7	60
Abstentions	29	6.3	-	-	-	-
Do not care	-	4.6	-	3	-	-

The responses to the question of how speakers of minority languages feel about their own languages reveal a distressing picture. In some cases, they do not feel any pride to speak their own languages. The loss of pride seems to be correlated with the level of education. University lecturers and students and lecturers at colleges of education (who may be considered comparatively more "educated" than other subjects) reported that they did not feel proud of being speakers of minority languages. High school teachers and students at colleges of education variously expressed pride in their own languages.

However, this expression of pride is mitigated by negative sentiments. There

were more respondents among those in the above two samples showing some pride who reported not feeling proud at all about their own languages. This is especially true of students at colleges of education among whom the number of those who did not feel proud was almost three times that of those who felt proud about their languages.

Looking at the data, one clearly sees that in fact the overwhelming majority of the respondents across the samples had some sort of low-esteem about themselves in terms of their linguistic identity. Indeed, many more felt ashamed to speak their own languages in public than those who simply felt "not proud" (except students at colleges of education who felt equally not proud and ashamed to speak their own languages in public). Once more, the long-held myths which elevated exoglossic languages (English and Afrikaans) to the top of the prestige scale and placed majority African languages at a higher level than minority African languages, comes into play.

It seem a useful imperative to focus a little more robustly on the data from the university sample with regard to language attitudes. University faculty could be regarded as the main agents for the growth and development of African languages including minority African languages, because it is at this level that the highest form of teaching and learning, research and publications usually take place. If language leaders at this level show any form of negative language attitude towards their area of academic and professional specialisation i.e. their languages, there is a strong possibility that this might rub-off onto their students and thence onto

the language community at large with disastrous linguistic consequence. For one thing minority languages might lag behind in terms of acquisition planning and corpus planning, leading to a perceived continuation in marginalisation and neglect at status planning level, and for another it might lead to institutionalised linguistic inferiority complex which can only load the dice against minority languages despite Constitutional stipulations at language equity and language parity in democratic South Africa.

(Unlike university lecturers who are somewhat privileged to teach, and students who may elect minority languages such as Tshivenda and Xitsonga as their major subjects of study, high school teachers and lecturers at colleges of education are not afforded the same privilege. Consequently, learners and students at these schools and colleges of education are deprived of the opportunity to take their own languages as subjects whereas they may be required to take other languages as subjects for the matriculation examination. Understandably, they may develop a low esteem of their own languages which the language policy-in-education ignores almost completely).

One may speculate that these negative perceptions towards their own languages may only create more pessimism about the future of the languages even after a democratic era has prepared the ground for their rehabilitation. An item in the questionnaire was specifically included to seek the respondents' opinions on the future of minority languages, in terms of hopes and fears.

5.1.8. Opinions on the future of minority languages

Respondents were asked to say whether or not they thought minority African languages had a future in South Africa. TABLE 26 below captures views in terms of "optimists" and "pessimists".

TABLE 26 : Opinions on future of minority languages

	High schools		Colleges of education		University	
	Teachers	Learners	Lecturers	Students	Lecturers	Students
Pessimistic	12.5	44.5	16.7	50	88.9	40
Optimistic	87.5	55.5	83.3	50	11.1	60

Not surprisingly (given TABLE 26 above), the respondents in the university sample are heavily pessimistic about the future of minority languages in comparison to respondents in the other samples. This result is consistent with the earlier finding that those actively involved in teaching or learning at university were more negative than the other respondents concerning the status of minority languages, presumably, as was speculated, because they may be impatient to see the implementation of the Constitutionally enshrined language rights. Their pessimism may also be a reflection of the general pessimism across the institution growing out of falling enrolments, most particularly in departments of African

languages and literature.

On the other hand, the optimism expressed especially by high school learners and students at colleges of education may simply be grounded in their daily experiences. Some of them felt proud to speak their own languages, in contrast to university students. This feeling of pride may be a result of what Mawasha (1993) refers to as "homogeneity" i.e. where speakers of the same language occur in a linguistic environment in which a common language predominates. Such a linguistic environment rules out problems of minority languages versus majority languages and the resultant linguistic power relation. The latter problem arises at universities where a "linguistic heterogeneity" normally occurs (Mawasha, ibid). In such a linguistic imbalance, majoring in a minority language is both a fact and a challenge.

5.2. Final discussion of main research findings and recommendations

The inclusion of language provisions in the new Constitution which accords parity to eleven official languages is an important confirmation of the basic rights of which the majority of people had been deprived for a very long time. However, the inclusion of such provisions is not sufficient, especially if they are not known by the majority of their intended recipients.

5.2.1 Awareness of language rights

As was found from the survey, seemingly not many speakers of African languages are knowledgeable about the language rights enshrined in the Constitution. It emerges from the data that the level of education does determine the level of awareness of — and perhaps of interest in — language matters. The fact that only a small percentage of teachers had read the language provisions in the new Constitution only confirms the general belief that teachers seldom take interest in anything else but textbooks on their syllabus. It also emerges from the results on the level of familiarity with the language provisions in the Constitution that the rural areas which are economically underprivileged are also underprivileged in terms of information about their rights. Their unfamiliarity with these language rights may be explained by the unavailability of, and limited access to information on their language rights in comparison to urban dwellers. Besides, familiarity with the Constitution in general, and with the language provisions in particular, is something that may not be common amongst rural and semi-rural residents who constituted the bulk of the high-school samples. Indeed, unlike the urban dwellers who are constantly exposed to debates, meetings, conferences, and seminars on, and are better informed about, issues of language policy, rural dwellers tend to concentrate on issues of provincial and/or local importance. The preoccupations of rural dwellers in general are more bread-and-butter ones than issues of language policy — although they are, in reality, as badly affected as, if not worse than, respondents in the colleges of education and university samples.

