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# A case study of civil society organisations' initiatives for the development and promotion of linguistic human rights in Zimbabwe (1980-2004)

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# CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION AND RATIONALE FOR THE RESEARCH

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## 1.1 Introduction

*A case study of civil society organizations' initiatives for the development and promotion of linguistic human rights in Zimbabwe* (*1980-2004),* is a research project that I undertook with the intention of investigating the efforts and initiatives embarked on by the minority language groups in Zimbabwe geared towards the promotion and development of their languages. I undertook this study in the context of growing concerns about the fate of minority languages globally and in particular the threat posed by dominant languages towards the non-dominant languages. This threat has manifested itself through language shift and death, giving currency to recent phenomena such as language endangerment (Krauss, 1992; Crystal, 2000; Grenoble and Whaley, 1998a).

The minority language groups in Zimbabwe argue that their languages are endangered and have initiated measures to develop and promote their endangered languages. This perception that Zimbabwean minority language groups are endangered is captured in the words of Saul Gwakuba Ndlovu, Chairman of the Zimbabwe Indigenous Languages Promotion Association (ZILPA) as follows:

> [T]he damage inflicted on the so called 'minority' languages and cultures is so immense that there is need for swift action to arrest the rapid movement towards

> extinction of these languages. These languages and cultures are on the verge of being assimilated by the so-called 'majority' [languages] and we are suffering from 'cultural ambiguity'. On the one hand we are battling to preserve the remains of our formerly colourful cultures yet on the other we are being strenuously stretched to accommodate new cultures, which are imposed on us from other languages (cited in Mumpande 2006: 36-37).

Organized resistance to the linguistic status quo by minority language groups in Zimbabwe is traced to the formation of the Tonga Language and Cultural Organization (TOLACO) in 1976. (The acronym TOLACO is also used to stand for Tonga Language Committee e.g. Mumpande 2006: 54.) The Tonga language is one of the six officially recognized minority languages in Zimbabwe, the other five being Nambya, Kalanga, Sotho, Venda and Shangani. The Tonga people, through TOLACO, are recognized as the drivers of resistance to the marginalization of minority languages in Zimbabwe. TOLACO managed to mobilize the other five minority language groups leading to the formation of ZILPA in March 2001. This thesis traces the initiatives undertaken by the minority language groups in Zimbabwe, starting with the early stages in which the struggles for the language rights of minority language groups were spearheaded by TOLACO, as an organization representing one language group, the Tonga, to the present stage where six minority language groups collectively mobilize for their rights under ZILPA.

In Section 1.2 I present the rationale for the research followed by a presentation of the aim and research questions that were addressed by this thesis in Section 1.3. Section 1.4 presents an overview of the thesis.

## 1.2 Research Rationale

This section provides a rationale for the research project. Section 1.2.1 introduces the notion of language endangerment from a global perspective in order to highlight the

broader context for language revitalization efforts in diverse global contexts. Section 1.2.2 introduces the notion of language endangerment within an African context. In Section 1.2.3 I provide a conceptual overview of the phenomena of language revival, language reversal, language revitalization, language empowerment and language management, all of which are used to describe responses that are employed in order to broadly address the problems associated with the marginalization of minority languages.

### 1.2.1 The Notion of Language Endangerment

Language endangerment is a subject that has attracted a wide range of scholarship in recent years (Crystal, 2000; Grenoble and Whaley, 1998a; Brenzinger, 1998; Matsumura, 1998; Ostler, 1998). As Batibo (2005) observes, language endangerment and death are phenomena that have recently "become matters of great concern not only to linguists but also to politicians, ethnographers, language planners and decision makers all over the world" (p. vii). He further notes that, the outcry is becoming louder and louder, particularly after the release of some alarming statistics such as those of Michael Krauss (1992), that predict that by the end of the twenty-first century only 600 languages will remain on the face of the earth, meaning that 90% of the world's languages will have perished. Similarly, Skutnabb-Kangas (2000) observes that "[l]anguages, and with them, cultures, are dying today at a pace faster than ever before in human history" (p. xx). Crystal (2000) chronicles the near frantic responses that have followed the publicisation of the scale of language shift and death of the world's languages. (See Appendix A for a list of some of the organizations working on endangered languages.) At the International Linguistics Conference held in Quebec in 1992, linguists called on UNESCO to take urgent measures to address the problem:

> As the disappearance of any one language constitutes an irretrievable loss to mankind, it is for UNESCO a task of great urgency to respond to the situation by promoting and, if possible, sponsoring programs of linguistic organizations for the description in the form of grammars, dictionaries and texts, including the

> recording of oral literatures, of hitherto unstudied or inadequately documented endangered languages (quoted in Crystal 2000: vii).

In response to the challenge, UNESCO's General Assembly adopted the "Endangered Languages Project" and the "Red Book of Endangered Languages" in November 1993. UNESCO observed:

> Although its exact scope is not yet known, it is certain that the extinction of languages is progressing rapidly in many parts of the world, and it is of the highest importance that the linguistic profession realize that it has to step up its descriptive efforts (quoted in Crystal, 2000: vii).

The institutionalization of work on endangered languages has followed, especially with the inauguration of an International Clearing House on Endangered Languages at the University of Tokyo as well as the Endangered Language Fund in the United States of America in 1995. In its opening statement, the Endangered Language Fund made the following exhortation to language professionals:

> Languages have died off throughout history, but never have we faced the massive extinction that is threatening the world right now. As language professionals we are faced with a stark reality: Much of what we study will not be available to future generations. The cultural heritage of many peoples is crumbling while we look on. Are we willing to shoulder the blame for having stood by and done nothing? (Quoted in Crystal 2000: vii.)

In the United Kingdom, the response was also in the form of a Foundation for Endangered Languages which was established in 1995. This Foundation, in its second newsletter, also provided its own assessments of the scale of language endangerment as well as the likely prospects:

> There is agreement among linguists who have considered the situation that over half of the world's languages are moribund, i.e. not effectively being passed on to the next generation. We and our children, then, are living at the point in human history where, within perhaps two generations, most languages in the world will die out (quoted in Crystal, 2000: viii).

The 1990's thus witnessed a "universal upsurge of professional linguistic concern" (Crystal, 2000: viii) about the world's endangered languages which saw the establishment of bodies, and the holding of conferences on language endangerment. It is with a sense of relief that Mithun (1998) observes the attention that language endangerment has finally attracted:

> At long last the tragedy of language loss worldwide has begun to enter the public conscious. In the past, individual communities and linguists have grieved over the disappearance of particular languages, but until recently the general public has been unaware of the accelerating loss of one of our most valuable human intellectual resources (p. 163).

The global response occasioned by an awakening to the problem of language endangerment, is captured by Batibo (2005) in the following terms:

> The rapidly growing concern over the problem among linguists can be seen in the number of conferences which have been organized in recent years to discuss aspects of language endangerment and death in international linguistics congresses, the creation of centers all over the world for research and custody of information on the endangered languages, the provision of funds by foundations and other non-governmental organizations towards the empowerment of the endangered languages, and the recent heavy involvement of UNESCO in making consultations on how to deal with the problem of language shift and death among the minority languages (p. vii).

This study, therefore, takes place in the context of frantic responses to save the world's endangered languages. In Section 1.2.2, I address the notion of language endangerment within the African context.

### 1.2.2 Language Endangerment in Africa

Batibo (2005) provides a useful typology for understanding language endangerment in Africa. He argues that African languages are generally marginalized and restricted to the primary domains, while in contrast exoglossic languages such as English and French are the preferred languages in the critical domains such as education, administration of justice, public administration as well as the media. The result is a contestation for space, which Batibo argues, takes place between the ex-colonial languages and the dominant African languages, with the result that the minority African languages are marginalized and suffer the risk of language shift and death.

Batibo (2005) provides a useful definition of a minority language in the African context:

> Sociolinguistically, a minority language is defined not only by its relative demographic inferiority but also, and more so, by its limited public functions. Thus, a minority language can be identified horizontally by looking at its weak or non-dominant position in relation to other languages in the region or nation, and vertically on the basis of its low status and absence of use in public or official areas (p. 51).

According to this definition, minority languages are largely characterized on the basis of their marginalization and exclusion from serving in secondary domains, and not on the basis of demographics. This, according to Batibo (2005), is the reason why the ex-colonial languages although spoken by just a few educated people in most countries, are not considered to be minority languages. On the contrary, most of the African languages would be designated as minority languages in view of their relative demographic, political and socio-economic inferiority.

Batibo (2005) identifies two possible scenarios that account for language endangerment. The first scenario is when the weaker language is subjected to pressure from the stronger language. The pressure could take the form of political domination, socio-economic attraction or social gain. The second scenario occurs when the speakers of the weaker language see many advantages in joining the speech community of the stronger language. In such a case, the speakers of the weaker language may not resist at all, but abandon their language in favour of the other as a strategy for integration. These two scenarios, according to Batibo (2005), present the minority languages (the weaker languages) as being at the mercy of the dominant languages (the stronger languages). Further, Batibo (2005) observes that in most African countries, there are dominant endoglossic languages that are not only demographically superior but also socio-economically prestigious. These languages, which often serve as lingua francae for inter-ethnic communication at local, national or regional levels, are usually standardized and reasonably codified. Batibo characterizes the dominant endoglossic languages as normally having a relatively stable orthography, a comprehensively described grammar and a useful dictionary or glossary. According to Batibo (2005), a further advantage of the dominant endoglossic languages over the minority endoglossic languages is that they have designated roles to play. In most African countries, the dominant endoglossic languages are used together with the ex-colonial language in some official settings, such as lower education, mass media, some sections of the judiciary and legislature, and local government. According to Batibo (2005) dominant endoglossic languages:

> … would normally have some form of prestige either areally (in a specific area within a country), nationally (within a given country), or regionally (across national borders). They would attract second language learners because of the socio-economic promotion, access to wider communication and their demographic superiority (p. 21).

Further, Batibo (2005) notes that in many African countries, the domains of the dominant endoglossic languages are expanding both upwards and downwards. For example,

countries with strong dominant endoglossic languages like Tanzania, Botswana, Ethiopia, Somalia and most of the Arab-speaking countries have seen their languages extending their roles to most of the secondary domains, with the ex-colonial languages only retaining currency in international and technical domains. In expanding downwards, the dominant endoglossic languages have taken over the domains of the minority endoglossic languages as their use has even extended to the village and the family. It is this downward expansion of the dominant endoglossic languages that constitutes a threat to the minority endoglossic languages.

In this section, I have introduced the notion of language endangerment in Africa in order to locate the study in the literature on language endangerment within the global context. In Chapter 3, which reviews the literature relevant to this study, I revisit the notion of language endangerment in Africa and globally. Below, in Section 1.2.3, I present a conceptual overview of the phenomena used to describe responses that are employed by communities that resist the shift to dominant languages.

### 1.2.3 Resisting Language Shift: A Conceptual Overview

The global concern with the fate of minority languages has given rise to new directions in scholarly literature concerned with a study of responses of speech communities whose languages are perceived to be endangered (e.g. Fishman, 1991; Fishman, 2001a; Dauenhauer and Dauenhauer, 1998; Grinevald, 1998; Batibo, 2005; Crystal, 2000; Bamgbose, 2000). For Paulston, Chen and Connerty (1993), one of the effects of such an upsurge has been the considerable conceptual confusion that has arisen from terminologies coined to explain the various efforts undertaken to develop and promote endangered languages These terminologies include language empowerment (e.g. Batibo, 2005, Bamgbose, 2000); language revitalization (e.g. Stroud, 2001; Crystal, 2000); language revival (e.g. Bentahila and Davies, 1993); language regenesis (e.g. Paulston, Chen and Connerty, 1993) and language management (e.g. Spolsky, 2004). For purposes of this thesis, I find Paulston, Chen and Connerty's (1993) distinctions most useful. They argue that:

> [L]anguage revival, language revitalization, and language reversal constitute three separate phenomena, subsumed under the concept of language regenesis (p. 275).

For Paulston et al., (1993) language *revival* refers to:

> [T]he giving of new life to a dead language, or the act of reviving a language after discontinuance and making it the normal means of communication in a speech community (p. 276).

Language *reversal* refers to the turning around of present trends in a language. According to Paulston et al. (1993), the concept of language reversal can in turn be subdivided into three types: legal reversal, reversal of shift, and rebound of an exoglossic language. Legal reversal involves situations within a state whereby the legal status of a language already in use is recognized. Reversal of shift refers to the actions of individuals belonging to linguistic minorities within a state seeking to increase the use of their common language. Rebound of an exoglossic language refers to its re-acceptance after a period of rejection. The exoglossic language is re-accepted primarily for economic advantage and communication with the world community.

For Paulston et al. (1993), language *revitalization* refers to "the imparting of new vigour to a language still in limited or restricted use, most commonly by increased use through the expansion of domains" (p. 276).

Following Paulston et al. (1993), the efforts at changing the status of the minority languages in Zimbabwe can be classified as both cases of language reversal and language *revitalization* because the language groups seek legal acknowledgement by the state (legal reversal), shift and increase in usage of the languages (reversal of shift) and the expansion of domains of use (language revitalization). In this thesis, the term language revitalization is preferred and used to refer to the efforts of the minority language communities in Zimbabwe to develop and promote their languages. Thus, it is assumed

that revitalization, defined as the imparting of new vigour to minority languages through the expansion of domains, subsumes the notions of language reversal, language empowerment, and language management.

Linguistic human rights has emerged as an influential paradigm in resisting language shift and language death. The notion of linguistic human rights arises from a marriage of language rights with human rights such that language rights are considered to be so fundamental and so inalienable that no state or any other person is allowed to violate them (Skutnabb-Kangas, 2000). Human rights are supposed to be the rights that every individual has, simply by being human. In a similar vein, Phillipson (1992) argues that:

> Universal rights represent a normative standard, an inherent right which the state cannot be justified in restricting. In this sense they do not need arguments to legitimate them. They are absolute or inalienable rights (p. 93).

By couching their arguments in the linguistic human rights discourse, the civil society organizations fighting for the language rights of minority language groups in Zimbabwe seek to present their case as a legitimate fight for the respect for human rights. The notion of linguistic human rights is central to this study and is discussed in depth in Chapter 3, Section 3.5.2.

## 1.3 Research Aim and Questions

The **aim** of this research was to investigate the contributions of particular organs of civil society in Zimbabwe, such as the Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace in Zimbabwe (CCJP(Z)), Silveira House, Save the Children Fund-United Kingdom (SCF-UK), and the African Languages Research Institute (ALRI) based at the University of Zimbabwe (UZ). These organizations have worked with grassroots-based organizations made up of the speakers of the minority endoglossic languages, in particular the Tonga Language and Culture Organization (TOLACO) and the Zimbabwe Indigenous

Languages Promotion Association (ZILPA). This aim led to the following **research question**:

> How have specific organs of civil society in Zimbabwe contributed to the development and promotion of linguistic human rights, and in particular the linguistic rights of minority endoglossic languages post-independence (1980 to 2004)?

The study raised the following **sub questions:**

- How are concerns regarding minority endoglossic linguistic rights constituted by civil society organizations in Zimbabwe?
- What is the vision of civil society organizations with respect to minority endoglossic linguistic rights in Zimbabwe?
- What would the recognition of linguistic rights mean in terms of transformed practices in this context?
- How have the organs of civil society responded to the existing linguistic status quo between the minority endoglossic languages on the one hand and English, Shona and Ndebele (as the languages of state policy) on the other?

## 1.4 Overview of the Thesis

In this chapter, I have provided the rationale for this the study by highlighting how concerns with language endangerment have resulted in frantic responses aimed at revitalizing endangered languages and concerns to reverse the processes of language shift and language death. In Chapter 1, I have also discussed the notions of language reversal, language renewal and language revitalization as the conceptual framework that informs this study. In this chapter, I have stated the aim and research questions addressed by this study.

Chapter 2 provides a discussion of the methodology adopted for this study. I identify my study as being located within the area of critical policy research. This chapter describes

the research as a qualitative case study where the primary modes of data collection included interviews with primary informants, as well as the collection of documentary materials that describe the activities of the various organs of civil society in Zimbabwe. The final section of this chapter describes the thesis' approaches to the organization of the data for purposes of analysis.

