

**LANGUAGE AND SOCIAL SERVICES IN RURAL NORTH WEST:
THE STATUS OF SETSWANA**

THESIS

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BY

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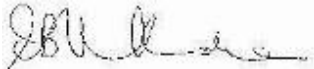
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DECLARATION

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

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'S. M. K.', written on a light-colored background.

SIGNED:

DATE: 9 December 2011

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
DECLARATION	2
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	8
ABSTRACT	9
<u>CHAPTER 1</u>	13
1.1 Awareness of the problem	13
1.2 The purpose of the study	20
1.3 Research methodology	20
1.4 Data-Generation techniques	21
1.4.1 Questionnaires	21
1.5 Population and sampling	22
1.5.1 Phase 1	22
1.5.2 Phase 2	24
1.6 Limitations of the empirical research	25
1.7 Paradigmatic perspective	25
<u>CHAPTER 2</u>	
LANGUAGE PLANNING AND POLICY ISSUES IN SOUTH AFRICA	36
2.0 Introduction	36
2.1 Language issues	36
2.1.1 Language planning and policy	39
2.2 Pre-Apartheid policies in South Africa	46
2.3 Post-Apartheid policies in South Africa	52
2.4 The status and functions of English in relation to the indigenous languages	61
2.5 The attitude of people towards English as opposed to the indigenous languages	70
2.6 Problems related to the dominance of English	73
<u>CHAPTER 3</u>	
SELECTED LANGUAGE ORIENTATIONS	79
3.0 Introduction: Language Orientations	79

3.1	Orientations in Language Planning	79
3.1.1	Language as a problem.....	80
3.1.2	Language as a right	89
3.3.1	Language as a resource	92
3.2	Language agents tasked with developing the indigenous African languages in South Africa	96
3.2.1	The Pan South African Languages Board (PanSALB)	97
3.2.1.1	What is PanSALB?.....	98
3.2.1.2	The foundation of the Pan South African Language Board ..	98
3.2.1.3	The role and functions of PanSALB	100
3.2.1.3.1	The Pan South African Languages Board subcommittees/ structures	
3.2.1.3.1.1	Provincial Language Committees (PLCs)	
3.2.1.3.1.2	National Language Bodies (NLBs)	
3.2.1.3.1.3	National Lexicography Units (NLUs)	
3.2.2	The National Language Service (NLS)	
3.2.3	Structures/directorates and their functions in the National Language Service	
3.2.3.1	Language Planning Directorate	
3.2.3.2	Translation and Editing (T & E) Directorate	
3.2.3.3	Terminology Coordination Directorate	
3.2.3.4	Human Language Technologies (HLT) Directorate	

CHAPTER 4

RESEARCH CONTEXT AND METHODOLOGY

4.1	Introduction	
4.2	Data-Generation methods and techniques	
4.2.1	Sites	
4.2.1.1	Rural areas	
4.2.1.2	Government departments	
4.2.2	The research instrument	
4.2.2.1	Closed questions	
4.2.2.2	The design of the questionnaire	
4.2.2.2.1	Questions	
4.2.2.2.2	Types of responses solicited from respondents	
4.2.3	Questionnaire administration	

4.2.3.1	Cost
4.2.3.2	Sample-related advantage
4.2.3.3	Information related to the survey and questionnaire
4.2.3.4	Ethical considerations
4.2.3.5	Research diary
4.3	Document analysis
4.3.1	The National Language Policy Framework
4.3.1.1	Background and context
4.3.1.2	Historical context
4.3.1.2.1	Aims, principles and provisions
4.3.2	Implementation Plan: National Language Policy Framework (NIPF)
4.3.2.1	Aims and objectives
4.3.2.2	Contextual analysis
4.3.2.3	Implementation structures
4.3.2.4	Language code of conduct for public servants
4.3.2.5	Language awareness campaigns
4.3.3	The South African Languages Bill
4.3.3.1	Objectives and principles of the Bill
4.3.3.2	Application and interpretation of the Bill

CHAPTER 5

DATA INTERPRETATION AND ANALYSIS

5.1	Introduction
5.2	Data analysis
5.2.1	Phase 1
5.2.1.1	Response rate
5.2.2	Phase 2
5.2.2.1	Response rate
5.3	Collating of the data
5.3.1	Language profile
5.3.1.1	Research hypotheses
5.3.1.2	Demographics
5.4	Managing data
5.4.1	Data coding

5.4.1.1	Coding choices
5.4.1.2	Data entry
5.4.1.3	Level of measurement

CHAPTER 6

6.1	Introduction
6.1.2	Language demographics in provinces
6.1.2.1	Findings from the rural areas of Setlopo and Logagane survey (Phase 1)
6.1.2.1.1	Language repertoire
6.1.2.1.2	Language choice
6.1.2.1.3	Language proficiency
6.1.2.1.4	Language dominance and language preference
6.1.2.2	Findings from the Department of Social Development South African Social Security Agency (Phase 2)
6.1.2.2.1	Language repertoire
6.1.2.2.2	Language choice
6.1.2.2.3	Language proficiency
6.1.2.2.4	Language dominance and language preference
6.1.2.2.5	Language policy and implementation.....
6.2	Conclusion.....
6.3	Recommendations.....

APPENDICES

Phase 1

Appendix A (Permission letter to school Principals)
Appendix B (Participant letter – Setswana Version)
Appendix B-1 (Translated version – participant letter)
Appendix C (Questionnaire – Setswana version).....
Appendix C-1 (Questionnaire – Translated version and coded answers as a key for my data analysis).....

Phase 2

Appendix D (Permission letter – Government Departments)
Appendix E (Proposal to conduct survey summary)
Appendix F (Permission letter: Department of Social Development)
Appendix G (Participant letter)
Appendix F (Questionnaire – Government employees and coded answers

as a key for my data analysis)

Collating Data

Appendix I (Data on Setlopo Village (SV) respondents).....

Appendix J (Data on Logagane Village (LV) respondents).....

Appendix K (Data on social development).....

Appendix L (Permission letter from SASSA).....

Appendix M (Data on SASSA).....

BIBLIOGRAPHY.....

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ABSTRACT

This study seeks to support the thesis that African indigenous languages in South Africa should enjoy equal treatment in terms of the South African Constitution. Therefore, it will explore and find ways and means of how the South African government can reach out to rural communities with inadequate English proficiency, in an English-dominated South Africa, by breaking down the existing language barriers and curbing social inequalities. Language rights, like any other human rights, should be protected, as enshrined in the new democratic Constitution of South Africa.

The dissemination of most information in South Africa is through English. This poses a serious problem, since information that is written in English is only accessible to people that are proficient in this language. Lo Bianco (1996) asserts that people acquire knowledge more effectively if the knowledge is presented to them in a language that they know. According to Ngcobo (2009:116), studies have focused on recommendations on how South Africa can address the challenge of providing information to South Africans. This thesis seeks to unpack what is actually happening in particular rural areas regarding this challenge. Ngcobo further emphasises that the issue is not only provision of information, but also access to the information. He further points out that information may relate to overall policies, procedures, what services are provided for whom, how to access these services, who to contact for urgent help or when things go wrong, and various other matters that may be of interest to members of the public.

South Africa is a multilingual country, and Lo Bianco (1996) maintains that servicing a multilingual population through one language is inefficient, ineffective, and sometimes dangerous. Robinson (1992:29) asserts that a language belongs to a speech community, both as a means of communication and as an identifying feature. Both these concepts (communication and identity) are central to intervention, particularly where participation of the people is promoted. This thesis argues that language is also an essential element of any strategy of communication. This thesis suggests that a language may be marginalised from the process of communication for purposes of development by those in authority, and this lack of concern with language may indicate and accompany marginalisation of the people from the process of development itself.

TSHOSOBANYO

Thuto e, e ikaelela go tshegetsisa patlisiso e e ka ga gore dipuo tsa Selegae tsa Seaforika mo Aforikaborwa di tshwanelwa ke go tsewa ka maemo le mokgwa o o lekanang go ya ka Molaotheo wa Aforikaborwa. Ka jalo, e tlaa utolola, e ribilole ditsela le go batla malepa a puso ya Aforikaborwa e ka fitlhelang setšhaba se se kwa magaeng, se bokgoni jwa kitso ya Seesimane bo leng kwa tlase mo go bona. Bothata ke gore Aforikaborwa e laolwa bogolo ke tiriso e e kwa godimo ya Seesimane mme puso e tshwanelwa ke gore e tlose dikgoreletsi tse di leng teng ga jaana tsa puo. E bowe gape e thibele go se lekalekaneng ga botshelo ka kakaretso mo loagong go go tlholwang ke go sa lekalekaneng ga kitso ya dipuo mo setšhabeng ka kakaretso. Ditshwanelo mo puong fela jaaka ditshwanelo dingwe le dingwe tsa botho, di tshwanelwa ke go sireletswa, jaaka di akareditswe mo Molaotheo o mošwa wa temokerasi wa Aforikaborwa.

Phasalatso ya bontsi jwa tshedimosetso mo Aforikaborwa e neelwa ka puo ya Seesimane. Se, se tlhola mathata a a seng kana ka sepe, ka gonne tshedimosetso e e kwadilweng ka Seesimane fela, e fitlhelela fela batho ba ba kgonang go bua Seesimane ka thelelo. Lo Bianco (1996) o tiisetse ntlha ya gore batho ba kgona go itshelela kitso ka nonofo fela fa e le gore ba e tlhagisetwa ka puo e ba e itseng. Go ya ka Ngcobo (2009:116), dipatlisiso di itebagantse le dikatlenegiso tse di mabapi le gore Aforikaborwa e ka lebagana le dikgwetlho tsa go tlamela setšhaba sa Maforikaborwa ka tshedimosetso jang. Patlisiso e, e ikaelela go sekaseka ka dikarolwana tse dinnye se se ka bong se diragala tota mo mafelong a a rileng a selegae fa go lebilwe bothata jo. Ngcobo o tswelela ka go gatelela gore kgangkgolo ga se

fela go tlamela setšhaba ka tshedimosetso, mme ke gore setšhaba ka bosona se fitlhelele tshedimosetso. O netefatsa gape fa tshedimosetso e ka kaya dipholisi ka kakaretso, mokgwa o di tsamaisiwang ka ona, gore ke ditirelo dife tse di rebolwang le gona di rebolelwa bomang, gore ditirelo tsa mofuta oo di ka fitlhelwa jang, go ka ikgolaganngwa le bomang go bona thuso ya potlako kgotsa gona fa dilo di sa tsamaya ka tshwanelo le mabaka mangwe a a farologaneng, a setšhaba se ka nnang le kgatlhego mo go ona.

Aforikaborwa ke naga ya dipuontsi, mme ka jalo Lo Bianco (1996) o ema ka la gore go tlamela setšhaba sa dipuontsi ka go dirisa puo e le nngwe fela go sa lekana le go nonofa ka gope, mme e bile mo mabakeng a mangwe go le kotsi e le tota. Robinson (1992:29) le ena o netefatsa fa e le gore puo e tshwanelwa ke go bonwa jaaka ya setšhaba se se e buang, e bonwe jaaka sediriswa sa tlhaeletsano le se ba ikayang le go itshupa ka sona gore ke bomang. Dikgopolo tse pedi tse (tlhaeletsano le boitshupo jwa batho), ke dintlhakgolo tse pedi tse di leng botlhokwa tota segolo fa go rotloediwa botsayakarolo mo setšhabeng ka kakaretso. Patlisiso e, e sekaseka ntlha ya gore puo le yona ke elemente e e botlhokwa thata fa maano mangwe le mangwe fela ka ga tlhaeletsano a dirwa. Patlisiso e, e tshitshinya fa puo e ka beelwa kwa thoko mo mabakeng a tlhaeletsano ke ba ba leng mo maamong a taolo ka go se e tswelletse le go e godisa. Go tlhoka tlhokomelo go ga puo go ka bontsha ga bo ga tsamaisana le go kgapela batho kwa thoko mo thulaganyong ya tswelletsopole ka nosi.

CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 AWARENESS OF THE PROBLEM

South Africa, a country which celebrated its change to democracy after the demise of apartheid in 1994, has undergone many changes in various spheres. South Africa's languages have also undergone changes. The linguistic situation in South Africa, which was previously characterised by the dominance of English and Afrikaans, could not be immune to the process of change in relation to the broader societal and political changes that came with a new democracy. There is now constitutional equality for the African languages in South Africa. This means that South Africa's politicians, through a negotiated settlement and an emerging democracy, opted for a multilingual approach in 1994. The Constitution has enshrined 11 official languages (Mutasa 2000:22).

Language is recognised throughout the world as one of the basic rights of the individual (Department of Education 1994). The Constitution stipulates that conditions for the development and promotion of the equal use of all official languages must be created (Section 3(1)). The use of any language for purposes of exploitation, domination, or division must be prevented (Section 3 (9)). Saunders (2011:15) writes that while there are many groups that advocate the language and education rights of Afrikaans speakers, the same is not true of our other indigenous languages – which are becoming increasingly marginalised in all spheres of life.

Despite the constitutional commitment to multilingualism in this country, the ability to speak English is considered such an asset that many find it difficult to understand the need for other languages. The concern expressed by Lo Bianco (1996:7) that social services cannot be delivered effectively when so few people speak English bears testimony to my experience working with the rural communities of Mafikeng. The realisation of the government's goal of efficient service delivery is being thwarted in these communities because of the English language barrier. African languages are neglected even by those who have to use them for communication purposes. This is why Mutasa (2000:15) asserts that no one seems to take African languages seriously. He states that some people in leadership positions, such as politicians, use English when they address rallies or political meetings, even when they are addressing rural people that do not understand English. Khumalo (in PanSALB's *Language use and language interaction in South Africa* (2003)) makes a similar point when he mentions that national leaders, politicians, business people, and government officials tend to use English far more than any other language, and that this practice is placing many South Africans at a disadvantage.

Another example can be cited from the field of health care services where both the patient and the doctor are native speakers of Setswana. The doctor will have a nurse as an interpreter, who does not even have interpreting skills and relies heavily on code-switching. In many instances, the information from the patient via the nurse to the doctor and the information from the doctor via the nurse to the patient will be distorted. Therefore it is incumbent on health practitioners to speak the language of the patients. Indeed, this is crucial. Oakley and Winder, as cited in Robinson (1992:38),

see knowledge of the language of the people as a requirement and agent for change. He maintains that people should take the time and make the effort to learn the language of the people well enough, so that the communication process is not hindered.

In my informal conversations with youth forums in some rural communities in the North West Province about social services that are delivered to them in English, I came to the realisation that people acquire knowledge more effectively if it is presented to them in a language that they know. Most of these youths are not sufficiently literate in English, thus they feel more comfortable using their home language. The provision of services in other languages is also important for people that understand and speak English, but nevertheless feel more comfortable using the language of their heritage or home language (Edwards, 2004:11). This is also stressed by Alexander (2002:151), when he argues that African languages need to be developed and intellectualised so that they may be a source of pride to black Africans, and they need to be used as primary tools in the development of the continent. Alexander, as cited by Saunders (2011:15), asserts that an English-only or English-mainly policy necessarily condemns most people, and thus the country as a whole, to a permanent state of mediocrity, since people are unable to be spontaneous, creative, and self-confident if they cannot use their home language.

Chinweizu, as cited in Duprez and Du Plessis (2000:153), concur with Alexander, by articulating that a person usually feels at home in his or her mother tongue and functions best in it. For one to be at home and function well in the modern world, one's mother tongue must be a proficient vehicle

for conducting modern life. This means that the black African of this era (and especially the half-alienated product of colonial education suffering an identity crisis) needs to have their mother tongue modernised if they are to feel at home and function at his best in modern industrial culture.

Government information is crucial, since it is linked to government services that are necessary for development. However, in general, most government information is available only in English; access to information that is linked to government services is mostly unaffordable, and the localisation of this information via indigenous languages has not been taken seriously (Ngcobo 2009:116). Ngubane (2009) argues that in the South African context, knowledge is located exclusively with the minorities, and that the majority of people continue to be alienated from resources and the mainstream economy because of lack of access to the English language, which he claims is a gatekeeper to knowledge and resources. It is evident from Ngubane's observations that dissemination of knowledge and skills to the populace in their own languages can contribute to social and economic improvement for the majority of the people. Language and communication barriers exacerbate problems of access (Edwards 2004:155). There is an obstacle to the achievement of one of several important national goals, namely the efficient delivery of services, because of the language barrier. In the same vein, Alexander (1989:10) asserts that racial prejudice and racism are reinforced and maintained by language barriers, and that if we want to fight racial prejudice and racism, then, among other things, we have to break down language barriers.

In South Africa, African people speaking indigenous languages as a mother-tongue are expected to operate normally in English, a language which is their second or third language. Drawing on the North West Province as an example, there are deep rural areas where people have not enjoyed high levels of schooling. The level of illiteracy is very high, with proficiency in English being largely non-existent. Much still needs to be done to adequately redress the extreme marginalisation of the indigenous African languages brought about in the apartheid era. According to Kaschula et al. (2007:47-48), the equitable use of the 11 official languages could certainly change the blatant disregard for language issues, such as language barriers and language rights in rural areas.

Explicit mention should be made that the provision of services in the languages that the people understand better is also important. Furniss (1993:105) states that no language is more important than any other. Languages should enjoy equal status and social prestige within the current political framework of the present language policy. The use of English as a lingua franca should not occur at the expense of other languages in South Africa. In the same vein, King and Van den Berg (1992:21) maintain that the principle of the right to participate fully in the life of society implies that language cannot be used to oppress people. If the business of civil society and decision making is done in a language which many people cannot understand, it follows that the language policy responsible for such a situation is exclusive and oppressive. Whatever decisions are made by a future government on how linguistic diversity is to be accommodated, it is obvious that translation and interpreting services for communication support will be developed. Robinson (1992:33) affirms that using the group's own

language reinforces confidence in the group's own behaviour patterns and increases security, which, in turn, will increase the prospects for change.

As May (2001:273) points out, indigenous people in South Africa have not in many instances had access to even the most basic rights ostensibly attributable to all citizens in the modern nation-state. According to Memela (2010:15), the government in South Africa has chosen to use mainstream media to carry its messages to the people. Unfortunately, these media have used English – and have largely targeted privileged, educated people. Memela further asserts that government's use of mainstream communication has not equipped it to deliver services, and it has revealed a lack of practical links through effective communication between government and the people on the ground. He maintains that government must consolidate the gains of South Africa's democracy by speaking the language of the people, literally.

As has been seen in South Africa, if not properly handled, language planning can easily lead to language oppression, through manipulation and abuse, and can lead to major conflict. The 1976 Soweto uprising was sparked when the government of the day attempted to force all schools for black pupils to accept Afrikaans as one of the media of instruction (Kaschula 2003:64).

The conflict did not end there; the conflict still exists across all provinces in South Africa, because of the hegemonic position of English in public documents and the behaviour of public persons (politicians). English is being used almost exclusively as official public language. Violent demonstrations and destruction of property by the people show that the government has not exactly succeeded in speaking to the people. It is not

that the government has failed to communicate with the people, especially the people that elected it, but the so-called service delivery protests are caused by a lack of information and knowledge as to what government may be doing. As Memela (Sowetan 2010:15) explains, mainstream communication has not only left government unprepared for “service delivery protests”, but has revealed a lack of practical links between government and the people on the ground as stated above.

In a developmental state, it will never be enough for a government minister to appear on TV or hold an extensive interview in English with a single journalist. They must consolidate the gains of the people under a democratic system by speaking the language of the people. Webb (2002:48) maintains that government wants to achieve, by improving education, creating jobs, becoming internationally competitive, and drawing the poorest members of the community into the mainstream economy. There is no way these goals can be achieved without a full consideration of the role of language.

Social services cannot be delivered effectively when so few people speak English, particularly in the rural areas. As Mtholeni (2009:119) indicates, communication with government is often unsuccessful and leads to frustration, as many people do not fully understand what is communicated to them. Successful communication takes place only if language is used in a manner that both parties can understand the language, and there is interaction.

1.2 THE PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

Since apartheid ended in 1994, not much has changed in terms of language practices in some of South Africa's institutions, such as in the educational, judicial and social services. The reality, as highlighted by Mhlambi (2010:17), is that the elevation of South Africa's indigenous languages to official language status should not be seen as a farce. Elevation of these languages to official language status should translate into tangible, feasible outcomes.

Thus, the purpose of my research is:

- To influence how the new language policy as represented in Section 6 of the Constitution can be best implemented in the delivery of social services;
- To explore the current situation of unequal access to public services and programmes, and respect for language rights in rural communities of Mafikeng (Setlopo and Logagane) with regard to the new language policy; and
- To assist and contribute (through my research findings and recommendations) to a comprehensive approach to language facilitation, in order to improve access to government services, and to implement the constitutional principle of language equity.

1.3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

I have used a quantitative approach (questionnaires) in my study. On the ontological issue of what is real, the quantitative researcher views reality as

“objective” and “out there” and independent of the researcher. Something can be measured objectively by using a questionnaire or an instrument (Creswell 1994:4).

The quantitative approach holds that the researcher should remain distant and independent of that which is being researched. Thus, in surveys and experiments, researchers attempt to control for bias, select a systematic sample, and be “objective” in assessing a situation. The intent of a quantitative study is to develop generalisations that contribute to the theory and that enable one to better predict, explain, and understand some phenomenon (Creswell 1994:4).

1.4 DATA-GENERATION TECHNIQUES

1.4.1 Questionnaires

A closed questionnaire has been compiled as a measuring instrument to investigate a more effective means of communication to access information. This is based on the findings of the literature study. Further to this, it is based on the fact that if the provincial government departments concerned, namely the North West Department of Social Development, Department of Health, Department of Home Affairs and the South African Social Security Agency, do not provide the necessary language services (for example, in the languages that people understand best) to break down language barriers, social inequalities will continue (Tollefson 1991:234). Furthermore, the questionnaires seek to ascertain the needs of rural communities concerning language barriers in social services.

Questionnaires were prepared to be administered to the two villages of Mafikeng, namely Setlopo and Logagane, where Setswana is largely the home language of these communities, and to the employees in the provincial government departments, namely the Department of Social Development, Home Affairs, Department of Health and the South African Social Security Agency. The completed questionnaires were pilot tested. The nature and purpose of my research was discussed, and the anonymity and confidentiality of respondents were guaranteed. The data obtained from the completed questionnaires is analysed quantitatively in Chapter 5, in terms of themes emerging from the responses concerning language and social services. The data has been generalised to all communities that experience language barriers in accessing information. This would be in an attempt to improve their lives and to disseminate further knowledge and skills. All the government departments will have access to this research in terms of encouraging and effecting language policies adopted since 1994, addressing language attitudes, challenges in service delivery, and the relationship between language and social services, as well as the current situation in the use of indigenous languages in social services. The prerequisite language needs of the departments in relation to the services rendered and how to cater for the language needs of the masses is addressed.

1.5 POPULATION AND SAMPLING

1.5.1 Phase 1

For the researcher Norman Denzin, sampling is defined as “the strategy of observing a portion of some total set of events or objectives” (Simon

2001:11). A probability sample of the population in the two villages of Mafikeng, namely Setlopo and Logagane, has been used in this study. Probability sampling uses a sampling method which argues support for the claim that the sample is in some way representative of the population from which it is drawn. The probability sampling method consists of two non-random sampling methods, namely cluster sampling (from each group one chooses a set number of objects) and stage sampling (one selects groups, subgroups, and subjects, for example, one chooses two circuits, or two schools) (Irwin 2006). The sample applied consists of 100 community members in each village.

These villages were chosen because, as the Regional Training Coordinator for the Media in Education Trust working in partnership with the North West Department of Education, with a focus on developing education, as well as health and socio-economic development in rural areas, I was responsible for the education centres at these villages. These centres serve as decentralised nodes for the delivery of quality education support services and their socio-economic programmes, services, and resources to schools and their communities. The strategy of these education centres is based on the objectives as set out in the respective mandates. The most important objective that sparked my interest to pursue this study was to support the socio-economic development of communities in the rural areas of the North West Province. In this much desired strategy of improving people's lives, language has not been playing a major role; the majority of information and access is available only in English. This has posed a serious problem for the rural communities, since information about services that is written in English is only accessible to people who are proficient in this language.

There is a dire need, as Recendo (2006:267-268) states, to improve the lives of individuals and groups from minority languages, who are currently disadvantaged in their access to participation in public services, employment, and education. Linguistic consequences cannot be separated from socio-economic and sociopolitical consequences, and vice versa.

1.5.2 Phase 2

A sample of the population in the North West Departments of health, Social Development, South African Social Security Agency and Home affairs, consisting of 30 employees/civil servants from each directorate responsible for delivering public services to the populace of Mafikeng and the neighbouring villages, were identified by probability sampling, to assess the status quo of Setswana in social services as far as language equity is concerned. According to Furniss (1993:105), languages should enjoy equal status and social prestige within the current political framework of a developing language policy. These government departments were selected because, as a Regional Training Coordinator, I have established a network with most of the government departments to address and support socio-economic development in rural areas. Through this network, I realised that some of these departments are more monolingual in their language practices (that is, they use mostly English), and thus, the impact of the present language policy is not yet being felt in the delivery of social services.

The data from the two phases would be coded. Maxwell (2005:96) refers to coding as the fracturing of data and the rearrangement of the data into

categories that facilitate comparisons between things in the same category and that aid in the development of theoretical concepts.

1.6 LIMITATIONS OF THE EMPIRICAL RESEARCH

The results of this study are representative of only the Setswana-speaking populace of Setlopo and Logagane villages in the North West Province. I have developed good rapport by interacting with youth forums, education centre management committees, and the communities at large in these villages. My possible patriotic stance against the hegemonic position of English over the indigenous African languages, and my sensitivity to issues of language dominance, may have biased me towards negative findings, in terms of the sample displaying language barriers to much-needed service delivery.