Clearly, if high school teachers who represent the section of the society — especially in the rural areas where the samples were drawn from — are not well read on the Constitutionally enshrined language rights, very few speakers of African languages have sufficient awareness of their rights to start using them in a way that is likely to promote their languages. It seems fair to assume that enough is not being done at secondary school level in terms of civic education. Indeed, if schools had civic education on the curriculum, information about language rights enshrined in the Constitution would form part of it. Because teachers are reputedly generally uninterested in additional reading, for their own information outside their textbooks, the inclusion of some civic education which every teacher ought to know might go a long way toward raising their awareness on important issues such as language rights, and by the same token that of their pupils.

More perplexing is the fact that up to 11,1% of university lecturers had not at all read the section on language provisions in the Constitution because they thought that it was "not necessary". Even if "not necessary" meant "not necessary to read the language provisions in the Constitution to be aware of the issue of language rights" it would still not be understandable of university lecturers for whom language policy is part and parcel of their teaching. One wonders how they can teach students about Constitutionally enshrined language rights if they, themselves, prove to be ignorant about these rights as stipulated in the Constitution. Indeed, awareness is the starting point for an informed debate about the types of language-in-education policy that would be fair and adapted to local

and regional contexts.

Three strong recommendations flow naturally from the above discussion viz (i) language awareness as a prerequisite for knowledge about one's language rights in a democratic dispensation must form part and parcel of educational transformation in the RSA. Since civic education as such does not form part of curriculum 2005 or the new teacher education programme styled Norms and standards for Educators (1997; see also Government Gazette, vol 415 N 20844, February 2000), instructions in language awareness could be factored into the Further Education and Training Band, NQF levels 2 - 4 under the learning area Language, Literacy and Communication (see Rationale and Specific Outcomes 1 - 7 of LLC) or it could be offered at the Higher Education and Training Band, NQF levels 5 - 7 specifically with orientation to teacher educators, ibid) under three areas, Communication, Life Orientations and Literature. The former will cater for learners currently at school and the latter will target student educators; (ii) at universities, language awareness as part of language rights could be offered either as part of a language arts programme, a module or as part of a language in education / classroom language / classroom communication programme. At these levels, language awareness will engage attention at the levels of lecturing and learning, independent / extra study or reading by students, research and publications i.e. research reports / articles and book publications. Since language mediates the bulk of learning at all levels, language awareness will, by that very fact, subsume much learning; (iii) practical experience and research observation suggest that the reading culture at some tertiary institution ranges from

unsatisfactory to disturbing. The tendency among most students is to read for the examination or test. Indeed the need to prescribe text for detail study and reference text for additional study seems to elude too many a faculty. It is perhaps for this reason that some very important documents that are generated as part of the transformation process in all domains of post-apartheid South Africa pass unnoticed, unread and most importantly unstudied by teachers and not taught, lecturers and students alike. The starkest problem is demonstrated by " ignorance" about the new Constitution per se and individual language rights in particular. In order to make good this education and training limitation among young South Africans, school, colleges and universities may want to create reading rooms or divisions within libraries in which important documents are housed in such a way that they will stand-out prominently enough to "entice" readers. Teachers and lecturers on their side should plan projects and assignments in such a way that the learners and students are literally forced to consult these important documents. In this way the culture of reading especially the reading of important documents will be initiated at school level and continued and developed to the fullest potential at college and university levels. Although the creation of a reading culture requires medium to long term strategies, findings of this study suggest greater urgency of thought, plan and action lest democratic rights remain a little more than excellent ideas between pages of neatly bound documents

5.2.2 Awareness of on-going language debate

At the next stage of awareness, that is awareness of the on-going language debates, the level of education and living environment, it was posited, were determining factors. The level of awareness about the debate on language policy decreases as one moves from tertiary to secondary level. Looking back at the results on familiarity with the language provisions in the Constitution from the responses by university lecturers, it can be seen that up to 11.1% reported not to have ever read the language provisions in the Constitution because they thought this was not necessary. Given their involvement in the teaching of languages and linguistics, and for that matter African languages (which had always been accorded a low status), familiarity with the Constitutional language rights should have been seen as being part of keeping abreast of the language debate. By the same token, it may be concluded that the lack of interest among some university lecturers is (i) a disincentive to students who more often than not depend on lecture notes and reading lists provided by their lecturers, and (ii) an inhibiting factor for an informed debate.

A recommendation that flows from this finding and discussion is as important and urgent as 5.2.1 immediately above, namely that the transformation of education to meet the need of the 21st century and of a democratic South Africa must include learning units (within learning areas) that seek to promote involvement in important national debates such as on-going language debates. In order to achieve this important outcome, it seems imperative for teachers and learners, lecturers

and students to accept and implement creatively the philosophy of outcomes based education. The following quotation illustrates (in part) what I have in mind:

> .....if the classroom is organised in groups, where the educator encourages the learner to read, talk, investigate and draw conclusion (which may differ from the educator's own ideas), develop illegitimate authority, develop confidence in their abilities and understand that they are knowledge constructors and meaning makers too (**Implementing OBE - 4, Philosophy, Lifelong Learning for the 21st century**, u.d., p.9).

Ability to initiate and to participate in major national debates such as those on language policy matters is a culture that must be cultivated, nurtured and developed across the schooling system. OBE (see quotation above) suggests practical ways in which the classroom (and the lecture hall too!) needs to be transformed in order to create such a desirable culture. Clearly, the sample used in this study will do with such a culture.

One possible reason why respondents in the sample were found wanting in issues relating to awareness of on-going language debate relates to transmission teaching which was in vogue in classrooms and lecture halls since the days of the

missionary school. Teachers tended to be the main speakers in teaching and learning situation. The teacher was seen as the sole authority, the source of all knowledge and the learners as empty vessels to be filled with this knowledge. Learners from such a system are most likely than not to be unaware of any important debates outside what the teacher says in the classroom. Traditional lecturing too is not entirely free of these limitations given the 11,1% referred to above.

