

**THE DEVELOPMENT OF ISIZULU AS AN ACADEMIC LANGUAGE FOR  
THE TEACHING OF FUNDAMENTAL CONCEPTS IN ECONOMICS**

**THESIS**

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## DECLARATION

I declare that **THE DEVELOPMENT OF ISIZULU AS AN ACADEMIC LANGUAGE FOR THE TEACHING OF FUNDAMENTAL CONCEPTS IN ECONOMICS** is my own work and that all the sources that I have used and quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

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MAKHATHINI, F.N.

**DECEMBER 2011**

DATE

## **DEDICATION**

This work is dedicated to the following people without whom the study would never have been a success.

- ❖ Sphiwe Pretty Princess Ngubane, your humour, love and support has always given me confidence in everything I do. You are the best woman on the planet.
- ❖ Mbuso Innocent Makhathini, the peaceful and innocent gift God gave me.
- ❖ Samukelo Victor Makhathini, for without you, I will never prove myself as a man. My destiny is fulfilled in every breath you take.

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## **ABSTRACT**

This thesis looks at language as the medium of all our ideas and sentiments. The thesis represents a position statement regarding the development of isiZulu as an academic language. The field of Economics is used to merely illustrate and support the points that are being made in this work. It is argued that each language is viewed as the means of expression of the cultural heritage of its people, and it remains a reflection of cultural groups who speak that particular language. It is a fact that indigenous African Languages have been, for obvious reasons, blatantly understudied during the apartheid years in South Africa (Rudwick 2004). Languages have market value and the desirability of English as the most important global language today has an effect in most Black learners in South Africa. The study examined the development of indigenous African languages, isiZulu in particular, in Zululand University where ninety percent of students and lecturers are isiZulu first language speakers, and came to a conclusion that there is an urgent need for Black South African students to learn academic subjects through their mother tongues. This would help them in thorough understanding and interpretation of analytic text presented in a foreign language such as English. The study advocates that isiZulu, which is the mother-tongue of many students at the University of Zululand, should be a language for upward mobility to these students, but as the situation stands, isiZulu becomes a neglected or marginalised language since it is not the normal medium of instruction and it is not used for effective communication in their education system.

It is noted in this thesis that teaching through an African language produces equality of learning, whereas using a foreign language as the measure of status and as a medium of education harms the learner's cognitive development for further progress in life. Education enables all persons to participate effectively in a free society, promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations and all racial, ethnic or religious groups, and this happens through languages which the mass population understands the most. However, with the death and disappearance of such a language, a unique unit in our knowledge and understanding of human thought and world-view is lost forever (Wurm 2001). This study looked at the development of isiZulu as an academic language for the teaching of fundamental concepts in economics from a position statement point of view. The inadequate use of mother

tongue in tertiary institutions of higher learning causes mental deficit and inadequate cognition to learners who are not at 'home' with English language.

## DEFINITION OF TERMS

**African language:** A language which originated in Africa, or is spoken only or mainly in Africa. In this sense, the Bantu languages, the Khoi-San languages and Afrikaans are African languages. In South Africa this is the term usually used to refer to the Bantu languages.

**Acculturation:** This term in this study is used to refer to the cultural exchanges between individuals living in different communities.

**Globalisation:** This term in this study is used to refer to the global continent and how languages affect the economy in linguistic communities where they live in terms of economic emancipation.

**Language as Social Semiotic:** This term in this study is used to refer to the effect of language on various fields of economic activities, especially on the formation of specific modes of expression, its use, and/or choice of language in specific economic categories denoted by the situation of the majority language speakers in a community.

**Indigenous African language:** This term in this study is used to refer to the language which originated in Africa, and used mainly within African countries. In South Africa these are: isiZulu, isiXhosa, tshiVenda, sePedi, siSwati, seSotho, seTswana, xiTsonga and isiNdebele. Afrikaans, which originated in South Africa from a European language, Dutch, and African languages, remains an African language, but is not indigenous.

**Money:** This term in this study is used to refer to the medium of exchanging value, a way of storing wealth and a unit of accounting.

**Mother tongue:** This term in this study is used to refer to one's primary, best-known language which one is competent in.

**First language:** This term in this study is used to refer to the language of everyday usage. In South Africa the primary language of academic and main-stream economic activity is English.

**Second language:** This term in this study is used to refer to the language which is acquired after learners' first languages have been developed. In South Africa English is a second language in most urban areas, but a third (or "foreign") language in most rural areas.

**Language Development:** This term in this study is used to refer to the manner in which indigenous African languages, particularly isiZulu, could be made available across disciplines at educational institutions.

**Empowerment:** This term in this study is used to refer to the ability of upgrading and uplifting indigenous African languages to meet the social needs of different societies who speak these African languages.

**Human Capital:** This term in this study is used to refer to the stock of competences, knowledge and personality attributes embodied in the ability to perform labour so as to produce economic value.

**Multicultural:** This term in this study is used to refer to the different linguistic and cultural groups tolerating and respecting one another where they live.

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## **Chapter 1: Research Introduction**

### **1.1 Context of the Research**

Indigenous African languages are supposed to play a significant role in the lives of many South African learners in learning and acquiring new skills and information. However, they are not as effectively used as English and Afrikaans, particularly in schools, universities and in the mass media. Many South African learners who come from previously disadvantaged backgrounds find it difficult to access information through the medium of English. As a result, they are disadvantaged by the inadequate use of their mother-tongues in their schools (Dalvit, Murray, & Terzoli, 2009). The use of a language such as English among speakers of different languages ostensibly facilitates trade among different nations and different linguistic communities because it is understood that it facilitates communication and provides a common medium. However, the common language in South Africa is a language which the mass population understands and that language is an indigenous African language and not any European language such as English. The latter remains an elitist language not necessarily spoken by the masses. In this case, in South Africa, languages such as isiZulu and isiXhosa function as common languages to the masses of South Africa.

Languages have market value (Alexander 2003). The manner in which languages are used signifies their importance in the outside world, for economic purposes. In terms of modern Human Capital Theory, all human behaviour is based on the economic self-interest of individuals operating within freely competitive markets (Fitzsimons 1997). The human Capital Theory refers to the stock of competences, knowledge and personality attributes embodied in the ability to perform labour so as to

produce outputs of economic value. This amounts to the attributes gained by a worker through education and experience. As people interact in their markets, language plays a significant role in fulfilling both the buyer and the seller's wish (Kaschula, Mostert, Schafer, & Wienand, 2007). Human Capital Theory exists among nations through the use of language in order to facilitate and perform labour so as to produce economic freedom in their lives. Languages are at the core in all the processes of production, labour supplies and trade, exchange and distribution of a country's wealth. Rubinstein (2000: 12) describes the symbiotic relationship between language and economy as follows:

Economic theory is an attempt to explain regularities in human interaction and the most fundamental nonphysical regularity in human interaction is natural language. Economic theory carefully analyses the design of social systems; language is, in part, a mechanism of communication. Economics attempts to explain social institutions as regularities deriving from the optimisation of certain functions; this may be applicable to language as well.

Language and economics are deeply intertwined. For a symbiotic relationship between a buyer and a seller, language plays a vital role. In many African communities, this communicative language is usually English and there is little or no use of indigenous African languages. It seems like African languages have market value only in rural areas during cultural ceremonies, and this impacts negatively on the lives of the people who are competent only in these language. This is supported by Moyo (2003: 139) when he stipulates that:

The absence of the functional roles of these marginalised languages, which includes their codification, the production of grammar books and dictionaries, has meant that conceptual and cognitive development for learners is virtually non-existent in these languages in the learners' early and higher education. Limited

proficiency for learners in their mother tongues has potentially vast negative implications for the success of education in English alone.

It is well-established that when a child begins learning in his or her first language, is more likely to succeed academically, and is better able to learn additional languages (Webley 2006). First language learning is, therefore, the right foundation in schools to foster academic achievement and excellence, as this will prepare learners to be ready to adapt for tertiary education.

Due to inadequate use of their mother-tongue in schools, learners lack vocabulary and language skills not only in the indigenous African languages but in all languages. This is seen in the number of South African matriculants that struggle to read and write in any given language. 'Our foundations in academia, business and literature are in English' (Matlwa 2007: 2). The inadequate use of indigenous African languages as medium of instruction at primary, secondary and tertiary institutions impedes the intellectualisation of African languages.

Alexander (2003: 5) maintains:

The individual citizen can only benefit optimally when he/she engages with his/her environment in a language he has very good command of. For most people, this is the 'mother tongue' or the language of the immediate community. Thus, the use of local languages and not only languages of high status is a prerequisite for the maintenance of a democratic regime based on the equal dignity of all the citizens.

For this reason, indigenous African languages should be well catered for and developed and should achieve the same recognition as English and Afrikaans in South Africa, more especially in formal settings such as schools and universities.

Further, Alexander (2003: 12) postulates that:

Unless African languages are given market value, i.e., unless their instrumentality for the processes of production, exchange and distribution is enhanced, no amount of policy change at school level can guarantee their use in high-status functions and, thus, eventual escape from the dominance and the hegemony of English.

There is an urgent need for proper implementation of the policy recognising indigenous African languages. Central to a successful implementation of a policy is terminology development so that these languages can be used for high status functions such as teaching and learning at universities in order to enhance cognition before a student transfers to English.

The role of indigenous African languages in schools or tertiary institutions is appalling. Alexander (2003: 6) further states that:

Suffice it to say that in the domain of education, if we are to make progress along this path, it is essential that we erase the dual folly of believing that an English Second Language-based educational system can lead to quality education for all and guarantee widespread excellence in most learning areas, and that there is something sinister about language planning.

The eleven languages spoken by the mass population are given official status, simply because they wanted to make the speakers of these languages feel welcomed, recognised and accepted in the new South Africa, which is a good way of recognising their presence and existence. Lack of sufficient corpus is a major handicap when it comes to implementation of the policy. In the long run, learning through home languages, before transferring to another language such as English, would

build up a sense of confidence, minimise learning hardships and maximise the intellectual potential to learners. It is my hypothesis that the learner who is taught through his or her first language, or can access explanatory terminology through that language, would be motivated and stimulated to learn more. This would lead to higher levels of cognition, and greater interaction among the various language groups (Bernstein 1976: 30).

There is a strong need for the development of an intellectualised African language discourse from primary level to tertiary level. This implies that isiZulu, like most indigenous African languages, suffers from linguistic stagnation. Mahlalela-Thusi (1999: 60) postulates that:

For African language speakers, true knowledge, power and liberation can only occur in their own languages. They will only be able to fight domination, poverty and unequal distribution of power if they learn in a mother tongue which is plugged into global culture. There is a need for African language speakers to learn in their mother tongues, to redefine and redescribe their lives constantly.

There is, therefore, a need for information to be available in one's mother-tongue, in order for one to have a completely clear meaning of a particular subject. In this study I seek to explore the prospects of isiZulu being used as a language of learning and teaching (LoLT) in academic disciplines, with special reference to economics.

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

It is noted that the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (1996) accommodated all the linguistic groups living in the borders of this

country by recognising eleven official languages. This means, according to the Constitution, everyone has a right to be educated in a language of their choice, in reality this is just a dream which has been deferred for a very long time and still there is no hope that in a near future the neglected official languages will ever be languages of power in the new South Africa. The problem here is the actual practice of what is documented in the constitution as far as language situation in South Africa is concerned.

Corpus language planning is not happening at all. As a result of this neglect the situation in schools is dire and there is no immediate solution to this problem unless a study related to the proper development and intellectualisation of indigenous African languages is conducted and is given proper consideration by the policy makers and government at large. This can be done to empower and develop indigenous linguistic and cultural knowledge of the masses of people living in the Republic of South Africa. It is noted that indigenous African languages of South Africa are given status but there is no corpus planning at all levels, from primary education to tertiary level, from administration to all government services available to the people of South Africa. This study looks at the impact of learning economical concepts in a foreign language by speakers of indigenous African languages at a previously disadvantaged Black medium university. The focus is on the effect of a foreign language (English) on their studies and how they deal with this situation in the progress of their studies.

### **1.3 Objectives of the Research**

The study formulates a theoretical background to the development of isiZulu in the teaching of fundamental concepts in economics, using example from the field of Economics, but emphasising and justifying

terminology development as the core of language development. The goal was to address the feasibility of how economics can be made available in isiZulu to foster academic excellence in African learners who study it. The study investigated the Human Capital Theory, as outlined in the context section of the research. The objectives of the study were:

- i. To investigate how isiZulu can be fully developed for academic purposes, and to develop terminology to explain concepts (Human Capital Theory) in economics.
- ii. To extend the use of isiZulu as a language of learning and teaching (LoLT) in academic disciplines by developing a wider range of vocabulary in isiZulu for disciplines such as economics.
- iii. To provide a glossary of newly coined terms in translation (isiZulu-English) as an appendix to the thesis.

In achieving these goals, the following questions were answered:

- How can isiZulu be used in the teaching of fundamental concepts in economics, particularly with reference to the Human Capital Theory?
- How can new terms in isiZulu be developed to teach economics? Which language would the students wish be taught in when they are taught Economics? What procedures should be followed in terms of terminology development, which procedures are best suited for this corpus planning process?
- How can isiZulu be used as a language of learning and teaching (LoLT) in academic disciplines? What are the students and lecturers responses to this initiative?

The importance of English is not discounted in any way in the study. However, the study advocates the promotion of isiZulu, so that it functions alongside English and Afrikaans as languages of learning and teaching in schools and universities. The creation of terminology should be seen as enhancing transference to English, and allowing for cognition to initially take place in the mother tongue.

The researcher used an economics book written by Michael Parkin, Melanie Powell and Kent Matthews to find the most used terms in this textbook in consultation with the university professors and who teach economics and students who study economics at the at the university of Zululand and also with the help of the glossary of terms which are found at the back of this book. Since the study sought to find the development of fundamental concepts in economics be made available in isiZulu, chapter one of this book has the most known basic concepts of economics

and these concepts are the backbone of the economics field. It is believed that any graduate from any Economic department in any university knows these terms, since there was consultation with the university professors and who teach economics and students who study economics at the at the university of Zululand and also with the help of the glossary of terms which are found at the back of this book.

#### **1.4 Methods, Procedures and Techniques**

One hundred economics students were used to gather data by means of formal questionnaires and focus group interviews. Questionnaires were distributed to first year Economics students at the University of Zululand. Different questionnaires were designed and distributed to the lecturers who teach economics. Interviews with lecturers who teach Economics at first year level with a set of written questionnaires were used to gather data. The researcher used chapter one of the economics book written by Michael Parkin, Melanie Powell and Kent Matthews to find the most used terms in this textbook in consultation with the university professors and who teach economics and students who study economics at the at the university of Zululand and also with the help of the glossary of terms which are found at the back of this book. All current lecturers who teach economics were asked to take part in the study. First-year level is where fundamental concepts are taught, while most lecturers at the University of Zululand are isiZulu first language speakers. The questions that were asked were in response to how isiZulu can be fully developed for academic purposes, to convey knowledge and teaching of the Human Capital Theory in economics.

Direct interviews took place randomly with students and lecturers in the Economics Department of the university with different questions for each. The University of Zululand was chosen, since the majority of students are from previously disadvantaged families and the majority are isiZulu first-language speakers. The majority of the lecturers are also isiZulu first-language speakers. All participants were adequately informed about the nature of the study and were allowed to freely contribute to the study. The confidentiality of all respondents and interviewees were respected, and anonymity was ensured while participation in the research was voluntary.

This research was carried out with first year students using the interpretive paradigm as described by Cohen and Manion (2000: 36): ‘The central endeavour in the context of the interpretive paradigm is to understand the subjective world of human experience’. The interpretive paradigm helped the researcher to find out the University of Zululand students’ experiences in trying to understand the Human Capital Theory of economics in a foreign language. The study established how economics theories such as Human Capital Theory can be re-interpreted in isiZulu, through terminology development, which is found in appendix four. The next chapter will present the research methods which were used while conducting this study, and how each data collecting technique was implemented to give fruitful results.

## **1.5 Chapter Outline**

This chapter has introduced the study and looked at the way in which the study was conducted and why it was conducted. The second chapter focuses on the methodology which was used while the study was

conducted. Chapter three focuses on how language is used by the society for the purposes of economic emancipation. Chapter four focuses on how languages of South Africa could be developed in such a way that they shed light on the economic needs of the society and any other linguistic group. Chapter five focuses on the development of economic isiZulu terminology based on a sample of concepts, to suit the needs of its speakers. Chapter six focuses on the presentation and interpretation of data which was gathered while the study was conducted. The last chapter is where I recommend different ways which could be used to better the language situation in Southern Africa, especially that of the development of economic terminology and the use of indigenous languages as academic languages as well as languages of instruction.

## **Chapter Two: Research Methodology**

### **2.0 Introduction**

This chapter is about different techniques and methods which were used while gathering and collecting data. Different methods were used in the collection of data; these are questionnaires and interviews. Advantages and disadvantages of using the above mentioned methods of data collection are analysed and discussed in this chapter.

### **2.1 Methodology Used**

Durrheim (1999: 29) postulates that a research design is a strategic framework for action that serves as a bridge between research questions and the execution or implementation of the research. Research design describes how the study should be conducted, what were needed and where the study is going to focus, including when, from whom, and under what conditions the data were gathered and collected, and how the data generated were analysed and interpreted.

The researcher used chapter one of economics textbook mentioned in Chapter one to find the most used terms in this textbook in consultation with the university professors who teach economics and students who study economics at the at the university of Zululand and also with the help of the glossary of terms which are found at the back of this book. All current lecturers who teach economics were asked to take part in the study. First-year level is where fundamental concepts are taught while most lecturers at the University of Zululand are isiZulu first language speakers. The questions that were asked were in response to how isiZulu can be fully developed for academic purposes, to convey knowledge and teaching of the Human Capital Theory in economics.

Furthermore, as pointed out in Chapter one of this thesis, direct interviews took place with students and lecturers in the Economics Department of the university. A different set of questions were asked to students and lecturers, on the other hand. The University of Zululand was chosen, since the majority of students are from previously-disadvantaged families and the majority are isiZulu first-language speakers. The majority of the lecturers are also isiZulu first-language speakers.

All participants were adequately informed about the nature of the study and were allowed to freely contribute to the study. The confidentiality of all respondents and interviewees were respected, and anonymity was ensured while participation in the research remained voluntary.

### **2.1.1 Sampling**

Durrheim (1999: 44) states that sampling involves decisions about which people, settings, events, behaviours and/or social processes to observe. In sampling, the researcher selects particular elements from the population that were representative or informative about the topic of interest. In sampling without replacement, each member of the population as a whole has the same chance of being selected as other members in the same group.

Sampling involves selecting individual units to measure from a larger population. The population refers to the set of individual units which the research question seeks to find out about. A sample is representative when it allows the results of the sample to be generalised to the population. Sampling in this study took place at the University of Zululand with students and lecturers in the department of economics. They were chosen because the study sought to find ways to develop indigenous African languages in such a way that there is enough

terminology to teach Economics as a subject and how indigenous African languages could be used as languages of learning and teaching at tertiary institutions and across disciplines.

### **2.1.2 Methods of Data Collection**

The following tools were used in the collection of data: questionnaires and interviews. The researcher strongly believes that the results are likely to be more fruitful since different methods are used rather than relying on a single method of data collection as different methods provide different levels of suitability. This view is supported by Rudwick (2004), who claims that data analysis allows the researchers to correctly validate their findings in a more fruitful way if different methods were used in the collection of data.

## **2.2 Questionnaires**

A questionnaire is a research instrument consisting of a series of questions and other prompts for the purpose of gathering information from respondents. Questionnaires were distributed to first year Economics students at the University of Zululand. Questionnaires were designed and distributed to the lecturers who teach economics. Written questionnaires were designed for students of the University of Zululand who study Economics at first year level. Questionnaires were distributed to one hundred Economics students. The students were given options to answer the questionnaire either in any indigenous African language (e.g. isiZulu) or in English. Students were chosen randomly in the department of Economics at the University of Zululand. The questionnaire was designed in such a manner that it would seek their attitudes towards learning, studying and speaking indigenous African languages. The questionnaires comprised both open ended and closed ended questions.

Furthermore, the questionnaires sought to gather information about the participants' feelings and attitudes towards their mother tongue and towards English in their quest to find lucrative careers after finishing their studies.

### **2.2.1 Advantages of using Questionnaires**

The researcher believes that using questionnaires when collecting data could be useful for one to obtain and collect information that could be subjected to an in-depth analysis where responses are gathered in a standardised way. Questionnaires are usually straightforward to analyse, and respondents have time to think about their answers; they are not usually required to reply immediately.

While conducting a study of this nature, I found it advantageous using questionnaires because people were given time to think their responses, were given time to submit the questionnaires, they were not forced to take part in this study and they were enthusiastic in discussing their views with me since the study is about how their mother tongue could be developed to suit their academic needs, in school and beyond. It was a very challenging, yet fun exercise, since I had to get their feelings and unintentionally deal with their attitudes on how they feel about being taught in English in a university full of Black South Africans. They (the respondents) were very much interested in voicing their views about the language situation in South Africa. It is for this reason that the researcher used questionnaires and believes that questionnaires are more objective and relatively easy to analyse.

### **2.2.2 Disadvantages of using Questionnaires**

In the study, the use of questionnaires has certain disadvantages. It was noted that some respondents were not willing to answer certain questions.

Sometimes respondents ignored certain questions. Some responses in some questionnaires were not finished and some questionnaires were not at all returned since some people did not have time to complete them and some did not even like to answer them. As a result, the use of a questionnaire could hide certain information from respondents.

Even though many respondents were happy about the study and more than willing to participate, some few respondents were very much unfamiliar with the jargon which was documented on the questionnaire. Some respondents misunderstand questions because the language which was used in the questionnaire is not their everyday language since they are from another department not from language department, while some did not complete the questionnaire because they had a feeling that they will not benefit from responding to the questionnaire. Sometimes I had to give new questionnaires to students who had lost initial copies and I had to request that they fill them (questionnaires) in my presence and immediately collect them. However, these attitudes did not hinder any progress in the completion of this study since the majority was very much interested in taking part and being included and voice their opinions about the language situation in their country.

### **2.3 Interviews**

Interviews to lecturers who teach Economics at first year level with a set of written questionnaires, and to students who study Economics were used to gather data. The interviews were conducted in both isiZulu and in English since some students were not comfortable enough in speaking English, and vice versa. These interviews would last for about five to thirty minutes each with students and about thirty minutes to forty five minutes to lecturers.

### **2.3.1 Advantages of using Interviews**

Interviewing people could yield better results if interviewees give the interviewer extra information. This is believed to be true when one has to interview experts in a certain field. While conducting the interviews, I noted that people were more than willing to talk and raise their issues and concerns about language situation in South Africa in an open environment where their views were not going to appear in any technological device such as videos because they have a feeling that they were going to be exposed for what they say. That made me interview students and lecturers on a one-to-one basis without the inclusion of any technological device. Most lecturers were more interested in telling me how a subject like Economics could be made available in isiZulu and how Black African learners and students, who are first language speakers of African languages, isiZulu in particular, could benefit from this idea. This is the reason why the researcher chose the interview method.

### **2.3.2 Disadvantages of using Interviews**

Interviews could also have disadvantages. In certain instances, when interviewing people, some people appear to be busier and have no time for you and be uninterested in the research. That is the challenge I experienced with some of the lecturers while conducting the study, resulting in the researcher getting little or no information. Some lecturers told me that they were too busy, even if I asked to reschedule another day and time they were too busy and not available, but when they heard from their colleagues that there was no harm on what I was doing, that I was just conducting a study for my own benefit, their attitudes changed and I was then allowed to reschedule for their interview.

Some students could not express themselves clearly in spoken language, especially in English. This forced the researcher to code-switch to isiZulu; then the respondent spoke with shyness because they had not mastered the language of instruction they are taught with in their everyday education. When the respondent gets shy, they simply move out of the research building and never want to take any part anymore in the study. This is one of the experiences and hardships which the researchers experienced while conducting the study.

## **2.4 Ethical Considerations**

Strydom (2005: 57) postulates that ethics is a set of moral principles which is suggested by an individual or group, is subsequently widely accepted, which offers rules and behavioural expectations about the most correct conduct towards experimental subjects and respondents, employers, sponsors, other researchers, assistants and students. This is used as a way of ensuring privacy and anonymity of the respondents' information which they supply to the researcher.