1.7 PARADIGMATIC PERSPECTIVE

Paradigms in the human and social sciences help us to understand phenomena. They advance assumptions about the social world, how science should be conducted, and what constitutes legitimate problems, solutions, and criteria of “proof” (Firestone 1978; Gioia & Pitre 1990, in Caswell 1994:1). The research approach adopted in this study conforms to the positivist paradigm. It is concerned with an enquiry into a social or human problem, based on testing a theory composed of variables, measured with numbers, and analysed with statistical procedures, in order to determine whether the predictive generalisations of the theory hold true (ibid.).

The paradigmatic perspective of a researcher can be defined as his or her world of experience, which is definitive of the nature of the world, the individual's place in it, and the range of possible relationships to that world and its parts (Denzin & Lincoln 1994, as cited in Nel 2003:12). As a positivist, I am aiming to discover the reality that is available, that is "out there", and to draw conclusions and generalisations. My world of experience acknowledges that the use of English as a lingua franca disadvantages rural communities from accessing information and government services. I concur with Lo Bianco (1996) that social services cannot be delivered effectively when so few people speak English. My use of the community's own language when I interacted with them resulted in a boosting of their confidence, because they could freely express their ideas and innovations using their first language. They also participated well in programmes related to capacity building and self-sustenance. In many instances, my translation services were required by the communities, because all the documents, pamphlets, flyers, and notices about government services were written in English. At times I had to interpret from English into Setswana when, for example, a presentation was given by the Department of Trade and Industry on how to start a business.

African people, particularly black South Africans, are expected to operate normally in English, a language which is often their second or third language as indicated earlier. Drawing on the North West Province as an example, there are deep rural areas where people have not enjoyed high levels of schooling. The level of illiteracy is often very high, with proficiency in English being largely non-existent. Much still needs to be done to adequately redress the extreme marginalisation of the indigenous African

languages brought about in the apartheid era. It is in the area of local government where this still remains a particular challenge.

I have chosen to work with Ruiz's typology, as explained by Heugh, as cited in Mesthrie (2002), which offers a way of viewing language from three different theoretical positions within the field of language planning, namely language-as-a-problem, language-as-a-right, and language-as-a-resource. Language-as-a-problem has to do with the elevation of the language of the ruling class. Restricted access to the language of the ruling class has the effect that the "other" languages are rendered inferior in status, and hence become of little value. (Assimilationists perceive diversity as a problem which needs to be eliminated. Assimilation is the dominant ideology here.) Language-as-a-right refers to the unequal relationship between the ruling class or economic elite and the languages of those who do not enjoy political or economic power. The impulse is overtly towards monolingualism. Language-as-a-resource includes the notion of language-as-a-right. In this position, the linguistic rights of communities are protected, because value is attached to each language. This carries with it the notion of functional, or instrumental, uses of languages, or functional multilingualism. Because my study deals with the right to certain languages, their value and empowerment, my focus is mainly on language-as-a-resource. The absence of language rights means that the local languages will inevitably not be developed, and their speakers will not be empowered. In turn, speakers of these languages will not have access to government services, programmes, knowledge, and information. According to Musau, as cited in Muthwii and Kioko (2004:8), speakers of these marginalised languages often do not

understand development policies, objectives, and procedures, and therefore cannot meaningfully participate.

Since apartheid ended in 1994, not much has changed in terms of language practices in some of South Africa's institutions, such as the educational, judicial and social services. The reality, as pointed out by Webb (2001:60), is that the support expressed for the development of indigenous languages and cultures in African states seems to have been mere lip service. My observation is that there is much concern from many speakers on African languages that the elevation of South Africa's indigenous languages to official language status has not received much needed support. There can be no doubt about the importance of mother-tongue languages, and yet many South Africans are not heeding the message (Saunders 2011:15).

Lo Bianco (1996) concedes that when the beginning point is to treat language pluralism as a problem that interrupts or obstructs the efficient delivery of services, inevitably understandings of the reality of diversity will be framed by problems and difficulties. Lo Bianco seems to suggest that multilingualism should not be seen as an obstacle to service delivery, or South Africa will still encounter problems related to linguistic diversity. African indigenous languages have to play a far greater public role than before, as Webb (2007:7) emphasises.

Deprivations resulting from language discrimination may be devastating for the acquisition of skills. Language barriers have also too often worked to frustrate and stifle the full development of talent capabilities. When people are deprived of enlightenment and skills, their daily lives are

correspondingly diminished (McDougal et al. 1976:155). To my mind, this is an important aspect, which has not yet been given the attention it deserves within the realm of African languages. Hence, Kishe, as cited in Fishman (1972:123), emphasises that the transfer of skills, new knowledge, and any other vital information desired to effect change (for example, the production of quality goods and services) can best be delivered to the target group through a common language.

The idea in this study should not be misconstrued as undermining English or Afrikaans at the expense of the African languages, or the African languages being used in the place of English, but a caution that some of the official languages other than English have not received any attention. Hence, the findings of the Language Plan Task Group (LANGTAG) in 1991 was that in regard to the dominance of English, it is felt that there should be an equitable balance between access to English for those who want to use it, to ensure that those who do not know English do not suffer in the process.

When interviewed by the scholar Brock-Utne on the fact that the Pan South African Language Board was unable to work in accordance with the Statute on Language Rights, Dr Neville Alexander, a member of LANGTAG, pointed out that there was “a lack of political will on the part of the current government to have our progressive language policy work”. Despite South Africa’s progressive language policy, languages other than Afrikaans and English seem almost completely absent from practical planning. The opportunities opened for these languages in the Constitution, and in such important documents as the LANGTAG report, remain largely vacant (Brock-Utne 2002:12).

According to Kamwangamalu (2000), what is evident is that since statutory apartheid ended in 1994, not much has changed in terms of language practices in the country's institutions. If anything has changed at all, it is that English has gained more territory and political clout than Afrikaans. This observation underlines the hegemonic position of English vis-à-vis the country's other official languages.

In an effort to eliminate domination of one language group by another, the drafters of South Africa's Constitution decided to make all 11 of the country's major languages equal and official (Brock-Utne 2002:11). Many arguments have been advanced by a number of language scholars in South Africa to explain the deep-rooted negative attitude towards African languages. This explains why the issue of the use of African languages in South Africa has not been adequately addressed, despite policy statements to the contrary (ibid.). It is now 17 years of democracy, but seemingly very little has been achieved. A lot needs to be done to show clearly that there is inequity between all South Africa's official languages and that this needs to be attended to.

However, explicit mention should be made that tangible efforts to develop South Africa's indigenous African languages have been made, and the government deserves credit for this. According to Pare, as cited in Taljard (2008:121), since 1997 the Department of Arts, Culture, Science and Technology (DACST) has been in constant consultation and discussion with stakeholders concerning the urgent need to establish Language Research and Development Centres (LRDCs). Provincial consultations and audits of

available capacity and resources were subsequently carried out to assess the need for and feasibility of such an undertaking. LRDCs were national structures created by the National Language Service of the Department of Arts and Culture (DAC) to undertake research and development for each of the nine official African languages in the country. The overriding aim was to effectively develop the indigenous official languages to ensure their public use in important fields such as law, commerce, science, politics, and education, among others. The centres formed the backbone of the governmental institutional infrastructure related to implementation of language policy and were required for the successful implementation of the National Language Policy Framework.

It is stated that one of the key objectives of the LRDCs was to ensure that indigenous languages were used as languages of business, politics, research, and government throughout South Africa. A primary objective of these centres was to change deep-rooted negative attitudes towards the indigenous languages – attitudes that reinforce practices, as well as perceptions, of inequality (due to a lack of or poor economic value attached to these languages). By generating language projects with immediate practical benefits for the wider community, the LRDCs would contribute directly towards the achievement of the broader goals of transformation, nation building, and the creation of wealth for all citizens.

It is surprising that these LRDCs no longer exist. This is a clear indication that South African indigenous languages are not yet valued. The critical role that these centres played should not have been abolished, because, if I may borrow the words of Wale, as cited in Finlayson and Madiba (2002), the

seeds for the use of the African indigenous languages have been sown by these centres. What remains is for these seeds to be watered, so that they can germinate and spread among all South Africans, in order to enhance collective participation towards national development efforts.

In the Department of Arts and Culture's briefing on its Annual Report 2009/10, members of the committee were given a breakdown of the various programmes of the department. Some of the service delivery achievements of the National Language Service include the awarding of 102 bursaries to students enrolling for language professions, the development of a web page to assist provinces in developing a provincial language policy, and the setting up of a translation and editing section. This was done to achieve the objective of developing and promoting the official languages of South Africa and enhancing the linguistic diversity of the country. The National Language Service is commended on awarding bursaries for the "academic training of language practitioners who must emerge with specialisation in a variety of domains, e.g. terminology, translation, editing and human language technology". However, the biggest concern is that, with the use of the indigenous languages in service delivery being pivotal in government, will "the capacity that has been built to deal with domains of knowledge which may have been effectively barred by lack of expertise or pre-democracy history" be utilised?

The Department of Arts and Culture (DAC) has taken practical and positive measures to elevate the status and advance the use of South Africa's indigenous African languages. In her speech at the launch of the multilingual campaign at Freedom Park in Pretoria, the Minister of Arts and Culture,

Lulu Xingwana, reiterated that the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa has respected linguistic diversity from the start of 2003, and that the DAC has moved up a gear and adopted the National Language Policy Framework (NLFP) and its implementation plan. In 2010 the DAC submitted to Cabinet and Parliament the Language Practitioners' Council Bill. The aim of the Language Practitioners' Council is:

- to raise the status of the language professions and safeguard the quality of their products; and
- to protect members of the public that make use of language services.

She further mentioned that there is a “Lwazi Project”, which has been commissioned by the DAC, to provide South Africans with access to government information and services in all 11 official languages, by using a landline or mobile telephone free of charge (<http://www.pmg.org.gov.za/report/201011-department-arts-culture-briefing>).

My observation, however, is that the dissemination of such important information is still not reaching the masses, meaning that the majority of citizens are still battling to access information using their mother tongue, and in rural communities, there is limited access to landlines and mobile phones. I concur with Ngcobo (2009:116) that the majority of people are excluded from receiving information to improve their lives, and that most of the available electronic content remains accessible to those who are able to read and write English.

Ngcobo further states that the South African government has shown a level of commitment to providing electronic access to government services. He cites the Cape Gateway website (www.capegateway.gov.za) and the Government Communication and Information Systems website (www.gcis.gov.za) as models in this regard. The government has also created the State Information Technology Agency (SITA), to encourage the provision of information technology, information systems, and related services in an organised environment. However, Ngcobo claims that there are still a number of problems with accessing information through ICT tools such as the internet, that access to interactive media is mostly unaffordable, and that the localisation of information via indigenous languages has also not been taken seriously. Kaschula (2003:68) cautions that the promotion of indigenous languages alongside English will require vast sums of money and expertise in the form of human and educational resources.

In her article, Dr Marrietta Alberts in PanSALB News (2009:5) has given a full elaboration on indigenous languages going cyber with Microsoft South Africa. She points out that Microsoft SA aims to make technology as accessible as possible to various language groups and to promote technological literacy in the country. One of the major initiatives in doing so is the Local Language Programme. The programme includes a localisation solution that allows users to install a language as a layer over an existing installation of, for example, Windows XP at no cost. Microsoft SA aimed to provide Language Interface Packs (LIPs) for both Windows XP and Office 2003 in several of South Africa's official languages. In liaison with PanSALB, they have now also created LIPs for the latest Vista platform.

Alberts even took pains to provide a web page where users could get free downloads of Setswana, isiZulu and Afrikaans LIPs.

It is still a concern that all this is easily accessible to the minority of the population that have Internet facilities. What about rural communities where, in some cases, there is no electricity at all, and the affordability of ICT tools is a problem? The Pan South African Language Board is a permanent body established in terms of the Constitution, as a proactive agent for, and watchdog over, language rights. Thus, the visibility of PanSALB at grassroots level is much desired in this regard. A close monitoring of more effective means of communication to access information and government services will lead to much needed service delivery, with more emphasis on the deep rural areas.

Chapter 2 will elaborate on language planning and policy in South Africa, with a brief overview of language issues. Thereafter, the pre-apartheid and post-apartheid policies on language planning will be explored, with the aim of describing how the South African government and language planners, both past and present, have dealt with language issues in our society, with specific reference to the position of the African indigenous languages.

CHAPTER 2

LANGUAGE PLANNING AND POLICY ISSUES IN SOUTH AFRICA

2.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter will give a brief overview of language issues in South Africa, with the aim of showing how language practices can point to a different reality where languages are undermined if language planning and policy do not adopt a more pragmatic approach to status planning. Pre-apartheid and post-apartheid policies on language planning will also be explored, with the aim of describing how the South African government and language planners, both past and present, have dealt with language issues in our society, with specific reference to the position of the African indigenous languages.

2.1 LANGUAGE ISSUES

In a multilingual, developing society, the context of language planning is extremely diverse, a situation which is exacerbated by the fact that language itself is an activity that constantly eludes the planned outcomes of any policy that tries to shape or constrain it. To regulate language at statutory level involves a variety of problematic choices – concerning, for instance, what the official language (or languages) for public and national communication should be, and which language or languages should serve a “symbolic” role for the nation. Also, democratic

governments have to take account of the realities of language practices in the country and operate within a context of many competing and contradictory views about what constitutes an appropriate language policy (King & Van den Berg 1994:1).

From the above exposition, it is clear that the question of language is something that cannot just be taken for granted. Language is an emotional matter; opposition to a language can result in violence. This has been proved in the drama of the liberation struggle; resistance to language policies in education has had an important role to play in political resistance. This resistance culminated in the uprisings of 1976, when the issue of enforced language medium of instruction became the central symbol of oppression of Bantu Education. In support of this notion, Cooper, as cited by Egington and Wren (1997:49), describes language planning as “a messy affair – ad hoc, haphazard, emotionally driven”. In this regard, other sociolinguists have seen language as a problem when such situations arise, but Haugen, as cited by Ricento (2006:27), has a different view, when he rightly opines that “language [diversity] is not a problem unless it is used as a basis for discrimination”. Ricento further asserts that if individuals or groups are barred access to the national language, and especially the standard “prestige” written variety, or if they are expected to assimilate into the dominant language and abandon their mother tongue (and cultural identity) without realistic expectation of access to the political economy and the benefits it provides, then there is the potential for conflict.

South Africa is faced with the responsibility of finding solutions to such issues as the economic upliftment of its people, the eradication of unemployment and poverty, the combating of crime, and the alleviation of social and health problems. Language has a very important role to play in all these issues. South Africans cannot ignore the role of language in diplomatic and economic activity, in education, in ensuring access to essential services, in personal development, and in cultural and artistic expression (Mkhulisi, as cited by Duprez & Du Plessis 2000:128).

Kelman, as cited by Eastman (1983:34), has expressed the idea of the ways language influences people's image of themselves relative to the political system under which they live. Kelman maintains that people may be either sentimentally or instrumentally attached to a nation-state, and that language is one of the factors determining the particular form of attachment. People are **sentimentally attached** to a national system when they see it as representing them; they are **instrumentally attached** to a national system when they see it as a vehicle for achieving their "own ends and the ends of members of the other systems". Eastman (1983:34) contrasts instrumental attachment, not with sentimental attachment, but with **primordial attachment**. According to Eastman, people that have primordial attachment to a state feel that it represents more of them, and that it symbolises their heritage. One could say that **primordial attachment** is a strong form of **sentimental attachment**.

Whenever language conflicts erupt in a multilingual society, one group with sentimental attachment to a language will lack access to a dominant other language and will experience discrimination at the instrumental level “because its language is not given due recognition”. The group feels that it is excluded from complete participation in the national system and that its access to socio-economic mobility is cut off. Eastman (1983:35) cites an example of Spanish speakers in the United States having difficulty developing any form of attachment to an American national system through language. The group expresses anger at the fact that it is perceived as linguistically handicapped when it comes to sharing in national funds, jobs, education, and the like. Thus, most language conflicts are rooted in grievances that relate to instrumental rather than sentimental (or primordial) attachment. People become upset when they cannot get what everyone else can because they lack the ability to use the language that is the key, metaphorically speaking, that opens the door to the good life.

2.1.1 LANGUAGE PLANNING AND POLICY

Many scholars caution that language planning within a political language system ought to be geared to realising policies based on considerations such as the establishment of communication patterns that help people gain access to social and economic goals. Policies should address the question of how people from different language backgrounds can have access to the national system. Language planning is an area where language is seen as an aspect of people’s attachment to a nation or state

(Eastman 1983:35). Eastman, as cited by Herbert (1992:96), also observes that language planning generally refers to efforts in a sociopolitical context to solve language problems, preferably on a long-term basis, by heeding the process of language change.

Language in South Africa has become intimately linked to ethnicity because, as Barkhuizen and De Klerk, as cited by Kamwangamalu (2000), remark, once the apartheid system “invented” or “labelled” groups, “there was a tendency by these groups and others in South African society to appropriate (internalise) the label”. As Makoni (1996) notes, what started out as an “ethnic” category, that is, an identity imposed externally on the Black people by groups in positions of power, in this case the apartheid government, ended up becoming an “emetic” category, that is, an internal self-definition of the imposed category. This emphasises the notion of sentimental attachment to a national system.

Planning is a “critical feature of human existence”, as pointed out by Kaplan and Baldauf (1997:4). There are activities which make up the language planning process which can be viewed from either a societal or a language focus. As these two scholars put it, the societal focus is called “status planning” and consists of those decisions a society must make about language selection and language implementation, to choose and disseminate the language or languages selected (Kaplan & Baldauf 1997:4). The language focus is called “corpus planning” and consists of language decisions which need to be made to codify and elaborate a language or languages. Acquisition planning as a third type of language

planning was, according to Cooper, as cited by Ricento (2006:28-32), introduced 20 years later. It is distinguished from status planning by being about the users rather than the uses of language, but, arguably, it has more in common with status planning than with corpus planning. In addition to this, the other scholars cited by Orman (2008:43) view acquisition planning as being concerned with the question of who uses which particular language varieties and involving activities aimed at facilitating the spread of language varieties throughout particular communities or parts of such communities. Orman further explains that acquisition planning may involve the systematic learning of a foreign or second language, or it may involve efforts aimed at the reacquisition of a historically diminished language.

Weinstein, as cited by Kamwangamalu (2000:51), describes language planning as a government-authorised, long-term, sustained, and conscious effort to alter a language's function in a society for the purpose of solving communication problems. As was alluded to earlier by Kaplan and Baldauf, Wardhaugh, as cited by Kamwangamalu (2000:51), also notes that the attempt to solve language-related problems may focus on either the status of a given language vis-à-vis other languages of a country, that is, **status planning**, or on the internal condition of a given language with a view to changing that condition, that is, **corpus planning**, or on both of these types of language planning, since they are not mutually exclusive. King and Van den Berg (1992:2) maintain that the underlying forces that influence the outcomes of language planning are many and complex. For example, contestation by

different interest groups, the cost of corpus planning for technically underdeveloped languages, mass literacy issues, regional differences, language attitudes, and development considerations are only some of the factors that might support or subvert a language policy. It has to be seriously considered, as Egington and Wren (1997:49) put it, in troubled times, when discrepancies in material wealth between sectors of the community are becoming wider, language can be proposed as a bond that unites. This has an interesting implication for language planning.

The term “language policy”, as defined by Orman (2008:39), refers to the formulation of laws, regulations, and official positions regarding language usage and the allocation of language resources by some government or political organisation. According to Orman, language policy is a combination of language culture and language planning. He claims that the terms “language policy” and “language planning” are often used interchangeably, with little or no conceptual distinction drawn between the two. He further explains that what turns out to be language planning is frequently referred to as “language policy”. Accordingly, language planning, or language management, may be regarded as an element, or a subdivision, of a wider language policy.

Kaplan and Baldauf (1997:3) view language planning as a body of ideas, laws, and regulations (language policy), changed rules, beliefs, and practices intended to achieve a planned change (or stop change from happening) in the language use in one or more communities. To put it differently, they assert that language planning involves deliberate,

although not overt, future-oriented change in systems of language code/or speaking in a specific societal context. Orman argues that Kaplan and Baldauf's definition of language planning involves deliberate intervention in a linguistic corpus (corpus planning) or in a sociolinguistic environment (status planning). Hence Fishman, as cited by Orman (2008:42-43), observes that status planning and corpus planning have been referred to as "the sides of the same language planning coin", the implication being that neither activity generally happens in isolation from the other activity.

According to Tollefson (1991:206), the commonly accepted definition of language policy is that it is language planning by governments. He offers an alternative conception of language policy as one mechanism for locating language within a social structure so that language determines who has access to political power and economic resources. Language policy, as he views it, is one mechanism which dominates groups that establish hegemony in language use. This conception of language policy implies that there is a dynamic relationship between social relations and language policy, and that hierarchical social systems are associated with exploitative language policies, that is, policies which give advantage to groups that speak particular language varieties.

Activist scholars working in the field of language planning and policy development firmly believe that this activity cannot and should not be controlled by government alone. Alexander (2004:116) rightly points out that while it is understood that the state, because of its access to

resources, will necessarily play a central role in any language planning strategy, it is equally clearly understood that unless the speakers of the language(s) concerned are consulted adequately, and unless non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and community-based organisations (CBOs) are involved at grassroots level, any language planning will be oppressive, and will necessarily lead to resistance. Democratic language planning “from below”, or “bottom-up” has to be built into any radical transformation exercise. Furthermore, Eastman, as cited by Van Rensburg (1999:128), postulates that the critical challenge for language planning is to bring the macro and micro perspectives together. This means that it is not sufficient to concentrate only on language use at the nation/state level.

Cluver, as cited by Reagan in Mesthrie (1995:327), argues that language planning in South Africa has been characterised by the fact that the members of one group (white South Africans, and particularly the Afrikaans-speaking group) monopolised political power, and therefore determined that their cultural values and symbols (such as their languages) would be national symbols. Reagan further asserts that as long as language planning and language policy formulation is seen as a top-down activity, removed from those whose lives it affects most closely, and is perceived as an activity only for those with specialised expertise, it will most probably continue to be generally ineffective. What is needed instead is language policies devised in consultation with, and with the support and involvement of, those they are intended to serve (*ibid.*).

Kaschula and Anthonissen (1995:100) make a similar point that effective language planning which considers and accounts for the sentiments of the people on the ground is essential for successful government in a multilingual country such as South Africa. Any manipulation of language would, more than likely, not be tolerated by people in a democracy, as it will lead to their disempowerment. Their language and their culture form part of their identity, their dignity, and their humanity. Hence, Webb and Kembo-Sure (2000:13) express the opinion that since language and culture are closely connected, the occurrence of language shift may lead to cultural shift, that is, the alienation of people from their cultural identity, and, eventually, perhaps even the “death” of a particular way of life. When this happens, a society seems to lose direction, often becoming victim to the twin evils of poverty and crime. Language policy is therefore an emotive issue which needs to be carefully handled by all in any multilingual society (Webb & Kembo-Sure 1995:100).

Baldauf and Kaplan (1997:196) share the same sentiments as other scholars, when they assert that language planning is based on language planning by individuals. They also point out that most of the traditional participants in language policy and planning have come from “top-down” language planning situations. These are people with power and authority who make language-related decisions for groups, often with little or no consultation with the ultimate language learners and users. Exactly who these planners are is often put in general terms, as the

individuals themselves may not be important, but rather are representative of social (that is, class) and political (that is, state) processes within a polity.

Some of the relevant events in pre-1994 and post-1994 South African history are presented in the following sections, with the aim of assessing how the status of the African indigenous languages has been addressed by policy makers and planners.

2.2 PRE-APARTHEID POLICIES IN SOUTH AFRICA

Afrikaner nationalism emerged in the past as a reaction against British attempts to anglicise Afrikaners after the Boer War. This was to have a dramatic impact on linguistic developments in twentieth-century South Africa. The Afrikaner nationalist elite emerged during the first half of the twentieth century and struggled for:

- Afrikaans to become an official language alongside English; and
- The right of Afrikaners to send their children to Afrikaans-language schools (De Klerk 1975; Steyn 1980, as cited by Louw 2004).

When these Afrikaner nationalists, mobilised around the National Party (NP), won the 1948 elections, they set about actively using the state to resist anglicisation and promote Afrikaans. They also implemented a peculiarly South African form of nation-building, associated with deconstructing the unified South African state (that is, partition/apartheid) and reconstructing in its place 11 ethnically defined

nations (that is, “separate development”). At heart, these Afrikaner nationalists were concerned with building a national state over which Afrikaners had sovereignty. The problem they faced was that Afrikaners were only one of many ethnic groups in South Africa and, indeed, were a minority of the population. Hence, the Afrikaner nation-building programme involved seeking mechanisms for “separating” Afrikaners from South Africa’s other ethnic/linguistic groups. The Afrikaner sense of “minority-ness” led, in particular, to a fear of black majoritarianism, and so, much of apartheid was about trying to find mechanisms for geographically delineating a secure “national territory” within which an Afrikaner (Euro-African) national state could function (Giliomee, as cited by Louw 2004). The result was apartheid (encoded in the ideology of Christian Nationalism), which aimed to “separate out” the different groups, so that Afrikaners would be left with their own national, cultural and linguistic “space” (Eiselen, as cited by Louw 2004).

Between 1948 and 1994 the apartheid state actively intervened to protect Afrikaans from being overwhelmed by English. The use of Afrikaans was vigorously promoted by the state. From the 1960s the state also began funding the promotion of South Africa’s black languages (Louw 2004). This response to “multilingualism” was, according to Herbert, as cited by Kaschula (1999:63), to use language for furthering the ends of apartheid. Furthermore, a concerted effort was made to encourage the use of African languages as a means of identifying individuals as members of ethnic groups, in terms of the divide-and-rule policy of apartheid.