A recommendation I wish to stress therefore is that the underlying philosophy of OBE as exemplified in the quotation above should inform the practice of teaching and learning across the schooling system in order to cultivate, inter alia, the culture of awareness of current debate in young South Africans. To stress the recommendation further at practical level; one of my supervisors, Prof A.L. Mawasha recalls that it was only in 1982 that students in the Faculty of Education, University of the North, under the chairmanship of Mr F. Molefe Ralenala now Deputy Dean of Education (by 2000) requested a meeting with Prof Mawasha on purpose to be informed in detail about the content and implications for education in the Republic of South Africa, of the De Lange Commission Report (i.e. **Report of the Main Committee of the HSRC Investigation into Education, Provision of Education in the RSA**, 1981). This was, at the time of writing this thesis, 18 years ago. The fact has never been repeated. The many policy documents that have been generated by the new leadership in post-apartheid South Africa seem either to have eluded the attention and interest of many a faculty or such documents have not elicited sufficient interest to call for meetings to brainstorm

them for detailed information and/or response.

5.2.3 Involvement in the language debate

Finally, when the level of involvement in the debate is considered, the same pattern differential levels according to the level of education emerges. University lecturers are, as would be expected, the most involved of all the subjects. Indeed, the Northern Province Language Council, for example, includes a number of university lecturers as members of its Executive. The Council is an excellent forum and a golden opportunity to participate in the debate. Besides this forum, university lecturers would be expected to be involved in many other ways in the debate, through their teaching, academic and general writing (journal articles, conference presentations, letters to newspaper editors), membership of academic and professional organisations, or membership of local associations with interest in language issues. The percentage of those who reported to have been involved in any language debate — less than a quarter — is, however, woefully low.

Among the reasons which they cited for their non-involvement in language policy debates were: the fact that (i) they had not been elected to serve on language committees, and (ii) the language policy meetings had not been properly scheduled to allow them to attend. Both these reasons (given for not being involved in the debate) can be considered as "flimsy" if one considers the many opportunities, listed earlier, for participation in such debates. One wonders whether being elected to a committee is a requirement, and not a consequence, of

one's interest in language issues. Furthermore, besides language committees, there are several other fora in which participation in the debate is not only possible, but would be highly visible.

Looking back at the questionnaire for possible misunderstanding, misinterpretation, or problems in answering the item (Item 10 see Appendix 2) in which the issue of involvement was surveyed, there does not seem to be any reason to suspect the item might not have been clear and straightforward, at least to respondents at the level of education and understanding of university lecturers. While the item might have needed rephrasing for respondents at a lower level of education or without involvement in language teaching or research, it ought not for university lecturers. Besides, there were no abstentions on the item among the university lecturers which would have suggested vagueness, fuzziness or generality of the question or misunderstanding of it by the respondents.

One possible explanation is that the lack of involvement might be linked to the assumption by a small number of the university lecturers surveyed that they "never thought it was necessary" to be familiar with the language clauses of the Constitution. One may conclude that both these attitudes are a sign of a generalised lack of interest in language policy issues. This generalised lack of interest among some university lecturers is confirmed by the fact that up to 11.1% of the respondents in this sample declared not to have been bothered by language issues. Although the overwhelming majority (88.9%) of the university lecturers reported to have always been bothered by language issues, it remains a moot

question why language professionals involved in the promotion, through teaching and research, of African languages might be somewhat uninterested by issues of language policy.

One of the implications of the finding above is that as long as the issue of language policy is not taken seriously, sometimes, sadly, even by those who would be expected to drive the debate, the very people who were, in the past, sidelined from such debates will continue to be the "recipients" of ready-made policies in their own backyard. If university lecturers who make their living on teaching African languages and literature do not seem to be willing to lead the debate, it is reasonable to expect that the participation of others whose preoccupations may rather be elsewhere and who believe that language policy issues are not likely to affect them, may be nil. Worse still, language policies driven by political motives will continue to be inadequate if linguists do not participate in the debate by putting forward arguments and suggestions based on informed research. Depressing as the finding of the lack of interest in the debate by some among those supposedly most informed on language issues may seem, there remains a ray of hope that those who are actively involved may still instill more interest in others through their work.

The successful implementation of multilingualism which recognises the importance and equal value of all languages depends on the level at which speakers — or, to borrow a term from Antonio Gramsci in **Language Procjects' Review**, April, 1991, Vol. 5 No.4, p.4) "owners" — of individual languages, and

particularly of hitherto neglected ones, play their role in supporting government policies on multilingualism. This support by speakers of African languages ought to start with their awareness of the Constitutional rights. One obvious way is to acquaint oneself with the language provisions contained in the Constitution. Indeed, the more aware the people concerned are, the more involved in the shaping of the policy they are likely to be. University lecturers, being at the top of the ladder in language matters, are expected to inform others through various means, most notably through teaching and writing.

In the face of the results of the survey, there is still a long way to go to get the message across and encourage speakers of African languages to get acquainted with the Constitutional language rights and, thus, participate in informed debate. Ironically, university lecturers who might lead the way, seem not to be fully involved (while some are even less enthusiastic about getting involved) in the shaping of language-in-education policy through debates.

University lecturers, understandably perhaps, seemed to be the most sceptical of all groups. Less than a quarter rated the current government's attitude towards African languages favourably; close to half of them rated it unfavourably, and a third considered as a mere political gimmick, any action taken by the current government in favour of African languages. Being at the heart of the debate on official languages because their daily life and survival as academics depend on the status which is accorded to African languages, all university lecturers surveyed may rightly feel that not enough has been done to change their status and improve

their future prospects. Their unfavourable perception of the current government's attitude towards African languages may be an expression of their impatience at the slow pace of the concrete implementation of the use of African languages in all walks of life. The number of papers at seminars and local conferences bemoaning this slow pace is testimony of the impatience and frustration of academics whose expectations had perhaps been too high.

