

**LANGUAGE POLICY AND PRACTICE AT CM VELLEW AND PJ OLIVIER PRIMARY
SCHOOLS**

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by

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DECLARATION

I, the undersigned, hereby declare that this thesis is my original work and has not, in its entirety or in part, been submitted at any university for a degree.

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ABSTRACT

This study looks at language policy and practice at two Eastern Cape schools. It further explores the link between language learning and teaching. Language implementation strategies were the main focus of this study.

The Language-in-education policy of the Republic of South Africa (1997) promotes the use of all nine African languages, which have been afforded the status of official languages. This study looks at the language teaching practices at two Grahamstown primary schools, where isiXhosa and Afrikaans have been used as media of instruction. Qualitative methods were used, and the study took the form of interpretive case studies.

The purpose of using multiple case studies was to investigate the reality within the two sites selected. The two schools had two extreme situations, in the sense that one of the schools taught in the mother-tongue of Afrikaans, and the other school made a transition to using English as the medium of instruction three years after this study was initiated. The tools used for data gathering were interviews, classroom observations, and an analysis of documents from the Department of Education (DoE). Data was then presented and analysed.

One of the findings of this research is that teachers are not well informed concerning South Africa's Language-in-education policy. Furthermore, parents are not aware of the benefits of their children being taught in their first language.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

SGB - School Governing Body

OBE - Outcomes Based Education

RNCS - Revised National Curriculum Statement

LoLT - Language of Learning and Teaching

PanSALB - Pan South African Language Board

SANTED - South Africa Norway Tertiary Education Development Programme

DoE - Department of Education

LANGTAG - Language Plan Task Group

LTSM - Learning and Teaching Support Material

LieP – Language - in-education- Policy

MT- Mother-tongue

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
CHAPTER 1	
1.0 Introduction.....	9
1.1 Context of the research.....	9
1.2 Background to the research.....	11
1.3 Objectives and specific research questions.....	17
1.4 Research methods.....	18
1.5 Significance of the study.....	19
1.6 Chapter summaries	20
1.7 Conclusion.....	21
CHAPTER 2	
2.0 Introduction.....	22
2.1 Bantu Education Act of 1953.....	23
2.2 Language planning and policy.....	28
2.3 The role of language planners.....	33
2.4 Possible problems facing language planners.....	35
2.5 Multilingualism.....	37
2.6 Definition of language and its uses.....	38
2.7 Languages of learning and teaching (LoLT).....	39
2.8 English hegemony.....	40
2.9 Language and education.....	45
2.10 Viability of mother-tongue in education.....	53
2.11 African languages as threatened languages.....	55
2.12 Language and economy.....	59
2.13 Conclusion.....	62

CHAPTER 3

3.0 Introduction.....	66
3.1 Research design.....	67
3.2 Research paradigm.....	68
3.3 Qualitative research.....	69
3.4 Multiple case studies.....	71
3.5 Sampling.....	73
3.6 Research sites.....	75
3.7 Research participants.....	81
3.8 Data collection methods.....	81
3.9 Development and administration of the teacher interview questions.....	86
3.10 Problems and improvements.....	88
3.11 Observations.....	89
3.12 Documents.....	90
3.13 Data analysis.....	91
3.14 Ethical considerations.....	91
3.15 Validity.....	92
3.16 Limitations and challenges.....	94
3.17 Role of the researcher.....	95
3.18 Conclusion.....	96

CHAPTER 4

4.0 Introduction.....	97
4.1 Profile of the research participants.....	97
4.2 Classroom observations.....	101
4.3 Interviews.....	103
4.4 Teacher interviews and teaching strategies.....	110
4.5 The reading diagrams.....	113

4.6 Reading models.....	122
4.7 Language-in-education-policy awareness by teachers.....	131
4.8 Teaching approaches.....	132
4.9 Parental support.....	132
4.10 Conclusion.....	133
CHAPTER 5	
5.0 Introduction.....	135
5.2 Further discussion.....	136
5.3 Future recommendations.....	145
5.4 Conclusion.....	147
Appendix A.....	150
Appendix B.....	151
Appendix C.....	152
Appendix D.....	153
Appendix E.....	154
Appendix F.....	155
Bibliography.....	156

Chapter 1

Introducing the study

1.0 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to provide an introduction to my research. This chapter introduces the key research problem and gives an overview of areas to be investigated. The context and research problem, as well as the background to the research, is set out, the objectives of the research are clarified, and the research questions are identified. The chapter briefly describes the range of research methods and approaches used in this study, and it concludes with chapter summaries.

1.1 Context of the research

There has been much debate and controversy surrounding Language-in-education planning and policy issues in South Africa. This is mainly due to multilingual nature of South African society. The year 1994 marked the birth of democracy, together with the changes that have been effected. This was conceived in the spirit of equality for all South Africans. Tremendous changes were to be effected within the different sectors of government, such as the departments of Education, Justice, and Health.

The apartheid system that ruled South Africa for decades was now abolished, meaning that there was to be a new education system in place to redress the imbalances of the past. Certain curriculum changes were put in place immediately after the 1994 elections, and there was a move towards

Outcomes-Based-Education (OBE) and Curriculum 2005. It was hoped that this would be a major step in ensuring that the proper educational foundations was laid for South Africa's youth. The introduction of the Curriculum 2005 brought new approaches to literacy, particularly in the Foundation Phase (Grades R-3).

In education, in particular, the introduction of OBE and the Language-in-education policy (LieP) were the two vanguards that were intended would provide equal education to all of South Africa's citizens. This new education system was to prepare learners to interact with the emerging social, political and economic life in South Africa, and also to be able to participate in the global arena. The new education system claimed to be non-discriminatory in terms of colour, race and creed. The LieP promotes additive multilingualism, which implies the maintenance of the mother-tongue, while encouraging the learning of additional languages. Kamwangamalu (2004:243) points out that language planning in South Africa has "...historically been an arena for power struggle, where white people exercised power over other ethnic groups and made decisions about languages that benefited them, while other ethnic groups lost their privileges, status and rights". English and Afrikaans exercised power over South Africa's indigenous languages. The above sentiments support the fact that there are negative feelings about the use of certain languages.

Sixteen years since into South Africa's new democracy, there are still problems with the implementation of this policy. By that, I mean the particular medium of instruction that is being used in the preparatory phase (Foundation Phase). The "rainbow nation" is the phrase that is constantly used to describe the diversity that we have in South Africa (Tutu, in Kaschula & Anthonissen 1995). Our Constitution is flexible, as it allows all nine indigenous African languages to

be used as official languages in all government domains. However, isiXhosa, together with the other indigenous languages is still not used as medium of instruction beyond Grade 3, particularly in historically black schools. However, English and Afrikaans continue to be used as languages of teaching and learning (LoLT) from Grade 1 of schooling right up to the senior phase (Grade 7-9).

The aim of this study is to explore the use of both Afrikaans and isiXhosa as the media of instruction in the Foundation Phase (Grades R to 3) at two Grahamstown primary schools. The study seeks to investigate the use and implementation of the above-mentioned two languages by teachers in the classroom. Furthermore various teaching and learning strategies will be looked at. The research questions, as outlined in this Chapter, will lead and guide the research process.

1.2 Background to the research

The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (1996) acknowledges the diversity found in this country. In line with the Constitution, the Language-in-education policy (1997), aims at uniting and building a non-racial South Africa by recognising linguistic and cultural diversity. It is disappointing to note that, despite all the efforts that have been made to accommodate linguistic diversity, some languages are still marginalised, particularly in education.

Language committees have been established to address the imbalances of the past. The problem lies with the actual implementation of the new policies on the ground (to be discussed in Chapters 4 and 5). African languages are still regarded and associated with poverty and people who are illiterate (Dalvit, 2004). This is a common fact, as the reality is that, English still dominates, as it

is only medium of instruction that is used from Grades 4 to 12 in historically Black schools. During the apartheid regime Afrikaans and English were the only languages of power and mobility. IsiXhosa mother-tongue instruction is still not perceived as a valuable asset by the African people, who still see English as the language that is appropriate for the education of their children (Kamwangamalu 2004:243-244).

Financial constraints are always cited as being the impediment in the implementation of mother-tongue education in an African language, particularly the compilation of learner–support material and other educational facilities. There is a vital need to develop African languages, by making them languages of economic and political life. This has always been a contentious issue in South Africa. Eastman (1992:96) defines language planning as “...the effort in a socio-political situation to solve language problems, preferably on a long-term basis, by heeding the process of social change.” Language policy has been a critical aspect of the political mosaic in South Africa. For example, the 1976 protests against the Bantu education system led to the Soweto uprising and arguably, the beginning of the demise of apartheid. This was driven by learners rejecting the use of Afrikaans as the medium of instruction in historically black schools (Hartshorne 1995:312-316).

In 1994, when South Africa became a democracy, all indigenous languages were recognised as equal in the new Constitution. The language clause (Section 6 of the Constitution) is also complemented by the Bill of Rights, which recognises language as a basic human right and stipulates that “everyone has the right to receive education in the official language or languages of their choice” (South African Constitution Act 108 of 1996:14). This

allows for the implementation of a language policy in the education system that meets the needs of the learners. The question that needs to be answered is: “How effective is the implementation of the Language Policy in Education at the Foundation Phase?”

The language policy in the Constitution is flexible, in that it allows for the use of all nine indigenous languages as official languages, alongside English and Afrikaans. As mentioned earlier, this study will concentrate on the implementation of three of the official languages of the Eastern Cape, namely, isiXhosa, English, and Afrikaans, and how these languages are used in the Foundation Phase in two Grahamstown schools. In the former Department of Education and Training (DET) schools, that is to say, schools that the erstwhile apartheid government designated for “black” learners, *a priori* observations indicate that code switching (switching and mixing different languages) was used frequently by teachers in many different grades to assist learners in understanding concepts.

Research relating to the use of English in schools has been undertaken by scholars such as De Klerk (2000), who explores language shift in Grahamstown, as well as more recently by Dalvit, Murray and Terzoli (2009) who attempt to deconstruct what they term “language myths” concerning the language of learning and teaching (LoLT) in South Africa. Aziakpono (2008) explores the attitudes of isiXhosa speakers to being taught in their mother-tongue. What makes my research unique is that I compare two schools, one where Afrikaans remains the language of teaching and learning from Grade R to 12, and the other where the practice is that isiXhosa is officially abandoned after the third year of schooling, and, in accordance with school policy, an English only

approach is maintained. This research explores the benefits and challenges facing mother-tongue education in relation to these two schools.

As indicated above, this research study was undertaken at two primary schools, with a particular focus on the Foundation Phase of teaching and learning. The schools that were investigated were CM Vellem (CM) and PJ Olivier (PJ) primary schools. These two schools were selected, as they reflect significant differences in terms of the profile and socio-economic backgrounds of the learners. CM is a former DET school located in a township, with all the resource allocation constraints typical of schools operating in this context, while PJ has a multiracial student profile and a wealthier economic background typical of schools located in the central part of Grahamstown.

Traditionally, PJ is an Afrikaans-medium school. I was motivated to undertake this study as a result of experience gained as a teacher at CM. This experience has led to a realisation that there was a discrepancy between the school's education policy documentation and the actual practices at the school in terms of teaching and learning.

I chose to conduct research at PJ Olivier, because this school claims that 99 % of its learners are of Afrikaans origin, and Afrikaans continues to be the school's medium of instruction, from grade R to Grade 12. At PJ Olivier, Afrikaans is not only taught as a subject, but it is also the medium of instruction in all grades. Compared to isiXhosa, Afrikaans is indeed a developed tongue, with a comparatively elaborated technical and scientific vocabulary. According to Alexander (2005:65), it has taken more than 75 years to develop Afrikaans to the status that it enjoys in South Africa today.

Despite the high status of Afrikaans, its association with oppression has contributed to a gradual phasing out of Afrikaans in township schools. This trend was evident at CM Vellem, where it has been phased out for the past three years. This development happened as a result of an awareness of the reality of the linguistic and political scenario in the wider society of South Africa. The use and usage of Afrikaans is clearly visible in signage, courts of law, and in most government domains, although it still does not find favour among many indigenous language speakers, due to the language being associated with apartheid. Alexander (2004) refers to this as a “knee-jerk” reaction by the populace towards Afrikaans, which also has implications for improving the status of the other indigenous languages.

Parents from the townships continue to send their children to former Model-C Afrikaans- and English-medium schools, suggesting that they see Afrikaans and English as languages that empower the youth and that offer a window to the global world (Crystal, 2003:45). This exodus from African-language-medium schools to Afrikaans- and English-medium schools reflects the innate value parents place on Afrikaans and English as languages. This research therefore seeks to reflect on the value of mother-tongue education in these two schools, PJ Olivier and CM Vellem, respectively, the lessons that can be learned from Afrikaans usage at PJ, and how these lessons can be applied at CM.

Documents from the Department of Education (DoE 1997) emphasised that it is imperative that the first three years of schooling be taught in the learner’s mother-tongue (MT). Informal observations have, however, shown that, contrary to policy requirements, day-to-day activities were not always aligned

to these requirements at the two schools that I investigated, particularly at CM.

From my experience as a teacher, I noticed that teachers were often unfamiliar with the Outcomes-Based-Education system, due to lack of training opportunities and information sessions. Effective implementation of the language policy or teaching of other subjects can be problematic, due to limited training in terms of the requirements of Curriculum 2005, and the time needed for teachers to familiarise themselves with this new curriculum. In fact, the term “microwaving” was coined to refer to the short induction courses offered by the DoE (SADTU meeting 2005). This “microwaving” could have had a negative effect on teachers’ abilities to perform and produce good results in language courses. Pandor (2004:3) in her speech published in the *Sunday Times* as the then National Minister of Education, acknowledged the importance of quality education, and she promised to provide intensive training of teachers in preparation for Curriculum 2005. This could also, in turn, empower learners to meet the challenges of the new millennium.

The learner normally brings only one language to the classroom, and it is a challenge for them to be taught in an additional language, such as Afrikaans (which is the situation at PJ), where some are not mother-tongue speakers of the language. It could be easy for learners to grapple with and master a second language after their MT is fully developed, as already suggested by completed research (De Klerk, 2000). By encouraging the use of isiXhosa in the first three years of schooling and beyond, at schools such as CM, it was contended that the isiXhosa language will be enriched through terminology development and publication of teaching material, while learners are provided with a solid

cognitive base. This is a research question that I will explore. This study was also driven by the new OBE system, to find out whether the teaching and learning strategies that are being used match the Outcomes-Based needs of the new curriculum.

1.3 Objectives and specific research questions

Historically, except during the Bantu Education era, indigenous African languages have never been used as media of instruction or as languages of assessment in the South African education system beyond primary schooling. They have been taught scientifically as subjects (Mbude-Shale 2010:8). But even in primary schools, these indigenous languages (for example, Afrikaans and isiXhosa, which feature in this research) are under threat, due to the use of English, and possibly also due to inappropriate use of code-switching in the language of education (Alexander 2005:63).

The objective of this research is to assess whether language implementation, as stipulated in the DoE policy documents, is, in fact, the reality within the selected schools. This will be achieved through research into how language is being used by teachers and learners in these schools to achieve the national curriculum outcomes. The following broad questions will be addressed:

1. What do the DoE policy documents say about language implementation in schools? These documents include the Language-in-education-policy (1997).
2. What languages are used at the two schools in question in Grahamstown, and in what contexts?
3. Why are the chosen languages used in these ways?

4. What are the experiences of teachers and learners regarding the use of different languages at these schools?

1.4 Research methods

This research is qualitative in approach. This means that data was collected initially from DoE documents. Two primary schools, namely CM and PJ, were investigated in terms of their language policies and the impact of these policies on teaching and learning. Purposive sampling was also used to draw participants into the study.

Data was collected through document analysis and interviews. Documents included government policies and other documents from the Education Department (as listed in the bibliography). Selected written work of learners from the language classes was analysed, and complemented by observations which were conducted to observe language use in the classroom and the implementation of different languages. Three Foundation Phase classes per school were observed and investigated over a two-year period.

The interview process is an especially effective method of collecting information for certain types of research questions as well as for addressing certain types of assumptions (Berg 2007:97). The research was conducted using semi-standardised interviews, as this structure is the most appropriate method to use, due to its flexibility (see Chapters 3 and 4). The interviews were conducted primarily with language teachers. The major focus was on language implementation in their classes and understanding the experiences of the language teachers at each school. All interviews were recorded and transcribed. These underwent a thematic analysis to draw out themes and trends from the data gathered.

The interviews with teachers, as well as my classroom observations and the analysis of DoE documentation, form the main focus of the thesis in the chapters that follow, particularly Chapters 4 and 5.

I am aware of the ethical considerations that should support such a study, and I therefore guaranteed the confidentiality of participants and ensured them that they would remain anonymous. The reason for carrying out the research was explained to interviewees. The potential future benefit, in terms of assisting children with conceptualisation and cognition of teaching material, was outlined. The researcher ensured that participants read and signed a consent form and made sure that they fully understood the objectives of the research (see Appendix D).

1.5 Significance of the study

The study looks at the implementation of isiXhosa and Afrikaans as the media of instruction in the above-mentioned primary schools. Parents, teachers and learners need to be made aware of the importance and value of the use of a child's mother-tongue as the medium of instruction during the very first years of schooling.

Ngugi Wa Thiongo in his creative and academic works such as *Devil on the cross* (1982) and *Decolonising the mind* (1982), has suggested that as Africans, Black people in particular, we have to decolonise our minds, so as to adapt to new ways of interpreting African reality, including that of teaching and learning. We have to do away with the myths that surround the use of the indigenous African languages in our education system. Hopefully the results of this research will help to cultivate and move schools towards a culture of adherence to the Language-in education policy by teachers on the ground.

1.6 Chapter summaries

Chapter 1

This chapter is an introductory chapter that contains information about what the study aims to achieve. It gives a brief background of the study as well as the objectives for the study are outlined. Research methodologies for data collection, as well as the significant issues concerning the study are highlighted in this chapter. It also highlights the research questions that underpin this study.

Chapter 2

Chapter 2 provides a literature review of the history of language in South Africa from 1953 until the present. This chapter presents a chronological account of how language has affected education in South Africa. Furthermore, this chapter gives a detailed account of the spread of English and its dominance in the sphere of education. The colonial legacy and its impact on indigenous languages, is discussed. Different uses of language are explored, and the multilingual matters that relate to education are discussed. This chapter further contextualises the issue of language planning and its challenges. The viability of the use of the mother-tongue is also looked at.

Chapter 3

This chapter explains the tools and methodologies that were used in gathering data for this study, as well as the research design and research paradigm that were used. Validity issues, challenges, limitations and ethical considerations are outlined. The role of the researcher is also explained.

Chapter 4

In this chapter all data collected at the two participating schools is presented and analysed.

Chapter 5

This chapter contains my research findings related to the data that was presented and analysed in the previous chapter. This chapter also discusses future recommendations which are extrapolated from this study.

1.7 Conclusion

This chapter served to give an introduction to the research problem at hand. It provides the background of this study, as well as the objectives for this study. Data collection methods were outlined, and the significance of this research was commented on. Finally, chapter summaries are provided so as to offer an overview of the study.

In the next chapter I present the literature review that underpins this study.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

2.0 Introduction

This chapter explores the history of language usage in South Africa, including the effects of colonialism, the role of language in South African society, South African language policy and planning, as well as the emergence of an English hegemony within the mosaic of multilingualism in the country. The purpose of this chapter is to review the literature (academic and popular) on which I base the core of this study.

Language issues in South Africa have been influenced by European colonisation, the gaining of independence by several African countries in the twentieth century, apartheid, and democracy. It is suggested that a sound language policy will help to overcome differences in South Africa and facilitate nation building, since language policy is the cornerstone of any country (Alexander 2005:10). Tauli (1974:56, cited in Cooper 1989:30) defines language planning in relation to South Africa as follows: “the methodical activity of regulating and improving existing languages or creating new, common regional and national languages”.

The South African Constitution affords equal status to indigenous African languages that were marginalised in the past, to be used alongside English and Afrikaans. When a language policy is in place, implementation strategies

should also be in place, and should reflect the content of the particular language policy. In other words, the minority languages that were marginalised are to be developed and intellectualised (Alexander 2005:20). This action would be for the purposes of nation building, and economic development as outlined in the Constitution (1996) and it would redress the inequalities of the past. Language policy in South Africa is looking at language as an economic resource, as well as the position and status of the African languages (Kaschula, Mostert, Schafer & Wienand 2007:45-48).

Language in South Africa has always been a contentious issue. Politics has played (and still plays) a major role in the history of language in the country. South Africa has diverse cultures and languages, hence the term “rainbow nation”. The Constitution allows for eleven of South Africa’s languages to be official languages. Language planning is important but at the same time it can have some negative effects if it is not applied in the correct way. With all languages there are policy preferences and these often involve security of identity. If a language of learning and teaching is the preference of the majority there will not be a problem. Unlike if the majority dislikes or disapproves then there would be the possibility of instability. An appropriate example is that of the 1976 uprisings where the youth took to the streets rejecting the use of Afrikaans in schools as the medium of instruction (McLean 1999:13-14). This heralded the end to the apartheid policies where the government was in favour of Afrikaans as the language of economy, education and courts of law.

2.1 The Bantu Education Act of 1953

Bantu Education came into being in 1953, with eight years of mother-tongue instruction, as well as the teaching and learning of Afrikaans and English as subjects. Textbooks and terminology were developed and made available in Afrikaans (Heugh 2000:23-24). Dr Hendrik Verwoerd is regarded as the architect of apartheid and separate education. Bantu Education was the legislation used to separate black people from the mainstream education system, which was specifically designed to benefit white people. At the height of the apartheid regime, black people were moved to homelands and townships, and so, a racially and ethnically segregated education system was central to the maintenance of these boundaries, many of them the result of a language-based divide-and-rule policy (Kaschula & Anthonissen 1995:33).