Chapter 3 presents a review of the literature relevant to this study. I locate the study within the Critical Applied Linguistics paradigm, and in particular how it draws on Critical Theory. Chapter 3 also includes a discussion of the macro and micro-variables that contribute to the endangerment of non-dominant languages, the factors implicated in language endangerment in an African context, and the arguments that are advanced in favour of actions that seek to reverse the processes that contribute to the endangerment of the non-dominant languages. Further, the chapter includes a discussion of the theoretical frameworks advanced by theorists working in the area of reversing language shift, such as Fishman, Crystal, Skutnabb-Kangas, Phillipson and Adegbija. In the final section of this chapter, I examine some case studies of language revitalization efforts located in Botswana and Canada.

Chapter 4 discusses the contexts of the research. This includes a discussion of the African linguistic context, and in particular the high levels of multilingualism found in most African countries and how this has been characterized as a problem. The chapter also examines some of the initiatives undertaken by for example, the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and the United Nations Education Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), which are aimed at developing and promoting African languages. Chapter 4 also includes a discussion of the sociolinguistic situation of Zimbabwe. This includes a description of the patterns of language use in the country. I argue that the language policy of the country recognizes and seeks to develop and promote English, Shona and Ndebele as the languages of state policy. In this context, the minority endoglossic languages are neglected and speakers of these marginalized languages argue that their languages are endangered. Finally, Chapter 4 provides an overview of the civil society organization (CSOs) in Zimbabwe, the evolving attitudes of the state to CSOs, and how this

environment impacts on the CSOs involved in the struggle for the promotion and development of the minority endoglossic languages in this context.

Chapter 5 introduces the main actors in Zimbabwean civil society involved in efforts to develop and promote the endoglossic minority languages in the country: the Tonga Language and Cultural Organization, the Zimbabwe Indigenous Languages Promotion Association, the Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace in Zimbabwe, Silveira House, Save the Children Fund (UK), and the African Languages Research Institute. The chapter includes a description of the backgrounds of the organizations, the collaborative networks established by these organizations pertaining to the minority endoglossic language issue, as well as the ideological positions that inform their involvement in the struggle for the development and promotion of the minority endoglossic languages in Zimbabwe.

Chapters 6 and 7 present an analysis of the data. Chapter 6 focuses on the efforts that were aimed at attaining ideological consensus amongst the minority language communities on the desirability of the minority endoglossic language revitalization efforts, as well as the strategies that were used to achieve such an objective. This includes a discussion of the mobilization of the traditional leaders, particularly village chiefs and headmen; the workshops conducted in the villages and at schools with the School Development Committees aimed at conscientising the stakeholders on need to fight for their language rights; and the cultural festivals held in the minority language communities to celebrate the cultures of the people and to affirm their presence in the sociolinguistic milieu of the country.

Chapter 7 focuses on the efforts of the CSOs that were aimed at expanding the domains in which the minority endoglossic languages are used in Zimbabwe. The chapter is divided into two analytical sections. The first section includes a discussion of the advocacy and lobbying strategies designed to influence the status of minority endoglossic languages in the education system, as well as in the media, particularly radio and television. These are identified as ideological and politically-oriented minority language

revitalization strategies. The second section describes the technical and linguistically-oriented minority language revitalization strategies, in particular the measures instituted to address the corpus development of the minority endoglossic languages in Zimbabwe.

Chapter 8 summarizes the main findings of the research and concludes the thesis by suggesting possible areas for further research.

# CHAPTER TWO: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

2.1 Introduction
2.2 The Nature of the Study
    2.2.1 Critical Language Policy Research
    2.2.2 Case Study
2.3 Approaches to Data Collection
2.4 Research Setting and Participants
2.5 The Process of Data Collection
2.6 Modes of Data Collection
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    2.6.2 Documentary Materials
2.7 Data Organization

## 2.1 Introduction

This chapter describes the research methods adopted in this study. It includes a description of the nature of the study, the approaches used to collect data, the research setting, as well as the participants involved in the research. The chapter ends with a description of the processes adopted in organizing the data.

## 2.2 The Nature of the Study

The investigation draws on critical language policy (CLP) research as well as descriptive case study methodology.

### 2.2.1 Critical language policy research

Tollefson (2006) describes CLP research as part of a growing field of Critical Applied Linguistics that draws on Critical Theory. The focus of CLP research, according to Tollefson (2006), is two pronged. Firstly, CLP research focuses on offering an alternative to traditional, mainstream approaches to language policy research. In particular, CLP research is critical of the neoclassical approach (Tollefson, 1991) which emphasized an apolitical approach to language policy research. CLP research, on the contrary, interrogates the political nature of language policy in the creation and sustenance of social inequality (Tollefson, 2006). Secondly, CLP research aims at examining "the role of language policies in social, political, and economic inequality, with the aim of developing policies that reduce various forms of inequality" (Tollefson 2006: 43). In Chapter 3, Section 3.2, I elaborate on the rationale for locating this study within the Critical Applied Linguistics research paradigm.

### 2.2.2 Case Study

This investigation is a case study focusing on a number of organizations working collectively and at times separately to develop and promote the endoglossic minority languages in Zimbabwe. According to Cohen and Manion (1989) case studies recognize the "complexity and 'embeddedness' of social truth"; they are "strong in reality" and their "strength lies in their attention to the subtlety and complexity of the case in its own right" (p. 150). Further Yin (1994) adds that:

> [C]ase studies are the preferred strategy when 'how' and 'why' questions are being posed, when the investigator has little control over events, and when the focus is on a contemporary phenomenon within some real-life context (p. 1).

The descriptive nature of this study derives from the design of this research as a case study. According to Hammersley (1994), a case study researcher relies on thick description in "attempts to capture and portray the world as it appears to the people in it" (p. 179). The descriptive nature of case study research is also captured in the words of Freud (1953), cited in Walker (1994): "It still strikes me… as strange that the case studies I write should read like short stories" (p. 173). In a similar sense, this study provides elaborate descriptions of strategies, actions, initiatives and outcomes, all constituting the story of the efforts of Zimbabwean minority language groups to develop and promote their languages. An important consideration in case study research is whether the findings from this particular research which focuses on a particular context are generalizable. Punch (2005) observes that a common criticism of case study concerns its generalizability. According to Punch, "whether a case study should even seek to generalize, and claim to be representative, depends on the context and purposes of the particular project" (p. 146). In Chapter 8, where I discuss the findings of this research I contend with the question of the generalizability of the findings of this research. Drawing on my findings, I proposed a model for minority endoglossic language revitalization. At one level, the model functions as a desription of how successful minority language revitalization in Zimbabwe actually unfolded. At another level, the model functions as a set of guidelines to those engaged in attempts to revitalize marginalized languages, particularly in the African context, in a more general sense. In this sense, although generalization was not necessarily the objective of the research project, the findings are put forward as potentially applicable to other cases in which minority language communities engage in efforts to revitalize their languages.

## 2.3 Approaches to Data Collection

This study utilized a qualitative approach to data collection. Creswell (1994) defines qualitative research as "an enquiry process of understanding a social or human problem, based on building a complex, holistic picture, formed with words, reporting detailed views of informants, and conducted in a natural setting" (p. 1).

Further, two assumptions of qualitative research identified by Merriam (1988) are significant in understanding the nature of this mode of enquiry:

- Qualitative research is concerned primarily with **process**, rather than with outcomes or products;
- Qualitative research is **descriptive** in that the researcher is interested in process, meaning, and understanding gained through words and other modes of representation.

Qualitative approaches to data collection are important because of the ways in which they position the researcher and those being studied. Flick (1998) observes that in qualitative research,

> [S]ubjectivities of the researcher and of those being studied are part of the research process. Researchers' reflections on their actions and observations in the field, their impressions, irritations, feelings and so on, become data in their own right, forming part of the interpretation… (p. 6).

Skutnabb-Kangas (2000) addresses this positioning of the researcher and those being studied as an integral part of research on the struggles of linguistic minorities to attain linguistic human rights. For Skutnabb-Kangas (2000), qualitative research especially as undertaken with respect to marginalized linguistic communities, does not allow for the researcher to assume a detached, on-looker position, as positivistically oriented researchers would suggest. Skutnabb-Kangas (2000: xxiv) cites Gramsci (1971) who refers to such positivists as "abstract pedants, studying popular feelings; he does not feel with them". According to Skutnabb-Kangas (2000), Gramsci (1971) alerts researchers to the need to be real organic intellectuals:

> The popular element 'feels' but does not always know or understand; the intellectual element 'knows' but does not always understand and in particular

> does not always feel. The two extremes are therefore pedantry and philistinism on the one hand and blind passion and sectarianism on the other. Not that the pedant cannot be impassioned; far from it. Impassioned pedantry is every bit as ridiculous and dangerous as the wildest sectarianism and demagogy. The intellectual's error consists in believing that one can know without understanding and even more without feeling and being impassioned (not only for knowledge in itself but also for the object of knowledge): in other words that the intellectual can be an intellectual (and not a pure pedant) if distinct and separate from the people-nation, that is, without feeling the elementary passions of the people, understanding them and therefore explaining and justifying them in the particular historical situation and connecting them dialectically to the laws of history and to a superior conception of the world, scientifically and coherently elaborated, i.e. knowledge (Gramsci 1971: 418, cited in Skutnabb-Kangas 2000: xxiv).

I have cited Gramsci at length because his argument aptly summarizes the position I found myself assuming during the course of this research. I could not avoid identifying, feeling and being impassioned as I delved into the people's narratives about historical marginalization and dehumanization. These were important considerations as I sought to understand the efforts of the organs of civil society involved in struggles to develop and promote Zimbabwe's minority endoglossic languages; their successes and failures, their victories and losses, their impressions, feelings and irritations.

## 2.4 Research Setting and Research Participants

Ragin (1994) observes that qualitative research is strongly shaped by the choice of **research sites** and **research participants**. Further, Ragin (1994) observes that the choice of research sites and participants raises the issue of sampling which emerges at different points in the research process. In my own research, the initial decision I had to make involved sampling a group of cases relevant to this research. This process involved identifying the specific organs of civil society involved in the efforts to develop and

promote minority languages in Zimbabwe. Before embarking on his study, my knowledge of the various actors involved in these efforts was limited. My preliminary research before undertaking this study had alerted me to the existence of a grassroots organization, ZILPA, which represented some minority language groups in Zimbabwe. I was also aware that ZILPA was assisted in its effort by a Catholic Church affiliated Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) called Silveira House. I was not aware of the wide network of CSOs involved in the efforts to develop and promote the endoglossic minority languages.

On deciding to undertake this study, therefore, my preliminary focus was to investigate the initiatives of ZILPA, supported by Silveira House, aimed at addressing the problems arising from the minority languages in Zimbabwe. The decision to choose to focus on these organizations was therefore informed by my prior knowledge of the significant actors in civil society engaged with questions of language rights. The selection of these organs was, therefore, in Cohen and Manion's (1989) terms, based on purposive selection informed by the organizations' typicality and uniqueness. Creswell (1994) supports this selection strategy by pointing out that the idea of qualitative research is to purposefully select informants (or documents or visual material) that will best answer the research question. In line with this strategy, no attempt is made to randomly select informants. This selection strategy also finds support in the advice of Stake (1995) who states that, "we need to pick cases which are easy to get to and hospitable to our inquiry, perhaps for which a prospective informant can be identified and with actors (the people studied) willing to comment on certain draft materials" (p. 4).

Although I was conscious of my limited knowledge of the full extent of CSOs' engagement with questions of language rights in Zimbabwe, I did not expect to encounter a network as wide as it turned out to be. The extent of the collaborative networks around the mobilization for the rights of minority language groups in Zimbabwe constituted an initial setback in the way in which I had hoped to conduct the study. Firstly, the nature of my research question demanded that I pursue every civil society organization involved with minority language rights in Zimbabwe. The second complication arose from the fact

that I needed more time to conduct the fieldwork than I had initially anticipated. Thirdly, the extended time needed for the investigation and the larger network that was supposed to be covered meant more financial resources were needed. The net effect of these challenges in conducting the fieldwork was that the data collection process took longer than I had anticipated. However, the positive spin-off was that I was able to generate thick data on the efforts of CSOs involved in challenging the language policy of Zimbabwe.

## 2.5 The Process of data collection

My awareness of the fact that ZILPA operated as a grassroots organization run by individuals on a voluntary and part-time basis, led me to decide on using Silveira House as an entry point for this investigation. My intention was to widen my inquiry through theoretical sampling, a strategy widely used in qualitative case studies. Theoretical sampling is a term coined by Glaser and Strauss (1967) to describe the process of choosing new research sites or additional cases following directly from ideas developed in the first site in order to get an opportunity to confirm and deepen the insights developed in that setting. According to Ragin (1994), in theoretical sampling, the selection of new cases is not a matter of convenience, on the contrary, "the researcher's strategy evolves as his or her understanding of the research subject and the concepts it exemplifies matures… sampling is done in a way that aids the development of concepts and deepening the understanding of research subjects" (p. 99).

Similarly, my sampling process evolved as the data collection proceeded from one setting to the other. It was during my first interview with Adelaide Musekiwa, a Finance Officer at Silveira House, conducted on 5 July 2004 at Silveira House, that I became aware of the full extent of the networks established to champion the linguistic rights of the minority language groups in Zimbabwe. I was alerted to the existence of the following organs of civil society involved in different activities, all geared towards the development and promotion of the language rights of minority language groups in Zimbabwe:

(i) The Tonga Language and Cultural Organization (TOLACO) which had initiated the struggle for the development and promotion of the Tonga language as far back as 1976. TOLACO as the driver, had spearheaded the formation of ZILPA, by bringing on board other minority language groups like the Kalanga, the Nambya, the Venda, the Shangani and the Sotho;

(ii) The Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace in Zimbabwe (CCJP(Z), had provided financial and logistical support to TOLACO, through a project called the Binga Justice and Peace Project (BJPP), established in 1999 in the Binga District;

(iii) The Save the Children Fund (UK), a United Kingdom based organization, which started an education programme in the Binga District, and involved in the publication of textbooks in the Tonga language for use in schools;

(iv) The African Languages Research Institute (ALRI) at the University of Zimbabwe, involved in research and publication of material in the endoglossic languages, including the minority languages[1].

Thus, following my initial interview with personnel at Silveira House, I was able to establish the extent of CSOs involvement in the minority languages issue in Zimbabwe. My task was, therefore, to apply the principles of theoretical sampling in order to gain access to the main actors in those organizations. I needed to identify research participants in those sites who would be most useful in addressing the research questions. I also needed to identify document materials that I could collect from those sites that would help complement the interview data in providing a comprehensive picture of the processes under investigation. Therefore, my challenge was to identify individuals who would not only be willing to grant interviews, but who would also provide access to informative document data relevant to the investigation. I also had to decide on the kind of materials that would be helpful assuming I managed to gain access to such materials.

[1] The activities of these organs of civil society involved in the development and promotion of minority languages are discussed in greater detail in Chapter 5.

In an attempt to address these considerations, I was grappling with what Flick (1998) calls the demands of qualitative research and particularly the problem of access:

> [H]ow does the researcher secure the collaboration of his or her potential participants in the study? How does he or she achieve not only that a willingness is expressed, but that this also leads to concrete interviews or other data (p. 55).

A break through in the data collection process was achieved when Silveira House officials promised full co-operation in the research process, including availing their officials for interviews, as well as allowing me access to relevant documents.

## 2.6 Modes of Data Collection

Having gained access to Silveira House, the snowball sampling process enabled me to track informants in the selected CSOs. Two principal modes of data collection were used for this study: qualitative interviews and the collection of document materials. In the next sub-sections I provide an in-depth description of the data collection processes used for this investigation, starting with the research interviews.

### 2.6.1 Interviews

Cohen and Manion (1989) define a research interview as:

> [A] two-person conversation initiated by the interviewer for the specific purpose of obtaining research-relevant information, and focused by him [sic] on content specified by research objectives of systematic description, prediction, or explanation (p. 291).

The wide-spread use of the interview as a mode of data collection in qualitative research has given currency to what has come to be called qualitative interviewing (Rubin and

Rubin, 1995; Gaskell, 2000). According to Gaskell (2000), the term 'qualitative interviewing' is used to refer to interviews of a semi-structured type as distinct from the highly structured survey interview type in which a pre-determined series of questions is asked.