All participants who took part in this study were adequately informed about the nature of this study, what would be done, when it would be done and how it would be conducted and that no one was forced to take part in this study although all were requested to. Privacy and anonymity was ensured while conducting the study. All the respondents were assured of their privacy and that information was even written in the questionnaires which they filled. In ensuring their privacy, no technological device was used in the interviewing process because they were not in favour of any video device that would take what they tell me, as a result I did as they wish so that I could continue finding data for my study.

## **2.5 Summary**

Different methods of gathering data were used in the study as they are discussed in this chapter. The next chapter will present different views on how language impacts on our daily living, mostly on how language determines one's status through wealth development.

## **Chapter 3: Language as Social Semiotics and Human Capital**

### **3.0 Introduction**

This chapter looks at the different roles of indigenous African languages at a societal level and how their role impacts on the daily living and their pursuit of economic freedom by its speakers.

### **3.1 Language and Society**

The knowledge of a language is not only of communicative value, but language in the wider sense also integrates and combines other disciplines, such as economics. Interaction between economy and language is a reality. Therefore, language as social semiotics simply refers to the effect of language on various fields of economic activities, especially on the formation of specific modes of expression, its use, and/or choice of language in specific economic categories denoted by the situation of the majority language speakers in a community. Language has a specific value which is marked by the economic variables. It then becomes pivotal that people receive education, technology and economy in a language they understand better so that they will see or view their culture and their linguistic community with upward social mobility. If and when certain languages or cultural groups are not given any role to play with their languages, economic factors will influence their ethno-linguistic vitality and contribute to the evaluation of diversity and to the promotion of minority languages, thus failing to create conditions for the promotion of official indigenous African languages, which most people would strive for.

In many African states which are multicultural, the effects of economic processes are linked to the position of minority speakers, as it is the case

in South Africa, especially in the context of monolingualism / bilingualism as a value at the national and local levels, and not at wider international level. The necessity of knowledge of a language in order to communicate is also important in behaviour and denotes the importance of language and cultural diversity contributing to the prevention of language decay and language loss. In the prevention of this plaque, the government in power must make it a point that all languages are equally distributed according to social being of individuals who live in that particular community where their languages are spoken.

Language is linked to the individual and society and that is a known reality. Economy, however, is a part of society. Language and culture are two important ingredients influencing the economic growth of the individual and society. They represent an important indicator of the satisfaction of the individual and affect the quality of life of the individual. This happens when language/linguistic rights of an individual or society are being violated by those who control the means of production. So, in a multicultural society language planning and language policies serve as tools to direct society in the social and economic sense. It is then highly recommended that those language policies do cater for the development of the mass population languages, serve their demand and interest positively.

Politics in many countries does not equip an academically profound individual to help those in need of his or her academic services. This is seen through a number of government departments where, if one demands proper services, it would take an employee half an hour, busy on a computer, to tell a client that he/she will not get any help that day and the reason being that the person who would or should help the client is

absent. The political economy of language determines the role of the dominant group in different social/language processes in the multicultural setting where the national language plays an important role. Every other language, even if official, is linked to the national language in the setting. The group whose government is in power would receive more benefits than those whose government is not. The same applies to language, when the majority of people who live in KwaZulu-Natal are isiZulu speakers, communication from government, in employment and the mass media must be made available in a language of the majority speakers, so that they would feel accommodated.

The economic development in a country can only succeed if there is equal language development and use, thereby giving equal income opportunities for all the citizenry through the use of their community languages (Moyo 2003). The absence of an appropriate political will leads to lack of any development, be it academic, economic, social or political. Halliday (1978: 9) postulates that:

In the development of a child as a social being, language has the central role. Language is the main channel through which the patterns of living are transmitted to him, through which he learns to act as a member of a society in and through various social groups, the family, the neighbourhood, and so on- to adopt its culture, its modes of thought and action, its beliefs and values.

All this happens through the medium of language, and it is not from the language of classroom but it is the most ordinary everyday use of a language with parents, brothers and sisters, neighbourhood children, in the home, in the street, in the park, in the shops, that serve to transmit, to the child, the essential qualities of society and the nature of social being. Language is best described in its social perspective, to account for the

language functions realised by speech at any given time. It is, however, noted that isiZulu, like most indigenous African languages, suffer from linguistic stagnation. Most parents insist that their children learn to schools which offer English as opposed to any African language, as a result, African languages are downplayed by the parents and the society at large.

Language is a social networking device which people use to communicate and share ideas. Languages have market value, they are used in the processes of production and in labour markets in the distribution of wealth for the nation. This wealth goes strongly to those who are keen to master a certain language which is considered to be the language of status and wealth. In South Africa this language is English. To many people, this language is the language which they go to school to study. Under different situations, others manage to master it while others do not. However, the competition race in the outside world is the same to everyone, either went to school or not. All people compete on the same place, regardless of the socio-economic background of the competitors. A language then becomes a barrier to good life to many people who are not competent and proficient in English at an expense of their mother tongues.

Language in the world of work plays a pivotal role in shaping an individual's future. 'The history of humanity is not only a history of socio-economic activity. It is also a history of semiotic activity' (Halliday and Martin 1993: 10). Semiotic simply refers to the effect of language on various fields of economic activities, especially on the formation of specific modes of expression, its use, and/or choice of language in

specific economic categories denoted by the situation of the majority language speakers in a community.

Languages of elite class are chosen to be languages of power while the minority languages suffer from linguistic stagnation. Languages build economy for each country. Tollefson (1991: 2) argues that:

Each and every language is built into the economic and social structure of society so deeply that its fundamental importance seems only natural. For this reason, language policies are often seen as expressions of natural, common-sense assumptions about language in society

Language proficiency and competency hinder a lot of people's chances of being employed in our country. Tollefson (1991: 7) further argues that:

Language competence remains a barrier to employment, education, and economic well-being due to political forces of our own making. For while modern social and economic systems require certain kinds of language competence, they simultaneously create conditions which ensure that vast numbers of people were unable to acquire that competence. A central mechanism by which this process occurs is language policy.

The importance of a language cannot be ignored. Language is one of the most mysterious possessions and an essence of our humanity. It is the principal factor enabling individuals to become fully functioning members of the society where they live. It is a language which provides an important link between the individual and his/her social environment mainly for economic affairs and social equity. Simkins and Patterson (2005: 33) argue that:

Pupils whose home language is an African language are at a considerable disadvantage in the language of instruction by the time they reach Grade eleven if the language of instruction is never spoken at home. This can be offset somewhat if the language of instruction is spoken sometimes at home and it can be offset considerably if the language of instruction is spoken often at home.

Any child, having acquired the basic communication skills of his mother tongue at an early age, will learn any language and any subject better conceptually, cognitively and intellectually. Prah (1995: 71) argues that 'Africans can rediscover their genius only in their own languages'. It is noted that isiZulu is the mother tongue of 23.8% of South Africa's population, followed by isiXhosa at 17.6%, Afrikaans at 13.3%, Sesotho sa Leboa at 9.4%, and Setswana and English each at 8.2% (Census, 2001), but it is linguistically incorrect so to say, that English dominates all languages in terms of academic and economic development, while according to the speakership is not the language with a lot of speakers.

The mother tongue is a language or languages with which the child grows up and of which the child has learned the structure before school. In multilingual contexts such as many African societies, children naturally grow up with more than one mother tongue as there are several languages spoken in the family of the child or in its immediate neighborhood, then why a lingua franca not an African language in South Africa if the majority of people are African speakers? Language use for economic purposes in South Africa has different dilemmas. This is noted by Chimhundu (1998: 7) when he questions:

How can [one] guarantee democracy when the law of the country is not understood in the language of the people? How does [one] abide by what [one] does not know? How can [one] use information to which [one] only has limited access? How can [one] fully participate in anything, or compete, or learn effectively or be

creative in a language [one] is not fully proficient or literate? Above all, how can a country develop its human resource base to full potential without the languages of the people?

This imbalance ought to be corrected if local languages, such as isiZulu, are to achieve any value in the linguistic market place. To many people, the idea persists that English is the language of wider communication and is the only means for upward economic mobility. Peoples' languages must be respected and used in official settings like schools, courts and public administration. The use of one's first language for economic purposes equates one to social equity. Economic growth and stabilisation comes through the language which is better understood by all.

According to Ozolins (2003: 67) economic approaches to language are at odds with the field of language policy/language planning as a result from deficiencies in the literature. Economic illiteracy has prevented the recognition of benefits that can flow in some language professional fields (e.g. interpreting). Economic justifications dominate the rationale for particular language programmes but these programmes struggle to realise their economic claims (e.g. programmes promoting language study for economic purposes). Economic issues pertaining to language use arise in international affairs (e.g. international organisations and the regulation of trade). Speaking another language is automatically equated with economic disadvantage and analysed accordingly (e.g. costs-benefits analyses of multilingualism and majority/minority languages).

Grin (1994: 34) also quoted in Strauss et al (1996: 3) postulates that people who want to do business with one another need to be able to communicate. An emphasis on language as a tool of communication and

a means of exchange has suggested to some economists that there is an analogy between language and money.

One area where economic benefits have often not been recognised has been that of interpreting, particularly in its commonest form, which is liaison interpreting in situations of contact with indigenous or deaf communities, where language minorities' persons and the institutions that serve them need a means of communication. Social systems around the world have acknowledged the need for language services, but what is regarded as an adequate service differs widely, and such services have often developed haphazardly.

Economy and language are the cornerstone of the wealth and gross domestic product (GDP) of any country. There is a need for a relevant language planning so that it functions alongside the needs of the mass population. Webb (1999: 110) points out that the two aspects of verbal communication that are directly relevant to economic activity, namely conveying or obtaining information, must be kept in mind. He argues further that:

The first step is that a simply 'knowledge of language' is not enough to be able to participate meaningfully in economic life. One also has to know 'the discourse' of the field, that is, one needs to be 'economically literate'. In the case of economic activity it means that one must be fully acquainted with concepts and the terms that refer to these concepts such as 'profit and loss', 'budget investment', 'balance sheet', 'income statements', 'debtors', 'creditors', and so on.

The approach of viewing a language as a resource or as an economic resource underlines its importance to the nation in conserving and developing all its linguistic resources.

According to Phaahla (2006), in South Africa language development has three objectives, that is, the development of standard orthography, spelling systems and the modernisation of vocabulary of the language and the creation of new registers for a particular purpose. Corpus planning in this context has to take place in a socioeconomic context. It is not enough to have linguists or language specialists only as planners since whatever language development they propose, be it spelling rules or lexical expansion, has to be confronted by issues of implementation and acceptance of such forms by the 'target group. Language, therefore, functions in all spheres of a society for economic development and for social cohesion.

Webb (1999: 179) warns that the exclusive use of English will lead directly to lower productivity and less efficient performance. He lists the problems associated with a monolingual approach as follows:

The exclusive use of English will lead directly to lower productivity and less efficient performance. The exclusive use of English can be very costly, both directly and indirectly. The direct costs involve the money, time and energy that will have to be put into upgrading the general knowledge of English, and the indirect costs involve losses due to misunderstanding, accidents, etc.

Language planning can make an important contribution to the creation of a better, more just and equitable South Africa. This would add more light to the creation of a better linguistic society where all languages have the same market value in an industrialised state.

Language proficiency involves more than the ability to communicate in everyday conversational contexts, but is specifically related to the use of language for academic purposes. Cummins (2000: 67) defines academic

language proficiency as ‘... access to and command of the oral and written academic registers of schooling’. Academic language proficiency is not acquired as naturally as basic interpersonal communication skills and develops through exposure to formal education (Cummins 2000; Hoff 2005). This implies that educators should facilitate this development with explicit teaching strategies addressing the language implicit in various learning areas.

Kaschula and Maseko (2009) argue that there is still a serious communication problem to many South African students as far as language is concerned. They argue that students trained in South African institutions of higher learning are not able to cope in South Africa's multilingual and multicultural environment as they are not able to provide a service to the majority of the people they are supposed to serve, i.e. those speaking indigenous African languages. These scholars are of the opinion that:

South African universities can play a significant role in implementing multilingualism in the education milieu, thereby influencing linguistic change at universities and in society in general. Our multilingual reality requires that tertiary training institutions adapt their learning programmes so as to include training in an African language. This training should equip students with language proficiency in as well cultural awareness of and sensitivity towards the target African language...the inability of South African university-trained professionals to operate effectively in a multilingual context is a barrier to effective provision of services. Failure of professionals to provide services effectively to markets with different languages and cultures is an enormous impediment (Kaschula and Maseko 2009: 3).

Language is at the core of income and economy of the working class. Universities should make it a point that in each and every discipline

language is studied and understood mainly for competence communication with the outside world after finishing the studies.

Crawford (1999) in Kaschula and Maseko (2009) postulates that in a doctor-patient relationship, power relations come into play. The doctor not only occupies a higher rank in the hierarchy of the communicative event because of his or her profession, but s/he is also probing the patient's body in a language that is inaccessible to the patient. The patient occupies a disempowered position – s/he is at the bottom of the hierarchy and as a result, in the whole interaction, s/he is passive and the diagnosis reached and the treatment furnished at the end is less informed, if at all, by their own perception and description of their illness.

A doctor in this case should possess all the communicative elements of speech since s/he will expect clients to speak and be proficient in more than five official languages of South Africa.

Crawford (1999) further postulates that in a situation where a doctor and a patient do not share a common language or world view, the cultural knowledge and other aspects of information are omitted, especially social information, which is not necessarily detected" from the physiology or the symptoms of the patient's illness, but is highly significant in reaching a diagnosis and deciding on treatment.

It could, therefore, be a wise idea if the indigenous African languages are included in all disciplines in universities just for the benefit of the mass citizenry in the economy and the affairs of the country. Many people are isolated from the affairs of the country since information is largely not available to their own first language but in the second language which

they hardly understand. If a doctor gives instruction to the patient on how to take the medication not in the patients language, the patients, even if there is an interpreter/ translator, the patient is not one hundred percent sure of the procedure to be followed simply because the patient received second hand information and not from the horse's mouth.

In the classroom, linguistic isolation can make learners feel unsafe, insignificant, and friendless, which affects participation in classroom activities. Learners must be given tasks that will make them speak, listen and act or perform certain duties in a second language, and by doing so, they master both their first and second languages respectively.

Batibo (2000) argues that the process of elaboration involves capacity building by way of adapting languages to new domains of use. This would include the creation of new technical or specialised terms, the development of idioms or expressions and even the development of additional syntactic structures to deal with the evolving complexity of language use. People would have a desire to learn and master a certain language only if it has social and economic value.

Osbourne (2006) argues that as long as a language is spoken and used in other spheres of activity, it is worth at least providing the opportunity for it to be used in various ways with the new technologies. It is recognised that this may involve changes in the ways languages are used, perhaps analogous to what happens when written forms of a language are first promoted. Such an opportunity becomes a critical concern since African languages are themselves important vehicles for the expression and generation of knowledge, but there is little organised educational activity beyond small-scale programmes for adult basic literacy and a limited

amount of first language instruction at the primary school level. Information and communication technology in African languages could be important in post-literacy and in dissemination and generation of knowledge.

This view states that the situation obviously arises from the underlying sociolinguistic, language policy, and educational contexts, though in this thesis these contexts will not be explored in depth. However, it is worth noting that computers and the internet, like formal educational systems a century earlier, have been introduced and disseminated as more or less monolingual media using one European language. This is a reflection of both the dominance of the languages inherited from colonisation in Information and Communication Technology (ICT) and the use of these languages by those people in Africa most likely to use the technology.

With regard to the motivation, Osbourne (2006) argues that those with access to computers tend to be people who are educated in and socialised to some degree to use the official languages and thus less likely to actively seek to use their first languages. Those who use their first languages but not the official language tend not to be in a position to do much in this area even if they wanted to. The issues surrounding use of the vernacular in Africa are complicated by factors such as status and attitudes towards what is indigenous vis-à-vis languages that are seen as providing more economic opportunity. It becomes easy for all to assume that ICT is for European languages. This practice does not favour multilingualism in Southern Africa.

Osbourne (2006) argues that there are several structural factors limiting African language use. Some of these relate to standardisation of

orthography, which in some cases is subject to change or individual experimentation, and in more than a few cases varies for the same language across borders. A significant number of less widely spoken languages apparently do not have any established orthographies.

Bamgbose (2000: 17) highlights the measures which should be instituted to empower a language. These include instituting a charter of linguistic human rights, appropriate legislation, language development and adopting second language norms using the language concerned in education, offering incentives for their use and expanding their domains of use in order to entrench a sense of participatory democracy.

Batibo (2006) postulates that the process of documentation should aim at not only the preservation of data of the indigenous languages for academic purposes but also, and mainly, the empowerment of the communities so as to be able to use their languages extensively and proactively. The empowerment process should also enable the speakers to value their languages, to build a higher self-esteem and to readily transmit their languages and culture to the younger generations. The esteem of a language sometimes is associated with incentives to the users, such as socio-economic opportunities or access to jobs. It is often disheartening to see regulations in many school systems where pupils are forbidden to speak their languages in the school compound, because they have to speak only the county's official language which often happens to be English and or Afrikaans in South Africa. Equally, in many African countries, the tendency has been to use the knowledge of English, French or Portuguese as an important requirement for those seeking white-collar jobs, even when such candidates are proficient in the local languages.

Batibo (2006) further maintains that the preparation of materials which are usable in the relevant speech community and the country in question would include practical orthography; user-friendly reference grammar; basic reference dictionary; specialised dictionaries or thesauruses of plants, wildlife, environment and indigenous knowledge systems; literacy materials (for learning and sustaining literacy); any variety of reading materials (historical, cultural, health) for cultural and socio-economic empowerment; and any other relevant materials.

Dalvit and De Klerk (2005) discuss the attitudes of isiXhosa-speaking students at the University of Fort Hare towards the use of isiXhosa as a language of learning and teaching. Their analysis indicates that while English is recognised as the dominant language in South Africa and, more specifically, in the domain of education, some categories of respondents acknowledge the usefulness of isiXhosa as an additional medium of instruction. They state that students seem to consider the use of isiXhosa as a medium of instruction more appropriate in the first year of study. It presupposes that, from Dalvit and De Klerk's study, many African learners and students still believe that an African language orientated school could still play a significant role to the lives of many African learners mainly for cultural and linguistic recognition for economic purposes.

The development of isiXhosa and other African languages for academic purposes is considered a crucial issue in the academic debate as Languages of learning and teaching (LoLT) at tertiary level (Alidou and Mazrui 1999; Kembo-Sure 2000). Language planning can serve as a tool for empowering groups and individuals, for creating and strengthening

national bonds and ties, and for maximising educational and economic development.

African languages should be maintained mainly to avoid of language loss and language decay. Surely language loss and decay should not be encouraged in any African state simply because their negative attributes is to the economy of the mass population who speak those languages. Batibo (2005: 102) defines language maintenance as:

A situation in which a language maintains its vitality, even under pressure. It implies therefore that the degree of resistance is strong enough to contain any pressure that may be coming from a dominant language. In a situation of language maintenance, the domains of language L1 remain largely the same and transmission of the language to the children is active and as perfect as possible. Moreover, the number of speakers remains relatively stable and they maintain a strong allegiance to their language. Language maintenance usually applies to a relatively monolingual situation. However it may take eighty places in a stable diglossic situation, in which the functions of L1 and L2 are well defined and remain unchanged.

The purpose behind language maintenance is to ensure cognitive and economic development through the first language and to follow the best route to second language proficiency for speakers of all languages.

The researcher believes that indigenous African languages like isiZulu can bear fruitful results since the communities have been able to participate fully and meaningfully in developmental activities, attend to welfare matters in their communities and initiate their own projects, as not only their language is used in communication, but also records are written and read in their language.

Anderson-Mejias (2002: 4) states that all languages are of equal value. Language speakers, students and teachers must be interested in their languages. Mother tongue/first home language affirms children in their self-worth and in their identity. Most researchers agree that mother tongue or first home language results in cognitive advantages for school learners, especially in the first years of primary education.

It is then important to maintain languages especially indigenous languages. All languages must be valued and speakers of African languages must have pride in their languages.

Preference for English as a medium of instruction is mainly due to economic considerations. Krashen (1996) is of the opinion that bilingual education for each child within a multilingual education policy does not mean a choice between either English or an African Language. It means both. It means developing the first language and adding a second language in the best possible manner to ensure the successful learning of the second language.

The majority of the South African population have a full command of at least two or more languages. However, English is one of the languages learnt by most as a second language, as it is an international language and the language of instruction in most South African schools. There are two independent systems of second language performance (Schütz 2005: 2; Ellis 1989: 261), that is the “acquired system” and the “learned system”. The acquired system or acquisition is the product of the subconscious process which is similar to the process children undergo when they acquire their first language (L1). For this system to develop, a child requires significant interaction and contact with the second language

(L2). Thus, IsiZulu-speaking learners will require several opportunities to interact with English speaking learners in order to develop the acquired system. Therefore, the absence of an appropriate political will leads to lack of any development, be it academic, economic, social or political.

The learned system or learning is according to Krashen (1987: 10) the product of formal instruction and it comprises of a conscious process which results in conscious knowledge about language, for example, knowledge of grammar rules. According to Krashen learning is less important than acquisition. Thus, it is important to develop the acquired system before a learner develops the learned system. If an isiZulu-speaking learner was to experience any difficulty in learning isiZulu, then that learner will most definitely experience difficulty learning in English. Thus, the difficulties experienced in learning isiZulu are seen to exist throughout the process of learning English.

The monitor hypothesis explains the relationship between acquisition and learning (Krashen 1987: 15). The acquisition system is viewed as the utterance initiator and the learning system as performing the role of the monitor or editor (Schütz 2005: 3). Monitoring aids in the planning, editing, and correcting of the new language. It is the internal voice that corrects language before the learner speaks. The role of the monitor should be minor, being used only to correct deviations from “normal” speech and to give speech a more “polished” appearance.

The Natural Order hypothesis suggests that the acquisition of grammatical structures (formal language) in an L2 follow a “natural” order which is predictable (Krashen 1987: 12). The promotion and further development of a mother tongue is necessary so that they function

alongside ex-colonial languages as viable media for equal access in education, for political participation in the civil service, in other forms of economic enterprises and for upward social mobility for the whole citizenry.

Comprehensible input is an essential aspect of Krashen's Input hypothesis. This hypothesis maintains that in order to acquire an L2, the learner must understand what is said to him or her. Learners should receive input that is appropriate to their age and language level. This language should be just beyond the learners' current proficiency but easy enough for them to understand. Sufficient comprehensible input is a necessary condition for acquisition of a second language (Cummins 1996: 87).

The Affective filter hypothesis embodies Krashen's view that a number of "affective variables" play a facilitative role in second language acquisition. These variables include: motivation, self-confidence, and anxiety. It is postulated that learners with high motivation, self-confidence, a good self-image and a low level of anxiety are better equipped for success in L2 acquisition. Low motivation, low self-esteem, and debilitating anxiety can contribute to raise the affective filter and form a "mental block" that prevents comprehensible input from being used for language acquisition. This implies that when the filter is "up" it impedes or obstructs L2 acquisition. Teachers of ESL learners need to remember to keep the learners' affective filters low. Language is seen as a socially constructed intellectual tool and participation in social activities is importantly mediated by the use of language and it expresses one's culture to the fullest. Learning would then be easy if the speakers of isiZulu and any other indigenous African language are made to have

choices when they write their examinations, be it their mother tongue or a second language. It then remains crucial that isiZulu be developed and used as a language for economic advancement to its speakers.

Language proficiency involves more than the ability to communicate in everyday conversational contexts, but is specifically related to the use of language for academic purposes. Cummins (2000: 67) defines academic language proficiency as ‘... access to and command of the oral and written academic registers of schooling’. Academic language proficiency is not acquired as naturally as basic interpersonal communication skills and develops through exposure to formal education.

Smith (2004: 46) contends that acculturation and assimilation also play a role in creating diversity among learners. While acculturation allows people to become part of a new culture at the same time as maintaining important aspects of their native culture, assimilation requires people to choose one cultural group over another, this simply means to discard aspects of native culture and to replace them with aspects of the new culture, which is often described as “mainstream culture”. This implies that English Second Language (ESL) learners are not only learning an L2; but they are also learning a second culture or set of cultures. The culture with economic power is more likely to be adopted and in South Africa this is English. For example, taking turns to speak, and the maintaining of eye contact during conversations modelled in many South African schools may be foreign to some learners in diverse classrooms.