Before 1953, there were mission schools that were partially aided by the state, but with the passing of the 1953 Bantu Education legislation, these schools were closed (McLean 1999:12). They were reputable schools and produced the people who took leadership at the beginning of South Africa's democratic dispensation, for example, leaders such as Nelson Mandela, Walter Sisulu, Oliver Tambo, and many others. The pre-1994 policies of apartheid aimed to perpetuate the cultural differences that existed among the black communities, so as to maintain segregation. This was done by reinforcing mother-tongue instruction.

In 1948, the National Party came into power. One of its main aims was to protect the Afrikaans language. This was done by allowing Afrikaans to take control of education, law, the economy, and politics. Furthermore, in 1948, the policy of National Christian Education was introduced, which favoured the

policies of the apartheid government. Schools were segregated according to race. This type of education demoralised and disadvantaged all the black ethnic groups, as well as the Coloureds and the Indians. This racially differentiated education system was crafted so as to portray black communities as static and defined. There were “Afrikaans-only schools”, which English-speaking learners were not allowed to attend. Segregation was extended to institutions of higher education, for example, the University of Fort Hare was assigned for black students, while Rhodes University was historically an English-medium university for whites. Stellenbosch University and the former University of the Orange Free State were historically white Afrikaans-medium universities, and in general terms, excluding some pro-liberation Afrikaner activists such as Beyers Naude, the Afrikaners believed that they were God’s chosen race (Msomi 1978:42).

1976

The history of South Africa’s language-in-education policy has been complicated. In fact, as noted by Alexander (2001:8), “...the language of teaching was the proximate cause of the Soweto uprisings”. On the one hand, because of apartheid education policies, Afrikaans came to be generally identified by blacks as the language of oppression. Mostly English was used during the uprisings to voice the people’s grievances. Mother-tongue education acquired negative connotations, and became associated with segregation policies and backwardness (Luckett 1995; Heugh 1995; and Smit 1996). IsiXhosa, for example, was and still is associated with poverty and illiteracy, which is why even today many of its speakers are reluctant to use it (Dalvit, Murray & Terzoli 2009).

1980

In 1980, there were widespread riots throughout South Africa, with black people protesting against the apartheid policies. They chanted slogans, singing songs using the indigenous African languages alongside English. There were also several initiatives to maintain the “Release Mandela” campaign. Also there were laws and bills that were passed to oppress black people, for example, the Separate Amenities Act, and the pass laws that restricted people from moving around. Apartheid policies were still entrenched, but the 1980 riots heralded the beginning of the end of apartheid, and the unbanning of previously banned political parties (*Sunday Times* editorial 1994).

1994

On the 11 February 1990, Nelson Mandela was released from prison. This event marked the death of apartheid, and the birth of democracy. The “new South Africa” is dynamic, in the sense that it acknowledges and gives expression to many different languages and cultures. Democracy brought freedom of choice and freedom of speech. The language policy that was chosen was a multilingual one. It was hoped that this policy would cater for the needs of a diverse South Africa.

For the very first time in the history of South Africa, black children were admitted to the former Model-C schools, which were historically reserved for white children. Previously banned political parties were unbanned, and politicians were for the first time allowed to articulate their speeches using both African languages and English. In 1996, a new Constitution was also drafted, passed, and implemented. It is flexible, as it allows eleven languages to be the official languages. Nine of these eleven languages are indigenous

African languages, and two are former colonial languages, namely English and Afrikaans.

In South Africa, colonialism has had a definite negative impact on education, the economy, and politics (McLean 1999:12-13). I will begin by assessing the impact of the colonial legacy on education. Schools played a major role in transforming the country from an apartheid state to a democratic state. Due to the powerful and vocal student movement during the apartheid regime, schools became important loci in the anti-apartheid struggle.

Apartheid has had a detrimental effect on the South African economy. This is a huge problem, which needs to be addressed (Kaschula, Mostert, Schafer & Wienand 2007:47). Education and the economy are two domains that need to be carefully considered and nurtured for the stability of a country. Apartheid policies were designed to satisfy certain desires related to segregation and prohibiting black people from taking part in main-stream economics. Certain languages, namely the former colonial languages of English and Afrikaans, evolved with political support in order to compete in the economic market. Indigenous languages were deprived to such an extent that they could not enjoy the status of the two colonial languages. These policies have now been abolished, and new government initiatives, though controversial in some respects, have been brought into being, for example, Black Economic Empowerment (BEE) and affirmative action. These initiatives have been introduced to hopefully redress the inequalities of the past with regard to the economy of South Africa.

With democracy came new ways of schooling. Policies that discriminated against blacks were abolished. Apartheid has left irreparable damage as far as education is concerned. Parents do not see the need to send their children to historically black township schools, hence the exodus of learners from black schools to former Model-C schools. The problem lies with the parents, as they still think that their children cannot afford to be taught in their own languages (Aziakpono 2008). Parents still see English as the only window onto the world of technology and power. Even with the advent of democracy, black people are reluctant to converse in the indigenous languages. They want to speak English, to give the impression of being wealthy and educated.

2.2 Language planning and policy

“Language planning may be defined as a government-authorised, long-term, sustained, and conscious effort to alter a language itself, or to change a language’s functions in a society, for the purpose of solving communication problems” (Jernudd and Das Gupta cited in Cooper 1989:30). Further to this they define language planning as a political and administrative activity for solving problems of a society. Karam (1974:105, cited in Cooper 1989) characterises language planning as “...an activity which often solves language problems, usually on a national scale, and which focuses on either language form or language use”. As noted by Williams (1981:80, cited in Edwards 1985), individuals that hold powerful positions in a society are usually those that carry out language planning, that is, language planners design language policies in such a way that they are likely to benefit from them personally. Language planning in South Africa continues to benefit the people who were in power during the apartheid era in the sense that English and Afrikaans still dominate

powerful institutions such as banks and universities. This may be seen as an imbalance of power with regard to the indigenous African languages.

Cooper (1989:182) argues that language is the fundamental institution of society, not only because it is the first human institution experienced by the individual, but also because all other institutions are built upon the regulatory patterns of language. Cooper (1989:182) further contends that “...to plan language is to plan society”. In fact, the question to be asked is not whether language can be planned, but rather how, and by whom, it will be planned. Similarly, Fishman (cited in Cooper 1989:30) describes language planning as an organised pursuit of solutions to language problems, typically at the national level. Drawing from the above definitions of language, it is clear that in any society, language issues should be resolved through a process of language planning. Language problems in a society can be located historically within the domains of education, economy, politics, but with a language component.

Language planning can serve as a tool for empowering groups and individuals to create and strengthen national bonds and ties and to maximise economic development (Kaschula, Mostert, Schafer & Wienand 2007:48). Every segment of society has language, and individuals competently use language for a variety of purposes. The economic perspective on language matters appears to be gaining momentum (Grin, 1994, 1995, 1996, 1997).

A language is sometimes described as a tool consisting of vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation. Therefore, careful language planning is important. Every language functions within the framework of a community's

culture. Language can cause problems, but it can also fulfil a useful service. According to Quirk (1962:54), language does not only have a restrictive influence on thought, but also conditions our thinking in a positive and constructive way. This means that as a nation, or as a society, or as individuals, we depend on words and language when we think. Furthermore, general thinking and decision making is supported and facilitated to a great extent by language.

Language planning efforts should consider modifying the language itself, as well as modifying the environment, so that the language that is in use does not become a source of conflict. The activities conducted in language planning can have a societal focus, that is, status planning, corpus planning and acquisition planning are all forms of language planning (Wardhaugh 1992:347-369). Language planning includes those decisions taken by a society about the selection of a language(s), and the implementation of those chosen languages. The term “language planning”, in my view, refers to coordinated measures taken to select, codify and, in some cases, elaborate grammatical, lexical or semantic features of a language.

Language planning also relates to activities conducted to solve a language problem on a national scale. In multilingual settings it is difficult to choose a particular language, especially in the educational domain, because if the language that is chosen is not the preferred language, tensions can arise. The work of language planners is to select a language, and organise and develop it in an ordered and policy-related manner. There should be follow-up programmes after a language plan has been implemented. Language policy is

determined in accordance with the number of speakers of languages, language use and organisation of a community's language resources. In other words language policy should underpin and support language usage at various levels within a particular society.

It is important therefore to note that at the heart of language planning is the relationship between the languages and the power or inequality among the people speaking these languages (Tollefson 2002:4). The Constitution and the Languages Bill are the two language planning documents which constitute the statutory framework, or legal infrastructure, for language planning in South Africa (Webb 1996:5). Adequate use of these documents, as will be shown below, will lead to the effective development and implementation of language policy in South Africa.

As stated above, language planning has three main activities, namely status planning, corpus planning, and acquisition planning, (Cooper 1989:99). Status planning refers to efforts to assign certain languages for specific functions, such as official languages, as shown below in the extract taken from Section 6 of the South African Constitution:

- (1) The official languages of the Republic are Sepedi, Sesotho, Setswana, siSwati, Tshivenda, Xitsonga, Afrikaans, English, isiNdebele, isiXhosa and isiZulu.
- (2) Recognising the historically diminished use and status of the indigenous languages of our people, the state must take practical and positive measures to elevate the status and advance the use of these languages.

- (3) National and provincial governments may use particular official languages for the purposes of government, taking into account usage, practicality, expense, region and the balance of the needs and preferences of the population as a whole or in respective provinces, provided that no national or provincial government may use only one official language. Municipalities must take into consideration the language usage and preferences of their residents.
- (4) National and provincial governments, by legislative and other measures, must regulate and monitor the use by those governments of the official languages. Without detracting from the provisions of subsection (2), all official languages must enjoy parity of esteem and must be treated equitably.

Acquisition planning has to do with the spread of languages that have been selected as official languages, and seeks to implement language policy according to the particular language plan (Cooper 1989:100). It further looks at ways of or opportunities for teaching or learning other languages. The phenomena of bilingualism and multilingualism are encouraged in South Africa, so that people get to know or speak more than one language, as part of a “social cohesion” process. Looking back at the history of languages in South Africa, a black person may resent and despise Afrikaans, as it reminds them of the apartheid regime (Van Rensburg 1999:17). Nevertheless, Afrikaans has been selected as one of the official languages for the new democratic dispensation.

Furthermore, in South Africa all of the eleven official languages are written languages. That is where corpus planning comes in to the equation. Corpus planning deals with the structure of a language. English and Afrikaans are well-developed tongues, with a plethora of teaching and learning materials. With regard to the African languages, there is a serious dearth of educational materials. Another aspect of corpus planning is that of standardisation of languages, to make the languages suitable for education purposes. A language of learning and teaching (LoLT) must be highly standardised, so that many different schools can use the same curriculum.

According to Webb and Kembo-Sure (2000:18), language standardisation is the process by which an authoritative language body, such as a government body, prescribes how a language should be written, how its sounds should be pronounced, how its words should be spelled, which words are acceptable in formal situations, and what the appropriate grammatical constructions of the language are. 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 this dominant community that generally becomes the standard language of the broader community.

2.3 The role of language planners

Language planners in a multicultural society should first identify the problem areas with regard to language, and then come up with solutions that will benefit the country. Another role of language planners is to increase the confidence of speakers of previously marginalised languages. This is important, so that these speakers can regain confidence in using their language, which is

crucial for language development in terms of the corpus of the language (Alexander 2002). In this respect, it is one of the duties of language planners to consider the injustices of the past, particularly in South Africa, with the segregation of the African languages, and the promotion and development of exclusively Afrikaans and English. Consideration of such injustices should then lead to the finding of new strategies, and their subsequent implementation. This is possible when planners have set out clear and precise objectives, intended to be achieved within stipulated time frames.

It is the duty of language planners to ensure that undeveloped languages are elaborated with words for various different technological phenomena. Together with this, planners should ensure that programmes of advancement are in place. These include, but are not limited to, adult learning centres to improve literacy levels. The schooling system should also be improved, since schools serve as vehicles for language transportation and language spread.

Transformation, too, will be important for language planners. Establishing teacher training centres will be crucial for the adequate training of teachers, so that they can be competent in their profession. Language planners also have the responsibility of improving access to vocational training programmes, which aim to empower people with skills. It is important for planners to be involved in acquisition planning. Knowledge of the number of speakers of each language is therefore important.

2.4 Possible problems facing language planners

Language planners have the responsibility of offering advice to policymakers. Fishman (1972:15) states that the planner's task is difficult, because the implementers of language plans are not turning to language planning research to guide them. This means that there are still languages that are not catered for. Examples are English-language varieties such as pidgins and creoles, which were used mainly for trade purposes with England at the time of British imperialism. In this case, it would have been difficult for language planners to ensure that such languages were developed. In South Africa, the Khoe and San languages are in a similar situation. Kaplan and Baldauf (1997:210) characterise as follows the problems facing professional language planners:

Those interested in working in language planning may find themselves under significant pressure to produce policies and programs, grounded not on the best available theoretical and practical knowledge about the issues [facing them], but based solely on agency preconceptions of what is politically or economically feasible.

In the South African context, language planners must look at the failures and injustices of the past, so as to formulate strategies that will yield a better education for the country. In my view, language planners should apply coordinated measures to select, codify and, to some extent, elaborate orthographical and grammatical structures. This is crucial in South Africa, keeping in mind that language is a fundamental institution of society, not only because it is the first human institution, but because all other institutions are built upon it (Cooper 1989:182). As pointed out earlier, language planners should also be aware of the fact that to plan language is to plan a society. As is

the case with national policies, language planners must expect language policies to develop gradually, to vacillate, and to undergo modification, even when they are thought to be final. The language planner is advised to allow ample time for policies to develop and mature.

Language planners should involve the speakers of the languages that they are carrying out planning for. This is crucial in South Africa, where indigenous languages have been disadvantaged for decades. Alexander (1992:145-146) refers to this as “language planning from below”. The problems that South Africa faces in relation to language are because certain groups were not consulted when language use decisions were taken. Taking cognizance of the attitudes of people towards their language, and monitoring language use, will provide planners with feedback on what needs to be done to develop the particular language in question. Furthermore, since language is dynamic, planners need to work closely with speakers of the language in question, so that they can become aware of any new words in the language.

Government agencies (planners) have to consider the welfare of the people, so as to redress those communities that were marginalised. Furthermore, they have to find ways in which they can boost the economy of the country, through networking with foreign countries. All this should be done with proper supervision and regulation, through a process of effective econo-language planning (Kaschula et al. 1995:70-72, 2007:50).

Language planners have to look at the use of language in various contexts, including the work environment. Practically, authorities developing language

plans are also confronted with the need to assess the costs of implementing these plans, and bringing these costs in line with budget constraints. Various global trends in the spheres of language and the economy are giving increasing relevance to the examination of specific problems where the economics of language can help (Grin 1994:25-42). If language planning is properly implemented, economically it will allow market mechanisms to regulate the linguistic environment, and it is expected that it will produce skills in different languages.

2.5 Multilingualism

As has been mentioned above, South Africa has a diversity of languages and cultures. Hence, this country is a multilingual environment.

The key to the preservation of multilingualism is the recognition of the first language of the child, that is, the language that the child brings to the classroom. The developmental history of South Africa's languages needs to be considered, so as to rectify the challenges now facing language planners, due to historical neglect of certain languages. Implementing a multilingual language policy will be an evolutionary process. Development of terminology for application in various fields will be an advantage. Implementation of our multilingual language policy will result in an elevated status for the indigenous languages, to the level of true official languages, and it will also result in prescribed use of these languages by government.

The power relations between the official languages need to be balanced, so that the formerly advantaged language groups do not continue to have an unfair advantage. This means that promoting the use of the African languages,

as well as promoting and developing them for employment and training opportunities, will be required. Minority languages are sometimes the subject of suspicion, and the right to use them is contested (Edwards 1997:408). My opinion in relation to this statement is that every language has a right to be used; no one should be discriminated against on the basis of the language she or he speaks.

Ensuring and maintaining a multilingual environment is another way that minority languages can be protected. In a multilingual setting, languages are in competition (Webb & Kembo-Sure 2000:80). We are now fortunate in South Africa in that the indigenous languages can be used in conjunction with English. It is hoped that in time, with proper implementation, these languages will be able to compete with and supplement English in an appropriate fashion. Language planning must recognise the primacy of the mother languages of individuals, and the options to learn other languages (Muthwii & Kioko 2004:96). This means that all the African languages spoken in South Africa should be looked after in terms of their being developed. The multilingual environment in South Africa has brought about a celebration of our linguistic diversity. It is hoped that this celebration of our linguistic diversity will continue.

2.6 Definition of language, and its uses

When you look at a scientific approach to language, it is when you learn a new word, how to say it, how to spell it, and what it means (Allen 1967:2). Linguists call language a system. Language is not something one can see, hear, or touch; it is a set of relationships, a phenomenon and an abstraction (Allen 1967:3).

Some people see language merely as a conventional system of sound symbols. But language is more than this; language is a social phenomenon. As such, it has a relationship with society, and the value system of society. Language is also a method of communication. Language may be seen as an instrument capable of allowing people to communicate with one another. Language is used for doing things. People use it in their everyday lives for many different reasons. They use it to converse, to transact business, to plan meals, to gossip, to ridicule, and to conduct politics. Furthermore, language has associated benefits and disadvantages, as it can be used either positively or negatively. One of the associated disadvantages of language is linguistic prejudice where one is judged by others on the basis of one's use of language and accent (Kaschula & Anthonissen 1995:28-40).

2.7 Languages of learning and teaching (LoLT)

Schools should build on the experience and knowledge that children bring to the classroom. Instruction should also promote children's abilities and talents. The level of development of children's mother tongue is a strong predictor of their second-language development when they enter the intermediate phase (Grades 4 to 6). If the first tongue of the learner is consolidated as the language of learning and teaching, literacy ability in the second language will emerge more strongly (Dalvit, Murray & Terzoli 2009). The end result of the subtractive bilingualism that takes place beyond Grade 3 is that learners struggle linguistically (Murray 2003:438). Cummins & Swain (1986:97-98) argues that learning of other subjects later on, as well as other languages, occurs even more effectively if skills in the mother-tongue have been fully developed. Furthermore, it stands to reason that the heritage and culture of the indigenous ethnic groups will be preserved if indigenous languages are at

the centre of learning and teaching. In most cases parents are not equipped to make informed decisions about language issues in the schooling system.

If South Africa's indigenous African languages are to be used as languages of learning and teaching, it means that much needs to be done in terms of raising awareness of the benefits of mother-tongue teaching. There will also be a need for terminology development and the promotion of literature, which needs to be initiated by government. In the Foundation Phase, material for all of the three learning areas should be written in the child's first language. Currently, teachers in the classroom have to teach these learning areas by first translating the subject matter in the instructional material from English into isiXhosa or Afrikaans. It is important that all the textbooks, readers, support materials, teaching aids, and guides be accessible in different languages, and be kept up to date. Accomplishing this could fulfil the aims of the Language-in-education policy. A lack of these materials will produce scholars that are unable to write in their own mother tongue with any acceptable level of competence. In any democracy, parental and learner choice is paramount, especially when it comes to such issues as the language in which a child is to receive his or her education, as enshrined in the South African Constitution.

2.8 The hegemony of English

One cannot talk about developing the African languages without an understanding of the current hegemony of English. The growth of English is subverting, and even eliminating, minority languages (Kaschula, Mostert, Schafer & Wienand 2007:45). Cabral (1970:15) calls for the dismantling of the economic class system (class suicide) in order to change this. English is always associated with social class in South Africa. This means that everyone in South

Africa wants to be able to speak English, in order to be perceived as of a higher class. Currently, English is dominating in the fields of technology and science. It is very difficult to cater for all of the nine indigenous languages in terms of intellectualising them (Sibayan 1999:229). This contributes to the indigenous languages becoming victims of the hegemony of English (Wardhaugh 1987:137).

Language policy in South Africa carries a postcolonial logic that English is the language of power. This is one of the factors that make black people reluctant to speak and use their vernaculars. Webb (2002:227) claims that a mere 25% of the South African population has adequate proficiency in English. This lack of proficiency further serves to marginalise minority languages, as the masses are illiterate. Few people can compete in the global market. The prerequisite is an ability to communicate in English. This, on its own, reinforces the hegemony of English. Mother-tongue languages are vital for the transition to English. They are also important for identity construction. According to Kaschula, Mostert, Schafer & Wienand (2007:44), “English is the language in which most economic transactions take place, and hence is the language of power, money and status.” Of course, it is not an either/or approach that should apply in South Africa, but rather the effective teaching of *both* the mother-tongue and English. This will be discussed in Chapters 4 and 5. The spread of English to different parts of the world and its use as an international language has provoked huge debate. The language has been seen by some as being beneficial, by others as being purely instrumental, and by others yet as being a threat.

Colonisation was responsible for the first stages of the spread of English, and provided the basis for further global development. Technology, economics, and communication have played a role in the new global varieties of English. This has resulted in a changing pattern of social relations at both the individual level and on the global scale. Kachru describes the ascendancy of English as follows:

For the first time a natural language has attained the status of an international (universal) language essential for cross-cultural communication. Whatever the reason for the earlier spread of English, we should now consider it a positive development in the 20th-century world context. (Kachru 1983:51)

English gave birth to other varieties called “new Englishes” (Crystal 2003:140). South Africa’s democratic dispensation is giving us another chance to revive our African languages alongside English. This revival will be achieved if we promote our languages and we use them on a daily basis. In addition, there are processes and projects in place to develop our African languages, for example, through the work of the Pan South African Language Board (PanSALB) and the South Africa-Norway-Tertiary-Education Programme (SANTED) (Maseko et al. 2008). PanSALB is a quasi-governmental initiative that is responsible for encouraging the development of the minority indigenous languages. SANTED is a Norwegian-funded project promoting multilingualism.