Looking back at the results of their reported familiarity (or lack thereof) with the language provisions in the new Constitution, one wonders whether it is not a manifestation of this impatience. Again, for people whose livelihood (now more than before) may depend on the elevation of African languages to the status they deserve, concrete action is perhaps what they want most. The lack of interest may, in this case, be an indication of their keen desire to see changes in policy implementation. This impatience, notwithstanding, ignorance of and/or ineptitude in expressing views on an aspect of the Constitution as important as language policy.

I think it is imperative at this stage to indicate that whilst the government has the moral obligation of supporting and developing the previously marginalised African languages and ensuring that there is language equity and language parity among all official South African languages, the speakers of these languages too have a moral obligation to use whatever Constitutional means is available to develop and promote their languages.

CHAPTER 6 : CONCLUDING REMARKS AND POSSIBLE AREAS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

In order to do justice to the study of this magnitude, I need to highlight some of the important observations and findings which it has made. At the end of this thesis, it became clear that because of the complexity and the comprehensive nature of issues surrounding minority languages, this field of study remains inexhaustible despite the enormous amount of data and information we have provided. Whilst government (and NGO"s to a certain extent) has a moral obligation to develop and promote the previously disadvantaged African languages in general and minority African languages in particular, the speakers of minority languages have a moral obligation too to use whatever Constitutional means at their disposal to develop and promote their languages. It is therefore the responsibility of all Language practitioners and Government to ensure that research projects in this field are continuously undertaken with the aim of trying to find solutions and a better understanding of society. Some of the areas which this study has exposed/identified as possible future research areas are the following in respect especially of indigenous languages vis-a`-vis English and Afrikaans:

i) Language in medicine (see seminar papers on Language in Court held at Venda under the auspices of the Northern Province Language Council on the 16th to the 17th May 1999).

ii) Language as Resource.

iii) Uses and abuses of Language.

iv) Language Prejudice.

v) Endangered Languages.

vi) Indigenous versus imported Languages. (Items ii to vi have been highlighted by Prof Ayo Bambose at a workshop held at the University of Pretoria from the 5th to the 6th of May 1998. The Theme of the workshop was "The role of African Languages in democratic South Africa". (See also the LANGTAG, 1996, pp. 89 -113).

vii) The role of government, NGO's and speakers of African Languages in Language planning and development.

viii) Possible reason(s) for the decline in student intake in African Language studies at tertiary level. That African students at predominantly African tertiary institutions where the lecturers and researchers are mother tongue speakers of African languages should seem to lose interest in their own languages and culture at the very point when they have taken over the reigns of government and all that goes with such a feat and challenge is an area that cries out for intensive and extensive research.

7. BIBLIOGRAPHY

1. AKINNASO, F.N. (1991): "Towards the Development of a Multilingual Language Policy in Nigeria", **Applied Linguistics**, vol 12, No 1, March.

2. ALEXANDER, N. (1989): **Language Policy and National Unity in South Africa/Azania**. Buchu Books, Cape Town.

3. **ANC, A Policy Framework for Education and Training**, January 1994.

4. APPEL, R. & MUYSKEN, P. (1987): **Language Contact and Bilingualism.** Edward Arnold, London.

5. BAKER, C. (1993): **Foundation of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism.** Multilingualism Matters Ltd, Clevedon.

6. BEUKES, A.M. (1991): "Language Teaching and the Politics of Language". **Journal for Language Teaching**, Vol. 25, No. 4.

7. BLAJBERG, J.D. (1992): **National Education Policy Investigation, Working Paper of the Research Group.**

8. BOOTH, A.R. (1983): **Swaziland: Tradition and Change in**

a Southern African Kingdom. Westview Press Inc. U.S.A.

9. BROWN, J.D. (1993): **Understanding Research in Second Language Learning: A Teacher's Guide to Statistics and Research in Design.** Cambridge University Press. December.

10. **Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, Founding Provisions:** (1996).

11. CHRISTIE, P. (1986): **The Right to Learn: The Struggle for Education in South Africa.** Ravan Press, Johannesburg.

12. CHRISTOPHER, A.J. (1982): **South Africa,** The Worlds Landscapes, U.S.A.

13. CURTIN, P, FEIERMAN, S, THOMPSON, L. & VANSINA, J. (1978): **African History**, McCorquodale Ltd, Lancashire,UK.

14. DANZINGER, C. (1983): **A History of Southern Africa**, Oxford University Press, Oxford.

15. DAVENPORT, T.R.H. (1977): **South Africa: A Modern History.** Macmillan Academic and Professional Ltd, Hong Kong.

16. DAVENPORT, T.R.H. (1978): **South Africa: A Modern History.** Southern Book Publishers, Bergvlei.

17. DEKKER, G. (1966): **Afrikaanse Literatuurgeskiedenis.** Nasou Beperk, Kaapstad.

18. DENOON, D.& NYEKO, B. (1972): **Southern African Since 1800.** Longman Group Ltd, Hong Kong.

19. DE CLUVER, A.D. (1992): "Language Planning Models for post-apartheid South Africa, **Language Planning and Language Problems**". Vol. 16. No. 2.

20. DE CLUVER, A.D. (1993a): "The Decline of Afrikaans", **Language Matters,** Vol. 24 UNISA, Pretoria.

21. DE CLUVER, A.D. (1993b): "Towards a Democratic Language Policy for South Africa". **Linguistica.** Festschrift, E.B Van Wyk, J.L. van Schaik, Pretoria.

22. DE CLUVER, A.D. (1996): "Variables Affecting Language Policy at Tertiary Level", **Towards a Language Policy for UNISA**, UNISA, Pretoria.