Language for academic purposes as a distinct register is not always recognised. There is evidence to suggest that teachers in South Africa are not only unaware of their responsibility to meet the language-related

needs of learners but also lack the methodological skills to promote effective learning of academic language because they have not had the necessary training (Mroz 2006; O'Connor & Geiger 2009; van der Walt, van den Berg, & Botha 2007). Learners from a culture that values spontaneous and exuberant call-and-response group dialogue may have difficulty raising their hands and waiting to be called on. Conversely, a child from a culture in which personal emotion and opinion are considered inappropriate for public display may withdraw from class participation (Sheets 2002: 46).

### **3.2 Language as Human Capital**

In human capital theory, language knowledge is valuable because of its direct effect on productivity. Any form of trade between individuals is almost always mediated through some common language and language knowledge opens doors for individuals to trade with a wider range of people. More linguistically competent people are at a competitive advantage in contrast to people who are less or not competent. This view is in line with Toffelson's (1991: 7) argument when he postulates that:

Language competence remains a barrier to employment, education, and economic well-being due to political forces of our own making. For while modern social and economic systems require certain kinds of language competence, they simultaneously create conditions which ensure that vast numbers of people were unable to acquire that competence. A central mechanism by which this process occurs is language policy.

Indigenous African languages have been rehabilitated from their vernacular to being official status, mainly to redress issues that were neglected in the past such as language equity, language as a resource, literacy, language as a medium of instruction, language in the public

service, heritage languages, sign language and language development. Language as an economic resource underlines the importance to the nation of conserving and developing all its linguistic resources.

Due to high unemployment level in South Africa, education must help learners to think like entrepreneurs and to debate economic issues in a language they are competent at. It is difficult, however, to think and debate in a language that learners only hear or use in the classroom and they do not use in their everyday social life. Communication is a key to the effectiveness of teaching and learning methods. Communication is also essential for accessing and creating knowledge.

Each language is the means of expression of the intangible cultural heritage of people, and it remains a reflection of this culture for some time even after the culture which underlies it decays and crumbles, often under the impact of an intrusive, powerful, usually metropolitan, different culture. However, with the death and disappearance of such a language, an irreplaceable unit in our knowledge and understanding of human thought and world-view is lost forever (Wurm 2001: 13).

### **3.2.1 The Importance of African Languages in Economy**

Language planning must be formulated in response to the language needs of a society and it must function alongside economic requirements and build around a vision of the role of language in economic empowerment. Bordieu (1991) argues that language should not be simply viewed as a means of communication, but also as a medium of power that allows people to realise their own interests, while displaying their own capabilities. Mother tongue should be implemented as a skill that fosters academic excellence. An individual growing in the community will have

the knowledge pertaining to his existence gradually divulged to him, facilitated by the improvement of his linguistic skills. This suggests that failure in the mastery of the techniques of communication will ruin the chances of an individual eventually interpreting the profound meanings encoded in song, allegory, myth and legend of his or her first language because this knowledge is transmitted essentially through informal education.

The knowledge of language is very functional for economic purposes. Language knowledge may offer substantial consumption benefits as well. Individuals may see language knowledge as a direct consumption good, or may use language knowledge as a tool to expand their consumption set through business and or market symbiotic relations.

The identity and pride in a culture of a group is expressed through its language and any language including the indigenous African languages, represents a people's social values. The human capital theory of language has some testable implications since the labour market benefits of language knowledge are assumed to be due to an increase in opportunities to gain from trade, the magnitude of such opportunities should be correlated with the number of people with whom the individual could speak. Thus, at the margin, additional language knowledge should be associated with higher returns, especially knowledge of indigenous African languages and culture. A sociolinguistically complex society which has a clear purpose of creating a sense of unity and identity has much significance in enabling a reflection on the ways in which language operates in Southern Africa.

Mukhuba (2005: 271) postulates the importance of isiZulu as that:

The Zulus are very proud of their culture and language so much that they have developed a negative attitude towards other South African languages... in fact, in most cases, an employer would have to learn their language in order to communicate with most of them in the job environment.

The economic impact of knowing an additional language lies in distinguishing the benefit due to language knowledge. People who have the ability to speak more than one language may also have other characteristics that allow them access to higher incomes, such as the ability to learn quickly and effectively. The language knowledge within one's own ethnic background may open labour market opportunities in an ethnic enclave which would not be available to members of the mainstream society.

In order to enhance human capital, indigenous African languages should be well documented. Batibo (2009: 196) postulates that:

The process of documentation should aim at not only the preservation of data of the indigenous languages for academic purposes but also, and mainly, the empowerment of the communities so as to be able to use their languages extensively and proactively. The empowerment process should also enable the speakers to value their languages, to build a higher self-esteem and to readily transmit their languages and culture to the younger generations.

The notion of development is a loaded construct which connotes economic indices and that of modernisation. It is a must that indigenous African languages assume their rightful role as the means of official communication in the public affairs of their speakers and that of economic development as part of human capital enhancement. It seems that, from a common observation, many people equate good and quality

education with one language in Southern Africa, and that is English. This view is in line with what Rudwick (2004) postulates that indigenous African languages have been, for obvious reasons, blatantly understudied during the apartheid years in South Africa, whereas relationship between language, culture and identity is inseparable, as Ngugi wa Thiong'o (1986: 16) postulates that:

The domination of the people's language by the language of the colonising nations was crucial to the domination of the mental universe of the colonised.

It has been noted (Chiuye and Moyo 2002) that African languages normally lead the learner to cope easily with the use of the language that the learner knows best. This is in his or her expression of thought processes in disciplines like science and technology. This further leads to the learners' greater participation in national life, since with knowledge that is acquired in the learner's best known language and the learner would become more capable of being allocated functions on the dissemination of information and subsequently in national development. The learner who is taught through his or her first language would be motivated and stimulated to learn more, which would lead to greater and higher level of education and the home language would lead to greater interaction among the various ethnic groups and thus promote a higher degree of national awareness and thus greater level of national integration and unification which would hopefully foster national unity in diversity.

Batibo et al (1997) note that the speakers of minority languages tend to develop negative attitudes towards their languages partly because of the often painful historical legacies, and partly because of the lack of socio-economic opportunities in using their languages, as they would consider

it advantageous to adopt the majority language for the education of their children, for job opportunities and for wider communication. Martin (2004) postulates that the core identity of a culture is embodied in and perpetuated by its language which includes the idioms, proverbs and gestures at once espouse the purity of tradition and salience of innovation. Moreover, any discussion about language is inherently a discussion about access to education and economic mobility.

The Department of Arts, Culture, Science and Technology (DACST 1999) states that the aim of developing the indigenous languages in South Africa is to make them suitable for use in modern domains such as governmental communication, science and technology and to entrench their use in official government communication. The government, through the Department of Arts, Culture, Science and Technology (DACST), is publicising legislation which will compel each government department to use at least four languages in its written communication. A rotational system is proposed in which all eleven languages are grouped into four clusters, namely, the Nguni group (isiNdebele, siSwati, isiXhosa, and isiZulu), the Sotho group (Northern Sotho, Southern Sotho, and Setswana), English, Afrikaans, tshiVenda and xiTsonga (DACST, 1999). According to this approach, all the official languages are considered to be resourceful for communication, and the choice of language(s) to be used in a particular situation depends on the communicative demands of the situation. However, practically, this does not happen.

A research which was conducted by de Klerk and Barkhuizen (1998) reveals the context in which parents, while half-heartedly (in some cases not at all) maintains their own isiXhosa identity and lifestyle, have supported the development of anglicised language behaviour for their

children. These parents belong to the wealthier, better-educated sector of society, and have clearly decided on cultural and linguistic assimilation for their children, despite the loss which will result. This study reveals that people have different attitudes towards the use of their own indigenous African languages which sometimes move us backwards as a nation, and their views are listened simply because they are economically balanced.

This view is in line with Stupart (2000) when he postulates that the most serious problem in the intellectualisation of the African languages in South Africa is the negative attitude which the speakers of indigenous African languages have towards their languages, especially as a medium for education. Accordingly, many speakers of these languages do not see much relevance in using them in education. Instead, English and Afrikaans are considered to be the languages of higher mobility or a passport to job opportunities in the country.

### **3.2.2 The Empowerment of Indigenous African Languages**

Learners and students will develop fluency in their subjects and confidence if using their first languages in their education. The functional domains of the African languages have not been expanded adequately to encourage the learners to see the relevance of choosing an African language as a language of instruction. The use of a language as a medium of instruction creates the demand for new terms and further provides the opportunity to use them in meaningful contexts, e.g. in textbooks, in teaching, for scientific experiments and so forth, and this process will then market the language in the global economy. This will make its speakers well recognised in the global economy and developing the people's economy.

In order to prevent the rejection of the use of indigenous African languages for functional purposes, mainly for economic purposes, their identity needs to be developed. This would result through the standardisation of orthographies, the writing of grammar books and dictionaries for these indigenous African languages. This practice would invalidate the idea that the languages which are spoken by the masses (indigenous African languages) are inferior. This would encourage many elite class parents to educate their children to schools where these languages are taught because they would have a sense that their children are still in the economic competition race if they study African languages.

Their importance was seen when they are not neglected, by the time government placed an emphasis on their development so that learners in schools and the whole citizenry acquire their proficiency and their competency, they were languages of economic and business enterprises. The development, empowerment and use of isiZulu would be of major benefit in South Africa since the majority people in South Africa are, according to the 2001 census, isiZulu first language speakers. The non-use of indigenous African languages in documentation, court proceedings and even in the national parliament undermines the constitutionality of the use of the major and viable languages in South Africa such as isiZulu. If indigenous African languages are neglected, a country would find itself in a state of semilingualism, where learners and the society are neither proficient in their mother tongue nor in any given language.

Parents who live in townships and suburban areas equate education with competency in English. The value of indigenous African languages has been diminished as many young educated black people view English as the language of aspiration. I would argue that indigenous African languages possess many specialised registers that are not available to

speakers of English and other non-African languages as in the register which is used when speaking with ‘amakhosi’ and ‘izinduna’ (village chiefs), ceremonies like releasing the widow, opening a homestead, traditional legal discourse used in many African functions, in praise poetry and in folk tales. The fact that people use their indigenous African languages contributes immensely to their development in economy, politics and education.

Africans have, therefore, been subjected to the Western ideas of education of which sometimes conflict with the African culture yet humanity emerged in Africa. Vilakazi (2002: 1-2) maintained that Africa is regarded as the mother of humankind, which not only gave birth to humankind, but also prepared the remarkable cultural foundation which some of her children took along with them as they left for other regions and corners of the world. He further states that Africans became a non-living possession of western culture, thereby saddling themselves with a terrible handicap of not being acquainted from inside with people and Africa culture. Educated Africans become lost and irrelevant as intellectuals who could develop African culture further. African indigenous culture then stagnated, what remained alive in minds and languages of the majority of Africans remained underdeveloped.

The South African constitution (1996) states that people belonging to a cultural religious or linguistic community may not be denied right with other members of the community to:

- enjoy their cultures, practice their religion and their language.
- form, join and maintain cultural, religious, linguistic associates and other organs of civil society.

Education is the medium through which culture can be passed from one generation to the next. This is done through a language which the society knows best and that language in South Africa should be an indigenous African language if the entire majority is to be accommodated in the education system that treats all people equally.

Mbambo (2005: 3) postulates the importance of language and culture as follows:

While promoting the African traditional culture in schools, educators should consider the fact that South Africa is a multicultural society. Learners from different social settings came together in the same classroom, various cultural backgrounds of the population group represented should be taken into account in the curriculum of the school. The future development of the South African society depends to a considerable degree upon the kind of education that would present equal educational opportunities and standards to the children of all racial groups. Multicultural education is the answer to the education problems in South Africa.

When culture dies the people whose culture declines and falls do not necessarily physically die, they become other people. Often they are absorbed by the more dominant cultures. Therefore, there is a need for Africans to return to their roots. It is, therefore, imperative that educators should play a vital role in promoting the African indigenous culture in schools. Missionaries who represented a large number of churches and religious societies began to labour among the Africans with the aim of converting them into Christianity. Sibisi (1989) maintained that in the mission schools the, quality of a school was judged by the proficiency in

which the educated African was speaking English and not an African language.

The life of individual is foremost an accommodation to patterns and standards traditionally handed down in his community. From the moment of his birth the customs into which he is born, shape his experience and behaviour. By the time he can talk, he is a little creature of his culture and by the time he is grown and able to take part in its activities, its habits are his habits, its beliefs, his beliefs, its impossibilities his impossibilities. What is emphasised here is that every person is born into a culture, which shapes his behaviour, beliefs, attitudes, feelings and values from the moment he is born. Few people find it easy to change the culture that they inherit because it has taught them how to behave, what to believe, how to feel and what to value. Once they have been socialised into these cultural patterns, many people want to keep it that way (Moulder 1989).

Learning is a high risk taking enterprise that works better when learners are made to feel secure and centred in who they are and what they are already capable of doing before they are asked to take on new ventures. The issue of cultural patterns can also be addressed in this study by paying attention to language. Language forms a part of culture, it is the vehicle through which culture is transmitted. Each cultural group has its own language pattern. School subjects are neutral, objective and independent of a particular culture with its existing pattern of behaviour, beliefs and its intellectual structures for example some African indigenous languages (Zulu and Xhosa) do not have prepositions. Therefore,

African children who are just starting to learn English or Afrikaans have great problems in using prepositions correctly.

It is imperative that learners learn how to interact with and understand people who are ethnically, racially and culturally different from themselves. The work in South Africa is becoming increasingly more diverse, compact and interdependent yet for the learners the formative years of their lives are spent in ethnically and culturally isolated or encapsulated enclaves. It is therefore the role of the educators to ensure that African indigenous culture is promoted in schools to enable African learners to interact freely with learners from other cultural groups and also to avoid trying to impose rules of social etiquette from one cultural system into another. This would result if indigenous African languages are given the market value and are developed accordingly in such that they are functional languages in economic and educational lives of its speakers.

The relationships of production or the way wealth is generated in society are thus so important that they determine the nature of all other social institutions and forms of consciousness. Legal, political, religious and educational institutions, of which schools are part, reflect the hierarchical, alienated relationships prevailing on farms, in mines and factories.

The South African constitution of 1996 stipulates that "Everyone has the right to use the language and to participate in other cultural life of their choice..." At schools learners receive education in a

language which is not their mother tongue, which sometimes hinders their progress at school.

Globalisation brings cultures into contact by encouraging recognition of relativism, reflectivity difference and the critique of Western modernity. Walters in Smith (2001: 229) argues that globalisation occurs through:

Economic globalisation which is associated with the use of World finance markets and free trade zones, the global exchange of goods and services. Political globalisation which is the way that the nation- state is being superseded by internationalisation (for example, United Nations, the European Union) and the rise of global politics. Cultural globalisation which is about the flow of information signs and symbols around the world and reactions that flow.

Indigenous knowledge of weaving is an art and skill largely practiced by rural women. Their products attract international customers and are also popular with the local home markets and hotel owners. It is due to this reason that the government should pay particular attention to developing proper communication technologies in the country. It is also against this reason that educators in schools should promote the African indigenous culture in schools as this will help learners in their future lives. It is for this reason that indigenous African languages should be well catered for, be developed and empowered for economic purposes and for the upliftment of the local economy through local languages.

Mbambo (2005: 76-83) is of the view that indigenous African languages and culture are looked down upon. He argues that:

The African indigenous knowledge in some cases is looked down upon, like the knowledge of the indigenous healers. In the rural areas there are few clinics and no hospitals, as a result if learners are sick, help need to be obtained from the indigenous healers. But because of the postmodernism influence, some of the learners opt to remain untreated rather than going to the indigenous healers...

Children go to school, to church, take part in sports, wear clothes and assume attitudes, which are all western in origin, no matter how much these have been adopted to suit them. This change in the life pattern of the Africans in general and the Zulus in particular have been in force for a long time.

Learners and students will maintain their love and respect for their heritage, language and culture and be prepared to contribute to the development of their own community and the nation. Education according to Akinpelu (1981: 9) must be based on what the society considers the best of knowledge worth having and how it is acquired. It must rest on a value system or a theory of what it considers most valuable and worth having. It must be based on the nature of man and of the society as conceived by that society. This means that each group of people transmits its own culture via education.

Without education various practices by, which a culture tries to perpetuate, improve and enrich itself through acquainting each successive generation with its most important traditions, habits, beliefs and experiences cannot take place. Culture is acquired formally at school and informally at home. African children begin to learn the way of their society from birth. They learn the patterns

of behaviour which one expected of him and those of expectations embody the values of society which one tends to internalise and make his own. These values are an important part of the culture of the group and he will also learn other elements of this culture, language, customs, beliefs the use of tools and other things. Culture and language must be transmitted to each new generation of children if the social group is not to collapse and absorbed into another society or even become extinct.

The language policy should not be viewed as only pertaining to the issues the Department of Education. The Department of Arts and Culture should be seen as a partner and driving force behind this effort where by indigenous languages are made relevant to African culture to restore self-confidence to the learners. There is a need to develop on arts and culture ideology which promotes autonomy, self-reliance and resourcefulness whose attributes will contribute towards building a sound political system, if not assist in nation building as well as democratising the nation. Parents should be given the opportunity to choose the language they want their children to communicate with. Classroom activities should reflect a respect for cultural differences. Children who arrive at school with minimal or no skills in English face the double challenge of learning a new language and keeping pace with their peers in academic skills such as maths and reading. In those states in which ethnic, religious or linguistic minorities exist, persons belonging to such minorities shall not be denied the right, in community with other members of their group, to enjoy their own culture, to profess and practice their own religion, or to use their own language.

South Africa is an example of a developing country in which the majority of the population speaks an indigenous language which is not the language of business or politics. However, most indigenous and minority children (and children from majority groups like those from African countries with European official languages) are forced to accept instruction through a language that is not their own. They have no choice, there are no schools teaching in their first language. Many parents and politicians ‘choose’ education through a dominant language, often English, unknowingly going against scientific evidence about learning and bilingualism, as well as against the human right of their own children to education in a language they understand.

Interaction provides a meaningful communicative context for new words and grammatical structures that cannot be achieved with lists and drills. Indigenous and minority children should be educated in their own languages with good teaching of a country’s official languages as second languages. Learners need to learn dominant languages in addition to, not instead of, their own languages. The provision of teaching assistants will help improve communication between teachers and children. Teachers will improve their local language skills through language courses and supported communication with local people.

Alexander (1999: 3) is of the view that:

Language policy and language practice can either stimulate or impede economic efficiency, labour productivity, economic growth and development. Since human beings are dependent on one another for the production of the means of subsistence, they necessarily co-operate in the labour process and in order to do so, they have to communicate with one another. In this process of communication, language plays the most important role. Hence, the development of linguistic markets, especially in the modern world of the capitalist mode of production, is directly related to the economic functions of a language or of a set of languages. These functions are automatically and objectively determined by the profit-seeking interests of the dominant sectors of economic production and of those who control the strategic means of production.

The languages in which the major economic transactions of a society take place are not the languages of the masses because there is a perception that these languages are not languages of power, money and status. Learning the mechanical skills is obviously essential, but these skills are best learned at the same time as the learner is apprenticed into use reading and writing in meaningful ways through the use of indigenous African languages. He further stipulates that:

In a multilingual polity, it is essential that the optimal balance be found in the deployment of relevant languages in order to maximise efficiency and productivity. One of the myths of “hands-on” as well as of most theoretical economics is that a single, dominant, language is a critical feature of such a “balanced” policy.

Language is the main instrument of communication at the disposal of human beings consequently, the specific languages in which the production processes take place becomes the languages of power. This happens through the mass media and through government

when they leave indigenous African languages out of economic market and use the colonial languages. For an example, if one does not have the requisite command of the language or languages of production, one is automatically restricted in one's options as regards access to employment and all that implies in a state where employment opportunities are hierarchically structured and differentially rewarded.

Self-esteem, self-confidence, potential creativity and spontaneity come with being able to use your own first language and this is highly neglected in many African states. This result when many African states choose to use the former colonial language as their languages of power over indigenous African languages. This practice make learners in schools to lose self-confidence when they communicate through these colonial languages, lose self-esteem and even pride that come along with their culture.

### **3.2.3 Attitudes towards Indigenous African Languages**

An attitude is a mental and neural state of readiness, organised through experience, exerting a directive or dynamic influence upon the individual's response to all objects and situations with which it is related (Gardner 1982). It is argued that learners have different attitudes towards languages they learn and speak. Klein (1986) postulates that learners and the society as a whole vary considerably in their attitudes to the language they are learning and to the people who speak that language.

Klein (1986) further illustrates that these subjective attitudes can also influence language learning in less obvious ways, as for an

example, in the aforementioned case of the presumably unconscious worry about the loss of social identity. This case incidentally illustrates the intertwining of the various factors insofar as this kind of attitude represents a negative component of the 'social integration' factor. Another example is that of conscious or unconscious - feeling that there is no real need to learn a language. What is involved is presumably an attitude not only to linguistics but also to other kinds of social behaviours.

It is believed that language attitudes are an integral part of communicative competence as it has been noted by Day (1982: 117), that communicative competence is the knowledge required using a language appropriately in a speech community. It includes, in addition to grammatical knowledge, social knowledge which acts to define the communicative process and to shape the way messages are realised in social situations. The functional domains of the African languages have not been expanded adequately to encourage the learners to see the relevance of choosing an African language as a language of instruction.

Murray (2002: 437-438), however, maintains that African children and parents want English as a language of teaching and learning in their schools even though African children are said to struggle both linguistically and in terms of their cultural identity. African students and parents do not seem to favour a move away from English as the language of teaching and learning since English is seen as a language of aspiration and of wider communication, however, learning through a language that is not your first language or mother tongue reduces chances for one to learn more

about his culture. Learning through English makes learners to forget about their languages and their cultures and think that the only language is English. I believe that learning through home languages would build up more sense of confidence and minimise learning hardships and maximise intellectual potential. The use of indigenous languages would lead to a free and equal use of all available national languages which would lead to linguistic and cultural plurality. This is an acceptable pragmatic observation to consider the rating of English as a global language, but it does not negate the development and use of other types of home languages, particularly indigenous African languages.

Stupart (2000) postulates that the most serious problem in the intellectualisation of the African languages in South Africa is the negative attitude which the speakers of indigenous African languages have towards their languages, especially as a medium for education. It is the bad attitudes towards indigenous African languages that make people not to see much relevance in using them in education. Instead, English and Afrikaans are considered to be the languages of higher mobility or a passport to job opportunities in the country. Such view negates any further development of indigenous African languages and culture.

It is only in lower primary grades that indigenous languages are used as media of instruction. In higher grades, and at secondary and tertiary levels, English is the dominant language. The failure of the African languages to be used as media of instruction at these educational levels surely impedes their intellectualisation. The use of a language as a medium of instruction, therefore, creates the

demand for new terms and further provides the opportunity to use them in meaningful contexts, e.g. in textbooks, in teaching, for scientific experiments and so forth. The researcher believes that it is for this reason that people have negative attitude towards indigenous African languages and culture.

### **3.3 Summary**

This chapter has looked at how language creates economy for its speakers and how languages are used and valued in the linguistic markets. Some languages have market value in higher social functions while others, on the other hand, are important for cultural pride and for the attainment of discourse control, especially when speaking to elders, amakhosi, at funerals. The latter applies mainly to indigenous African languages.

The importance of education is to prepare one for battles ahead after school and in adult life, and to prepare one to be independent. In that education process, language plays a pivotal role in fulfilling one's ambitions or destroying one's vision about their future especially when the language of teaching and learning is not the language which an individual has a very good command of. Martin (2004) postulates that the core identity of a culture is embodied in and perpetuated by its language which includes the idioms, proverbs and gestures which espouse the sanctity of tradition and salience of innovation. Moreover, any discussion about language is inherently a discussion about access to education and economic mobility. The next chapter will present literature based on the different views and concerns about the development of isiZulu and

its development as an academic language and mainly for the teaching of fundamental concepts in economics.

## **Chapter 4: Language and Economic Development in South Africa**

### **4.0 Introduction**

Economic development is based on specialisation and trade. Individuals who specialise and trade must develop common means of communication. This puts pressure on the local languages, and in the long run will push many of these into extinction. Thus in the long run economic development will lead to a decline in the number of languages and in language diversity.