Louw (2004) expatiates on the state's activities to block anglicisation of the Afrikaners as involving the following:

- The principle of 50-50 Afrikaans-English bilingualism was legally enforced with the state bureaucracy.
- English speakers were compelled to learn Afrikaans at school.
- Bilingualism was legally enforced with regard to signage, product labelling, and announcements at airports, railway stations, etc.
- State-built infrastructure, such as Afrikaans-medium schools, universities, teacher-training colleges, and technical colleges.
- The Afrikaans book publishing industry developed to supply the needs of the above educational infrastructure. The purchase of books by the education departments guaranteed that resources flowed into the publishing industry.
- The Suid-Afrikaanse Akademie vir Taal, Letterkunde en Kuns (South African Academy for Language, Literature and Art) and the Afrikaanse Taal- en Kultuurvereniging (ATKV) received state sponsorship to develop dictionaries, codify grammatical and spelling rules, and ensure the ongoing development of scientific, technical and legal terminology in Afrikaans.
- Sponsoring the development of dictionaries, plus codifying grammatical and spelling rules for languages such as Sesotho sa Leboa, Sesotho, and Setswana.
- Insisting on mother-tongue education. The 1949 Eiselen Commission into black education led to the closure of mission schools, because these were seen to be anglicising people. In the same way that the NP moved

to end the anglicisation of Afrikaner children through compulsorily removing Afrikaners from English schools, so too was this policy applied to black education. Werner Eiselen advocated mother-tongue education in black primary schools to promote “own-ness” among Zulus, Xhosas, Tswanas, Pedis, Sothos, etc. Bantu Education was developed to replace the mission schools and to disseminate the ideology of “separate development” and “own-ness” among black children.

- The SABC’s TV1 television service operated on the principle of 50-50 Afrikaans-English bilingualism. Advertising was done in both English and Afrikaans, and the state sponsored the dubbing of overseas television programmes into Afrikaans and subsidised the production of Afrikaans television programming.
- The state encouraged the production of Afrikaans films (via a film subsidy scheme) and Afrikaans theatre (via the state-subsidised Performing Arts Council).

Seemingly, from the above activities, Louw claims that the results were that prior to 1994, the South African state actively promoted multilingualism and actively resisted the pressures of anglicisation. One might argue that Louw is distorting the facts by presenting contradictory points. The promotion of multilingualism that he refers to was totally negative. The sense of “own-ness” among black children mentioned in one of the activities is not what Kaschula (1999:65) observes when he points out that the apartheid government kept different groups and communities apart and uprooted many people in order to relocate them to areas where their mother tongue was the dominant language. Furthermore, black people regarded this education policy (of “own-

ness”) as one designed to separate them from the international community, where English is often used as a lingua franca.

Louw points out that anglicisation was resisted because Afrikaner nationalists ironically believed that building a “unified nation” would threaten the survival of Afrikaans and Afrikaner cultural forms. According to him, prior to 1994 South Africa was experientially not a society where English was dominant. Rather, it was a society where Afrikaans was strongly in evidence within a bilingual framework, and where South Africa’s black languages were being promoted, by being codified and taught in schools. To claim that black languages were promoted is just a fallacy. In essence, the ruling Afrikaner elite, as Orman (2008:88) puts it, erected impenetrable barriers of racial categorisation to ensure their continued in-group integrity and political dominance. This point cannot be emphasised any more than in the South African context, where the apartheid regime used language as one of the yardsticks, besides skin colour, to engineer and promote its divide-and-rule ideology (Kamwangamalu 2004:113).

Van den Berg (1992:3) argues that for the Afrikaner under British rule, the Afrikaans language became a symbol of the struggle to create a national identity. The introduction in 1914 of vernacular Afrikaans (rather than Dutch) as a medium of instruction in schools and colleges, and its legalisation as an official language in 1925, marked the beginning of a systematic and concerted policy aimed at enhancing the status of Afrikaans as the dominant language.

Van den Berg (1992:3) further asserts that language has also been used as a means of establishing and maintaining policies of separate development. The National Party, on coming into power in 1948, set out to classify the population into separate groups, to treat them unequally, and to impose the language and culture of the Afrikaner whites onto the entire population in significant ways. An important part of the rationale for the policy of separate development was the notion of mother-tongue education. Since 1948 the principle of mother-tongue instruction has been enshrined in the policy and practice of education for all “population groups” except for the “Indian” group.

Van den Berg (1992:3) lists as follows the features that dominated the education system in South Africa, collated from an Independent Examination Board (IEB) colloquium titled “A Language Policy for South African Schools”, held in October 1990:

- Decisions on language policy in education have been imposed without consultation on a powerless majority;
- The School’s language policy is ethnically based and divisive;
- Afrikaans-English bilingualism is entrenched as the official policy. In practice, this means that the majority of the population is forced to become trilingual;
- Those whose mother tongue is English or Afrikaans are advantaged in the competition for educational certificates;

- Assumptions about the benefits of mother-tongue instruction operate to the advantage of English and Afrikaans speakers. They receive language medium transfer.
- The question of whether apartheid language policy was actually successful in its aim of creating and/or reinforcing divisive ethnolinguistic identities among the Bantu population remains debatable. What is certain, however, is that by severely restricting access to English-language education, English increasingly became seen by blacks from all ethnolinguistic categories as a unifying symbol of opposition to apartheid (De Klerk & Gough, as cited by Orman 2008:89).

2.3 POST-APARTHEID POLICIES IN SOUTH AFRICA

After the abolition of apartheid, political changes took place in the country. The advent of democracy resulted in the Language Task Plan Action Group (LANGTAG), an initiative of the Department of Arts, Culture, Science and Technology (DACST) in 1996. Mesthrie (2006:152) notes that its brief was to advise the Minister (then Ben Ngubane) on planning for policy making within the language guidelines of the new Constitution. LANGTAG brought together a broad range of language practitioners (including sociolinguists), enabling comprehensive consultations with different communities and sectors, intensive discussions, and some new research.

Colonial and apartheid language policies, in concert with socio-economic and sociopolitical policies, gave rise to a hierarchy of unequal

languages which reflected the structures of racial and class inequality that characterise South African society. The dominance of English – and later of Afrikaans – was sustained systematically in order to reinforce other structures of domination. These practices engendered the corollary low status of the indigenous languages and varieties of the African people and of other marginalised groups, such as slaves, foreigners, the deaf, and so forth (LANGTAG Report 1996:8).

The above statement is a final report of the Language Task Plan Group, which was presented to the Minister of Arts, Culture, Science and Technology on 8 August 1996. LANGTAG was inaugurated on 9 November 1995 by Dr B.S. Ngubane, the then Minister of Arts, Culture, Science and Technology. The task group's mandate was to advise the minister on the issue of a National Language Plan for South Africa. Dr Ngubane's reminder to the seven members of the Main Committee of LANGTAG in October 1995 was that the following goals should be achieved:

- All South Africans should have access to all spheres of South African society by developing and maintaining a level of spoken and written language which is appropriate for a range of contexts in the official language(s) of their choice.
- All South Africans should have access to the learning of languages other than their mother tongue.
- The African languages, which have been disadvantaged by the language policies of the past, should be developed and maintained.

- Equitable and widespread language services should be established. (LANGTAG 1996:1)

From Objective (3) above one can deduce that the members of the Main Committee were to take cognisance of the fact that language dominance was an unwanted phenomenon. They therefore had to do everything possible to ensure that no language became superior to any other language, and they had to see to it that a thorough task was done, so that at the end, there would be equity and equality for the languages of the vast majority of the people of South Africa.

Furthermore, historical developments and previous social struggles, including the defining factors of colonial conquest, racial discrimination, and apartheid, made it possible for English and Afrikaans to become dominant languages of power in South Africa, so the legacy of the apartheid had to be broken down by “...means of the special promotion of the African languages and other marginalised languages, including sign language” (LANGTAG 1996:1).

The post-apartheid era in South Africa began officially in 1994, when the first multiracial all-party elections were held, which culminated in the Nelson Mandela-led African National Congress (ANC) being elected into power. The new era was to represent a significant break with the rigid policy of Afrikaans-English bilingualism that existed during the apartheid years. The new South African Constitution, a document strongly influenced by the values of traditional individualistic liberal human rights discourse and designed to ensure inter-ethnic peace,

declared 11 official state languages, including nine Bantu languages, namely isiZulu, isiXhosa, Tshivenda, siSwati, isiNdebele, Xitsonga, Setswana, Sesotho sa Leboa, and Sesotho, in addition to Afrikaans and English (Orman 2008:91).

According to the post-apartheid Constitution, language policy must recognise “the historically diminished use and status of the indigenous languages of [the South African] people”, and “the state must take practical and positive measures to elevate the status and advance the use of these languages” (Chapter 1, Section 6, Article 2 of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa 1996). Thus, the Government of National Unity of the time, in recognising 11 official languages, rejected the bilingual policy of the apartheid government, which reflected only the linguistic diversity of white South Africa, and replaced it with a multilingual policy more accurately reflecting the reality of South African society. Further, the Reconstruction and Development Programme of the ANC calls for the development of “all South African languages and particularly the historically neglected indigenous languages” (Mesthrie 1995:326).

The post-apartheid era has seen a flurry of language planning activities and governmental bodies set up with the intention of implementing the directives of South Africa’s new Constitution. For example, the National Language Service (NLS) was set up as a directorate in the Department of Arts, Culture, Science and Technology (DACST) to promote “the linguistic empowerment of all South Africa’s people”. In addition, the

Pan South African Language Board (PanSALB) was set up by virtue of the PanSALB Act (Act 59 of 1995), with the chief purpose of providing for the recognition of multilingualism and the development of the country's official languages (DACST 1998:24).

The post-apartheid Constitution commits the government to build upon an underlying philosophy of pluralism and linguistic human rights by pursuing a policy of equitable multilingualism. In elevating nine black African languages to the status of official languages, it meant that the previous privileging of Afrikaans under the apartheid system could be countered, with Afrikaners not being able to argue with any credible conviction that the status of their language had been downgraded (Pretorius 1999, as cited by Orman 2008:91).

In comparing the apartheid regime to the post-apartheid government, Orman (*supra*) argues that the post-apartheid government has carried over the linguistic categorisation of the African population that was imposed on it by the apartheid regime. In addition to the promotion of linguistic pluralism, the South African government has also committed itself to undertake a complementary project of identity construction, or "nation-building". Unlike the apartheid regime, the current South African government has not adopted a policy of multilingualism with the intention of promoting separate, divisive identities. It has chosen to view linguistic pluralism as a resource for the promotion of a common, non-racial, fully inclusive South African identity.

In support of the above notion, sociolinguists maintain that in South Africa's policy of pluralism, no single language has been officially designated as the "national language", unlike the case in neighbouring states such as Botswana and Namibia, which, like many countries in Africa, have taken the exoglossic option of declaring English as their national language, despite the fact that it is known by less than 5% of the population (Fourie, as cited by Orman 2008:92).

In opposing Eurocentrism, Alexander (2008) postulates that former colonial languages such as English are often promoted in these circumstances as languages of national unity on the grounds that they are somehow "ethnically neutral". Even if this highly dubious assertion were true, it is seriously stretching credibility to claim that a language which is unknown by the vast majority of the state's citizens can serve as a means of uniting them in a common identity community. Such languages actually just serve as vehicles of elite unity. The real issue in the matter of promoting national unity is not that people should all speak any particular language (although this is clearly very helpful!), but that they should be able to communicate with one another (Alexander, as cited by Orman 2008:93). Orman (2008) expands by noting that nationhood need not necessarily be predicted on the existence of a common national language, or even on the requirement that all members of the nation be able to communicate with each other in any language.

In terms of language policy, South Africa is no longer officially the bilingual state that it was in the apartheid era, with English and

Afrikaans as the sole official languages of the state. Consequently, on national television, for instance, Afrikaans shares airtime not only with English, but also with all the nine African languages. That is, the prime news bulletins, for instance, are no longer divided between the former two official languages, namely English and Afrikaans, with each taking up to 50% of news time, as was the case in the apartheid era (Kamwangamalu 2001:81).

With the multilingual language policy that South Africa has adopted, Kamwangamalu (2000:50) proceeds to point out that, to some extent, this policy reflects internationalisation and pluralism, two of the four ideologies of language planning proposed by Cobarrubias (1983). Internationalisation is the adoption of a non-indigenous language as an official language, while pluralism is the official recognition of more than one language, such as English and Afrikaans and the nine African languages, namely isiZulu, isiXhosa, Tshivenda, siSwati, isiNdebele, Xitsonga, Setswana, Sesotho sa Leboa, and Sesotho.

It is worth noting that Desai and McLean, as cited by Kaschula (1999:67), argued on initial attitudes to the draft forms of language policy that responses from the public have been understandably critical. The two authors cautioned that English speakers are frequently dismissive, that Afrikaans speakers often see the new language policy as a trick to demote Afrikaans, and that African language speakers are positive mainly about the symbolic achievement of this policy. The main

arguments against the new policy are that it is empirical and that it is an attempt to demote Afrikaans, which will then allow English to dominate.

In support of this view, Kamwangamalu (2001:82) mentions some of the gains that African languages have attained from this new language policy as being greater visibility in the national media (especially on television) than was the case during the apartheid era, and the fact that some jobs in the public and private sectors now require knowledge of an African language. He then proceeds to point out that despite these gains, compared to English and Afrikaans, the African languages have no real cachet in the broader social, political, and economic context. Rather, these languages co-exist with English and Afrikaans in what may be described as a hierarchical triglossic system. He explains a hierarchical triglossic system as one in which English is at the top, Afrikaans is in the middle, and the African languages are at the bottom (Kamwangamalu 2000:51). On these grounds, Mkhulisi, as cited by Dupreez and Du Plessis (2000:126-127), warns that functional multilingualism should certainly not be equated with a rigid hierarchical ordering. On the contrary, great care should be taken to avoid assigning some (dominant) languages to the “higher” functions and relegating the others, in particular the historically marginalised languages, to the “lower” functions.

Cuvelier and Du Plessis, as cited by Orman (2008:95), share the same sentiments as suggested by Kamwangamalu’s hierarchy, by maintaining that, in contrast to the equitable promotion of all 11 languages envisaged

by the country's Constitution, there seems to be an increasing tendency towards English monolingualism in all spheres of South African public life. Quite a clear language hierarchy has emerged, with English at the top, the Bantu languages at the bottom, and Afrikaans somewhere in the middle, but gradually sinking. Webb, as cited by Mesthrie (2006:155), asserts that there is a need for real (as opposed to symbolic) empowerment of the African languages.

One of the findings of the Language Equity Subcommittee of LANGTAG regarding dominance of English states that "it is felt that there should be an equitable balance between access to English for those who want to use it, to ensure that those who do not know English do not suffer in the process" (LANGTAG 1996:18). Unfortunately this is not the case in most of the country's institutions. The majority of public servants in South Africa use English to deliver social services to communities that are not conversant with English. The use of African languages and other marginalised languages is still a stumbling block for many. This is contrary to the constitutional principle of language equity, which stipulates that "all official languages must enjoy parity of esteem and must be treated equitably". One major goal of the new language policy is to promote the status of the African languages. The following sections will examine this policy in regard to the status of English alongside African languages, the attitude of people towards English, and the merits and demerits of this policy.

2.4 THE STATUS AND FUNCTIONS OF ENGLISH IN RELATION TO THE INDIGENOUS LANGUAGES

Kamwangamalu (2000) expresses great concern that since statutory apartheid ended in 1994, not much has changed in terms of language practices in the country's institutions. According to Kamwangamalu, if anything has changed at all, it is that English has gained more territory and political clout than Afrikaans has. Commenting on language policy in the provincial legislatures, Gunning, as cited by Kamwangamalu (2000:53), remarks about the use of English in most legislatures and explains that politicians prefer English over other languages, that English is used to avoid confusion, and that it is the main language of documentation. He also argues that in Parliament the majority of politicians are black South Africans and that in South Africa it is common knowledge that, besides being fluent in English and/or Afrikaans, the black African members of Parliament are fluent in at least one African language. Besides this, however, Pandor, as cited by Orman (2008:95), noted that in 1994, 87% of speeches in the South African Parliament were in English, 5% were in Afrikaans, and 8% were in one of the remaining nine African languages, something which rather undermines aspirations towards achieving a credibly representative democratic political culture.

Gunning's observation about language usage is also noted in the *Sunday Times* (2004), as cited by Beukes (2004:14):

The work of government is conducted virtually entirely in English, and the language of our culturally diverse Parliament is almost exclusively English. Many senior politicians stay away from African language radio stations, presumably because they perceive those audiences as not sophisticated enough. ... Universities are battling to keep African language departments open as student numbers dwindle... book publishing in indigenous languages is on its deathbed, and ... the use of these languages among native speakers is becoming unfashionable.

Also, in its findings on the language practices in public institutions, LANGTAG (1996) reports that some cabinet ministers and directors generally refuse to respond to documents unless they are in English; at provincial level, correspondence is conducted mainly in English; and at local government level, city and town council meetings are held monolingually in English, because some councillors cannot speak in any other language. These findings, once again, underline the hegemonic position of English vis-à-vis the country's other official languages (Kamwanagamalu 2000:56).

Crystal, as cited by Louw (2004:322), argues that changes in South Africa's sociopolitical environment in 1994 have dramatically altered the country's linguistic environment to such an extent that today, even those South African languages with millions of speakers are not necessarily safe in the face of anglicisation. Louw (2004) emotionally claims that the abolition of apartheid in 1994 produced a new African National

Congress (ANC) ruling elite dominated by westernised black South Africans who have forged a capitalist alliance with local capital (mostly owned by white Anglos). Significantly, the ANC elite deploy English as their language of state administration and have effectively promoted Atlantic Charter modernisation and nation-building. He argues that the apartheid state discouraged the use of English at the expense of other languages besides Afrikaans. To him it seems that the post-apartheid state encourages all South Africans to learn English and to use English as the country's lingua franca.

As Louw (2004) observes, English has acquired enhanced status, as it is used by both the political elite and the business elite of the country, while South Africa's other languages have become increasingly marginal within the government's modernisation project of building a unified nation-state. He emphasises that the use of English is being "encouraged", and that the use of the other 10 official languages is being "discouraged", and concludes by saying that the fact that South Africa officially has 11 languages does not alter the "de facto" dominance of English. Hence, Nettle and Romaine, as cited by Louw (2004:328), also argue that in reality, English has become South Africa's dominant ("metropolitan") language, while 10 of South Africa's 11 national languages are "peripheral" – restricted to economically less developed areas, and to a smaller range of economic roles and functions. Mkhulisi, as cited by Duprez and Du Plessis (2000:126), expresses the same concern that large companies such as South African Airways have adopted an essentially monolingual policy. In her words, passengers are

greeted in several languages, but all safety demonstrations and other verbal directives are given in English only. No multilingual language strategies are put in place by SAA (or by similar institutions). Catering for linguistic diversity is seen as a nuisance and as costly.

Orman (2004:94) also observes that English (and, to a much lesser extent, Afrikaans) dominates as the language of business and trade, and that competence in English is a prerequisite for any substantial economic advancement. The value of African languages within the formal economy remains very low, to non-existent. This contributes to the existence of increasingly large socio-economic inequalities in South Africa, because the majority of the population is unable to function effectively, from an economic point of view, in the languages of greatest economic value.

English was widely used by the anti-apartheid political leadership and in the late twentieth century became associated with unity and liberation in South Africa. African languages have become associated with the divide-and-rule policy of apartheid, for them to be considered as languages of educational and economic progress. With the negotiations that led to the first democratic elections of 1994, it was English that was the *de facto* lingua franca. The African National Congress (ANC) leadership once seemed headed for a policy with English as the only official language (Mesthrie 2006:151). Mesthrie proceeds to point out that English consolidated its position at the expense of the other languages; English came to dominate in Parliament, higher education,

local government, and institutions such as the police, the defence force, and the courts. This scholar further cites three examples to illustrate this. Here is one example, quoted from (Geldenhuis 2001):

In the South African Police Service (SAPS) all orders, instructions and circulars at the national level are produced in Afrikaans and English. They are then distributed to the provinces in these two languages. If the need arises, the provincial commissioner is to have these documents translated into another official language. Where there is any difference in the contents of these official documents, the English version is to prevail.

Webb (2004:3) argues that the state institutions have become monolingual in practice, which means that the government is acting contrary to the spirit of the Constitution. Functionally, according to him, English is the major language in the country, being almost the sole language of formal public contexts, with Afrikaans still a factor in the workplace, but with Bantu languages used almost only for low-level functions, such as personal interaction, cultural expression, and religious practice.

A sociolinguistic survey commissioned by PanSALB (2000), for example, reported that 49% of their respondents often did not understand, or seldom understood, speeches in English. This lack of English-language proficiency stood at 60% among speakers of Setswana, isiNdebele, and Tshivenda, particularly among less educated respondents

in rural areas, and respondents in semi-skilled or unskilled communities (ibid.).

Echoing the language/political situation in South Africa, Webb (2004:7) states that colonialism and apartheid have meant that all of the languages in the country have acquired sociopolitical meanings, with English being regarded as highly prestigious, Afrikaans as generally stigmatised, and the Bantu languages as having little economic or educational value. He maintains that in terms of power and prestige, English is the major language of the country, with Afrikaans lower on the power hierarchy, and the Bantu languages effectively marginalised. This view is almost similar to Kamwangamalu's "hierarchical triglossic system", alluded to earlier. Webb proceeds to point out that the test of South Africa's language policy development lies in the country's ability to resolve its language-related problems. He explains language-related problems as problems that are non-linguistic in nature, but in which language plays some causal role. He further cites four main language-related problems. I will quote only one of these, which carries more weight than the others:

Inadequate political participation (partly due to the fact that the main language of political discourse is English), and the continuance of linguistic discrimination and inter-group conflict (Kamwangamalu 2000).

The situation of the hegemonic position of English is also seen in other countries. Oyeleye, as cited by Adeyanju (2009:5), shares the same

sentiment as other scholars already mentioned, by writing that English is unquestionably the official lingua franca of Nigeria, Ghana, Sierra Leone, the Gambia, and Liberia. English in such countries enjoys a status analogous to Fagun's H (High), while the indigenous languages have the status L (Low), in terms of the prestige of the language and official use. For instance, Adeyanju argues that by virtue of its status as official language in Nigeria, English is the language of bureaucracy. This means that government business and official communication are largely carried out in English. He suggests that this official status of English, as is the case in South Africa, affects people's sociolinguistic, sociocultural, socio-economic and sociopolitical fortunes (Adeyanju 2009:5).

There is the observation that a criterion for most government jobs in South Africa is proficiency in English. Interviews are also conducted in English, and those that have a good command of the language are at an advantage. Walking past one of the shops in Grahamstown, an advertisement for the National Arts Festival read "TEMPORARY EMPLOYMENT OFFERED FROM 30 JUNE-12 JULY – MUST BE PROFICIENT IN ENGLISH OR AFRIKAANS". The question here is "Does it mean that if one cannot speak either of these two languages, one is not eligible for this job?" One may argue that if the National Arts Festival is so well attended by different people of different languages, why is English or Afrikaans proficiency a requirement for this employment? Writing in this same vein, Alexander (2002) notes that, as with the question of colour, the language question is one that confronts

us in every sphere of life in South Africa. It is not a question that can be ignored or avoided, under any circumstances.

Adeyanju (2009:7) notes that English is a primary language of politics. English is employed much more than any indigenous language in political debates, the passing of bills, and parliamentary resolutions. Also, in electioneering campaigns, English functions alongside indigenous languages at political rallies and conventions. Radio/television jingles, sponsored advertisements in newspapers, and billboards about political campaigns are more common in English than in the indigenous languages. In this regard, Kamwangamalu's (2000:137) concern is that the majority of South Africans have turned to English for communication purposes, even though the indigenous languages have been accorded official status.

Adeyanju (2009:7) proceeds to point out that the political elites, the military opportunists, and the policy makers who have been privileged to occupy the corridors of power at one period or the other consist of people who were greatly aided by their proficiency in the use of English. These are the role models and opinion leaders that the ordinary people look up to for determining their course of action in matters of public interest. What the latter statement points out is that when it comes to matters such as asking for better living conditions, as has been noticed in many squatter camps in South Africa, this is often not conducted in a language that they understand best.

Poor people think that when they speak English at their protest marches or write placards in English, their leaders will hear them better. At times what they are saying is not what they meant, in terms of voicing their grievances. If they were to speak in their vernacular languages, they would express their feelings much better. A group of protesters in one rural area held a big placard with the caption “We are fed up with this government”. As they were singing and toyi-toyi-ing, holding this placard up, it got torn. One group was left with part of the placard that read “We are fed”, and another group was left with part of the placard that read “up with this government”. This was not the message that these people wanted to convey to their political leaders. Because of this miscommunication, the leaders were happy and joined the protesters in the march. There are many scenarios similar to this one, for example, black people are forced to write affidavits in English at police stations, in most government departments that deal with social services there are no information documents in the indigenous languages, and forms that people have to fill in are written in English. In the end, people see the indigenous languages as subservient to English.

In support of the above view, Egwuongu, as cited by Adeyanju (2009:6), emphasises that the indigenous languages have not been developed to function in the place of the ex-colonial languages, and since most Africans are not competent in the ex-colonial languages, participating in the national development and globalisation process cannot be carried out by these people, who are largely illiterates and semi-illiterates.

2.5 THE ATTITUDE OF PEOPLE TOWARDS ENGLISH, AS OPPOSED TO THE INDIGENOUS LANGUAGES

There is an overwhelmingly positive attitude to English at the expense of the indigenous languages. The status accorded the indigenous languages by the Constitution in the area of “equity”/“parity of esteem” is not, according to Adeyanju (2009:11), “unconnected with the people’s lukewarm attitude and indifference to the development and adequate use of their L1 [first language]”. Adeyanju strongly cautions that unless there is a change of attitude in favour of the indigenous languages, the image of English will continue to loom larger, while that of the indigenous languages will continue to diminish.

Oyetade, as cited by Igboanusi and Lothar (2005:17), argues that English will continue to enjoy a favourable attitude as long as it is associated with prestige and success. Oyetade cites an example of Nigerians that are not literate in English and cannot use it. They feel deprived and would make any sacrifice to enable their children to be in a position to use English.