23. DU PREEZE, E. (1987): **Language Atlas of South Africa: A Theoretical Introduction,** HSRC, Pretoria.

24. GOLELE, N.C.P. (1991): "Xitsonga in a Multilingual Society - A South African "minority" Language",

Conference paper, University of Namibia, 9 - 13 September.

25. HACHIPOLA, J.S. (1992/3): **Minority Language Project: Progress Report, Department of African Languages and Literature**, University of Zimbabwe.

26. HARRISON, D. (1987): **The White Tribe of Africa,** Southern Book Publishers, Bergvlei.

27. HARTSHORNE, K.B. (1987): **Language Policy in African Education in South Africa, with Particular Reference to the issue of the Medium of Instruction**, in Young, D (ed) **Bridging the Gap**, (1910-1985) Maskew Miller/ Longman, Cape Town.

28. HAUGEN, E. & DERRICK, J. (1980): **Minority Languages Today**: A Selection from the Papers at the First National Conference on Minority Languages held as Glascow University from 8 to 13 September 1980, Edinburgh University, University Press, Edinburgh.

29. HERBERT, R.K. (1994): **Not with one Mouth: Continuity and Change in Southern Africa**

Languages Studies. Witwatersrand University Press. Johannesburg.

30. **Interdepartmental Committee on Native Education.** 1935 - 1936: Government Printer. Pretoria.

31. JACQUESS. A.A. (1971): **Swivongo swa Machangana.** 3rd Edition. Swiss Mission in South Africa. Cleveland.

32. JULY. W.R. (1992): **A History of the African People.** East African Education Publishers. Nairobi.

33. JUNOD. H.A. (1927a): **The Life of a South African Tribe.** Vol 1 & 11. MacMillan and Co. Ltd. London.

34. JUNOD. H.A. (1927b): **Matimu ya Vatsonga.** Sasavona. Braamfontein.

35. KGWARE. W.M. (1955): **Bantu Education in the Province of the Oranje Free State during the Twentieth Century** (1900 - 1953). Unpublished MEd Dissertation. UNISA.

36. KLOSS. H. (1966): "Types of Multilingual Communities. A Discourse of Ten Variables". Sociological Inquiry. Indiana University. Bloomington.

37. KUNENE. M. (1995): **City Press.** 14 May P. 17.

38. **Language Projects' Review** (1991): Vol.1. No.4. April.

39. **Language Projects' Review** (1992): Vol.7. No.1, May.

40. LEGODI, M.J. (1992): Competence on English and Afrikaans in Black Post Primary Schools with Special Reference to the Northern Transvaal. Unpublished MEd Dissertation. University of the North.

41. LEKHELA, E.P. (1970): **The Origin, Development and Role of Missionary Teacher Training Institution for Africans of the North-West-Cape** 1950 - 1954. Unpublished D.Ed Thesis. UNISA.

42. LEMON, A. (1959): **The Geography of Change in South Africa,** John Wiley and Sons. Ltd. New York.

43. LEON, T. (1998): "A political Perspective on the Need for Language Summit", Johannesburg, 21 March.

44. Le PAGE, R.B & TABOURET-KELER, A (1985): **Acts of Identity; Creole Based Approaches to Language and Ethnicity,** Cambridge University Press. Cambridge.

45. LiCCA. (1991): **Language in Contact and Conflict.** HSRC, Pretoria.

46. LOMBARD, D.P. & MOKGOKONG, P.C. (1985): **Introduction to the Grammar of Northern Sotho.** J.L. van Schaik, Pretoria.

47. MAAKE, N.P. (1994): "C.M. Doke and the Development of Bantu Literature", Witwatersrand University Press, Johannesburg.

48 MACDONALD, C.A. (1990): **Crossing the Threshold into Standard Three,** Report Soling - 16, 1990, Human Sciences Research Council, Pretoria.

49. MALIMABE, R.N. (1992): "The Impact of Economic Factors in the Development of Vernacular Languages, Especially in the Process of Urbanization, with special Reference to Setswana", College of Continuing Training, Pretoria.

50. MATHUMBA, D.I. (1993): **A Comparative Study of Selected Phonetic, Phonological and Lexical Aspects of Some Major Dialects of Tsonga in the Republic of South Africa, and Their Impact on the**

Standard Language, Unpublished Doctoral Thesis. UNISA. Pretoria.

51. MATUNA, J. (1993): **Sowetan**, 11 August.

52. MAWASHA, A.L. (1969): **From Missionary and Provincial Control to State and Community Control of Bantu Education,** Unpublished MEd dissertation. UNISA.

53. MAWASHA, A.L. (1977): **The Teaching of English as a Second Language to North Sotho Speaking Children in the Junior Secondary School with Special Reference to Oral Communication**. Unpublished D.Ed. Thesis. UNIN.

54. MAWASHA, A.L. (1978): "English Teaching and the Multicultural Environment", in Eagleson, Robert D(ed). English in the Eighties. AATE. Sydney. Australia.

55. MAWASHA, A.L. (1982): "Language in Black Education: The Politics of Language in a Multi-lingual Situations". Inaugural Address. 4 August. Pietersburg.

56. MAWASHA, A.L. (1990): "Where do we go from here?". Paper Presented at the Northern Sotho Language Board's EM Ramaila Prize for

Literature, Lebowakgomo, 21 September.

57. MAWASHA, A.L. (1991): "The Way they Were so they shall be again: the Future of African Languages in South Africa". Paper Read at the Seminar on Literacy and a future Language Dispensation in South Africa, held at the University of South Africa, 29 January.

58. MAWASHA, A.L. (1991): "Comrades-in-Language". Paper Read at the Literary Prize-giving Ceremony of the Venda Language Board on June 21.

59. MAWASHA, A.L. (1993): "The Role of the Northern Sotho Language Board in Promoting Readership (Literates and Neo-Literates) in African languages". Seetsa, Vol 1, No 1.

60. MAWASHA, A.L (1995): "The Role of English in the New South Africa". Unpublished Paper, Rainbow Communication Conference - 23 - 25 April, Johannesburg.