African languages can be fully developed when a negative mental ideology is erased from their minds, the attitude that African languages have no market value, job opportunities are scarcely available since the majority of citizens do not put their languages first in their daily lives. Alexander (1992) argues that the developing countries, like South Africa and many other African countries must develop their own strategies of language planning that function to suit the specific needs of each individual country and its population.

Hamer and Blanc (1989) state that language is a product of culture, transmitted from one generation to the next in the socialisation process. IsiZulu is a Southern African language spoken predominantly in South Africa. In 1994 isiZulu became one of nine indigenous languages to obtain official recognition in South Africa's first post-apartheid Constitution. It is an official language in South Africa and is spoken in almost all nine provinces alongside English and Afrikaans.

IsiZulu forms part of the Nguni language group and is, therefore, closely related to the other major languages in this group, isiXhosa, siSwati and isiNdebele. IsiZulu speakers trace their origins to a chief who founded the royal line in the 16th century. In the nineteenth century the warrior king Shaka established the Zulu Kingdom as the most powerful African bulwark against British colonial penetration of the subcontinent.

It is, however, noted that isiZulu is not used in academic settings such as institutions of higher learning as compared to English and Afrikaans. There is tremendous amount of literature that relates to the development of indigenous African languages, particularly isiZulu, and how they can be fully developed, mostly for effective participation in the social and economic lives of their speakers. This chapter will present data based on how indigenous African languages (isiZulu) can be fully developed and be used in academia.

#### **4.1 The importance of learning in a mother tongue**

Mother tongue plays a major role in shaping one's identity and perceptions about the world. Currently economic, political and socio-cultural transformations globally have thus resulted in many traditional communities facing an identity crisis. The Bantu Education Act of 1953 placed African education under the control of the state. African schools were linguistically zoned. The mother tongue was the medium of instruction up to standard seven (grade 9), thereafter, English and Afrikaans were used equally as media of instruction as opposed to the development of indigenous African languages (Henrard 2001).

Looking at a country like South Africa, the image of a rainbow nation is commonly invoked in order to promote multicultural unity, however,

little attention is paid to the country's language policy. According to the South African constitution, all eleven official languages theoretically carry equal status and every child has a right to be educated in his/her mother tongue. In practice English is the most powerful language.

Batibo (2005: 58) postulates that:

One may dismiss this as a mere coincidence, and we wish to assert that plurilingualism in itself is not a cause of underdevelopment, but that it all depends on what people do with it. They may use it as a divisive means so that attention is focused on conflict rather than development. Or they may use plurilingualism to disadvantage minority language speakers so that their mental capabilities are inadequately developed and they are left behind in developmental efforts.

The equal use of English and Afrikaans as media of instruction (also known as the "50/50" policy) was a serious stumbling block to effective learning because of the sudden shift from African languages to Afrikaans and English. To make matters worse, African learners had poor levels of competence in these two new media of instruction. The curriculum was poorly developed and was, therefore, not geared towards producing educationally well empowered Africans. There was a deliberate attempt to limit Africans' access to the languages of socio-political and economic power i.e. Afrikaans and English (see UNESCO 1967).

Economic development is based on specialisation and trade. Individuals who specialise and trade must develop common means of communication. This in turn leads to the use of a common language. This common language in South Africa is the language that is spoken by the masses which is one of the indigenous African languages. Thus as

countries move on the ladder of economic development and increase the network of trade both within and outside the country, a common language will impose itself and were used by an increasing number of individuals.

A mother tongue helps learners and society alike to forge friendships with each other, cultural ties, and economic relationships within and with other communities. Because of its close ties with the architects of apartheid, Afrikaans was stigmatised by Africans as the language of the racist oppressors. English, on the other hand, though a colonial language, was portrayed in positive light, and was (and still is) the language most demanded by Black South Africans. Some positive labels were attached to English - for example - the language of unification and liberation, the vehicle for ideologies of freedom and independence, and the symbol of liberal values and liberation. It was the liberating potential of English that drove Africans to revolt against the imposition of Afrikaans as the medium of instruction in African schools in 1976. The Soweto uprising in 1976 was not only a rejection of Afrikaans but also a rejection of the whole apartheid system.

Martin (2004) postulates that the core identity of a culture is embodied in and perpetuated by its language which includes the idioms, proverbs and gestures which espouse the sanctity of tradition and salience of innovation. Moreover, any discussion about language is inherently a discussion about access to education and economic mobility. As the cornerstone of success in a technology-driven economy, literacy is the 'catalyst for inclusion' in South Africa, and linguistic equity is needed in order to realise the democratic ideals of mass literacy.

Chiuye and Moyo (2002: 82) postulate that: ‘for education and knowledge to take place appropriately in the language that people know best, it should be the normal medium of effective communication in all the education system’, it is, however, noted that in order for this to happen, a mother tongue based learning and teaching be adopted and implemented. Chiuye and Moyo (2002: 79) further acknowledge that:

...education and human resources training are crucial elements to national development and an appropriate language medium is central to the acquisition of education and training, the language of the masses is a cardinal element in this process.

Chiuye and Moyo (2002:79) further came up with a sound example where Christian missions allowed the British colonial system of divide and rule, and adopted local languages in their system of rule. What this translated into is that there was a streamlining process, where only a selected few ‘natives’ could go through to be absorbed in the education system that was set. This was because the ruled also desired to acquire the language of the rulers, which ultimately promised them better paying jobs.

This tells us that knowledge of a language, especially English, is of paramount importance to those who are oppressed, to those who are free and even to the poorest, as it has been noted by Batibo et al (1997) that: ‘the major belief is that of securing good employment and better salary when one has mastered the language.’ The researcher believes that it is for this reason that parents send their children to good schools so that their children could acquire good English and if possible, acquire native-like competence in the language. The importance of English is not discounted in any way in the study, however, the study advocates the

development and use of indigenous African languages such as isiZulu in the teaching of fundamental concepts in economics.

There are various plausible reasons why indigenous African languages should be used in schools. Chiuye and Moyo (2002) maintain that African languages normally lead the learner to cope easily with the use of the language that the learner knows best. This is in his or her expression of thought processes in disciplines like Science and Technology. This further leads to the learners' greater participation in national life, since with knowledge that is acquired in the learner's best known language, the learner would become more capable of being allocated functions on the dissemination of information and subsequently in national development.

Chiuye and Moyo (2002) further stipulate that the learner who is taught through his or her first language would be motivated and stimulated to learn more. This would lead to greater and higher level of education and the home language would lead to greater interaction among the various ethnic groups. As a result, a higher degree of national awareness and greater level of national integration and unification would be promoted, which would hopefully foster national unity in diversity. In the long run learning through home languages would build up more sense of confidence and minimise learning hardships and maximise intellectual potential. The use of indigenous languages would lead to a free and equal use of all available national languages which would lead to linguistic and cultural plurality.

Krashen (2003) further states that learning a language, on the other hand, is a conscious process, much like what one experiences in school. New knowledge or language forms are represented consciously in the learner's mind, frequently in the form of language 'rules' and 'grammar' and the

process often involves error correction. Language learning involves formal instruction, and according to Krashen, learning is less effective than acquisition.

A study by Rudwick (2004) postulates the problem which is faced by both learners and teachers in some schools, the language problem. In the study it is found that the transfer of information is not adequate since both a teacher and learners are not proficient in the language of instruction. Rudwick (2004) is concerned with how the English language is used, where she has observed that in Durban, both teachers and learners struggled in using English, claiming the availability and the degree at which how much and how far knowledge and information can be adequately transmitted in a language, in which neither learners nor teachers are proficient.

If indigenous African languages are used as Languages of Learning and Teaching (LoLT) in schools of South Africa, a problem such as this one highlighted by Rudwick (ibid) would be avoided because both learners and teachers would be at an advantage of communicating in the language which they understand better, thus creating a conducive teaching and learning atmosphere. This could also a solution even at tertiary institution where if students and lecturers use a language which they all best understand, learning hardships would be avoided.

Indigenous African languages are seen as unimportant yet more of them are also official languages in South Africa. Batibo et al (1997) note that: ‘the speakers of minority languages tend to develop negative attitudes towards their languages partly because of the often painful historical legacies, and partly because of the lack of socio- economic opportunities in using their languages, as they would consider it advantageous to adopt

the majority language for the education of their children, for job opportunities and for wider communication'. This is evident to a number of learners who are omitted from public schools to attend private and former model C schools with an aim to achieve native-like competence in English.

Education in previously disadvantaged schools is seen as weak, unimportant and useless by many parents, mostly Black parents. Even Black parents do not want their children to go to previously disadvantaged schools. They send them to former Model C schools with a belief that they would receive good quality education in those schools, as it has been noted by Batibo et al (1997) that: 'The minority languages in most countries have been confined mainly to family communication, village interaction, intra-ethnic contacts and cultural expression', as a result, indigenous African languages are down-played in many schools and educational institutions while English dominates all indigenous African languages in many African schools.

It is believed that all parliamentary speeches in 1994 were in English, with a little Afrikaans and it is the most popular default language in other multilingual contexts such as business, schools, university campuses and military camps (de Klerk 1998; de Klerk and Barkhuizen 1998). There are also interesting patterns of English usage in South African television, where, in English programmes such as news, non-English reports are avoided, or translated in cases where they are utilised. However, in programmes in all other languages, English inserts are frequent, and translations are not provided (Kamwangamalu 1998: 284).

English fulfils a range of linguistic functions and has a rich literary tradition, which is not the case with most, if not all, the indigenous

languages; written resources are readily available in English. Even the bigger languages e.g. isiZulu, isiXhosa and seSotho have only relatively nascent linguistic and literary traditions. Particularly urgent, is the need for technical vocabulary in indigenous languages if they are to be used successfully in such areas as government or military life (de Klerk and Barkhuizen 1998). This, of course would be with the exception of the elite Black people who want English only.

Research by de Klerk (1998) reveals the context in which parents, while half-heartedly (in some cases not at all) maintains their own isiXhosa identity and lifestyle, have supported the development of anglicised language behaviour for their children. These parents belong to the wealthier, better-educated sector of society, and have clearly decided on cultural and linguistic assimilation for their children, despite the loss of their African cultural identity which will result. Such sentiments are echoed in parallel research by Verhoef (1998) in the North West Province. Less than half of the Xhosa parents interviewed regarded first-language support for their children as important. And these parents do not want Black South African English (BSAE) for their children. They want 'proper' English as observed by de Klerk and Bosch (1998) in their study:

English is good, it is an international language, you know she can communicate with another person. I think English in South Africa is just here to stay. English is important. 'Many people are speaking English even Zulus. If you see a Zulu and you are Xhosa you can't speak Zulu and she can't speak Xhosa you speak English ... It's useful because mostly communicate in English, even in schools. In street, everywhere in South Africa. Every day you cannot get anything without English and you can't get education without English because English comes with education and vice versa.

Does education come in isiZulu? Looking at this extract by this parent who was interviewed in a study conducted by de Klerk and Bosch (1998), it seems as if many Black parents choose English as a right language which their learners should learn and acquire at the expense of any African language. I believe that all languages have market value.

Although the Constitution states that each learner has the right to choose the language of instruction, English continues to be chosen as the sole medium of instruction in all schools, the majority of which are Africans. The functional domains of the African languages have not been expanded adequately to encourage the learners to see the relevance of choosing an African language as a language of instruction.

It is only in lower primary grades that indigenous languages are used as media of instruction. In higher grades, and at secondary and tertiary levels, English is the dominant language. The failure of the African languages to be used as media of instruction at these educational levels will surely impede the intellectualisation of these languages. Further support for this argument comes from the use of Afrikaans as a medium of instruction which has contributed significantly to the intellectualisation of this language. Therefore, if, for political, economic or other reasons, a person is denied access to a language that is crucial to ensuring his/her upward social mobility, then that person's individual right to language will have been violated and this constitutes a form of marginalisation.

#### **4.2 The Importance of isiZulu in academic excellence**

IsiZulu is one of the official languages of South Africa and one with the largest number of speakership in South Africa (Census 2001). It is, however, noted that it is not catered for the same way as English and Afrikaans in South Africa even though the majority speakers are isiZulu

first language speakers. Batibo (2000: 126) postulates the importance of learning in a mother tongue of an African learner as it equip one to know more in their mother tongue.

Unless the schools' language and environment are close to the children's' background, the children's learning process were substantially hampered, a child will not have mastered his or her mother tongue fully by the time the new medium of instruction is encountered, which also prevents the child from transferring prior knowledge to the new environment... one important aspect of confidence and assertiveness is mastery of a language...thus without proper language support, both thought and intelligence cannot be properly developed in a young learner.

One of the major reasons for the failure of most African economic development plans because development aids are usually conducted in English, by so doing, it excludes the majority of Africans from participating and leading development initiatives in their own languages. Mother tongue plays a major role in shaping one's future and identity. By encouraging children to use their own languages, one is not only helping them to feel accepted, but one is also acknowledging the importance of first language development and make them part of culture and traditions of that language. Learning in a mother tongue in the early years of education should be a must and it must be highly implemented so that people who study English as a second language would find it not difficult to transfer already known knowledge from mother tongue to a second language.

Vernacularisation refers to a situation where an indigenous language is developed and made to function in domains such as

education, the mass media and government services. The elevation of the nine African languages to official status is an example of vernacularisation. This is something that is not yet firmly established since English continues to dominate in official domains (Kamwendo 2006).

Language planning can serve as a tool for empowering groups and individuals, or creating and strengthening national bonds and ties, and for maximising educational and economic development (Reagan 2002: 420). Language is everywhere and is essential to thinking and learning. It permeates our thoughts, mediates our relations with others, and even creeps into our dreams. Most human knowledge and culture is stored and transmitted in language.

### **4.3 The role of indigenous African languages in educational institutions**

Language is everywhere and is essential to thinking and learning. It permeates our thoughts, mediates our relations with others, and even creeps into our dreams. The development of isiZulu and other African languages for academic purposes is considered a crucial issue in the academic debate as Languages of learning and teaching (LoLT) at tertiary level (Kembo-Sure 2000).

Language planning involves public decisions about language, its use, status and development, decisions that have overwhelming significance socially, economically, educationally and politically for both society and the individual (Reagan 2002: 419). Corpus planning, on the other hand, would focus primarily on the lexical development and expansion of Afrikaans and the African languages of South Africa. Specific examples of corpus planning would include the creation of new terminology and the production of dictionaries and textbooks. Acquisition planning refers to organised efforts to promote learning of a language (Cooper 1989: 157).

Maseko and Kaschula (2009: 3) argue that:

Through multilingual learning and teaching universities can promote transformation, linguistic tolerance and cultural sensitivity in higher education. This responsibility is appropriate to universities mainly because of their principal function as centres of research, enquiry and development... There is ineffective communication between doctors and their patients as they do not understand each other's culture and language. The relationship between a health-care professional (HCP) and his/her client requires communication, but meaningful

communication is only possible through a language that is intelligible to both the interlocutors.

In their study, communication through a language that everyone knows and understands best is pivotal for any business's survival. Language plays a very crucial role in social cohesion of the community and in uniting the nation. African languages are primarily used for everyday oral communication, but enjoy limited use in some higher domains, particularly in the media and education. Their role to unite is seen but their full participation is not highly active in education, law, media and now even in churches.

Many African language speakers moving into the English first language schools are moving away from their own language which they seem to regard as inferior or useless. This is seen through a number of Black parents sending their children at an early stage to schools which do not offer any indigenous African language. By doing so, they play a role in downplaying their own languages portraying them as inferior.

Crystal (2000: 78) is of the opinion that:

The learning of the dominant language is virtually everywhere, there is no escape because the same transport systems which carry country people into cities are used to convey consumer products and the associated advertising back to their communities.

When one culture assimilates to another, the sequence of events affecting the endangered language seems to be the same

everywhere. Language declines when positive attitudes are missing, when it is seen as a sign of backwardness, especially by the younger generation, when they have no confidence in it and when it is not being strongly maintained even in rural areas.

Ngugi wa Thiong'o, (1986) remembers a time in his school days when speaking a first language was not allowed. He says:

One of the most humiliating experiences was to be caught speaking Gikuyu (an indigenous African language) in the vicinity of the school. The culprit was given corporal punishment-three to five strokes of the cane on the bare buttocks- or was made to carry a metal plate around the neck with inscriptions such as 'I am stupid' or 'I am a donkey'.

Such incidents happen in our own schools where the majority of speakers are indigenous African language speakers, which involve even the school governing bodies (SGB) doing nothing to stop this thing from happening. Learners, because of this practice, are demotivated in using their indigenous African languages. They are made, by circumstances to think and feel that their indigenous African languages are useless.

It is, however,, noted that people in general have different attitudes in the use of languages in South Africa. Pearsall (1998: 108) refers to 'attitude' as a settled way of thinking or feeling about someone or something. Language attitudes are the feelings people have about their own language or the language for others.

The African languages of South Africa comprise mainly the African languages of which four distinct groups can be distinguished, namely the

Nguni languages (isiXhosa, isiZulu, isiNdebele, and siSwati); the Sesotho languages (Sepedi, Sesotho and Setswana); Tshivenda and Xitsonga. The African languages are primarily used for everyday oral communication and enjoy limited use in some higher domains, particularly in the media and education.

Mboup (2008) is of the opinion that language plays a significant role in the economic lives of people. Mboup (2008: 73) points out that:

Language is the most important and the most dynamic element of every culture. As such, it is at the core of the process of contestation of foreign domination, as an irreplaceable means of expression and social communication in all political and economic activities and socio-cultural manifestations which participate in the project of resistance to foreign domination, multiform national resistance always includes a strong linguistic component.

Languages come with market value, as outlined in Chapter One, the promotion of social use of indigenous African languages and their usage as national languages and mostly as languages of education are of crucial importance to the society at large.

The elements that make up any culture are contingent to conditions of life. They are contingent to specific geographical location, to economic, legal, political and technological development. They are subject to change and transformation as these factors change. The dynamism, stagnation and adaptation of a culture to a new environment will also depend on these contingent factors. Consequently, as people learn about the restrictive aspects of their culture, they would remove these barriers and substitute them with more progressive ones. In this way there could

be a culture that develops organically. This approach is a more judicious and democratic way of dealing with the archaic and destructive toxics of a culture. A culture that moves forward by the means of its own internal necessities in an open and free environment which would serve the interest of its own people. In contrast, a culture dictated by an occupying state and establishment tends to serve their interest and supremacy.

Tonkin (2003: 6) postulates that:

The diversity of language is an asset: it helps build cohesion in small communities and sustains unique cultures, thereby bestowing distinctive identities on individuals and reducing alienation and homogenisation. The rich variety of linguistic idioms carries with it an equally rich variety of cultural forms and ways of thought, and maintains for humankind a diversity of devices for coping with the uncertain challenges of human existence. And who knows what cultural and intellectual tools we will need in tomorrow's world? In this sense, linguistic diversity resembles biodiversity.

One would argue that for effective and rapid development of science and technology in Southern Africa, use of African languages and modern technology is a must for the development of African languages. Democracy is essential for the equal development of African languages and African languages are vital for the development of democracy based on equality and social justice.

Wurm (2001: 13) populates that:

Each language reflects a unique world-view and culture complex, mirroring the manner in which a speech community has resolved its problem in dealing with the world, and has formulated its thinking, its system of philosophy and understanding of the world around it. In

this, each language is the means of expression of the intangible cultural heritage of peoples, and it remains a reflection of this culture for some time even after the culture which underlies it decays and crumbles, often under the impact of an intrusive, powerful, usually metropolitan, different culture. However, with the death and disappearance of such a language, an irreplaceable unit in our knowledge and understanding of human thought and world-view is lost forever.

There is no freedom of expression and freedom of association when the majority speakers are, by circumstances, denied to speak and communicate using their first languages. African speakers should be considered an asset in using their first languages and not a burden. Language offers a window of opportunity in African development and in the philosophy of life.

Ndhlovu (2008: 146) postulates that:

Since Parliaments are the most dominant political institutions in any democratic society, they have the capacity to provide a chance for marginalised groups to find their niche in national discourses. To this effect, I suggest language-based proportional Parliamentary representation as an alternative to the prevailing legislative arrangements. The distinct advantage of a proportional system of representation is that it is cognisant of the diversities and pluralities characterising multilingual societies.

Indigenous African languages should be seen as languages of African political liberation and of economic emancipation. This could happen if all languages are used when conducting research mainly for their development while their vitality and equality is recognised for the future empowerment of the African people.

Ramphela (2009) in the *Sunday Times* (dated March 8), speculated that:

Can you imagine a French child arriving at preschool being greeted by a teacher in broken English? Or a child in grade one being taught in English by a teacher who is not proficient in the language because her mother tongue is French? Welcome to the daily reality of indigenous African language teaching in post-apartheid South Africa. If language is not only the medium of communication, but also a means of cultural heritage transmission between generations, how are our children to know who they are and what heritage they bring to South Africa's diversity? South African Airways, the national carrier, must be one of few state-owned airlines on which passengers are not greeted in a dominant indigenous language. African language use is restricted to one line or phrase, almost as an afterthought: Hambani Kahle! Tsamayang hantle!

Our current approaches alienate children from their cultural roots and make parents' participation in the education of their children difficult. How can they participate in a process in which their primary medium of communication is rendered irrelevant? How can they help their own children learn when the language of instruction becomes a barrier to communication from the first day of school? Ubuntu (humanity to others) and Batho Pele (people first) as values of our society can only thrive if anchored to a firmer cultural heritage base. To leverage South Africa's rich diversity of languages is key to our success.

Language affects a variety of economic outcomes, such as trade, economic growth, education and the provision of public goods. Productivity in manufacturing is higher when workers communicate with each other. Urban residents interact and use markets more than their rural counterparts. Both manufacturing employment and urbanisation provide incentives to learn new languages, however, communicating in a mother tongue is of vital importance mainly for the attainment of community discourse which is normative in our society which maps indigenous

African languages to the global market as important languages which best describes our culture.

Linguistic diversity within a country is negatively associated with both economic growth and the provision of public goods. Negash (2005: 6) points out that ‘language is the primary instrument of people's access (or non-access) to education, technological know-how, and scientific and intellectual knowledge, which, in turn, determine the state of the economic well-being, identity and culture of nations/communities.’ African languages as vehicles of communication and knowledge survive and have a written continuity of thousands of years. Colonialism created some of the most serious obstacles against African languages and literatures. African languages are important for nation building and societal coherence, and development.

#### **4.4 The Language Question in Economic Policies**

The South African government has responded to the various needs of the society by creating a number of economic policies which aimed at solving economic inequalities between the rich and the poor. It is, however, noted that in all these economic policies which are stated hereunder, language problems are not considered, the objectives of these policies is to empower African people. These policies are not made available in the languages of these people they seek to empower. Language situation is also downplayed even by the policy makers when they seek to empower economically affected people without the inclusion of their languages in those policies.

Language issues are strictly not addressed neither mentioned in the process of empowering economy to the needy communities of South Africa. In their processes of empowering African people, they

purposefully, without any communication made available in the languages of the masses, disempower them. The following are the good examples of government economic policies which seek to empower African people but fail to do so because of the language matter which these policies are presented in. As a matter of fact, these economic policies empower those who are already empowered and not the needy, because of the language which hinder the needy to obtain any help from these policies. The major are stated hereunder.

#### **4.4.1 Language in Relation to Growth, Employment and Redistribution (GEAR)**

Growth, Employment and Redistribution (GEAR) is a macroeconomic strategy adopted by the Department of Finance in June 1996 as a five year plans aimed at strengthening economic development, broadening of employment, and redistribution of income and socioeconomic opportunities in favour of the poor people /communities of South Africa. GEAR remains government policy in trying to resolve matters of poverty. The key goals of the policy as originally outlined were economic growth of 6% in the year 2000, inflation less than 10%, employment growth above the increase in economically active population, deficit on the current account and the balance of payments between 2 and 3 percent, a ratio of gross domestic savings to GDP of 21.5 percent in the year 2000, improvement in income distribution, relaxation of exchange controls and reduction of the budget deficit to below 4 percent of GDP (source: Department of trade and industry of South Africa).