In the homes of many educated persons in Nigeria, the children are first introduced to English before they are introduced to their parents’ mother tongue(s). Parents see this early introduction to English as an advantage to their children (Igboanusi & Lothar 2005:18). This assertion reminds me of my experience teaching in a predominantly white school (a former Model C school). Setswana and English were offered as first languages

and Afrikaans as a second language. English was offered as a second language as well for learners that did not want to choose Afrikaans as a second language. Learners had the choice of a first language paired with a second language, or taking two first languages as their choice. Most of the black learners, who were mother-tongue Setswana speakers, chose Setswana as first language and English as second language, or both Setswana and English as first languages. Surprisingly, the majority of black parents forced their children to choose English as a first language and Afrikaans as a second language, claiming that English will give their children access to educational and job opportunities. They did not even communicate with their children in their mother tongue, for the mere reason that they attended an elite school. Learners from neighbouring black schools regarded black learners that attended this “Model C school” as intelligent, because they spoke English with a “white or American accent”. Some black learners had a negative attitude towards them, calling them “snobs”, because they had unlearned their Setswana accents and anglicised the pronunciation of their names.

The above scenario is illustrative of Herbert’s (1992:109) observation that in South Africa, English has become the language that people like the most, following the social changes accompanying the political events of recent years. Even if people speak other first languages at home, they generally want to be taught in English, and they believe that the economic future of South Africa requires knowledge of English.

This scenario raises an extremely important question pertaining to the relationship between the Department of Education and the Pan South African Language Board. One wonders why PanSALB did not promote the status, corpora and acquisition of the African indigenous languages through the education system, so as to increase people's awareness of the advantages and importance of multilingualism, as set out in the Final Report of the Language Task Group (DACST 1996:129-130).

This high esteem with which parents of black children hold English is similar to what was noted by Crystal, as cited by Louw (2004:325), using the following scenario:

During a visit to Southern Africa in 1998, speakers of several of the newly recognised official languages of South Africa expressed to me their anxiety for their long-term future, in the face of English – including Afrikaans (whose language is spoken by around 6 million) ...

One trend illustrates the trend that these people find worrying: engaging a Johannesburg driver in conversation, it transpired that he was conversant with all 11 of his country's official languages – an ability which he did not think at all unusual. However, his main ambition was to earn enough to enable all his children to learn English. None of South Africa's other official languages ranked highly in his esteem.

In linguistic terms, the attitude of the elites towards the English language is reminiscent of Fukuyama's prematurely proclaimed "end of history". In the estimation of the elites, no other language is able or will be able to

challenge the position and utility of English as a means of communication, and therefore as an instrument for the production and exchange of commodities. The elites are captive to the notion that there is no alternative to English, that proficiency in English gives them access to global markets and that it makes it possible for one to be elevated to the charmed circle of global elites (Alexander 2004:120). In simpler terms, Alexander argues that English is valued by the elites, in that other languages cannot stand on its way. English is, according to Kamwangamalu (2000:56), perceived as the language of erudition and success.

2.6 PROBLEMS RELATED TO THE DOMINANCE OF ENGLISH

A major disadvantage in the continued use of English as the sole official language is the alienation of illiterate persons. Their inability to use English separates them from the rest of society and blurs their relevance in society. Whatever gains society stands to make from the intelligence and wisdom of some of these persons is lost, because they are denied opportunities in national debate or discourse. The emphasis on Western educational attainment, which in itself is synonymous with a mastery of English, prevents the illiterate from participating in the politics of the nation (Igboanusi & Lothar 2005:18). These two scholars warn that the dominance of English should not endanger smaller languages. Therefore, the existence of one language should not end the relevance of other languages.

Orman (2004) argues that current elite language practices in South Africa are preventing the type of nation-building envisaged by the South African Constitution, by continuing to reflect language identity strategies fostered by an “elite closure” mentality. Orman asserts that “elite closure” refers to the means by which that thin stratum of society which has a stake in the allocation and acquisition of power attempts to maintain and reproduce itself as a group. Myers-Scotton is cited as explaining that elite closure occurs when “the elite successfully employ official language policies and their own non-formalised language usage patterns to limit the access of non-elite groups to political positions and socio-economic advancement” (ibid. 2008:102).

Commenting on the issue of politicians and cultural leaders concerning the language question, as they are some of the people that are driving the language policy, Alexander (2004) advocates the very reasonable view that these people are guided by what they consider to be the immediate positive effects of the policies that they are pursuing. He further explains that it is not clear to them that an English-only, or even an English-mainly, policy prevents the majority of people from gaining access to vital information and, therefore, from full participation in the democratic political process:

- undermines the self-confidence of L2 speakers and, even more so, of those for whom English is effectively a foreign language;
- smothers the creativity and spontaneity of people who are compelled to use a language which they do not have full command of; and

- at the economic workplace, language levels cause major avoidable miscommunication that have significant negative impacts on productivity and efficiency. (Alexander 2000:122-123)

Whatever the causes, it is a fact that English was the language used almost exclusively in negotiating the Constitution itself. And English has continued to be the main language of the National Assembly and the provincial legislatures. The balance may change in some ways, driven by the understandable demands of ethnicity, but the role of English as the language of common resort in a country with an apartheid-induced horror of ethnic fragmentation is likely to remain strong (Ricento 2000:168).

In a nutshell, Webb (2004) lists the negative signs of the dominance of English as follows:

- Increasing monolingualism;
- Too little effective support for linguistic pluralism from important decision makers at senior levels of government;
- Continued emotional resistance to the Bantu languages;
- A lack of public support among public leaders generally for the 11-language policy.

Webb (2004) points out that the use of English leads to “a reproduction of the previous (and existing) language politics, where non-Bantu languages are dominant in public life and perceived as the symbols of the ruling elite, prestige and successes, and the Bantu languages are

perceived as symbols of a socio-economic underclass and instruments only of low functions in public life”.

However, Webb (2004) commends the government for seriously engaging in implementing a policy of pluralism, by citing strong public support by key cabinet ministers (for example, in the departments of Arts, Culture, Science and Technology, and Education), as well as from important decision makers in sectors such as the public broadcaster and the Department of Education (2001:12). To add to Webb’s positive observations, it is thanks to the funding of the Department of Arts and Culture that I am writing this research. This department has awarded bursaries to other students as well, to enhance their linguistic competencies in different indigenous languages. It deserves to be applauded for its vigorous efforts to promote South Africa’s indigenous languages.

The Department of Basic Education has taken the initiative of translating and producing the new National Curriculum Policy Statement (NCAPS) document from English into all nine of South Africa’s indigenous languages, including Afrikaans. The Life Orientation and Mathematics CAPS documents as well have been translated into these languages. This will assist the educators of these languages to impart the relevant knowledge to all African children in the language that they understand best. One can argue that the Department of Basic Education is supporting the idea that mother-tongue education bears fruit and that it plays a pivotal role in developing cognitive proficiency in the child’s

first language. Furthermore, as Ricento (2000:169) observes, multilingual, multicultural classrooms are now a feature of many schools. This is a sign that there is a way! In addition, Hornberger (1998:444) asserts optimistically that language policies with a language-as-a-resource orientation (see section 3.1.3) can have an impact on efforts aimed at promoting the vitality and revitalisation of endangered indigenous languages.

Herbert (1992:14) observes that attitudes towards languages are multifaceted. For example, the language of English is both admired and despised, as seen from the discussion above. However, as Igboanusi and Lather (2005:2) argue, we must not lose sight of the merits of the coexistence of English with the indigenous languages. The coexistence of English with indigenous languages has led to the linguistic empowerment of the populace, by enabling educated users of English to have access to the benefits of the Internet and other electronic media, through which the world has become a global village. It has also enabled countries to operate and interact meaningfully with one another for the common good.

Chapter 3 explores orientations in language planning, which offers a way of viewing language from three different theoretical positions within the field of language planning (see section 1.7). The main focus of this chapter will therefore be on language-as-a-resource, which includes the notion of language-as-a-right. Also, the role of government language agents tasked with developing the indigenous African languages of

South Africa will be discussed, to explicate the theoretical position of language-as-a-resource within the field of language planning.

CHAPTER 3

SELECTED LANGUAGE ORIENTATIONS

3.0 INTRODUCTION: LANGUAGE ORIENTATIONS

Ruiz, as cited by Nyati-Ramahobo (1999:29), defines a language orientation as “a complex of dispositions toward language and its role ... which are related to language attitudes in that they constitute a framework in which attitudes are formed”. He further asserts that “basic orientations toward language and its role in society influence the nature of planning efforts in any particular context”. McKay and Wong (1988:4) point out that orientations are basic to language planning, in that they delimit the ways we talk about language and language issues, and they determine the basic questions we ask, the conclusions we draw from the data, and even the data itself.

3.1 ORIENTATIONS IN LANGUAGE PLANNING

According to Lo Bianco (1996:7), Ruiz notes that in the public response to language pluralism, there are three underlying orientations. These are: language as a problem, language as a right, and language as a resource. Nyati-Ramahobo (1992:29) postulates that underlying these orientations are sociocultural and sociopolitical goals for languages. She maintains that if the sociocultural goal is to assimilate all the minority groups, then language is likely to be viewed as a problem in which all minority groups have to be eradicated. She goes on to say that if the societal goal is to achieve linguistic and cultural pluralism, then it is likely for language to be viewed as a right or as a resource. In this case, all minority languages are recognised and their cultures are preserved.

It is therefore imperative to describe the three orientations, so as to be able to draw clear conclusions from the data in this research.

3.1.1 Language as a problem

May (2008:182) writes that in the orientation of language as a problem, the targets of language policy are construed as a social problem that must be identified, eradicated, alleviated, or in some other way resolved. The phenomenon of language as a problem is explained by Nyati-Ramahobo as the problem of which language to choose for use for official purposes in a multilingual society. Perry (2004:156) writes that here language is considered an impediment and an obstacle that has to be overcome; linguistic diversity is seen as hindering communication and as needing to be eliminated. In this orientation of language planning, other languages are rendered inferior in status, and hence become of little value instrumentally.

For this reason, in his opening address at a workshop on language as an economic resource held on 14 July 1995, Dr B.S. Ngubane, the then Minister of Arts, Culture, Science and Technology, reiterated that we should stop regarding South Africa's language diversity as a problem. He mentioned that his department believes that the task of improving the quality of life of all South Africans should address the issue of language inequality, including the allocation of resources for language-related projects. He also stressed that language should be recognised as an essential resource for the betterment of the quality of life of South Africa's people, and policy intervention will be characterised by the goal of eradicating the perceived language problem. Language diversity becomes a problem if it is perceived as an obstacle to the achievement of one or other important national goals, such as the assimilation

of minorities, the efficient delivery of health or legal services, or economic development (Lo Bianco 1996:2).

Webb and Kembo-Sure (2000:4-12) view language as a problem in a broader perspective, by arguing that language can lead to problems if it is used negatively. This occurs when language is used to deny people access to information, and to manipulate people, for instance, to force people who speak a certain language to behave in a certain way, or to separate one group of people from another group. These two scholars view language and its role in society and the lives of people as the “social functions of language”.

According to them, there are “**language-based problems**” and “**language problems**”. They distinguish between these two types of problems as follows. **Language-based problems** are problems in the domains of education, the economy, politics, or social life, but with a clear language component. In other words, language plays a central role in these specific work and educational domains. **Language problems** are problems that are directly related to the nature of language, for example, language standardisation (or the norms of language), the reluctance of some people to use their languages in public places, and the fact that some languages have not yet been adapted for use in certain domains, such as technological domains.

There are four language-based problems that Webb and Kembo-Sure (2000) have elucidated. I deem it necessary to outline them, as they play a pivotal role in this research. They are discussed below.

- **Restricted access to knowledge and skills**

Webb and Kembo-Sure (2000) blame school authorities and parents for the use of English as the language of learning in schools, and they claim that this has contributed to the underdevelopment of South Africa's people. The high value placed on English in the global world, as well as by Africans has led educational authorities and parents to decide that English has to be used as the language of learning and teaching (the medium of instruction) in schools from as early as possible. In some schools, English is even used from the first day of primary education (see section 2.3.2). This decision has most likely contributed to the unacceptably low level of individual educational development in the country, since most black schoolchildren in South Africa simply don't know English well enough to be able to use it effectively as a language of learning and cognitive development. Knowledge, skills, and opportunities have not been accessible for many, partly because they do not know their language of learning well enough. For these reasons, in April 2011, Blade Nzimande, the Minister of Higher Education and Training, saw the need for African languages to be studied at tertiary level. He was quoted as saying in his mother tongue, isiZulu, that "*Akukwazi ukuba yithi kuphela ekuthiwa sifunde isiNgesi nesiBhunu, bakwethu, kodwa ezethu iilimi abanye bangazifundi*" [We cannot be expected to learn English and Afrikaans, yet other people are not learning our languages] (*Mail & Guardian*, September 16-22, 2011).

Commenting in the same vein, Mariechen Walder, a journalist writes that, according to the panel of experts appointed to advise Minister Nzimande, a plan to compel students to learn African languages could reach fruition. Professor Duma Malaza, chief executive officer of Higher Education South Africa, is quoted as saying that "the [Minister's] key message is that our universities have

a strong role to play in the preservation of, and the use of African languages”. Consistent with Nzimande’s sentiments, Kallie Kriel, the head of Afrikaans civil rights body Afriforum, points out that the government operates as a “one-language institute”, conducting business only in English. He highlights his point by stating that a draft bill that was formulated some years ago to make the state multilingual is gathering dust. The Pan South African Language Board (PanSALB) acting chief executive, Chris Swepu, welcomed Nzimande’s plan by saying “we think it is time that African languages are taken seriously” (City Press, 10 April 2011).

It should be noted that among the universities that are fostering multilingualism in South Africa, Rhodes University in the Eastern Cape Province has long responded wholeheartedly to Nzimande’s plan and government policies that encourage universities to consider the linguistic and cultural diversity of South African society in their strategic planning. The Multilingualism award (2008) that Rhodes University’s African Language Studies Section (in the School of Languages) received from PanSALB attests to this. According to Kaschula (2009:49), the multilingual courses at Rhodes University are designed to implement strategies suggested by scholars such as Maseko (2008), so that students and staff can be enabled to interact meaningfully, despite their differences and various stereotypes that may exist in society.

- **Low productivity and ineffective performance in the workplace**

Webb and Kembo-Sure (2000) claim that South Africa’s economic development is not equitable, because of the uneven distribution of wealth. They rightly point out that English is the dominant language of economic activity in the country, and that less than 25 percent of the black population know it well enough to be able to use it to participate in the economy of the

country. See also (Alexander 2000:122-123). They observe that the languages of 75 percent of the country's people do not play any serious role in the economic activity of the country. Whichever way, language is a barrier to the meaningful participation in the economy of South Africa by the vast majority of the country's people. To substantiate this assertion, Webb and Kembo-Sure's (2000) research findings from the Eastern Cape in South Africa, where the dominant language is isiXhosa, show that 85 percent of the communication between employers and employees was between white people and black people, respectively, yet only 4 percent of the white employers knew isiXhosa, nearly 50 percent of the training officers couldn't speak isiXhosa, 22 percent of employers used English for training purposes, and half of the organisations did not make information on pension schemes, insurance, or savings available in isiXhosa. This is a denial of language rights. Some of the reasons given for this state of affairs were that translation was time-consuming and costly, that black people were in any case illiterate, and that isiXhosa was not a technical language.

- **Inadequate political participation by the public; manipulation, discrimination, and exploitation by the ruling powers; national division; and conflict**

Webb and Kembo-Sure (2000), like many sociolinguists, express concern that in spite of the fact that South Africa now has a democratically elected government, there is very little meaningful citizen participation in political decision making, there are very few signs that the basic values and beliefs of democracy are operational to a meaningful extent, and the populace of the country is still divided, with strong potential for intergroup conflict. It has been mentioned that one of the reasons for this lack of development of African languages is that the major language of political debate is English. In addition,

language has been used as a tool for purposes of manipulation, discrimination, and exploitation. For the strongest demonstration of the use of language for purposes of manipulation, see (Van den Berg 1992:3). This exploitation, according to Webb and Kembo-Sure (2000), is a good example of language-based political manipulation. Discrimination on linguistic grounds is perceived from the fact that Afrikaans, the main language of the former white government, and English have both been very dominant, which has led to their being used for purposes of discrimination. In this regard, see (Kamwangamalu 2004:113).

An example that has been cited of exploitation on linguistic grounds in South Africa is the practice in the country's gold mines of using Fanakalo as a medium of communication between white supervisors and black workers during the colonial and apartheid periods. Miners were not given the opportunity to learn Afrikaans or English, which would probably have increased their occupational opportunities. Eastman, as cited by Herbert (1992:97), relates closely to the point made above that Fanakalo was used to retain the English and Afrikaans words, but replace the Zulu vocabulary (totalling 70 percent of the lexicon) with words from other local languages.

Fanakalo is explained by Mesthrie, as cited by Herbert (1992:305), as a crystallised pidgin language of Southern Africa, stable for over a hundred years, showing the effects of contact between Germanic languages (Afrikaans and English) and South Eastern Bantu languages (specifically the Nguni languages – isiZulu, and, to a lesser extent, isiXhosa).

- **Language problems**

With regard to language problems, Webb and Kembo-Sure (2000) focus on three major problems, as there are many such problems. These are discussed below.

- **Insufficient adaptation of the African languages**

Generally there is a belief that the African languages cannot be used in public domains, as instruments of learning, economic activity, social mobility, or any other public business. Most African-language speakers argue that their primary languages do not have the necessary vocabulary and speech styles, or sufficiently high status to be used spontaneously in public domains, and that it therefore makes no sense to study these languages at school. Omotoso, as cited by Webb and Kembo-Sure (2000:15-16), points out that there are a variety of possible reasons for Africans' tendency not to believe in their languages, and these reasons include long-term factors such as the influence of apartheid language planning. They proceed to argue that adaptation of languages forms part of what it is called **corpus planning** and **status planning**. See Chapter 2 and (Baldauf & Kaplan 1997:4).

- **The politicisation of a country's languages**

Languages, according to Webb and Kembo-Sure (2000), become "politicized" when they are associated with particular political philosophies or programmes, in order to attain political meanings. The problem of political languages in South Africa includes the unevenness in the knowledge of the country's languages, the strong ethnic nationalism associated with Afrikaans, in particular, and the negative sociopolitical connotations of Afrikaans for many communities, the generally extremely positive sociopolitical status of English,

and the generally very low socio-educational status of the Bantu languages. These authors go on to cite a relevant example in Kenya, where this problem is seen in the people's reluctance to use community languages in public places, even when those speaking share a mother tongue. I concur with these authors and argue that it is not only in Kenya that this is happening, but that it is the practice even in many places in South Africa.

The politicisation of South Africa's languages has resulted in ethnic intolerance, which has caused racial conflict in the country. There are terms that are used to refer to different racial groups which are considered very offensive, for example, *Kaffirs* for black South Africans, *Boers* for Afrikaans-speaking white South Africans, *rooinekke* (red-necks) for English-speaking white South Africans, *coolies* for Indians, and *Boesmans* for coloured people.

- **Language standardisation**

Language standardisation has been defined as the process by which an authoritative language body, such as a government-appointed body, prescribes how 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 a language are. This body thus intervenes in the regularisation of the grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, and writing system of a language. There is such a body that falls under the Pan South African Language Board (PanSALB), which operates in collaboration with the Department of Arts and Culture. It is called the National Language Board, and it will be discussed later in this chapter.

Webb and Kembo-Sure (2000) caution that standardisation can be an emotive issue. They cite an example of the debate about the harmonisation of the

languages of the two main language families in the country, namely Nguni (isiNdebele, siSwati, isiZulu, and isiXhosa) and Sotho (Sepedi, Sesotho, and Setswana). Harmonising these languages means that a single variety common to all the languages within each of these families should be developed, as a way of facilitating closer unity between the different language communities in the black community of the population. This is a good idea and has the support of some sociolinguists, but it has been the subject of heated debate, and it has been rejected by many leading figures of Bantu language communities. It seems that harmonisation is predominantly perceived as a threat to the sociocultural identity of these communities. I want to believe that the aim here, if I may use Sach's phrase, is "to promote language solidarity rather than language conflict" (as cited by Perry 2004:145).

Despite all this, in the National Language Policy Framework (2003) these languages have been grouped equally. Section 2.4.6.5 of the framework, titled "Government publications", indicates that in cases where government documents will not be made available in all 11 official languages, **national** government departments must publish documents **simultaneously in at least six languages**. The languages must be selected as follows:

- At least one from the Nguni group (isiNdebele, isiXhosa, isiZulu, and siSwati);
- At least one from the Sotho group (Sepedi, Sesotho, and Setswana);
- Tshivenda;
- Xitsonga;
- English; and
- Afrikaans.

In Section 2.4.6.6 of the framework, it is indicated that a principle of rotation must be applied when selecting languages from the Nguni and Sotho groups for the publication of government documents (2003:18-19). This is to ensure that none of the languages within these two groups is neglected, and that neither of the most spoken languages within these groups [isiZulu (24%) and Sepedi (9%), respectively] dominate in government publications.

3.1.2 Language as a right

Language as a right, in May's view, confronts the assimilationist tendencies of dominant language communities with arguments about legal, moral and natural rights to local identity (2008:182). Del Valle (1981) cites the following as examples of the right to "effective participation in government programs" in the USA: the provision of unemployment forms in Spanish for Spanish monolinguals, bilingual voting materials such as ballots and instructional pamphlets, and interpreters. In addition, Hernandez-Chavez, as cited by McKay and Wong, views this right as the right to the use of ethnic languages in legal proceedings and the right to bilingual education. He mentions other things that minority language communities might demand, such as the use of the dominant language in the media, in medical services, and in commercial contracts. On the other hand, Macias, as cited by McKay and Wong (1988:11), suggests two kinds of language rights, namely "the right to freedom from discrimination on the basis of language" and "the right to use your language(s) in the activities of communal life". Seemingly, examples of language rights can be endless, which is why McKay and Wong (ibid.) say it is not only access to formal processes such as voting which are affected, but also civil service examinations, judicial and administrative proceedings, and public employment. The right to personal freedom and enjoyment is also affected. It is for this reason that an exhaustive list of language rights is difficult to compile. Language as a right is viewed by

Perry as something of “intrinsic value” (2004:156). Perry (ibid.) claims that language is an end in itself, “a facet of human life that merits protection, because the abuse of one’s mother tongue inevitably debases one’s human dignity”.

All the examples cited of language rights are what is actually supposed to be witnessed in the democratic South Africa. One of the examples that Perry emphasises is that individual persons have the right to participate in the governing of the state to which they belong, but one cannot participate in such activities if one does not know the official language of the state (2004:50). One typical example of this in the South African context is that if the accused cannot understand the language in which the trial takes place, he or she is not in any real sense “present” at the trial. Thus, accused persons have the constitutional (language) right of either a trial in their own language, or an interpreter (which is the more likely scenario).

Section 30 of the Constitution guarantees the right to use the language of one’s choice. This right is not limited to the private sphere; one may exercise it in public too, including interactions with state agencies. The fact of the matter is that the role of language should not be ignored; it should be taken seriously. It should not, at any rate, for example, effectively exclude the accused from what is eventually to decide his or her fate. On the issue of interpreting, real expertise is essential. As Kaschula and Anthonissen (1995:84-91) point out, the legal fraternity has been operating in a cross-cultural context for many years, but there has been little or no development of English second language-speaking interpreters by lawyers. Furthermore, the use of interpreters in such contexts can sometimes be problematic. Courtroom procedure in South Africa, which includes the use of language, is determined by a dominant minority culture. This

means that the use of English or Afrikaans marginalises most South Africans, in a situation where language is of fundamental importance. In the same vein, Mtuze (1995:49-50)) makes a point that there are certain cultural issues that are very difficult to put across in another language, worse still if that language is a “non-African language”, such as English or Afrikaans. Smit (1992:358) makes a similar point that translators often have problems when they have to translate culture-specific words. Such words very often do not have adequate translation equivalents in the target language.

May, as cited by Perry (2004:47), has expressed his support for the protection of language rights, especially with regard to the rights of indigenous peoples. Perry gives accolades to a vocal spokesperson for language rights, namely the scholar and activist Skutnabb-Kangas, who enumerates what she believes ought to be universal “linguistic human rights” with regard to the mother tongue. I will mention only one of these rights, which carries more weight in this study:

[E]verybody can identify with their mother tongue(s) and have this identification accepted and respected by others; learn the mother tongue(s) fully, orally (when physiologically possible), and in writing (which presupposes that minorities are educated through the medium of their mother tongue(s)); uses the mother tongue in most official situations, including school. (Skutnabb-Kangas 1998, as cited by Perry 2004:7)

Skutnabb-Kangas is said to employ the term “linguistic human rights” to imply that these rights do not need justification, but are inherent and absolutely imperative for the maintenance of human dignity. Thus, Perry opines that the imperative nature of linguistic human rights finds its roots in the importance of the mother tongue for an individual’s identity and perception of reality. He goes on to say that to violate a person’s identity or fundamental relationship to reality

would unavoidably undermine that person's human dignity. Thus, denying a person the use of his or her mother tongue implies the violation of that person's identity and fundamental relationship to reality (ibid.). Skutnabb-Kangas and Perry's notion of protecting the mother tongue through human rights is congruent with what is reflected in the new language policy of South Africa, which recognises that people exercise their rights and freedoms in their own languages. In conclusion, Perry asserts that language rights protect linguistic minorities from oppression and enable people in these minorities to participate more fully in the arenas of the economy and politics (ibid. 2004:50).