61. MAWASHA, A.L. (1996): "Teaching African Languages to Speakers of Other South African Languages: Operationalising the New

Democratic language Policy in South Africa", **Journal for Language Teaching,** Vol. 30, No. 1, April.

62. MAYLAM, P. (1986): **A History of African People of South Africa: From the Early Iron Age to the 1970's,** Creda Press, Cape Town.

63. MMINELE, S.P.P. (1989): **Teacher Education in Lebowa**, 1953 - 1983, Unpublished M.Ed dissertation, UNIN.

64. MODGIL, S. VERM, G.K. MALLICK, K. and MODGIL, C. (1986): **Multicultural Education: The Interminable Debate**, The Falmer Press, London.

65. MPHAHLELE, M.C.J. (1978): **The Development, Role and Influence of Missionary Teacher Training Institution of Lebowa (1903 - 1953)**. Unpublished D.Ed thesis UNIN.

66. **National Education Policy Investigation: Working Papers of the Research Group**, October 1992.

67. NDOMA, U. (1986): **National Language Policy in Education in Zaire**, Kinshasa, Zaire.

68. **New Nation:** (1994): 10 April.

69. NKONDO, C.P.N. (1981): "Trends in the Teaching and Study of

African Languages in Southern Africa". Conference paper. ALASA. Potchefstroom.

70. NXUMALO, N.E. (1998): "South Africa's New Democracy and the Rights of the Minority Languages as Enshrined in the New Democratic Constitution". Conference paper read at Technikon South Africa, Gauteng, 21 March.

71. NXUMALO N.E. (1999): "Language attitude and loss : A case for Xitsonga in Tshama-hansi settlement near Potgietersrus in the Northern Province". Conference paper read at SAALA conference held at University of the North, 7-9 July.

72. OKOTH, A. (1979): **A History of Africa**. East African Traditional Publishers. Nairobi.

73. OMER-COOPER, J.D. (1987): **History of Southern Africa**. First Edition. Villiers Publication Ltd. London.

74. OMER-COOPER, J.D. (1994): **History of Southern Africa**. Second edition. Heinemann, U.S.A.

75. RAMAITE, M.S. (1972): "Language in Court": Keynote address delivered at the Northen Province

Language Council Conference on Language in Court, held at Thohoyandou, 7 May.

76. REAGAN, T. (1981): **Language Selection and Language Planning in South Africa.** University of Illinois at Urbana Press Champaign.

77. REAGAN, T. (1988): "The "Language Struggles" in South Africa: Emergence and Development in Educational Policy", Central Connecticut State University Press Connecticut.

78. Reader's Digest: (1989): **Illustrated History of South Africa.** New York.

79. **Report of the Political Commission of the Study Project on Christianity in Apartheid Society**: (1973): SPRO-CAS Publication, No. 10, Ravan Press, Port Elizabeth.

80. **Report of the Commission of Inquiry into the Riots at Soweto and Elsewhere from the 16th June to the 28th February 1977**, Vol 2, 1977, Government Printers, Pretoria.

81. **Republic of South Africa Constitution Act No 110**, 1983, CapeTown.

82. **Republic of South Africa Government Gazette**, No. 15466, January 28, 1994, Cape Town.

83. ROGERS, B. (1976): **D.I.V.I.D.E. and Rule: South Africa's Bantustans International Defence Aid**

for Southern Africa.

84. ROSE. B & TUMNER. R. (eds)(1975): **Documents in South African Education.** A.D. Donker. Johannesburg.

85. RUBIN. J. & JERNUDD. B.H. (1971): **Can Language be Planned?.** University of Hawaii Press. USA.

86. SCHAPERA. I. (1937): **Bantu-speaking Tribes of South Africa,** Lund Humphries. London.

87. SCHURING. G.K. (1990): **Language Planning for a New South Africa.** H.S.R.C. Pretoria.

88. SIHLANGU. A.D. (1975): **Ta ka Mpisane.** Sasavona Publishers. Braamfontein.

89. SKUTNABB-KANGAS. T. & CUMMINGS. J. (1987): **Multilingualism and Education of Minority Children in Minority Education.** Multilingual Matters. Clevedon.

90. SLABBERT. T.S & FINLAYSON. R (1995): **Language and Identity: A Comparison of Nguni and Sotho In Constitutionally Enshrined Multilingualism: Challenges and Responses**: Proceedings of the 15th Annual Conference of the Southern

African Applied Linguistics Association. University of Stellenbosch 10-12 July. Stellenbosch.

91. SOGA. J.H. (1931): **The Ama-Xhosa: Life and Customs**. Lovedale Press. South Africa.

92. SPENCER. J. (1963): **Language in Africa**. Papers of the Loverhume Conference on Universities and the Language Problems of Topical Africa. held at Cambridge University. Cambridge University Press. London.

93. **Statutes of the Republic of South Africa - Cultural Institutions**(1973): Issue No 25. 25 May. Cape Town.

94. SURE . K. (1977): **Meeting with staff and students at the University of the North**. April 16.

95. THOMPSON. L. (1990): **A History of South Africa**. Yale University Press. USA.

96. Towards Education for All (1993): **A Development Brief for Education, Culture and Training,** Ministry of Education and Culture. Gamsberg. MacMillan. Namibia.

97. **Towards a Language Policy in Education, Draft Discussion Document of Education** (1995)

98. **Transvaal United African Teacher's Association**. October 1973 in Van der

Merwe, H.W. et al (eds): **African Perspective on South Africa**, David Philip, Cape Town, 1978.

99. TYACK, L.A.M. (1976): **South Africa: Land of Challenge,** France Inter Presse, R.S.A.

100. VAN DALEN, D.B. (1979): Understanding Educational Research, An Introduction, 4th ed., Mcgraw-Hill Book Company, New York.