For purposes of this study, qualitative interviewing was considered appropriate because it enables the researcher to gain insights into the world of the main actors in this study. As Gaskell (2000) explains, "the qualitative interview provides the basic data for the development of an understanding of the relations between social actors and their situation" (p. 39). Further, the advantage of using the semi-structured interview is that it allows the researcher to use probes in order to get more information, seek clarification and to be able to continuously evaluate the progress of the interview and guide the conversation in line with the research objectives. For Rubin and Rubin (1995) the merit of the qualitative interview lies in the fact that:

> [T]hrough qualitative interviews, researchers evaluate all kinds of projects and programs, whether for social reform, or managerial improvement. Interviewers talk to people who are trying to solve social problems and examine their successes and failures (p. 4).

The interviews I conducted were aimed at gaining an insight into the stories behind the minority language revitalization projects and programs. Apart from the interviewee, Musekiwa, I was able to interview Ignatious Musona, the Silveira House Advocacy Officer responsible for advocacy activities on the minority language issue based in Harare. Musona's involvement in the advocacy for minority language rights dated back to the period when he worked for the CCJP(Z) in the Binga District promoting the work of TOLACO. By July 2004, when I interviewed Musona for this research, he had been involved in working with TOLACO towards including other endoglossic minority language groups to form ZILPA. In this sense, Musona was an important source of data regarding the history of the struggles of the minority language groups in Zimbabwe. He was also an important link person for purposes of identifying other key informants.

Musona worked on the minority language issue with Issac Mumpande who was based at the Bulawayo office. Most of the minority language groups in Zimbabwe are found in Matebeleland Province, of which Bulawayo is the provincial capital. For this reason, Musona explained that the Bulawayo office handled most of the documentation on the advocacy activities on the minority languages issue. Therefore, Musona referred me to the Bulawayo office of Silveira House where I was advised to contact Isaac Mumpande, the Silveira House Advocacy Officer based at the Bulawayo Office who would in turn introduce me to the Chairman of ZILPA, Saul Gwakuba Ndlovu. I was advised that Saul Gwakuba Ndlovu would be able to help me track down the other members of ZILPA scattered around the country.

Thus, the snowball sampling process meant that I had to spend the month of July 2004 in Matebeleland tracking down the dispersed members of ZILPA. I managed to conduct ten interviews in this first cycle of data collection that ended on 1 August 2004. By the end of this period, I had managed to interview Adelaide Musekiwa and Ignatious Musona at Silveira House in Harare, Isaac Mumpande, the Silveira House Advocacy Officer based in Bulawayo, Saul Gwakuba Ndlovu, the Chairman of ZILPA and six members of language committees that make up ZILPA: 2 members of the Sotho Language Committee, 2 members of the Kalanga Language Committee and 2 members of the Tonga Language Committee. On 13 July 2004, I conducted interviews with staff at the African Languages Research Institute (ALRI) based at the University of Zimbabwe in Harare. The interviewees included Professor Herbert Chimhundu, the Director of the Institute. Other interviewees were Peniah Mabaso, Emmanuel Chabata, Nomalanga Mpofu and Cornelius Ncube who were all research fellows based at ALRI.

The second cycle of interview data collection took place in the month of June 2005. During this period, I interviewed 2 members of the Shangani Language Committee, 2 members of the Venda Language Committee and 2 Members of the Nambya Language Committee[2] I also conducted follow up interviews with Mumpande, Musona and

[2] Most members of the language committees requested anonymity. The reasons that were given by most of them were that they were civil servants (mostly teachers) who felt that they could be victimized by the

Musekiwa. In the second cycle of the interview process I also interviewed Enos Kawina who is an officer with Basilwizi Trust, an organization running a project called the Tonga Advocacy Project, which is demanding compensation for the economic prejudice suffered by the Tonga people when they were removed from their traditional homes during the construction of the Kariba Dam (refer to Chapter 5 Section 5.2.1).

The interviews were important in providing insights from the perspectives of the actors in the minority language revitalization projects that were pertinent to this study. All of the interview data was tape recorded and transcribed for purposes of analysis. In both cycles of data collection, documents on the activities of the CSOs were also collected for purposes of analysis.

### 2.6.2 Documentary Materials

Important sources of data for this research were documentary materials that were collected from the various organs of civil society that were identified as holding relevant data. For Henn, Weinstein and Foard (2006) the usefulness of documents in qualitative research is that they provide direct accounts of people involved in their social situations. Further, Henn et al. (2006) observe that documents are important because "there is no intermediary to influence [the] account, to report it, or change it. Rather, such documents provide a first-hand account from the 'inside'" (p. 97).

The fact that I was dealing with non-governmental organizations proved to be advantageous for my study, particularly in terms of accessing relevant documentary materials. Firstly, non-governmental organizations are institutions that are well resourced with excellent facilities for recording and storing the information that they accumulate over time. Secondly, arising from them being well resourced, non-governmental

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government through the Public Service Commission or politically. Their fears were compounded by the fact that the period before and after the Zimbabwean parliamentary elections in 2000 were characterized by violence against people perceived to be against the ruling ZANU(PF) party. Some ZILPA members in some communities had clashed with Government sponsored youths in Binga leading to the closure of some schools. See Chapter 6 Section 6.2.3 on the deterioration of the relationship between government and ZILPA.

organizations have personnel that can be accessed in their offices or through other means of communication such as e-mail, telephone or fax. Thirdly, the funding regime for non-governmental organizations makes it imperative for them to keep accurate records of their activities, the individuals involved, as well as the specific indications of when and where the activities took place. In sharp contrast is the cultural organization such as ZILPA, which is made up of individuals acting out of their own intrinsic motivation and with very few resources at their disposal, hence record keeping is not always a priority. Given the practical reality of the differential staffing and resource bases of the non-governmental organizations on the one hand, and the language and cultural organizations on the other, the administrative work was often delegated to the non-governmental organizations, particularly Silveira House. From a data collection point of view, this was a major advantage in that I was able to access documents about the initiatives for the revitalization of the Zimbabwean endoglossic minority languages from one place.

During the first visit in July 2004, Isaac Mumpande gave me access to the files on the activities of TOLACO, CCJP(Z), Silveira House, ZILPA and the SCF(UK) that were relevant to the minority language question. During my second visit to the Silveira Office in Bulawayo in July 2005 I managed to access files that covered the activities between the periods after my first visit up to the month before my second visit (August 2004 to June 2005). It is important to acknowledge with gratitude that I gained unbridled access to the files that contained data on the minority language issue kept at the Bulawayo office of Silveira House.

An important development which occurred when I was in the final stages of writing-up this thesis was the publication of a report on the minority language revitalization project in the form of a book. The book, titled *Silent Voices: Indigenous languages in Zimbabwe,* written by Isaac Mumpande was published by Weaver Press in 2006. (Refer to Appendix G for a brief review of the book). Isaac Mumpande, being one of the Advocacy Officers at Silveira House involved in the project from its inception in the Binga District, recorded the struggles for the revitalization of minority languages from an insider's perspective, but also draws on the input of the various actors involved in the process. The book, which

I used mostly for purposes of data triangulation, was very important in that it provided a further source of data on the minority language revitalization project in Zimbabwe.

The book was considered particularly important because of the reliability and authenticity ascribed to reports that are published as books due to the more rigorous editing processes that go into book publication. Cumanzala (2006) observes in the foreword that the book is an important report on the minority language revitalization project in Zimbabwe as it tells the story of the Advocacy Programme at Silveira House and how it successfully lobbied the government so that Tonga, Sotho, Kalanga, Venda and Shangani languages are taught in schools.

Further, the book represented an important addition to the documentary materials I had accessed because in using these documents for my study, I assumed the interpretivist approach. The interpretivist approach emphasizes a cautious approach to the use of documents as sources of data. Henn et al., (2006) explain this approach to the use of documentary materials in the following terms:

> The document is viewed not as a neutral resource, but as a social construction that represents the way some people (the people who produced the document) see the world. In this sense documents are not objective sources of information-rather they will need to be read and interpreted to bring out the evidence that is within them (p. 99).

The availability of multiple sources of data which included interviews, the book and the various primary documents was, therefore, considered important for purposes of data triangulation.

## 2.7 Data Organization

As mentioned in Section 2.5.1 above, the data collection process was a major success owing to the meticulous data management of the non-governmental organizations consulted. After the two visits, I had accumulated a lot of documents on the activities of the non-governmental organizations that collaborated to promote and develop the endoglossic languages. I also had pages of transcribed interview data. My next challenge was to organize the data in a way that would allow me to make sense of it for purposes of addressing the research questions. My first strategy was to file the documents in chronological order, starting with the oldest to the most recent. My intention was to be able to read the stories in a way that captured the chronological developments over time. Organizing the documents in this way also helped me to easily check whether reports covering events in certain months could be missing. Henn et al. (2006) emphasize the importance of checking for missing documents as this constitutes a common problem with research that utilizes documents. Henn et al. (2006: 105) identify two problems that are related to using documents. The first, which they refer to as "selective deposit", occurs when only an unrepresentative selection of documentary data is stored. The second, which they call "selective survival", involves an editing process whereby certain documents are not made available to researchers.

In the process of organizing the documents, I checked whether there were any gaps in the "stories" which could suggest that some documents were missing. My collection of documentary data was divided into four categories:

1. **Reports**: These included monthly, semi-annual and annual reports. These chronicled the activities of the CCJP(Z) and the Civics Department of Silveira House in assisting ZILPA and the affiliate language committees to mobilize for the recognition of their languages.

**2. Workshops and Seminars**: Documents in this category reported on the workshops and seminars attended by the members of ZILPA in which they received training on

advocacy on language issues. Some of the documents contain reports by the language committees on their activities.

**3. Minutes of meetings:** These are minutes of meetings held by ZILPA committee members that were later forwarded to Silveira House to update them on the deliberations, recommendations and resolutions made by the language committees.

**4. Other documents include**: The constitution of ZILPA; A paper on the Constitutional Law Perspective by a lawyer contracted by Silveira House to look at the provisions of the Education Act; the language policy of Zimbabwe; Correspondence among the actors on developments, strategies, successes and setbacks etc; Papers presented at seminars and workshops e.g. by language committees, advocacy officers, government officials; government reports (e.g. A Report on the Survey of the Teaching/Learning of Minority Languages, by the Curriculum Development Unit-African Languages Team).

An important aspect of the documents that were gathered is that they contained evidence of a wide range of consultative processes involving the staff of the CSOs and the ZILPA membership. Records of meetings allowed for input from members and feedback on any documents, such as reports on activities, minutes of previous meetings etc, given that they were circulated for review before each meeting.

In reading the documents as a representation of the story of the struggles as they happened over time, I made cross references to my interview transcripts in order to identify consistencies, inconsistencies or possibilities of missing data. I also looked for instances of possible disagreements or disruptions among the main actors within language committees and across language committees. Further, I sought to identify epochal moments in the activities of the organizations. At this stage, I was engaging in data triangulation which according to Bauer and Gaskell (2000) is a necessary practice in qualitative research:

> A criterion of good practice in qualitative research using several methods or conceptualizations in the same problem. This often leads to contradictory evidence which reflects back on the research process. The resolution of these contradictions needs to be documented (p. 367).

The use of documents for data triangulation is also emphasized by Punch (2005) who states that documents used alongside other modes of data collection provide for a "triangulation framework to ensure that everything is checked from more than one angle" (p. 185). What emerged from this process of data triangulation was that interview data tended to generate some inconsistencies in terms of detail across informants. For example, some interviews mixed up the order in which events happened. It was also evident that the Advocacy Officers were more conversant with the activities organized around the collaborative networks that had been established. On the other hand, members of the different language committees were more conversant with events, activities and general detail regarding their particular language groups. I attributed these differences to the fact that the Advocacy Officers worked on these issues as a full-time vocation, while language committee members were involved on a part-time basis. Further, the Advocacy Officers were responsible for organizing and writing up the reports on the activities organized at the national level. Advocacy Officers were also involved in organizing activities together with the grassroots language committees. In situations where the Advocacy Officers were not involved in organizing an event or were unable to attend, reports were sent to their offices for filing or for reference when the Advocacy Officers compiled monthly, semi-annual and annual reports. I realized that the information on the activities around the minority languages revitalization project was recorded systematically in the documents. For example dates, attendance registers at meetings and workshops, as well as accurate records of what was discussed at the meetings and workshops were aspects that were well recorded in the various documents. In reading through the documents, I was able to identify issues which I needed to probe during interviews in order to be able to develop a more comprehensive picture that enabled me to answer my research questions.

The final stage in the organization of data involved finding appropriate ways of analyzing my data. My analysis of the data drew on studies that have investigated language revitalization projects in other contexts. I found Fishman (1991, 2001a) and Adegbija (1997, 2001) particularly useful in deciding on the categories that would help me to answer the main research question: How have specific organs of civil society in Zimbabwe contributed to the development and promotion of linguistic human rights, and in particular the linguistic rights of minority endoglossic languages post-independence (1980-2003)? In terms of Fishman's (1991, 2001a) analysis of language revitalization projects in diverse contexts, I identified two categories that were relevant to my analysis which he identifies as phases in reversing language shift (RLS). The first phase has to do with efforts to attain consensus among the advocates of minority language development and promotion. This aspect is addressed in Chapter 6 which I have titled "Search for ideological consensus". Based on the data from my study, Chapter 6 discusses the strategies adopted by the CSOs in Zimbabwe, geared towards mobilizing the grassroots members of the minority languages community to take part in efforts to develop and promote their languages. Adegbija (1997, 2001) calls the strategies that target the grassroots members of marginalized language communities "cultural RLS strategies".

Fishman's (1991, 2001a) second phase of RLS deals with those efforts which seek to promote the use of marginalized languages in secondary domains. Based on my data, I decided to address this aspect in Chapter 7 where I divide the chapter into two sections to capture two main strategies identified by Adegbija (1997, 2001) as necessary in minority language revitalization efforts that seek to promote minority language use in expanded domains. Adegbija (2001: 295-301) calls one of these strategies "linguistic or language-based RLS strategies" and the other "politically-oriented RLS strategies". Following Fishman's (1991, 2001a) identification of the RLS efforts in the second phase as "efforts to transcend diglossia", Chapter 7 in this research is titled "Tackling the higher spheres". Following Adegbija (2001) Chapter 7 is split into two sections: Section 7.3 headed "Ideological measures" correspond with Adegbija's "politically-oriented RLS strategies" and Section 7.4 headed "Technical measures" corresponds with Adegbija's "linguistic or language-based RLS strategies".

Thus Chapter 6 and Chapter 7 provide an analysis of the data and capture the three ways in which CSOs have sought to address the marginalization of Zimbabwean minority endoglossic languages: (i) through grassroots mobilization, (ii) through measures that tackle the ideological basis of the languages' marginalization and (iii) through measures that address the technical basis of the languages' marginalization.

An important consideration in the process of organization the data was how to present the voices of the informants in such a way that they could speak for themselves about their language rights. Consequently, I made the decision to reserve the presentation of my own voice as the researcher to what is titled in the thesis as "comment" sections. This decision allows me to present the voices of the research participants with as much integrity as possible. The privileging of the research participants' voices is in keeping with the qualitative approaches to the presentation of such data. In allowing research participants full descriptive space and restricting authorial voice to the comment sections, I follow Bonny Norton Peirce (1993) who successfully utilized the approach to analyze qualitative case study data by focusing on the interface between language learning and social identity amongst immigrant women in Canada.

# CHAPTER THREE: LITERATURE REVIEW

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## 3.1 Introduction

This chapter presents a review of the literature relevant to this enquiry. The literature review is divided into six sections. In Section 3.2, I locate my study within the broader framework of Critical Applied Linguistics and language policy research. Section 3.3 discusses the macro and micro-variables implicated in language endangerment. I also consider the dynamics of language endangerment in the African context. An overview of the literature that makes a case for the revitalization of marginalized and endangered languages is presented in Section 3.4. In Section 3.5, I introduce some of the dominant frameworks for language revitalization efforts. Section 3.6, examines some cases that document the efforts of marginalized language groups to develop and promote their languages and cultures in diverse contexts. Section 3.7 concludes the literature review.