3.1.3 Language as a resource

Ruiz, as cited by Perry (2004:156), argues that one can have any combination of the three perspectives or "orientations" on language. The orientation of language as a resource includes the notion of language as a right. See Chapter 1 and (Muthwii & Kioko 2004:8). Perry asserts that language has value by virtue of its uses, that language is a means, or a kind of cultural capital (ibid.), and Nyati-Ramahobo (1999:29) describes the aims of this language planning orientation as being that languages must be developed, nurtured, valued, and planned. In the same vein, May (2008:182) explains that languages and the communities that speak them are viewed as a social resource. Perry opines that the language of the law in South Africa reveals itself as one that espouses both language as a right and language as a resource; language, according to the law, is both a right and a resource. He goes on to say that the Constitution, by making 11 languages official languages and calling for their equitable treatment, implies that citizens have the right to interact with government in the official languages of their choice, in addition to many other conceivable rights.

The Constitution likewise evokes a language-as-a-resource orientation, when it calls on government to elevate the status and “advance the **use**” of historically diminished languages (ibid. 2004:156). This notion is phrased more succinctly by Mkhulisi, who notes that political language debates in South Africa are dominated by two opposing views, namely the view that sees language as a **resource**, and the view that considers language to be a **problem**. People that consider language to be a problem propose a monolingual, or so-called “pragmatic”, solution; typical arguments advanced by this view are that a multitude of languages is divisive and that only one so-called “neutral” language (usually English) can unify the country. People that see language as a resource stress the role of language diversity as the provision of access to information, developing people (through literacy), and so on.

Annamalai and Coulombo, as cited by Baldauf and Kaplan (1997:211), argue that language rights may be both individual and communal. Kaplan (1995:ibid.) opines that individual rights against undue interference or discrimination can be justified, regardless of community status, as matters of a right to privacy and fairness – the right to personal autonomy. Language rights are confirmed in Sections 26 and 27 of the United Nations Charter. Section 26 of the charter guarantees civil and political rights without discrimination based on language, and Section 27 affirms the right of linguistic minorities to use their own language among themselves. As language is shared communal goods, and as language cannot exist without communication and community, it can also be argued that language is an essential component of community identity.

In discussing language rights in South Africa, Perry poses the question of whether the language rights enshrined in the South African Constitution represent individual rights or group rights (1997:211). The answer is clear from

the scholars cited above. Over and above this, McMillan holds that there are ineradicable core group rights in the idea of language rights, stemming from the fact that language itself presupposes community. In this same vein, Skutnabb-Kangas notes that “most language-related rights are to be found in articles on minority rights, and these have so far also been individual”. Perry himself provides the answer to the question that he poses, when he maintains that “one can even witness the kind of group right called solidarity language rights, such as the right, in South Africa, to the promotion of multilingualism – a right whose goods obviously devolve to all South Africans” (Perry 2004:54).

Ruiz’s orientations above can be contrasted broadly with Baldauf and Kaplan’s approach to language planning and power. The concept of language as a right has become important. However, the problem with this paradigm, as pointed out by Crawhall, cited by Cuvelier et al. (2000:16), is that a right is only of value if there are accessible and reasonable routes for the enforcement thereof. Crawhall further asserts that the rights of minority groups are often regarded as an expensive and thorny problem by the dominant group. Therefore, the dominant language groups often feel that it is not in their interest to actively give shape to the language rights of the minority groups. In practice, this means that only the powerful minorities succeed in securing and protecting their language rights.

In the light of this view, Baldauf and Kaplan observe that there are three critical issues which go largely unaddressed in language policy and planning situations, and yet these issues are often central to the language planning that is being done. These issues are issues of **class**, **state**, and **power**, and they are often ignored by language planners, because they see themselves as “neutral” purveyors of linguistic information. As unpacked by Luke et al. (1997:195), **class** is related to the common-sense version of social power, that is, those in

social control “are able to decide what language(s) can be deemed to be politically correct, which should be encouraged and furthered, and which should be respectfully demoted and discouraged” (language as a problem). **State** relates to the rhetoric used by the state to frame language selection, to generate mass loyalty based on language, and to use language to serve internal and external political ends. Much of modern language planning has been bound up with the notion of “one language, one nation”, and, by implication, the suppression of minority languages. **Power** is about the agency use of language planning for social, economic and political ends, as opposed to the social aspects of discourse, or the condition of language in actual use. Luke et al. (ibid.) maintain that for each of these issues, social elites are in positions of political, social and economic power, and hence may be able to control language planning processes to their own advantage.

May (2008:192) warns that whatever language typology is employed, it is important to acknowledge its limitations. He notes the most important limitation as being the inevitable gap that occurs between policy and practice. There are still grey areas between policy and practice across multiple social domains of the South African government. Failure to make information accessible is largely traceable to the choice of medium used. For example, English is being used in deep rural areas in the provinces of the country, where the illiteracy rate is still quite high.

Cuvelier et al. (2007:227) caution that if no active measures are in place to enforce language equality, the concept of “language as a right” may tend to protect the powerful language, rather than the vulnerable language. The language that dominates the political dispensation is the language that is usually favoured at the cost of other languages, as is evident from the history of

language policy in education in South Africa up to 1961, including language policy in education under the former Cape colonial government, and language policy in education under the National Party government (that is, 1948 to 1994) – as well as the current political dispensation.

3.2 Language agents tasked with developing the indigenous African languages of South Africa

King and Van den Berg (1992:22) observe that one of the ironies of apartheid policy has been that indigenous languages have historically received more attention at state level than has been the case in many other colonial situations. The various language boards that were set up have been central in this regard. In education they have defined the development of African languages, by attempting to set “standards” through school books, such as literary set works and textbooks. However, the apartheid context in which such “development” has been undertaken – its goals, methodologies, and practice – undercut the status of the indigenous languages, in that the “development” of the African languages was handled in a way that had little to do with the realities of language use, or the real promotion of the status of these languages.

Democratic South Africa has put structures in place that are supposed to redefine the concept of language development away from, to borrow a phrase from (King & Van den Berg 1992:22), “a purist notion of language planning from above, towards one of proactive encouragement and support for languages in the context of a range of actual and possible uses”. Perry (2004:156) notes that the Pan South African Language Board (PanSALB) legislation, in creating an official node where citizens may direct complaints of language rights abuses, reinforces the language-as-a-right orientation of language planning.

Furthermore, a national sociolinguistic survey commissioned by PanSALB in 2000 found that most South Africans were dissatisfied with the way their languages were being used in the public sector. The survey also found that the general public perceived the public services to be inaccessible in terms of language. In addition to the development of the African languages, it will be important to ensure the use of all the official languages. The implementation plan addresses these issues, by proposing the establishment of certain structures and identifying mechanisms to redress the situation (DAC 2003:9). Therefore, discussing the Board, its structures, and the role of other government agents with regard to language policy implementation and planning is essential in this study.

Let us examine the functions of these structures and their present state of functionality, by virtue of the powers vested in them regarding the promotion of multilingualism and the creation of conditions for the development of the 11 official languages of South Africa.

3.2.1 The Pan South African Language Board (PanSALB)

According to the South African Languages Bill (Section 2.3), the language units of all national and provincial departments are mandated to liaise with the Department of Arts and Culture (DAC) and PanSALB on language issues (Perry 2004:142). PanSALB is a strategic partner of the Department of Arts and Culture in language matters. The activities that are undertaken by structures that are instrumental in the development of the indigenous languages will have to be undertaken in close collaboration with PanSALB (DAC 2003:9). On this note, PanSALB can be seen as an umbrella body that oversees all language matters, with the Department of Arts and Culture remaining the overseeing government body.

3.2.1.1 What is PanSALB?

Sachs seemed to provide a clear explanation of what PanSALB is when he explained Section 3(10)(a) of the 1994 Constitution, saying "Provision shall be made by an Act of Parliament for the establishment by the Senate of an independent Pan South African Language Board". He had this to say:

Notice it is an independent board. It is not party political, it is not part of the Government of National Unity, it is not subject to caucuses ... it is an independent board. I would like to see that instead of the [Pan South African] Language Board being subordinate to the Deputy Minister or the Minister of Arts and Culture ... a strong case could be made out of it to be a really autonomous body working under the Senate and through the President's office. (cited by Perry 2004:145)

In the PanSALB Annual Report of 2009/2010, it emerges clearly what this body is:

In terms of Section 4 of the PanSALB Act, the Board is an independent organ of state, subject only to the Constitution and its founding legislation, and must perform its duties without fear, favour or prejudice. All organs of state are enjoined to cooperate with the Board and may not interfere with its functioning in the execution of its mandate.

Thus, it can be deduced that PanSALB is a body which has great influence regarding language policies and the implementation thereof in South Africa.

3.2.1.2 The foundation of the Pan South African Language Board

In order to monitor the lawful implementation of the official language policy, a Pan South African Language Board was established by Parliament (Act No. 59

of 1995, amended by Act 10 of 1999) (<http://www.pansalb.org.za>). As Marivate points out, PanSALB was thus initially created mainly to provide for the recognition of multilingualism, and to promote and develop all the languages of the country (Deprez & Du Plessis 2000:131).

The idea of an independent language body, as explained by Perry (2004:144), as cited by Heugh (in press), first emerged as part of Alexander's proposal for "language planning from below", an approach that could be understood as emphasising governance over government (see Chapter 2). In terms of this approach, "ordinary people" would propose local policies that most closely met their specific preferences and needs. This idea appealed to members of the African National Congress (ANC) in 1991 at a conference initiated by the National Language Project. The objective of this project was to "arrest [the] linguistic balkanisation" perpetrated by the apartheid-era language boards, hence the establishment of the independent language body of PanSALB. Perry points out that the National Party lobbied hardest for such a body, because it feared the hegemony of English, and because such a body would actively engage the promotion of multilingualism and would offer protection for Afrikaans. The full support of the ANC for such an independent language body became evident in the Interim Constitution of 1993, the mandate for the creation of a Pan South African Language Board appearing in Section 3(10)(a) of the Constitution. Perry succinctly explains that the word "board" suggested some continuity with the language boards of the former regime, and that the word "pan" declared that the Board had a unifying perspective – one of multilingualism, rather than of multiple monolingualism.

Sachs (as cited by Perry 2004:145) explained the significance of having a language body in this manner:

The term “Pan South African Language Board” indicates that it is to function in a holistic and integrated way, seeking balanced overall language development. Instead of each language being left to fend for itself, there is to be across-the-board defence for all language rights. The objective is to promote language solidarity rather than language conflict, to develop a language garden rather than a language snake pit.

The independence of PanSALB was praised by many language interest groups, but this took a sad turning point when, as observed by Perry, “the brief history of PanSALB followed a trajectory of decreasing independence, and increasing subordination to governmental, and effectively party-political, control”. This takes us back to the notion of “language planning and power”. See (Baldauf & Kaplan 1997:195).

3.2.1.3 The role and functions of PanSALB

According to Marivate, as cited by Deprez and Du Plessis (2000:132), the function of PanSALB, as derived from its vision and mission, is primarily to promote multilingualism, by creating conditions for the development and the equal use of all South Africa’s official languages.

This is clearly stated in the Interim Constitution of 1993:

Section 3(10)(a): provision shall be made by an Act of Parliament for the establishment [...] of an independent Pan South African Language Board to promote respect for the principles referred to in subsection 9 and to further the development of the official languages.

Regarding the development of languages, Marivate, as cited by Deprez and Du Plessis (2000:131), makes a distinction that PanSALB is to focus on specific

languages, namely the official languages, the Khoe and San languages, and sign language, whereas PanSALB is only required to promote respect for the other languages, not to develop them.

Another function of PanSALB is to foster respect for other languages used by communities in South Africa. The relevant section of the Constitution states the following in this regard:

Section 3(10)(c): The Pan South African Language Board shall be responsible for promoting respect for and the development of German, Greek, Gujarati, Hindi, Portuguese, Tamil, Telegu, Urdu and other languages used by the communities in South Africa, as well as Arabic, Hebrew and Sanskrit and other languages used for religious purposes.

Yet another function of PanSALB is to enable the best use of the country's resources, so that South Africans free themselves from all forms of discrimination, domination, and division and make appropriate linguistic choices for their well-being, as well as the development of the nation.

The legislative mandate of the Pan South African Language Board, as outlined in the PanSALB Annual Report of 2009/2010, is to

- make recommendations with regard to any proposed or existing legislation, practice, or policy dealing directly with language matters at any level of government, and with regard to any proposed amendments to, or the repeal or replacement of such legislation, practice, or policy;
- make recommendations to organs of state at all levels of government where it considers such action advisable for the adoption of measures aimed at the promotion of multilingualism within the framework of the Constitution;

- actively promote an awareness of multilingualism as a national resource;
- actively promote the development of the previously marginalised languages;
- initiate studies and research aimed at promoting and creating conditions for the development and use of (i) all the official languages of South Africa, (ii) the Khoe and the San languages, and (iii) South African Sign Language;
- advise on the coordination of language planning in South Africa; and
- facilitate cooperation with language planning agencies outside South Africa.

This legislative mandate tempts one to say “If wishes were horses, beggars would ride”. The mandate is “in black and white”, but the fruits are yet to be tasted. Perhaps it is still too early to make such a judgement, but the fact of the matter is that the face of PanSALB in some parts of the country is not visible.

I view the language rights focus that PanSALB has created as being significant to this study. South Africa boasts a highly progressive Constitution that guarantees a panoply of rights within a liberal framework (Klaaren, as cited by Perry 2004:20). Perry goes on to point out that these rights feature an array of language rights, which include, inter alia, the right to non-discrimination on the basis of language, the right to information in a language one can understand, and even the right to the development of one’s language. Marivate, as cited by Deprez and Du Plessis (2000:136), makes a similar point that, in terms of its mandate, the Board is to help develop conditions that prohibit all forms of linguistic discrimination, domination and division, and to enable citizens to exercise appropriate linguistic choices for their own well-being, as well as for the development of the nation. Section 11 of the PanSALB Act states that “any

person, body of persons or institution acting on behalf of the members of a language group or any organ of state” may lodge complaints of (alleged) language rights abuses with PanSALB (Perry 2004:151.)

The fact that complaints can be lodged with PanSALB means that this body is charged with the duty of protecting the language rights of citizens. For this mammoth responsibility, Mishke, as cited by Perry, notes that the Board, “may on its own initiative and shall on receipt of a written complaint investigate the alleged violation of any language rights, language policy or language practice” (Section 11(4)(a)). If the Board subsequently finds that there is “substance to the allegation”, it must endeavour to “resolve and settle any dispute” (Section 11(5)(a)). To facilitate such conciliation, PanSALB can subpoena “any person, body or state to appear before it, to give evidence and produce any relevant records or documents” (Section 11(4)(b)). In the case that mediation fails, PanSALB can then recommend to the offending organ of state a course of action as PanSALB sees fit, a purview that does not exclude exacting financial relief. PanSALB can also then provide the complainant with financial assistance so that the complainant can pursue his or her complaint through a court of law. Although complaints may be lodged against the state, nothing prevents complaints from being made against private companies (ibid. 2004:20).

Marivate, as cited by Deprez and Du Plessis (2000:136), notes that of the 45 complaints on alleged violations of language rights that the Board had entertained by 2000, most had come from Afrikaans speakers. Very few had come from African-language speakers. She asserts that this indicates that there is a need for PanSALB to educate people about their rights and to improve mechanisms of monitoring and attending to language rights issues. Disturbingly, more than 90% of the complaints have a bearing on the violation

of language rights by governmental institutions, and most complaints are about the domination of English. To substantiate this, in his foreword, Sihawu Ngubane, the chairperson of PanSALB, indicates that while there are more linguistic human rights complaints, he is, however, perturbed that these are predominantly from one language group (PanSALB Annual Report 2009/10). He also feels that this clearly demonstrates a lack of awareness about linguistic human rights among speakers of our indigenous languages. However, he acknowledges that the Board is trying its best, with limited resources, to give attention to this lack of awareness. In response to this, the acting chief executive officer of PanSALB, Chris Swepu, expresses concern that the country has not yet adopted a language act. For this reason, he alleges that they are currently experiencing many instances where public institutions do not even respond to their queries about linguistic human rights violations. They also have little recourse, apart from publishing the names of violators of language rights in the *Government Gazette*.

In addition to the legislative mandate of PanSALB, there are services that have called for subcommittees to be constituted. These services are, among others:

- Translation and interpreting;
- Language in education;
- Standardisation, and terminology development;
- Lexicography, terminology, and place names; and
- The development of literature.

Thus, following the legislative mandate, PanSALB has to establish provincial language committees and national bodies to advise it on any language matter affecting a province or a specific language, and to establish national lexicography units to operate as companies limited by guarantee under Section

21 of the Companies Act, 1973 (Act 61 of 1973), and to allocate funds to the units for the fulfilment of their functions (ibid.).

Since its inception, the body of PanSALB has established national and provincial language committees and national language bodies, as well as lexicography units as its subcommittees/structures.

3.2.1.3.1 The Pan South African Language Board subcommittees/structures

3.2.1.3.1.1 Provincial Language Committees (PLCs)

The Provincial Language Committees are established in conjunction with the Member of the Executive Council (MEC) responsible for language matters, through a process of public nomination and scrutinisation. Upon a request from the MEC, PanSALB sets up a PLC for the province in question (Marivate, as cited by Deprez & Du Plessis 2000:133).

The duty of the Provincial Language Committees is to advise on language matters affecting the province. A Provincial Language Committee must be sufficiently representative of the language communities in the province, but not of the official languages only. This implies that the Khoe and the San languages and sign language, as well as the so-called heritage languages (that is, Arabic, Tamil, Urdu, Hebrew, French, German, etc.), also have to be represented on the nine Provincial Language Committees (ibid.).

According to the template on service delivery achievement in *Programme 2: Language Development*, under the column “Sub-programme”, PanSALB has to conduct meetings and workshops with Provincial Language Committees, to

advise them about enhancing mechanisms for monitoring language rights violations. Under the “Output” column, the Board has to ensure that PLCs understand their mandate to monitor language rights violations. Then follows the “Output performance measure” column, which indicates that PLC meetings have been held in conjunction with the provincial offices. The column “Performance against target” is subdivided into two columns, namely “Target” and “Actual”. Under the “Target” column it is indicated that PLCs understand their role in respect of language rights violations. The “Actual” column has “No movement” written under it. Next to the “Actual” column there is a “Reason for variance” column. Under it “Budgetary constraints” is written.

Reporting on funding being PanSALB’s biggest challenge, acting CEO Chris Swepu expresses regret that language work is suffering, mostly because of the difficulty operating with the meagre resources allocated to the Board, and also being responsible for the 11 official languages and structures created by the PanSALB Act (PanSALB Annual Report 2009/10). It can be concluded that language is not of much importance to the government. This is evident from the minutes of the meeting held on 25 June 2002, between PanSALB and the Department of Arts, Culture, Science and Technology, where erstwhile CEO Professor Cynthia Marivate complained that when developmental needs were considered and addressed by government, languages had to fight for attention, as they were not being considered among the priority areas for government funding (<http://www.pansalb.org.za>).

One may rightly argue that if workshops and meetings were held to ensure that the PLCs properly understand their mandate, and at the end this exercise proves to be futile because of budgetary constraints, then there is a lack of proper planning. In such instances, obviously there should be strategic plans and

measures put in place in case of any variance that may hinder the process. Secondly, the steps taken by PanSALB during the past 12 years, and the experience gained, should lead to a better approach, with a view to promoting and developing the nine indigenous official languages.

3.2.1.3.1.2 National Language Bodies (NLBs)

According to Section 8(8)(b) of the PanSALB Act, 1995 (as amended in 1999), the Board should establish a National Language Bodies to “advise it on any particular language, sign language or augmentative and alternative communication”. Thus, 13 language bodies have been established, namely 11 for the official languages, one for the Khoesan languages, and one for sign language(s) (<http://www.pmg.org.za/minutes/20010515-pan-south-african-language-board-briefing>).

Discussing the foundation of the Pan South African Language Board, Perry (2004:150) notes that during the “Languages for All” conference, much debate centred around the structural and human constituents of PanSALB. He points out that many that were present at the conference advised that the new PanSALB make a decisive split from the language boards of the past, on the now familiar grounds that to reproduce the 11 boards would legitimise and perpetuate the separate ethnolinguistic categories of the apartheid era, foster division, and perhaps ultimately promote ethnic conflict. Perhaps this advice has helped PanSALB to come up with focus areas that are intended to promote multilingualism.

The objectives, or focus areas, of the National Language Bodies, as outlined in the PanSALB Report, are as follows:

- To initiate and implement projects that promote official languages;

- To identify development needs of these languages; and
- To raise funds for recording languages that have a small number of speakers left (for example, Khoe and San), to avoid extinction.

The core function of the National Language Bodies is language development and standardisation. PanSALB is closely monitoring this activity by attending standardisation, spelling rules, terminology development and orthography workshops with the different NLBs, and it has been reported that there is ongoing collaboration regarding the standardisation process (PanSALB Annual Report 2009/10).

3.2.1.3.1.3 National Lexicography Units (NLUs)

PanSALB has established 11 National Lexicography Units, that is, one unit per language. At the time of their establishment, Marivate, as cited in Deprez and Du Plessis (2000:134), notes that this was seen as mandatory, as there were only two units in the past, one for Afrikaans (based in Stellenbosch), and one for English (based in Grahamstown), but she mentioned that a similar unit had been established for isiXhosa at the University of Fort Hare in Alice. At the time, it was not called a National Lexicography Unit; rather, it was called the “Xhosa Dictionary Project” (established in 1968), and it later became the headquarters for the IsiXhosa National Lexicography Unit (XNLU). A follow-up on this is indicated in the Pan South African Language Board and at a briefing of the National Language Service, where Professor Marivate points out that there are two types of dictionaries, one of them being a dictionary for minority languages. She goes on to say that the Lexicography Units focus on monolingual comprehensive dictionaries, in essence to ensure that all languages are represented. She reinforces her point by saying that the African languages need to have database that are equal in quality to those of Afrikaans and English, and

that creating lexicography units is the first step towards reaching this goal (<http://www.pmg.org.za/minutes/20010515-pan-south-african-language-board-briefing>).

In its service delivery template, PanSALB has formulated its measurable objective as “to assist in accelerating the production of dictionaries and other products that could generate income for National Lexicography Units in the near future”. The report on the template shows that the production of dictionaries for some of the languages is in progress, while dictionaries for the other languages have already been produced. Among the dictionaries already produced are those for isiZulu, Sesotho, and Setswana (PanSALB Annual Report 2009/10), while Perry (2004:151) notes that dictionary production for Afrikaans, isiZulu, isiXhosa, and South African English has been taking place since before the promulgation of the PanSALB Act.

3.2.2 The National Language Service (NLS)

The National Language Service resulted from a merger between the former State Language Service and the National Terminology Service in April 1998 (Mkhulisi, as cited by Deprez & Du Plessis 2000:121). It is now a Chief Directorate within the Department of Arts and Culture (DAC), with the broad task of meeting constitutional obligations on multilingualism, by managing language diversity through language planning, human language technologies, and terminology projects, and providing translation and editing services in the official languages and foreign languages (<http://www.dac.gov.za/chief-directorates/language-services.htm>).

Marivate (2000:121) points out that, as a primary language planning agency, the National Language Service sees itself as an important partner in nurturing the

diversity that characterises the country of South Africa. Diversity is increasingly being acknowledged as a resource (ibid.). Managing diversity, in Marivate's words, is no easy task. Hence, in the implementation plan it is indicated that the NLS of the Department of Arts and Culture will facilitate the establishment of the required structures and play a coordinating role with regard to the identification mechanisms. However, successful implementation will depend largely on collaboration with all national and provincial structures, as well as PanSALB (DAC 2003:9). Therefore, the NLS has the following structures to accomplish its mission, "to meet the language requirements of the Constitution and the varied language needs of the people of this country, and to provide a language facilitation and advisory service to promote better communication and governance" (http://www.dac.gov.za/chief_directorates/).

3.2.3 Structures/directorates and their functions in the National Language Service

3.2.3.1 Language Planning Directorate

The main functions of this directorate are to:

- Plan, conceptualise, develop, and review language policies/legislation;
- Conduct language policy/legislation consultations through workshops, meetings, seminars, and conferences;
- Assist provinces and local government with the development of their language policies;
- Facilitate the establishment of Language Units within government departments;
- Monitor and evaluate language policy implementation (for example, language units, and development of policies by other government departments in the provinces);

- Build capacity for language facilitation by providing financial assistance to institutions of higher learning for language study through bursary schemes; and
- Facilitate and develop the promotion of literature. (ibid.)

3.2.3.2 Translation and Editing (T&E) Directorate

The core functions of this directorate are the following:

- This directorate has two components that translate and edit official documents, with the aim of facilitating communication between government and the public. The two components are African languages and English, and Afrikaans and foreign languages.
- This process promotes good governance, by translating official documents from English into the other 10 official languages, and vice versa.
- This directorate translates documents for the national and provincial government departments, government entities, the Presidency, Parliament, and the parastatals. These documents include Acts, regulations, manuals, notices, social grants, and health documents. (ibid.)

3.2.3.3 Terminology Coordination Directorate

The core functions of this directorate, as outlined by Mkhulisi, as cited by Deprez and Du Plessis (2000:123), are the following:

- To advise on national policy regarding technical language, by establishing and evaluating norms for terminology development purposes.
- To create and implement standardised facilities.
- To elaborate procedures for collecting, documenting, systematising, standardising, and disseminating terminology information for the different languages.
- To provide administrative support to the South African Geographical Names Council (SAGNC) and recommend names to the Minister for approval.
- In collaboration with the SAGNC, this directorate attends to matters of redress, recommends names for uninhabited places and geographical features, and coordinates all naming matters in the country.
- It provides a database to the SAGNC for the dissemination of information on approved names.