According to Crystal (2003:77), the history of English traces the movement of English around the world, beginning with the pioneering voyages to the

Americas, Asia, and the Antipodes. English is indeed a language for the different nations of the world, hence it being called a “global language”. It is represented on every continent. It is this spread of representation, and the application of the label “global language”, which causes English to be seen as a language of opportunity and empowerment whose future needs to be guaranteed. Teaching and language planning must become part of a strategy of language spread, as the mother tongue or as a second language. Any language planning requires a budget that will cater for teaching, publishing, and training. The need for a global language is particularly appreciated by international academic and business communities. According to Humphrey Tonkin, a global linguistic strategy is needed which balances the ongoing spread of English with the maintenance of linguistic diversity. Today English is used in many countries and in all types of communication. It seems certain that more and more non-mother-tongue English speakers are now online, not just from the outer circle (traditionally colonised societies such as South Africa, India and so on), but from all over the world, from the expanding circle, China, and so on, as noted by Crystal (2003:61).

The use of English and the development and recognition of the African languages as official languages at national and regional level are inseparable. English is accepted as a language of wider communication and an educational medium. English proficiency provides access to the international world. The challenge of developing our African languages in conjunction with English remains a central challenge to language planning in South Africa (Alexander 2002).

As already mentioned, PanSALB is a quasi-governmental initiative that has been tasked with encouraging the development of the minority indigenous languages. This is to be done through workshops, but presently the process is slow due to financial constraints. Kaplan (1997:156) states that “[i]n economic terms the value of language is not a property of language itself, but an index of its appreciation by a relevant community”. In the case of business and industry, a language holds a value determined by the community. Members of society should be able to learn languages or acquire a language such as English with the purpose of establishing economic ties and obtaining work without neglecting the acquisition of our African languages. Success at improving second-language learning will secure a country’s long-term economic future. This requires the introduction of more language learning and language teachers in schools.

Webb and Kembo-Sure (2000) state that the existence of a global language poses a danger of language death for some languages. This can only be prevented if there is a deliberate attempt at language maintenance, so that communities do not lose their linguistic and cultural identity. If members of a speech community insist on using their language of cultural identity for at least some important functions in the home and elsewhere, then the language is assured of continued active existence, in spite of the learning of other languages for additional uses.

Historically, once English had been adopted in a particular region, whether for reasons of science, technology, literature, prestige, elitism, or modernisation, the language went through a reincarnation, which was partly linguistic and

partly cultural. This was essentially caused by the new bilingual (or multilingual) setting, and by the new context in which English had to function (Kachru 1983:5-6).

The above observation shows that English did not begin where it is today. The language was developed, based on the way speakers used it, and because of its favourable position, that of first being used by the British Empire. The use of English in science, technology and literature also gave English the much desired status that it enjoys today. The development of the African languages will need to follow a similar language planning process, as has been evidenced by the growth of Kiswahili and Afrikaans on the continent.

2.9 Language and education

This section will look at the issue of language and education in South Africa. A brief history of the language issues prior to 1994 will be presented. I will then discuss the changes in language policy after 1994. Policy can be defined as a plan developed to guide our actions and behaviour. In South Africa, the issue of language in education started during the apartheid era. Before 1976, the Bantu Education system came into being, through the Bantu Education Act No. 47 of 1953 (McLean 1999:12). The aim of this act was to prevent Africans from receiving an education that would lead them to desire positions that they would not be authorised to hold in contemporary South African society. Instead, Africans were to receive an education designed to provide them with skills to serve their own people in the Bantustan “homelands” or to work in labour-intensive jobs under white control (*Sunday Times* 2005).

Consequently, education was designed to prepare black people for this role. This Bantu Education legislation was condemned and rejected as inferior from the time of its introduction. This cornerstone of apartheid ideology in practice brought destruction to the education of black people in South Africa, and disadvantaged millions for years. Even today the effects continue to be felt. The word “Bantu” in the term “Bantu Education” is highly charged, politically, and the term soon developed derogatory connotations.

It was in this context that the former Department of Bantu Administration and Development resolved to enforce the 50-50 rule for Afrikaans and English as languages of instruction in black schools. Inspectors in Soweto and other schools in the then southern Transvaal instructed black schools that mathematics and arithmetic had to be taught in Afrikaans alone, despite the fact that most teachers and pupils probably had only a weak command of Afrikaans (Giliomee 2003:17). Teacher organisations and black parents on school boards in the townships protested strongly, but the government ignored these protests.

Language policies for education are highly charged political issues, and are seldom, if ever, decided on educational grounds alone. When they are made, they are almost invariably subject to mistrust by some sectors of the community. Black people viewed Afrikaans as the language of the oppressor, particularly since it was introduced as part of the plan of the apartheid government (Van Rensburg 1999:83).

At the dawn of democracy in South Africa in 1994, for the first time indigenous languages were going to be used in specific domains such as health, justice and, most importantly, education. The new policies of the democratic South Africa made it possible for black children to attend former Model-C schools. Today more and more children of different races are educated in the same classroom. There was a massive exodus from township schools to historically white schools, as black people considered English to be the language of liberation. Even during the apartheid era black people voiced grievances on their placards in the language of English, and chanted slogans in English. For example, placards were brandished with the slogans “Away with Bantu Education”, “Away with the use of Afrikaans in our schools”, “Down with Afrikaans”, “We are not Boers”, and “If we must do Afrikaans, [Prime Minister] Vorster must do Zulu” (Giliomee 2003:17).

It should be noted that in South Africa from 1976 to 1993, only two languages, namely English and Afrikaans, were used as official languages, and in the sphere of education. It was only after 1994 that multilingualism was legislated for. The nine African languages of South Africa were no longer seen only as languages of communication, but it was legislated that they be used for teaching and learning purposes as well. The multilingual state of South Africa brings about some challenges in education. It is the norm that children grow up hearing more than one language. It is common that students master more than one language. Considering that languages reflect the world people live in and cultural identity, their use in society must be guarded jealously, so that mother-tongue languages are not “replaced” by English, or another lingua franca. Bilingualism in education has contributed to creating multilingual

societies, but implementation of multilingualism remains a challenge in South Africa.

As already mentioned, schools are vehicles of language spread and transportation. Therefore, the language that learners are taught in school becomes crucial, particularly in South Africa, where the promotion of our African languages is at the centre stage. I am of the opinion that, for these languages to be preserved and promoted, all schools must embrace the policy frameworks that encourage teaching and learning in the mother tongue and/or the African languages. The argument that the African languages are not well developed and lack vocabulary should be discarded, as these languages are taught formally in schools, and informally in society. It is important that South African citizens be afforded the opportunity to be empowered and educated. South Africans should be allowed to achieve this in their own languages. The level of illiteracy in South Africa is very high; furthermore, English proficiency is declining annually, despite the fact that one out of five people is learning English.

Today, as a result of the Bilingual Education Act of the late 1960s and the South African Schools Act (DoE 1997), it is possible for students to be educated in their mother-tongue, or first languages other than English, while at the same time learning English. According to Webb and Kembo-Sure (2000:289), many Africans have a first language that is different from the official languages of their countries, which they then acquire as a second language.

In line with the sentiments expressed above, the aims of South Africa's Language-in-education policy are as follows:

- To promote full participation in society and the economy through equitable and meaningful access to education
- To pursue the language policy and be supportive of general conceptual growth among learners, and hence to establish additive multilingualism as an approach to language in education
- To promote and develop all the official languages. To support the teaching and learning of all other languages required by learners or used by communities in South Africa, including languages used for religious purposes, languages which are important for international trade and communication, and South African Sign Language, as well as alternative and augmentative communication
- To counter disadvantages resulting from different kinds of mismatches between home languages and languages of learning and teaching
- To develop programmes for the redress of previously disadvantaged languages

(Department of Education 1997:4-5)

As indicated earlier, South Africa's Language-in-education policy stipulates that every learner must be taught in their mother-tongue in the first three years of school learning. This is known as the reception phase. Cummins & Swain (1986) argue that optimal first-language education provides rich cognitive preparation for the acquisition of a second language. The literacy skills already acquired in the first language provide easy transition to the second-language education medium. Knowledge transfer also becomes easy when a child is being taught in

her or his first language. Teaching in the mother-tongue provides a vital link between home and community, as well as encouraging cognition and understanding in school education (Alexander 2002:23).

A pilot study on the feasibility of using isiXhosa in education has already been conducted in the Western Cape (*Cape Argus* 2007). Learners wrote examinations in isiXhosa for various learning areas. Results from the research showed that learners performed better than their counterparts who wrote the same examinations in English. This is evidence of the fact that there is a correlation between good performance and home-language instruction.

Consequently, the National Department of Education is slowly phasing in mechanisms, allowing the choice of the mother-tongue for learners as a medium of instruction in schools. On 30 November 2010, the Eastern Cape Education Department likewise launched a mother-tongue-based bilingual education project in Cofimvaba, to be rolled out in selected schools (Mbude-Shale 2010). The point here is that it is the school governing body that is the decision maker on the choice of language in schools. This point should not be forgotten, as it is the parents who often need to be re-educated in order to make informed decisions about medium of instruction. It has also been proven internationally that a child taught in his or her mother tongue performs better academically (Oliphant 2008:5). However, the National Department of Education is still unable to provide multilingual examinations for Matriculants. There was recently a case where a high school in Durban refused to teach one of its learners' isiZulu as a first language. The parent of the learner took the school to court, and the court ruled in favour of the learner (*Daily Dispatch*

2009). This incident, on its own, should be sufficient motivation for the government to provide mother-tongue schooling for learners. This incident, moreover, demonstrates that with the advent of democracy, language rights have not yet been fully addressed, and that to redress pupils in some former Model-C schools through English-only usage is a failure to properly implement South Africa's language policy.

School acts and policies should be culture-oriented and should uphold constitutional decrees. In this new dispensation, with the advent of democracy, transformation is required. This can be achieved by having transformative leaders and teachers, at regional level, provincial level, and national level. Furthermore, teachers should adapt to the new policies. Policymaking should not be regarded as a once-off activity; policies require continual change, so that they fit in with changing circumstances. Furthermore, policies in schools should be tailored to the specific needs of a particular school. This will further ensure transformation. The mix of cultures in many of South Africa's schools assists in reconciliation for future generations and helps create peace between the various different races in South Africa, as well as social cohesion. The appointment of teachers of different races in schools will, on its own, promote diversity in our schools.

It is important that African languages are viewed not just as languages of communication, but also as languages of power. This approach will enable the African languages, when fully developed, to be used in the domains of science and technology. This is fully supported by the former Minister of Education, Naledi Pandor. A speech that she made in 2007 clearly stated the support of

the use of the mother-tongue in schools (*Sunday Times* 2007). Nevertheless, there has to be a shift in practice towards the African languages. Schools in one locality may share a teacher or teachers according to the needs of the schools. The ministry of education should make funds available for the development of the African languages, so that they are on a par with English.

The intellectualisation of the African languages is another important factor if African languages are to be fully developed and utilised. English should be seen as an additional language in South Africa, for those who have an indigenous language as a mother-tongue, and not as a primary language, merely because of its colonial, dominant past. For this reason, indigenous languages should be encouraged and promoted. Alexander (2002:23) states that “...unless we are able to use the indigenous languages of South Africa as languages of tuition at tertiary level, our education system will continue to be skewed in favour of an English-knowing elite”. English remains a tool for exclusion in the former Model-C schools.

The English-only usage in former Model-C schools was, and still is, condemned by the former Minister of Education, Naledi Pandor (*Sunday Times*, 2007), who argues as follows:

Language cannot be used to deny access to education. In that I mean English is used as an entry level at those schools. If the child is having no basic knowledge, he/she will never enrol in that school.

According to the Freedom Charter (25, 26 June 1955), “Doors of learning should be open to all”. In practice, the opposite of this is happening, in that the principals and governing bodies of some Model-C schools are refusing to admit learners, citing poor English language usage as one of the reasons. This effectively means that for some learners, the doors of learning remain closed.

Although numerous successes have been recorded with regard to language in education in South Africa, some challenges remain for policymakers. For example, the National Department of Education has yet to offer multilingual examinations for Matric students. Exam papers for subjects such as mathematics, science and biology are available only in English and Afrikaans. In this case, while on paper the department has managed to level the playing field for all South Africans, Afrikaans- and English-speaking learners nevertheless still enjoy an unfair advantage over their black counterparts. However, even if the Department of Education intended to offer such examinations, research has shown that translating exam papers into another language that was not the language of instruction does not necessarily work. Meanwhile, a large body of research has shown that the mother-tongue is the most effective medium of instruction, as it improves learners’ linguistic and cognitive abilities (*Grocott’s Mail* 2005; Dalvit, Murray & Terzoli 2009).

2.10 Viability of the mother-tongue in education

UNESCO defines mother-tongue education as an aspect of a larger enterprise, namely language planning (See Eastman 1992:96, quoted earlier). It is extremely important that the educational foundation that learners receive at school be made in their mother-tongue, if learners are to reach their full potential. Furthermore, mother-tongue education espouses the principle that

a learner is taught the fundamental concepts of a topic in her or his first language. Duquette (1995:38) believes that mother-tongue instruction is meaningful and relevant to the child, as it facilitates the transfer of first language skills to the outside environment.

One of the major obstacles, if not the biggest obstacle, to effective teaching and learning is the practice of people being taught in a second, and even a third, language. Mother-tongue instruction is still a sensitive issue in South Africa. This is still not an easy issue to address, as people tend to become emotional regarding the subject of isiXhosa as medium of instruction in schools (Dalvit, Murray & Terzoli 2009). As I have mentioned earlier, people need to be informed about the changes brought about by our democracy. Parents should be brought on board and made aware of the psychological and cognitive benefits of mother-tongue education. Much work lies ahead before many parents can begin to realise that their offspring can only do well if they are taught in their own languages (at the very least, at primary school level).

Even the Bantu Education system allowed children to be taught for eight years in their respective first tongues. This step prepared children well for the transition to the target language, even though a good education in the target language was largely denied them. Learners become more relaxed if lessons are conducted in the language they know best. Mother-tongue instruction activates the child's ability to perform with confidence, and improves reading, writing and numeracy skills. At present in South Africa, only English and Afrikaans mother-tongue speakers have these privileges. The mother-tongue should not be seen as a handicap, but rather be used in a variety of vocational

fields. According to Tollefson (1991:211), mother-tongue instruction at school is a fundamental human right. The lack of status associated with indigenous languages can be directly attributed to the fact that indigenous languages have been marginalised in schools. There is just not sufficient effort from government to promote the African languages. To this day, Afrikaans still enjoys a higher status than South Africa's indigenous African languages. Thulas Nxesi, Secretary General of the South African Democratic Teachers Union (SADTU), argues that the whole concept of the eleven official languages being equal is "just lip service" (*City Press* 2008). The mother-tongue still suffers, as it is rare in many former Model-C schools to find indigenous languages being offered, despite the change in the demographics of South Africa's suburbs. Segregation in schools might have been abolished, but the language policy in many schools, in effect, promotes segregation. In the light of the above-mentioned facts, it seems as if the "medium fails the message" (see Appendix B).

2.11 African languages as threatened languages

The future of African languages may be threatened, as more and more Matriculants attend former Model-C schools and choose to study an African language as their additional language, rather than as their mother-tongue. In 2008 in the external Matric examinations in the Eastern Cape, only 12 723 of the 590 000 Matric candidates wrote one of the nine African languages (*Daily Dispatch* 2008). This suggests that our African languages are under siege (see Appendix F). IsiXhosa, in particular, is under serious threat, as only 1 602 of the Matric candidates wrote the IsiXhosa mother-tongue language paper. The fear is that if future middle-class isiXhosa speakers do not know how to read and

write their language properly, isiXhosa faces the possibility of language death (Sifile 2008:14).

According to Mlawu Tyatyeka, the Eastern Cape provincial manager of PanSALB, the root of the problem facing African languages is that some schools in South Africa refuse to incorporate African languages as part of the curriculum (Sifile 2008). This is despite the fact that the South African Constitution provides for the use of all of the official languages in education. Tyatyeka also states that “...those learners who choose European languages are only doing so because of the higher status given to those languages”. He added that “...there is a perception that those who have studied English and Afrikaans have an advantage over those who studied English and isiXhosa” (Tyatyeka, as quoted by Sifile 2008:14). Learners also need to be informed of the job opportunities that are available to them after studying African languages, such as being a language practitioner.

Black parents are also accused of forcing their children to take English as primary language, instead of one of the African languages. This is so, as most parents still regard English as a prestigious language, and still see being able to speak English as a privilege (Dalvit, Murray & Terzoli 2009). However, the choices that parents make concerning language have been defended, given that English is regarded as a “bread-and-butter language” (Kaschula, as quoted by Sifile 2008).

The ways African languages are taught in schools poses a threat to the survival of these languages. Kaschula (as quoted by Sifile 2008) stated that “...we teach

African languages as dead languages, that is the problem”. To counter this problem, new and interesting market-related ways of teaching African languages, be it in schools or at tertiary level, must be introduced. This is the only way young people will be attracted to learn isiXhosa. Most importantly, “...language practitioners and teacher unions are concerned that there aren’t enough trained teachers to offer a variety of subjects in the indigenous languages” (Van Zyl 2005:22). Another challenge is that there aren’t enough textbooks. The Education Department will need to work hard to make learning materials and language teachers available for all South Africa’s official languages in all schools.

Lack of development of terminology for the African languages also poses a threat to the continued existence of these languages. Through PanSALB a number of lexicography units have been set up to compile dictionaries for the African languages. For example, a unit for isiXhosa, the IsiXhosa National Lexicography Unit, is based at the University of Fort Hare. There is, however, still much work to be done (Sam 2010). These efforts need to be extended to other African languages.

The limited use of African languages in the traditional media also poses a danger inasfar as the preservation and development of these languages is concerned. Use of the African languages in media such as radio and television is believed to encourage speakers of these languages to be proud of their languages and to use them more. Once African languages are used in the media, users of these languages will automatically attach status to their language and will realise that their language has the same value as the

languages of English and Afrikaans. For example, at the moment, the public broadcaster, the SABC, focuses mostly on Nguni languages, at the expense of the other indigenous African languages, such as the Sotho languages, isiNdebele, Tshivenda, and Xitsonga. The print media has not been faring any better. Kaschula (as quoted by Sifile 2008) states that publishers are not doing a good job of publicising isiXhosa books. Without literature, languages will not be preserved, and consequently could face extinction.

The hegemony of English all over the world is seen to be threatening the survival of indigenous languages (Mona, as quoted by Speckman 2005). Peter Mtuze (as quoted by Speckman 2005), the then deputy registrar of Rhodes University, stated the need for indigenous languages to be developed and promoted through daily use, especially in technical and scientific spheres, as well as in the workplace. He added that "...it is the context that creates a language ... the initiative lies with speakers of African languages".

For any serious development of a language to take place, speakers of that language must be prepared to use that language in all aspects of their lives. For example, during the apartheid era, Afrikaans was used in all spheres of life, that is, education, the economy, society, and politics. As soon as a person makes an utterance in an African language, it is assumed that the person is illiterate and uneducated. Other associations evoked by the use of an African language are those of poverty and barbarism. The diagram below shows that the most widely spoken languages in South Africa are the indigenous African languages. Nevertheless, these languages continue to be marginalised in South Africa's education system.

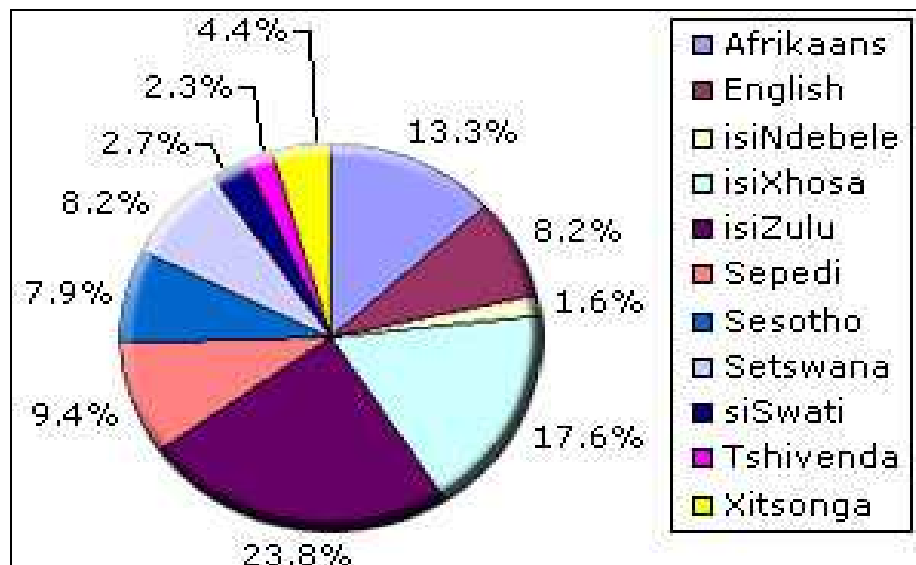


Figure 1: The distribution of South Africa's languages by number of speakers as a percentage of the population (Source: South African Census 2001)

2.12 Language and the economy

Language plays an important role in every economy and every society. Language planning also has an impact on the economic situation. For example, at the micro level of economics, the relative prices of various goods, such as textbooks, are likely to affect patterns of language use. At a macro level, patterns of international trade are likely to influence language dynamics, both informally, through the interaction between economic actors, and formally, through the choices made by large organisations to favour certain languages for internal communication.

Skills are better rewarded in some languages than others, which suggests a form of competition between languages (Webb & Kembo-Sure 2004).

Reciprocal language variables have an impact on economic variables. Economic gain will be facilitated by one's proficiency in the designated language of business. Languages are seen not only as elements of identity or potentially valuable communication skills, but as elements that influence socio-economic status.

South Africa is a multicultural society; it has to cater for different people of different languages and cultures. As mentioned earlier, for the proper implementation of policies, the government must spend vast sums of money to rectify the injustices of the former apartheid era. Economics has a role to play in a country such as South Africa, particularly in the selection and design of language policies. Language planning can serve as a tool for empowering groups and individuals, for creating and strengthening national bonds and ties, and for maximising economic development (Kaschula et al. 2007).

Language planning should be anchored in the discipline of economics. The economic perspective on language matters appears to be on the rise (Reagan, as cited in Mesthrie 1995:320). Most of the economic work on language policy addresses the position of one language in relation to other languages, or the broader question of linguistic diversity. However, it is useful to point out that education and economics also provide relevant inputs, principally because education tends to be the single most important channel of government intervention in the sphere of language. Furthermore, it stands to reason that an educated people are a prosperous people, in economic terms.