## 3.2 Critical Applied Linguistics and Language Policy

Pennycook (2001) notes that Critical Applied Linguistics is not yet a term that has wide currency, being a recent broadening of the field of Applied Linguistics. My starting point is, therefore, to clarify the sense in which Critical Applied Linguistics represent a departure, as well as a broadening of the field of Applied Linguistics and how I locate this research in the former rather than the latter. To do this, I refer to *The Longman Dictionary of Applied Linguistics* which gives two definitions of the domain of Applied Linguistics: "the study of second and foreign language learning and teaching" and " the study of language and linguistics in relation to practical problems, such as lexicography, translation, speech pathology, etc" (Richards, Platt and Weber, 1985: 15). According to this definition, Applied Linguistics deals with language use in professional settings such as translation, speech pathology, literacy and language education. In describing the concerns of the domain of Applied Linguistics, Pennycook (2001) observes that it is not merely the application of linguistic knowledge to such settings but is a semi-autonomous and interdisciplinary domain of work that draws on, but is not dependent on areas such as sociology, education, anthropology, cultural studies, and psychology. However, this

conception of Applied Linguistics merely suggests relating language contexts to social contexts without viewing these social relations as being problematic. Thus, Pennycook (2001) suggests a Critical Applied Linguistics, whose central element is:

> [A] way of exploring language in social contexts that go beyond mere correlations between language and society and instead raises more critical questions to do with access, power, disparity, desire, difference and resistance. It also insists on an historical understanding of how social relations came to be the way they are (p. 6).

Thus, Critical Applied Linguistics seeks to broaden Applied Linguistics by finding ways of interrogating social, cultural and political domains. Work on language rights is a domain of Critical Applied Linguistics that seeks to challenge the way in which language policy has been uncritically developed and implemented (Tollefson 1991). Luke, McHoul, and Mey (1990) argue that while maintaining a "veneer of scientific objectivity", language planning has "tended to avoid directly addressing larger social and political matters within which language change, use and development, and indeed language planning itself are embedded" (p. 27). This uncritical conception of language policy has therefore failed to incorporate views of language, society, and power that are capable of dealing with questions of access, power, disparity and difference, which also sees language as playing a crucial role in the construction of difference (Pennycook, 2001). Critical Applied Linguistics suggests an alternative view whereby language policy serves as a vehicle towards achieving social justice and not the interests of the state and the groups that dominate it (Tollefson, 1991).

The domain of language rights raises questions about the dominance of certain languages over others. Phillipson (1992) coined the term linguistic imperialism to refer to the dominance of English, deliberately spread for political and economic purposes, thereby posing as a threat to other languages.

## 3.3 Language Endangerment: Factors Contributing to Language Shift and Death

Just as the 1990's witnessed an unprecedented growth of the various organizations concerned with endangered languages, a number of scholars also focused on understanding the dynamics that contribute to language endangerment (e.g. Dorian, 1998; Grenoble and Whaley, 1998a; Fishman, 1991; Grinevald, 1998; Brenzinger, 1998; Hale, 1998; Krauss, 1992; Matsumura, 1998). Some authors who have investigated factors that contribute to language endangerment (Grenoble and Whaley, 1998a; Crystal, 2000; Sasse, 1992) conclude that these can be identified at the macro and micro levels.

### 3.3.1 Macro -Variables in Language Endangerment

Features of the broader context that contribute to language endangerment are referred to as the *macro-variables* (Grenoble and Whaley, 1998b), also called *External Setting* phenomena (Sasse, 1992). Macro-variables consist of political, historical, economic, and linguistic realities (Brenzinger and Dimmendaal, 1992). In this section, I will discuss western language ideologies, language policy as well as globalization and economic factors as some of the key macro-variables implicated in language endangerment.

#### 3.3.1.1 Western language ideologies

The powerful effect of the macro-variables is best illustrated by Dorian (1998) in what she has identified as a European attitude towards indigenous and non-dominant languages. For Dorian (1998) western language ideologies have been prominent among factors that have contributed to language endangerment, especially in those parts of the world where standardized European languages have become the language of the dominant social strata such as former colonies. Dorian (1998) observes that:

> The histories of several of the national languages of Europe, very conspicuously those of French and English, are histories of a growing monopoly on legitimacy and prestige by a single dominant speech form, all others being relegated to inferior status. The standard language is typically considered a rich, precise, rationally organized and rationally organizing instrument; dialects and ethnic minority languages, by contrast, are considered impoverished and crude, most likely inadequate to organize the subordinate world itself and certainly inadequate to organize other worlds (p. 8).

This European "ideology of contempt" (Dorian, 1998) for subordinate languages has led them to adopt language policies that undermine even the humanity of the subordinate peoples. France provides a perfect example of this ideological slant that can be traced back to the French Revolution of 1789 when "[t]he idea of national unity meant that France was to become a unity bound together not only by a common administrative, social, and economic system, but also by a standard culture" (Kuter 1989: 77), an ideological position that has been maintained to the present day. This ideology of contempt is exemplified by the treatment of the Breton in France. This is aptly captured by Lois Kuter (1989) who cites Elegoet's portrayal of the derogatory perception of the Breton language by schools and the media:

> It is a peasant *patois*, unable to ensure communication even with the neighbouring village, even more incapable of expressing the modern world-the world of tractors, automobiles, airplanes, television. A language only good enough to talk to cows and pigs. From that you get the refusal to transmit this language to children - a language considered to be a burden, a handicap in social promotion, a source of humiliation and shame (p. 81).

Such a stigma was not restricted to the popular and non-official circles but also presented as part of official government policy. According to Kuter (1989), at the political level, French has been endowed with the status of the national language of "France, one and indivisible" (p. 87). Thus, this ideology was to find resonance in the language-in-

education policy where part of the goal was to "Frenchify the Bretons". Kuter (1989) cites the case of the General Inspector of Schools, I. Carre, who in a 1922 report argued for the need to use non-Breton teachers in schools of Brittany:

> It is of first order importance that Bretons understand and speak the national language: they will only truly be French on that condition… It is Frenchmen that are needed to Frenchify the Bretons; they will not Frenchify themselves by themselves (p. 77).

Given the prevalence of such a stigma attached to the Breton language and its speakers in French society, Kuter (1989) observes that "Bretons have learnt that their culture, and language especially, are considered inferior and backward, and ridicule has served to reinforce feelings of shame in being Breton" (p. 80). The result has been that Breton has become a language spoken mostly by old people who are not passing it on to their children, making it an endangered language (Kuter, 1989).

For Dorian (1998), also characteristic of the western language ideologies is "a belief in a linguistic survival of the fittest, a social Darwinism of language", which "encourages people of European background to assume a correlation between adaptive and expressive capacity in a language and that language's survival and spread" (p. 10). According to Dorian, this is a self-serving but widespread belief not only among prominent languages like English, French and Spanish, but also among speakers of smaller, standardized and state-promoted languages of Europe. The western language ideologies present a direct danger to non-dominant languages. The danger manifests itself in diverse contexts including post-colonial states in Africa where the colonial powers influenced the linguistic status quo through language policy.

#### 3.3.1.2 Language policy

An important macro-variable which has been noted for some instances of language decline and loss is language policy. Crystal (2000) cites the example of parts of South

America where language policies are characterized by subtle forms of antipathy and indifference. In these contexts, people find they have fewer opportunities to use their language, because it has been officially marginalized. The provisions of the language policies are such that non-dominant languages are not found in official domains, such as in the media and in higher education and the languages gradually disappear from the 'serious' side of life, with religion usually the last domain to be affected Crystal, 2000).

Once a language is reduced to use in unimportant domains, also called the 'folklorization' of a language (Fishman, 1987), leading to a loss of vocabulary and stylistic range and is consequently referred to as being "deprived" of domains (Bamgbose, 1997) and "invisible" (Annamalai, 1998).

#### 3.3.1.3 Globalization and economic factors

A critical macro-level factor in language endangerment is globalization. Globalization the attendant urbanization processes produce cities whose homogenization effect makes it imperative for the learning of dominant languages such that "[t]he language of the dominant culture infiltrates everywhere, reinforced by the relentless daily pressure of the media, and especially of television" (Crystal, 2000: 78). As a result of growing globalization and urbanization, individuals and families have been forced by economic considerations to separate from their local-language communities, a factor contributing to the loss of non-dominat languages (Hale, 1998). For this reason, Grenoble and Whaley (1998b) argue that "economics is perhaps the single strongest force influencing the fate of endangered languages" (p. 52). And for Hale (1998), "the economic factor, broadly conceived, combined with the almost overwhelming influence of the dominant language, is perhaps the greatest contributor to language decline now" (p. 214). The economic factor is thus implicated as a major contributing factor to cultural assimilation.

### 3.3.2 Micro -Variables in Language Endangerment

Micro-variables refer to characteristics which are unique to specific speech communities (Grenoble and Whaley, 1998b), its patterns of language use, attitudes, and strategies (Brenzinger and Dimmendaal, 1992). For Sasse (1992) micro-variables are *Speech Behaviour* phenomena that refer to:

> … the regular use of variables, which, in a given speech community, are bound with social parameters, e.g. the use of different languages in multilingual settings, the use of different styles of one language (Fishman's famous *Who speaks what language to whom and when),* domains of languages and styles, attitudes towards variants of languages, and so on (p. 10).

The most prominent micro-variables in language endangerment include economic organization, attitudes and literacy. Each of these micro-variables will be dealt with in turn in the sub-sections below.

#### 3.3.2.1 Economic organization

One micro-variable that has been identified as contributing to some instances of language loss is the economic organization of a speech community (e.g. Crystal, 2000; Grenoble and Whaley, 1998b; Dorian, 1989). For example, it is generally agreed that the languages of hunter-gathers are more threatened than those of any other group. According to Grenoble and Whaley (1998b), this is attributable to the fact that these groups are generally small populations. Further, when they come into contact with pastoralist groups whose economies are agriculturally based, pressure mounts for them to change their lifestyles. The economic factor comes into play. As Grenoble and Whaley (1998b) observe, hunters are generally the most despised groups in Africa. They constitute the poorest African people and their lifestyle is often viewed as animal-like. For these reasons, there is tremendous motivation for such low-status groups to throw off symbols of traditional identity in order to assimilate more smoothly into more prestigious

groups.The economic factor is particularly significant in this study since it is identified by the Tonga people as an important factor that has contributed to the marginalization of their language and culture. The economic marginalization of the Tonga people is dealt with in detail in Chapter 5, Section 5.2.1. Economic marginalization contributes to a collective inferiority complex, which in turn leads a speech community to develop negative attitudes towards their language and culture.

#### 3.3.2.2 Attitudes

A speech community's attitude towards variants of languages is a key factor among the micro-variables that contribute to the endangerment of languages. As argued above, the micro-variables contribute to a situation whereby speakers of non-dominant languages develop negative attitudes towards their languages. Attitudes towards languages and styles develop on the basis of political, social and economic pressure, and this pressure in turn develops on the basis of the historical situation in which a speech community finds itself (Sasse, 1992). Micro-variables are so powerful that speakers of the non-dominant languages begin to view their languages as a sign of backwardness, or a hindrance to making improvements in social standing. The feelings of shame and a lack of self-confidence about one's language are introduced by a more dominant culture, whose members stigmatize the speakers of non-dominant languages as being "stupid, lazy, and barbaric and their language as ignorant, backward, deformed, inadequate, or even (in the case of some missionaries) a creation of the devil" (Crystal, 2000: 84).

Thus, where non-dominant languages attract negative attitudes, the likelihood of speakers of these languages shifting to the dominant language is high. Negative attitudes are even more likely to arise in situations where a minority language is not associated with literacy.

#### 3.3.2.3 Literacy

Although the interplay between literacy and language viability is a complex matter, it is apparent that the majority of endangered languages come from oral cultures (Grenoble and Whaley, 1998b). Literacy in both the majority and minority languages is essential for the maintenance of endangered languages. In Africa as well as other underdeveloped countries, the minority languages are often not sufficiently codified, nor do they have comprehensively described grammars. These are aspects that are normally addressed at the macro-level. As Grenoble and Whaley (1998b) rightfully observe, majority cultures tend to control financial resources needed for mass publication of materials, and tend to control policy issues, such as determining the language of education, the ratification and enforcement of laws which permit or restrict access to the indigenous language, and most often control access to the press.

Such considerations naturally bring economic factors into play since economics is a key factor in literacy issues. The training of language teachers as well as the production of textbook materials and other reference materials are costly endeavours such that in most contexts, policy makers use the cost element to legitimate the non-teaching of the minority languages. The exclusion of the minority languages from schools, as is the case with the Bretons, is bound to be interpreted as a formal condemnation of the minority language and culture, thus providing further motivation for the language groups to assimilate to the economically dominant culture.

### 3.3.3 Factors Contributing to Language Endangerment in Africa

Having considered the main macro and micro-variables responsible for language endangerment in the global context, I now consider language endangerment in Africa as it pertains to the immediate context of this study. Table 3.3.3 below shows the proportion of the minority languages in Africa as a percentage of the total number of languages spoken in a country.

***Table 3.3.3*** *Proportion of minority languages in African countries*

| | **Minority languages as percentage of total** | **Countries or territories** |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | 0-19 | Burundi, Canary Islands, Cape Verde, Djibouti, Lesotho, Mayotte, Reunion, Rwanda, Seychelles, Swaziland |
| 2 | 20-39 | Comoro Islands, Egypt, Eritrea, Mauritania, Mauritius, Niger, Sao Tome and Principe |
| 3 | 40-59 | Gambia, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Libya, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Morocco, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Tunisia, Uganda, Zambia, Zimbabwe |
| 4 | 60-79 | Algeria, Angola, Burkina Faso, Central African Republic, Cote d'Ivoire, Equatorial Guinea, Ghana, Kenya, Liberia, Mozambique, Namibia, Senegal, Somalia, Sudan, Togo |
| 5 | >80 | Botswana, Cameroon, Chad, Congo Republic, Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia, Gabon, Nigeria, Tanzania |

**Source:** Batibo (2005:53).

As the table illustrates, in most African countries, minority languages constitute a significant proportion of the languages spoken. According to Batibo (2005), of a total 2477 languages spoken in the various African countries, 1931 are minority languages. These statistics illustrate that the majority of African languages are designated minority languages. The significance of these statistics lies in the fact that in most African countries, minority languages are neglected marginalized and are endangered.

The minority languages are usually not standardized nor are they reasonably codified. They usually do not have comprehensively described grammars nor do they have well developed dictionaries, if at all. The absence of documentation is often cited by policy makers as the reason why minority languages cannot be used in education or other public functions. According to Batibo (2005) the result is that minority languages "tend to be marginalized and are often considered by their speakers as being of no value for social or economic advancement" (p. 24). Further, historical legacies of domination by the dominant languages make speakers of minority languages feel inferior to those who

speak the dominant languages. Batibo (2005) captures the net effect of these factors on the minority languages:

> Minority language speakers tend to develop negative attitudes towards their mother tongue, not only because of the often painful historical legacies but also because of the lack of socio-economic opportunities its use is perceived to offer, and they may consider it advantageous to adopt the more widely used language for their children's education, job-seeking and wider communication (p. 54).

As the review of the literature above has shown, in the African context it is the dominant endoglossic languages that pose a threat to the minority languages. As Batibo (2005) has argued, in most African countries, "the dominant languages that are used as national media have gained so much status and weight that they are pushing the minority languages into a marginalized position" (p. 28). Speakers of the minority languages lose their loyalty to their languages as they learn and use the dominant language as a second language or even shift to it at the expense of the mother tongue. Similarly, in assessing the interaction between the dominant and the minority endoglossic languages, Brenzinger, Heine, and Sommer (1991) cited in Grenoble and Whaley (1998b) conclude that the general pattern of language endangerment in sub-Saharan Africa is rather distinct from much of the rest of the world in that the most immediate threat to indigenous languages in Africa is not the language of European conquerors but other indigenous languages. It can be argued that in Africa, concerns about language endangerment relate to the demise of endangered minority languages. Using various sources that include Grimes (2000), Wurm (1996), UNESCO (2003a), Sommer (1992), Mann and Dalby (1987), Batibo (2005) concludes that of the total 2193 languages currently spoken on the African continent, 308 are highly endangered and 201 are extinct or nearly extinct.