The government acknowledges GEAR's stringent limits on expenditure limit the ability to meet social development goals of the RDP. As the South African National Housing code notes "The most significant goals of GEAR in respect of our capacity to implement the housing programme

are those that have to do with availability of funds for housing. GEAR is clear about promising tighter fiscal policy measures, which are being brought about by a cut in government expenditure and a more cost-effective civil service. Consequently, it is unlikely that government will have the capacity to expand the scope of subsidies or grants, beyond those already accepted as housing policy" (source: Department of Trade and Industry of South Africa).

Economic growth, poverty reduction and job creation remain key goals of economic policy. The South African government has made significant progress in meeting the goals of the RDP: providing housing, basic services, health care and land reform. The lives of millions of people have been improved. The government says GEAR and privatisation are the best long-term way to achieve this growth.

The macroeconomic policy known as GEAR is seen by many as being in direct conflict with the goals of the RDP, the reduction of poverty and a more equal division of wealth. South Africa remains a divided economy with the vast majority of the poor being Black and most of the wealthy white. Economic growth is insufficient to reduce unemployment. Though jobs have been created in the informal sector they have been lost in the formal sector. Millions of people still need adequate housing, basic services and land. To achieve and maintain the goals set out in the RDP South Africa needs growth.

The government of South Africa faces major protests from the homeless over lack of housing and from those threatened eviction from their homes because they cannot afford to pay their mortgage bonds. Perhaps the most poignant challenge facing South Africa is how it will balance its fiscal policy and its goal of attracting foreign investment with the

pressing needs of its people for jobs, housing, land, education and health care which is defined as rights in its constitution. It is, however, noted that, as it is noted in the previous chapter that economy and language is the cornerstone of the wealth and gross domestic product (GDP) of any country. There is a need for a relevant language planning so that it functions alongside the needs of the mass population.

#### **4.4.2 Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP)**

In the early 1990s, unions, the civic movement and social organisations began to develop a plan for social transformation needed for post-apartheid South Africa. A process developed which involved extensive consultations within the African National Congress (ANC), its allies and a wide range of experts that resulted in 1994 in the Reconstruction and Development Programme. The RDP aimed at addressing the many social and economic problems facing the country. A key aspect of the RDP was that it linked reconstruction and development. The RDP recognised that all the problems (lack of housing, a shortage of jobs, inadequate education and health care, a failing economy) are connected. It proposed job creation through public works, the building of houses and provision of services would be done in a way that created employment. The five key programmes were: meeting basic needs, developing human resources, democratising the state and society, building the economy and implementing the RDP.

It is also noted that all these are implemented without considering the importance of language use and without any inclusion of linguistic communities by recognising and using the languages of the people whom these policies are directed to (Source: Department of Trade and Industry of South Africa).

#### **4.4.3 Black Economic Empowerment (BEE)**

Black economic empowerment is already an unfolding process in our economy, however, this document outlines the more comprehensive and focused strategy that is now needed and adds impetus to the process by providing greater clarity and certainty. The document begins with an analysis of the legacy of dispossession and disempowerment that characterised our economic development until 1994. It is essential that we understand this in order to comprehend actions which are needed for success. The steps taken to overcome this legacy are examined and lessons from this experience are extracted.

Black Economic Empowerment (BEE) is the outcome of an extensive consultation process within government and with the private sector. It is informed by contributions of the BEE Commission as well as the views of the President's Black Business and Big Business working groups. The Trade and Industry Chamber of the National Economic Development and Labour Council have also considered the matter and their inputs have been incorporated. Black Economic Empowerment functions without the recognition of indigenous African languages yet it seeks to empower indigenous African communities. It is for this reason that the mass population does not know nor understand what BEE entails. There is a need for a relevant language planning so that it functions alongside the needs of the mass population and serves to meet the needs of needy African communities.

The challenge in defining BEE is to find the appropriate balance between a very broad definition and an overly narrow one. To define BEE too broadly equates BEE with economic development and transformation in general. The strategy is then commensurate with the totality of government's programme of Reconstruction and Development.

Accordingly, government defines BEE as an integrated and coherent socio-economic process that directly contributes to the economic transformation of South Africa and brings about significant increases in the numbers of Black people that manage, own and control the country's economy, as well as significant decreases in income inequalities. Thus BEE process will include elements of human resource development, employment equity, enterprise development, preferential procurement, as well as investment, ownership and control of enterprises and economic assets.

#### **4.4.3.1 Policy Objectives of BEE**

The successful implementation of the BEE strategy is evaluated against the following policy objectives. These are some of the objectives of the BEE.

- A substantial increase in the number of black people who have ownership and control of existing and new enterprises.
- A substantial increase in the number of black people who have ownership and control of existing and new enterprises in the priority sectors of the economy that government has identified in its microeconomic reform strategy.
- A significant increase in the number of new black enterprises, black-empowered enterprises and black-engendered enterprises.
- A significant increase in number of Black people in executive and senior management of enterprises.
- An increasing proportion of the ownership and management of economic activities vested in community and broad-based enterprises (such as trade unions, employee trusts, and other collective enterprises) and co-operatives.
- Increased ownership of land and other productive assets, improved access to infrastructure, increased acquisition of skills, and increased participation in productive economic activities in under-developed areas including the 13 nodal areas identified in the Urban Renewal Programme and the Integrated Sustainable Rural Development Programme.

- Accelerated and shared economic growth.
- Increased income levels of black persons and a reduction of income inequalities between and within race groups.

Looking at the above mentioned objectives of the Black Economic Empowerment, language issues are strictly not addressed neither mentioned in the process of empowering economy to the needy communities of South Africa, even to the objectives. How can one use information to which one only has limited access to? This concern is also noted by Chimhundu (1998: 7) with regards to indigenous African languages. The idea in the following statement is that even policy makers are in the processes of neglecting indigenous African wisdom, they do this by fully downplaying indigenous African languages when implementing policies which affect the daily living of African language speakers.

How can [one] guarantee democracy when the law of the country is not understood in the language of the people? How does [one] abide by what [one] does not know? How can [one] use information to which [one] only has limited access? How can [one] fully participate in anything, or compete, or learn effectively or be creative in a language [one] is not fully proficient or literate? Above all, how can a country develop its human resource base to full potential without the languages of the people?

It appears that even government departments who seem to seek to help needy communities in terms of different infrastructures, are talking to themselves when redressing/addressing community problems to people whom they do not speak their language. If the majority of South Africans, especially in Zululand, are isiZulu first language speakers yet they are addressed in a foreign language by government, it appears to me that, government is not doing enough for the citizens of this country. It seems that there is a lack of political will from the government if the government is not doing sufficient ways of developing and maintaining languages of the mass population who gave him a big vote.

## 4.5 Corpus Language Planning

Corpus planning, according to the author's understanding, is an approach to language planning that involves the expansion of a language through vocabulary and terminology development. Kloos (2003: 32) defines corpus planning as: 'the linguistic form of a language and attempts to identify variables that modify the nature of language itself'. Specific examples of corpus planning would include the creation of new terminology, spelling, production of dictionaries and textbooks, magazines, newspapers, standardisation of a language.

Languages can be regarded as amongst the abstract social structures. Language defines a certain potential, certain possibilities, and excludes others – certain ways of combining linguistic elements are possible. According to Kloos (1986: 78) corpus planning means the codification of a language, that is, the development or adaptation of a written form, the choice of a standard language, the modernisation of change of terms, the manifestation of orthographic, lexical and grammatical norms.

According to the 2001 population census which is presented in the table below, South Africa has roughly 45 million people. The majority 23.82 % of South Africans are isiZulu speakers, followed by isiXhosa (17.64 %), Afrikaans (13.35 %), Sepedi (9.39 %), English (8.20 %), Setswana (8.20 %), Sesotho (7.93 %), Xitsonga (4.44 %), siSwati (2.66 %), Tshivenda (2.28 %), isiNdebele (1.59 %), and other languages (0.48 %).

<b>SOUTH AFRICAN LANGUAGES 2001</b>		
<b>Language</b>	<b>Number of speakers*</b>	<b>% of total</b>
Afrikaans	5 983 420	13.35%
English	3 673 206	8.2%
IsiNdebele	711 825	1.59%
IsiXhosa	7 907 149	17.64%
IsiZulu	10 677 315	23.82%
Sesotho sa Leboa	4 208 974	9.39%
Sesotho	3 555 192	7.93%
Setswana	3 677 010	8.2%
SiSwati	1 194 433	2.66%
Tshivenda	1 021 761	2.28%
Xitsonga	1 992 201	4.44%
Other	217 291	0.48%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>44 819 777</b>	<b>100%</b>

\* *Spoken as a home language*  
*Source: Census 2001*

Corpus language planning is part of indigenous African languages planning as well since these languages (indigenous African languages) are spoken and used by the majority of citizens in the Republic of South Africa. South Africa's language policy is a product of the political transformation that started in the early 1990s. South Africa's new constitution, which was adopted in 1996, recognises eleven official languages, nine of which are the previously marginalised African languages. The official languages then are: Sepedi, Sesotho, Setswana, siSwati, Tshivenda, Xitsonga, Afrikaans, English, isiNdebele, isiXhosa and isiZulu.

Colonial languages in many African states like Zambia, Malawi, Zimbabwe, Lesotho, Swaziland and South Africa have continued to be

languages of government, higher education, economy and national politics. Language policies have been very dominant in education and business transactions with indigenous African languages being reduced to languages of village and cultural communication only. It is even worse in instances where English second language learners listen and hear the language of instruction, which is English, then interpretations and thinking have to be in mother tongue and communicating both oral and written responses take place in English.

The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (1996) recognises eleven of South Africa's most spoken languages as official languages of the country, nine of the eleven are indigenous African languages and are spoken by the majority of the South African population. Corpus planning focuses on changes by deliberate planning to the actual corpus or shape of a language. While status planning mainly deals with the selection of a norm, corpus planning deals with codification, and can play a significant role in implementation and elaboration stages (Ngcobo 2005).

Learners in schools have not acquired any proficiency and competency in any indigenous African language and at the same time they have equally failed to acquire the same in English. Such practice promote semilingualism in Southern Africa where the majority of learners are neither proficient in English nor in their mother tongues. Language has a powerful influence on the outcomes of schooling. Language is also a crucial means of gaining access to important knowledge and skills and this can determine academic achievement. Learners with a limited proficiency in the medium of instruction are most at risk of school failure.

The non-use of documentation in court proceedings and the non-use of other indigenous African languages, other than Afrikaans, by members of

the parliament undermine the constitutionality of the use of major and viable languages such as isiZulu, seSotho and isiXhosa. This practise in fact excludes the use of these African languages in matters of educational and political development for vast numbers of its population. Learning is at the heart of the modern world's endeavours to become a knowledge economy.

Heine and Nurse (2002: 5) argue that:

The quality and quantity of the documentation for African languages ranges from fairly high to nil. We say 'fairly high' because no African language has been documented or analysed to the extent of the better researched European or Asian languages. If we define 'fairly high' as having a reasonably accurate and comprehensive reference grammar available, then less than a hundred African languages are in this category. For most, the documentation consists of an inadequate grammar, an analysis of part of the language, an article or two. For yet others, all we have is a reliable word list, or less than that.

Wolff (2000: 23) is of the opinion that there could be no successful and competitive national development of multilingual states in Africa without due recognition of the big three 'M's namely multilingualism multiculturalism and modernisation of the mother tongues; and mother tongue education. It is, therefore, a right way to foster academic excellence through indigenous African languages.

#### **4.6 Status Language Planning**

Status planning is, according to the general knowledge of the author, is an effort to influence the allocation of functions among a community's languages and it has to do with establishing policies, rules or laws about which languages are to be used and which ones should be left and why.

Status planning refers to decisions made by governments and other authorities at the supranational, national, regional or community level, which decide the status of individual languages in relation to each other. Decisions may also be made in relation to the use of certain languages in various institutions, in various areas of public life, for specific functions or in various regions of the state. Such decisions may involve deciding the number of languages to be designated or used and which languages or which form of language. Status planning refers to decisions made by governments and other authorities at the supranational, national, and regional or community level, which decides the status of individual languages in relation to each other. Decisions may also be made in relation to the use of certain languages in various institutions, in various areas of public life, for specific functions or in various regions of the state. Such decisions may involve deciding the number of languages to be designated or used and which languages or which form of language.

Halliday (1972) defines corpus planning “internal” or “linguistic” planning, while status planning as “external” and “social” planning. According to Webb and Kembo-Sure (2000), corpus planning refers to determination of standards and norms for a language, as well as the introduction of new words and technical terms. Language planning is a social construct that may involve the discursive production of a language policy (Alexander and Heugh 1999). The minority languages have no official status whatsoever. They are only used within the confines of their respective ethnic communities. Their functions are limited to family, ethnic interaction and cultural activities. English, on the other hand, is spoken many by the educated portion of the population, and it often involves urban dwellers who work in government and private sector. It is the language of government and administration, trade and commerce,

courts and legal proceedings, science and technology, education and international relations (Batibo 2000).

Alexander (2005: 15) argues that:

It is more than obvious that the availability of the Internet as a tool enables smaller linguistic communities to take their virtual places alongside all the peoples of the world and to preserve their languages as expressions of modernity. There is also no doubt that the world wide web is beginning to serve as a kind of linguistic archives for endangered and even extinct languages and that this capacity is of the utmost significance for the preservation of the cultural heritage of all of humanity. The basis upon which language bodies make their decisions is very often the linguistic behaviour of the dominant community in the society, and it is the variety spoken by these people that generally becomes the standard language of the broader community.

Language goes further than just communication, it extends to a sense of belonging somewhere and, more than that, a sense of pride in that somewhere. Languages come with their own unique way of thinking and way of living. It is not just the words we lose when we ignore our languages, but the culture and heritage that come with them. When languages die, whole peoples die and along with them, everything they have to offer to society at large.

Nakin (2009: 98) argues that:

All languages and all their varieties have the words and sounds necessary to express whatever their speakers wish to say. Again, all languages are kitted up with the linguistic structures and rules needed to speak about any topic. It is a fact that some languages have a higher prestige and value than others. Thus, all languages are not seen as socially equal. One language might have a word for a certain concept while another may lack such a word. That does not

mean that the language with that word is superior to the language without the word. Furthermore, all languages have an inherent capacity to accommodate new items by means of different strategies.

Indigenous African languages have market value. This idea is supported by Prah 1996 (cited in Jokweni 2001: 1) that:

If African languages are cooperatively developed on the basis of harmonised clusters across borders, the resultant large population sizes of language communities provide a better basis for economies of scale in the production of educational and general media material of such harmonised languages.

These languages must be used in communication, and also be stabilised in communal domains. By the time parents stop the belief that the languages of the study cannot open job opportunities for their children. Indigenous African languages not languages of the study and less attention is given to colonial languages more than indigenous African languages, there were light and progress in the fight against multilingualism in South Africa. The principle of equity of all languages must be practiced and not documented alone. All languages should enjoy recognition and protection.

Ndhlovu (2008: 12) is with the school of thought that believes that:

With the aid of information communication technologies, the existing theories and methodologies of computational linguistics, lexicography and natural language processing can be easily applied to terminology development and standardisation for bio-medical sciences, mathematics, environmental studies, natural sciences, agriculture, law, commerce and other specialist fields. In short, the movement of African languages throughout the world makes them amenable to processes of modernisation through processes of term creation and the Internet

becomes the perfect point of entry for the global dissemination of information about Africa in African languages.

All languages must be adequately developed to serve the complex and diverse requirements of modern communication. Human beings are equipped, other than animals, to acquire a rule based language system simply by being exposed to the language spoken around infants. Language is undoubtedly an essential part in the making of Africa and African identities. The concept of right to language refers to “the right to use the language one is most proficient in, as well as the right of access to the languages of empowerment and socio-economic advancement” (Mazrui and Mazrui, 1998: 115). Therefore, if, for political, economic or other reasons, a person is denied access to a language that is crucial to ensuring his/her upward social mobility, then that person’s individual right to language will have been violated and this constitutes a form of marginalisation.

Tonkin (2003: 6) is of the opinion that:

The diversity of language is an asset. It helps build cohesion in small communities and sustains unique cultures, thereby bestowing distinctive identities on individuals and reducing alienation and homogenisation. The rich variety of linguistic idioms carries with it an equally rich variety of cultural forms and ways of thought, and maintains for humankind a diversity of devices for coping with the uncertain challenges of human existence. And who knows what cultural and intellectual tools we will need in tomorrow’s world? In this sense, linguistic diversity resembles biodiversity.

When languages are marginalised and remain invisible in the development process, it is the accumulated wisdoms that die – wisdoms about politics, about philosophy, about ideology, about living on the

planet earth and successfully doing so. Every ethno linguistic community is unique and has a different history from any other.

Matlwa (2007) in the *Sunday Times* (dated October 7) postulated that:

The state of indigenous languages in schools and tertiary institutions is not just sad but dire. Not so much because the structures or policies are not in place, but because of the mentality about indigenous languages, the mentality that goes “if it’s black, it’s wack”, a mentality that has been with us from before- before and that refuses to leave us still.

Languages offer a window of opportunity to our understanding of the dynamics of African development and African worldviews and philosophies of life. Rather than limiting the majority of people in Southern Africa to their right to language, media dialogues about African politics, economics, democracy, and human rights should be available and debated in a language which the mass population understand, that is an indigenous African language.

It is, therefore, for this reason that Webb (2000: 23) postulates that:

Language determines thought and perception. This is done in a casual way, so that any changes in the structural functions or social meanings of a language impact upon the cultural character of its speakers. Language determines thought and perception, but in a constitutive, not casual way. For example, acquiring a ‘racist’ language as a first language will promote a racist perception of the world. Culture stands in a casual and deterministic relationship to language, so that cultural changes naturally lead to linguistic changes. Cultural changes impact upon language, thus leading to linguistic adaptation and change. This includes changes in the meaning of words as in the case of words such as tribe, nation, people, and democracy.

Prah (1995) states that “we have abundant evidence that any idea can be conveyed in any language”. African languages should play a pivotal role in economic and social issues of their speakers and not languages with minor speakership which are labelled as languages of power, English and Afrikaans.

Matlwa (2007: 22) further postulates that:

When a French woman walks into the room staggering and stumbling over English words, her heavy accent making it near impossible to decipher what she is saying, we find ourselves captivated. When a Zulu woman walks into the room knocking herself on English words, bumping and smashing terms in her way, her heavy accent making it difficult to discern what she is up to, we find ourselves concerned. In this day and age, at a time when education should be freely available to all, she should at the very least be able to communicate the basics in English, we think.

When a Russian accent walks into the lecture theatre and puts up its slides, conversations abruptly cease, pens and highlighters are held ready because what is to come is surely founded on intellect and years of research and study. But when a Tswana accent walks into the lecture theatre and sets up its slides, conversations pause to check out the curious form, note pads are forgotten in bags and pens are used only to take down references to be checked after the lecture has ended.

On the playground, when an English-speaking girl attempts to repeat a phrase in Sepedi and calls a cat a mat, we smile and hug her warmly because her heart is in the right place. But on that same playground when a Xhosa-speaking girl calls a boy a she and a she a man, we cringe and hastily correct her and hope, for her sake anyway, that she never makes that mistake again.

If indigenous African languages are looked down upon, even by their first language speakers, this can result in a terrible loss of respect and disregard for culture and traditions of these indigenous African languages. Language is a human phenomenon. It appears that people have different attitudes towards many things. From the above quotation, it appears that in different domains where they meet regularly such as workplace and in schools, their attitudes come into practice when they resolve issues about languages they speak. It also appears that in most cases we do not value our own indigenous African languages as languages that can emancipate us from poverty and to linguistic inequalities.

Language is a necessity for co-operation and interaction everywhere we find ourselves. A language spoken by one community or nation is as important as any other language spoken by other communities or nations. The right of each language to exist is no less or more valid than any other language. They all stand on par to one another. In view of that, to deny this right for whatever reason would be undermining the most basic right of those people that use that specific language. The human experiences, thoughts and creativity in all its multi-dimensions are expressed and preserved in the body of our languages. The past, the present and the future are joined by the means of language. An economy is merely an integral part of the culture in which it operates, but both the culture and the economy are embedded in the language in which they are expressed and communicated.

Heugh (2002: 449) is of the opinion that:

Language policy developments in South Africa have undergone dramatic changes over the last decade. Explicit statements of policy have shifted away from the

segregationist mould of the previous apartheid government with the widely divergent roles and functions it ascribed to the various languages of the country. There is now a move toward principles that espouse the equal promotion of respect for, and use of, other languages. The extraordinary circumstances surrounding the political negotiations that led to a sharing of power after the country's first democratic elections of 1994 created the opportunity for 'proposals from below' (from civil society), to take root in a manner which has never before been possible in South Africa. Many of the proposals for new language policy have been accepted on an official level and an encouraging, optimistic environment seemed, in the early years of the new government of national unity, to promise a vibrant future for language development and multilingualism.

In a constitutional country such as South Africa where there is constitutional democracy, parliamentary proceedings must be carried out and recorded in an open way, which everybody can understand, and that is through involving indigenous African languages.

#### **4.7 Summary**

This chapter has looked at the views of other scholars pertaining to the use of languages and their effect on society as a whole, the use of isiZulu and how it could be developed for economic purposes. The next chapter will give a sample terminology and how it should be developed in order to satisfy the needs of the society in terms of language use in all public domains where real language practice occurs.



## Chapter 5: Terminology Development in isiZulu

### 5.0 Introduction

In all aspects of life languages are viewed as vehicles for equitable and democratic life for all. Languages, therefore, hold the key to the establishment of what would be described as democracy, education and equality for all (Bamgbose 2000). Good quality learning is not only about becoming more competent and productive but also about nurturing diversity and being well rooted in one's culture and traditions, while adapting to the unknown and being able to live with others. Language facilitates and determines the most important transactions of human life, it preserves and decides the rights of mankind, is a driver of economic competitiveness as well as community development.

Wurm (2001: 13) is of the opinion that each language reflects a unique world-view and culture complex, mirroring the manner in which a speech community has resolved its problems in dealing with the world, and has formulated its thinking, its system of philosophy and understanding of the world around it. In this, each language is the means of expression of the intangible cultural heritage of people, and it remains a reflection of this culture for some time even after the culture which underlies it decays and crumbles, often under the impact of an intrusive, powerful, usually metropolitan, different culture. However, with the death and disappearance of such a language, an irreplaceable unit in our knowledge and understanding of human thought and world-view is lost forever.

Parents play a huge part in forming the child's language. Even if people are "pre-programmed" in some way to speak language, we need to learn a specific language from the people around us. Mothers typically adjust their speech to fit the child's level which is called motherese. It is found

in practically every culture on the planet, and it has certain common characteristics: The “sentences” are very short, there is a lot of repetition and redundancy, there is a sing-song quality to it, and it contains many special “baby words.” It also is embedded in the context of the immediate surroundings, with constant reference to things nearby and activities that are going on here-and-now. Through motherese, language is developed efficiently and it is where language is mastered at level best by a learner.

Enabling access to education in the language in which the child feels most comfortable significantly increases that child’s chances in life. Teaching through an African language produces more democracy and equality, whereas using a foreign language as the measure of status and as a medium of education harms children and also a society as a whole. This view is supported by Alexander (2000: 17) when he states that it is pedagogically sensible and tactful to promote mother tongue education in early education. A second language and any other additional languages would follow after for socio-economic and political education system as an ideal, were possible. It has to be noted that the equitable use of languages plays an important role in education, cultural, socio-economic and in the political development of individuals and that of a country.

Through a language different people from different countries gave themselves a single identity and similar aspirations. Afrikaners developed and consolidated their language so much that they eventually became a dominant group in South African society. When the Afrikaners were in power, they legislated a language policy that gave English and Afrikaans official status and African languages were oppressed or promoted only in so far as they served "the divide and rule strategy". This language policy was doomed to failure as it inevitably caused resentment amongst Black

people. Correct language policy and planning must take into consideration the attitudes of the people whom a particular language is planned. Language can also be used as a mobilising tool.

This chapter deals with terminology as an important element of an intellectualised language that may be used for academic purposes at university level, in the teaching of fundamental concepts in economics. The elements of language planning which include status planning (the recognition of indigenous languages, focus in isiZulu, as official languages) and corpus planning (e.g. orthography) are at the core in language development. Terminology development must be a continuous process in order to keep languages abreast with developments in science, technology and other specialised knowledge areas, like Economics. In this chapter a sample of isiZulu economics terminology is presented against the backdrop of the position taken in this thesis, namely that in principle, African languages need to be used as languages of learning and teaching.