Through the work of PanSALB, South Africans are empowered with skills for communicating in business. Kaplan (1997:156) states that “[i]n economic terms, the value of language is not a property of language itself, but an index of its appreciation by a relevant community”. As has already been mentioned, in the case of business and industry, a language holds a value determined by the community. Members of a society should be able to learn or acquire languages, including English, for the purpose of economic activity.

Eastman (1992), as well as Alexander (1992), reinforces the view that a “bottom-up” approach to language planning is the best approach. This is an approach that allows language to facilitate economic growth and prosperity. South Africa’s African languages should be well developed, so that they can facilitate economic growth. The economic usefulness of a language determines the maintenance and development of a language. It is for this reason that the African languages are unable to compete on the global market, because of their low status and underdevelopment. However, all languages must be included on the socio-economic scene, for the benefit of the speakers of the languages.

Granting official status to the minority languages may be costly, but these costs should be weighed against the costs of deteriorating intergroup conflict. The contribution of economics often recasts language problems in a new light and redefines them in terms of alternatives whose implications must be spelled out, and between which choices have to be made.

The main expenditure would thus be state spending on language teaching in our schools. Offering higher education in various languages and providing language teachers with incentives and job promotions based on linguistic proficiency could result in stronger economic and educational scenarios. Language is a valuable commodity, both to individuals and to national economies. It can be argued that the relationship between language planning and economics is at a critical turning point, if decision makers are prepared to re-examine the role of languages.

2.13 Conclusion

Even with the advent of democracy, the indigenous language issue has not been resolved. The granting of official status to South Africa's nine indigenous African languages is not a ready solution to the problem. In fact, it has created more challenges regarding the language issue, as these languages still need to be developed.

Government initiatives are in place, but the process is slow due to financial constraints. As far as education is concerned, black learners from townships are moving in large numbers to register at former Model-C schools. This is because the township schools are underdeveloped. They have no libraries, no laboratories for science experiments, and so on. Parents therefore move their children, because they think that their children can never achieve at these township schools as long as Model-C schools remain well resourced. The language-in-education issue therefore goes beyond language issues, and includes challenges regarding attitudes and resources.

After democracy, a new education system was introduced, with new teaching strategies and learning areas. This should help black children to compete in the world of business, technology and science. However, there are no follow-up programmes to monitor the situation in schools. For example, there should be workshops for teachers to improve their English and African language proficiency. Teachers on the ground are not doing what is stipulated in the DoE documents mentioned in this chapter, especially from Grades 4 to 12, where English is the medium of instruction. Teachers are reluctant to use English; as a result, they code-switch. In the end, when children are assessed, they are compelled to write everything in English. They are then unable to perform well in English, or in their mother-tongue, for that matter, because their teachers had made excessive use of code-switching when they taught the learners. The learners lack communicative ability, because they cannot express themselves in English. English continues to dominate as it is used alongside African languages. At the same time, Afrikaans has been phased out in township schools, and is consequently, in effect, a silenced language much like the indigenous languages at present. What is required now is the parallel development of both English and the indigenous languages including Afrikaans. This would assist African language speakers to be empowered, and to avoid the hegemony of English. It is only then that South Africa's indigenous African languages can develop as potential languages of economic and educational power.

African languages must not be seen as add-on courses, but rather as providing people with real career opportunities. Furthermore, they should be transactional languages that can be used in banks, as well as in the public and private sectors. Making material available in the African languages should be a

priority of language planners. For example, in the Eastern Cape, material must be made available in isiXhosa, and in KwaZulu-Natal, material must be made available in isiZulu. This I believe is the only way of giving African languages their due respect and recognising them as functional languages, in reality rather than just in theory. Speakers of African languages must also be encouraged to use their languages in their day-to-day activities. Meanwhile, government should put measures in place to ensure that the African languages are used in the media. This will ensure that the African languages are preserved and developed.

Lastly, the intellectualisation of the African languages is gradually becoming a reality, through journalism and creative writing in South Africa. African languages should not be developed for the younger generation only. Finlayson and Madiba (2002:40) are of the opinion that language intellectualisation is a significant facet of language development. More books should be published in the African languages.

According to Foley (2004:83), in theory it is possible to develop the African languages in South Africa, but in practice the policy of developing the African languages may not be successfully implemented, owing to socio-economic and political problems militating against the development of these languages as languages of learning and teaching. Tollefson (2000) argues that the choice of a language of learning and teaching is often not the only issue in language policies in education, but that instead many different socio-political issues are involved.

It has also been pointed out in this chapter that the choice of English over an African language is often based on the fact that English is associated with progress and prosperity (Phillipson 1992:8). The new demands that were placed on the African languages, as expressed in the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (Act 108 of 1996), were articulated such that a new social space and function had to be established for them. This means that although these languages are used as official languages, they are lagging far behind in the area of modern terminology, as compared to the former colonial languages (Finlayson and Madiba 2002:46). The challenge now is to create educational equality for all of the official languages in South Africa.

This chapter has presented an overview of language planning and policy implementation, as it relates to published literature in this field. In the next chapter I explain the methods that were used for my data collection in the two schools that were selected, as mentioned in Chapter 1. The methods used in my study include an ethnographic approach, where participant observation formed an important part of my research at the two research sites.

Chapter 3

Methodology and Ethnographic Background

3.0 Introduction

This chapter describes the methodologies employed in achieving the objectives of this study. I begin by aligning the goals of this study with the methods that I have chosen to use. I further describe actual methods used as well as justifications for selecting them. Methods are fully outlined for my research.

The main focus of this chapter is a description of the methodology employed in collecting data from the participants involved in this research. As a point of departure this chapter discusses the choice of methods selected, in order to pave the way for data presentation and analysis in the chapters to follow. Therefore I will outline sampling, the research sites, data collection methods, research ethics, validity as well as discuss limitations and challenges. As the study followed a qualitative approach, I employed triangulation to validate data that had to be collected through various methods.

Qualitative research involves asking personal questions and collecting data in places where individuals work or live (Creswell, 2007:1140). Qualitative types of data collection might be categorised in terms of their sources such as: observations, videos, pictures, newspaper cuttings, interviews, and documents from the DoE.

The qualitative approach is the philosophy which informs this research project. Furthermore, case studies are conducted within an interpretive paradigm.

Crucial features of research such as validity and ethics are given consideration. I highlight my role as the researcher, and the challenges that I encountered. Finally, I conclude by providing a summary of my research methodology.

3.1 Research design

In this section, research goals are explained as well as the research paradigm. The study sample concludes with challenges and limitations. I provide reasons for choices made and how they facilitated the carrying out of the research.

This research study shows that the majority of children suffer educationally due to the question of the medium of instruction. The scope of this research is primary schools, particularly teaching at the Foundation Phase. The goal of this research is to assess language implementation as stipulated in the DoE policy document outlined in Chapter 2, and to assess the reality within the selected schools. This can only be achieved through thorough research into how language is being used by teachers and learners in these selected schools, namely, PJ Olivier (PJ) and CM Vellem (CM) in Grahamstown.

For the purpose of this study I chose learners from Grades R-3. These learners in both schools had been doing all three learning areas in their respective first-tongues, namely, languages studies, numeracy, and life skills. All the learners had a reasonable oral proficiency in the two media of instruction, namely isiXhosa and Afrikaans.

What makes my research unique is the fact that I will be comparing two schools, one where Afrikaans remains as the language of teaching and learning throughout, and the other where isiXhosa is officially abandoned after the third year of schooling, and in terms of policy, an English only approach is maintained.

In short the actual reason which underpinned this study is to investigate how teachers perform/implement their teaching, using isiXhosa at CM and Afrikaans at PJ, as a medium of instruction in the Foundation Phase. In other words the study sought to find out the kind of classroom interaction and discourse which occurs between teachers and learners when using either isiXhosa or Afrikaans as a medium of instruction in these schools (as a mother-tongue).

3.2 Research Paradigm

A paradigm is defined as the application of an entire research framework to practice (Willis 2007:8). In this section research goals are explained as well as the research paradigm. The study sample concludes with challenges and limitations. I provide reasons for choices made and how they facilitated the carrying out of the research. I will further discuss the interpretive paradigm. A paradigm is defined as a basic set of beliefs that guide action (Guba 1990:17). These beliefs define the worldview of the researcher-as-interpretive-bricoleur, Denzin and Lincoln (2005:245).

In regards to the interpretive paradigm, the researcher is directly involved by interacting with the subjects' perceptions and meanings which they give for their actions. Furthermore it has naturalistic features such as: being there, their worlds, as well as their own stories (Willis 2007:6). All data collected in this study was based on actions, views and perceptions of the individual. In this research I used observation and ethnography to assist me in compiling the discussion of my findings that will be presented in Chapters 4 and 5. This ethnographic approach involving participant observation is taken for the approach developed by Dell Hymes in terms of his ethnographic framework which involves a "speech situation", such as a schooling environment. Hymes

(1962:101) states that “The ethnography of speaking is concerned with the situations and uses, the patterns and functions, of speaking as an activity in its own right.” I also knew that interpreting is in itself a very subjective way of analysing data. In other words its primary emphasis lies in the process of understanding. This study will be conducted particularly in the classroom that enables me to use the interpretive paradigm as a lens through which to view this research. My view is that the researcher has to look at different places and at different things in order to understand a phenomenon.

3.3 Qualitative Research

The idea of qualitative research is to purposefully select informants that will best answer the research question. Although the study is not simply a comparative one, the qualitative method has contributed to collecting critical aspects of the data that I needed. The study seeks to capture the lives of the participants in order to understand their contexts by analysing conversations and interactions that the researcher had with the research subjects, (Henning 2004:19).

The aims of qualitative research are to gain in-depth descriptions and understanding of actions in terms of their specific natural contexts rather than attempting to generalize (Denzin and Lincoln 2005). Qualitative research is the type of research that presents its findings in a narrative form. I am saying this because qualitative introductions may start with a personal statement of experiences. Furthermore a researcher as a first-person with a subjective point of view positions herself/himself in the narrative. This is evident from Chapters 4 and 5 that follow.

The qualitative aspect of the interpretive paradigm is pertinent in this study because the focus is on understanding human practice and making meaning without generalizing. Babbie and Mouton (2001:53) describe qualitative research methods as guided by the insiders perspective on social actions that is, the individuals interpretation of social reality. Maxwell (1996:55) maintains that there is a great deal of flexibility inherent in qualitative research. This is verifiable as I was able to modify the research along the way and the changes that I made were based on the development of the project.

The researcher had to observe how the participants (teachers and learners) interacted in the classroom. Also, the researcher had to analyse the teacher's perceptions of the use of Afrikaans at PJ, and isiXhosa at CM, as medium of instruction. This helped in order to ascertain find their own understanding surrounding the issue of languages of instruction in these two schools. Qualitative methods worked very well when conducting and requiring in-depth information. The idea of qualitative research is to purposefully select informants or documents or visual material that will best answer the research question (Creswell 1994:148).

Qualitative studies may employ more questions to guide the researcher. I chose this method because one of its chief reasons is that the study is exploratory, as I seek to listen to informants and to build a picture, based on their ideas. This is better explained in the interview section. Also as a researcher I would want to probe more on what the policy states should be done during the first years of schooling. I looked at what the teachers were doing on the ground. The question is: are they on the right track or are they acting contrary to what is supposed to be done in the classroom? The best way

to conduct this research was to go to schools and visit directly with educators and learners.

The most interesting part of the qualitative method is that, when collecting data from various sources, including people, the reality is constructed by the individuals involved in the research situation. As Creswell (2009:176) states: “...qualitative research is a form of interpretive inquiry in which researchers make an interpretation of what they see, hear and understand”. Also the qualitative aspect of the interpretive paradigm is appropriate as it seeks to interpret social phenomena in a natural setting in which people’s experiences, views, behaviours and actions are taken into account. Knowledge is gathered from interviews, observations and different types of documents.

3.4 Multiple Case studies

According to Creswell (1998:61) a case study can be regarded as an “...exploration or in-depth analysis of a bounded system”. Stake (cited in De Vos 2005:272) argues that the sole criterion for selecting cases for a case study should be the opportunity to learn. It is indeed a process. The case study method was adopted for this study. I deliberately selected the cases to have certain features and boundaries that are as follows:

- Teachers learning and teaching strategies (literacy) from Grades R-3 classrooms.
- The manner in which the learners interact with their teachers in class.
- Gender: Boys and Girls.
- Age range: 5-9 years.
- Language: isiXhosa speakers and Afrikaans mother-tongue speakers.

The case study is not a data-gathering technique, but a methodological approach that incorporates a number of data-gathering measures (Hamel, Dufour, and Fortin 1993). This therefore means that a case study is both a process of inquiry about the case and the product of that inquiry. A case study approach is found within the qualitative research approach. It is an in-depth exploration of a particular context, such as classroom or group of individuals that involves the collection of extensive qualitative data. The case study method allowed me to retain the holistic and meaningful characteristics of real-life events (Yin 2003:2). As indicated above, having chosen to work with the qualitative approach, I incorporated the case study method.

Anchored in real-life situations the case study offers insights and illuminates meanings that expand its reader's experiences. There are different types of case studies; the one that is relevant for this study is the descriptive case study. It is relevant as it falls within my research area. In my study I am focusing on language policy and practice in two different schools. The purpose of this study is to probe deeply into the matter with the intention of analysing the phenomenon that is being observed.

Case study research excels at bringing us to an understanding for a complex issue. Case studies emphasize detailed contextual analysis of a limited number of events or conditions and relationships (Soy 1997:1). Adelman et al. (2000:181) state that "...a case study is the study of an instance in action". This approach is again evidenced in Chapters 4 and 5.

3.5 Sampling

The nature and selection of the sample of this study should take into account the research method selected, the research goals as well as the demands of the choice of the research paradigm, with the aim of providing the best information from the most appropriate research sites (Creswell & Plano-Clark 2007:112).

Sampling usually involves people and settings, as well as events and processes. For this particular study I have decided to employ a mix of purposive and convenience sampling. These two types of sampling were deliberately chosen, as each one has a specific purpose. Also these two approaches help the researcher to bring together a worldview perspective concerning the research. The cases presented are those from which someone can learn a great deal about issues of central importance to the purpose of the research, thus the name purposeful sampling (Patton 1990 as cited in Merriam 2001:61). In order to begin with the purposeful sampling the researcher should begin by subject selection to obtain a sample that appears to be representative of the group (Patton 1990).

Convenience sampling is when the sample is selected on the basis of some constraints such as location, time and cost. A convenience sample is a group of subjects selected on the basis of being accessible or expedient (MacMillan and Schumacher 2001:175). Patton mentions the criterion of convenience which refers to the selection of those cases which are the easiest to access under given conditions. I chose CM Vellem as my convenience sample, because I have been employed at the school since 2004 and have positive relationships with the teaching staff. This type of sample is easier to use when conducting

research, though it has some limitations. One of its limitations is that the researcher cannot make generalizations from the selected sample.

The sample itself at CM Vellem is as follows.

I observed:

- one Grade R class lesson
- one Grade 1 class lesson
- one Grade 2 class lesson
- one Grade 3 class lesson

In these lessons I focussed specifically on:

- three learners from Grade R
- three learners from Grade 1
- two learners from Grade 2
- two learners from Grade 3

In total I worked with ten learners from the four grades on an on-going basis.

In all the already mentioned grades, I needed to observe language implementation by the educators, as well as the behaviour of learners. Fortunately at CM Vellem the educators find it easier to implement language usage, as the class is not multicultural, but monolingual. The learners are all isiXhosa first language speakers. That amounts to less of a burden for the educators because there is no need of interpreting or translating; educators use a language that they bring from their homes which they already know.

For further purposive sampling, I chose PJ Olivier. This type of sampling helps the researcher to establish comparisons in order to show or highlight the reasons for differences between settings and individuals. The purposeful selection of participants represents a key decision point in a qualitative study. In the case of purposive sampling, researchers purposely seek typical and divergent data (Erlandson et al. 1993:33 cited in De Vos et al. 2005:329). Furthermore PJ firmly reflects the multilingual, multicultural context of South African society. This is a school in which the language of business and teaching is Afrikaans. However, this does not mean that Afrikaans is the only language spoken at this school. Similarly, the home contexts will be that some learners will be speaking their home language at home and not much Afrikaans. The two samples that I chose, help the researcher to put the whole sample together, however, the success of the research depends on the richness as well as the relevance of the information.

3.6 Research sites

In this section I explain the historical background of the two schools chosen as research sites. I also explain their geographical position in Grahamstown.

Township schools are generally located in the low socio-economic areas of Grahamstown. C.M Vellem School is situated in Joza location. It is a township school that is under-resourced but well managed. The school is a Junior Secondary school that starts from Grade R and proceeds right up to Grade 9. It had an enrolment of 1090 learners in the 2010 academic year. The learners in this school are isiXhosa speakers. As indicated earlier, my main focus is on the Foundation Phase, from Grade R to Grade 3. There is a staff complement of 34 teachers. For the Foundation Phase there are 7 educators in charge. Educator

participation in this study was voluntary and educators who were interested in my research were targeted.

The school itself is in the centre of the low cost housing project where the majority of the parents work as domestic workers and gardeners. Some parents are pensioners, some are doing piece-jobs, and many are unemployed. One would wonder why the high enrolment at CM. The answer is simple: teachers aim to provide as good an education as they can, in high poverty conditions. Parents within the township seek out such schools for their children, since they cannot afford schools outside the township, such as the former Model-C schools. This means that certain schools with a good reputation in the township find their numbers growing. This makes the point that poor parents in the local communities know which schools are performing relatively well or poorly. This should be taken into consideration, namely that this school accommodates learners particularly from the working class families as well as many broken homes.



Picture 1: Meal servers at CM Vellem

The school also offers a feeding scheme to all learners (see picture above). The motive behind this is that some learners come to school having not eaten, and it is hoped this feeding scheme will motivate them to attend school regularly. This attracts learners from all over Joza Township, such as the informal settlement and the squatter camps.

There is overcrowding in the townships and unfavourable living conditions, such as lack of proper sanitation, poverty, and high crime rates. Burglaries have occurred several times at this school and the area poses certain dangers. Even so, the school encourages participation in many extra-mural activities such as sports, music, drum majorettes and dance. The school choir is always invited to perform by various organizations within the community.

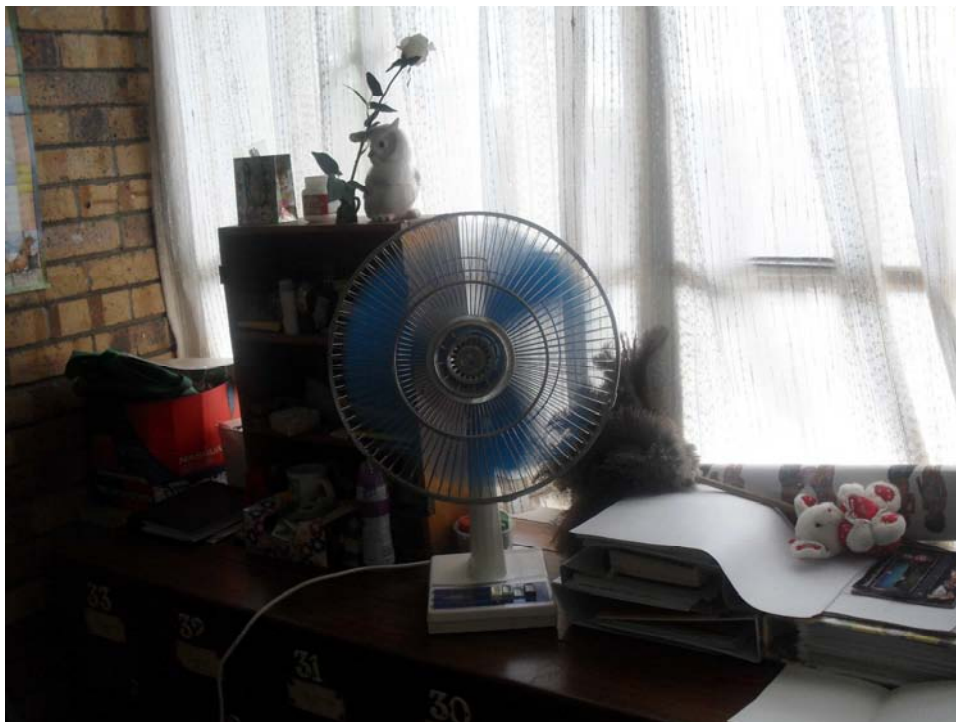
PJ, however, is situated in the centre of the main town. The school grounds are attractive and it is an ordinary government city-centre school with all the facilities of a previously whites-only school. All teachers are Afrikaans female speakers. The school is well resourced with numerous sporting facilities as well as a well-resourced library. The Foundation Phase section of the school is signed as follows: GRONDSLAFASE Gr-R tot Gr-3, and the Grade R section PIKKIES. The learners are from the neighbouring farms and the suburbs.

PJ Olivier is a totally different setting from CM. They operate in total extreme settings, as I have mentioned earlier. PJ is diverse in character as it has a mixture of languages and cultures. See picture below.



Picture 2: A multicultural PJ Olivier classroom

There are isiXhosa mother-tongue speakers, English mother-tongue speakers, as well as Afrikaans mother-tongue speakers in this school, the latter being in the majority. The learners are from middle class families as well as wealthy farming communities and business people. The school is well resourced and well managed. The classes are well structured and well resourced in terms of equipment (see picture below).



Pictures 3 & 4: A typical PJ Olivier classroom

Further Site Pictures



Pictures 4 and 5: Exterior views to the Research Sites

The PJ Olivier classroom is not overcrowded compared to the CM Vellem township classroom. In the past PJ used to be a traditionally Afrikaans medium school that accepted only a particular race group. With the advent of

democracy all races are welcome - hence they have multicultural classes, though conducted through the medium of Afrikaans.