The scholars cited in this section (e.g. Crystal, 2000; Grenoble and Whaley, 1998b; Brenzinger, 1998; Batibo, 2005) point to the precarious state of minority languages in Africa. Unlike the ex-colonial languages and the dominant endoglossic languages, which enjoy high degrees of social prestige, utilitarian functions and considerable socio-political

power, the minority languages suffer a number of disadvantages that culminate in language shift and death (Batibo, 2005).

In this section, I have highlighted some of the macro-and micro-variables which account for language endangerment in the world today. It is apparent that some of these variables have greater weight than others in determining the viability of the languages than others. In considering the situation of the minority endoglossic languages of Zimbabwe, I am bound to agree with Grenoble and Whaley (1998b) that "economic factors are a driving force behind much of language attrition and may override other factors which support maintenance of the indigenous language" (p. 53). However, the position I take, similar to that assumed by the organs of civil society involved in struggles for linguistic human rights in Zimbabwe is that propagated by Hale (1998) to the effect that "[t]he condition which must prevail in order to halt language loss is a form of socio-political and economic justice" (p. 215). As Crystal (2000) argues, "there is no case for a Darwinian perspective, in which we note dispassionately the survival of the linguistic fittest, because the factors which cause the death of languages are, in principle, very largely under human control" (p. 33 footnote 14). Below, I will consider some of the arguments advanced in favour of preserving the world's endangered languages.

## 3.4 The Case for Revitalizing Endangered Languages

The central focus of this study is on the efforts of minority language groups to preserve their languages and cultures which are in most cases marginalized and in danger of disappearing. As Fishman (2001b) points out, there are a number of factors that militate against the revitalization of marginalized languages. Given the formidable forces that militate against attempts to develop and promote languages that are already at the fringes of the sociolinguistic milieu, it is important to consider why such enterprises are worthwhile in the first place. The need to understand the rationale for engaging in efforts to develop and promote endangered languages is underlined by Fishman (1991) when he points out that:

> Before a task can be undertaken, it is desirable that those involved in the undertaking be maximally clear in their minds and united in their hearts as to why that task *should* be undertaken (p. 10).

In this section, I draw substantially on Fishman (1991, 2001a), Skutnabb-Kangas (2000) and Crystal (2000) who provide compelling arguments for the preservation of each and every language used in the world. I will highlight five key arguments which are advanced in support of initiatives to protect the world's endangered languages.

The first argument relates to the need for diversity. According to Crystal (2000) the need to protect languages for purposes of maintaining diversity is a direct extension of the ecological frame of reference. In relation to ecology, an individual species is not simply of interest or value in its own right, but that living entities exist through interrelationships. Thus, in "the language of ecology: the strongest ecosystems are those which are most diverse"; similarly, "[a]ny reduction of language diversity diminishes the adaptational strength of our species because it lowers the pool of knowledge from which we can draw" (Bernard, 1992, cited in Crystal, 2000: 34).

The second argument is that the preservation of linguistic diversity is important in the maintenance of group and individual identity. For Crystal (2000), languages have to be preserved because they carry a community's identity: "Language is the primary index or symbol, or register of identity" (p. 40). Fishman (1991) illustrates the importance of the link between language and identity by pointing out the case of the Jews who have lost the Hebrew language. Fishman (1991) argues that "Jews who have lost their familiarity with Hebrew have lived a different daily life pattern (a different Jewishness) than have Jews who did not, regardless of whether both groups continued to call themselves and to be so called by others" (p. 16).

The third prominent argument advanced in favour of saving every one of the world's languages is that languages are repositories of history. People's desire to know about

their ancestry is a universal inclination which can only be satisfied through language (Crystal, 2000). The role of language as the storehouse of a people's history is one of the key reasons why the loss of any language is a grave occurrence and hence needs to be prevented. For Fishman (2001b), to abandon one's language "may be viewed as an abandonment not only of the traditional doings and knowings, but as an abandonment of personal ancestral kin and cultural ancestral heroes per se" (p. 5).

The fourth argument is that languages are sources of knowledge, insight and wisdom, contributing to the sum of human knowledge. Drawing on the work of Ezra Pound (1960), Crystal (2000) comments that the sum of human wisdom is not contained in any one language, and no single language is capable of expressing all forms and degrees of human comprehension. Ken Hale (1992) refers to language as the embodiment of intellectual wealth. In this sense, the loss of languages, and of the cultural systems that they express, is viewed as an irretrievable loss of diverse and interesting intellectual wealth.

The fifth argument is that languages are interesting in themselves. The idiosyncratic nature of each language is testimony to the fascinating range of possibilities which humanity is capable of expressing through language. As Crystal (2000) points out, each language manifests a fresh coming-together of sounds, grammar, and vocabulary to form a system of communication which demonstrates universal principles of linguistic organization and structure.

These and other arguments provide an explanation for the frantic response of the 1990's to the "tragedy of language loss worldwide" (Mithun, 1998: 163). The literature on endangered languages, thus presents compelling arguments for the preservation of each and every one of the world's language. In particular, the five arguments presented above pertaining to diversity, identity, history, knowledge and general interest serves to counter the monolingual language ideologies, in favour of language ideologies that view multilingualism as a resource and not as a problem. Convinced about the need to save endangered languages, some theorists, have developed theoretical frameworks useful in

understanding the efforts of speakers of endangered languages to revitalize their languages. Section 3.5 considers some of the influential theoretical language revitalization frameworks.

## 3.5 Theoretical Frameworks for Language Revitalization

The study of the efforts of minority language groups to preserve their languages is a very recent field initiated by Joshua Fishman. The contemporary currency of such theorization of language revitalization efforts explains the paucity of such theories prior to the 1990's. This section considers the theoretical frameworks suggested by prominent scholars on language revitalization efforts, particularly those advanced by Fishman (1991, 2001a), Skutnabb-Kangas (2000), Crystal (2000) and Adegbija (1997, 2001)..

### 3.5.1 Fishman's Reversing Language Shift Theory

Fishman (1991) developed a theory called Reversing Language Shift (RLS) which is considered to be a pioneering study of the efforts of linguistic minorities to preserve their languages. In a book that he edited entitled *Can threatened languages be saved*? Fishman (2001a) revisited the RLS theory and invited other scholars to comment on the efficacy of his theory in explaining language shift processes. Further, Fishman (2001) asked other scholars to comment on the usefulness of the RLS theory's suggested language management activities that speakers of endangered languages might undertake in order to resist further loss, or to re-establish earlier strength. As Garcia, Morin and Rivera (2001) observe:

> Fishman's *Reversing Language Shift* turned the focus of language shift/maintenance studies from mere descriptions of sociolinguistic situations to steps that can be taken by ethnolinguistic communities to do something about their weak sociolinguistic status (p. 70).

In this sense, Fishman's (1991) RLS theory represents a shift from abstract theorization to an interrogation of practice with a view to effecting change. In Fishman's (1991) own words, RLS is:

> An attempt on the part of authorities that are recognized by the users and supporters of threatened languages, to adopt policies and to engage in efforts calculated to reverse the cumulative processes of attrition that would otherwise lead to the contextually weak language-in-culture becoming even weaker while, its competitor, a strong language-in-culture, becomes even stronger (p. 81).

By emphasizing a shift from theory to practice and action, Fishman's (1991) RLS theory represents a shift from merely understanding the problem to suggesting solutions and courses of action. Skutnabb-Kangas (2000) refers to such a shift from theory to practice as representing a move from the "language of critique" to "the language of possibility" (p. xxvii) with an emphasis on "strategies for hope and alternatives" (p. xxviii). RLS is, in this sense a theorization of efforts that challenge the linguistic power dynamics characterized by dominance of the strong over the weak.

Fishman's (1991) RLS theory suggests a model called the Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale (GIDS), which is designed in a way that approximates the Richter Scale used to measure the intensity of earthquakes. Figure 3.5.1 below presents the GIDS as formulated in Fishman (1991).

**Figure 3.5.1** Toward a theory of reversing language shift

**STAGES OF REVERSING LANGUAGE SHIFT:**
**SEVERITY OF INTERGENERATIONAL DISLOCATION**
**(read from the bottom up)**

1. Education, work sphere, mass media, and governmental operations at higher and nationwide levels.
2. Local/regional mass media and governmental services.
3. The local/regional (i.e. non-neighbourhood) work sphere, both among Xmen and Ymen.
4b. Public schools for Xish children, offering some instruction via Xish, but substantially under Yish curricular and staffing control.
4a. Schools in lieu of compulsory education and substantially under Xish curricular and staffing control.

**II. RLS to transcend diglossia, subsequent to its attainment**

5. Schools for literacy acquisition, for the old and for the young, and not in lieu of compulsory education.
6. The intergenerational and demographically concentrated home-family-neighbourhood: the basis of mother tongue transmission.
7. Cultural interaction in Xish primarily involving the community-based older generation.
8. Reconstructing Xish and adult acquisition of XSL.

**I. RLS to attain diglossia (assuming prior ideological clarification).**

**Source:** Fishman 1991: 395

On the GIDS, and similar to the Richter Scale, "[h]igh numbers are indicative of stronger tremors, i.e. of greater disruption of the established, normal geological strata, and, accordingly, of greater threat to those living in the vicinity of the quake" (Fishman 1991: 87). According to Fishman (1991), the GIDS like the Richter Scale:

> …is a similarly graded sociolinguistic disruption scale with respect to language communities or networks and, here too, higher numbers will imply greater disruption and, therefore, more severe or fundamental threat to the prospects for the language to be handed on intergenerationally (p. 87).

For Hornberger and King (2001):

> [the GIDS] provide a means of assessing the status of a language, the prospects of intergenerational transmission of the language, and, by implication, the level of success of efforts to maintain and revitalize the threatened language (p. 171).

In the GIDS, Fishman (1991) uses a notational convention whereby the threatened language is designated as X or Xish, and its speakers as Xmen. The threatening and stronger co-territorial competitor is referred to as Y or Yish and its speakers as Ymen. XSL designates the learning of the threatened language as a second language. The people involved in efforts to reverse language shift are referred to as pro-RLSers. Fishman (2001c) draws attention to the criticism that has been leveled against aspects of the notational convention. Firstly, the use of Xmen and Ymen is considered to disregard the need to be gender neutral. Fishman (2001c) addresses this aspect by using Xians and Yians in place of Xmen and Ymen. The second criticism is on the use of the notational convention itself, criticized for "reducing languages and human population to mere lifeless and morally equivalent symbols" (Fishman, 2001: 481 footnote 1).

Fishman (2001c) however defends his notational conventions by arguing that:

> Since the entire message and intent of RLS is to champion and foster the unique role of languages in their own traditionally related populations and functions, the handiness of the shorthand designations, coupled with the transparency of the contexts in which they are employed, seems to me to outweigh the objections to them (p. 481).

In the following section, I will provide a synopsis of each of the 8 stages of the GIDS in descending order, highlighting Fishman's (1991) characterization of the extent of disruption of a threatened language and the suggested thrust of RLS at each particular stage.

*Stage 8 on the GIDS: most vestigial users of Xish are socially isolated old folks and Xish needs to be re-assembled from their mouths and memories and taught to demographically unconcentrated adults* (Fishman 1991: 88).

At this stage, the degree of attrition is advanced and the suggested task for pro-RLS advocates is to identify the remaining speakers and record the remnants of the language and culture such as folk tales, formulaic expressions such as greetings, apologies, benedictions etc and from the foregoing attempt to assemble partial grammars, phonologies, and lexicons, etc.

*Stage 7 on the GIDS: most users of Xish are a socially integrated and ethnolinguistically active population but they are beyond child-bearing age* (Fishman 1991: 89).

At this stage, Fishman points out that the elderly Xish speakers are still societally integrated, living in homes, neighbourhoods and communities among their own Yish-speaking children, grandchildren and neighbours. The major goal for RLS efforts is to promote the use of Xish among young people with the old people acting as the resource through a variety of youth groups, young people's associations, young parent groups, etc. conducted, organized, supported, financed and ideologically encouraged by the 'old folks' to promote Xish among the young people of childbearing age so that intergenerational continuity can be established.

*Stage 6 on the GIDS: the attainment of intergenerational informal oralcy and its demographic concentration and institutional reinforcement* (Fishman 1991: 92)

Fishman considers Stage 6 to be the crucial stage for Xish because the "lion's share of the world's intergenerationally continuous languages are at this very stage and they continue to survive and in most cases even to thrive, without going on to subsequent ('higher') stages" (p. 92). At Stage 6, Xish is the language of community interaction in informal contexts within all three generations of the family, while Y is reserved for formal and

technical contexts. Fishman (1991) emphasizes that the family is the core of this stage even in urban areas where there is an onslaught of Yish:

> While it is true, of course, that neighbourhood change occurs, bringing with it the characteristic anomie of urban life and the estrangement of neighbours from each other, it must be a prime goal of RLS movements not only to challenge and to overcome such processes but, furthermore, to instill the stimulation and purposefulness of conscious Xishness, into 'their' neighbourhoods, because, after all is said and done, that is still the locus within which intergenerational mother tongue transmission occurs (p. 94).

Fishman (1991) considers Stage 6 to be so indispensable in RLS efforts that he emphasizes the need to "take special pains to facilitate the formation and concentration of the home-family-neighbourhood-community institutions and processes that constitute the heart and soul of Stage 6" (p. 95). Emphasis on the schools, the media, and the economy at the expense of "an intimate sheltered harbour at stage 6" (ibid: 95) according to Fishman is for any RLS movement tending towards "peripheralisation from personal and emotional bonds and faces the danger of prematurely tilting at dragons" (ibid. 95).

*Stage 5 on the GIDS: Xish literacy in home, school and community, but without taking on extra-communal reinforcement of such literacy* (Fishman 1991: 95).

The preoccupation of RLS efforts at Stage 5 is with introducing literacy for languages that basically function in their oral form. As Fishman (1991) puts it,

> Stage 5 is preoccupied with the protection of the oral realization of Xish by providing it with at least a somewhat broadened functional periphery and, furthermore, by doing so in such a way as to still depend overwhelmingly on intragroup resources and processes, i.e. by focusing on Xish literacy primarily under intragroup sponsorship, with respect to both its acquisition, its content and its control (p. 96).

Literacy in Xish is considered to be advantageous in that it "liberates" the Xish community from a reliance on Yish for intragroup communication.

*Stage 4 on the GIDS: Xish in lower education (types a and b) that meets the requirements of compulsory education laws* (Fishman 1991: 98).

Stage 4 involves the incorporation of Xish in the education system at the elementary level in two types of schools: type 4b schools in which the Yish political authorities allow schools funded through tax funds to use Xish as a co-medium of instruction in schools attended primarily or only by Xish children. According to Fishman (1991), type 4b schools constitute a compromise on the Yish political arm "insofar as the general social consensus is concerned with respect to what is minimally adequate and desirable in education" (p. 99). For Fishman (1991), type 4b schools also constitute a compromise on the part of,

> [S]taunch supporters of Xish and for all those who pursue the vision of a particular type of Xmen-via-Xish, for they must accept major Yish authority and input in the ultimate decision as to what is minimally adequate and desirable for Xish children (p. 100).

Type 4a schools on the contrary are:

> [M]ore under Xish control and may better reflect the subtleties of Xish society and culture (e.g. in the school decorations that are employed, in the tunes that come over the public address system, in the sense of 'at homeness' of the parents and grandparents who visit, the very school calendar itself and innumerable formal and informal ways that are not part of the designated curriculum but that build an environment nevertheless) far better and more fully than can schools of type 4b (ibid.: 101).

The advantage of type 4a schools, according to Fishman (1991) is that they provide an environment conducive for greater parental support, involvement, commitment and a sense of community which is vital for RLS efforts.

*Stage 3 on the GIDS: use of Xish in the lower work sphere (outside of the Xish neighbourhood/community) involving interaction between Xmen and Ymen* (Fishman 1991: 103).