3.2.3.4 Human Language Technologies (HLT) Directorate

The aim of the HLT initiative is to actualise the constitutional provision and National Language Policy Framework (NLPF) requirements for the development and use of South African languages through the development of human language technology products. Thus, the main functions of this directorate are:

- To enhance the quality of documents rendered in the official languages or translated into them, by developing spellcheckers customised for government purposes for all the official languages except English (English already has several well-developed spellcheckers);

- To develop machine-aided tools in order to improve the speed, consistency, and quality of official documents published in government offices and legislatures, as well as in other language offices;
- To develop a multilingual telephone-based system that will enable callers to access government services in the official language of their choice, through a simple speech-oriented interface that is suitable for users with limited or no literacy in any of the 11 official languages;
- To establish a national centre for HLT. The centre will serve as a repository for reusable high-level digitised annotated text and speech data, conforming to international standards, in all the official languages;
- To support the creation of appropriate multilingual applications in all the official languages of South Africa; and
- To form the hub of HLT activities in the country, facilitating research, development, and capacity building conducive to building a flourishing HLT industry. (http://www.dac.gov.za/chief_directorates/language_services.htm)

What has transpired from the discussions about the government language agents in developing the indigenous languages and implementing the language policy puts South Africa in a good position when it comes to “written” policy and implementation. PanSALB and the National Language Service clearly make known their reports, minutes of meetings, and briefings, and both of these organisations have wonderful plans and mission and vision statements, as well as the core functions of structures and directorates involved – in print, anyway. This may lead one to conclude that these government agents are delivering on their mandate at a snail’s pace, and it is frustrating. People are pointing fingers at the government’s failure to deliver services and implement a multilingual language policy, and its apparent promotion of the dominance of English.

My observation is that there is a thin line between PanSALB and the National Language Service when it comes to their roles and functions. In Maseko's words, "although there is overlapping on some aspects of their work, there does not seem to be a collaborative effort in doing work" (2007:81). According to Maseko (*ibid.*), a collaboration and harnessing of various resources would prevent an overlapping of duties, and would cut costs. Congruent with these sentiments, Marivate asserts that PanSALB needs to establish cooperation with similar-minded institutions. It needs to do this in order to help create mechanisms in South Africa for people's primary languages to gain currency in domains that were previously reserved for only English and Afrikaans (Marivate, as cited by Deprez & Du Plessis 2000:137).

It is pointless for these government agents not to execute some of their duties of protecting and developing the indigenous languages, citing "budgetary constraints" as obstacles, when the government can spend millions of rands for its other agents to throw massive parties. The development and functionalising of the indigenous languages is still at the crawling stage. Communities in the rural areas of the country are not reaping the full benefits of what PanSALB and the National Language Service have achieved so far. Some of the strategic plans of these organisations have been successful in meeting the varied language needs and requirements of the people, but they have not fared as well among the rural populace of the country. The path of language development is somehow bypassing this populace. Most of the developments that have been outlined in this chapter, particularly those of human language technologies, favour urban development to the detriment of rural development. People in the rural areas are not as technologically advanced as people in the urban areas, because of lack of resources and infrastructure.

Mkhulisi, as cited by Deprez and Du Plessis (2000:123), holds that the South African Constitution enjoins the state to take active steps to develop the indigenous languages. However, very little will come of language rights unless the state itself plays a leading role in language development. Many challenges remain; if there can be less lip service about the development of the African languages, the misery of the rural communities will be alleviated.

In Chapter 4 I describe the methods and procedures I have followed in conducting a survey to examine how information is disseminated and how people access information regarding the goals of a language policy strategy in the government departments and the communities that I have chosen to investigate in the Mafikeng district of North West Province.

CHAPTER 4

RESEARCH CONTEXT AND METHODOLOGY

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter outlines the research methods and techniques followed to investigate language and social services in rural North West, with specific reference to Setswana. The objective of the survey is to examine the implementation of language policy in public service and government communication policy, to promote better access to services. The purpose is to address the management problem of discovering what government administrators think are the challenges that impede the implementation of language policy, and what the best practices are that government departments have successfully applied to offer social services to the communities in the rural villages of North West Province in the Ngaka Modiri Molema district. The management purpose of this survey is also to discover what the intervention measures are that can be taken to accelerate the application of the language policy.

4.2 DATA-GENERATION METHODS AND TECHNIQUES

The investigation was conducted in two phases. In Phase 1, a questionnaire was compiled to ascertain the communities' needs concerning the language barriers in accessing government services. In Phase 2, a questionnaire was compiled to ascertain the language policy implementation in public service and government communication policy to promote better access to services.

Lastly, document sources have been used to discover witting evidence (original evidence) and everything else that stems from the original evidence i.e.

unwitting evidence (Bell, as cited by Ketlhoilwe 2007:102). Witting evidence is the information that the original author of the documents wanted to impart, and unwitting evidence is everything else that can be learned from the documents (ibid.). The evidence that I gathered from document analysis laid the foundation for a careful examination of policy implementation processes in the selected government departments. This means that two methods of generating data were used, namely questionnaires and document analysis. Downsborough (2008:39) writes that the use of questionnaires alongside document analysis is another technique often used by researchers to enhance the validity/trustworthiness of their research. Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2000) are cited as defining this technique as the use of two or more methods or sources of data collection in a study.

4.2.1 Site

The sampling strategy which includes questionnaires and document analysis was convenient. This technique was appropriate, because I had already decided about the environment in which the survey would take place. Fink (1995:3) states that the environment consists of the individuals or group of people, places, activities, or objects that are to be surveyed. I chose to work with individuals in two different environments, that is, in the rural areas, and in the government departments, as a sample. The ideal sample has the same distribution of characteristics as the population from which the sample is drawn (ibid).

4.2.1.1 Rural areas

I applied random sampling to select two rural areas of Mafikeng in the North West Province (see section 1.5.1). The rural areas selected were Setlopo and

Logagane villages. As mentioned in Chapter 1, I have worked with the people in these areas, and it was thus easy to access schools that would assist in the completion of a survey about language policy implementation in social services in the communities. It would not have been easy to post the questionnaires to the residents, because of poor infrastructure in these areas. Most of the people do not have postal addresses.

As Thomas (2004:90) recommends, non-probability sampling was then applied, because I did not have a list of the population (target audience) from which I could select my sample. Convenience sampling was therefore applied, because, according to Fink (1995:18), a convenience sample consists of a group of individuals that is prepared and available. Furthermore, Fink and Kosecoff (1998) explain that in non-probability samples one selects only those respondents that are willing and available to complete the survey. They elaborate that non-probability samples are subcategorised into systematic samples and convenience samples. In convenience sampling, one selects everyone who is available when one needs them, if they meet the criteria for one's survey, and if they are willing to complete all the questions. The sample consisted of 100 respondents that were readily available in each rural area.

4.2.1.2 Government departments

I applied non-random sampling, because it represents government departments deemed likely to be further along the road towards implementing language policy for access to services, and therefore more likely to have identified any barriers that exist and any intervention measures that can accelerate adoption. The government departments, or public service management agencies, selected in the Ngaka Modiri Molema district in Mafikeng in North West Province were the Department of Health and the Department of Social Development.

All the government employees in these departments were willing to answer the questions in the survey. The sample comprised 30 civil servants in each department. Munn and Drever (1990:15) are of the opinion that there are no firm rules about sample size. They say most authors suggest 30 as the minimum, one reason being that with numbers below 30, the statistical formulae may have to be adapted slightly. It should be mentioned that the non-random selection of 30 participants from the selected government departments cannot be considered to be representative of the entire population of government employees, but that the thought is that the viewpoints of these participants could add a small contribution to this study to ascertain any similarities or differences of perception concerning language issues.

4.2.2 The research instrument

I have chosen to work with a closed questionnaire as my method of survey. Although the survey method has its shortcomings, the Saldru Working Paper No. 48 (1982:5) states that there will always be a need for the means by which we can obtain, over a fairly short period of time or over a dispersed area, information which will enhance understanding, particularly comprehensive information. The survey method using the questionnaire is therefore a preferred method.

4.2.2.1 Closed questions

Closed questions are used when the answers or responses are preselected for the respondent. Fink (1995:13) maintains that some respondents prefer closed questions, because they are either unwilling or unable to express themselves while being surveyed. Also, because the respondents' expectations are more

clearly spelled out in the questions and the answers that are presented, these answers have a better chance of being reliable or consistent over time. On the same note, Foddy (1993:128) writes that

- (a) Closed questions allow respondents to answer the same question, so that answers can be meaningfully compared.
- (b) They produce less variable answers.
- (c) They present a recognition task, as opposed to a recall task, to respondents, and for this reason respondents find them much easier to answer.
- (d) They produce answers that are much easier to capture digitally and to analyse.

4.2.2.2 The design of the questionnaire

A clear, unambiguous questionnaire relevant to the respondents' level of literacy was designed. The language used in the questions, and the format for each question type, had to be such that the rural community members would easily be able to answer the questions. Thus, as a qualified translator, I translated the questionnaire into Setswana. Both the English and the Setswana version of the questionnaire were proofread by another qualified translator to ensure accuracy of the language and of the translation. I was guided by Bourque and Fielder (1995:41) to maximise "user-friendliness" and designed a user-friendly questionnaire by considering, among other things, the following important areas that these authors have listed:

- Instructions that are both clear and adequate.
- The avoidance of double-barrelled questions that ask two things at once.

Some specific issues that are asserted by Sanders and Pinhey (1983), are: (i) the high level of functional illiteracy in rural areas, and (ii) that the majority of South Africans are probably unfamiliar with questionnaires, their purpose, their use, their value, and how to respond to them.

A key element in the use of questionnaires is that they can be designed and structured to suit specific needs and purposes. They may, with imagination and due attention to validity and reliability considerations, be used in very flexible ways. Much of this potential flexibility lies, however, in the way the questionnaire is designed and constructed, that is, its layout, types and content of questions used, the sequencing of questions, appropriate language use, and clear instructions (Irwin 2006:2).

4.2.2.2.1 Questions

Simon (1995:22) advises researchers to make questionnaires as short and to the point as possible, and to include only those questions which relate directly to the research itself. All the questions should be in simple language and free of ambiguity. A questionnaire should not be lengthy; it should be reasonably quick to complete, which will enable respondents to answer all the questions. On the simplicity of language use, I agree with Munn and Drever (1990:21) when they say that questions should be phrased in a way that matches the vocabulary of the respondents.

Much care was taken in drafting the questions in the questionnaire used in this study. Munn and Drever (1992:4) caution that in a questionnaire all respondents should be presented with the same questions. During the filling out of a questionnaire, there is no interviewer intervening between the respondent and

the questions, so there is no scope for the meaning of the questions to be negotiated or clarified.

After I had compiled the first draft of the questionnaire, I consulted experts in the field of African languages to read through and answer each question on the questionnaire, with the aim of confirming the relevance and comprehensibility of the questions. Thereafter I administered the questionnaire to respondents who were similar to the ones who would eventually complete the survey, to test the questionnaire, so that any problems with the questions could be discussed. This, I believe, is an indication that the questionnaires have been pre-tested. Simon (1995:17) writes that pre-testing is used for checking an aspect or aspects of the research design (for example, the sample design, the questionnaire, the computer programme, etc.). Such testing of a questionnaire, according to Munn and Drever (1990:32), is called “small-scale piloting”, which, according to them, refers to the relatively informal exercise of trying out a questionnaire to see how it works, and to get the “bugs” or potential complications out of the questions.

Munn and Drever (1990:32) further point out that small-scale piloting is essential, in that it helps the researcher to find out roughly how long it takes to answer the questionnaire, and whether there are any features of the questionnaire that are likely to put people off due to the complexity of the questionnaire and to reduce the response rate (1990:32). Fink and Kosecoff (1998:5) support these two authors when they say that a pilot test is a tryout, and that its purpose is to help produce a survey form that is usable and that will provide the researcher with the information that is needed.

4.2.2.2.2 Types of responses solicited from respondents

Responses were solicited by means of a rating scale. With rating scales, Fink and Kosecoff (1998:5) say that respondents are asked to place the item being rated at some point along a continuum, or in any one of an ordered series of categories, and a numerical value is assigned to the point or category.

The choices given to respondents for their answers took three forms, explained by Fink (1995:13) and Fink and Kosecoff (ibid.) as follows:

- (a) Nominal or categorical: These are answers given by people about the groups to which they belong. There is no numerical or preferential value to the answers.

Example from Appendix A: Please indicate your gender.

Male	Female

Respondents are asked to “name” or categorise themselves as belonging to one of two categories.

- (b) Ordinal: These scales require that respondents place answers in rank order. Respondents are asked to rate or order choices, say, from “very positive” to “very negative”. A measure of whether an individual strongly agrees, agrees, disagrees, or strongly disagrees with a statement, or is not sure about a statement, is considered an ordinal measure by some people and an interval measure by others.

Example from Appendix B: Do you agree that your mother tongue/home language is the best language for receiving government services and information? (Please mark one answer by placing X next to the answer.)

- (a) Strongly agree
- (b) Agree
- (c) Disagree
- (d) Strongly disagree

Respondents indicate on a continuum the degree to which they feel that their mother tongue is, or is not, the best language for receiving government services and information.

- (c) Numerical choices: The questions ask for numbers, such as age (in years).

Example from Appendix B: How old are you? (Please mark only one answer by placing X under your answer.)

20-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60-69	70-79	80 or more

The questionnaires used in Phase 1, both the English version and the translated Setswana version, are included in Appendix A, and the questionnaires used in Phase 2 are contained in Appendix B.

4.2.3 Questionnaire administration

I used personally administered questionnaires, which Bourque and Fielder (1995:9-11) call self-administered questionnaires. They explain this type of questionnaire as an instrument used to collect information from people who complete the instrument themselves, that is, each respondent receives a printed questionnaire, which is filled out using a pen or a pencil. The above two

scholars have outlined the advantages of the self-administered questionnaire as follows.

4.2.3.1 Cost

Compared to other methods (e.g. in-person and telephone interviews), self-administered questionnaires are less cost-intensive. Given the same length questionnaire and the same objectives, a completed questionnaire administered by mail incurs approximately 50% less of the costs incurred in a questionnaire administered by telephone, and 75% less of the costs incurred in a questionnaire administered by personal interview.

4.2.3.2 Sample-related advantages

a) Geographical coverage

Mailed questionnaires allow for wider geographical coverage than is the case with face-to-face interviewing. A questionnaire can be mailed to anywhere in the world, whereas face-to-face interviews tend to be restricted to a defined geographical area or areas where trained interviewers are available, where the interview can be monitored, and where the interviewers are able to physically contact the intended respondents.

b) Larger samples

The lower unit cost of mailed questionnaire, combined with the ability of this type of questionnaire to cover a wide geographical area, and its ability to be administered across long distances, allows the surveyor to study a larger sample of persons or groups. Thus, where available funds may allow for a certain number of persons within a limited geographical area to be interviewed, the same funds will allow for questionnaires to be mailed to many persons over a much larger geographical area.

c) Wider coverage within a sample population

Some people are reluctant to talk with people in person or over the telephone. These people may, however, be willing to respond to a mailed questionnaire. Similarly, some people do not have access to a telephone and may be more willing and able to respond to a self-administered questionnaire. In some cases, respondents are much more willing to complete a self-administered questionnaire, as it can be completed at their convenience, and it does not require them having to make a commitment to an interviewer to be available at an appointed time for a specific length of time to do an interview.

Based on the above ideas, the following components received attention.

4.2.3.3 Information related to the survey and questionnaire

Bourque and Fielder (1995:106) emphasise that mailed questionnaires should *always* be accompanied by a covering letter. The letter must be well written and must explain the purpose of the study and how and why the respondent was selected. It must also cite meaningful reasons for why the respondent is important to the research and should reply to increase compliance and response

ratio in relation to the questionnaires. All the covering letters that were sent were brief and to the point. As Simon (1979:20) points out, a researcher should ensure that the letter is brief and to the point, since many respondents skip or skim over a lengthy introduction.

Both the covering letter for the rural communities and the covering letter for the employees in the government departments included the information below, adapted from Bourque and Fielder (1995:106), that hopefully motivates respondents to reply:

(i) Salutation

I used personalised salutations for letters to principals and for Setswana letters to the communities. In accordance with the custom in my culture of showing respect, the honorific titles *rra* (for male respondents) and *mma* (for female respondents) were used. These titles are used to address people if one does not know their names, or does not want to call them by their first names. The use of honorifics such as these increases the respondents' sense of their importance as respondents (ibid.).

(ii) Purpose of the study

The purpose of the study was clearly stated, so that respondents could know why they were being requested to give their responses, and how the questionnaire would benefit them.

(iii) Reasons why an individual's participation is important

An explanation of why an individual's participation is important encourages the respondent to participate, because the reason for the individual's participation has been stated, which engages the respondent favourably towards the study.

(iv) Incentives to encourage the schools used as a suitable source to conduct a survey

According to Bourque and Fielder (1995:112), respondents can be motivated to respond in many ways. Providing a monetary or material incentive is one method of increasing the response rate. Incentives such as money, pencils or pens, notepads, calendars, and the like can be used to increase participation. The incentive offered to the principals was a donation towards the schools as a token of appreciation for their contribution in distributing questionnaires to the communities, ensuring that the questionnaires were quickly and easily distributed to the population of the study. It was deemed undesirable to offer incentives to the respondents, because, according to Bourque and Fielder (ibid.), some surveyors believe that the data collected from individuals that receive incentives is unreliable. Their reasoning is that the use of incentives “buys” responses from individuals that ordinarily would not respond and that would pay little or no attention to the importance of the study when filling out the questionnaire and would just make any response when answering the questions.

(v) Letters sent in advance to the principals of the schools used

Letters soliciting permission to use certain schools as sources to conduct the survey were faxed to the gatekeepers concerned. A gatekeeper is a person that gives permission for one to contact members of the target audience to invite them to respond to one’s questionnaire (Thomas 2004:83). The letters were preceded by telephone calls, where permission was solicited verbally. The letters are for purposes of record keeping, and to ensure transparency with Department of Education officials and the

educators and school governing bodies of the schools concerned in respect of the activities taking place at the schools.

(vi) How the material should be distributed to the communities

It was communicated telephonically to the principals that the researcher would deliver the material to the schools, which would then be taken home by the learners to their parents/guardians.

(vii) Explanation of confidentiality and how the data will be handled

This information was provided in covering letters and in the questionnaire itself. Bourque and Fielder (1995:112) state that research ethics require that the subjects of all research studies be provided with information about how the collected data will be used, and how the privacy of the subjects, or the confidentiality of their data, will be ensured (ibid.). Consequently, the questionnaires that were distributed did not require respondents to state their names. The questionnaires for the rural communities explicitly stated that no names or contact details should be written on them. Fink and Kosecoff (1998:36) warn that the use of surveys and ethical concerns are interwoven. Surveys are conducted because of the need to know something or exact information; ethical considerations protect the individual's right to privacy, or even anonymity. The two authors emphasise that confidentiality refers to the safeguarding of any information about one person that is known by another person.

(viii) Provision of the researcher's name and telephone number and the name of the institution where the researcher is studying, as well as the supervisor's name

The supervisor's name and contact details were provided, in case the respondents wanted to verify the authenticity of the research.

(ix) Provision of the name and telephone number of the researcher

The contact number of the researcher is for purposes of responding to questions that the respondents may have and to be able to answer questions that the respondents may have about the questionnaire.

(x) When and how to return the questionnaire

Information was supplied regarding the date by which the questionnaire was to be returned, and how it was to be returned. This information was supplied to motivate the respondents to complete the questionnaire and return it immediately, so as not to miss the submission deadline. Adherence to formal procedure was encouraged, in that respondents were requested to return the completed questionnaire in the enclosed envelopes.

Covering letters were sent to the following parties (the relevant appendices depicting the respective letters are indicated in brackets):

- Communities (Appendix C)
- Principals (Appendix D)
- Government department employees (Appendix F)

4.2.3.4 Ethical considerations

I was made aware by Baxen (2006:40) that in dealing with human subjects, attention has to be given to certain ethical considerations. The fact that I informed all the participants in my study about the purpose of my survey and requested their participation indicates that I considered ethical issues. As Cohen and Manion, cited in Ketlhoilwe (2007:128), attest, such disclosure is done to ensure that there is informed consent, to assure participants that they are not obligated to take part in the study, and to ensure that participants answer the survey questions conscientiously.

I requested permission telephonically from all stakeholders and later sent faxes and emails to do follow-up on the telephone conversations. Letters were sent by fax to the principals of Setlopo and Logagane schools, requesting permission from them to use these schools to distribute my survey questionnaires, with the incentive that as part of the survey, a little donation would be made towards the schools' fundraising projects (see section 4.2.2.2.4 (iv)). As suggested by McNiff et al., as cited in Ncula (2007), researchers should check with the principals of schools before undertaking research connected with their institutions, so that consensus is reached about what the researchers may and may not do.

I conducted field visits to the identified government departments to enquire about the procedure in requesting permission to conduct a survey in these departments. I was guided through the policies for gaining access to the departments, where I was requested to submit letters soliciting permission, as well as a proposal, to be allowed to conduct a survey (see Appendices G and H). A day after I had submitted a letter soliciting permission to the Department of

Social Development, I received a response (see Appendix I). The responses from the other two departments were received three weeks after the letters requesting permission had been submitted, as protocol had to be observed, but permission was finally granted (see Appendices J and K).

During the administration of the questionnaire, participants were given an explanation of the purpose of the survey. The approach put forward by Bourque and Fielder's (1995:118) was used and the researcher assured the respondents of as much confidentiality and anonymity. Thus anonymity and confidentiality were ensured by not using names or contacting non-respondents. Questionnaires were designed in such a way that the respondents were not identifiable.

4.2.3.5 Research diary

Gillam (2000:142) advises that in case study research, researchers should keep journals, in addition to their observation. He states that in these journals or logbooks, researchers take notes of their impressions, questions, emerging themes, decisions, or any other issues that arise. Instead of keeping a logbook, I kept a fieldwork diary. Downsborough (2008:89) recommends the keeping of a fieldwork diary as a tool to document the sequence in which field visits take place, as well as to record events, happenings, discussions, and personal reflections that occur during these visits. I kept a fieldwork diary to document the sequence of my field visits to the identified government departments. It was an eye-opener for me to learn, after speaking to one of the managers, that I was required to submit a survey proposal accompanied by a letter requesting permission. This diary was useful in that it helped me become organised and conduct follow-up with the departments with outstanding responses.

4.3 DOCUMENT ANALYSIS

Document analysis was conducted to identify legislation and regulations with regard to a policy on the use of languages in and by government through its public service management agencies. The aim of this analysis was to examine the extent to which the identified government departments had implemented the language policy, that is, the relationship of change, or the resistance to change, as far as language policy implementation is concerned. I have used the National Language Policy Framework (12 February 2003), the Implementation Plan: National Policy Framework (13 and 14 February 2003), and the Languages Bill. The documents, my experience as a regional training coordinator, and the questionnaire data are all directed at evidence that will enable me to report on language use in the public service in rural North West, with specific reference to Setswana.

4.3.1 The National Language Policy Framework

In his foreword to this policy framework, the then Minister of the Department of Arts, Culture, Science and Technology, Dr B.S. Ngubane, mentioned that after a thorough process of consultation, there was finally a framework for a language policy for South Africa. According to him, the consultation process was an essential step in view of the lack of tolerance for linguistic diversity, the resultant “multilingualism is a costly problem” approach evident in some sectors of our society, and the growing criticism from language stakeholders of the tendency towards unilingualism in South Africa. Dr Ngubane felt that the Policy Framework was the achievement of government’s goal to promote democracy, justice, equity, and national unity (DAC 2003a:2-3).

4.3.1.1 Background and context

The National Language Policy Framework (NLPF) came into being after South Africa's transition to democracy, where South Africans had to respond to their linguistic and cultural diversity, and the challenges of multilingualism. In 2003, nine years into South Africa's democracy, the Cabinet finally approved the NLPF. The NLPF is designed as a package that will eventually consist of a policy strategy, an implementation plan, the South African Languages Act, and the South African Practitioners' Council Act (DAC 2003b:5).

The following points have been summarised from the introductory Section 1 of the National Language Policy Framework:

- Of the approximately 25 different languages spoken in South Africa, 11 have been granted official status in terms of Section 6 of the Constitution (Act No. 108 of 1996).

Based on this, South Africa emerges as a multilingual country, *inter alia* by virtue of the fact that several indigenous languages are spoken across provincial borders, shared by speech communities from different provinces.

- There is a strong need to promote and develop the previously marginalised indigenous languages, so that South Africans are liberated from undue reliance on the utilisation of non-indigenous languages as dominant official languages of state.
- It is alleged that there is a problem in the management of linguistic diversity, in that there is no clearly defined language policy, leading to the use of English and Afrikaans as the dominant languages in the socio-economic and political domains of South African society.

- The Policy Framework strongly encourages the utilisation of the indigenous languages as official languages, in order to promote national unity. It takes into account the acceptance of the principle of equal access to public services and programmes, and respect for language rights (DAC 2003b:6-7).

For this reason, Deprez and Du Plessis (2000:97) note that because of South Africa's deeply divided past, nation-building is a priority of the new government. Two themes are particularly focused on: reconstructing the country, by establishing strong democratic institutions, and improving the quality of life for all, and reconciling and uniting the nation. These themes have dominated the political agenda since 1994.

4.3.1.2 Historical context

Government language policy and the monolingual mainly English or Afrikaans speaking elite during the apartheid regime failed to recognise South Africa's linguistic diversity. This situation was revised after the first democratically elected government came into power in 1994, with its constitutional provisions of official multilingualism. Deprez and Du Plessis (2000:105) make a similar point that the 1993 and 1996 Constitutions radically changed the disparity in the status of South Africa's languages, since 11 of the country's languages were granted official status at the national level. The rights of the African languages were extended to those areas where these languages had not enjoyed official status before.

Failure to recognise South Africa's linguistic diversity has resulted in language inequality, and the dominance of English and Afrikaans has created an unequal relationship between these languages and the African languages. Heine, as cited in Deprez and Du Plessis (2000:96), points out that many African states have

ended up becoming exoglossic nations, where a foreign language was declared the official language, but that these exoglossic policies have failed. Knowledge of the official language among many of the citizens was inadequate, and the symbolic emphasis placed on the foreign language caused cultural and linguistic alienation. Exoglossic policies, according to Heine, were strategies that were implemented to create linguistic coherence, but unfortunately they did not lead to nationhood.