In this school I worked with 4 teachers in 4 classes, that is one class per grade. As with CM Vellem, I focused on the Foundation Phase. Also at this site I worked with 10 learners from the four grades. I needed to observe language implementation by educators as well as the learners' behaviour in the classroom.

3.7 Research participants

The adequacy of a research method depends on the purpose of the research and the questions being asked (Babbie & Mouton 2001:391). If a researcher is researching questions such as: "and how do you implement language usage in the classroom?" or "tell me about the learner's behaviour in the classroom. It is at this juncture where participant observation might be a better method of inquiry.

For convenience sake my criteria for choosing the learners was based on their interest shown in spontaneous reading and writing. As for the participating educators, I worked with educators that showed interest in my research study. For the purpose of this research, participant observation was used in that I was part of the social life of the participants.

3.8 Data collection methods

In this section I define the term "interview" as well as the other types of research methods. I then move on to describing the reason for choosing a specific type of study. Furthermore I explain the way in which the interviews were conducted and analysed. I then conclude with a brief description of the development of the interview questions designed in three languages that is,

Afrikaans, English and isiXhosa. Observations and documents have been used as data collection tools.

According to Collins, cited in Willis (2007:137) the interview serves to facilitate the process wherein messages are conveyed from one mind to another. For Collins the interview is not a fact finding mission but an interaction between people who are creating understanding through conversation. The interview is an especially effective method of collecting information for certain types of research questions; it can also be used for addressing certain types of assumptions, for example, in order to ascertain if the teachers on the ground do adhere to what the language policy states regarding language usage in the classroom.

In both schools the participants were females. This encouraged a situation of woman to woman talk. I was warmly welcomed in both schools, as an interviewer, as everyone was looking forward to participate. Being an isiXhosa speaker was an added advantage as well as having a fair command of the Afrikaans language.

Interviewing is only one of a number of ways that researchers can obtain answers to questions. The research interview is defined as “...a two person conversation initiated by the interviewer for the specific purpose of obtaining research-relevant information, on content specified by research objectives” (Connell and Kahn as quoted in Cohen et al. 2007:351). It must be noted though, that an interview cannot be equated to an ordinary conversation, as interviews are “...constructed with a specific purpose and are question- based” (Dyer, as quoted in Cohen et al. 2007:350). This highlights the centrality of

human interaction in interviews, and the emphasis on the social context of research data.

According to Seidman (1998:2) interviewing is a basic mode of inquiry. This means interviewing expresses an interest in understanding the experience of other people, and the meaning they make of that experience. Interviews may be used in research for three reasons. An interview can be used as the main method of collecting data to test or suggest a new hypothesis. In-depth interviews were incorporated in this study, so that they could be used alongside other methods such as classroom observation and document analysis.

Interviews were chosen for this study because they provided an opportunity to “interact” (Babbie & Mouton 2001:306) with the respondents and gather information. Another reason why I chose to use the interview as a tool in this study is that, the method allowed for in-depth descriptions of the respondents actions and their understanding of the importance of mother-tongue instruction in the lower levels of schooling. Secondly, I was able to capture emotions as well as their cues, as I was having face-to-face interviews with them. Thirdly, interviews were consistent with the interpretive paradigm. The paradigm focuses on subjectivity to understand and explain the actions of the individual. The interview provided the opportunity for the researcher to understand their subjective world.

In some instances, interviewing children below a certain age may not work, specifically in my case as a Foundation Phase inquirer where young children may not understand and grasp the questions. Their ages range from 6-9, and this required sitting down with them to ask about their experiences.

Interviewing an educator or a learner allows the researcher to put behaviour in context and provides access to understanding their actions.

The semi-structured interview was chosen for this study. This was based on a review of the various types of interview methods available as outlined by Patton, as quoted in Cohen et al. (2007:352-356). The semi-structured interview "...combines structure and flexibility..." which was important for this study. Semi-structured interviews meant that there were set, pre-prepared questions guiding the interview, with room for asking follow-up questions. Interviews are required to provide oral responses to open-ended questions directed to them by the researcher. In order to probe for more information about a specific point, the interview guide includes general suggestions such as: "Can you explain this in more detail?" Another general probing question would be: "What do you mean by...?" (Oerter et al. 1996:43-7).

For this particular study, a focused or semi-structured interview was chosen, as this rests on the following assumptions:

1. It takes place with respondents known to have been involved in a particular experience.
2. It refers to situations that have been analysed prior to the interview.
3. It proceeds on the basis of an interview-guide, specifying topics related to the research hypothesis.
4. It is focused on the subjects' experiences regarding the situations under study.

(See Dalvit 2004)

A detailed interview guide was prepared and, after a brief explanation of the topic and purpose of the research, the questions were put to the interviewees. The only time I changed the wording was when I needed to overcome the language barrier, but I managed to stick to the interview schedule. The key to success in this kind of interview is to strike a balance between structure and flexibility in order to allow for unexpected information to emerge.

Another type of interview is the unstructured interview. It is also known as the informal conversational interview, where questions “...emerge from the immediate context and questions are asked in the natural course of things and there is no predetermination of questions” (Patton Cohen et al. 2007:352-356). This type of interview was not chosen, because it was not systematic and without guidelines controlling the interviews, and there are no mechanisms to ensure that relevant, consistent data can be generated from all the interviews conducted. This would be a risky way of collecting data, because drawing themes and trends could be very challenging if the questions and data generated were different.

There is also the structured interview which was used. Structured interviews are usually prepared well in advance. They are normally used to count or quantify responses. I did not envisage quantifying data, but rather drawing descriptive data from respondents. Interviews allow the researcher to record additional information, such as context, and the immediate reaction of the respondent to the questions, which can be in the subsequent analysis. Interviews were recorded and then transcribed by hand. These then underwent a thematic analysis to draw out themes and trends from the data gathered, as can be seen from the material presented in Chapters 4 & 5.

Sarantakos (cited in De Vos et al. 2005), views the pilot study as one way in which the prospective researcher can orientate themselves to the project they have in mind. The pilot study also forms an integral part of the research problem. This has helped me as the researcher to refine some questions and to improve the research method prior to the full administration of the interview. For example, through the pre-interview session some questions had to be left out, upon the realisation that the language issue has been and still is a sensitive issue in South Africa. This has already been mentioned in Chapter 1.

According to Singleton et al. (1988:230), the pretesting of a measuring instrument consists of "...trying it out on a small number of persons having characteristics similar to those of the target group of respondents". Lincoln & Guba (1985:123) suggests that before devoting oneself to the arduous and significant time of qualitative study, it is a good idea to do a pilot study. Although a researcher may plan the investigation, the practical situation will remain an unknown factor until it is entered.

3.9 Development and administration of the teacher interview questions

An analysis of various documents was used as the initial data collection method. Merriman (2001:133) states that "...documents of all types can help the researcher uncover meaning, develop understanding and discover insights relevant to the research problem". The documents I used in this study were the DoE documents, the government gazette, and other reading material derived from the media. I had to read extensively in order to gain a full understanding of the field so as to be in a position to interpret my findings.

I used the document analysis for drafting the initial questions that I used in the classroom and with the interaction with the teachers, as well as other people

knowledgeable in the educational sphere. I chose the sites that I thought would be relevant to my research problem, so that accurate and reliable information was used. Document analysis was also central to the question of the development of interviews. Literature on language policy provided another source for the development of the interview questions.

Most of the works that I reviewed in Chapter 2 dealt with themes on the awareness of the language policy, and the knowledge of the importance of mother-tongue education during the child's first years of schooling. Some of the questions were derived from my own curiosity about ways in which the language is implemented in each of the two chosen sites. I had a few preliminary questions drawn up on language implementation strategies and approaches used by teachers. Other questions came from my prior knowledge as a teacher.

Classroom observations enabled me to obtain an indication of the areas that people were interested in, and wanted to know more about. I used this information to create questions for the interviews. The questions were then prepared and ordered, and given to the respondents a few days before the interview. This was an important stage, as questions had to be modified to suit some of the respondents.

At several points in the interview, opinion seeking questions were asked. I used these questions as it was an important aspect of my research to establish teacher's opinions about our new Language-in-education-policy, as well as their opinions on the use of mother-tongue instruction in the Foundation Phase. All questions were open-ended and allowed for follow-up questions. I gave the respondents an opportunity to relax by asking them general questions

about their work and how long they had been involved in it. All interviews began with a few background questions which served as ice breakers.

Teachers were told at the beginning about the purpose of the interviews. They were also assured that their responses would be kept confidential. Permission was asked to record their responses, and they generally accepted my request. Interviews were conducted in a venue comfortable for the respondents. This was achieved by allowing them to choose the venue themselves. All the interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed. I did this as I was not going to be able to take notes while recording. Also, I wanted to save time as I do not have skills in short-hand writing. At PJ the interviews were conducted in the morning before tea-time. This was an agreement between the researcher and the HOD of the Foundation Phase. I had an opportunity to interview educators one-by-one. This made the teachers more relaxed. In total, I had eight extended interviews at PJ as well as at CM.

I did transcriptions for the isiXhosa and English interviews, but with the Afrikaans interviews I had to depend on someone with a good command of that language. I was able to interact with my data, which I began to analyse while I transcribed (Hahn 2008:78). I gave the respondents transcripts for member validation (Maxwell 2008:82). This was to give respondents time to see the typed information as well as for them to change or amend what they had said in the interviews. They showed interest in me by asking general questions about my studies as well as my background.

3.10 Problems and improvements

I experienced certain problems; the most challenging being that of time, as setting up time with colleagues was difficult, as we were all embarking on a

national strike at the time of my research. Another challenge was streamlining questions that I wanted to pose to my respondents, without being biased or leading. Once the interviews were completed, I faced the challenge of transcribing them, which was time consuming. Another hurdle to overcome was the fact that some of the participants refused to be voice-recorded.

3.11 Observations

As indicated previously, observations are one of the research strategies used in many types of research designs; experimental, descriptive, and historical research (Best & Kahn 1989:175). To respond to the research questions that underpinned this study, as mentioned in Chapter 1, I made observations to gather information from the classroom.

As I continued with the classroom observations, I began to find some answers, sometimes to a limited extent, to some of the research questions. Observations can be direct or aided by media. Direct observations were done by taking field notes and by making use of a video camera. I recorded what was happening inside the classroom, thus proving the worthiness of observations recorded in field notes alongside video-recordings (Cohen, Manion, and Morrison 2007:311). That helped to keep track of situations and thoughts during the period of study. Time and dates of events, written work and photographs of participants, as well as video clips were used by the researcher. Furthermore, field notes consisted of a written record of observations, interactions, conversations, situational details and thoughts kept during the period of study.

Berg (1989:192) suggests that “...note-taking is a personal activity that depends upon the research context, the objectives of the research, and the

relationships with informants”. Field notes were a useful tool because of their convenience. They provided continuity, as I was able to relate incidents, identification of issues and the information by the participants. The field notes were of a descriptive nature. My specific focus during these observations was mainly on the practice of mother-tongue instruction at the already mentioned schools. Field notes included diagrams and models within an observation context. Spontaneous written work of the participants, photographs taken and resources used by the teachers were collected. Essentially, observations are about describing a setting and events that take place within that setting. Saville-Troike (1982:2-3) supports this by stating that ethnography “...takes language first and foremost as a socially situated cultural form”. These socially situated interviews form a primary source of data collection in qualitative research (Merriam 2001:311).

3.12 Documents

Documents of all types can help the researcher uncover meaning and discover insights relevant to the research problem (Merriam 2001:133). This refers to physical material gathered during the research for this study (Schwarz 1997:32). I had to read extensively in order to understand the field and to be in a position to interpret my findings, as indicated in Chapter 2.

DoE policy Documents, photographs, as well as newspaper cuttings were collected. Policy documents and what is stipulated therein were looked at. The purpose of the photographs in this thesis is to learn more about the situation within the research sites, from an ethnographic point of view, and they serve as a reminder regarding specific conditions found at the research sites. Moreover, the photographs were often taken in conjunction with participant

observation (Hymes 1962). Document research may also be used conjunctively as a means to counter validity threats.

3.13 Data analysis

Data analysis begins by going back to the purpose of the study. A key principle is that of depth and intensity of analysis, and this was determined by the purpose of the study. Document analysis prepared me of what to expect during the carrying out of this research. Document analysis was central to the development of the interview questions. Literature reviewed in Chapter 2 provided another source in developing the research questions.

To facilitate data analysis the teacher responses were coded as follows: at PJ, PIKKIES 1234 and at CM, COTTY 1234.

3.14 Ethical Considerations

Ethical issues were considered in this study. I had to consult with the principals of the two schools to access permission to conduct all interviews and classroom visits. Obtaining permission was beneficial in that I came to know people that I was going to work with. All the respondents were competent enough to make their own decisions in terms of whether to take part in the study. According to Stake (1998:18) procedures for gaining access to research subjects are based on the enduring expectation that permissions are needed. Furthermore, all respondents were asked to sign a consent form as a record of their voluntarily participation and undertaking that they understood the purpose of the study (see appendix D).

A meeting was arranged beforehand between the researcher and the two principals at different scheduled times. Principals were informed about the purpose of the study, as well as how the data was to be gathered. In addition I

explained the purpose of conducting the research, namely to fulfil the requirements of the MA programme at Rhodes University. Participants were assured of confidentiality, as they were given consent forms that were read to them. Also the participants were told that there were no financial benefits or otherwise due to them at the end of the research period.

I further assured both parties that the photographs and video clips would remain anonymous. The identity of learners that were interviewed and observed was protected by using pseudonyms. Lastly, I invited the principals to proofread drafts of the research to ensure that details were accurately reported. Confidentiality and anonymity are sometimes mistakenly used as synonyms, but they have quite distinct meanings. Confidentiality is an attempt to remove from the research records any elements that might indicate the subject's identities. In a literal sense, anonymity means that the subjects remain nameless.

3.15 Validity

In this section I discuss the several validity threats identified, and the ways I improved the validity of my research. Validity refers to the "...extent to which a measure accurately reflects the concept it is intended to measure" (De Vos et al. 2005:121). In dealing with validity I was aware of the effect that personal bias could have on the end-results of my study. I made an effort to minimise the influence of my personal bias on the data collection and conclusions reached (Maxwell 1992). Bias is defined by Rose (2001:2) as likely "...if the researcher has too much in common with the respondents", then there may be temptation for the interviewer to affect the responses. The validity measurement in qualitative research lies with whether the data collection methods are investigating what the research is supposed to be investigating.

Furthermore, validity checks for bias or lack of precision; it questions the procedures used and the decisions made. It also addresses theoretical questions, which underpin the research study (Henning et al. 2004:148). For validity purposes, content validity was concerned with the extent to which a measure covers the range of meanings. For example, most of the data was collected by means of observations, and to make meaning of the data I interviewed teachers who voluntarily became part of this study.

Concerning validity, the present study took into consideration the content of data collection, as driven by the research questions. The qualitative nature of this study allowed for credibility and reliability, which promoted validity in the research (De Vos et al. 2005:346). In terms of credibility this study has described the research-sites and the research subjects (teachers and learners). For reliability there is evidence through videos and photographs.

To strengthen the validity of my research, I interviewed the participants in the languages of their choice. That was to ensure that they were free to speak in a language that they best know. At PJ I used Afrikaans, and at CM isiXhosa was used, but one teacher at CM Vellem chose to be interviewed in English. The interviews were first transcribed into isiXhosa and Afrikaans, where necessary, by a research assistant and then translated to English by the researcher. I avoided giving direct responses, by voicing out personal views and opinions. Bias may also be present in the questions used in the interviews, such as the leading questions. While preparing questions, I had to address my personal view-points, so that they did not affect the study. I did this through engaging in lengthy discussions with people who had different points of view on language issues. I had to make sure that my qualitative data was not based on my opinion. I did this by ensuring that my interview data was based on the

respondents lived experiences (Van der Mescht 2008). I was able to do this by making use of the probing questions on the interview sheet. This has helped gather rich data for my study. I also used triangulation, to avoid validity threats. Triangulation is recommended as it reduces the risk that conclusions reflect only the systematic biases or limitations of a specific method. This has allowed me to gain a better assessment on the validity of the explanations that I developed (Maxwell 2008:236). Triangulation also compares data derived from different data sets, in order to give credibility to the data used in this research (Creswell & Plano Clark 2007:194). Member checking is another way of validating findings. This also assists in making sure that the data, therefore, is valid in terms of being representative of the views of the respondents. After each classroom lesson visit, all unclear issues were clarified with the teachers concerned.

3.16 Limitations and challenges

Generalisability was one limitation this study faced. Marshall (1989:146) states that a qualitative study's "...generalisability to other settings, that is its external validity, may be problematic and is seen as a weakness in the approach". Although this is true of the qualitative research it was different for my study, as I did not generalise views and opinions. The nature and duration of this study, and commitment of the participants, together with the research environment and working conditions at the two schools, as well as the fact that I am a full-time teacher, can be seen as limitations within the context of this study.

It is important to note that this study deals with the use of the mother-tongue, either isiXhosa or Afrikaans, within the two selected schools. The end results of this study are based on two schools only; therefore they do not represent a general overview of other schools in Grahamstown.

Time constraints underscored the importance of focusing on research questions, and remaining focused throughout the research process. In my case the challenges were with the carrying out of the interviews, as the teachers were embarking on a national worker's strike. The focus of my work became slightly changed, as time had to be spent refocusing and adjusting to new time constraints. Setting my own deadlines and writing up the research required discipline and dedication. Transcribing, drafting and conceptualising information from the respondents was a major challenge in terms of time.

My observations had to correspond with the teacher's time-tables, especially at PJ. I visited this particular school on Wednesdays. That was an agreement between the researcher and the junior school management. At CM it was very easy for me to partake in classroom observations, as I was also a staff member. I used my free periods to undertake research. Another challenge was that the learner's development in the Foundation Phase should have been monitored constantly. That would have been possible if the study was to be conducted over a longer period.

3.17 Role as the Researcher

In this section I discuss the various roles I had to play for the successful completion of this research. Glesner & Peshler (as quoted in Mkhonto 2005) state that the researcher needs to clearly define his/her role in the research. Clarity of my role helped in the planning for this research.

Firstly, I had to manage my subjectivity in the carrying out of this research, as I was an insider in that I am a staff member of one of the schools in question. Also, the fact that I am a teacher by profession made me to have claims of being an insider. That forced me to reconcile my insider role in this research.

Understanding that I had this insider role made it possible for me to realise that this status brought a risk to my study, by possibly compromising interpretations. The ambiguity of being the participant observer and teacher in this study, and attempting to keep these roles separate, had to be managed through constant awareness on the part of the researcher.

3. 18 Conclusion

This chapter begins by situating the research within a particular research paradigm. I move on to explain the various research approaches that were used. The chapter then describes the methods of data collection. It later explains issues of validity, limitations, and challenges for this research and the role that the researcher played is outlined. Given the ethnographic, anthropological nature of the research it was important to specify the research methods in detail in order to contribute to the validation of my research.

In the next chapter, I present and analyse all data collected using the various methods as discussed in Chapter 3.

Chapter 4

Data presentation and analysis

4.0 Introduction

Data analysis was done by analysing the interview data that was derived from classroom observations as indicated in Chapter 3. After assessing the data obtained from each teacher, I derived patterns, similarities and differences in the data and accounted for them. The data is here presented and analysed as part of three strands:

- Firstly I give a brief description of the schools' context in which the research took place. A profile of the participants (teachers) is given.
- The second strand looks at the observations from the classroom, as well as the teacher interviews.
- The third strand focused on the awareness of Language-in-education policy, parental support, teaching strategies and the reading models.

4.1 Profile of the research participants

This section provides the background information and a profile of the research participants. I will be presenting and profiling three selected teachers in each school, though discussions and interviews were held with many teachers.

Teachers at PJ:

P1

P1 was a Grade 1 teacher at PJ. She lived downtown in a suburb near the school. She did her primary teachers certificate at the Stellenbosch College of Education. She was 58 years of age, with 34 years experience of teaching and she was nearing retirement. There were 21 learners in her classroom, 10 girls and 11 boys. She was an Afrikaans mother-tongue speaker. Her classroom was neatly arranged with the desks in rows, (see picture below):



Picture 6: Learners at PJ in an ordered classroom

She always said to me: “Jammer my skat, ek gebruik die ou metode van opleiding” (Sorry my love, I still use the old methods of teaching). The classroom had a very colourful wall that makes a print-rich environment. She was also the oldest teacher in the Foundation Phase.

P2

P 2 was a Grade 2 teacher. She stayed at the girl’s hostel, within the school premises. She was 27 years old, with 2 years of teaching experience. She

completed a teaching degree at Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University (NMMU). She was also an Afrikaans mother-tongue speaker. She had a class of 24 learners, 12 boys and 12 girls. The classroom was arranged in a different style, and the desks were arranged in the OBE way. This means two desks had to face each other. This is an ideal seating configuration for group discussions. The book-bags were hung on hooks, making it an attractive learning environment.

P3

P3 was a Grade 3 teacher. She was 52 years old with 32 years teaching experience. As she stayed 20 kilometres out of town, she had to travel to and from school every day. She was a qualified teacher with a primary teachers certificate (PTC) as well as an (ACE) qualification from Potchefstroom University. Her classroom was made up of 20 learners, 12 girls and 8 boys. The class was neatly arranged with a book corner, and a table at the back for the learner's lunch boxes.

There was a basin with a tap so that anyone who was thirsty could drink water, without leaving the classroom. She spoke basic isiXhosa words like “uphi?” (where are you?), “wena” (you), “yiza” (come), “ngubani?” (who is it?). She had picked up those words from the farm where she stayed. Also she was always telling the learners that: “Onthou kinders, dat dit ‘n Afrikaans klas is” (remember children, this is an Afrikaans class). When I wanted to know more about what she was trying to put across she simply said to me: “Die medium van onderrig hier is Afrikaans” (the medium of instruction here is Afrikaans). Again, this approach favours the Afrikaans mother-tongue-speakers in the school as indicated by Alexander (2002:7-8) where he discusses the factors that clearly demonstrate the importance of this mother-tongue instruction,

particularly in terms of identity construction, democracy, the economy, and more importantly in this case, cognitive development. As pointed out in Chapter 3, this is not emphasised at CM Vellem, where isiXhosa is abandoned in favour of an English-medium mode of instruction at Grade 4.