## **5.1 The Importance of Terminology Development**

The language clause in the Constitution is an integral part of this ideological meta-discourse and its interpretation. The implications and application should encapsulate the ideological meta-discourse of the Constitution. The development not only of high-quality textbooks but of excellent general reading material in abundance for African languages is critical if these languages are to provide cognitive and affective educational scaffolding comparable to that which is so richly available in English. The identity and pride in a culture of a group is expressed through its language.

The Threshold Project Report of 1990 reports that in South African schools, language factor in the curriculum is complicated by the curriculum overload that occurs as early as standard three where learners are to face expansion into content subjects, all with their own disciplines, concepts and vocabularies. Learners have to deal with a shift in approach from learning English as a subject to using English as a medium of learning across the curriculum, often without the necessary skills required to read a content subject with understanding. Terminology development is, in cases such as these, the long term solution to learners whose mother tongue is not English and have to learn their subjects in English. The development of indigenous African languages helps in growth and cognitive development of a child in the academic world.

Meaning is transmitted by authorised texts and certified by teachers in accredited schools. Communication depends on everyone's agreeing to use words to mean the intended message, and that is codified in a standard language or in a language that is spoken and understood by the majority citizens and in South Africa. In that process, a student is more likely to suffer from mental deficit and not progress well in his/her studies simply because the non-use of his/her home language hinders him/her from their full progression in his/her academic life. It is, therefore, the right foundation to foster for the promotion and development of the languages of the majority citizens, indigenous African languages, for the smooth transfer of knowledge from the source to the hearer.

It has been pointed out in the previous chapter that status and corpus planning are important in developing languages and promoting their use. This enables the use of languages, primarily for cognitive and emotional benefit and to support learning and teaching, either in the promotion of

mother tongue education or in supporting learning and teaching which is metered in ex-colonial languages. Translation and terminology development are important aspects of language development; however, the most difficult aspect of terminology development is the implementation of policies. A country's linguistic dilemma can be best addressed and solved through the development of terminology for the languages spoken by the masses. In South Africa an indigenous African language like isiZulu is one such example.

Terminology needs to be developed so that people who are speakers of indigenous African languages will have access to the economic affairs of their country. Terminology development plays an important role in language development of an individual for the better understanding of information available to them in business and academic world. Indigenous African languages need development so that they are used and viewed as functional languages of South Africa. It is, therefore, important to develop indigenous African languages into functional languages in a way that they are used in all spheres of life. Terminology, therefore, has a specific role it plays to the society. This view is supported by Alberts (2010: 600) in that:

It is important to develop official languages into functional languages in all spheres of life. Information transfer, assimilation and retrieval should be through the first language or mother tongue. It is proven that information is best acquired (decoding process) and conveyed (encoding process) through the first language. Standardised terminology leads to exact communication and misinterpretation or misunderstanding is avoided.

Terminology is a resource and has an important role in a country regarding the functional development of languages and their users. Effective economic, scientific and technological transfer and assimilation

of knowledge and skills amongst subject specialists and lay people, and the communication skills of the citizens of a country are developed through the use of correct terminology. It then becomes a crucial point that needs to be taken seriously that indigenous African languages need to be developed through language policies in all spheres of the society so that they will become functional languages in economy and education.

## **5.2 The History of Terminology Development in South Africa**

The 1996 Constitution language provisions set a new standard for language planning practice. This Language planning practice in South Africa has to respond to the challenge set by the Constitution language provisions by formulating models, constructs, strategies and methodologies that can effectively be deployed to realise the multilingual dispensation envisioned by the Constitution. This was the greatest challenge to language planning practice in South Africa. The previously marginalised languages need to be developed to a level whereby they can be used effectively in all aspects of communication. This entails both corpus planning and status planning. The 1996 Constitution language provisions point toward the need for language planning practice in South Africa to engage in proactive approaches that aim at giving effect to the multilingual dispensation envisioned in the Constitution.

Since the 1990s, the increased access to various sources of knowledge such as the internet, e-mail, video, television and oral tradition, besides the traditional literate sources and the broadening of the academic literate canon, have made the teaching boundaries among language, literature, and culture more permeable and have introduced ethnic, geographic, and gender-related variation in national languages and their cultural productions. Terminology development is introduced to foster easy

learning and teaching and easy transfer of knowledge from one person to another.

South Africa has Language policies which are well documented but in practice language rights are violated. In language planning and language policy, Wright (2007: 6) comments that:

Language planning and language policy express particular efforts at official social intervention and control in the sphere of language. Normally the direction and ambitions of language policy and planning embody an economic and social vision. In accord with this vision, certain aspects of current language practice in society are officially challenged or curbed, others are sustained and affirmed. In general, the aim of language policy is to move language practice in directions deemed desirable by those in power. Usually such attempts are applied through legislative measures (policy) and allied material provision (planning) to different social and political entities, such as geo-political regions, organised economic alliances, nations, provinces, industries, schools systems, government departments, businesses and so forth.

Looking at language as a resource, South Africans would be equipped with linguistic and economic freedom if their languages, indigenous African languages are used as languages that bring economic emancipation to their lives. In this sense, subject areas such as economics, science and technology can play a significant role in developing indigenous African languages, as it was the case with English. Technological information exists in languages such as English, French, German, Japanese and Chinese, to mention just a few, and not in indigenous African languages of Africa. Wright (2010: 6) describes language planning as: ‘the attempt to control the use, status and structure of a language through a language policy developed by a government or

by other authority.’ If the same efforts of development which were used in developing these above named languages are used in the development of indigenous African languages, indigenous African languages would share the same status with English and Afrikaans in South Africa as a language of business, economy, education, law and media.

Section six of chapter one of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa in 1996 declared eleven languages as official together with English and Afrikaans which was already used as official languages in colonial and apartheid South Africa. According to the constitution, the state must take practical and positive measures to elevate the status and advance the use of all official languages. It is noted that the language policy promotes the equitable use of all the official languages and accommodates linguistic diversity, which is something that is favoured by the linguistic groups of South Africa because it promotes multilingualism. In accordance with the Constitution there is the National Language Policy Framework (NLPF) and Implementation Plan formed in 2003. It proposes that optimal use be made of the country’s linguistic resources by fostering respect for linguistic diversity and for linguistic rights. This applies that the choice of a particular language in a particular situation is determined by the context in which it is used, like the function, the audience and the message for which it is employed. It is, therefore, a duty at hand to the government that all documents are made available in all eleven official languages of South Africa.

Considering the role of language in economic activity, it is a given fact that language can either be a barrier or a facilitator to economic activity. Therefore, if languages of the masses are not used in accordance with the language policy, their languages will be a barrier to economic activity since language is of central importance in the economic life of a country,

for an example as a means of human communication, as a means in vocational training, effective management, trade negotiations, job security and in job market.

The Department of Arts and Culture has made a multilingual soccer terminology list with the aim to make every soccer fan feel at home with the soccer jargon. It is, however, noted that there are limitations in the multilingual soccer terminology list since the terminology is without any explanations but only soccer terms put in isolation. When a person is not competent with soccer jargon, this booklet (the multilingual soccer terminology list) could not help them much because there are no explanations, what would happen is that a person will get even more confused with the terminology supplied. It could, therefore, be recommended that when terminology is created and developed, there must be explanations available in peoples' mother tongues / first languages so that they will be adequately assisted linguistically.

Maseko (2011: 99) postulates that for the successful terminology development in South Africa, people who undertake the task of the development of terminology like the terminologist, need to understand the concepts associated with the subject so that the process can lend itself to the creation of terms that can be adopted into the language that can be accepted and used by the speakers of that particular language. During the process of terminology development, corpus language planning and status language planning as well as cognitive, linguistic and communicative dimensions in terminology development.

### **5.3 Cognitive, Linguistic and Communicative dimensions in Terminology Development**

It is argued by Maseko (2011) that a term created must be a representation of a concept rather than a word because a concept stays for a long time in a learner's memory other than a word. In terminology creation, one has to ensure that a term created precisely represents the concept corresponding to the term, and for this to occur one is to consider the following three dimensions which are the cognitive, the linguistic and the communicative dimension of the term. This view is supported by van Huyseteen (2003: 99) in Maseko (2011) when she states that:

The terminologist describes the concepts of any one discipline in three ways: by definition, by their relationship to other concepts – as expressed by the conceptual structure and realised linguistic forms, and by linguistic forms themselves, the terms, phrases and expressions chosen for their realisation in any language.

In describing a concept, one would start by looking at the features, the characteristics and even the functions of a concept. This is the cognitive dimension in term creation. Once that has been achieved, and then one can look at the equivalent to represent that concept in a manner that is appropriate to the orthography, the phonology, syntax, morphology and semantics of the language. During the process of terminology development, one has to consider different ways on how a term should be developed which include compounding, blending, acronymy, coinage, loaning of words from other languages and borrowing. If these are to be made precisely without any political motivation, there would be a thorough and fair terminology development.

#### **5.4 Language Distribution in South Africa**

Some 25 languages are used in South Africa on a daily basis by more than 44.8 million people (Statistics South Africa 2003). The majority of

South Africans, almost 80% of the population, use an African language as their home language.

The most commonly-spoken home language is isiZulu, which is spoken by 23.8% of the population, followed by isiXhosa (17.6%) and Afrikaans (13.3%). English is used as a lingua franca across the country, but is the home language of 8.2% of the population (Census 2001). Equal rights are entrenched for the 11 languages used by 99% of the South African population. These languages are the two former official languages, English and Afrikaans, and nine African languages: Sepedi, Sesotho, Setswana, siSwati, Tshivenda, Xitsonga, isiNdebele, isiXhosa, and isiZulu. Language development is afforded high priority: "practical and positive measures" are to be put in place to advance these languages.

The Bill of Rights (Section 30) recognises language as a basic human right. It postulates that:

Everyone has the right to use the language and participate in the cultural life of their choice, but no one exercising these rights may do so in a manner inconsistent with any provision of the Bill of Rights.

This assumption seems to postulate the idea that language and culture somehow belong to a different order of things – that while there may be direct and indirect economic benefits from language viewed as an industry, language itself is fundamentally a matter of social identity, political redress and cultural reconstruction, issues to be pursued without reference to what might be called the economic life of language. We do not have the option of ignoring its economic dimensions. These interrupt on our every effort at linguistic reconstruction. Instead, we have to explore the ways in which language behaves as an economic entity.

Bloom and Grenier (1996: 46) postulate that:

As a basic proposition of economic analysis is that individuals respond to incentives, economists often focus on the idea that individuals seek to acquire those language skills whose expected financial benefits exceed their expected costs. The anticipation of various non-pecuniary benefits, for example, widening intellectual horizons or gaining social acceptance, though difficult to measure, will also play a role in these decisions.

The language of the home, our appropriately named mother tongue which we acquire through natural processes of inter-generational transmission, is like the air we breathe; so much a part of us, so taken for granted, so universal, that its value is hardly apparent. It becomes valuable and valued only when its distinctiveness is articulated for us, and this is generally done from a vantage point on the margins of our linguistic community or when we cruise beyond that community. Then difference and tension come into play, creating for us more conscious assessments of the value and distinctiveness of our linguistic/cultural environment, a placing of that environment in relation to that which lies beyond it.

Webb and Kembo-Sure (2000) postulate that corpus planning in Africa concerns both the development of African languages and the Africanisation of the ex-colonial languages. Therefore, the development of isiZulu and other African languages for academic purposes is a crucial issue. There is a real need to develop indigenous languages so that students can access science and technology through the medium of their native languages.

Luckett (1992: 18) postulates that until education resources in the African languages are developed to a higher conceptual level and not unless these languages are perceived to facilitate access to the wider society and

economic advancement, the attraction of English as opposed to the African languages will continue to be overwhelming. The researcher is of the opinion that language is at the core of every business enterprise in the global economic market mainly for its survival.

Webb (2002: 7) is of the view that a country must be transformed linguistically so that African languages play a far better and bigger public role than what they are doing presently. Webb postulates that:

Indigenous languages of the people of Africa have no role in the official domains in their country. The fact that official languages of public communication is a language originating from the colonial period; lastly, that approximately, only 30% of the citizens 'know' the official languages of their country. The masses of the population in the country are unable to express themselves in the official languages. The 30% is determined by the fact that, the majority of the population is not even aware of their language rights.

The identity and pride in a culture of a group is expressed through its language. An example that readily comes to mind here is that of the Zulus of South Africa. The Zulus are very proud of their culture and language so much that they have developed a negative attitude towards other South African languages. They are so uncompromising in their attitude towards other languages.

The interrelationship between language and society must be recognised and acknowledged. According to the 2001 population census, 80.9% of people in KwaZulu-Natal speak isiZulu. IsiZulu is the most frequently spoken home language in fact in most provinces of South Africa. Languages spoken in South Africa are shown with a percentage for each in the following figures (Census 2001 figures):

- Eastern Cape – isiXhosa (83.4%), Afrikaans (9.3%)
- Free State – Sesotho (64.4%), Afrikaans (11.9%)
- Gauteng – isiZulu (21.5%), Afrikaans (14.4%), Sesotho (13.1%), English (12.5%)
- KwaZulu-Natal – isiZulu (80.9%), English (13.6%)
- Limpopo – Sesotho (52.1%), Xitsonga (22.4%), Tshivenda (15.9%)
- Mpumalanga – siSwati (30.8%), isiZulu (26.4%), isiNdebele (12.1%)
- Northern Cape – Afrikaans (68%), Setswana (20.8%)
- North West – Setswana (65.4%), Afrikaans (7.5%)
- Western Cape – Afrikaans (55.3%), isiXhosa (23.7%), English (19.3%)

The 2001 South African census estimates the number of isiZulu speakers to be 10 677 308. At 23% of the population, isiZulu speakers constitute the largest language group in South Africa. The official languages of South Africa are divided in such that we have the Nguni languages, the Sesotho languages with seTsonga and Venda. The Nguni language family consists of isiXhosa, isiZulu isiSwati and isiNdebele while the Sesotho language family consists of Sesotho, Sepedi and Setswana with the inclusion of the former coloniser's languages, English and Afrikaans.

Kaschula & Anthonissen (1995) argue that the recognition of eleven official languages with nine African indigenous languages is a direct result of the implementation of Apartheid policies to facilitate the ideas of separate homelands, in each of which a different indigenous African language became the official language alongside English. According to Section 29 and 30 of the Bill of Rights there are eleven official languages in South Africa. National and provincial governments must use at least

two official languages for their business and the State has to take positive steps to advance the use of all official languages.

Chapter two of the LANGTAG report spells out that corpus development is needed to enable African languages to be used across the full range of public and educational domains. The researcher, therefore, is of the opinion that learners in schools where education takes place, should be given the opportunity to develop and value their home languages and their cultures by encouraging them to use their home or first languages in their learning. People generally do not hold opinions about languages in a vacuum. They develop attitudes towards language which reflect their views about those who speak the language, and the contents and functions with which they are associated.

That practice will not only help them to feel accepted, but that idea will play a fundamental role in developing their first language, which will surely in many government schools in South Africa, contribute to the level of pass rate and easy and fair knowledge transfer from teacher to learner. This practice will also make learners acknowledge the importance of their first language for economic, political, social and educational purposes. Using African languages in all domains of life of individuals, communities and society at large is a must from government.

## **5.5 Terminology Development**

Cluver (1996) argues that language development should be part of and contribute to the overall development of the community. According to the author, any language development should entail language selection, which includes the selection of a specific dialect for development. It must include language codification, which is the development of a writing

system, documentation of existing vocabulary and grammar, development of spelling and orthography especially for any unwritten language or modernising the existing spelling and standardising the language. Another point is that of language elaboration which involves the expansion of the functions of the language so that it can operate beyond its traditional domains (home, family and community) as a working language as well as in the public domains like in the government offices, administration, court proceedings etc.

Language could also be developed through language spread, which is the development of the language as a language for teaching and learning, especially in the domains of education as in primary, secondary and tertiary education, and also as a language of communication, as in media and technology. Another aspect of language development is that of language modernisation, which is a general terminology development in all spheres of the working environment, like economy, which is the focus of this study, like science and technology which is seriously important for the expression of abstract concepts (Cluver 1996).

The objective of the study was to investigate how isiZulu can be developed for academic purposes, and to develop terminology that will assist in the formation of isiZulu equivalents in the learning of economic concepts (Human Capital Theory) in economics. In developing the isiZulu terminology for economic concepts, the most important economic terms which are used in Chapter One of the book written by Michael Parkin, Melanie Powell and Kent Matthews are listed. These were taken in consultation with the University of Zululand's economics department staff and students to identify difficult terms in the above named book. This was done so that the researcher would have background knowledge on what terms in the economics book hinder their (students) success in

mastering economics in English. It was found in the study that there are significant problems learners face while learning in English, most economic terms consist of more than one word which seriously confuses learners in understanding those terms. It is also noted that these terms are at the core of the subject of economics. Students must know them well although they are impeded by limited proficiency in English.

Since these are fundamental economic terms, they are, however, inaccessible to students who are non-native English speakers, creating equivalent terms in isiZulu for the same concepts may go a long way in addressing the learners' problems. The fact that most of the concepts are referred to through multi-word terms, they compound the challenge given that the meaning of the terms may not always be deduced from the meanings of individual words making up such terms.

Students at the University of Zululand learn through the medium of English yet in their daily communication at home and with peers English is never used. This hinders their progress in mastering economics as a subject and its concepts which are never presented in their home language.

Terms were taken from the appendix of the book of economics and given to students for their translations in isiZulu. These sample terms hold what is a key terms in economics and are therefore the backbone of economics as a subject. Their meanings in isiZulu are more important and easy compared to English translations since most students are isiZulu First language speakers. The fundamental concepts in economics are presented hereunder with their isiZulu translations / equivalence. In Appendix 4 these are used as a study tool with their equivalent meanings in isiZulu.

What follows below is an exploratory sample of English terms with their explanations from Parkin, Powell and Mathews (2008) followed by either proposed equivalent isiZulu terms in bold, or isiZulu explanations of the terms in italics, or both. IsiZulu translations, both equivalent terms and explanations, were supplied by my informants or created by the researcher.

**Asset:** Anything of monetary value that is owned by a person. Assets include real property, personal property, and enforceable claims against others (including bank accounts, stocks, mutual funds, and so on). The equivalent isiZulu term could be **Impahla eyigugu** which can be explained as *impahla yasendlini noma oyisebenzisa ebhizinisini lakho*.

**Barter system:** System where there is an exchange of goods without involving money. The equivalent isiZulu term could be: **Ukuhwebelana ngokwempahla** which can be explained as *ukuhwebelana ngaphandle kokutshenziswa kwemali phakathi kwezinkampani, osomabhizinisi okanye nanoma ubani osebenza ngebhizinisi nokuhwebelana*.

**Budget:** A summary of intended expenditures along with proposals for how to meet them. A budget can provide guidelines for managing future investments and expenses. In isiZulu this term could be: **Ukuhlela lokuthenga** and can be explained as *uluhlu lwezinto ozozithenga uma usuthole imali*.

**Capital:** Wealth in the form of money or property owned by a person or business and human resources of economic value. Capital is the contribution to productive activity made by investment is physical capital (machinery, factories, tools and equipments) and human capital (e.g. general education, health). Capital is one of the three main factors of

production other two are labour and natural resources. An isiZulu equivalent term could be: **Imali oyidingayo uma uzoqala ibhizinisi.**

**Central bank:** Major financial institution responsible for issuing currency, managing foreign reserves, implementing monetary policy, and providing banking services to the government and commercial banks. In isiZulu this term could be explained as: **Ibhange elisemthethweni lokuxhumana ngokwezimali ngokwamazwe ngamazwe omhlaba.**

**Closed economy:** A closed economy is one in which there are no foreign trade transactions or any other form of economic contacts with the rest of the world. In isiZulu an equivalent term could be: **Umnotho wezwe ongancikile kwamanye amazwe.** This could be explained in isiZulu as *Umnotho wezwe ngezwe ongancikile kwamanye amazwe nongakudingi ukusebenza ngesivumelwano namanye amazwe. Umnotho wezwe ngezwe wokusimamisa noma ukufukula lelo nalelozwe kwezomnotho.*

**Deflation:** Deflation is a reduction in the level of national income and output, usually accompanied by a fall in the general price level. In isiZulu this term could be explained as: **Ukuwa noma ukufadalala komnotho.**

**Debts:** An amount owed to a person or organisation for funds borrowed which is paid mostly in instalments or in lump sum with interest added. In isiZulu this term could be explained as: **Izikweletu.**

**Tax:** A fee charged by government on a product or income or activity. In isiZulu this term could be explained as: **Intela.**

**Economic development:** The process of improving the quality of human life through increasing per capita income, reducing poverty, and enhancing individual economic opportunities. It is also sometimes defined to include better education, improved health and nutrition,

conservation of natural resources, a cleaner environment, and a richer cultural life. In isiZulu an equivalent term could be: **Ukukhuliswa komnotho which can be explained in the same language as *indlela ezahlukene okubalwa kuzo ukwakha amathuba omsebenzi nokuzikhulisa komuntu ngamunye kwezomnotho.***

**Gross domestic product (GDP):** Gross Domestic Product: The total of goods and services produced by a nation over a given period. Gross Domestic Product measures the total output from all the resources located in a country, wherever the owners of the resources live. In isiZulu this term could be presented as: **Inani lezimpahla nokuyigugu kwesizwe** and be explained as *ukuthengiswa kanye nokudayiswa kwazo okubalwa nenzuzo etholakalile ngenkathi zingena noma ziphuma kulelo nalelozwe.*

**Inflation** is the percentage increase in the prices of goods and services. In isiZulu this term could be presented as: **Ukukhula kwenani lezimpahla** which can be explained as *inani lokukhula okanye ukutshintsha kwenani lezimpahla ezithengiswayo ezimakethe.*

**International Monetary Fund (IMF):** An autonomous international financial institution that originated in the Bretton Woods Conference of 1944. Its main purpose is to regulate the international monetary exchange system, which also stems from that conference but has since been modified. In particular, one of the central tasks of the IMF is to control fluctuations in exchange rates of world currencies in a bid to alleviate severe balance of payments problem. An equivalent isiZulu term could be: **Inhlangano yomhlaba yemali** and it could be explained *inhlangano yamazwe wonke omhlaba esebenza ukulawula ukusebenzisana kwamazwe ngokwezimali nakwezomnotho, okubalwa kuzo ukulawula inani izwe*

*nezwe okumele lilikhokhe ekusebenzisaneni namanye amazwe omhlaba kwezomnotho.*

**Macroeconomics:** The branch of economics that considers the relationships among broad economic aggregates such as national income, total volumes of saving, investment, consumption expenditure, employment, and money supply. It is also concerned with determinants of the magnitudes of these aggregates and their rates of change over time. In isiZulu this term could be explained as: *Igatsha elibalulekile kwezomnotho elimayelana nenzuzo, ukonga, ukutshala imali kanye nokusetshenziswa kwemali. Lana kubukwa ikakhulukazi indlela inkampani kanye nezwe elilawula ngayo ukuphathwa nokusetshenziswa kwezimali.*

**Microeconomics:** The branch of economics concerned with individual decision units (firms and households) and the way in which their decisions interact to determine relative prices of goods and factors of production and how much of these were bought and sold. The market is the central concept in microeconomics. In isiZulu this term could be explained as: *Igatsha elibalulekile kwezomnotho elimayelana nokusetshenziswa kwemali yizinkampani, kungaba ezikahulumeni okanye ezizimele. Lana kubukwa ikakhulukazi indlela umuntu nomuntu ayisebenzisa ngayo imali.*

**Open economy:** is an economy that encourages foreign trade and has extensive financial and nonfinancial contacts with the rest of the world in areas such as education, culture, and technology. In isiZulu this term could be explained as: **Umnotho wezwe okhululekile** and this could be explained in the same language as *Igatsha lokuhwebelana kwezomnotho*

*kwamazwe ngamazwe okukhululekile, kungaba ukusetshenziswa kwemali okanye kube yisivumelwano sento ethile.*

**Political economy:** The attempt to merge economic analysis with practical politics--to view economic activity in its political context. In isiZulu this term could be explained as: **Uhlelo lwezomnotho oluncike kwezombusazwe.**

**Price:** The monetary or real value of a resource, commodity, or service. In isiZulu this term could be explained as: **Inani** okanye **intengo** yempahla ethengiswayo.