The hierarchy or social stratification of languages in South Africa is the result of colonial and apartheid policies. This inequality reflects the structures of racial and class inequality that have characterised South African society.

The pre-apartheid practices referred to are seen to have engendered the corollary status of the indigenous languages and the language varieties of African people. It is claimed that this has enforced negative stereotypes of the African languages, which are held not only by English and Afrikaans speakers, but even by many of the speakers of the African languages themselves (DAC 2003:9). In addition, the LANGTAG (1996) report points to the fact that the underdevelopment of the indigenous African languages has contributed to the negative attitude that even the speakers of these languages have towards their languages.

4.3.1.2.1 Aims, principles, and provisions

The National Language Policy Framework has clearly outlined its aims, principles and provisions but since the focus of the study is more on the status of African indigenous languages, I will only mention the following:

Its aims are to:

- Promote equitable use of the 11 official languages;
- Facilitate equitable access to government services, knowledge and information;
- Ensure redress for the previously marginalised official languages; and
- Promote good language management for efficient public service administration, to meet client expectations and needs (DAC 2003a:13).

The language policy is based on the following principles:

- A commitment to the promotion of language equity and language rights, as required by a democratic dispensation;
- The recognition that languages are resources to maximise knowledge, expertise, and full participation in the political and socio-economic domains;
- The prevention of the use of any language for the purposes of exploitation, domination, or discrimination; and
- The enhancement of people-centredness in addressing the interests, needs, and aspirations of a wide range of language communities through ongoing dialogue and debate (DAC 2003a:14).

The provisions of the policy are as follows:

- All government structures (national, provincial and local government), as well as institutions exercising public power or performing a public function in terms of legislation, are bound by this Language Policy Framework.
- In promoting multilingualism, provinces will formulate their policies in line with the guidelines contained in this Policy Framework, taking into account their regional circumstances and the needs and preferences of communities, as stated in the Constitution.
- Local governments will determine the language use and preferences of their communities within an enabling provincial language policy framework. Upon determination of the language use and preference of communities, local governments must, in broad consultation with their communities, develop, publicise, and implement a multilingual policy.
- The use of different languages in government structures is determined by this policy as follows:
 - Working language(s)/language(s) of record: By consensus, each government structure must agree on (a) working language(s) for both intra- and interdepartmental communication purposes, provided that where practically possible no person will be prevented from using the language(s) of his or her preference. For the purpose of conducting meetings or performing specific tasks, every effort must be made to utilise language facilitation facilities such as translation and/or interpreting.
 - Communication with members of the public: For official correspondence purposes, the language of the citizen's choice must be

used. All oral communication must take place in the preferred official language of the target audience. If necessary, every effort must be made to utilise language facilitation facilities such as interpreting where practically possible.

- Government publications: A publication programme of functional multilingualism should be followed by national government departments in those cases that do not require publication in all 11 official languages (DAC 2003a:16-18).

4.3.2 Implementation Plan: National Language Policy Framework (NLPF)

Dr R.M. Adam, the then acting Director-General of the Department of Arts and Culture, in his foreword puts it succinctly that the Implementation Plan outlines the strategies that will be used to implement the language policy, proposing strategies that will be key to implementation and mechanisms that will be employed to accelerate the development and promotion of South Africa's African languages. He further points out that the language policy needs to be implemented with urgency, that the challenge for Government is to ensure the delivery of an efficient language service that is responsive to the needs of its citizens, and that language is the means through which Government communicates with its citizens (DAC 2003b:3).

Following the announcement of the NLPF, Government published its Implementation Plan. The Implementation Plan is said to be part of the National Language Policy Framework, and its scope of implementation is that all government structures are bound by the provisions of the policy, as are any institutions exercising public power or performing a public function in terms of legislation. Since implementing the policy would require a major shift from apartheid language practices, strategies for policy implementation, and mechanisms and structures to ensure equitable access to government services, knowledge and information for all citizens, have been included in the Implementation Plan.

4.3.2.1 Aims and objectives

The implementation process has guiding aims and objectives set out in the policy. The key focus areas of implementation have been listed, and from those I have chosen to highlight the following in relation to this study:

- The reinforcing of government responsibility to ensure that the benefits of service delivery are distributed equally by providing equitable access to services for all citizens irrespective of language, in order to enhance their participation and voice in government matters.
- The management of language to ensure the functional use of all the official languages and to promote the public image of Government.
- The encouragement of learning specifically tailored to the needs of the public service, to improve public servants' efficiency and productivity in the workplace and make the benefits of multilingualism visible (DAC 2003b:6).

4.3.2.2 Contextual analysis

The Implementation Plan sings the same tune as the National Language Policy Framework, namely that South Africa's previous policy of official bilingualism created an unequal relationship between English and Afrikaans, on the one hand, and the indigenous African languages, on the other hand. The domination of the former languages had far-reaching prejudicial effects on indigenous African-language speakers in terms of their communication with Government and their access to government services, justice, education, and jobs.

As a matter of priority, the Implementation Plan deems it fit for the indigenous African languages to be developed, in order to correct the imbalance. A fact worth noting is that this Implementation Plan succumbs to the reality that a major challenge to implementation is current language practices, which are closely linked to the multiple functions of English in post-apartheid South Africa. Not surprisingly, Government is fully aware that English is widely used in most domains, that is, in government structures and in the media (both print

media and electronic media), the workplace, as a lingua franca for inter-group communication, and as the language of the Internet and science and technology.

It has been stated that these issues were addressed by the proposal of the establishment of certain structures and establishing mechanisms to redress the situation (see section 3.2).

4.3.2.3 Implementation structures

Seeing that the implementation of the language policy will result in a substantial increase in the demand for language services, the requirement is that all national and provincial government departments must have language units. The rationale for language units has been stated as ensuring the sustained use of the official languages, as required by the language policy. The function of these units is to manage the implementation of multilingualism in a particular department or province, and to liaise with other departments on language matters.

4.3.2.4 Language code of conduct for public servants

The Implementation Plan clearly states that a language code of conduct for all public servants will stipulate how public servants have to communicate and interact with the public in order to render an effective service. The code of conduct will embrace the Batho Pele principles in as far as the public service has an obligation to provide complete, accurate information to customers in the language that they understand best. The code will emphasise the fact that no customer or public servant may be marginalised or disadvantaged through the use of any particular language.

4.3.2.5 Language awareness campaigns

In order to arouse public interest in language matters, the Implementation Plan cites language awareness campaigns as being necessary. I have picked up ongoing language awareness campaigns that are relevant to this study, which the Implementation Plan recommends the Department of Arts and Culture should run, in collaboration with PanSALB. The aims of these campaigns are to:

- align language policies and practices in the various spheres of government;
- encourage public servants to provide service to clients in their own language;
- create an awareness of the benefits of living in a multilingual society; and
- ensure correct understanding and interpretation of policy at all levels.

The Implementation Plan further stipulates that specific language awareness campaigns will be executed by language units (national and provincial), the Department of Arts and Culture, and PanSALB. In view of their critical role in language policy implementation, government departments and public servants will be the main target audience for the first two years. Campaigns aimed at the general public will be engaged simultaneously (DAC 2003b:19).

4.3.3 The South African Languages Bill

Simultaneously with the publication of the Implementation Plan, the South African Languages Bill was published for comment in 2003. The Draft Bill provides for the publication of official documents in all 11 official languages, and where this is not possible, in at least six languages, as laid down in the policy statement (see section 3.1.1). It also allows for the establishment of language units and measures for the development of indigenous languages and South African Sign Language(s)

(http://www.dac.gov.za/bills/sa_language_bill.pdf).

The first exposition of the Bill states:

To provide for an enabling framework for promoting South Africa's linguistic diversity and encouraging respect for language rights within the

framework of building and consolidating a united, democratic South African nation, taking into account the broad acceptance of linguistic diversity, social justice, the principle of equal access to public services and programmes, respect for language rights, the establishment of language services in all spheres of government, the powers and functions of such services, and matters connected herewith... (ibid.)

From the above exposition it is clear that the context of managing language diversity in South Africa has been captured in the South African Languages Bill. Department of Arts and Culture Deputy Minister Joe Phaahla announced in his budget vote speech to members of the National Assembly that his department would in 2003 submit the South African Languages Bill to Parliament for processing. He has been quoted as saying “Part of who we are as South Africans is expressed through our languages and our shared embrace of a multilingual nation”. He further reiterated that “freedom of expression, and of creativity, can only take full effect if we recognise the importance of mother tongues and the right of our people to speak, read and write in the languages of their choice”.

According to the Deputy Minister, the Bill would seek to:

- promote the inclusive use of all South Africa’s official languages;
- ensure unhindered and equal access to government services and programmes, to education, and to knowledge and information; and
- pursue the entrenchment of language equity and language rights, so that both national unity and democracy are promoted.

<http://www.sabinetlaw.co.za/arts-and-culture/articles/departement-of-arts->

The aims expressed above by the Deputy Minister are what most people in South Africa would want, particularly those who have been disadvantaged through past policy. It must be noted that the Final Draft Bill is dated 24 April 2003, nine years into South Africa's democracy. One could argue that the delay in the implementation of policy is the result of too much lip service. In this regard, Beukes writes a cautionary note in the *Sunday Times* newspaper, advising against the country's mother tongues being silenced:

We find that our 10-year-old democracy has been the greatest enemy of indigenous languages. All the lofty pronouncements made in the early days of transition seem to have been thrown out of the window and the authorities have paid token gestures to the issue. (Sunday Times, 25 April 2004, as cited in Beukes <http://www.linguapax.org/congress04/pdf/-beukes.pdf>)

4.3.3.1 Objectives and principles of the Bill

The objectives and principles of the Bill are listed below.

4.3.3.1.1 The objectives of the Bill are to:

- Give effect to the Constitutional provisions on language;
- Promote the equitable use of the official languages;
- Enable all South Africans to use the official languages of their choice as a matter of right to ensure equal access to government services and programmes, education, and knowledge and information; and

- Provide for a regulatory framework to facilitate the implementation of official multilingualism.

4.3.3.1.2 The guiding principles of this Bill are as follows:

- The promotion and accommodation of linguistic diversity must be pursued in accordance with the Constitution and relevant international law.
- The promotion of the use of all the indigenous languages and South African Sign Language(s).
- The entrenchment of language equity and language rights must be pursued in such a way that both national unity and democracy are promoted.
- Measures of the implementation of multilingualism must take into account the interests, needs and aspirations of all affected parties and their participation in language matters must be promoted.

4.3.3.2 Application and interpretation of the Bill

(i) This Bill binds

- the state, which shall include any department of state or administration in the national, provincial or local sphere of government, and
- any institution exercising public power or performing a public function in terms of any legislation.

(ii) When interpreting the provision of this Bill, it

shall take precedence over inconsistent provisions of any other Act on language use, except the Constitution.

<http://www.sabinetlaw.co.za/arts-and-culture/articles/department-of-arts-and-culture-introduce-south-african-languages-bill-parliament2011-06-02>)

Beukes observes that the situation as regards language policy in the key domains of the provinces has thus, with the exception of one pace-setting province, namely the Western Cape, which has devised and implemented a language policy and plan based on provincial legislation, namely the Western Cape Provincial Languages Act, 1998 (Act No. 13 of 1998), remained static for the entire first decade of democracy. She goes on to say that:

the first decade of liberation has given South Africans much to celebrate; numerous important issues relating to standard of living have been addressed, resulting in improved conditions for those who were disadvantaged by apartheid. Many of our young democracy's hatchlings have indeed started "testing their wings". However, some hatchlings have remained bound to their nests, lacking the maturity to test their wings for long-haul heights! A case in point is our acclaimed multilingual language policy. (<http://www.linguapax.org/congress04/pdf/-beuks.pdf>)

From Beukes' observation above, it can be concluded that for language policy to be implemented successfully, it is incumbent on South Africa to do its best to ensure, in terms of the Constitution, the South African Languages Bill, and the Implementation Plan, the continued existence and functionality of all the languages that form part and parcel of its full heritage. The vast infrastructure of language development that South Africa has built up over the years needs to be relied on as a structural foundation for the sustainability of multilingualism.

Deprez and Du Plessis (2000:108) observe that more effort is put into raising the status of the African languages than into real advancement of the use of these languages. Elevation of status is a soft option; the advancement of the use of the African languages will require a greater commitment.

The chapter that follows will analyse data collected from the two villages in the Ngaka Modimi Molema area of the North West Province and the identified government departments. The chapter will describe how the data was coded, interpreted, and reported.

CHAPTER 5

DATA INTERPRETATION AND ANALYSIS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The purpose of the survey project on language policy and implementation was to address the management problem of discovering what government administrators think are the challenges that impede the implementation of language policy, and what the best practices are that government departments have successfully applied to offer social services to the communities through appropriate language usage in the rural villages of the Ngaka Modiri Molema district of the North West Province.

5.2 DATA ANALYSIS

This chapter focuses on the data interpretation and analysis. According to Paton, as cited in Downsborough (2008:37), “data interpretation and analysis involves making sense of what people have said, looking for patterns, putting together what is said in one place with what is said in another place and integrating what different people have said”. Two separate questionnaires for data collection were used in two rural communities and identified government departments, respectively. On the whole, data for the questionnaires administered were analysed to find out the status of language use within the North West Province, in order to infer the status of Setswana in the rural communities.

The analysis of data developed in two phases. The first and second phase, as discussed in Chapter 4, involved working with closed-question questionnaires that I had collected. The approach that I took was to interpret the information I had

gathered from these questionnaires and to trace it back to the documents I had analysed as a means of reference to the responses in the questionnaires.

5.2.1 Phase 1

Each of the questionnaires was given an identity, because the questionnaires had been completed anonymously. For the questionnaires administered in Setlopo village, I used the identification SV01-100 (see Appendix I) and for the questionnaires administered in Logagane village, I used the identification LV01-100 (see Appendix J), that is, each questionnaire was numbered consecutively from 01 to 100. In the data that is presented, the research participants are referred to as “respondents”, for example, “Respondent SV01”.

The questionnaire consisted of 15 questions formatted onto a back-to-back A4 sheet, each of which described a strategy of government communication to deliver services in the rural areas. A coding system was employed on the answers to the questionnaire, to suit the kind of data being handled (see Appendices C-1 and K). According to Simon (1979:61), coding may be defined as the quantification of received data into numerical form for the purposes of computer analysis. There were also two demographic questions relating to education level and age, respectively. Samples of the question types were presented in Chapter 4.

5.2.1.1 Response rate

Seventy-eight of the 100 questionnaires administered to the Setlopo village respondents were returned. Of the 78 questionnaires returned, two were returned unanswered, bringing the number of completed questionnaires to 76. Thus, the response rate was 76%. Ninety-seven of the 100 questionnaires administered to the

Logagane village respondents were returned. One of the questionnaires was returned unanswered, bringing the total number of completed questionnaires to 96. Thus, the response rate was 96%. In general, then, the rural communities that were investigated in this study were successfully surveyed.

5.2.2 Phase 2

The questionnaire consisted of 20 questions formatted onto a back-to-back A4 sheet, and it included some of the same questions that were posed to the village respondents, so that language mismatches could be noted. There were also three demographic questions on gender, race, and occupation, respectively. Other questions focused on language policy and implementation. A coding system was also employed on the answers to the questionnaire to suit the kind of data being handled. The questionnaires that were administered to respondents in the Department of Social Development were given the identification code SD01-30 (see Appendix K).

Worth mentioning here is that my request to conduct a survey at the Department of Home Affairs was rejected. This is a pathetic state of affairs, because in the Batho Pele principles, which are embraced in the language code of conduct for all public servants, two of the principles are “access” and “information”. According to the Implementation Plan (DAC 17:2003), the public service has an obligation to provide complete, accurate information to customers. I feel that the information that I was seeking relates to access of services and information concerning language. For this department not to allow me access leaves a lot to be desired. Pluddeman et al. (2004:139) caution that language issues are very sensitive, and that matters dealing with language need to be handled with care. I am fully aware

of this caution, and that is why for ethical reasons I explained what my survey was all about (see Appendices D and E), but I still did not succeed to obtain access.

The protocol observed by the Department of South African Social Security Agency, the Department of Home Affairs, and the Department of Health resulted in it taking much longer for me to receive a response to my request to conduct surveys in these departments. The delayed response from these departments led to my decision to drop these departments and to work with the Department of Social Development, which had responded promptly to my request.

5.2.2.1 Response rate

Twenty-eight of the 30 questionnaires administered to the Department of Social Development were returned. Thus, the response rate was approximately 93%.

5.3 COLLATING OF THE DATA

Data on the returned questionnaires was captured manually on a grid, and answers to questions on the questionnaires were coded (see Appendices C-1 and K). In the case of unanswered questions, the number 12, a random selection, was placed in Phase 2, and the number 10 was used in Phase 1. For the purposes of computer analysis, all the data was keyed into a spreadsheet, which assisted in the deduction of the findings and the reporting of the results from all the questionnaires. An MS Excel spreadsheet was used to calculate the response rate for each question.

5.3.1 Language profile

Since this study deals with language and social services, I adapted language-specific indicators as used by Pluddemann et al. (2004:38) in language surveys that they conducted in multilingual societies in the Western Cape. These scholars explain these indicators as follows:

- *Language repertoire*: the extent to which the language in question is either the only language used at home, or is in competition with other languages, or co-occurs with other languages.
- *Language choice*: the extent to which the language is used in interaction with family and extended family members and other community members.
- *Language proficiency*: the extent to which the language is understood, spoken, read, and written.
- *Language dominance*: the extent to which respondents speak this language the best.
- *Language preference*: the extent to which respondents prefer to speak this language.

In this study I used and versioned the above language-specific indicators in my investigation of the language practices of the selected rural villages and government departments. The indicator of “language repertoire” in the government departments was substituted with “language used in the departments”, rather than “language used at home”.

5.3.1.1 Research hypotheses

On the basis of my research (see section 1.1.1), I developed a number of hypotheses from the experience that I had gained in working with the rural

communities and the government departments identified. The hypotheses that I developed were adapted from those of Pluddemann et al. (2004:40-41), as follows:

- **Inventory of home languages:** In the informal settlements, I expected to find that Setswana was the major home language, with a few less dominant home languages.
- **Language repertoire:** I expected to find that the rural communities would communicate in their home languages, rather than in English or Afrikaans. In the government departments I expected to find that Setswana was the language of communication, or the language that was spoken.
- **Language choice:** In this instance, I expected to find that the government departments' language choice in their interactions with rural communities would be English, with some code switching.
- **Language proficiency:** I expected that since the literacy level in the rural areas is low, reported reading and speaking proficiency in English would be significantly lower than reported reading and speaking proficiency in the mother tongue. In the government departments I expected the opposite, on account of the low status of the indigenous languages.
- **Language dominance and language preference:** I expected to find that Setswana was the dominant language in the rural areas, and that it was less dominant in the government departments, that is, that Setswana would be used for communication purposes, but not for dissemination of government documents such as forms, pamphlets, posters, etc. Although there was a preference of Setswana in receiving government services over and above English and Afrikaans in rural areas, there is still a predominant use of English in government departments because of the historical background of English

and Afrikaans being languages of dominance in the government domains (see Chapter 2 of the LANGTAG Report 1996:8).

- **Language policy and implementation:** I expected to find that the language units are non-existent in the identified government departments, that government employees are not familiar with the language policy, and that the implementation of language policy is minimal.

I will attempt to prove or disprove the stated hypotheses in the next chapter.

5.3.1.2 Demographics

Although Simon (1979:21) argues that it is most suitable to place demographic questions first in a questionnaire, on the basis that one of the warm-up questions might offend and lead to destroying the questionnaire, whereas the demographic questions do not offend and lead the respondent well into the questionnaire, thereby making it more difficult for him or her to withdraw. I included the section on demographics for the Phase 1 and 2 questionnaires at the end, for the fact that I did not have warm-up questions. I deemed it necessary to leave the demographic questions till the end of the questionnaire, with the reasoning that my sound question design would have built up the necessary rapport with the respondents. Most researchers are of the opinion that demographic questions should be placed at the end of the questionnaire, as by then the researcher should have built up a rapport with the respondents, which would allow honest responses to the more personal questions. The demographic information I had gathered from Phase 1 helped me to have clear insight into the level of literacy of the inhabitants of Setlopo and Logagane villages as far as the language barrier was concerned. The information on age helped me to find out about the proportion of individuals

experiencing a language barrier. Many researchers caution that it is important never to assume that you already know the demographics of your respondents. Previously I mentioned that the level of literacy of the rural communities is inadequate.

The demographic information gathered from Phase 2 was helpful in determining how opinions vary between groups in the same workplace, and in finding out how government administrators value the indigenous languages that they speak as home languages.

5.4 MANAGING DATA

I was guided by the website <http://www.uniwex.edu/ces/tobaccoval/pdf/exceltips> to code my data, so that the computer can work with numbers, rather than text. The data was entered manually onto a grid, so that it could later be entered into a spreadsheet or database. This also helped me to “clean” my data, meaning that I was able to make sure that responses were accurately entered according to the guidelines that I had established and recorded. The goal of coding, entering data, and cleaning was for me to simplify the information I had collected.

5.4.1 Data coding

Coding is the process of assigning numbers to each response (<http://www.uniwex.edu/ces/tobaccoval/pdf/exceltips>). The data was coded because it was much easier to analyse with the computer, and easier to check for errors. It enabled straightforward analysis of the data.

5.4.1.1 Coding choices

I looked at all possible survey responses and saw that the highest number of responses for Phase 1 was 9 responses, and that for Phase 2 it was 11. I therefore decided that “10” would represent “no response” responses in Phase 1, and “12” would represent “no response” responses in Phase 2.

Although all the responses for the questions had been assigned the same numbers, that is, 1 to 11, they did not always mean the same thing throughout the survey (for example, “1” did not always stand for “YES”). A key is included in Appendices C-1 and H to keep track of what each number was assigned to represent. In Phase 2, the last question on demographics was assigned the unique code of an acronym and a number for job titles, for example, Administration Clerk (AC1), Senior Personnel Practitioner (SPP2), Assistant Director (AD3), Intern (INT4), etc.

5.4.1.2 Data entry

I assigned a unique identifier to each questionnaire (see Appendices I, J and K). The use of a unique identifier is for the same reason that credit card companies, doctors, and the social security administration use them. Unique identifiers allowed me to track records more accurately.

Most analysts generically refer to individual persons, things, or events that we get information about as “cases”, while I have referred to all participants as “respondents”. Each completed questionnaire is referred to as a “record”. It is suggested that questionnaires which have been assigned a unique identification number are easier to arrange in a logical order, which is helpful when you need to go back and look at the original document

(<http://www.uniwx.edu/ces/tobaccoval/pdf/exceltips>).

The first column on the spreadsheet shows the identification number of each case, and the rest of the columns indicate variables, meaning that each row is a “record”, as it represents answers to one particular questionnaire.

Traditionally, the rows in a data sheet correspond to the cases, and the columns correspond to the variables of interest. The numbers or words in the cells then correspond to the attributes of the cases (<http://www.usdoj.gov>). This methodology has been of much help in guiding me through my data analysis.

5.4.1.3 Level of measurement

Although the terminology used by different analysts is not uniform, one common way to classify a quantitative variable is according to whether it is nominal, ordinal, interval, or ratio (Fink 1995:13; Fink & Kosecoff 1998:5).

The attributes of a nominal variable have no inherent order. For example, the gender variable in the Phase 2 questionnaires is a nominal variable, in that being male is neither better nor worse than being female. In chapter 4 I have indicated the purpose of including gender in the questionnaire. For purposes of data analysis, I assigned numbers to the attributes of a nominal variable, but it has to be noted that the numbers are just labels, and must not be interpreted as conveying any sequence of the attributes.

With ordinal variables, the attributes have been ordered. For example, observations about attitudes have been arranged into four, five or six classifications, such as

“Strongly agree”, “Agree”, “Tend to agree”, “Tend to disagree”, “Disagree”, and “Strongly disagree”. For data analysis, numbers were assigned to the attributes. However, the numbers are understood to indicate rank order. Thus, the intervals between the numbers have no meaning. The meaning of the experiences of the respondents as interpreted by the respondents themselves has been analysed instead – the actual feelings as expressed by the respondents.

The following chapter will describe how the data was interpreted. It will report on the findings concerning what the respondents actually thought, as opposed to what the available documents actually contained in relation to how information was communicated and in what language. It will also spell out the conclusions and recommendations to be drawn from the study.

CHAPTER 6

DATA ANALYSIS AND CONCLUDING REMARKS

6.1 INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this chapter is to report on the results of the data analysed in Chapter 4 and synthesise them to bring out the major findings of the study, with respect to the status of Setswana regarding language and social service in the North West Province. These findings will help with the intervention measures that can be taken to accelerate the application of language policy; and variables that serve as barriers to language policy implementation will be highlighted and show how they can be controlled by the province and altered to curb linguistic barriers in accessing government services.

6.1.2 Language demographics in provinces

I deem it necessary to provide a brief overview of language demographics in South Africa's provinces, and later focus on the North West Province which is the bone of contention in this study. As indicated in Chapter 4 (4.4.1.2.1.3); "in promoting multilingualism provinces will formulate their policies in line with the guidelines contained in this Policy Framework, taking into account their regional circumstances, and the needs and preferences of communities, as stated in the Constitution". It is thus at this level that language statistics could have most impact.

According to the UNESCO language survey report, around 3 301774 people in South Africa use Setswana as their home language. Setswana speakers are concentrated in the North West Province (**67, 8%**), but with speakers also in Gauteng (17,4%), Free State (5,2%), Northern Province (2,0%), Mpumalanga

(2.3%), Northern Cape (5,0%) and Western Cape (0,1%) < www.salanguages.com/setswana> An important point to mention here is that 67,8% of all speakers of Setswana live in the North West Province. As indicated by these statistics, Setswana is the dominant language in the Province.