Teachers at CM

C 1

C 1 was 54 years old, teaching Grade 1, with 32 years teaching experience. She had a (PTC) from Lovedale College of Education in Alice. Her classroom was neatly arranged, with ice-cream containers on the table, used as storage for lead pencils. The windows were broken. She had a class of 42 learners, with a gender balance of 21 boys and 21 girls. There was clearly not enough space to move between the desks, despite this, she was able to manage the classroom very well. The walls of the class were decorated with the letters of the alphabet, thereby making it more attractive.

C 2

C 2 was a vibrant 35 year old teacher with 7 years teaching experience. She was a graduate from Rhodes University, with a Bachelor of Arts (BA) degree and a Postgraduate certificate in education (PGCE). She taught grade 2 learners. There were 50 learners in her classroom, 27 girls and 23 boys. There was again not sufficient space to move, even for the learners. The classroom was full to capacity, and as a result it was untidy. The learners had a good relationship with her, especially the girls, because she was always dressed in bright colours. She stayed in a nearby house, close to the school. This lady-teacher had received background training from the Breakthrough programme, which was meant for literacy improvement in the Foundation Phase. Also she

had been selected to attend the Molteno literacy programme that was offered at Rhodes University.

C 3

C 3 was a Grade 3 teacher, with 14 years of experience in the teaching profession. She was 40 years of age, with a junior primary teachers' diploma (JPTD), Bachelor of Education degree (BED), and an advanced certificate in education (ACE). The classroom was made of 32 learners, 20 girls and 12 boys. C3 was a very creative teacher, and the classroom was decorated with ceiling hangings donated by the Department of Arts and Culture.

The windows were decorated with numbers written in white, red and black colours. I noticed that in her class there was one portable blackboard on a stand which was donated by the READ project, a non governmental organisation. In one corner there was an oversized reader, entitled SIYADLALA, with all the reading strategies inside. As indicated in Chapter 3, all the teachers and learners at CM were isiXhosa language speakers.

4.2 Classroom observations

As indicated in Chapter 3, observations in this study were made using the qualitative research method. Observations mainly focused on the teaching approaches that were used by teachers in the language lessons. I also looked at the classroom infrastructure and resources available in each class. Learning and teaching is more favourable when all the learner/teacher support material is available (LTSM). As a researcher I also took note of the different class arrangements in both schools, by this I am referring to different class layout in both schools.

At PJ the teachers were authoritative, the teacher would make a command once, and all the learners would be quiet within a split second. In Chapter 3, I mentioned that PJ has multilingual and multicultural learners. At times the teachers had to code-switch to facilitate the lesson. Code-switching was from Afrikaans to English, there was obviously no code-switching from Afrikaans to isiXhosa.

It came to my attention that the classrooms at PJ were colourful in terms of decoration, with all the books on display. Each learner had a book, as there was no sharing of books. All classes were print-rich, with the crayons kept in plastic containers, as well as erasers, rulers and lead pencils. Black learners would make conversation with a teacher using Afrikaans: “Mevrou, kyk Schalk se hare” (Teacher, look at Schalk’s hair). I could see that the learner was trying to impress.

There is a belief that culture is embedded in any language, the two are inseparable (Kaschula & Anthonissen, 1995:15). I am citing this because when I first entered the classrooms at PJ, the learners asked their teachers if I was the new isiXhosa teacher: “Ekskuus Juffrou, is die dame die nuwe onderwyseres vir die Xhosa taal?” The teacher was reluctant to answer them, as I indicated to the teachers at first that I have a fair command of the Afrikaans language.

At CM the teachers were care-free, as the learners were noisy at all times. The teacher would shout at the top of her voice, to the extent of banging on the table with her hand. There was no code-switching, because all learners were sharing isiXhosa as their first tongue. The learners responded to their teachers by saying “Yes Miss. No Miss”, instead of saying “Ewe tishalakazi, Hayi tishalakazi”. Learners asked to leave the classroom in English instead of asking:

“Uxolo tishalakazi ndicela ukuya kuzinceda”. They will substitute that by saying “Sorry Miss, can I leave the classroom”. A further classroom observation was that corporal punishment was still used at CM, despite its official abolishment.

At CM the learners were excited about my presence in their classrooms, as they used to see me in the school yard, as well as in the Senior Phase section. They participated well, using isiXhosa in all their lessons. I felt good as a researcher, as the successful interaction between teachers and learners formed part of classroom observation.

4.3 Interviews

In this section I present findings of the selected interviews with four teachers from each school, though I have selected three interviews for the purposes of this study. The respondents were the same as those that I worked with during my classroom observations. These six teachers believed that they were experienced in the education field, and they participated voluntarily in this study. For the benefit of this study, the interview questions were presented in three languages namely:

- Afrikaans
- English
- isiXhosa

The Afrikaans version

1. Vertel my van jouself.
2. Hoe sal jy jou skool se taal beleid beskryf?

3. Wat verstaan jy omtrent die huidige taal in die onderwys beleid in die land?
4. Is daar leerlinge in jou klas van ander kulturele groepe en/of is daar leerlinge van verskillende taal groepe?
5. Hoe sal jy voel om in 'n verskillende omgewing te werk?
6. Vertel my omtrent die nuwe metodes in onderwys, Sou jy sê dit is van hulp vir leerlinge aan die einde van hul skool/opleiding.

English version

1. Tell me about yourself.
2. How would you describe the language policy of your school?
3. What do you understand by the Language-in-education policy for our schools?
4. Do your learners in your class come from other cultural groups and/or are there ones speaking different languages?
5. How would you feel working in a diverse environment?
6. Tell me about the new methods of teaching. Do you think they would be helpful to children at the end of their schooling?

IsiXhosa version

1. Ndicela ukuba uthi gqaba-gqaba ngawe.

2. Ingaba lukhona ulwimi olusisivumelwano/undoqo ekunyanzelekileyo ukuba lusetyenziswe apha esikolweni?
3. Ingaba uchulumancile ngokusetyenziswa kolwimi lwenkobe ezikolweni zethu – wazi ntoni ngamalungelo axhasa lo mcimbi?
4. Ingaba bakhona abafundi bezinye iintlanga kwigumbi lakho lokufundisela okanye bakhona abathetha olunye ulwimi?
5. Ungeva kanjani ukusebenza kwisikolo apho kuxubene ootitshala/titshalakazi bezinye iintlanga?
6. Kha undixelele ezi Ndlela zintsha zisetyenziswa ngootitshala ekufundiseni. Ucinga ukuba ezindlela zinako ukuwenza umahluko xa umntwana egqibile esikolweni.

Respondents in both schools

P1 at PJ

P1 was the head of the Foundation Phase section, which placed her in control of the whole section. In response to the question of the language policy of her school, she stated clearly that PJ was an Afrikaans medium school. All teaching and learning took place in Afrikaans. She also mentioned that she still used the old methods of teaching which she believed were the best. She indicated that she was very much aware of what the language policy was advocating, but did not see that working at her school.

P1 reiterated that her school did not see the point of teaching isiXhosa, as it was a waste of time to the isiXhosa speakers. She made the following statement: “the parents of isiXhosa learners did not see a point of sending their learners to schools where this language was being offered as first

language”. That means the parents saw PJ as a school in which their children will get quality education, through the medium of Afrikaans. Paradoxically, she also mentioned the importance of mother-tongue use, claiming that if a child is taught in her/his mother-tongue, then it is likely that success at the end of schooling was guaranteed.

She went further by providing me with a brief background of the school, and she highlighted the fact that it used to be a single race school, but now that we are living in a democratic country, she noted that her school was forced to admit learners of all races. Her response addressed question no 3, where I asked about the presence of learners of other race groups in her class.

Concerning teaching methods, she preferred the old drilling method. She said she did not picture herself working in a township school. Speaking with her was crucial, as she was the voice of the Foundation Phase, because she was part of the school management team.

P2 at PJ

P2 was a post-level-one educator, just like the other participant to follow. Responding to the second question on the language policy of her school, she made it clear that the medium of instruction was Afrikaans, and that it had always been Afrikaans, even in her schooling days at PJ. She indicated that she did not see any difference in the current Language-in-education policy, compared to the one that was used before, under apartheid.

P2 emphasized the importance of mother-tongue instruction when she said that: “moeder taal is belangrik in die grondsafase” (mother-tongue education is important in the Foundation Phase). Furthermore, she said if the isiXhosa language can be developed, then it can also be a language of power, as it is

spoken by the majority of this country. She responded differently from the other two teachers, as she was positive about the use of African languages in her school. Addressing the question of mixed languages and cultures in her class, she showed joy by saying that it was a pleasure to have them in her class, but fortunately the non-Afrikaans speakers had to grapple with the target language, namely Afrikaans.

Coming to the question of a diverse environment, she said she did not mind to be in that type of a situation, as South Africa promotes diversity, but for now at PJ it is an all-white staff, though the learners are from diverse backgrounds. As she was newly graduated she was energetic and used many innovative teaching strategies such as games, songs, and she also made use of outdoor teaching with the learners.

P3 at PJ

P3 was different from the other two teachers, in the sense that she spoke basic isiXhosa language. She was able to communicate with learners in a more meaningful way. She also emphasized the importance of mother-tongue teaching in the Foundation Phase. She indicated how she wished that black parents would recognise that their children were battling with the Afrikaans language and that they were not being taught in their mother-tongue.

She recommended the old methods of teaching, suggesting that they were very useful in scaffolding the non-mother tongue speakers. She did not see anything of value in the current Language-in-education policy, commenting that “...nothing much has changed, because we are doing what we used to do in the past”. With the multilingual character of her class, she felt pity for the learners, as she was of the opinion that they were compromising their “own”

languages. On a very personal note, she stated that creating diversity in staff would never happen at PJ, as the school promoted Afrikaans in every way. She suggested that the learners of other languages be sent to the respective schools that offer “their first tongues”, stating that this “...would be wise as the language transfer would be more effective.”

C1 at CM

C1 was a Head of Department, and like P1, she was a voice of the Foundation Phase. The question of school language policy was a very difficult question for her to answer. She stated that the only thing that she knew about this was that there were 11 official languages in South Africa. She elaborated by stating that the isiXhosa language is only used for teaching and learning in the Foundation Phase. Also she commented that isiXhosa has been used in the past, and she also saw nothing new in that. But in the same interview she stated: “Aba bantwana bafika apha esikolweni bethetha isiXhosa esixubeneyo namagama athile esiNgesi”. She noted that children brought mixed isiXhosa with some English words to the classroom, which she saw as problematic for the learning process.

She responded to the question of other race group learners by noting that all learners at CM were isiXhosa speakers. C1 wished to work in a diverse environment, as she thought that would market CM in the Grahamstown area. She stated: “ukuba kunokubakho iititshala zezinye iintlanga(abelungu) zininzi izinto ebesinokuzifunda ,kuba kaloku bona kudala imfundo yabo iphucukile.” (If CM could have white teachers, this means the school could benefit a lot, as they had better education now and in the past). She made some closing remarks by highlighting the importance of mother-tongue being spoken and used the correct way. C1 used the drilling method as a teaching strategy.

C2 at CM

Out of the three teachers, she was the most educated teacher. She was a post-level-1 teacher. She was of the opinion that there should be an English class at CM. C2 made it clear by stating that isiXhosa “...is not taking our learners anywhere”. Furthermore, she was of the opinion that an English-only approach for the learners at the preparatory stage would better prepare them for the intermediate phase. This type of attitude is supported by the work of Dalvit (2004) as indicated in Chapter 2.

She further stated that she knew about the school language policy, but maintained that the learners would not be able to withstand the load of a new language in Grade-4, so she opted to use English in her class. She also chose to be interviewed in English. C2 said she would highly appreciate it if there could be diversity at CM, or to be transferred to a diverse learning and teaching environment. This seemed somewhat ironic. When it comes to teaching strategies she managed to introduce group work. She saw this type of activity as the one that would familiarise the learners with the English language. She concluded by stating that: “with the new strategies in use, learners are critical thinkers at the end”. She also made use of the strategies that she acquired at Rhodes, as she had been chosen to take part in the Breakthrough short course programme, as well as the Molteno project that was responsible for encouraging reading.

C3 at CM

She did not know anything about the language policy of the school. She said she thought isiXhosa should be the one to be used since it is the language spoken by the learners. C3 was also of the opinion that learners could achieve

better results when using isiXhosa: “Abantwana banakho ukuphumelela besebenzisa ulwimi lwabo lwenkobe”.

Working in a diverse environment was not important to her, as she said adapting to a new language or environment would not serve any good for her. Responding to the question of the teaching strategies that she used, she replied by stating that the strategies used in the olden days were the best. She commented that the telling and the drilling method were the best, because the learners had been sent to be taught by the teachers only.

4.4 Teacher interviews and teaching strategies

Interviews were conducted with the teachers, as a follow-up to the classroom observations. I used the interviews to verify and complement data from classroom observations. As indicated in Chapter 3, the study is qualitative, and I saw interviews as a relevant tool for data collection. The interviews aimed to establish how teachers felt about the use of isiXhosa and Afrikaans as the medium of instruction in the two respective schools.

Strategies used by teachers in the two schools are also fully outlined here. The major focus will be more on various strategies used by teachers to implement the isiXhosa and Afrikaans usage as medium of instruction at CM and PJ. This is evident through lessons that are discussed in this chapter in various grades (Grades R to 3). Teachers in both schools used different language implementation strategies. This depended on the availability of teaching resources in each school and possibly also differences in the teacher-training programs that the teachers attended. The lessons at PJ were conducted in Afrikaans right through to the end. In one class the teacher started by reading

a text from an Afrikaans Bible, and that was followed by a lesson activity as part of story-reading.

Physical training is part of their daily routine before the lessons begin, as there is a belief that it helps to freshen their minds. (See picture below):



Picture 7: Physical training at PJ

On the contrary, at CM the Bible verse is written on the blackboard, and the learners are expected to recite it (see picture below):



Picture 8: Bible verse written on the blackboard at CM Vellem

From a comparative point of view, such differences in how things are done were important to note. At PJ the learners listen attentively, as they are seated on a carpet in front of the teacher. (See picture of Grade 1 class below):



Picture 9: Story-reading at PJ Olivier

Children with little reading experience are able to see how their teacher opens a book in order to read them a story. After the teacher has read the story, they might see the book taken to a neat and tidy book corner, where books are

attractively displayed, thereby encouraging respect for books and a reading culture. (See picture 10 below):



Picture 11: Book display corner at PJ Olivier

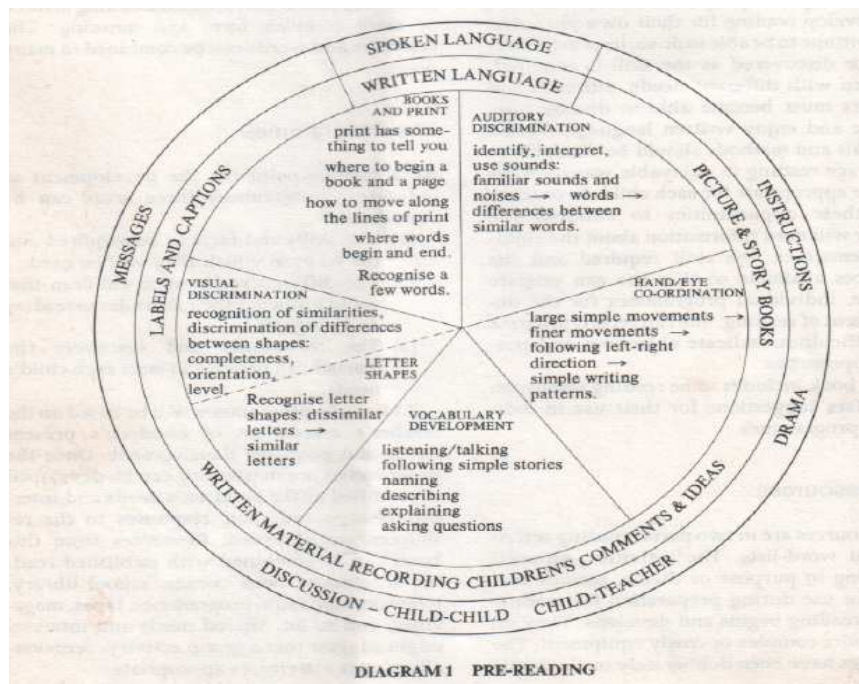


Picture 12: Book corner at CM Vellem

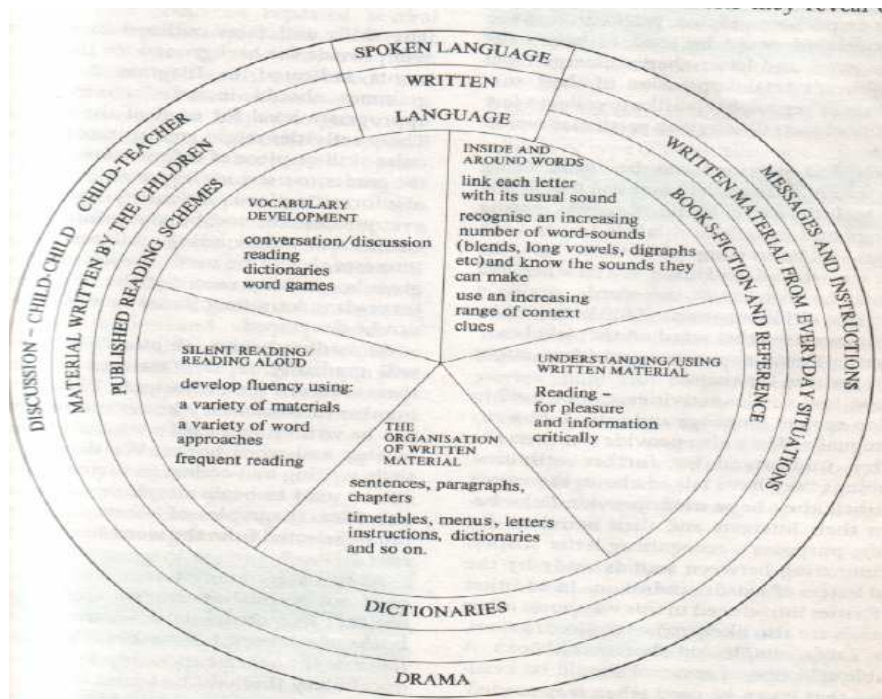
4.5 The Reading Diagrams

The diagrams below, as designed by Ball, illustrate the main experiences to be met and skills to be acquired during (a) the pre-reading, and (b) the reading

stages. These are the stages that are aspired to at both schools. The diagrams are another way of showing efforts by teachers to teach learners how to read.



Picture 13 & 14: Pre-reading (above) and Reading Diagram (below)



Ball (1979:2-3)

The diagrams serve as a guide-line towards language implementation in the preparatory phase. Each and every step that a teacher makes is fully outlined. This includes materials to be used and learning strategies to be implemented. The first diagram serves as a pre-reading guide. This is most relevant for Grades R to 1. At the end of Grade R, before entering Grade-1, learners are required to have mastered these three areas:

- auditory discrimination
- visual discrimination
- Hand /eye co-ordination

The above mentioned areas are called the perceptual areas that are used to prepare the learners up until the end of the phase. Language is very much used through activities that enabled them to interact with the subject content. At both schools it was clear that teachers were knowledgeable concerning these phases, though there were differences in teaching approaches as mentioned above, and the PJ learners read largely in Afrikaans, whilst the CM learners read in English, and to some extent in isiXhosa, as a result of lack of reading material in isiXhosa. This in itself has implications for the application of the information as set out in the diagrams. This resulted in greater reading competency and cognition at PJ, through the medium of Afrikaans, as opposed to CM.

The outer circles of the diagrams show ways in which spoken and written language can be encountered in the classroom. The two diagrams overlap in dealing with stages of development. This simply means that before implementing something, especially with the beginners, it is the duty of the

teacher to plan and come up with development strategies. The pre-reading experiences and skills increase as spoken language is encouraged through a given activity like (news or let us talk about what has happened during the weekend at home). All sorts of good and bad news will come up and in the process the vocabulary is developed as everyone has something to say. Reading can be done silently, or aloud, and frequent reading develops fluency. This activity becomes more enjoyable and effective as the learners are keen to take part in news-making. As indicated above, these strategies were evident in both schools, though more clearly applied at PJ, and in a single language.

In a Grade R class at PJ, learners were encouraged to speak as they looked and made different interpretations of what they observed (see picture below):



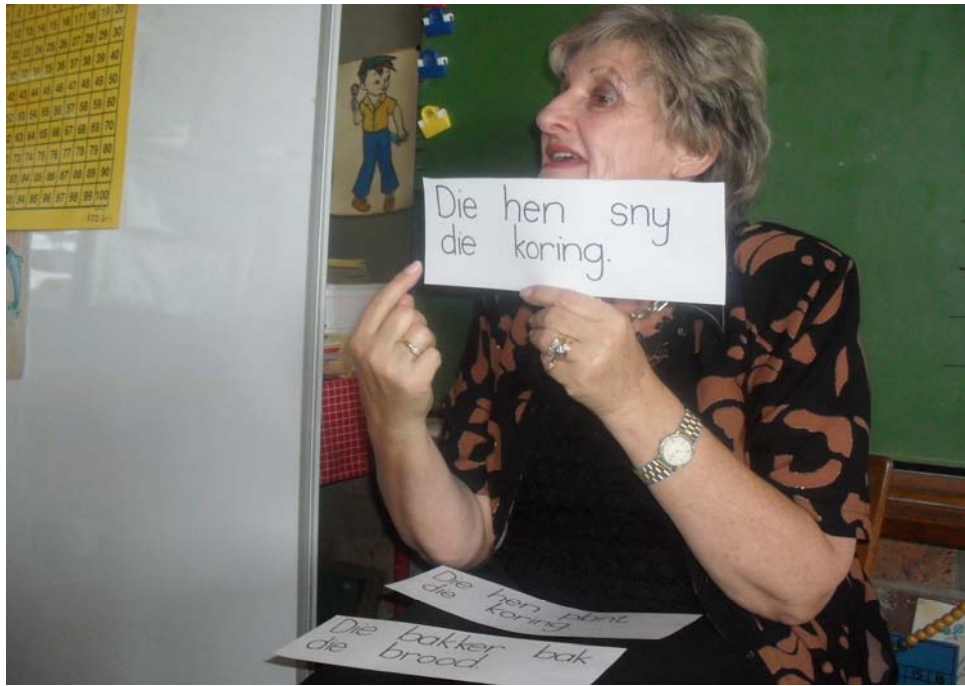
Picture 15: Interpreting pictures and words at PJ

On a particular day, I observed a Grade R class, and the children were listening attentively to a story: “Dannie en die springtou” (Dannie and the skipping rope). After reading the story the teacher asked questions to test the learner’s

concentration and comprehension. They also had to draw the rope next to Dannie's picture, bringing in a pictorial aspect to reading and learning. This activity was done on the blackboard. At CM the teacher stands in front of the learners as they are also seated in rows, and the story is read to them. There would be question time to test their listening skills, with less emphasis on pictorial activities.