101. Union of South Africa :**Report of the Commission on Native Education**, 1949 - 1951, UG No. 53/1951, Government Printer, Pretoria.

102. VAN DER MERWE, I.J. & VAN NIEKERK, L.O. (1994): **Language in South Africa: Distribution and Change,** University of Stellenbosch Press, Stellenbosch.

103. VAN DER MESCHT, A.J.B (1953): **Bantoe-Onderwys Sedert die Wet op Bantoe-Onderwys**, Unpublished M.Ed Dissertation, University of Stellenbosch.

104. VAN WARMELO, N.J. (1935): **A Preliminary Survey of the Bantu Tribes of South Africa,** The Government Printer, Pretoria.

105. VENTER, A. (1989): **South African Government and Politics: An Introduction to Its**

Institutions, Processes and Policies, Southern Book Publishers, Johannesburg.

106. **Verslag van die Werkkommittee: Tale en Taalonderrig** (Julie 1981). RGN Pretoria.

107. **White Paper on the Provision for Education and Training in the Republic of South Africa** (1982).

108. WILLIAMS, P. (1984): **Special Education in Minority Communities**, Open University Press, Great Britain.

109. YOUNG, D. (ed) (1987): **Bridging the Gap**, Maskew Miller, Longman, Cape Town.

APPENDIX 1

BOARD NOTICE 120 OF 1997

PAN SOUTH AFRICAN LANGUAGE BOARD ACT, 1995

RECONCILIATION AND ESTABLISHMENT OF PROVINCIAL LANGUAGE COMMITTEES

1. In terms of section 8(8) of the Pan South African Language Board Act, No 59 of 1995, provincial language committees are hereby established in the following provinces:

   Eastern Cape

   Free State

   Gauteng

   Kwazulu-Natal

   Mpumalanga

   Northern Cape

   Northern Province

   North West

   Western Cape

Composition of provincial language committees

2. (1) A provincial language committee shall consist as far as practically possible of representatives of each South African language used in that province, proportionate to the language composition of the province.

   (2) Each language used in a province shall be represented by a representative

who shall within that province be nominated and appointed by a public and transparent process which shall be determined and overseen by the MEC for Culture.

(3) Any member of the public may object in writing to the nomination of any person.

(4) A member of a provincial language committee shall hold office for a term of three years and shall on the expiry such term be eligible for reappointment for one term only.

(5) The members of a provincial language committee shall at the first meeting and thereafter as the occasion arises elect -

(i) a chairperson from among its members; and

(ii) a vice-chairperson from among its members

(6) If the chairperson is absent from a meeting of a provincial language committee the vice-chairperson shall preside at that meeting and if both the chairperson and the vice-chairperson are absent from a meeting of a provincial language committee the members present shall elect one of their number to preside at that meeting

(7) The first chairperson and the first vice-chairperson shall hold office for a term of not more than two years, after which an election shall be held annually; provided that such chairperson shall be eligible for re-election for one further term not exceeding one year.

(8) Any member of a provincial language committee may at any time be removed from office by that provincial language committee if there is sufficient reason for doing so, subject to the approval of the Pan South

African Language Board.

(9) Any vacancy on a provincial language committee shall be filled by nomination and appointment in the manner in which the member who has vacated the office was required to be appointed, and any member so appointed shall hold office for the unexpired portion of the period for which the member who has vacated the office was appointed.

(10) No member shall serve on a provincial language committee on a full-time basis.

(11) Members of a provincial language committee shall not be eligible for grants from neither the provincial language committee concerned nor the Pan South African Language Board during their term of office. Where members are involved in projects applying for funding from the Pan South African Language Board, they shall declare such interests and recluse themselves from any discussions involving the application concerned.

Meetings of provincial language committees

3. (1) A provincial language committee shall meet at least four times a year and meetings shall be held at such times and places as the provincial language committee may determine.

(2) The chairperson may at any time convene a special meeting of a provincial language committee, which shall be held at such time and place as the chairperson may direct.

(3) A quorum for a meeting of a provincial language committee shall be a majority of its members.

(4) Any decision of a provincial language committee shall be taken by resolution of the majority of its members present at any meeting of the provincial language committee and, in the event of an equality of votes on any matter, the person presiding at the meeting in question shall have a casting vote in addition to his or her deliberative vote as a member of a provincial language committee.

Functions of provincial language committees

4. (1) A provincial language committee shall advise the Pan South African Language Board or any language matter in or affecting the province concerned or any part thereof with respect to the languages used in that province.

(2) A provincial language committee, after consultation with the Pan South African Language Board, may -

(a) determine which language issues are to receive priority support;

(b) investigate and determine the need for support for any person, organisation of institution;

(c) research any language-related manner in the province concerned;

(d) establish, compile and maintain databases, including but not limited to databases of persons, organizations, institutions, equipment and facilities connected with the language matter in the province concerned;

(e) liaise with the responsible MEC's in order to promote the provincial languages more effectively throughout the province concerned;

(f) make grants to any person, organization or institution in order to provide facilitates to support the development and promotion of the official language in the province concerned;

(g) co-operate with any person, organization or institution on language matters; and

(h) generally do anything that is necessary to achieve its objects.

(3) A provincial language committee shall perform such other functions as may be assigned to it by the Pan South African Language Board.

BOARD NOTICE 121 OF 1997

PAN SOUTH AFRICAN LANGUAGE BOARD ACT, 1995

RECOGNITION AND ESTABLISHMENT OF LANGUAGE BODIES

1. In terms of Section 8(8) (b) of the Pan South African Language Board Act. No 59 of 1995. language bodies are hereby established for the following South African languages:

   Sepedi

   Sesotho

   Setswana

   isiSwati

   Tshivenda

   Xitsonga

   Afrikaans

   English

   isiNdebele

   isiXhosa

   isiZulu

   Khoe and San Languages

   South African Sign Language

   Heritage Languages

Composition of language bodies

2. (1) A language body shall consist of not more than 13 persons with special knowledge of or experience in the language concerned and who are indigenous speakers of the language concerned.