6.1.2.1 Findings from the rural areas of Setlopo and Logagane survey (Phase 1)

A total of 76 respondents from Setlopo village and 96 from Logagane village participated in the rural survey. The sample consisted of 100 respondents in each village. The remainders from the two villages were returned unanswered for the reasons unknown to the researcher.

Both counts and percentages will be reported to give the reader a sense of “real number” of surveys, percentages give a sense of what this number means in proportion to the total number surveyed.

6.1.2.1.1 Language repertoire (see Pluddeman et al, 2004:38)

Question 1: What is your home language/mother tongue?

Responses:

(i) Setlopo village

Setswan a	isiXho sa	isiZul u	Sesot ho	Sepe di	isiNdeb ele	isiSw ati	XiVen da	xiTson ga
59/76=7 8%	7/76= 9%	1/76= 1%	9/76= 12	-	-	-	-	-

(ii) Logagane village

Setswana	IsiXh osa	isiZu lu	Sesot ho	Sepe di	isiNdeb ele	isiSw ati	XiVen da	xiTson ga
96/96=10 0%	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

From these data it is clear that Setswana is the major home language in these rural areas. As expected, in Setlopo village I found a few smaller home languages (isiXhosa and Sesotho) mainly because of the informal settlement in this village.

6.1.2.1.1.2 Language choice (see Pluddeman et al, 2004:38)

The data for Question 2 and 3 will be reported in conjunction with each other as they have a reciprocal influence on the category above.

Question 2: What language(s) are spoken in your village?

Question 3: In which language do you most communicate in your village?

Responses:

(i) Setlopo village

Question 2:

Setswan a	IsiXhos a	isiZ ulu	Sesotho	Sepe di	isiNde bele	IsiSw ati	xiVe nda	xiTso nga
43/76=5 7%	23/76=3 0%	-	21/76=2 8%	-	-	-	-	-

Question 3:

Setswan a	isiXho sa	isiZu lu	Sesot ho	Sepe di	isiNdeb ele	IsiSw ati	XiVen da	xiTson ga
70/77=9 2%	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

(ii) Logagane village

Question 2:

Setswan a	isiXho sa	isiZu lu	Sesot ho	Sepe di	isiNdeb ele	IsiSw ati	XiVen da	xiTson ga
95/96=9 9%	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

Question 3:

Setswana	IsiXh osa	isiZu lu	Sesot ho	Sepe di	isiNdeb ele	IsiSw ati	XiVen da	xiTson ga
96/96=10 0%	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

The finding is that the language of choice in all interactions is more often Setswana. This supports the idea that people in rural areas have a stronger

Setswana background than any other languages. Furthermore these people feel more comfortable using their heritage language and are more confident in using their home languages for communication (cf Edward, 2004:11 and Robinson, 1992:33) I hypothesised that the language of choice in interaction with community members would correspond largely to home language use (see Chapter 5(5.3.1.1). As can be noticed, Setswana has large percentages for question 2 and 3 even though there are other languages that are spoken especially in Setlopo village.

6.1.2.1.1.3 Language proficiency (see Pluddeman et al, 2004:38)

The data for Question 4 and 5 will be reported in conjunction with each other as they have a reciprocal influence on the category above.

Question 4: What is the standard of your conversational proficiency in English?

Question 5: What is the standard of the general formal (reading and writing) proficiency in English?

Responses:

(i) Setlopo village

Question 4

Excellent <i>4/76= 5%</i>	Good <i>23/76=30%</i>	Poor <i>34/76=45%</i>	Can not speak the language <i>10/76=13%</i>
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Question 5

Excellent $4/76=5\%$	Good $23/76=30\%$	Poor $30/76=39\%$	Can not write in English $15/76=20\%$
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(ii) Logagane village

Question 4

Excellent $3/96=3\%$	Good $24/96=25\%$	Poor $38/96=40\%$	Can not speak the language $31/96=32\%$
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Question 5

Excellent $3/96=3\%$	Good $19/96=20\%$	Poor $40/96=42\%$	Can not write in English $32/96=33\%$
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A large number of respondent who judge their own formal and conversational English proficiency is between 45% and 39% (poor) for Setlopo village and between 40% and 42% (poor) for Logagane village. Those who can not speak and write the language is between 13% and 20% in Setlopo village and between 32% and 33% in Logagane village. The numbers are very low as compared to the language the respondents communicate with amongst themselves, which is Setswana at the most. This is a clear indication that they have not been exposed to English as a national language. Only a small percentage of the respondents consider their own conversational English to be good and excellent (30% and 5%

respectively) in Setlopo village; (20% and 3% respectively) in Logagane village and formal English (5%) in Setlopo village; (3%) in Logagane village. My language proficiency hypotheses states that reported speaking, reading and writing proficiency of the respondents in English will be significantly lower and high in their mother tongue.

Therefore, from the above figures one can deduce that the respondents will have trouble reading, speaking and understanding the language. The large percentage of poor and illegibility to speak and write is a good indicator that the respondents experience language barrier whenever services are communicated to them in English and as a result they are disadvantaged in accessing available public services and programmes through the Government internal and external communication.

6.1.2.1.1.4 Language dominance and language preference (see Pluddeman et al, 2004:38)

It is clear that Setswana is the dominant language for 78% of Setlopo village respondents and 100% for Logagane village based on the home language, and the most language used for communication in the communities for 92% of Setlopo respondents and 100% of Logagane respondents. An interesting revelation is that 54% of Setlopo respondents and 63% of Logagane respondents indicated that they receive notices, information letters of government services in English, and 70% of Setlopo respondents and 42% of Logagane respondents can read these documents. 22% of Setlopo respondents and 48% of Logagane respondents access the services mentioned by asking help from those who understand the language. A contradiction in Setlopo village respondents can be noticed as 39% of them have indicated previously (see question 5) that they have poor reading skills in English

but 70% can read documents of government services in English. One expected a fair report like for Logagane respondents where 42% of them have indicated that their English reading skills are poor and 48% ask help from those who can read the language. The question on literacy level was set to support responses on question 4 and 5 from the respondents. Thus the response from question 14 is as follows:

Question14: How much school have you completed, check the level of previous grade attended or highest degree received.

(i)Setlopo village

Grade 6 (STD 4)	Grade 9 (STD 7)	Grade 12 (Matric)	Professi onal Diploma	Techni cal Diplo ma	Bachel ors Degree	Post- gradu ate Degre e	Did not attend any formal schooli ng
18/76=2 4%	20/76=2 6%	26/76=3 4%	3/76=4%	2/76=3 %	-	-	3/76=4 %

(ii)Logagane village

Grade 6 (STD 4)	Grade 9 (STD 7)	Grade 12 (Matric)	Professi onal Diploma	Techni cal Diplo ma	Bachel ors Degree	Post- gradu ate Degre e	Did not attend any formal
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							schooling
36/96=3 8%	14/96=1 5%	20/96=2 1%	-	-	-	-	23/6=2 4%

The level of literacy of respondents in the two villages is very low. Therefore it can be plausibly argued that most of the respondents, in the transformed educational South African reality, are currently unable to participate more fully in economic and political arenas (cf. Ngubane 2009; Webb and Kembo-Sure, 2000). Literature review suggested some support for the premise that servicing the majority with the language they understand best can be helpful especially for people who are not conversant with English (cf. Edwards, 2004:155 and Alexander, 1985:5)

The response on communication between government employees and the respondents in the two villages is as follows:

Question 8: What language is used by government employees in their offices during your visit for services?

(i) Setlopo village

Setswana	English	Afrikaans
51/76=67%	22/76=29%	-

(ii) Logagane village

Setswana	English	Afrikaans
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51/96=53%	33/96=34%	-
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My hypothesis that government documents are disseminated in English but the question on communication would be the opposite was proved correct. The above data supports the idea that there is a strong dominance of Setswana compared to the number of respondents who report that English is the language of communication in government domains. Secondly one can surmise that the remarkably high percentages of Setswana speaking government employees in the two government departments sampled, and the dominance of Setswana in the North West Province has influenced the responses reported.

6.1.2.2 Findings from the Department of Social Development and South African Social Security Agency (Phase 2)

A total of 28 respondents from the department of Social Development and 30 from South African Social Security Agency participated in the government departments' survey. The sample consisted of 30 respondents in each department. The remainders from the department of Social Development were not returned.

6.1.2.2.1 Language repertoire

Question 1: Which languages are spoken in your department?

Responses:

(i) Department of Social Development

Setswana	English	Afrikaans	isiXhosa	isiZulu	Sesotho	Sepedi	xiVenda	xiTsonga	IsiSwati
26/28= 93%	22/28= 79%	12/28= 43%							

(ii) South African Social Security Agency

Setswana	English	Afrikaans	isiXhosa	isiZulu	Sesotho	Sepedi	xiVenda	xiTsonga	IsiSwati
23/30= 77%	17/30= 57%	5/30= 17%							

From these data it is clear that there are 3 language varieties spoken in the two government departments of the North West Province, namely Setswana (93% and 77%), English (79% and 57%) and Afrikaans (43% and 17%). Afrikaans is used to a much smaller extent followed by English. As expected, Setswana has a large percentage of respondents because of the statistics given (cf. 6.1.2). Despite the Setswana dominance in both departments, 46% of the Social development respondents indicated that the public is serviced in English whilst 20% of the South

African Social Security Agency respondents have indicated that the public is serviced in English. The response for language used for servicing the public is as follows:

Question 6: In which language is the public mostly serviced?

(i) Department of Social Development

Setswana	English	Afrikaans	All official languages
6/28=21%	13/28=46%	-	5/28=18%

(ii) South African Social security Agency

Setswana	English	Afrikaans	All official languages
12/30=40%	6/30=20%	-	7/30=23%

A distinction is noticed between the two departments for English and Setswana percentages. There is a link in question 1 and 6 for South African Social Security agency when the Department of Social Development has given the opposite response, meaning that English enjoys by far the strongest position in this department. My hypothesis is confirmed with South African Social Security Agency only. There is a complete correspondence of question 6 and 12 in this department where 96% of the respondents strongly agree that people should be serviced in the language that they understand best, especially those that have been disadvantaged through past policy.

The large number of percentages in English for the Department of Social Development could be indicative of the historical background which resulted in language inequality where “the dominance of English and Afrikaans created an unequal relationship between these languages and the African languages” (cf. DAC, 2003:8). Contrary to the dominance of English in the Department of Social Development, however, 71% of the respondents strongly agree that people should receive services in the language they understand best, especially those who have been disadvantaged through past policy.

6.1.2.2.2 Language choice

Even though the meetings are conducted in English, the language of communication in these meetings was indicated as follows:

Question 5: Is the staff allowed to communicate in the language they understand best in these meetings?

Response:

(i)Department of Social Development

Always	Almost always	Only sometimes	Not at all
8/28=29%	8/28=29%	12/28=43%	-

(ii)South African Social Security Agency

Always	Almost always	Only sometimes	Not at all
11/30=37%	10/30=33%	6/30=20%	3/30=10%

From these data a minimal percentage of the respondents in South African Social Security Agency (37%) is always and (33%) almost always allowed to communicate in the language they understand best; it is assumed that this language is Setswana, according to the report given (cf. 6.1.2.2.1) and for the fact that Setswana is widely used in these departments; but this is different with the Department of Social Development where a large percentage of respondents (43%) is only sometimes allowed to communicate in the language they understand best, the popularity of English reflects its powerful position and ensuing desire to speak it. It is therefore not surprising that the language this department uses to service the public is English. One can rightly argue that English is still valued more than other official languages. This brings us to the literature review that English is the language of business, that African languages can not be used in public domains of life or any other public business. (cf. Chapter 1:1.1; Mutasa, 2000:15; Webb and Kembo-Sure 2004).

6.1.2.2.3 Language proficiency

The data for Question 14 and 15 will be reported in conjunction with each other as they have a reciprocal influence on the category above.

Question 14: What is the standard of your conversational proficiency in English?

Question 15: What is the standard of the general formal (reading and writing) proficiency in English?

Responses:

(i) Department of Social Development

Question 14

Very poor -	Poor -	Good 16/28=57%	Very good 6/28=21%	Excellent 4/28=14%
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Question 15

Very poor -	Poor -	Good 13/28=46%	Very good 9/28=32%	Excellent 6/28=21%
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(ii) South African Social Security Agency

Question 14

Very poor -	Poor -	Good 18/30=60%	Very good 5/30=17%	Excellent 6/30=20%
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Question 15

Very poor -	Poor -	Good 16/30=57%	Very good 8/30=27%	Excellent 6/30=20%
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The language proficiency profile from the above data shows that a large number of respondents from the two government departments, (57% and 46%) in Social

Development and (60% and 57%) in South African Social Security Agency have good oral, reading and writing skills in English. The percentages for very good and excellent conversational and formal proficiency in both departments are remarkably low. These percentages concur with the ‘excellent’ percentages of the language spoken in these departments (cf. 6.1.2.2.1). One can deduce that English is a second if not third language to the majority of the respondents. If Setswana can be spoken very well more than English, why then communicate with the public in English?

6.1.2.2.4 Language dominance and language preference

The data for Question 3 and 4 will be reported in conjunction with each other as they have a reciprocal influence on the category above.

Question 3: Which language do you use for conducting meetings?

Question 4: In what language do you write/receive minutes of these meetings?

Responses:

(i) Department of Social Development

Question 3

Setswana	English	Afrikaans	All official languages
-	26/28=93%	-	-

Question 4

Setswana	English	Afrikaans	All official languages
-	28/28=100%	-	-

(ii) South African Social Security Agency

Question 3

Setswana	English	Afrikaans	All official languages
-	28/30=93%	-	-

Question 4

Setswana	English	Afrikaans	All official languages
-	30/30=100%	-	-

English is the dominant language for 93% and 100% respectively for both departments' respondents. Although the dominant language spoken in these departments is Setswana, meetings, are conducted in English and minutes are written and received in English as well. Despite the percentages indicated in English proficiency profile (cf. 6.1.2.2.3), this clearly indicates the status of English. It reflects how English is valued more than any other language.

The minimal percentage of respondents in the South African Social Security Agency who indicate that they are almost always allowed to communicate in Setswana and a large percentage of respondents in the Department of Social

Development who indicate that they are only sometimes allowed this opportunity is a further indication of the low status and value of Setswana. This relates closely to the point made by Perry that "...Government departments have decreased their use of Afrikaans, increased their use of English and largely ignored their obligations to use autochthonous languages..." (2004:121). Many scholars have cautioned that one of the reasons why indigenous languages are dying is because speakers are denied the opportunity to use these languages and negative attitudes exist towards these languages by the speakers themselves. The principles of parity of esteem and equity are either misinterpreted or not considered to be important in these departments.

My hypothesis that English would be a dominant language in the government departments was proved correct. One may conclude that there is a strong preference for English in administrative matters in the two government departments.

6.1.2.2.5 Language policy and implementation

The data for Question 7, 8, 9, 10, 11 and 13 will be reported in conjunction with one other as they have a reciprocal influence on the category above.

Question 7: is there a language unit which offers translation and interpreting services in your department?

Question 8: If your answer is yes, are there qualified translators and interpreters in this unit?

Question 9: If your answer is no, how do you translate documents available for public consumption from English into other official languages?

Question 10: What language is used in the forms, posters, pamphlets etc. for enhancing access and disseminating information to rural communities?

Question 11: How familiar are you with the National Language Policy?

Question 13: How effectively do you feel that your department has applied language policy?

NB: Some of the questions were not answered and are represented by the number 12 (see Appendix K and M)

Responses:

(i) Department of Social Development

Question 7

YES	NO $28/28=100\%$
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Question 8

YES	NO $28/28=100\%$
-----	---------------------

Question 9

A. This is done by people who can speak these languages > $9/28=32\%$

B. The service is outsourced to translators outside the department >
 $5/28=18\%$

C. Documents are distributed to the public without translation >
 $10/28=35\%$

Question 10

Setswana	English	Afrikaans	All official languages
$2/28=7\%$	$12/28=43\%$	-	$11/28=39\%$

Question 11

Very Familiar

Not at all

5	4> $3/28=11\%$	3> $6/28=21\%$	2> $6/28=21\%$	1> $1/28=4\%$	0> $6/28=21\%$
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Question 13

A = Often > -

B = Sometimes > $8/28=29\%$

C = Almost never > $5/28=18\%$

D = Never > $10/28=35\%$

(ii) South African Social Security Agency

Question 7

YES $7/30=23\%$	NO $23/30=77\%$
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Question 8

YES	NO $23/30=77\%$
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Question 9

A. This is done by people who can speak these languages >
 $14/30=47\%$

B. The service is outsourced to translators outside the department >

7/30= 23%

C. Documents are distributed to the public without translation >

4/30=13%

Question 10

Setswana	English	Afrikaans	All official languages
2/30=7%	4/30=13%	-	13/30=43%

Question 11

Very Familiar

Not at all

5> 6/30=10 %	4> 3/30=10 %	3 >6/30=20 %	2>4/30=13 %	1>4/30=13 %	0>12/30=40 %
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Question 13

A = Often > 9/30=30%

B = Sometimes $>14/30=47\%$

C = Almost never $>3/30=10\%$

D = Never $>2/30=7\%$

From the above data, the findings are that there are no language units in both departments; this is reflected by high percentages of respondents; 100% in the Department of Social Development and 77% in the South African Social Security Agency. However 23% of respondents in the South African Social Security Agency agreed that there is a language unit but did not indicate whether there are qualified translators or interpreters for this unit. One wonders if the respondents do understand what a language unit is. According to (Perry, 2004:142), as set forth in Section 7, language units have the responsibility to implement language policy, especially with regard to intra- and inter-departmental communication (both oral and written), inter-governmental communication, and communication with the public.

When asked how they translate documents for public consumption without language units, 35% of respondents in the Department of Social Development indicated that they are distributed to the public without translation, when 32% indicated that the translation is done by people who can speak indigenous languages and 47% of respondents in the South African Social Security Agency gave the same answer. An interesting finding is that there is correspondence between this question and question 10 which asked about the language used in the forms, posters, pamphlets etc.; 43% of respondents in the Department of Social development which is the highest percentage amongst all responses, indicated that it is English and 43% of respondents in the South African Social security Agency indicated that information in forms, posters, pamphlets etc. is disseminated to rural

communities for enhancing access in all official languages. All official languages in this instance, means the official languages spoken in the province which is presumably Setswana, English and Afrikaans; and not all 11 official languages of the country. However, an interesting revelation is that in the data analysed the vast majority of respondents did not take cognisance of Afrikaans but always opted for Setswana and English in their answers.

Concerning familiarity to the National Language Policy, percentages of respondents in the Department of Social Development ranging from a scale of 0-2 (not familiar) added up together i.e. $21\%+4\%+21\%=48\%$ whereas a scale ranging from 3-4 (very familiar) added up together is $21\%+11\%=32\%$. In the South African Security Agency percentages from a scale of 0-2 are $40\%=13\%+13\%=66\%$ with a scale of 3-5 adding up to $20\%+20\%+10\%=40\%$. This means that 48% of respondents in the Department of Social development are not familiar with the National Language Policy and 32% are very familiar and in the South African Social Security Agency 66% percentage of respondents are not familiar when 32% percentage is very familiar.

Some 35% of the respondents in the Department of Social Development admitted that the language policy has never been applied in their department and 29% indicated that the language policy has sometimes been applied whilst 7% of the respondents in the South African Social Security Agency indicated that the language policy has never been applied and 29% indicating that it has sometimes been applied. As to whether the policy was made known to staff, a clear discrepancy is revealed. One can conclude that with the percentages of respondents not familiar with the language policy, it is impossible to apply it effectively in their departments.

6.2 Conclusion

The analysis of documents (cf. The South African Bill of Languages, National Language Policy Framework and Implementation Plan) in previous chapters reveals that the two government departments do not seem to understand the language clause in the Constitution and the Language Code of Conduct in the South African Bill of Languages and do not interpret it as an integrated whole. The official Language Policy is available but, if I may borrow Deprez and Du Plessis's words "there does not seem to be any real commitment to multilingualism" (2000:114). Factors mentioned in the language implementation Plan to be taken into account when making language choices at the regional level are not valid in these departments considering the unfamiliarity of the Language Policy that was shown by large percentages of respondents. Sharing the same sentiments with Deprez and Du Plessis (Ibid), one might rightly argue that by somehow preventing multilingual communication taking place in meetings conducted in the two departments, show "lack of commitment and uncertainty regarding the interpretation of principles of equity and parity of esteem". Despite what Dr BS Ngubane has reiterated about a framework for a language policy for South Africa, there is still lack of tolerance for linguistic diversity (cf. DAC,2003a:2-3).

Although the literature recognizes that there are language barriers to social services also evident from the data analysed in this research, close monitoring of the lawful implementation of the official language policy from Pan South African Language Board as a government watch dog is invisible. One wonders then that, if "all organs of state are enjoined to cooperate with the Board and may not interfere with its functioning in the execution of its mandate" (cf. PanSALB Annual Report

2009/10), why is there still ignorance of the Language Policy by government departments.

The fact that there are no language units and no qualified translators for government documents in the departments identified, is a clear indication that the body that is responsible to oversee this (PanSALB), deserves to be named a “toothless dog”, as observed by Perry (2003). It is expected of PanSALB to have long acted on ensuring that there are language units in the government departments that do not have them, since we are now into 18 years of democracy.

The two government departments identified are commended for mostly communicating orally in personal contact with the public in Setswana but in written communication English appear to be unchallenged. For argument sake, oral communication is in Setswana for the mere fact that 93% and 77% of respondents reported that Setswana is the spoken language in these departments and the English conversational and formal proficiency in both departments are remarkably low.

My survey brought to light that the two government departments identified have not yet adopted the language policy, and the majority is not familiar with the National Language Policy. It is also striking that the language used in official documents is mostly in English as indicated. Therefore one may conclude that these departments almost completely disregard a formal policy but their form of

informal accommodation of Setswana language usage and preferences of their communities, in Deprez and Du Plessis's words (2000: 118.) "seems to have provided a reasonably format for addressing the language question".

6.3 Recommendations

- Pan South African Language Board should appear as a "warm body" and not as a "toothless watch dog". Action should be taken to all government agents that disregard the constitutional directive to promote African Languages. It should in the true sense, be a "pro-active agent for, and a watchdog over, linguistic rights and must perform its duties without fear, favor or prejudice" (cf. PanSALB Report 2009/10).
- The previously established Language Research Development Centres (LRDCs) at Universities should be reinstated to curb their tangible efforts to develop African Languages. If their overriding aim "was to effectively develop the official indigenous languages to ensure their public usage in important fields... and were required for the successful implementation of the National Language Policy Framework" (cf. Chapter 1:1.7) it is, nevertheless, difficult to understand why were they eroded. Above all it is not clear why PanSALB did not intervene about the sustainability of these centers.
- My main recommendation is that the government departments be literally supported in implementing the Language Policy where necessary be pressurized to adopt The National Language Policy and the South African Languages Bill as soon as possible. These documents should not be left to

gather dust, and lip-service should be a thing of the past. As observed by Pludemann et al (2000:99) "the adoption and – crucially- the resourcing of the policy" would enable most of the issues identified in this study to be addressed. These include amongst the others, African languages being considered among the priority areas for government funding.

- To overcome the challenge of an apparent official reluctance to implement the Language Policy, adequate emphasis should be placed on Language Policy training. Each department should consider all-the-year round language opportunities where qualified translators, interpreters and the whole staff is trained on proficiency, Language Policy and Language Code of Conduct.
- Sensitivity to high illiteracy level of rural communities can curb the linguistic barriers and social inequalities and thus cater for language needs of the masses. This refers to disseminating official documents in English (cf. 6.1.2.2.5). People who cannot speak English should not be made to feel that there is a divide between them and the elites or people who are proficient in this language. Government officials and ministers should communicate with the masses in the languages they understand best in order to make the language policy realize its goal.
- Implementing policy from above as many authors have disregarded in this study should be reconsidered. Language policy planners should involve the masses within the current political framework of a language policy. Rural communities' views should be included about language use, attitudes towards use and access to resources. It should not just be assumed that every

body is technologically advanced and therefore can access government services through e.g. the internet. This implies that restricting participation in local and national affairs to few, who can use English, makes mass participation impossible.

- Knowledge of English is still a prerequisite for appointment and promotion in state institutions and for access to government information, thus non-speakers are excluded from state jobs and alienated from mass participation (cf. Benjamin in Fargon and Graham, 1994: 98). The state must put in action the process that will facilitate equal opportunities for all languages especially the previously disadvantaged. Multilingualism has long been preached, it is now time that it should be practiced. As Deprez and Du Plessis (2000; 114) rightly opine, the principle of constitutionalism should be respected and a legal meaning should be afforded to all, so that none is reduced to a mere symbolic status.
- The superior role assigned to English in all government domains needs to be regarded as meaningless, all official languages must be used regularly so that multilingualism is perceived to be a reality.
- In view of the evident discrepancy between language policies and language practices in the government departments identified, the Department of Arts and Culture and Pan South African Language Board should take the lead as Government policy implementation agents tasked with language issues. Giving narrated reports after reports bares no fruition.

- There is a need, as Pludemann et al (2000: 101) lament, for ongoing, updated and targeted language surveys as one indispensable source of information for the unfolding policy process. This implies that language surveys where there is evidence of unequal access like the one I have conducted in this research will speed up the process of language policy implementation. The two government agents above will see the urgency of language importance for nation-building in the country.
- The use of Setswana should not be limited to oral communication in the North West Province as revealed in the survey; it should also be used in higher functions like education, business and modern media such as Information Communication Technology.
- There is a dire need for immediate redress in matters pertaining to language. Therefore it is vital that public figures ensure successful communication with the populace (cf. Ngcobo, 2009). To effectively achieve this, the use of indigenous languages is highly recommended.

This thesis has shown that there seems to be lack of vision concerning language usage from the point of view of the relevant stakeholders. It is argued that this attitude should be addressed and eliminated and that a functional approach to the language question be put under fierce and forceful consideration as a way forward.

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