At CM they partook in an isiXhosa activity: "Masincokoleni" (Let's talk). Learners made up all sorts of stories, some based on life stories happening in their homes. Some made up news around alcohol abuse, thereby also showing up the different backgrounds that children come from in the respective schools. The teacher developed games like the WOLF and MARY GO ROUND. At CM the games were done using isiXhosa and some of the stories were read to learners in isiXhosa: "Udyakalashe nomvolfo" (Jackal and the wolf); "nondize" (Hide and seek). It was important to note the ease with which these stories were transported into isiXhosa from English. For each of the areas outlined in the circle diagram above, the teacher had to devise activities, such activities could be: The visual discrimination, auditory discrimination, Hand/eye co-ordination, Letter shapes. These activities were appropriate to both Grade R and 1, but there were different activities for different grades.

Another strategy of encouraging them to talk at PJ, as opposed to CM, was the successful use of story cards for Grade 1, and the learners then interpreted them (see picture below):



Picture 16: A story card used at PJ



Picture 17: A story card

“Die storie van die bakker en die haan” (The story of the baker and the rooster).

The story cards had the words:

- die bakker,
- bak die brood,
- Haan plant die koring.

There would be question-time, which involved answering questions such as the following:

- Wat is die pappa Hoender? (What is the father chicken?)
- Mama Hoender is die...? (Mother hen is the...?)
- Baba Hoender is die...? (Baby chicken is the...?)

As a child's grasp of reading developed, the skills and information that they acquire must be used in relevant situations, and this could be made possible by introducing activities specifically linked to the material they are reading. Furthermore they had been given different readers such as:

At PJ	At CM
Die hangmaat	Siyadlala
Pappa en die valhat	Setyis' ulwazi
Shirley is die gemmer	Simnandi IsiXhosa
Die trein	Ekhaya
Boetie en seuntjie	Umhambi

Even though the content was completely different and in different languages at the respective schools, (as indicated above), some of the strategies used

were remarkably similar. After reading the comprehension from a reader, the next activity was to pick up verbs and to fill in the missing words activity. At CM there were limited books, as they normally used shared-reading. This was evident in picture 12 above, where the book-corner is shown as haphazardly arranged.



Picture 19: Interactive reading corner at PJ

The learners enjoyed playing and reading at the same time, as can be seen in the above picture. When it is time for them to read the teacher reads with the learner using her finger to point to words, thereby letting their reading flow, thereafter enabling the learner to read on his/her own (see pictures below):



Picture 20: PJ Teacher using her finger to indicate words



Picture 21: PJ learners reading aloud

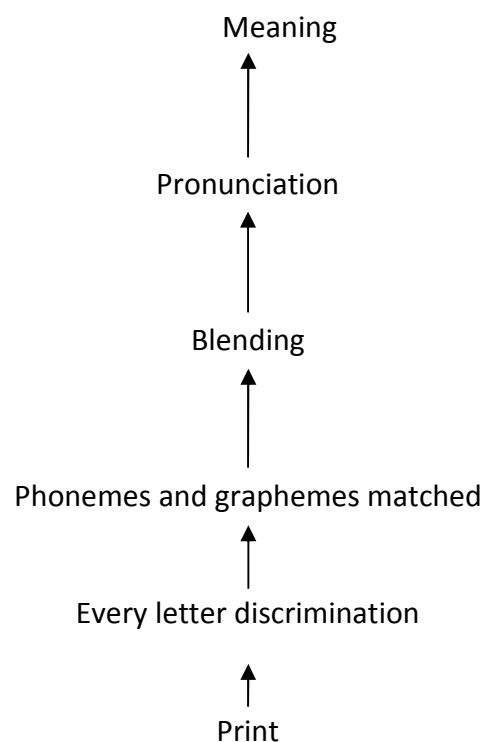
Writing was also encouraged at this stage. The instruction was in the mother-tongue at both sites, that is Afrikaans at PJ, and isiXhosa at CM. Code-switching

to English was done at PJ as the classes were multilingual, in order to facilitate the lesson for the non-mother-tongue speakers.

4.6 Reading models

The first model used by teachers at both schools in order to consolidate the learner's reading, was the bottom-up approach. The second approach was the top-down model. These helped develop knowledge brought by learners from the unknown to the known. Below is an example of the bottom-up approach.

Illustration of the model



Wray and Medwell (1997:97)

As the model suggests, the learners will take note of the print, then try to familiarise themselves with the print, then try to pronounce the words. After this important activity the learner will make meaning of the whole word. The information requires making an assessment of needs, and progress can be

obtained mainly through the teacher's observations of each child's general development, including language development. This was the case at both schools though there was more individual attention at PJ, given that the classes were smaller.

Observations can be made while children are pursuing their usual reading activities, using the resources normally provided in the classroom. For Grade R to Grade 1, print reading is a popular way of introducing reading to them, as they are used to seeing some form of print in their home surroundings. Some children may begin to recognise words that they often see on street-signs, or on food packets and tins. In order to facilitate understanding, their classes needed to have a print-rich environment (see picture below at CM of a word wall):



Picture 22: A word wall at CM

This word-wall approach has certain advantages for learners as there would be an alphabet displayed across the wall, and individual words are then added beneath each other (READ Educational Trust 2001:23). Each learner will be

able to identify the first alphabet of his/her name that is written on the blackboard. (See picture below):



Picture 25: Identifying letters at CM

After this lesson they were asked to write the name of any type of vegetable or fruit, and to write their full names on top of the page, indicating reading and writing progression (see picture below):



Picture 23: Writing your name at CM

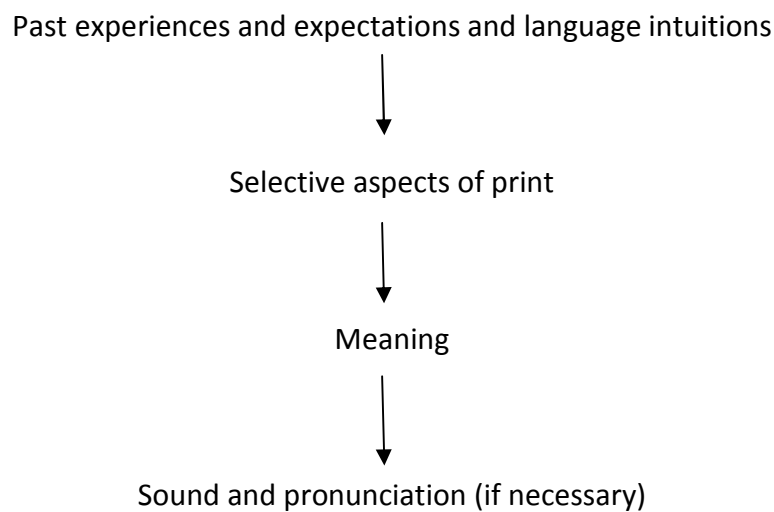
When looking at the above photograph, it is evident that the teacher has worked according to the knowledge that the learners brought from home. The learners proudly stand in a line, each with their name written on a piece of paper (see also picture below):



Picture 24: I am Mbali

They can now identify the first letter of their name from the alphabet. There is a link between reading and writing, in the sense that they are similar in many ways. By improving reading, writing also improves, and by improving writing, reading improves (READ Trust 2001:10). After reading and writing the learners will respond by talking and by doing.

Top-down model



Wray and Medwell (1997: 97)

This model was most effective for Grades 2 and 3 at both schools, because the learners at this stage had just grappled with print and interpretation. Their knowledge had developed as they were able to link the past experience with the present. The activity for Grade 3, in order to make meaning, concerned the use of riddles. The learners constructed this activity by imitating and by using gestures in order to give a clue to the others.

Colour riddles

- An example at PJ: dit is, warm, rooi bo in die hemel en begin met 's'.
- (It is red, hot, up in the sky, its name begins with 's')

Vegetable riddles

- Dit is groot, rond, blare soos die ore en die antwoord begin met 'k'.
- (It is big, round with leaves like ears, the answer begins with 'k').

Animal riddles

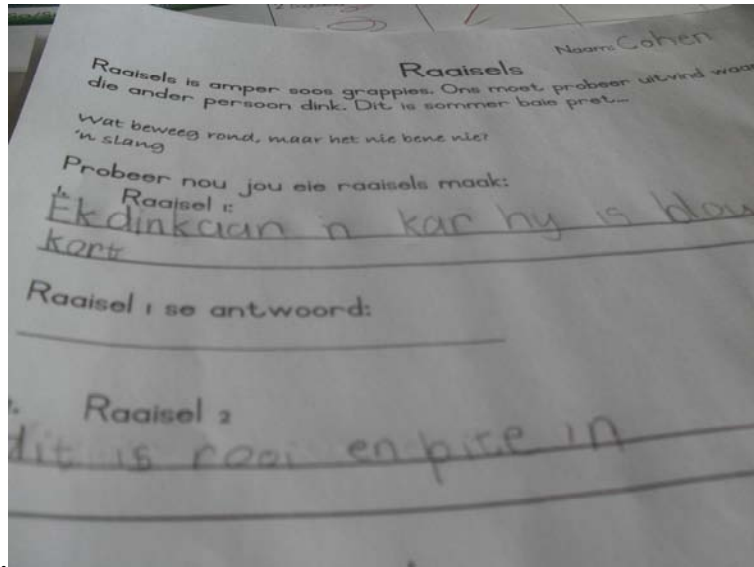
- Dit het vier bene en 'n stert, die naam begin met 'h'.
- It has got four legs and a tail, the name starts with 'h'

The learners stand up, taking turns and asking each other questions concerning general riddles that someone knows. They make use of their hands and sometimes their facial expressions in order to provide clues. (See picture below from PJ):



Picture 25: Answering riddles at PJ

At certain times, the learners were given worksheets to fill in the words in the given spaces, thereby making up their own written riddles. This activity is done in pairs (see picture below):



Picture 26: Worksheet

For this activity, the learners brought to class prior knowledge, either from previous classes, or from home, or from the community. At this stage they are highly responsive to everything around them, and they are able to make meaning from what they see in class, or in the environment.

In another activity at PJ, the learners were given an activity concerning rhymes and high frequency sentences. Their ability to construct sentences was improved. They were given loose names written on cardboard pieces packed in plastic money-bags, the words were jumbled up and the teacher told them to construct sentences using them. A further activity would relate to making doubles. Take the following examples from PJ:

- oe, dit is oulik
- ee, dit reen
- aai, dit is swaar
- oo, dit ruik vreeslik

- Ee, hy het gewen

Using the alphabet they will use the doubles to say their names. For example at CM:

- Aa Ayabonga
- Bb Bongani
- Cc Cebo
- Dd Daliwonga
- Ee Eyethu

Reading is done at the same time as writing. At CM there is no carpet for the learners to sit on, again indicating differences in resources. The learners are divided into groups of five, and while the one group reads, the other writes. The learners copy the words from the blackboard to their work-books. A teacher gives them a blank page, constructing some sentences and relevant drawings next to the sentence. Also at CM the teacher reads a story to them, and after reading they were asked questions and given a writing activity. The activity for them was to pick up the plurals, verbs, and sound-words. This is an example of a story read by the CM teacher:

Ekhaya (At home)

Mna ndihlala ekhaya (I stay at home)

Kumnandi ekhaya (It is nice at home)

Xa kubanda ndotha umlilo (When it is cold I sit around the fire)

Ndombatha iingubo ezifudumeleyo (I wrap up in warm blankets)

Xa kumnyama ndilayita isibane (When it is dark I light the lamp)

Umama upheka ukutya (Mother cooks food)

Mna ndibukela umama xa epheka (I watch mother as she cooks)

Andidlali ngemela (I don't play with the knife)

This story is all about events that are taking place in the household. These are the chores done by Mother in the kitchen. The activity is for Grade 1 at CM. The story is followed by a written activity. The learners are given a worksheet to fill in the missing words:

1. Eli li-----lam
2. Umama akafuni ndidlale nge----
3. Xa kumnyama ndilayita-----
4. Xa----- ndicima isibane
5. Ndombatha----- ezifudumeleyo

At the end of each sentence there is a picture related to an answer, which is there to guide them to create the correct answers. This activity verifies the fact that reading and writing can be done at the same time. More importantly this is done through the medium of the mother-tongue, thereby encouraging conceptual understanding as indicated in Chapter 2. However, as indicated earlier, this ends after Grade 3 at CM, after which there is a switch to English.

4.7 Language-in-education-policy awareness by teachers

During my observations in the two schools I noticed that at PJ they did adhere to the language policy by strictly using Afrikaans mother-tongue instruction. At CM teachers did not have much knowledge of the language policy. The only thing that they knew was that there are now 11 official languages that are in use in South Africa. They even commented that they have never heard of the LiEP document.

The fact that some schools are operating without language policies violates the purpose of redressing inequalities of the previous education system. It was apparent at CM that few of the teachers had knowledge of the language policy. It is my assumption that the School Governing Body (SGB) members were also not aware of the language policy. There was a need for the government to capacitate them on the benefits of mother-tongue instruction in the first years of schooling, and not just the first three years. The primary function of the SGB is to make a choice of the language to be used by teachers for learning. The teachers sometimes confused the learners by speaking a mixture of isiXhosa and English in one sentence. For an example: “I wonder kutheni ungayenzanga nje ihome work yakho?”

At PJ the teachers knew very well that Afrikaans is the chosen language for learning and teaching throughout. All learning takes place in Afrikaans in all the respective grades. Personally I think they were trying to preserve their Afrikaans language at all costs, but this does have cognitive advantages for learners. The feeling of the parents at that particular school was that Afrikaans language was being compromised, (see appendix A). My opinion is that language policy gives direction to teaching and learning. Deducing from an

informal conversation at CM, one teacher commented that isiXhosa as the medium of instruction was not going to take the learners anywhere. Furthermore, that isiXhosa was not going to encourage learners, for example, to become teachers, lawyers, or doctors. It was also apparent that teachers still see English as the superior language of learning and teaching.

4.8 Teaching approaches

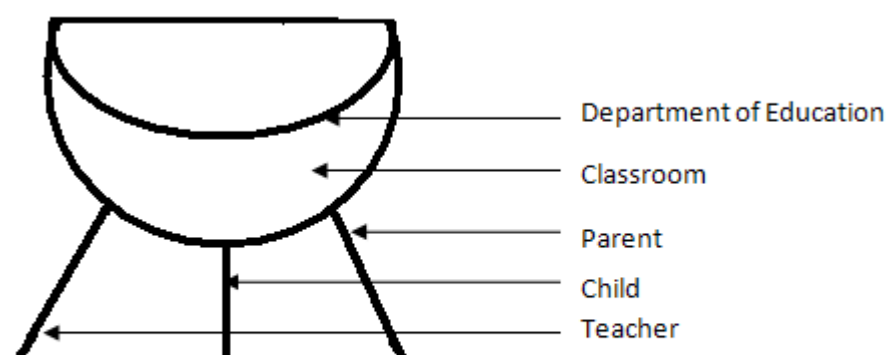
Out of eight teachers that I observed, it was clear that the younger teachers from both schools had more modern ways of teaching. I noticed that their approaches were in line with the OBE curriculum. Their classes were OBE arranged to allow learners to share ideas and for group work purposes. The remaining experienced, older teachers talked more in class. They practised a more teacher-oriented approach. They used the telling method throughout their lessons. This could be toxic to learners as their thinking skills were suppressed by being spoon-fed throughout the lesson. At times, this resulted in the non-engagement of learners with the lesson. I think the difference in the teacher's approaches at CM and PJ stems from the lack of learner-teacher-support materials (LTSM), especially at CM where there were large classes and where learners shared reading material and textbooks.

4.9 Parental support

My view on parental involvement reverts back to the language spoken by parents with their children. As mentioned in Chapter 3, CM and PJ operate in two different linguistic and socio-economic extremes. Already I mentioned that at CM the learners are highly disadvantaged due to the socio-economic conditions they come from. Deducing from the homework it is clear that there is a lack of adequate parental involvement, especially with learners from CM some of whose parents were illiterate and unable to assist learners. Another

contributing factor would be that of parental ages which range from 19-21 at CM, and in many instances they have not come to terms with parenthood.

Many of the learners in the Foundation Phase at CM depended on their grandparents for their upkeep and welfare, thereby excluding them from the 3-way learning dialectic between the teacher, learner and the parent. In isiXhosa we say “imbiza ima ngemilenze emithathu” (a Xhosa pot stands firm if it has three legs). This means that parental involvement is crucial for the success of the child. At PJ the learner’s homework gets done whenever a task is given, but this is not the case at CM. (See picture of a Xhosa pot below):



Designed by Zande

4.10 Conclusion

In this chapter I analysed data gathered through learning strategies, teaching approaches, Language-in-education policy awareness by teachers, as well as parental involvement. I briefly looked at similarities and differences related to teachers at the two respective schools. Language usage in lessons and approaches were also analysed.

In the next chapter, I present a summary of my findings as well as future recommendations.

Chapter 5

Summary of findings, conclusions, and future recommendations

5.0 Introduction

The primary purpose of this chapter is to outline the major findings of the study. The aim was to give an overall summary of the main findings that emanated from the data, as well as the research paradigm used. In this chapter the raw material is presented not only in relation to the research questions, but also in relation to the objectives stated in Chapter 1.

The different research techniques that were employed in this study aimed to address the research questions that were outlined in the first chapter. The present study set out to investigate language policy and practice at CM and PJ primary schools. According to Webb and Kembo-Sure (2000:30), it is recommended that the learner's first language should be used for teaching and learning, wherever possible. This is much more important in the Foundation Phase, where children have to learn to read and write.

In order to establish the use of the two media of instruction, isiXhosa and Afrikaans at each school, classroom observations were conducted. Interviews with teachers were also conducted and transcribed. I used an interview guide to carry out the interviews (see Appendix C). Photographs and videos were taken as a back-up, and for validation purposes. My discussion in Chapters 4 and 5 is cross-referenced with the literature reviewed in Chapter 2.

5.2 Further discussion

The mother-tongue as a learning resource

As indicated in Chapter 2, the Constitution of South Africa (1996) allows that every child be taught in his or her own language during the years of formal schooling. This means that the nine languages that we have in South Africa should all be used, depending on the language used in each province or region. In a multilingual country such as South Africa, it is important that learners reach high levels of proficiency in at least two languages, and that they are able to communicate in other languages (Alexander 2002).

South Africa's Language-in-education policy delegates to school governing bodies the responsibility of selecting school language policies that are appropriate for their schools. This is also the case at CM and PJ. Based on Bamgbose's (1991:249-254) observation and experience of mother-tongue education, the following points can be drawn:

- Primary education is more meaningful when conducted in the child's first language.
- Mother-tongue education does not preclude effective education in more than one language.
- Language education may entail curriculum reform.
- Terminology need not be an obstacle to mother-tongue education.
- Cooperative effort is required for materials development and terminology creation.
- Mother-tongue education will lead to a reduction of educational failure.

(Bamgbose 1991)

Cummins & Swain (1986:97-98) argue that the learning of other subjects later on, as well as other languages, occurs even more effectively if learners' cognitive skills are fully developed in the mother-tongue.

This means that if a child is taught in the mother-tongue in the Foundation Phase, language transfer to a second language will take place more easily. The transition to the target language in the upper phases will be much easier. Each learner in this study, especially in the Foundation Phase, was approached at their own level of development, and they were monitored constantly. Learners in Grades R and 1, in particular, had been given the opportunity to develop at their own pace. At this stage, they did as they pleased, as they were grappling with their new environment.

The learner's mother-tongue is the basis for the acquisition and development of a second language and other languages (Alexander 2005; Prah 2003; Skutnabb-Kangas & Garcia 1995). Heugh and Cummins (as cited in Fleisch 2005:106) have argued that unless children have a deep understanding of their first language, transfer to other languages will not take place. The use of isiXhosa beyond Grade 3 at CM should be seen as a move not only towards the development of isiXhosa, but also as an education right for all learners who are mother-tongue speakers of this language (LieP document 1997). At PJ, learners are at an advantage, as Afrikaans is used right up to Grade 12 as the language of learning and teaching. According to Fleisch (1995:105), the early exit from isiXhosa usage beyond Grade 3 can be seen as subtractive bilingualism, whereas South Africa's Constitution of 1996 promotes additive multilingualism.

Chumbow (1990:63) emphasises the psychological importance of the child's mother tongue. Duquette (1995:38) is of the view that mother-tongue education is meaningful and relevant to the child. With regard to the use of the mother-tongue as a resource, it was evident from the interaction between the learners and their teachers that learners felt more comfortable expressing themselves in the language they know best (Alexander 2004). Furthermore, when they used their mother tongue, the learners' self-esteem seemed to be boosted, as they were spontaneous in their talking, reading, and writing. As a researcher, I am in agreement with Webb (2002:192), who claims that "it makes sense on psychological, social and educational grounds for children to be taught in a language they know effectively, which will normally be the mother tongue of the child". The black learners at PJ were very reluctant to give answers to questions asked, as they were not confident at expressing themselves in Afrikaans. This refers to those learners who were non-mother-tongue speakers of Afrikaans. I had a feeling that these learners were displaced, and that they were not actually learning very much on account of being taught in the medium of Afrikaans. This correlates with Klein's (1986:28) comments that the child's first language competence is a valuable resource, which always interacts with other sorts of knowledge that may be drawn into the child's learning.