Stage 3 on the GIDS deals with the lower work sphere which can be of two types: on the one hand, the Xish-controlled enterprises and services seek to meet the needs of the Yish market, and on the other hand, Yish-controlled enterprises and services seek to meet the needs of the Xish market. For Fishman (1991), RLS successes in the realm of work represent:

> [T]he efforts to carry RLS outside of the immediate Xish community itself and into those more general, Yish-controlled, pursuits that nevertheless impinge quite unavoidably upon the daily well-being of the Xish family and neighbourhood (p. 104)

This involves an intricate communicative pattern that takes into cognizance the principle that services should be provided in the language preferred by those being served. The goal of the RLS efforts in the lower work sphere should be the maintenance of what Fishman calls ethnolinguistic boundary maintenance. In an Xish-controlled enterprise for example, this entails "making the work sphere as Xish as possible" (p. 104) through, for example, Xmen using Xish to interact with each other, keeping business records in Xish, remaining closed on Xish ethnocultural holidays. On the other hand, when Yish businessman are serving the local Xish public, RLS efforts should involve insisting on the service to be provided in Xish. With respect to the work sphere, Fishman (1991) advises that:

> [T]he work sphere must be tackled by successful RLS-efforts, because its alternative, to be overwhelmingly economically dependent upon Ymen and Yish-controlled rewards, is even more troublesome and dislocative (p 105).

The dominance of Yish in most work spheres makes the attainment of Stage 3 a difficult endeavour for most RLS movements. Fishman (1991) advises that where the attainment of Stage 3 is problematic, RLS movements should concentrate on Stages 6-4 instead, until such a time that Xish is consolidated in those earlier stages.

*Stage 2 on the GIDS: Xish in lower governmental services and mass media but not in the higher spheres of either* (Fishman 1991: 105).

Stage 2 involves use of Xish in lower governmental and mass media domains which are firmly under Yish control. Fishman (1991) observes that very few RLS-movements manage to reach Stage 2 and Stage 1 of the GIDS and further argues that:

> [S]tages 2 and 1 represent government itself or are most closely governmentally regulated because of their importance in the formation and preservation of integrative attitudes, opinions, identities and the top-most skills and statuses (p. 105).

In terms of RLS efforts at Stage 2, Fishman (1991) suggests that some levels of success are possible in situations whereby the pro-RLS contingent utilizes grass-roots involvement. These are situations whereby the pro-RLS contingent is more demographically concentrated, and has already become involved in the educational, economic, and political processes at the grass-roots level. At this stage, RLS advocates demand programming in Xish on national radio and television. Fishman (1991) advises that Stage 2 poses a danger in that it "further integrates Xish and Xmen into polity-wide reward systems. This is a stage at which brain-drain possibilities become particularly worrisome" (p. 106), in the sense that there are likely to be more rewards for excellence in Yish than in Xish.

*Stage 1 on the GIDS: some use of Xish in higher level educational, occupational, governmental and media efforts (but without the additional safety provided by political independence)* (Fishman 1991: 107)).

Stage 1 seeks the use of Xish in higher level educational, occupational, governmental and media efforts. Fishman (1991) describes Stage 1 as representing an accomplishment in RLS when:

> Xish would not only be co-associated with the highest educational, occupational, governmental and media activities there but its spokesmen and representatives would become responsible for planning, conducting and evaluating such activities and, therefore, for keeping a very watchful eye on the use of Xish (and on the implementation of Xishness) in conjunction with them (p. 107).

For Fishman (1991), Stage 1 represents the highest possible achievement for minority language groups seeking the promotion and development of their languages when the group's cultural autonomy is recognized and implemented particularly within those regions in which the minority language groups are highly concentrated.

Fishman's (1991) GIDS model is suggested as a heuristic device for communities that seek to reverse the fortunes of their languages. As Fishman (2001c) suggests, the stages on the GIDS helps advocates of RLS to locate the extent of disruption of their languages and the possible strategies for reversing language shift. Fishman (2001c) cautions that the GIDS model does not suggest a "step-by-step 'from the bottom upward' effort" (p. 467), or a "lock-step stage-by-stage progression" (p. 467). On the contrary, Fishman advises that RLSers should identify their priorities based on their desires for their languages, as well as on considerations such as the resources available to them.

In his RLS theory, Fishman emphasizes three aspects that serve as advice to those communities seeking to promote and develop their marginalized languages. The first is that:

> RLS-efforts must initially be primarily based on the self-reliance of pro-RLSers and on the community of Xish users and advocates whom pro-RLSers seek to mobilize and to activate (Fishman 1991: 111).

For Fishman (1991) the preliminary stages require concerted efforts on the part of the minority language activists to mobilize the language community members in line with RLS stages 8-6 which are mostly "labour-intensive rather than cost-intensive" (p. 111).

The second suggestion is that pro-RLSers should properly sequence their efforts considering the stage of sociocultural dislocation of Xish language and culture. Fishman advises against the premature rush to direct efforts at higher level Stages 4-1 when the pragmatic course of action would be to start with the lower levels to achieve higher degrees of ideological consensus among the Xish community.

Fishman's (1991) final suggestion with respect to pro-RLSers utilizing his GIDS is for them to "ponder the interstage connections in RLS-efforts, particularly the feedback between the stages above 4b and those below it" (p.113). Thus Fishman suggests the importance of both the stages concerned with intergenerational transmission (especially Stages 6 through 4a) and the Stages concerned with language maintenance (Stages 4b-1) by stressing that:

> Severely dislocated language-in-culture constellations must stress the foundational Stages (6-4a) first and then go on to protect and enhance them (Stages 4b-1) thereafter (Fishman 1991: 114).

Fishman's (1991) RLS theory thus emphasizes the need to foster intergenerational transmission as a sine qua non of minority language maintenance and revitalization. I will

revisit Fishman's (1991) RLS theory in Section 3.6 with reference to selected RLS case studies. In Chapter 6 and Chapter 7, I will make an extensive application of Fishman's (1991, 2001a) RLS theory in my analysis of the data from my study.

### 3.5.2 Skutnabb-Kangas's and Robert Phillipson on Linguistic Human Rights

Tove Skutnabb-Kangas and Robert Phillipson are the leading advocates for language revitalization through an approach that emphasizes a demand for Linguistic Human Rights (LHRs). Skutnabb-Kangas (2000) advocates for the marriage of language rights with human rights in order to obtain binding, codified, enforceable LHRs support from the human rights system and international law.

Skutnabb-Kangas (2000) makes an important distinction between language rights and LHRs. Language rights are a much broader concept that includes individual and collective enrichment-oriented rights that:

> … have to do with 'extras' for a good life, above basic needs. The right to learn foreign languages in school is oriented towards enriching the linguistic repertoire of both majorities and minorities over and above linguistic necessities (p. 498).

LHRs, on the other hand, are concerned with the needs of speakers of dominated minority languages for protection in order to ensure their survival and basic justice. For Skutnabb-Kangas (2000) LHRs are necessary rights which fulfill basic needs and are a prerequisite for living a dignified life and necessary for linguistic, psychological, cultural, social and economic survival for minorities and for basic democracy and justice.

Phillipson, Rannut and Skutnabb-Kangas (1995) observe that in as much as individuals can have their human rights violated through arbitrary imprisonment and torture, individuals and groups are unjustly treated and suppressed by means of language. They argue that individuals and groups "who are deprived of LHRs may thereby be prevented

from enjoying other human rights, including fair political representation, a fair trial, access to education, access to information and freedom of speech, and maintenance of their culture" (p. 2). Where such LHRs deprivations occur, Phillipson, Rannut and Skutnabb-Kangas (1995) identify language and ethnic conflict as the ultimate result. They, however, argue that "there is no necessary correlational relationship between conflict and differences of language" (p. 6), but that "we see lack of linguistic rights as one of the causal factors in certain conflicts, and linguistic affiliation as a rightful mobilizing factor in conflicts with multiple causes where power and resources are unevenly distributed along linguistic and ethnic lines" (p.7).

In the African context, Phillipson and Skutnabb-Kangas (1995) argue that the majority of the population is denied LHRs through language policies that promote exoglossic languages at the expense of the endoglossic languages. Phillipson and Skutnabb-Kangas (1995) cite the OAU Inter-African Bureau of Languages which argues that current policies are unlikely to change the marginal position of the endoglossic languages:

> Years after the attainment of political independence, the majority of African independent states have continued to practice linguistic policies inherited at the time of independence, where, on the whole, foreign colonial languages are more favoured than the languages indigenous to the African continent (p. 335).

This observation is particularly significant in the Zimbabwean context where the majority of the endoglossic languages were marginalized and resources channeled towards the promotion of the English language and to a lesser extent, the dominant endoglossic languages (refer to Chapter 4, Section 4.3). Commenting on these practices in colonial contexts, Preiswerk (1980), cited in Phillipson and Skutnabb-Kangas (1995: 338) argues that "[t]he structural and ideological entrenchment of the dominant language in colonial empires had predictable results" especially through education by "glorifying the dominant (group/language), stigmatizing the dominated (groups/languages), and rationalizing the relationship between the two, always to the advantage of the dominant".

Through glorification, non-material resources of the dominant groups, including the dominant languages and cultures are presented as better adapted to meet the needs of modern, technologically developed, democratic societies (Skutnabb-Kangas, 2000). On the contrary, the non-material resources of the dominated groups such as their languages and cultures, are stigmatized as being traditional, backward, narrow, and inferior and they are marginalized, deprived of resources for their development and use. In this way, Skutnabb-Kangas (2000) argues, the dominated languages and cultures are made invisible or socially constructed as handicaps rather than resources.

Particularly significant for this study is Skutnabb-Kangas's (2006) argument that it is in the education domain that the adverse effects of the denial of linguistic human rights for minority language groups are experienced. Skutnabb-Kangas (2006) argues that without educational LHRs, a minority whose children attend school not only fails to neither reproduce itself, nor integrate but is forced to assimilate. As I argue in Chapter 5, Section 5.2.3.2, the language activism of the linguistic minority groups in Zimbabwe targets the education domain because it is considered to promote assimilationist subtractive education. For Skutnabb-Kangas (2006) subtractive language learning is genocidal because it leads to the death of the non-dominant language because:

> …a new (dominant/majority) language is learned at the cost of the mother tongue, which is displaced, leading to a diglossic situation, and often the replacement of the mother tongue (p. 277).

The minority language groups in Zimbabwe argue that the language-in-education policy of Zimbabwe is a key factor that contributes to their marginalization and demand for educational LHRs. For minority language groups to enjoy educational LHRs, Skutnabb-Kangas (2006) argues that language-in-education policies should provide for additive language learning situations whereby high-levels of majority-language skills are added to high levels of mother-tongue skills. However, as I have argued in Section 3.3.3 above, in most African countries, subtractive language learning is the predominant practice leading to the endangerment of most endoglossic minority languages.

The linguistic human rights paradigm as advanced by Skutnabb-Kangas and others has, however, attracted some criticism with some scholars (e.g. Blommaert, 2005; Makoni and Pennycook, 2005; Stroud, 2001) arguing for alternative approaches to minority language debates. The engagement between the scholars has at times been extremely acrimonious[3]. Below, I will highlight some of the key criticisms of the linguistic human rights paradigm and the implications of such critiques to the present study.

One of the main criticisms of the linguistic human rights paradigm stems from its association with what has come to be called the "language ecology movement" (May, 2003). The language ecological movement (see for example the work of Maffi, 2000; Nettle and Romaine, 2000) links language and ecology and argues that "the current parlous state of many of the world's languages is analogous to processes of biological/ecological endangerment and extinction" (May, 2003: 100). Skutnabb-Kangas (2000) draws on this ecological frame of reference to argue that there exists a causal connection between biodiversity and linguistic and cultural diversity. Critics of the language rights movement such as Edwards (2001) argue that such a causal link is an example of overstating the case and may be counter-productive. Edwards (2001) argues that the language ecology argument is counter-productive because inspite of the nobility of the intentions to save the environment and maintain the balance in the ecosystem, harsh realities are that species that do not adapt to a changing environment become instinct. In the same way, the ecological frame of reference, when extended to language would imply that the death of non-dominant languages is a natural phenomenon which has to be expected. Thus, critiques of the linguistic human rights paradigm argue that its links with the language ecology movement is guided by artificial and impractical wishes and questions the advisability of implementing such "utopian wishes in the face of harsh realities" (Brutt-Griffler, 2002, cited in May, 2003: 101).

[3] See, for example, Blommaert's (2001) critique of Skutnabb-Kangas's conception of the notion of linguistic human rights and the reply by Skutnabb-Kangas et al. (2001). The 2004 issue of the *Journal of Language, Identity and Education* also captures the acrimony generated by the linguistic human rights debate.

The apparent utopianism and artificiality of the language rights movement is further explored by Blommaert (2001). Blommaert particularly questions the practical possibility of promoting ethnolinguistic pluralism as advocated by Skutnabb-Kangas and Philipson (1995). Blommaert (2001) argues that it is utopian and idealistic to propose

> genuine ethnolinguistic pluralism, in which language groups would be given institutional muscle for their language: standardization and scholarship, media, politics, literature and an education system" (p. 136).

Blommaert (2001) argues that apart from the obvious financial reasons, it is sociolinguistically impossible because the process would involve the development and introduction of status varieties in these languages, a process which makes "specific varieties of the languages exclusive and elite hegemonic" (p. 137). Whereas such processes would reduce inequality among language groups, it would exacerbate inequality within languages (Blommaert, 2001). Similarly, Edwards (2001) argues that an attempt to develop and promote marginalized languages is an artificial, utopian and therefore a futile attempt which disregards the *realpolitik* of language loss as reflective of inevitable sociopolitical change.

The argument that LHRs are utopian, artificial and impractical is particularly significant for this study in that the logic of the argument, when applied to the initiatives for minority language development and promotion in Zimbabwe, anticipates failure. The question of financial constraints as a major factor militating against the development of minority languages has been identified in this study as a real challenge. However, as discussed in Fishman's (1991; 2001) and Adegbija's (1997; 2001) theoretical frameworks for language revitalization (see Sections 3.5.1 and 3.5.4) language development initiatives will always encounter the problem of financial constraints and ways of working around the problem are always available whenever a commitment to such initiatives exists. The dismissal of initiatives to develop non-dominant languages as utopian, artificial and impractical has been identified as one of the main reasons why African languages have remained underdeveloped for so long (see for e.g. Bamgbose,

1991; Batibo, 2005; Kashoki, 1990). In Chapter 4, and particularly in Section 4.2, I argue that the 'utopian dismissal' was the main tool by which the colonial languages maintained their elite status because it was considered to be sociolinguistically impossible to develop the multitude of African languages and *realpolitik* dictated that the colonial languages like French and English be used in the important domains. Similar arguments have been used in Zimbabwe as a way of maintaining the dominance of Shona and Ndebele over the minority languages (refer to Chapter 4, Section 4.3.2). In this thesis, I argue that the initiatives to develop and promote the endoglossic minority languages are neither utopian nor impractical. Following Dorian (1998), I argue that the reasons against the development of the endoglossic minority languages of Zimbabwe arise from the internalization of the "ideology of contempt" for non-dominant languages characteristic of colonial language policies. (Refer to Section 3.3.1.1 above for an extended discussion of the European ideology of contempt.)

The other main criticism of the LHRs paradigm is its perceived tendency towards essentialism. Essentialism refers to the process by which particular groups come to be described "in terms of fundamental, immutable characteristics – as, for example, via a particular language – identity link" (May, 2003: 96). Stroud (2001) critiques this essentialist tendency of the language rights approach by arguing that it conceives identity as something fixed and permanent, whereas "identities are multiple and changing, constantly negotiated, contested and elaborated in any interaction and discourse" (p. 347). The argument is, therefore, contrary to the arguments advanced by language rights advocates who see the loss of a particular language as not being the end of the world, , since individuals simply adopt and adapt to a new language. Extended to the Zimbabwean context, and particularly with respect to the minority language rights advocates, the essentialist critique of the LHRs paradigm challenges the apparent language – identity link advanced by the minority language groups. It is important to concede that the language – identity link poses a challenge to the Zimbabwean minority language rights advocates. Data from this study has demonstrated that amongst the minority language community, there is no consensus regarding identity. This is highlighted in Chapter 6, Section 6.2.1 where some chiefs deny their identity as speakers

of minority languages and claim a different identity as speakers of dominant endoglossic languages. The discussion in Section 6.2.1 draws attention to difficulties that arise when the advocacy for language rights assumes a language – identity link. As May (2003) has argued,

> [the] common disjuncture between 'individual' and 'collective' aims immediately problematises the legitimacy of any claim to a group-based minority language right, whatever its social and political merits" (p. 105).