(2) The members of a language body shall be nominated and appointed by a public and transparent process which shall be determined and overseen by the Pan South African Language Board.

(3) The language bodies are intended to be widely representative of major uses of the respective language in the following language spheres, among others:

(a) Language sections within the public sector

(b) Broadcasting, journalism and reporting

(c) Translation

(d) Interpreting

(e) Lexicography

(f) The medical profession, including traditional medicine

(g) The legal profession

(h) Traditional leaders

(i) Organised student movements

(j) Teacher's organisations and examining bodies

(k) Higher education institutions

(l) Writer's associations

(4) Nay member of the public may object in writing to the nomination of any person

(5) A member of a language body shall hold office for a term of three years and shall on the expiration of such term be eligible for reappointment for one further term only.

(6) The members of a language body shall at the first meeting and thereafter as the occasion arises elect -

(i) a chairperson from among its members, and

(ii) a vice-chairperson from among its members.

(7) If the chairperson is absent from a meeting of a language body the vice-chairperson shall preside at that meeting and if both the chairperson and the vice-chairperson are absent from a meeting of a language body, the members present shall elect one of their number to preside at that meeting.

(8) The first chairperson and the first vice-chairperson shall hold office for a term of not more that two years, after which an election shall be held annually; provided that such chairperson and vice-chairperson shall be eligible for re-election for one further term not exceeding one year.

(9) Any member of a language body may at any time be removed from office by that language body if there is sufficient reason for doing so, subject to the approval of the Pan South African Language Board.

(10) Any vacancy on a provincial language committee shall be filled by nomination and appointment in the manner in which the member who has vacated the office was required to be appointed, and any member so appointed shall hold office for the unexpired portion of the period for which the member who has vacated the office was appointed.

(11) No member shall serve on a provincial language committee on a full-time

basis.

(12) Members of a provincial language committee shall not be eligible for grants from neither the provincial language committee concerned nor the Pan South African Language Board during their term of office. Where members are involved in projects applying for funding from the Pan South African Language Board, they shall declare such interests and recluse themselves from any discussions involving the application concerned.

Meetings of language bodies

3. (1) A provincial language committee shall meet at least four times a year and meetings shall be held at such times and places as the provincial language committee may determine.

(2) The chairperson may at any time convene a special meeting of a provincial language committee, which shall be held at such time and place as the chairperson may direct.

(3) A quorum for a meeting of a provincial language committee shall be a majority of its members.

(4) Any decision of a provincial language committee shall be taken by resolution of the majority of its members present at any meeting of the provincial language committee and, in the event of an equality of votes on any matter, the person presiding at the meeting in question shall have a casting vote in addition to his or her deliberative vote as a member of a provincial language committee.

Functions of language bodies.

4. (1) A language body shall advise the Pan South African Language Board on the language the users of which it represents

(2) A language body shall liaise closely with other professional bodies that can help to enrich and expand the language the users of which the language body represents.

(3) A language body shall actively assist the Pan South African Language Board in its endeavours to promote multilingualism as a national resource.

(4) A language body shall give special emphasis to language development, especially as far as the previously marginalized languages are concerned.

(5) A language body shall perform any other tasks and functions as may be assigned to it by the Pan South African Language Board.

(6) A language body shall conduct surveys in communities where the language in question is spoken so as to record and standardise new terminology and words.

(7) A language body shall stabilise and popularise new terminology.

APPENDIX 2

QUESTIONNAIRE

NOTE:
- Information gathered by means of this questionnaire will be treated as confidential and the results will be used strictly for research and academic purposes
- Please be as frank and as honest as possible
- Please do not write your name or surname on the questionnaire

NAME OF SCHOOL/INSTITUTION ....

Please indicate by means of cross (X) in the appropriate space.

OPINION QUESTIONS

1. Are you aware of the current debate surrounding language policy in South Africa?

YES	NO

2. Are you in any way involved in it?

YES	NO

3. If yes, in what way? ....
....
....

4. Have you read the language provision clauses in the new democratic Constitution?

YES	NO

5. Choose the reason for your answer in 12 from the following options:

I cannot read
I have never seen the Constitution

I never thought it necessary to know about such a provision
I don't think it affects people like me
Frankly, I do not care about such matters

6. What do you think is the attitude of the present Government towards African Languages in particular?

Positive
Negative
Interested with a political agenda
I don't know
I don't care

7. Have language policy matters ever bothered you in the past?

YES	NO

8. (a) If yes, in what way?

. . . .
. . . .
. . . .
. . . .

If no, why?

. . . .
. . . .
. . . .
. . . .
. . . .

9. In your opinion, what was the attitude of the Government towards African Languages before democracy?

(a)

Positive
Negative
Interested with a political agenda
I don't know
I don't care

(b) Any other comments

. . . .

. . . .

. . . .

. . . .

10. What was the position of minority languages such as Xitsonga, Tshivenda, isiNdebele in schools, colleges, universities, business, law, medicine before democracy?

(a)

Same as for majority
Marginalised
Despised
Neglected
I don't know
I don't care

(b) Any other comments

. . . .

. . . .

. . . .

. . . .

. . . .

11. What was the attitude of speakers of minority languages towards their language before democracy?

(a)

Proud of them
Not proud of them
Did not care
Ashamed to use them
I do not know

(b) Any other comments

. . . .

. . . .

. . . .

12. (a) The future of minority language is uncertain

YES	NO

(b) Why? Briefly explain your response.

. . . .

. . . .

. . . .

. . . .

. . . .

13. (a) The existence and survival of minority languages depends entirely on the shoulders of the speakers of these languages

YES	NO

(b) Why? Briefly explain your response.

. . . .

. . . .

. . . .

. . . .

. . . .