**VAT:** A form of indirect sales tax paid on products and services at each stage of production or distribution, based on the value added at that stage and included in the cost to the ultimate customer. In isiZulu this term could be explained as: *Intela eyengeziwe empahleni ethengiswayo.*

**World Bank:** An international financial institution owned by its 181 member countries and based in Washington, D.C. Its main objective is to provide development funds to the Third World nations in the form of interest-bearing loans and technical assistance. The World Bank operates with borrowed funds. In isiZulu this term could be explained as: **Ibhange lomhlaba.**

**WTO:** The World Trade Organisation is a global international organisation dealing with the rules of trade between nations. It was set up in 1995 at the conclusion of GATT negotiations for administering multilateral trade negotiations. Source for these definitions: economics book. In isiZulu an equivalent term could be: **Inhlangano yomhlaba yezokuhwebelana.**

## 5.6 Summary

Since language users simultaneously encode multiple meanings, a given segment of discourse must be analysed in terms of distinct functional modes. It is as if surface form were connected by a complex circuitry to meaning and function, the analytic task being to sort out the connections.

Indigenous African languages are largely eliminated and marginalised from use. Instead of investing in and using their linguistic, cultural, and human potential, African governments and the elite still continue to channel away their resources and energies into learning ‘imperial’ languages that are used by a tiny minority of the populations. Therefore, because of this fact, our country (South Africa) requires an economy that can meet the needs of all economic citizens, people and their enterprises in a sustainable manner. This will only be possible if the economy is built on the full potential of all persons and communities across the length and breadth of this country.

The South African economy requires an equally systematic response from government in order to achieve redress, particularly in the context of globalisation and the need for accelerated economic growth to eradicate poverty in our country. Since 1994 the government has taken many steps to transform the economy and has set the foundation for a focused strategy of broad-based black economic empowerment. Status planning is in place and is a very good one but there is no corpus planning at all more especially when it comes to indigenous African languages and culture. With the help of terminology developers, indigenous African languages cannot face death but could be functional languages of Africa with economic value like English and Afrikaans in South Africa. The next chapter presents the presentation and the interpretation of data which was

gathered at the University of Zululand which were in response of how isiZulu can be developed to teach economic concepts.

## **Chapter six: Data Presentation and Interpretation**

### **6.0 Introduction**

This research was carried out with first year students using the interpretive paradigm as described by Cohen and Manion (2000: 36): ‘The central endeavour in the context of the interpretive paradigm is to understand the subjective world of human experience’. The interpretive paradigm helps the researcher to find out the University of Zululand students’ experiences in trying to understand the Human Capital Theory of economics in a foreign language.

The study has found that indigenous African languages are downplayed in certain circles in society. Speakers of these languages feel that their languages are of little importance in their lives since they are not adequately used in their everyday business and economic life, even in their education. In this chapter, data that were collected with the use of questionnaires and interviews is presented and interpreted hereunder.

### **6.1 Presentation and Interpretation of Data**

On the basis of this study, it was found that the knowledge of a language is closely related to economy. Power relations and social stratification come into play more efficiently when people use the common dialect which they know and understand better. In South Africa, languages that unite the majority of people in social situations where they will feel better, are African languages, which are isiZulu and isiXhosa since they are the languages with a wider speakership in this country. Mother tongue education is a good foundation in developing indigenous African languages. This view is supported by Prah (1995: 66) that:

If only the mother tongue was allowed some influence on current social life, or was used across the counters of government offices, or directed the postal services, but this is not the case. The entire bureaucracy, the entire court system, all industry hears and uses the coloniser's language. Likewise, highway markings, railroad station signs, street signs and receipts make the colonised feel like a foreigner in her own country.

If indigenous African languages are given market value, when their importance is justified as crucial to the coming generation, indigenous African language can reclaim their space and be taught and used in the same way as European languages like English in South Africa. A belief that African languages have less vocabulary when it comes to certain subjects like economics, mathematics and science is a problem that can be solved if terminology is adequately developed to meet the needs of speakers of indigenous African languages.

## **6.2 Questionnaires**

All the data was collected from the University of Zululand's population. The questionnaires consisted of open-ended questions and closed question types. The original questionnaire which was distributed is presented in Appendix one and two for both close and open ended questions. Out of one hundred questionnaires which were given to students, I received ninety four with six being not returned back to me. The data received were in response to the following questions:

### 6.2.1 Close-ended Questions

Students were instructed to complete the following questionnaires and give their fair responses on the issues of languages use in South Africa.

#### 1. All languages are equally important in South Africa.

Strongly Agree    Agree    Strongly Disagree    Disagree  
                                                           

One hundred students took part in the study and ninety four questionnaires were returned while the other six was not returned. Most students, 60% of them ticked agree. This suggests that the majority of people in South Africa see that all languages of South Africa have the same and equal importance to the people who use them. This, therefore, highlights that all official languages must have the same recognition and same status so that they function alongside social needs of the people who speak them, all must have economic value.

#### 2. Indigenous African languages can enhance economic development in South Africa.

Strongly Agree    Agree    Strongly Disagree  
Disagree  
                                                           

Most respondents, 80% of them strongly agree. This suggests that, since the majority of students at the University of Zululand are isiZulu speakers, they believe in their language and that it can offer them information. Most of them can see the light and fully understand if their subjects are available in their first language.

**3. The excess use of English demotivates speakers of indigenous African languages to use their languages with pride.**

Strongly Agree    Agree    Strongly Disagree    Disagree

                                                                

Most respondents, 72% of them strongly agree on this issue. This is with a belief that the excess use of English in all spheres of life as the language of education, administration, court and business has reduced the status of other official languages of South Africa especially indigenous African languages. Besides status, they do not understand English which is used excessively and sometimes exclusively used.

**4. The only language with economic advancement in South Africa is English.**

Strongly Agree    Agree    Strongly Disagree

Disagree

                                                                

Most respondents, 56% of them agree. This is as a result of everything being made available in English and neglects other languages particularly indigenous African languages. Indigenous African languages are the major languages which experience this linguistic neglect while English dominates all spheres of government and economic advancement.

**5. The hegemony of English in South Africa has reduced the status of indigenous African languages.**

Strongly Agree    Agree    Strongly Disagree    Disagree

                                                                

Most respondents, 70% of them strongly agree. This view is in line with the idea that English has a major effect on influencing other people to believe that English has the best culture and best lifestyle compared to other official languages in South Africa. People end up having a negative

influence on learning and speaking other languages and accept English as ‘the’ language for economic advancement.

**6. Indigenous African languages have economic value to the rural communities only.**

Strongly Agree	Agree	Strongly Disagree	Disagree
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Half of the respondents (50%) who took part in the research strongly agree that African languages only have economic value in rural communities. This shows that students have different views about the economic value of any language spoken and used in South Africa. Half of them believe that isiZulu has an economic value to the rural areas where people show respect for their language and culture through practicing their traditional dances in traditional ceremonies, which does not happen in urban areas, through paying respect to the deceased family by attending funerals in large numbers, which in isiZulu culture shows respect and affiliation and support to the family which has lost their loved one, and this practice is given recognition mainly in rural areas. IsiZulu has cultural value in rural areas as in showing respect to traditional leaders such as ‘izinduna’ and ‘amaKhosi’ while in urban people converse with their councilors mainly in English. Half of the respondents believe that isiZulu and any other indigenous African language has no cultural and economic value at all since they are not used as languages of learning and teaching in primary, secondary and tertiary institutions of higher learning in South Africa.

**7. IsiZulu has rich vocabulary to teach subjects like economics at South African universities.**

Strongly Agree    Agree    Strongly Disagree    Disagree

                                  

Of the respondents, 90% strongly agreed and this is evident to the manner in which they helped me find isiZulu equivalencies of economic terms in the open-ended question types. They find it easy to give words which could be used in isiZulu to teach economics as a subject to the majority students of Southern Africa who seriously struggle to understand these concepts when presented in a foreign language.

**8. IsiZulu is a right language to compete with the status of English in economic life of South African citizens.**

Strongly Agree    Agree    Strongly Disagree    Disagree

                                  

Many respondents (95%) believe that isiZulu has sufficient vocabulary to compete with the status of English economically, since it (isiZulu) has rich vocabulary to even teach economics as a subject to the majority students at different previously disadvantaged universities. This could also be true in other indigenous African languages if they are developed and catered for to the extent of having books and knowledgeable lecturers in those subjects.

**9. Economic concepts / theories can be easily interpreted and made available in isiZulu if isiZulu is used as a language of learning and teaching (LoLT).**

Strongly Agree    Agree    Strongly Disagree    Disagree  
           

Most respondents, 65% of them ticked strongly agree. Their perception is that isiZulu has rich vocabulary to teach economic concepts and be used as a language for teaching and learning at tertiary level.

**10. All linguistic cultures are represented in the South African constitution and enjoy the same parity of esteem.**

Strongly Agree    Agree    Strongly Disagree    Disagree  
           

Most respondents ticked strongly disagree. This is a result that some languages are downplayed while others are given market value, full recognition and high status compared to others (indigenous African languages).

**11. Studying indigenous African languages is not important since they are not languages of power in the whole of Africa and the globe.**

Strongly Agree    Agree    Strongly Disagree  
Disagree  
           

Most respondents 70% of them disagree with the above statement. Their belief is that indigenous African languages like isiZulu, have rich vocabulary to teach even in a subject like economics. Therefore studying indigenous African languages could yield better results if corpus

language planning is implemented in such that they are fully recognised as important languages of South Africa.

**12. Indigenous African languages are only important at homes to those who live in rural areas.**

Strongly Agree    Agree    Strongly Disagree  
Disagree  
                                               

More than half of the respondents (55%) ticked strongly disagree. Their attitude is on the belief that a language like isiZulu is a language with the majority of speakership in South Africa. Therefore it could be made a language of teaching and learning (LoLT) if positive attitudes are implemented towards developing it to the level of English and Afrikaans in South Africa. The idea that indigenous African languages have their significance in the communities which in rural areas must be changed and their speakers must be made to feel that their languages are part of economic life.

**13. Do you think African culture is fully recognised, represented and accommodated in former Model C schools?**

Strongly Agree    Agree    Strongly Disagree    Disagree  
                                               

In fact all respondents (100%) who took part in this study strongly disagree. The attitude behind this is the manner in which former Model C schools differ from the so called previously disadvantaged schools in terms of language use inside and outside the classroom. Private schools and former Model C schools do not in their school teaching hours cater for the teaching of any indigenous African language, if they do, it would be after the school learning and teaching hours allocated by the

government so that those who wish to know something about these languages could stay behind while the rest of the learners have gone home. By so doing, they do not promote any development and accommodation of indigenous African languages. Such practices demotivate any fruitful efforts which are made to develop indigenous African languages of South Africa.

**14. African languages can be used as Languages of Teaching and Learning (LoLT) in South African schools.**

Strongly Agree    Agree    Strongly Disagree    Disagree

                                                                

More than half of the respondents (57%) ticked agree. This highlights that there is a strong linguistic ‘purism’ that indigenous African languages could be best used as languages of learning and teaching (LoLT) and if such idea is implemented into practice, educational battles could be won easily since every student and learner would learn and acquire knowledge and information in a language they understand fully. The following is a set of open-ended questions which were used while conducting a study.

### **6.2.2 Open Ended Questions**

Students were instructed to complete the following questionnaires and give their fair responses on the issues of languages use in South Africa. In this set of questions, students were allowed to write as they wish about a given question, they are open-ended. Out of one hundred questionnaires which were given to students, I received ninety four, with six not returned to me.

#### **1. What do you think should be done to develop indigenous African languages of South Africa?**

After careful going through the respondents responses, most of them (62%) answered this question and came with a view that research regarding the use of indigenous African languages must be conducted and it must be part of the school curriculum that indigenous African languages are studied till they reach matriculation and it must be the learners' choice to be assessed in a language they want to, not any other person. Educators of indigenous African languages need to be sufficiently trained as early as possible so that the fight against language loss or decay is avoided early.

#### **2. What do you think should be done to enhance the development of isiZulu in such that it has the same status as English?**

Among the list of things which must be done in order to develop isiZulu, 80 % of the respondents made mention that isiZulu must be taught at all levels at all schools which offer basic education to South African learners. That would enable them to have more choices as in choosing a language they would like to be assessed in. IsiZulu must be used in court

proceedings, in all government departments and in administration, this would enable fair language development and use in South Africa.

**3. Do you think economy could be easily developed through indigenous African languages and culture?**

The respondents, 100% of them, agreed that the use of isiZulu is a major necessity for developing economy in South Africa. People of the outside world would like to know about isiZulu culture and all their cultural practices, sell to them the Zulu traditional attire, teach them about history and origin of the Zulus, their lifestyle, their food, clothing, wars they fought, why they fought in those wars, what was the outcome of those wars, etc. These are the possible things that could develop the South African cultural life and economy, through the use of indigenous African languages and culture.

People who do business with South Africa would have to be well conversant in isiZulu as a language. Many business owners from other countries who come to invest in our country would have to be conversant in isiZulu, which would promote for the development of isiZulu to greater levels. More indigenous African languages educators would be needed to teach any business persons coming to South Africa. That would develop economy at the best possible asset we have as South Africans.

**4. What ways should be done to make isiZulu be a language of teaching and learning in South African universities?**

IsiZulu would initially be used as a medium of learning or education at home, and in early education. This would be a language that is used to teach learners/children from birth about the world view of the society they are born into. The society's values and norms, traditions, its

worldview and its organisations are passed on to a child in this language. It is also a language a child uses with his peers and is a language that is mastered by children before they even go to school. It is, therefore, a very important language on a child's life as he progresses in life and must never be neglected. African languages, therefore, must not be used as languages for communication and also for learning and teaching as well in early education. Learning in the first language links the formal schooling to the child's home, this would help learners to actively engage and participate in their education without any inhibitions and this can occur if the medium with which the child engages with the teacher is in their first languages (Tollefson 2002).

From the responses I received from my respondents, many respondents (70%) believe that the best possible way to develop isiZulu in such a way that it becomes a language of learning and teaching in South African primary schools until learners reach tertiary level.

It appears that, based on the findings of this study that terminology developers must develop isiZulu terms which would be used in modern technology so that even the urban youth would be encouraged to use the language since it would be found on IT and social networks.

**5. Do you think isiZulu has rich vocabulary to teach economic concepts? Why do you think so?**

Many respondents (90%) believe that isiZulu has rich plethora of vocabulary to teach economic concepts. Knowing isiZulu prides one to know new economic words and culture of isiZulu speakers. This set of vocabulary is used as an appendix to be used as a vocabulary of economic terms with their equivalent meanings in isiZulu.

6. Do you think indigenous African languages have economic value in South Africa? Why do you think so?

Indigenous African languages have market value, from the responses I received, sixty five percent of the respondents believed that there is a plethora of words that are used in the market like the music industry where music groups like Ladysmith Black Mambazo and popular Kwaito musicians use isiZulu words to compose their music. That promotes isiZulu as a language with economic value here in South Africa and abroad. IsiZulu is being taught even in universities abroad for indigenous African languages recognition and value.

7. Do you think the hegemony of English in South Africa has reduced the status of indigenous African languages? Why do you think so?

The hegemony of English has a very negative influence on the status of indigenous African languages. From the responses received, fifty percent of the informants believed that English dominates the corporate world, business and technology. This is seen through the number of interviews which are conducted in every workplace which are in English and never in any indigenous African languages. In order for one to survive in the corporate world it is a must that one is fully proficient in English.

8. Do you think the use of English demotivates speakers of indigenous African languages to use their languages with pride? Why do you say so?

The use of English in Southern Africa demotivates speakers of indigenous African languages to an extent that when one speaks them on the domains of tertiary and business world is looked down upon. From the responses received, sixty percent of the responses believed that if one

is articulate enough in English one is not suitable for any employment prospects. Only those who are articulate in English are better suitable for employment positions.

9. South African economy could be better understood in an African context through the use of African languages and culture. What do you think?

Many respondents, seventy percent believed that African economy could be better understood in an African context through the use of indigenous African languages and English alike. English and indigenous African languages need to intertwine in all business sectors. They ought to complement each other.

10. Does the South African government make sufficient ways to develop indigenous African languages of this country? Why do you think so?

South African government does not make sufficient ways to develop indigenous African languages of South Africa, from the responses received, sixty percent of the respondents believe that studying indigenous African languages is a must in order to promote employment prospects for language planners, terminologist, interpreters, language teachers and translators. It is, however, noted that the South African government is not doing sufficient ways to develop these languages because many schools and tertiary institutions do not cater for the promotion and development of these languages but for English and Afrikaans. There is nothing that the South African government has put on the ground to make sure that African languages are taught in all schools, let alone monitoring the quality of language at those schools that have taken an initiative to teach these indigenous African languages in their schools.

11. Do you have any interest in studying indigenous African languages? Give a reason for your answer either it's a yes or it's a no.

People have different attitudes in many things they do. It is, however, noted that the responses which I received while conducting this study seem to be in favour of the development of indigenous African languages of South Africa. Many respondents, seventy percent of them, believed that studying indigenous African languages could yield better employment opportunities for them, claiming that indigenous African languages have rich values that are unobtainable when one studies, e.g. English language or an African language and its culture, like greetings, which is a sign of warm welcoming at any time of the day and it gives a person a chance to find out what problems we experience in life to an extent of asking about other family members which are not present at a time of conversation. Studying indigenous African languages would surely bring back the spirit of 'UBUNTU' and that of togetherness in the whole African continent.

### **6.3 Interviews**

Different interviewing methods were applied during the collection of data in the study. Twenty students and six lectures were interviewed (There are only six lectures at Economics Department at the University of Zululand). Structured interviews consisted of the set of fifteen questions. Respondents were given the freedom to answer in English or in isiZulu since the majority of students at the University of Zululand and in Zululand area are isiZulu speakers. Most respondents were eagerly motivated in answering my questions in English. Even when I code-switched to isiZulu, they (interviewees, this case, students) kept on

speaking in English. This was because they believe that they have to speak in English every time they discuss something about Economics, since they are not exposed to other economic terms in their first language when learning Economics.

Interviews were conducted on individual basis where each structured interview lasted for about ten to thirty minutes or so. The original set of questions which were asked is presented in Appendix Three. The interviews were in response to the following questions:

1. Do you think that all South African schools should study indigenous African languages as subjects and as medium of instruction? If yes why and if no why?

Both students and lecturers who were interviewed showed a lot of interest in a manner in which how indigenous African languages must be catered for. They made mention that for the better preparation of developing indigenous African languages, they must first be fully grounded in primary education and be used as languages of teaching and learning so that learners will be better exposed to them and be in a position to use them proficiently at tertiary level. Teaching and learning must be made available to the language which the learner knows best, in African continent, that language is always and indigenous African language. If learners learn isiZulu from the first grade up to tertiary level, they would attain proficiency and competency that would surely help them achieve better results academically and increase their employability prospects.

2. Do you see any reason why indigenous African languages should be taught in South African schools?

There is an urgent need for the indigenous African languages to be used as a lingua franca in African continent so that Africans would retain their pride and dignity they deserve. This view was said by quite a number of respondents claiming that they study their commercial subjects in a foreign language and are expected to produce good results and if they do not, they are looked as if they are not intelligent in the subjects they failed. One interviewee asked if their English counterparts could, if they are given a chance, would be able to pass any subject in isiZulu or isiXhosa and be able to obtain distinctions. If they cannot, then it is true that the government of South Africa is downplaying the status of indigenous African languages and of the people who speak these languages. 'If a white person is examined in his/her first language or mother tongue, why are we examined in a foreign language? It is like Whites are better than Blacks educationally?' The interviewee here made a very strong comment but yet hit the nail on head that corpus planning in Southern Africa is just a dream which has been deferred for a very long time and still there is no hope, as the situation stands, that soon there would be a change. There is, as the situation stands educationally, no mutual catering of languages for educational purposes in South African. The policy is there, a very good one, but corpus planning is never implemented in all spheres of education, government, law and administration.

3. Do you think African culture and heritage is fully recognised, represented and accommodated in all schools in South Africa?

Previously disadvantaged schools are the ones that still involve themselves in cultural activities while some schools like former Model C schools have no time for cultural activities and do not honour those days even in their school calendars. Many respondents were wary about many African children who have adopted a lifestyle and culture for White people and left theirs claiming that theirs is out of fashion, which includes wearing traditional attire which many people nowadays are not in favour of, and the practice of traditional ceremonies which is also not favoured by many teenagers who stay in urban areas. Since many parents nowadays can afford to send their children to former Model C schools where African culture and heritage is not recognised and accommodated, indigenous African culture is likely to face a situation of cultural loss or death if nothing is done to ascertain that African culture is fully recognised and presented in all former Model C and private schools in Southern Africa.

4. Do you think that indigenous African languages are as important as English? Why do you think so?

Less interviewees showed a very strong feeling that English is the most important language in South Africa. Most students were very eager to say that isiZulu is the language in South Africa which has widest speakership yet education and employment is not made available in it, purposefully by educational stakeholders and employers as such. Indigenous African language are more important than foreign languages in Africa because they act as a communicative bridge to the masses of African population

who communicate with them. If commerce, technology and education is made available in African languages, Africans would achieve their genius easily and be able to be functional African citizens both educationally and socially.

#### 5. How can a language situation be changed in South Africa?

The respondents responded that the language situation in South Africa could be made better if African languages which are official in the constitution are given market value, when they are used as English and Afrikaans as languages of government and economy and education, they would be then changed for better because the mass population who speaks them would be granted a fair chance to prove themselves their genius as far as education is concerned.

#### 6. Do you think South African economy could be enhanced and developed through the use of indigenous African languages? How?

The respondents were in favour of the idea that if indigenous African languages are given market value and corpus planning is implemented according to the language policy; economy could be better enhanced through tourism because the African continent is rich with game reserves which are full of African animals which are not found elsewhere except Africa, through the food we eat, which separate us from non-Africans, through the development and creation of teachers who would help teaching and educating the tourists about our environment and our spirit of humanity as Africans through the use of indigenous African languages and culture.

7. Do you think attitudes play a role in downplaying indigenous African languages and culture in South Africa? How?

It is the negative political attitudes that come into play, when the academics have found the way forward on how something should be done to change the lives for the suffering individuals, many politicians do not favour any idea that does not come from their comrades. This comradeship ends up terminating the whole process of development in African continent. This view was expressed by the students who seem to be very unhappy about political affiliation in government departments, because service delivery is stopped when people work with political motives, even at tertiary institutions. The students were very much enthusiastic in telling me that the manner in which government communicates and acts, is not in accordance with the needs of the society which voted for that government. One student made the following remark:

Why a president of the republic in his speeches does not speak his own first language? Is the speech not expressed better in isiZulu? How many people in South Africa listen to the budget speech and understand it? If the majority of citizens of South Africa are not fully literate or competent in English, why does the government or the Finance minister speaks to them in English? This simply means that the government is speaking to himself and not to the target audience.

It is an attitude such as this that downplays the status role and significance of our indigenous African languages in many spheres of our

society and it becomes very hard to correct the mistakes which are made because the next government just takes where the previous government left.

8. When languages die we lose culture and heritage that come with them. What do you think should be done to save African languages from dying?

Both students and staff agreed that when languages die, people who speak them would be in a dire situation too since they would lose knowledge, beliefs, culture and heritage of their linguistic group. Much information and knowledge that came with their languages would be lost for good since the next generation would not get any chance to learn about it in schools and even in the mass media. It was noted that the students who took part in the study expressed pride of their Zulu language and heritage for their culture claiming that isiZulu, being the home language for the most citizens of South Africa should be used more than any other language in South Africa. They argued that culture itself should be understood as a resource and that while there are differences in the way people behave, think and live, this reflects to their differing access to their cultural resources and backgrounds. Culture is a resource and languages are potential parts of this resource. One student who was interviewed made the following remark:

The Chinese and Japanese are proud of their culture and heritage, they practice they culture more than any country. They are not forced by any circumstances to adopt a certain lifestyle of any country because they believe in their language and culture. The world's major economic countries have

learned the Chinese/Japanese language and lifestyle so they can trade with them for economic advancement. Why don't we do the same here in African continent? The more we adopt to learn the European languages lifestyle and their culture, the more we move away from what and who we are and become what we are not, and we may end up knowing nothing about ourselves, it will be even worse to the coming generation.