However, as I argue in Chapter 6, Section 6.2.1, the fact that some people decide to change and renegotiate their identity makes the case for minority language development and promotion even stronger. Instead of viewing such identity renegotiation as a rational choice, I agree with May (2003) that such a choice serves to demonstrate that "holding onto such languages has specific negative social and political consequences for their speakers" (p. 106). The essence of the criticism of LHRs as essentialist is that since identities are fluid, multiple and changing, speakers of the minority languages should abandon their languages and assume new identities as speakers of the dominant languages. As the discussion in Section 3.4 has highlighted, the LHRs paradigm provides a framework for resistance to such linguicist propositions. The data from this study shows that such a proposition constitutes the central issue in the language activism of the Zimbabwean minority language groups (see Chapter 5).

The essentialism argument stated above links with another prominent criticism that the linguistic human rights paradigm fails to recognize the fact that individual mobility of minority language speakers is far better served by shifting to a majority language. To illustrate how the linguistic human rights arguments have come to be associated with "cultural and linguistic stasis" (May, 2003), Blommaert (2004) draws attention to Skutnabb-Kangas and Phillipson's (1995: 89) argument that:

> Linguistic diversity at local levels is a necessary counterweight to the hegemony of a few 'international' languages. The 'World Languages' should just as roads

> and bridges, be seen as tools for communication of ideas and matter, but the creation of authentic ideas and products (instead of mass products) is in most cases necessarily best done locally.

For Blommaert (2004), this is tantamount to advocating for a territorialization of language functions, a process which "ties the speakers of these languages to a place and reinforces the presumed fixed connection between people and their environment" (p. 59). The promotion of marginalized languages in these contexts, according to Blommaert (2004), restricts the speakers of non-dominant languages from accessing languages such as French, English and other dominant languages that are known to facilitate upward social mobility. Thus, according to Blommaert (2004: 61) language planners working from a linguistic rights paradigm in which endoglossic languages are promoted as instruments for education and public life are "caught in a web of conflicting factors" because such an approach "runs counter to the existing trajectories of upward social mobility, often involving 'moving out' to some other place [and] it is therefore often understood by the target groups as preventing them from achieving upward social mobility by tying them to locality". In this sense "minority-language advocates are criticized for consigning, or ghettoizing, minority-language communities within the confines of a language that does not have a wider use , thus constraining their social mobility" (May, 2003: 101).

The argument that the demand for LHRs limits the prospects for the upward social mobility of minority language groups has featured prominently in most African contexts. In most of these contexts, the argument is that colonial languages such as French, English and other European languages facilitate access to high-status knowledge. As Roy Campbell (2003) observes, the new African leaders moved up the colonial educational ladder through instruction in European languages, in the process naturalizing the foreign languages as the languages of education. Inasmuch as the foreign languages have come to be associated with upward social mobility, critics of the LHRs paradigm disregard the core argument of LHRs advocates that language-in-education policy need not cast dominant and non-dominant languages in a dichotomous relationship. In Skutnabb-

Kangas (2006) terms, language-in-education policies should provide for additive language learning situations whereby high-levels of majority-language skills are added to high levels of mother-tongue skills. The same argument is advanced by Kontra et al. (1999), that access to LHRs should mean access to at least two languages, the mother tongue and an official language. Extended to the Zimbabwean context, the question of constraining the social mobility of minority-language communities does not arise because the demands of the minority language communities include the desire to access the dominant languages in addition to their own languages.

Contrary to Blommaert's (2004) argument that by advocating for territorialization of language functions, LHRs advocates constrain the possibilities for the development of non-dominant languages, other studies have shown that the principle of territoriality has been successfully applied in countries such as Belgium, for French and Flemish (see for e.g. Debrez, 2000) and Canada for French and English (see for e.g. Fishman, 1991). (Also refer to Chapter 5, Section 5.2.3.2, for an extended discussion of the merits of the principle of territoriality particularly for the Zimbabwean minority language groups.)

It is important to note that most of the critiques of the LHRs approach to minority language development and promotion do not constitute a dismissal of the LHRs paradigm, but are perspectives whose objective is to provide alternative approaches to the attainment of LHRs for linguistic minorities. Blommaert (2004) addresses the spirit of most of this critique when he states that "there are hardly any arguments against linguistic human rights" (p. 55) and that "[c]riticizing the linguistic rights paradigm is not a rejection of linguistic rights, nor a denial of the problems motivating the idea" (p. 62) but a desire to bring the best sociolinguistic practice to bear on the subject. Blommaert (2001) acknowledges that "[t]he political perspective developed by Skutnabb-Kangas and Phillipson is appealing and persuasive" (p. 140) and that the purpose of critique is meant to "shape our public voice in a particular way, one that offers an edge over the voices of others…" (p. 141).

The literature on LHRs is particularly important in this study in that it highlights some of the challenges associated with framing minority endoglossic language rights in such a discourse. In Chapter 5, Section 5.3. and Chapter 7, Section 7.3, I will revisit the literature on linguistic human rights as it informs the ideological position that motivates the interventions of organs of civil society in Zimbabwe.

### 3.5.3 Crystal's Postulates for a Theory of Language Revitalization

Crystal (2000) suggests some postulates for a theory of language revitalization which he describes as "pre-requisites for progress towards the goal of language being used in the home and neighbourhood as a tool of inter-generational communication" (p. 130). Crystal's postulates comprise of six factors which can be identified as creating possibilities for success in language maintenance and revitalization projects.

The first postulate: *An endangered language will progress if its speakers increase their prestige within the dominant community* (Crystal, 2000: 130).

Crystal (2000) argues that minority languages and cultures can be revitalized through the enhancement of a language community's prestige mostly by making themselves increasingly visible through such platforms as the media; newspapers, radio and television. Such visibility, Crystal (2000) suggests, can be achieved through cultural and religious festivals that attract the attention of the media. Minority language communities could also obtain greater visibility through insistence on the use of their languages in place names, on road signs, and on public signs in general. Crystal (2000: 131) cites cases whereby road signs written in the dominant languages were defaced and painted over by the equivalents in the non-dominant languages such as Welsh, Basque or Gaelic. Such activism, according to Crystal (2000), demonstrates dynamism at grassroots level and indicates the acceptability of the minority language's presence in the wider community.

The second postulate: *An endangered language will progress if its speakers increase their wealth relative to the dominant community* (Crystal, 2000: 132).

Crystal (2000) argues that the economic factor is important in language revitalization efforts given that raising the social and political profile of a language costs money which can only be available in a prosperous environment. Crystal (2000) cites the case of Catalonia where:

> The strengthened economy of Catalonia, for example, has been a major factor in encouraging the use of Catalonia there, and this has enhanced the prestige of the language in other Catalan-speaking areas (p. 132).

Crystal (2000) identifies economic activities such as tourism, service industries and light manufacturing industries as some of the domains in which endangered languages may benefit from economic growth.

The third postulate: *An endangered language will progress if its speakers increase their legitimate power in the eyes of the dominant community* (Crystal, 2000: 133).

Legitimate power for minority language communities arises from support from leading political organizations such as the UN. Crystal (2000) cites examples such as the adoption of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages and the Universal Declaration of Linguistic Rights as contributing to the legitimization of the efforts of minority language communities' efforts at language revitalization.

The fourth postulate: *An endangered language will progress if its speakers have a strong presence in the education system* (Crystal, 2000: 136).

Crystal (2000) acknowledges the primacy of the presence of endangered languages in the home, but also emphasizes the need for a strong presence of non-dominant languages in the education system. The presence of the minority languages in the school system,

according to Crystal (2000), provides opportunities for children to use their languages in varied contexts and generates confidence in the children on the importance of their language in comparison with the dominant languages.

The fifth postulate*: An endangered language will progress if its speakers can write their language down* (Crystal, 2000: 138).

Crystal argues that languages that have dictionaries, grammars and other materials developed in them have better chances of survival and maintenance than those that do not. Corpus planning is cited as an important activity in language revitalization.

The sixth postulate: *An endangered language will progress if its speakers can make use of electronic technology* (Crystal, 2000: 141).

According to Crystal (2000): 142) "Information technology (IT)-and the internet in particular-offers endangered languages which have been written down a fresh set of opportunities whose potential has hardly begun to be explored" (p. 142). Information technology is identified as helpful in developing a language's profile. Further, technology is helpful in countering the geographical scattering of a community through migration, one of the major factors in the dissolution of languages. Crystal, however, notes the limitations that confront many minority language communities which do not even have electricity to begin with.

In Section 3.6, I revisit Crystal's postulates for language revitalization in evaluating how these postulates help in understanding language revitalization initiatives in the case studies cited. In Chapter 6, Section 6.2, I draw on Crystal's (2000) postulates for language revitalization to assess the strategies employed by the advocates for minority endoglossic language rights in mobilizing grassroots members of the minority language communities in Zimbabwe. Further, Crystal's (2000) postulates for minority endoglossic language revitalization are revisited in Chapter 7, Sections 7.3 and 7.4, focusing on the usefulness of these postulates in assessing initiatives that seek to expand the domains in

which minority endoglossic languages are used. The main thrust of these analytic moves is to put theory into practice via analysis of field data.

### 3.5.4 Adegbija's "Operation 'Rescue Them'"

Adegbija (1997) proposes what he calls "Operation 'Rescue Them'" which he suggests as "an action plan for the survival and promotion of small-population languages" (p. 16). Adegbija's (1997) proposal seeks to accommodate the unique linguistic situation that exists in Africa, particularly the high levels of multilingualism, the high numbers of undeveloped languages and the scarcity of resources. Adegbija (1997) suggests five "concrete proposals for promoting and ensuring the survival of small languages and, also, for combating some of the difficulties responsible for their neglect" (p. 17).

The first proposal: *A strong, basic commitment and developmental philosophy* (Adegbija, 1997: 17).

Adegbija's (1997) first proposal targets the language ideology of governments and suggests that they should embrace a philosophy that recognizes the importance of each of the state's languages, no matter the number of speakers of the language. For Adegbija (1997), it is important that governments enact legislation or constitutional provisions that "guarantee respect and a basic equality for all languages, their sizes notwithstanding" (p. 18). While acknowledging that some languages have more speakers than others, a factor which impacts on their developmental status, Adegbija (1997) argues that it is the government's responsibility to recognize the principle of equity in the allocation of resources.

The second proposal: *The establishment of national and local language-development coordinating bodies, committees, or agencies* (Adegbija, 1997: 18).

For Adegbija (1997) the formation of small, even informal language-development coordinating bodies for each language in a multilingual context "constitutes the saving

grace of many small languages within the country" (p. 18). Adegbija (1997) argues that in Nigeria, most small languages have survived because of the existence of such bodies. Adegbija (1997) suggests that the role of the committees would be to monitor the development of the minority languages:

> The task of such a committee should primarily be that of being a catalyst to the development of the community language and could involve taking or implementing crucial language planning decisions; liaising with outside experts, for example in the universities and teachers' colleges, especially when internal expertise in language development is not available; liaising with government agencies such as the ministries of education, of culture etc.; conducting periodic evaluations of developmental efforts; commissioning the devising of orthographies; ensuring that elaboration, codification, and standardization are carried out; writing primers, readers, dictionaries; pilot testing such materials in the community, etc. (p. 19).

Adegbija's suggestions for the roles of minority language committees are particularly significant for my study and will be revisited in Chapter 6 and Chapter 7 when I discuss the initiatives of the Zimbabwean minority language committees to develop and promote their languages. In Chapter 6, Sections 6.2.2 and 6.2.3, I focus on initiatives involving Zimbabwean minority language committees and the interactions they have with the Ministry of Education officials and schools to influence changes in practices in favour of the minority languages. In Chapter 7, Sections 7.3 and 7.4, I discuss how minority language committees in Zimbabwe undertake initiatives similar to those suggested by Adegbija (1997), involving liaising with universities and teachers' colleges on the corpus development of minority languages, and with government agencies on status planning with respect to the endoglossic minority languages.

Further, apart from language committees representing minority language groups at localized levels, Adegbija (1997) proposes the formation of national governmental bodies that coordinate and provide support for language development efforts within the country.

In most African states, national governmental bodies that coordinate language development focus mostly on the dominant endoglossic languages. For example, in Zimbabwe the Language Advisory Committees for the Shona and Ndebele languages were supported by government to develop these two languages at the expense of the other minority endoglossic languages (refer to Chapter 4, Section 4.3.2.3.) Similarly, in Botswana, a Setswana National Language Committee exists, while other languages do not have national language committees recognized by government. In Section 3.6.1, I discuss how the Botswana government prioritizes the promotion of Setswana, neglecting the other endoglossic languages.

The third proposal: *Deep involvement of the language communities concerned in development efforts* (Adegbija, 1997: 21).

This third proposal emphasizes the need for grassroots participation in the revitalization of minority languages. Adegbija (1997) emphasizes the importance of involving the speakers of the minority languages being developed in the following terms:

> The deep emotional, intellectual and mental involvement of the small-population community whose language is being developed is imperative for achieving the success of the development of small languages and for implementing language programs that could result from the language development efforts (p. 20).

Adegbija (1997) cites the Rivers Readers Project as a success story because the language communities whose languages are being developed under the project actively participate in the language development process. The participation of grassroots members of minority language communities is particularly important in this research and the significance of such participation is discussed in Chapter 6, Section 6.2.

The fourth proposal: *Tapping all available resources and reducing language-development costs* (Adegbija, 1997: 21).

Adegbija's (1997) fourth proposal for the revitalization of minority languages addresses the issue of scarcity of resources necessary for language development. Adegbija (1997) observes that in Africa particularly, "[u]ndoubtedly, the issue of scarce resources is the most nagging and bedeviling dilemma that undermines language development" (p. 16). Adegbija (1997) argues that where a firm philosophy of multilingualism is pursued by the state, resources for language development would be made available as a matter of national priority:

> Contrary to the usual cry about non-available resources, it is my position that all the available resources germane to the survival and promotion of small-population languages in particular and language development in general in many multilingual contexts, especially in Africa, has not been judiciously tapped by government and many local bodies (p. 21).

Citing the case of Nigeria, Adegbija (1997) argues that resources have not been used optimally. He cites the example of university departments, particularly those of education and linguistics, which have not been fully utilized to provide language development work. Adegbija (1997) argues that with government support, each of the over thirty universities in Nigeria could be involved in developing the languages in its "catchment area" (p. 21). This suggestion is particularly important for my study because it is one of the proposals pursued by the minority language groups in Zimbabwe to the extent that colleges and universities are seen as ideal sites to develop programs that promote minority languages in their "catchment areas" (refer to Chapter 7, Section 7.4). Adegbija (1997) argues that such initiatives at colleges and universities could be complemented by other organs of civil society who "if liaised with in the process of such development, would be willing to support at least a cheap production of such materials where the government cannot afford printing them" (p. 22). (Refer to Chapter 7, Sections 7.4.1 and 7.4.2 for a discussion of similar measures pursued by the advocates for minority endoglossic language rights in Zimbabwe.)

The fifth proposal: *Official institutionalization of multilingualism* (Adegbija 1997: 22).

Adegbija's (1997) fifth proposal deals with the expansion of domains of language use for minority languages. Adegbija (1997) cites (Williams (1991) who argued that in order to develop and promote minority languages, there is need for:

> [T]he reform of the public sector in multilingual contexts in such a way that multilingual practices can become the norm, for example in law courts, administrative offices, public notices, commercial publicity, etc. (secondary domains as distinct from the primary domains (Williams 1991, cited in Adegbija 1997: 23).

Adegbija (1997) supports such initiatives by pointing out that languages develop when they are provided with opportunities for use in the public sector and more particularly in the educational domain.

The efforts of the minority language groups in Zimbabwe are centred mostly on expanding the domains of language use from the primary domains to the secondary domains, particularly, in the domains of education and the media. Chapter 7 focuses on the initiatives of Zimbabwean minority language groups to expand the domains of language use for their languages.

In the next section, I focus on some case studies that describe initiatives to revitalize marginalized languages. The discussion of the case studies draws on the theoretical frameworks already presented in subsequent sections of this chapter.