Lack of teaching and learning materials

Learning and teaching materials are vital to reinforce a lesson. I am saying this because the subject of this study is language implementation where two different languages of instruction are used. Teaching and learning materials played a major role in my study, as it substantiated my findings. When I talk about learning materials in this study, I am referring to the teaching aids that

were used in the Foundation Phase. These could be the visual material, such as posters and other printed matter.

From the photographs taken at CM, it is evident that the classrooms were not rich in printed matter. There was a general shortage of reading matter. Some of the learners did not have any idea of what an ordinary magazine was. These magazines assisted in scaffolding learners in the perceptual areas, which I think are important areas in the Foundation Phase, as mentioned before. There is still racial inequality in education, because there are still schools that are under-resourced, particularly historically black schools. Racial inequality in terms of access to resources ensures that we are not equal. Classrooms are the most crucial element in schooling. Classrooms are the place where teachers and their pupils interact, and where knowledge is shared. Historically black schools, in particular, have no libraries, or computers, or even running water, in some instances.

At CM, the school was faced with water problems. Learners could not be kept in school when the taps were dry; there was no option but to send them home. This caused a break in tuition and reduced learners' tuition time. Overcrowding in classrooms made it difficult for effective learning to take place. At times learners became drowsy because of a lack of proper ventilation. One particular resourceful teacher made it possible for the learners to read, despite the unavailability of materials needed. Most of the time, teachers at CM improvised by bringing materials from their home environment.

At the beginning of this study I mentioned that this study was not necessarily comparative, but that it does show the two different situations in which these two schools operate. I am saying this because at PJ the classrooms were well

arranged, having all the resources that were needed for the smooth implementation of learning and teaching.

The curriculum in context

The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (Act 108 of 1996) provides the basis for curriculum transformation and development in South Africa. Outcomes-Based Education (OBE) forms the basis of the new curriculum in South Africa. The curriculum starts by developing learner's ability to understand and speak the language used as the medium of instruction. Education, and the new curriculum, in particular, has an important role to play in realising the following aims:

- healing the divisions of the past, and establishing a society based on democratic values, social justice, and fundamental human rights;
- improving the quality of life of all citizens, and freeing the potential of each person;
- laying the foundations for a democratic and open society in which government is based on the will of the people and every citizen is equally protected by the law; and
- building a united and democratic South Africa that is able to take its rightful place as a sovereign state in the family of nations.

(Department of Education: Revised National Curriculum Statement Grades R-9, 2002).

From the above aims of the Revised National Curriculum Statement (RNCS), it is clear that the RNCS is a government initiative to redress the inequalities of the previous education system of the apartheid era. The RNCS stipulates three

learning programmes for the Foundation Phase, namely literacy, numeracy, and life skills.

The assessment standards that are used for the above learning programmes support the development of a strong literacy foundation in reading, writing, visual skills, and critical literacy (RNCS 2002:2). These standards are aimed at providing quality education for all children in South Africa, irrespective of race and colour. This, on its own, is a step forward in the direction of the rights of “Education for all”, as defined in the Freedom Charter of 1952.

The birth of democracy in 1994 came with new changes in all sectors of government, particularly in education, hence the new curriculum. This type of curriculum is learner-centred. The RNCS is a component of this OBE curriculum; it aims at promoting success for learners (seeing learners as achievers) (RNCS 2002:10). This curriculum ensures that South Africa’s identity is built on values that are different from those that underpinned apartheid education. The curriculum seeks to create multi-skilled and multilingual, as well as critical, citizens of this country.

Implementation

The problem lies with the implementation of the new language policies on the ground. South Africa’s language-in-education policy aims to promote and develop all of the official languages (LieP document 1997:4). This policy promotes additive bilingualism, which, in reality, is not achieved, because of the current practices that promote English over the other languages, particularly the African languages. CM is a case in point, where the approach is different from the approach followed at PJ.

Language policy implementation refers to the acts that the government or its subsidiaries undertake in effecting government's language policy. Bamgbose (1991) and other scholars (Alexander 2000; Kaschula 2004; Reagan 2002:182-183) argue that many African countries have sound language policies, but lack sound implementation plans. Kaschula (2004:11) contends that language policies in Africa are characterised by a lack of political will to drive the process, and that mostly lip service has been paid to the implementation process.

Implementation of South Africa's Language-in-education policy starts with the teachers on the ground. It would be impossible to divorce the implementation of this policy from the process of teacher education. The teachers in the schools are the people that have to interpret the objectives and content of the curriculum plan. Implementation involves a series of related tasks. Implementing language policy is a huge task, as it is not easy to adapt and accept change. This means that there are going to be new demands for teachers. New knowledge and attitudes will need to be acquired, which requires flexibility on the part of teachers.

Teacher education is essential for the implementation of language policy. The implementation of the new curriculum in schools depends largely on the re-training of teachers. This has everything to do with being creative, skilled, and the changing of attitudes fostered during the initial training. Follow-up programmes such as workshops should be organised, so as to develop and equip teachers with what should be done in schools. For the implementation process to take place smoothly, teachers need to be dedicated to transformation, and need to adhere to what the language policy requires. This will enhance the view by Bamgbose (1991) that the success of language policy

implementation is not necessarily attributable to government agencies, but that the input of teachers is imperative for its success.

My concern is that teachers are not given enough time to learn how to use the new OBE-RNCS curriculum. I am saying this not only from my own experience as a teacher, but also from my observations at PJ and CM, as reflected in Chapter 4. Workshops that are held take place over three days only, and at the end of that short period, one is expected to produce good results in the classroom. Furthermore, teachers are not well versed with what is supposed to be done, and then end up following their own approaches, for example the teacher-centred approach followed at PJ.

My research supports the view of Bamgbose (1991:133) that implementation may arise from definite directives, or it may be based on local initiatives based on the perception of perceived needs. Furthermore, the present language implementation plan does not yet appropriately reflect this important association between language policies and their execution (Bamgbose 1991:133-139).

Use of traditional teaching methods

Bearing in mind the interview responses in Chapter 4, it is evident that most of the teachers in both schools used the traditional methods of teaching. Teachers at both schools used the telling method. Most of the time, the learners were not actively engaged, but, rather, were passive listeners. This suggested to me that rote learning continues to dominate in the classroom, despite the new teaching methods. Language teachers structured their lessons around writing words or sentences on the chalkboard. The teachers further asked the whole class to read together what was written on the board. The

learners were not given a chance to think and mull over new concepts, but rather were required to do whatever they were told to do. Rote learning violates the stipulations of the OBE-RNCS curriculum, which advocates a learner-centred approach.

The OBE-RNCS curriculum envisages a learner who will be able to be a critical thinker at the end of his or her schooling career. I noted that teachers at both schools were not giving learners time to think, as the teachers required a one-word answer. Below are some examples of questions asked by teachers:

- *Ngubani igama lenkwenkwe?* (What is the boy's name?)
- *Impendulo: NguSazi.* (Answer: It is Sazi.)
- *Unjani umbala webhola kaSindiswa?* (What colour is Sindiswa's ball?)
- *Impendulo: Ubomvu.* (Answer: It is red.)
- *Hoeveel piesangs het Ben?* (How many bananas does Ben have?)
- *Antwoord: Drie.* (Answer: Three.)
- *Met wat het Ben gespeel?* (With what did Ben play?)
- *Antwoord: 'n Tou.* (Answer: A rope.)

In my assessment, these questions tested only the learners' listening skills; these questions did not offer learners the opportunity to use their minds in a meaningful way. Teachers should be careful when designing classroom activities, as continual use of questions such as these promotes rote learning and memorisation, rather than understanding. If someone learns through memorisation, this can have a detrimental effect in the long run. As has

already been mentioned, the Foundation Phase is a crucial phase, because if something is missed out during this phase, it will take much effort to rectify it. Teachers need to be creative, by designing activities that will draw the learner's attention. If this is encouraged, learners will participate well, communicating with one another using language. Teachers need to be skilled at choosing and applying teaching strategies that challenge their learners cognitively and intellectually.

In my view, I think the way that teachers themselves were educated has an effect on their ability to deliver in the classroom. Furthermore, I think overcrowded classrooms are not conducive to effective teaching and learning. In the Foundation Phase, the pedagogic focus is more on the teaching approaches and strategies that are used, rather than on the content of the instruction. An important factor is the teacher's attitude towards learning and teaching. If the teacher has a negative attitude towards teaching and learning, then no effective learning will be achieved. The new curriculum is a challenge, as it normally comes out with its goals and objectives that require implementation by teachers. Poverty, crime and unemployment could be negative contributing factors in terms of meaningful teaching and learning, but the medium of instruction also plays a significant role. Township schools, in particular, are victims of these circumstances.

5.3 Future recommendations

Teachers in South African schools need to embrace democracy, and everything that goes with it. Parents and teachers should break away from the shackles of the past regime by adapting to the new changes that have taken place since 1994. Diversity needs to be encouraged in schools, by employing teachers of

other race and cultural groups. This would be a step towards transformation in our schools.

Lesson planning is one of the principles of the OBE-RNCS curriculum. Teachers cannot operate in isolation; they need to be directed. The National Department of Education should consider retraining teachers. Teachers should be given monetary rewards for good work; this would make them feel appreciated. African languages should be made compulsory subjects in the former Model-C schools, so that learners of other race groups can learn and value these languages. This move will strengthen pride and loyalty in South Africans as citizens of the “rainbow nation”, and nurture social cohesion. South Africa’s indigenous African languages should be intellectualised, so that these languages can be used in our institutions of higher learning.

My concluding remarks are as follows:

- Mother-tongue education plays a fundamental role in cognitive development and the acquisition of additional languages (Tollefson 1991).
- Certain areas of the curriculum need to be revised.
- Follow-up programmes on language implementation strategies should be set up by the DoE.
- Content gap workshops should be organised on a regular basis.
- Quarterly reports should be made at schools, and submitted to the language subject advisers, who should make regular visits to monitor the implementation process.

5.4 Conclusion

In South Africa we have enabling policies with disabling practices. Policies are already in place for education, but need to be implemented. However, educators on the ground are promoting disabling practices, thereby creating confusion and negative attitudes, at least towards the indigenous African languages. The best remedy is to create an educational environment where teachers adhere to the implementation of South Africa's Language-in-education policy.

This research shows that there is a gap between the policy goals and what is actually happening in schools. Probyn (2002) cites South Africa's new Language-in-education policy as being one of the most progressive of such policies in the world, yet few schools have implemented it. This policy advocates the maintenance of the learner's home language at the same time as they acquire additional languages, that is, additive multilingualism. This lack of implementation of South Africa's Language-in-education policy is evidence that the gap between theory and practice has not yet been bridged, except in some Afrikaans-medium schools, such as PJ.

It appears that the school governing bodies (SGBs) are not well equipped to implement certain decisions about school language policy which meet the requirements of the national Language-in-education policy. This might be because of negative attitudes from learners, teachers, and parents, which override considerations of multilingualism and additive bilingualism, as expressed in the policy. It is disappointing to note that 16 years into the new democracy, many of the whites, Coloureds and Indians still cannot speak any

of South Africa's indigenous African languages, which are, in fact, the languages of the majority of the people of this country. The general lack of command of the African languages among the white, Coloured and Indian population groups is due to the fact that these languages are simply not taught in historically white, historically Coloured and historically Indian schools, or these languages are taught inappropriately. Furthermore, it is disappointing to note that some of the former Model-C schools are not offering any of the indigenous African languages as subjects.

Further to this, there is a "displacement" of learners at schools such as CM when the learners reach Grade 4. The sudden move to English does not equip the learners to answer questions, and there is a general restlessness in class, as was observed in my research. This "displacement" of the learners leads to code-switching as a resource to facilitate learning in the classroom. It is my view that this is where the learners' frustration starts, and that this is one of the factors that is responsible for the high failure rate and drop-out rate among learners at CM. Furthermore, language practices lead to poor achievement, which results in high failure rates in the upper grades. This, of course, is not true of PJ, where a 100% pass rate has been achieved in Grade 12. At PJ, there has been no switch to a new medium of instruction in Grade 4. At CM, the SGB members were illiterate, they were not aware of the education rights and needs of their children, and they also needed to be made aware of the importance of the choice of language used in the teaching of the learners. I noticed that at both schools, most teachers in the foundation phase had been trained a long time ago; as a result, they were not willing to change their mindsets concerning the current new teaching strategies. It can be concluded from this research that parents' low level of education was the main cause of

them not understanding the importance of South Africa's new Language-in-education policy.

The most significant findings of this study are that the schooling background of the research participants played a crucial role in their teaching practices. Interviews showed that the teachers were in favour of the traditional ways of teaching. The major focus of this study was not on socio-economic problems, but these nevertheless contributed to the research problem. I say this because parental support is still lacking in black schools. Parents need to put their children's education first, by becoming involved in every aspect of their child's education, including helping them with their homework. This study showed that the structure of the learners' families had a definite effect on learners' academic success. It is clear from this study that there should be closer adherence to South Africa's Language-in-education policy within the schooling system.

Appendix A:

The Times, 28 February 2008

Afrikaans parents in school row

BONGANI MTHETHWA

AFRIKAANS-speaking parents are pulling their children out of Newcastle High School, claiming the pupils are being discriminated against.

Twenty-seven learners left the former Afrikaans-medium school this week to attend the neighbouring Ferum High School.

More are set to leave after an emotionally charged meeting held on Wednesday, where parents voiced concern that Afrikaans was being eroded at Newcastle High.

The school became divided along racial lines, following the appointment of a new governing body in 2006, which clashed with the then principal Jan du Toit and a number of white parents.

Parents claim that black teachers can't speak Afrikaans. They also maintain that deputy principal Muggle Liebenberg was overlooked for the principal's position, despite doing "excellent work". Liebenberg is appealing against the department's failure to short-list her as one of the applicants

for the position of school principal.

Dr Jan Boer, who chaired Wednesday's meeting, said five neighbouring schools had indicated there was space for pupils who wanted to transfer.

Boer said Afrikaans parents were concerned that communication at the school in Afrikaans had virtually evaporated in favour of English. "I've got the feeling that the Afrikaans child is being discriminated against," he said.

Parent Francois Lichtenstein, who unsuccessfully took the governing body to court to force it to retain the school's Christian identity, said Afrikaans was deliberately being eroded.

Peet Liebenberg, a former teacher at Newcastle High, said the governing body was made up of an "Indian Broederbond" hellbent on destroying the school.

But new principal Manuel Govender denied that Afrikaans was being done away with. "It's very sad that people can't accept change. I understand change is very difficult, but at the end of the day we can learn to tolerate our differences," he said.

Appendix B:

Daily Dispatch, 25 November 2010

The medium fails the message

LUMKA OLIPHANT

FINDING the right school for my child who is going into Grade 1 next year has been a daunting task.

After the decision to take him to a public school was made, off I went to get him enrolled in Midrand where we live.

I encourage my children to speak both isiXhosa and isiZulu at home and I expected that 14 years into our democracy I would find at least one school that offered one of these languages, as well as English.

How wrong I was.

Many former model C schools in Gauteng offer one or none of our indigenous languages, yet they see nothing wrong in offering Portuguese, Italian and other international languages as part of their curriculums.

At both the primary schools I went to, isiZulu was offered only in Grades 3 and 4.

So much for the education department's duty to promote multilingualism and the development of all official languages.

One of the principals I spoke to had the audacity to say: "The kids

say they don't need any of these languages."

The implementation of our language policy is neglected, especially in former model C schools.

There is also the perception that if you want your child to be taught an African language, you mean isiZulu. Schools offered only isiZulu and I kept wondering what if I was Venda and wanted my child to be taught in Tshivenda?

Many former model C schools offer one or none of our indigenous languages

This has left me with only one option: to send my child to a school in Soweto or in Tembisa, if I want him to be taught at least one African language at school.

It seems as if the education department has forgotten that the

demographics in formerly white areas have changed.

Schools and the department are playing some sort of ping-pong game, with neither taking responsibility. The department blames the schools' governing bodies, while the principals say the system is unworkable.

Besides the language issue, I was in for another surprise when I was told that extra-mural activities are offered from Grade 3 only. One of the schools I visited has a swimming pool, but lessons are limited to eight pupils – based on a first come, first served basis. This despite the fact that swimming is a necessary life skill. It is scandalous that this school, whose pupil body is 99.9% black, underutilises this facility.

They would rather give the business to private coaches than pay a teacher to provide lessons.

All this has left me wondering what happened to the high standards conferred on model C schools?

Is it a question of non-commitment from parents, schools or the department? I hope to get answers before my son's school journey begins next year.

Appendix C:

Interview guide

1. Introduction
2. Explain the purpose and nature of the study.
3. Ethical issues:
 - Confidentiality- Explain that pseudonyms will be used in the final report to preserve anonymity.
 - Explain that this is an academic research and that no financial gain or otherwise will arise from taking part in the study.
 - Obtain written consent to partake in the study, for the audio-recording of the interview and the use of extracts in the final report.
 - Explain that member-checking will be conducted.
4. Guide the interview process.
5. Closing: Make sure I maintain the tone set throughout the interview that is friendly and courteous. Make a brief but not abrupt ending of the interview. Thank interviewee for their time and explain that I will contact them again to build or clarify issues arising from the interview.

Appendix D:

Consent Form

I hereby agree to participate in an interview with Mila Pamella Fobe and give her permission to audio-record it as part of her data collection process. I understand that she will be making an enquiry around the topic of language policy and practice. I understand that transcripts of the interview will be made and that she may use extracts in the final report.

Signed (respondent)..... Date.....

Appendix E:

Sunday Times, 1 September 2009

Sign language case in court this week

KAREN VAN ROOYEN

KWAZULU-Natal matriculant Kyle Springate is due to go back to court this week in his quest to have sign language recognised as an exam subject.

Springate, who is without 91% of his hearing due to a congenital condition, discovered late last year that despite having taken sign language as a subject throughout high school, it would not form part of his matric exam this year.

Springate opted for sign language as an additional language believing it formed part of the school curriculum. The discovery that it was not a recognised subject meant he faced losing points in his university applications.

Springate took up dramatic arts as an extra subject, and had to cram three years of work into his final school year at Westville Boys' High School in Durban.

His mother, Palge McLennan-Smith, said this had placed him at a disadvantage.

"Kyle is exhausted after a normal day at school because (as a result of having to lip-read) he has to concentrate at all times during the school day. Now, with the added

burden of dramatic arts, he is even more exhausted after a day at school," she says in court papers.

"If Kyle fails dramatic arts and his application to university is assessed on the basis of only six subjects, he stands little chance of being accepted."

Springate hopes to study fine art at Rhodes University in the Eastern Cape next year.

In court papers filed at the KwaZulu-Natal High Court in Pietermaritzburg, the Department of Basic Education's deputy director-general in further education and training, Penny Vinjevold, said there was no consensus yet among organisations representing the deaf about the exact definition or components of sign language. This had resulted in a delay in the process to formally recognise it as a subject.

Tim Stones, a researcher at the National Institute for the Deaf's Deafnet Centre of Knowledge, said: "A positive result in this court case will go a long way to ensuring that the deaf and hard-of-hearing community in South Africa moves closer to enjoying equal access and equal opportunities in all spheres of life."

APRIL 14 2004

African languages under siege

English is the lingua franca of SA campuses

GILL MOODIE

UNIVERSITY students are saying *hamba kahle* (farewell) to South Africa's indigenous tongues as they turn their backs on studying African languages.

Language experts said this week that they feared for the future of the nine official African languages as English became the language of technology, commerce and government.

"Indigenous languages are under siege. Parents in townships equate education with competency in English," said Professor Mhloni Moleleki, chairman of the Pan South African Language Board and head of African languages at the University of the Free State.

At the University of the Western Cape, students studying African languages have fallen from 1 900 a decade ago to fewer than 100 today, said Professor Bertie Neethling, head of African languages.

"It's frightening. We're really battling. All the universities will tell you the same thing," Neethling said. "It goes against the country's promotion of indigenous languages."

The classes have dwindled, say experts, because few people today consider teaching an attractive profession. Until 1994, many students studied an African language as part of a teaching degree.

But there was a dire need for teachers of African languages in schools, especially for remedial education, said Sandile Gxilishe, an associate professor in the University of Cape Town's African Languages department. It was difficult to detect learning disabilities in a pupil's second language, he said, and there was a need for research of child language development in indigenous languages.

Some say the value of African languages has been diminished as many young, edu-

cated black people view English as the language of aspiration, while the government and parents steer children towards science and maths-oriented professions.

"The children of former Model C schools don't read or can't read African-language newspapers and increasingly use English amongst themselves," said Cyril Madlala, editor of the Zulu newspaper *umAfrika*.

"I'm not sure this generation is very interested in the African Renaissance."

Few books are published in indigenous languages, said Jeanne Hromnik, publisher of the David Philip division at New Africa Books, as there is no market for them.

The publisher recently scrapped a plan to translate one of its novels into Zulu due to lack of interest and even struggled to find takers at universities for a book on the psychology of African writers who work in English.

But some universities are trying to make African languages more relevant. The University of Port Elizabeth has linked Xhosa to a technology and communications course and postgraduate numbers have increased to 16 students this year.

The university puts this down to the department offering interesting research projects. This year, for instance, students will do field work to collect oral history and folk stories as part of the establishment of a government-funded research centre.

The Pan South African Language board has set up offices in all the provinces and will soon start a drive to market African languages, while the government has proposed introducing bursaries for African languages.

Professor Shole Shole of the University of South Africa believes indigenous languages will survive the present threat.

"South Africa is now an African country and the African identity is emerging. You cannot do that without African language."

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