When our languages and culture face death, it is us, the speakers of those languages that would lose our resources and cultural heritages thereby making the next generation forgetting where they come from. In order to avoid this cultural shift, indigenous African languages must be used across disciplines in our educational institutions so they function alongside English and Afrikaans and share the same status.

#### 9. How would you explain / interpret Human Capital Theory in isiZulu?

Human Capital Theory is, according to many respondents who were interviewed, the stock of competences, knowledge and personality attributes embodied in the ability to perform labour so as to produce economic value. This amounts to the attributes gained by a worker through education and experience. This explanation is in line with that which is found in wikipedia. When asked to interpret or translate this term in isiZulu, their explanations were almost the same and in line with the context of the English version. The isiZulu explanation is:

Yilapho kusuke kubukwa umdlandla womsebenzi  
ekwenzeni umsebenzi aqashelwe wona nokuzikhandla

kwakhe ekwenzeni umsebenzi wakhe ngobuqotho ukuze enze inzuzo okwanye umkhiqizo osezingeni eliphambili. Konke lokhu kufezeka ngobuhlakani nobuchule umsebenzi abuthola ngokwemfundo kanye nesipiliyoni emsebenzini wakhe awenza ngokuzikhandla nangokuwuthokozela.

10. How can isiZulu be used in the teaching of fundamental concepts in economics, particularly Human Capital Theory.

Terms could be coined together and used to teach Economics in isiZulu with English terms so that any South African student would have a choice in choosing the language of their choice. This view was expressed by quite a number of respondents which were interviewed, claiming that their home language which is isiZulu is not used at all in their education yet they (the students) are expected to master any subject presented to them in a foreign language. If they fail, nobody blames the language of instruction, they are totally blamed for not being intelligent in their subjects. They proposed that if isiZulu is given educational value and is used alongside English in the University of Zululand, the majority of students would excel in their education like their White counterparts in White medium universities.

11. Looking at the yearly pass rate at the Economic Department, what do you think is a root cause for this?

Students and lecturers agreed to me that studying Economics is a milestone to the majority of students, not only at the University of Zululand, but country wide. Quite a number of universities face a huge

drop-out rate in the departments of Economics and commerce at large. The majority of students are not at home with English, as a result, they fail their course dismally and then choose to seek careers in other departments other than Economics.

12. How, according to your knowledge, can the following terms be translated into isiZulu:

Asset, Barter system, Budget, Capital, Central bank, Closed economy, Deflation, Economic development, Gross domestic product (GDP), International Monetary Fund (IMF), Macroeconomics, Microeconomics, An Open economy, Political economy, Price, Value Added Tax (VAT), World Bank and World Trade Organisation (WTO), Human Capital Theory.

Both students and lecturers at the University of Zululand were of great help in assisting me with the possible translations of the above named Economic terms. Their equivalent meanings are stated in the terminology development chapter as well as in the Appendix Four of this thesis.

## **6.4 Discussion and Summary**

Most educated and elite Africans acquired their education through their mother tongues with their second languages being used after they have acquired knowledge through their first languages / mother tongues. There could be no understanding and interpretation of any written and analytical texts without the use of one's first language and / or mother tongue. The idea that there are no people or books available to make education better understood in an African language is just hypothetical. It is just that government should invest in the languages of the people who put them in power so that the whole population would feel that they themselves are

also in power and are benefitting from the services which the government deliver to people.

English is considered to be the language of power and upward social mobility. On the other hand, isiZulu and any other indigenous African languages are seen as unimportant. English culture is synonymous with an elite lifestyle, while associations with isiZulu and its culture are seen as retrogressive. This view is supported by Dlamini (2001) who maintains that isiZulu is sometimes associated with backwardness and rural identity, as this has been observed by most respondents who were interviewed.

One of the response which I received from my interviews is: *'Why should we bother ourselves with White culture and practice to speak good English when White people do not make an effort to learn isiZulu, yet there are more Black people than White people in South Africa?'*. This comment signifies that the respondent is wary about how isiZulu and other indigenous African languages are viewed since White people are not making any effort to learn isiZulu or any other local language. An idea of multiculturalism and multilingualism in South Africa is a bridge which is too far to be built even when it is built it would be too far to be reached because there is no mutual and symbiotic relations between policy makers and the people who communicate with these languages.

This study was conducted with the aim of investigating whether students whose first language or mother tongue is isiZulu understand the concepts of economics in a foreign language. It was found in the study that even though students at the University of Zululand are isiZulu first language speakers, they learn through the English medium of instruction as in most tertiary institutions in South Africa. However, it was found in the study that most students, seventy percent of them, cannot explain economics

concepts in their first language. If that is so, how much does a student understand in the second language if the student does not initially understand anything in the first language or mother tongue?

In a situation such as this, I agree with Appel and Muysken (1987: 61) that an African student who does not perform well in his studies has cognitive and linguistic challenges which could be sorted if the child is encouraged to understand the importance of his or her mother tongue in their studies. According to Appel and Muysken (1987: 61), 'the minority child's general cognitive development would be retarded if he or she does not receive education in the mother tongue, and if the mother tongue is not further developed in the school as it is the case with these students. Learners must attain a certain level of mother tongue or first language competence before they operate extensively in the second language to avoid mental deficit. The data which was presented in this chapter helped me to ascertain the problems students face when learning economics in a foreign language. The next chapter concludes and gives recommendations based on the findings of this study.

## **Chapter Seven: Conclusions and Recommendations**

### **7.1 Conclusions**

The mother tongue of a learner is closely associated with that learner's growth and development, socially and academically. As the children mature, their language develops, and through language, personality and experience are expressed. How possible can one express one's personality in a foreign language. This is the same as learning everything about English and in English and fail to explain it in your first language (this case African language) as it was the case with most students who took part in the study. Learning opens doors for one to become what he wants to become in future. Becoming what you plan to become requires one to be able to communicate meaningfully to the outside world and the worst part is that the outside needs one to show his personality and one cannot fully express his well-being without knowing his origin, that being a master of one's thought, that is showing your true colours in your culture since language goes with culture. One's mother tongue is a compendium of what the society regards as important and through it one can study and understand the values and concerns of the society. Failure to develop the mother tongue would lead to stunted cognitive development which would further, if not solved, cause mental deficit.

Our ability to effectively communicate with others through spoken and written language is considered as one of the ultimate goals of our educational system. Reading and learning is essential to the success in our society. The ability to read and learn is highly valued and important for social and economic advancement of our society, and this should happen in a language the majority citizens understand the most, and that language

in South African and the whole Southern African countries is an indigenous African language.

Language, especially mother tongue, does not only serve to facilitate and support modes of social action that constitute its environment, but also actively creates an environment of its own, so making possible that all the imaginative modes of meaning, from backyard gossip to narrative fiction and epic poetry come into play in an individual's subjective world. All this happens through language.

There seems to be an interesting paradox between what the Constitution says and what is currently happening in schools and educational institutions in the Republic of South Africa. It seems that indigenous African languages are included as official languages simply because they represent a sizeable majority of the country's speakers. However, when compared with English or ex-colonial languages, they are viewed lowly and thus play a passive and not fully functional role in the socio-economic life of its people and the country as a whole. As it is highlighted in this study, African learners or students due to mother tongue neglect, they often show some symptoms of cognitive and linguistic imbalance which plays a negative role in their academic performance and even in understanding the true linguistic world within which they live.

Most Africans suffer from semi-lingualism where they experience difficulties in understanding African languages and also the same difficulties in understanding English language. This semi-lingualism hinders their progress in their academic as well as in their social life. It could be argued that one learns best in his or her mother tongue, therefore, indigenous African languages must be re-implemented in order

to avoid mental deficit among learners of African languages in terms of information processing. Language development /empowerment enables the indigenous languages to be used in education, literacy campaign, local administration and mass media. Such public use usually raises its prestige and its utilitarian value. The esteem of a language is associated with incentives to the users, such as socio-economic opportunities or access to jobs. It is very disheartening to see regulations in many school systems where pupils are forbidden to speak their languages in the school yard. Such practice is placed may erase any mother tongue pride in a learner. The learner is encouraged, by the system, to think that his/her mother tongue is useless. It is such incidents where we see that a government is turning a blind eye in promoting and developing indigenous African languages and schools. Learners are not allowed sometimes to think, speak and master their indigenous African languages. It is on the basis of this study that the researcher concludes that the inadequate use of mother tongue in tertiary institutions of higher learning causes mental deficit for learners who are not at 'home' with English language.

Language welfare should reflect the welfare of the speech community. Considering the role of language in economic activity, it is a known fact that language can be either a barrier or a facilitator to economic activity. The role of language in economic performance is conditioned by the linguistic character of the community. People who speak indigenous African languages must show signs of recognising, valuing their languages and show pride in using firstly at a societal level in different communicative functions they are engaged in. This would further develop African wisdom and everyone would see the genius in them.

Language development must be part of the contribution to the overall development of the community. It must enhance the status of the

language with its speakers. The status of a language could be enhanced by proving to its users that it can be employed as a modern means of communication to function in domains in which languages of wider communication function, places like education, the legal system, health care, local administration and in agriculture (Alberts 2010). Supplying appropriate scientific, technical, educational and economic terms should be a national priority especially in a multilingual dispensation.

Multilingualism should be developed through terminology development which fruitfully contributes to the translations, editing, interpreting and translation of literary texts. Through the process of terminology development, indigenous African languages can develop into functional languages which can be used by the speakers in private initiatives, publishing and language offices.

## **7.2 Recommendations**

In the light of the findings of this research, I am of the opinion that the following recommendations would alleviate the academic constraints associated with the development of isiZulu as an academic language for the teaching of fundamental concepts in Economics.

- Mother tongue instruction must begin at an early stage and must not be removed at all because it is an important part of their lives. Learners must have freedom to learn subjects firstly in their mother tongue so that they will get an in-depth analysis and understanding of the subject. Learning in English must come as a secondary option or as an addition to the knowledge you already have in your brain. This would make matters easy for learners to more competent in their subjects and that would increase their chances of employability.

- There must be a political will on government's side. Government must at this time realise that languages have market value, so do indigenous African languages. It must not appear as if it is English that has status and market value at an expense of indigenous African languages. It seems that there is a lack of expertise from government to develop enterprises that will help in the development and promotion of indigenous African languages as languages of wider communication and employ language practitioners and writers to write books that would help in the development of African languages. In this way language specialists would be participating positively and actively to the space or climate of development that has been created through status language planning. This is a matter of urgency since many indigenous African languages are facing decay because of monolingualism which is favoured mostly by government.
- Speeches in parliament, government departments and offices, employment and educational institutions must be effortfully made available in a language that the mass population understand the most, and that is an African language. As this view is supported by Prah (1995: 71) that 'Africans can re-discover their genius only in their own languages'. It is, therefore, a must that African states invest on economy which favours languages of the majority population.
- Indigenous African languages must have the same recognition and all languages must enjoy the same parity of esteem in the new South Africa, mainly for the survival of African tongues. Language teachers must be fully equipped with linguistic knowledge first before they teach their languages, this would enhance different

views of a language, and be able to understand different linguistic problems their learners face while at school.

In summary, information transfer, assimilation information retrieval should be facilitated through the first language or in the mother tongue simply because information is easily acquired and learned through the first language. Africans must move away from an idea that it is civilised to speak and use prestigious European language and leave your own. They must come to a belief that speaking indigenous African language best describes who you are, your culture, wisdom and identity which is unique.

The rural communities of South Africa face a lot of challenges of getting proper service delivery since knowledge and information which they should have access to, is presented and made available in a foreign language and not in their first languages. As a result, they are at a certain level of frustration based on the fact that fluency in languages other than their own is critical for sheer economic survival. If two-thirds of the population of the Republic South Africa is not reached due to language and communication problems, this should be enough reason for a greater sense of urgency in respect of language development and the fair practise of multilingualism.

African language development is strictly human development since it is largely aimed at increasing human capabilities, enabling people to have access to knowledge and information related to their different social and academic needs. It could then be argued that all the developmental processes that take place in the lives of citizens could be best fostered and delivered in the first languages or mother tongues of the needy citizens. It is argued in this thesis, that within the field of Economics and indeed in

all intellectual disciplines, it is through the first languages and not in foreign languages that deep cognition and understanding can be attained.

## Appendix 1: Close ended Questions

1. All languages are equally important in South Africa.

Strongly Agree    Agree    Strongly Disagree    Disagree

                                                                

2. Indigenous African languages can enhance economic development in South Africa.

Strongly Agree    Agree    Strongly Disagree    Disagree

                                                                

3. The excess use of English demotivates speakers of indigenous African languages to use their languages with pride.

Strongly Agree    Agree    Strongly Disagree    Disagree

                                                                

4. The only language with economic advancement in South Africa is English.

Strongly Agree    Agree    Strongly Disagree    Disagree

                                                                

5. The hegemony of English in South Africa has reduced the status of indigenous African languages.

Strongly Agree    Agree    Strongly Disagree    Disagree

                                                                

6. Indigenous African languages have economic value to the rural communities only.

Strongly Agree    Agree    Strongly Disagree    Disagree

                                                                

7. IsiZulu has rich vocabulary to teach subjects like economics at South African universities.

Strongly Agree    Agree    Strongly Disagree    Disagree

                                                                

8. IsiZulu is a right language to compete with the status of English in economic life of South African citizens.

Strongly Agree    Agree    Strongly Disagree    Disagree

                                                                

9. Economic concepts / theories can be easily interpreted and made available in isiZulu if isiZulu is used as a language of learning and teaching (LoLT).

Strongly Agree    Agree    Strongly Disagree    Disagree  
                                                           

**10. All linguistic cultures are represented in the South African constitution and enjoy the same parity of esteem.**

Strongly Agree    Agree    Strongly Disagree    Disagree  
                                                           

**11. Studying indigenous African languages is not important since they are not languages of power in the whole of Africa and the globe.**

Strongly Agree    Agree    Strongly Disagree    Disagree  
                                                           

**12. Indigenous African languages are only important at homes to those who live in rural areas.**

Strongly Agree    Agree    Strongly Disagree    Disagree  
                                                           

**13. Do you think African culture is fully recognised, represented and accommodated in former Model C schools?**

Strongly Agree    Agree    Strongly Disagree    Disagree  
                                                           

**14. African languages can be used as Languages of Teaching and Learning (LoLT) in South African schools.**

Strongly Agree    Agree    Strongly Disagree    Disagree

## Appendix 2: Open Ended Questions

Please complete the following questionnaires and give your fair responses on the issues of languages use in South Africa. Thank you for your patience.

1. What do you think should be done to develop indigenous African languages of South Africa?

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2. What do you think should be done to enhance the development of isiZulu in such that it has the same status as English?

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3. Do you think economy is developed through indigenous African languages and culture?

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4. What ways should be done to make isiZulu be a language of teaching and learning in South African universities?

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5. Do you think isiZulu has rich vocabulary to teach economic concepts? Why do you think so?

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6. Do you think indigenous African languages have economic value in South Africa? Why do you think so?

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7. Do you think the hegemony of English in South Africa has reduced the status of indigenous African languages? Why do you think so?

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8. Do you think the use of English demotivates speakers of indigenous African languages to use their languages with pride? Why do you say so?

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9. South African economy could be better understood in an African context through the use of African languages and culture. What do you think?

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10. Does the South African government make sufficient ways to develop indigenous African languages of this country? Why do you think so?

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11. Do you have any interest in studying indigenous African languages? Give a reason for your answer whether it is a yes or a no.

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## **Appendix 3: Interview Questions**

The following questions were asked in interviews to the lecturers teaching economics at the University of Zululand and to students doing their first year at the University of Zululand.

1. Do you think that all South African schools should study indigenous African languages as subjects and as medium of instruction? If yes why and if no why?
2. Do you see any reason why indigenous African languages should be taught in South African schools?
3. Do you think African culture and heritage is fully recognised, represented and accommodated in all schools in South Africa?
4. Do you think that indigenous African languages are as important as English? Why do you think so?
5. How can a language situation be changed in South Africa?
6. Do you think South African economy could be enhanced and developed through the use of indigenous African languages? How?
7. The state of indigenous African languages in African states is dire. How do you think that situation could be changed for better?
8. Do you think attitudes play a role in downplaying indigenous African languages and culture in South Africa? How?
9. When languages die we lose culture and heritage that come with them. What do you think should be done to save African languages from dying?
10. Is government doing enough to promote economy through the use of indigenous African languages? How?
11. How would you explain / interpret Human Capital Theory in isiZulu?
12. How can isiZulu be used in the teaching of fundamental concepts in economics, particularly Human Capital Theory.
13. Looking at the yearly pass rate at the Economic Department, what do you think is a root cause for this?
14. How, according to your knowledge, can the following terms be translated into isiZulu:

Asset, Barter system, Budget, Capital, Central bank, Closed economy, Deflation, Economic development, Gross domestic product (GDP), International Monetary Fund (IMF), Macroeconomics, Microeconomics, An Open economy, Political economy, Price, Value Added Tax (VAT), World Bank and World Trade Organisation (WTO) Human Capital Theory.

## Appendix 4: Development of Terminology

The following are the key terms in economics which were used as a study tool in order to find their equivalent meanings in isiZulu. Their isiZulu meanings/equivalencies are stated hereunder.

**Asset:** Anything of monetary value that is owned by a person. Assets include real property, personal property, and enforceable claims against others (including bank accounts, stocks, mutual funds, and so on). In isiZulu this term could be explained as: Impahla eyigugu eyimpahla yasendlini noma oyisebenzisa ebhizinisini lakho.

**Barter system:** System where there is an exchange of goods without involving money. In isiZulu this term could be explained as: Ukuhwebelana ngokwempahla okusemthethweni ngaphandle kokutshenziswa kwemali phakathi kwezinkampani, osomabhizinisi kanye nanoma ubani osebenza ngebhizinisi nokuhwebelana.

**Budget:** A summary of intended expenditures along with proposals for how to meet them. A budget can provide guidelines for managing future investments and expenses. In isiZulu this term could be explained as: Ukuhlela izinto ozozithenga uma usuthole imali.

**Capital:** Wealth in the form of money or property owned by a person or business and human resources of economic value. Capital is the contribution to productive activity made by investment in physical capital (machinery, factories, tools and equipments) and human capital (e.g. general education, health). Capital is one of the three main factors of production other two are labour and natural resources. In isiZulu this term could be explained as: Imali oyidingayo uma uzoqala ibhizinisi.

**Central bank:** Major financial institution responsible for issuing currency, managing foreign reserves, implementing monetary policy, and providing banking services to the government and commercial banks. In isiZulu this term could be explained as: Ibhange elisemthethweni lokuxhumana ngokwezimali ngokwamazwe ngamazwe omhlaba.

**Closed economy:** A closed economy is one in which there are no foreign trade transactions or any other form of economic contacts with the rest of the world. In

isiZulu this term could be explained as: Umnotho wezwe ngezwe ongancikile kwamanye amazwe nongakudingi ukusebenza ngesivumelwano namanye amazwe. Umnotho wezwe ngezwe wokusimamisa noma ukufukula lelo nalelozwe kwezomnotho.

**Deflation:** Deflation is a reduction in the level of national income and output, usually accompanied by a fall in the general price level. In isiZulu this term could be explained as: Ukuwa noma ukufadalala kwesimo somnotho.

**Debts:** An amount owed to a person or organisation for funds borrowed which is paid mostly in instalments or in lump sum with interest added. In isiZulu this term could be explained as: Izikweletu.

**Human Capital Theory:** The stock of competences, knowledge and personality attributes embodied in the ability to perform labour so as to produce economic value. This amounts to the attributes gained by a worker through education and experience. Yilapho kusuke kubukwa umdlandla womsebenzi ekwenzeni umsebenzi aqashelwe wona nokuzikhandla kwakhe ekwenzeni umsebenzi wakhe ngobuqotho ukuze enze inzuzo okwanye umkhiqizo osezingeni eliphambili. Konke lokhu kufezeka ngobuhlakani nobuchule umsebenzi abuthola ngokwemfundo kanye nesipiliyoni emsebenzini wakhe awenza ngokuzikhandla nangokuwuthokozela.

**Tax:** A fee charged by government on a product or income or activity. In isiZulu this term could be explained as: Intela.

**Economic development:** The process of improving the quality of human life through increasing per capita income, reducing poverty, and enhancing individual economic opportunities. It is also sometimes defined to include better education, improved health and nutrition, conservation of natural resources, a cleaner environment, and a richer cultural life. In isiZulu this term could be explained as: Ukukhuliswa komnotho ngezindlela ezahlukene okubalwa kuzo ukwakha amathuba omsebenzi nokuzikhulisa komuntu ngamunye kwezomnotho.

**Gross domestic product (GDP):** Gross Domestic Product: The total of goods and services produced by a nation over a given period. Gross Domestic Product measures the total output from all the resources located in a country, wherever the owners of the resources live. In isiZulu this term could be explained as: Inani lezimpahla

nokuyigugu kwesizwe, ukuthengiswa kanye nokudayiswa kwazo okubalwa nenzuzo etholakalile ngenkathi zingena noma ziphuma kulelo nalelozwe.

**Inflation** is the percentage increase in the prices of goods and services. In isiZulu this term could be explained as: Inani lokukhula okanye ukushintsha kwenani lezimpahla ezithengiswayo ezimakethe.

**International Monetary Fund (IMF):** An autonomous international financial institution that originated in the Bretton Woods Conference of 1944. Its main purpose is to regulate the international monetary exchange system, which also stems from that conference but has since been modified. In particular, one of the central tasks of the IMF is to control fluctuations in exchange rates of world currencies in a bid to alleviate severe balance of payments problems. In isiZulu this term could be explained as: Inhlango yamazwekazi omhlaba esebenza ukulawula ukusebenzisana kwamazwe ngokwezimali nakwezomnotho, okubalwa kuzo ukulawula inani izwe nezwe okumele lilikhokhe ekusebenzisaneni namanye amazwe omhlaba kwezomnotho.

**Macroeconomics:** The branch of economics that considers the relationships among broad economic aggregates such as national income, total volumes of saving, investment, consumption expenditure, employment, and money supply. It is also concerned with determinants of the magnitudes of these aggregates and their rates of change over time. In isiZulu this term could be explained as: Igatsha elibalulekile kwezomnotho elimayelana nenzuzo, ukonga, ukutshala imali kanye nokusetshenziswa kwemali. Lana kubukwa ikakhulukazi indlela inkampani kanye nezwe elilawula ngayo ukuphathwa nokusetshenziswa kwezimali.

**Microeconomics:** The branch of economics concerned with individual decision units (firms and households) and the way in which their decisions interact to determine relative prices of goods and factors of production and how much of these were bought and sold. The market is the central concept in microeconomics. In isiZulu this term could be explained as: Igatsha elibalulekile kwezomnotho elimayelana nokusetshenziswa kwemali yizinkampani, kungaba ezikahulumeni okanye ezizimele. Lana kubukwa ikakhulukazi indlela umuntu nomuntu ayisebenzisa ngayo imali.

**An Open economy:** is an economy that encourages foreign trade and has extensive financial and nonfinancial contacts with the rest of the world in areas such as education, culture, and technology. In isiZulu this term could be explained as: Igatsha lokuhwebelana kwezomnotho kwamazwe ngamazwe okukhululekile, kungaba ukusetshenziswa kwemali okanye kube yisivumelwano sento ethile.

**Political economy:** The attempt to merge economic analysis with practical politics--to view economic activity in its political context. In isiZulu this term could be explained as: Uhlelo lwezomnotho oluncike kwezombusazwe.

**Price:** The monetary or real value of a resource, commodity, or service. In isiZulu this term could be explained as: Inani okanye intengo yempahla ethengiswayo.

**VAT:** A form of indirect sales tax paid on products and services at each stage of production or distribution, based on the value added at that stage and included in the cost to the ultimate customer. In isiZulu this term could be explained as: Intela eyengeziwe empahleni ethengiswayo.

**World Bank:** An international financial institution owned by its 181 member countries and based in Washington, D.C. Its main objective is to provide development funds to the Third World nations in the form of interest-bearing loans and technical assistance. The World Bank operates with borrowed funds. In isiZulu this term could be explained as: Ibhange lomhlaba.

**WTO:** The World Trade Organisation is a global international organisation dealing with the rules of trade between nations. It was set up in 1995 at the conclusion of GATT negotiations for administering multilateral trade negotiations. Source for these definitions: economics book. In isiZulu this term could be explained as: Inhlangano yezokuhwebelana emhlabeni.

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