## 3.6 Case Studies in Language Revitalization

The activities of CSOs involved in advocacy for the development and promotion of endoglossic minority languages in Zimbabwe are the specific context of this research. I

am not aware of any systematic studies that document the involvement of organs of civil society in the struggles of marginalized language groups in Zimbabwe[4]. However, there are a number of language revitalization projects that have been undertaken and documented in other parts of Africa and the world. In this section, I will examine the relevance of these documented projects to this study, in particular those that have been initiated by civil society organizations in Botswana and Canada. The case of Botswana is particularly important because it highlights the complexities involved in advocacy for minority language rights in an African context in which the multilingual nature of the state is suppressed. The importance of the Canadian case study lies in the fact that it represents the successful revitalization of French, which faced marginalisation following the entrenchment of a dominant global language, English.

### 3.6.1 Language Revitalization Efforts in Botswana: The Kalanga, the Wayeyi and the Naro Peoples and Languages.

The Kalanga, the Wayeyi and the Naro people of Botswana are engaged in advocacy activities that seek to develop and promote their languages, which they perceive to be suppressed in a sociolinguistic environment that favours Setswana, the dominant endoglossic language, and English, the dominant exoglossic language. According to Chebanne, Nyati-Ramahobo and Youngman (2001), the promotion of Setswana and the concomitant suppression of the other endoglossic languages have created the widespread belief that Botswana is a monolingual state in which Setswana is the only native language. Table 3.6.1 below shows the profile of the languages spoken in Botswana, their status in the country and the number of languages ascribed the various statuses.

[4] The book *Silent Voices* (See Appendix H) represents an attempt to record the struggle for language rights. The book is an important record of the initiatives of minority language groups in seeking to promote their languages. However, the main thrust is to present a report of those initiatives and does not engage in the scholarly debates that has characterized minority language revitalization debates in Botswana and Canada.

***Table 3.6.1*** *The linguistic profile of Botswana.*

| **Status** | **Language** | **Number of languages** |
|---|---|---|
| Ex-colonial language (official language) | English | 1 |
| Nationally dominant language (national language) | Setswana | 1 |
| Areally dominant languages | Ikalanga, Shekgalagari, Naro | 3 |
| Minority languages | Thimbukushu, Otjiherero, Nama, #Hua, Zezuru, Nambya, Sindebele, Sebirwa, Shiyeyi, Afrikaans, Chikuhane, Tshwa, Setswapong, Silozi, !Xoo, Shua, Kwedam, Ju|'hoan, Kua, |Gwi, Rugciriku, #Kx'au||'ein, ||Gana | 23 |

**Source:** Batibo (2005: 52).

Commenting on the linguistic status quo in Botswana, Batibo (2005) observes that:

> It is clear that the majority of the languages of Botswana are minority languages. However, although they constitute 82% of the number of languages in the country, their speakers make up only 7% of the population. Some of them, such as #Hua, |Gwi and ||Gana, are spoken by scarcely 1000 people. On the other hand, although Ikalanga, Shekgalagari and Naro are areally important, they have no tangible public function. It is because of their dynamism and socio-historical circumstances that they have assumed areal importance (p. 52).

Batibo's (2005) observations regarding the relative numbers of majority and minority endoglossic languages mirrors the Zimbabwean linguistic situation whereby the majority of the endoglossic languages are minority languages, although in both countries, the speakers of the minority languages make up a smaller fraction of the total population of the country. (Refer to Chapter 4, Section 4.3.1 for a discussion of language status and language use in Zimbabwe.) The sociolinguistic profile of Botswana, like that of

Zimbabwe, conforms to Batibo's (2005) triglossic structure model discussed in Chapter 4, Section 4.2.3).

The language policy of Botswana recognizes only English and Setswana which are designated official and national languages respectively. According to Batibo and Smieja (2000), Botswana's language policy renders the other endoglossic languages invisible in that they are neither recognized nor allocated any public functions. For this reason, the language policy is considered to be discriminatory in that it is perceived to undermine other languages. Janson (2000) observes that the entrenchment of Setswana as the main language of the state has been inversely proportionate to the status of the minority languages which have gradually been down graded over the years. Janson (2000) argues that the situation regarding the minority languages has become difficult in that the speakers of minority languages have been subdued by the speakers of Setswana who display attitudes of disrespect and disdain against the minorities.

According to Chebanne, Nyati-Ramahobo and Youngman (2001), post-colonial language policy contributed towards the further marginalization of the minority languages because, immediately after independence, English became the constitutional language, and Setswana was understood to be the national language although this was not explicitly stated in the constitution. Further, other languages which were taught in schools such as Ikalanga were discontinued. According to Chebanne et al., (2001) this policy was pursued as part of the post-colonial project of nation-building adopted in many Third World countries which sought to construct nation-states amongst diverse ethnic groups within inherited boundaries by imposing the culture and language of a dominant ethnic group.

The net effect of the language policies and practices in Botswana have been that there has been what Batibo and Smieja (2000) have referred to as "a big concern about the fast changing scenario of the minority languages and the almost irreversible trend of these languages towards language shift and death" (p. xiii). It is such concerns that have

attracted the intervention of civil society organizations in order to attempt a reversal of these trends.

The language revitalization initiatives in Botswana are significant to this study because they point to the possibilities of CSOs establishing collaborative partnerships with grassroots organizations fighting for language rights. The pursuit of similar collaborations in Zimbabwe is discussed in Chapter 5, Section 5.2. The sections below briefly discuss the language revitalization efforts initiated in favour of three languages in Botswana: Section 3.6.1.1 provides the background to the formation of SPILL and the efforts the society has initiated in order to promote the Ikalanga language spoken by the Kalanga people in Botswana; Section 3.6.1.2 focuses on the Wayeyi people's initiatives to promote the Shiyeyi language; and Section 3.6.1.3 discuses efforts to develop and promote the Naro language.

#### 3.6.1.1 Society for the Promotion of the Ikalanga Language in Botswana

Efforts to promote the Ikalanga language in Botswana were initiated by the Society for the Promotion of Ikalanga Language (SPILL), formed in 1981 with the objective to develop and maintain the Ikalanga language and culture. The formation of SPILL arose from growing perceptions that the Ikalanga language was threatened. These perceptions arose from the fact that following Botswana's attainment of political independence in 1966, Ikalanga and other minority languages were banned from the education system, the media and other secondary domains, relegating the languages to the home environment. At its formation, SPILL attracted hostile attention by the government who viewed it as tribalistic and divisive, such that even those Kalangas who were in top government positions avoided demonstrating public support for the organization for fear of victimization.

Civil society organizations that support the work of SPILL include UNESCO and the Lutheran Bible Translators based in the United States of America. The UNESCO sponsored project, initiated by the Department of Adult Education at the University of

Botswana in 1998 was designed to develop adult literacy teaching materials as well as to train adult literacy teachers in the use of materials. Through the technical support provided by the Lutheran Bible Translators, Nyati-Ramahobo (2004) reports that SPILL has pursued projects that are inclined towards facilitating Christian religious practice among the Kalanga people, including the development of Ikalanga orthography, the translation of the New Testament into Ikalanga and the publishing of a hymn book in Ikalanga. SPILL has promoted the use of Ikalanga in the education system and in the media by developing booklets for informal teaching of Ikalanga and for future use in schools and by publishing a newsletter and news articles in Ikalanga in independent newspapers.

Further, SPILL is pushing for the right to be represented in the House of Chiefs by their own Paramount Chief. This move contests the current situation whereby "there is a Kalanga sub-Chief in the House of Chiefs, but he is not regarded as [a] representative of all Kalangas as he is not a Paramount Chief" (Nyati-Ramahobo, 2004: 61). For Nyati-Ramahobo (2004), SPILL is a crucial civil society actor in promoting the orientation that language diversity is a right and a resource for development.

#### 3.6.1.2 The Kamanakao Association and the Promotion of the Shiyeyi Language in Botswana

The case of the Wayeyi people of Botswana and their language Shiyeyi is of particular interest to my study in that it bears close resemblance to the struggles undertaken by the minority language groups in Zimbabwe and in particular, the Tonga. Like the Tonga of Zimbabwe, the story of the Wayeyi in Botswana is one of political and economic marginalization, subjugation, discrimination, dehumanization and a general undermining of their language and culture. According to Nyati-Ramahobo (2000) the Wayeyi have suffered cultural and linguistic domination at the hands of the Tswana dating back to as late as 1820 when the Wayeyi of the North-West region of Botswana were invaded by the Batawana, a Tswana-speaking group, taking their land and cattle and subjecting them to a form of serfdom.

The Wayeyi's resistance to the dominance of the Tswana and the denigration of the Shiyeyi language and culture was spearheaded by the Kamanakao Association, whose main objectives were: "(i) to develop and maintain the Shiyeyi language and culture; (ii) to carry out and disseminate research on Shiyeyi language and culture, traditions, customs, life-styles, norms, beliefs and other related issues; (iii) to cultivate an appreciation of and knowledge about Shiyeyi culture; (iv) to promote the storage, retrieval, dissemination and development of the Shiyeyi literary and cultural materials; and (v) to collaborate with other bodies interested in the promotion and maintenance of language and culture[5]".

As a way of asserting their presence, the Wayeyi decided to secede from the Batawana (a Tswana tribe whose chief presided over them) and went on to install their paramount Chief on April 24 1999 and demanded that government should recognize him. Nyati-Ramahobo (2000) provides an insight into the importance attached to chiefs and their role in Botswana:

> Chiefs are viewed as custodians of the culture of a people. It is generally believed that chiefs bring unity amongst their people. They also provide a sense of self-esteem to the people (p. 224).

Among the Wayeyi, and similar to the minority language groups in Zimbabwe, the traditional chiefs are accorded a high status which motivates for their placement at the center of language revitalization efforts.

Nyati-Ramahobo (2004) reports that the Kamanakao Association uses three main sources of funding to pursue various projects in language and culture revitalization. Firstly, through funding from the UNESCO - University of Botswana project, the Kamanakao

[5] The Objectives of the Kamanakao Association are discussed in Chebanne et al., (2001: 12).

Association focuses on training secondary school leavers in using the Shiyeyi orthography to write stories, songs as well as writing primers for adult literacy.

Secondly, the Kamanakao Association received funding from the Lutheran Bible Translators which they used to fund the development of Shiyeyi orthography. Further, the funds from the Lutheran Bible Translators were used to fund the translation of hymns and religious films into Shiyeyi (Nyati-Ramahobo, 2004).

Thirdly, the Kamanakao Association raises funds through projects initiated by its nine branches which involve the sale of T-shirts, booklets, bags and calendars. According to Nyati-Ramahobo (2004), the communities are responsible for the cultural aspects of the organization which include organizing cultural activities and hosting Chief Kamanakao when he visits the villages.

However, in spite of all of these positive developments at a grassroots level, Nyati-Ramahobo (2004) reports that at the government level there is an unwillingness to recognize the language and cultural rights of the minority language groups. For example, Nyati-Ramahobo (2004) reports that the activities of the Kamanakao Association are being branded as divisionistic and tribalistic, leading to a situation where some Wayeyi in top government positions and others in the ruling party have been used to de-campaign the Kamanakao Association and to lobby against the acceptance of Chief Kamanakao to represent the Wayeyi in the House of Chiefs. The Kamanakao Association has, in spite of the resistance from government structures, pressed ahead with its advocacy activities which, according to Nyati-Ramahobo (2004) have been championed by grassroots Wayeyi, some academics and the collaborating NGOs.

### 3.6.1.3 The Naro Language Project

This section describes initiatives to develop and promote the Naro language spoken in Botswana. The discussion in this section is based on a report by Hessel Visser (2000) who describes a project that he leads which seeks to reverse the imminent demise of the Naro language. Visser and his wife arrived in Ghanzi on 6 March 1991 at the invitation of the Church Council of the Reformed Church in Botswana (RCB) in D'Kar, to do linguistic and missionary work among the Naro people.

The Naro language belongs to the Khoesan language family. According to Visser (2000), Naro is spoken by about fifteen thousand people over a big area, stretching from over the border with Namibia through Ghanzi town to the Kuke area in Ngamiland. Visser (2000) reports that studies by Batibo (1997, 1998), Batibo and Smieja (2000), and Chebanne and Nthapelelang (2000) have revealed "shocking" results that members of the Khoesan communities were less prepared to stand for their language and culture than members of other minority language groups. Further, cases of language shift were reported promoted by the older members of the communities who even motivated their children to abandon their languages in favour of the dominant language, Setswana.

Unlike the Kamanakao Association and SPILL, which receive support from major institutions such as UNESCO and the University of Botswana, the Naro Language Project provides a different scenario where language revitalization is championed by individuals, albeit with the support of their church. Unlike SPILL and the Kamanakao Association, the Naro Language Project pursues an approach that emphasizes the corpus aspect of language revitalization, without challenging the ideological dimension which implicates status planning.

Visser (2000) reports that their task was three fold: academic, developmental and missionary. The academic task involved developing the orthography of the Naro language that would be used to teach the local people to read and write. The academic task also entailed lexicographic work which culminated with the publication of a

preliminary version of a dictionary in 1994. The developmental task involved developing the people by teaching them reading and writing skills. The missionary task involved translating the bible into Naro and ministering to the people. Citing Guenther (1986), Visser (2000) reports that:

> The Naro used to believe that God had made the (white) people, animals and other creatures. Afterwards, the counter-god copied the Creator, but these creatures were caricatures, because his limited power: So he made a goat for God's cow, a donkey for God's horse, a black man for God's white man, and a San person for God's baboon! (p. 205).

These pejorative sentiments point to the language group's sense of dehumanization and an entrenched inferiority complex. The Naro Language Project is credited with contributing towards the revitalization of the Naro language and the humanization of its speakers through a rejuvenation of their identity. Visser (2000) cites a study by Hasselbring (1996) who reported the increased use of the Naro language as an indication of the success achieved in revitalizing the Naro language and culture. In his own assessment of the project, Visser (2000) expresses his satisfaction, albeit cautiously:

> Of course we may have questions about revitalizing a language. Using a language must be functional. It must serve a purpose; it should not just be done merely for the sake of looking at it as in a museum. But it is wonderful that a nearly extinct language can again be studied, and that its speakers can rejoice in sentiments of the past (p. 214).

The case of the Naro language revitalization efforts is, therefore, presented as a success story in the sense that a language that was on the verge of extinction is experiencing a reversal of fortunes.

### 3.6.1.4 Comment on the Botswana case studies

In Skutnabb-Kangas's (2000) terms, the Botswana case studies of the Ikalanga, Shiyeyi and Naro languages present evidence of the state's language ideology as linguicidal (Skutnabb-Kangas, 2000). The overt discrimination against the minority languages through state policy portray the view that multilingualism in Botswana is viewed as a problem, rather than as a resource. By promoting Setswana at the expense of the minority languages, the language policy of Botswana promotes Setswana linguistic hegemony. In Botswana, the minority languages are presented as being threatened by Setswana, confirming Batibo's (2005) argument that in most African states, it is the dominant endoglossic languages that pose a threat to the minority languages. In a similar way, the minority languages in Zimbabwe are threatened by the dominant endoglossic languages, (Shona and Ndebele) which are supported through state policy. In both the Zimbabwean and Botswana contexts, the governments lack what Adegbija (1997) calls "a strong, basic commitment and developmental philosophy" towards the development and promotion minority languages (refer to Section 3.5.4). By challenging the Botswana government's language policy, the Kalanga people through the SPILL initiatives, and the Wayeyi through the Kamanakao Association and the Naro through the Naro Language Project, recognize Adegbija's (1997) exhortation that:

> Prior to confronting and tackling all other problems that bedevil the development of small-group languages is the need for a strong, unshakeable policy and commitment of the will to the philosophy that all languages, no matter the number of speakers, qualify for, and should be given, a chance to survive, develop, and grow to their maximum without being stifled by government policy actions (p. 17).

The Botswana case studies show that the government's language policy is a major impediment to the survival and promotion of the minority languages.

Further, the Botswana case studies are valuable for my research because of the example set for the minority language groups in Zimbabwe and the forms of resistance that they have adopted in opposition to their marginalization. Their resistance is couched in a similar discourse where the right to language is presented as a human right. In both the Zimbabwean and Botswana contexts, the minority language groups resist the stigmatization of their cultural resources (Skutnabb-Kangas, 2000), and affirm their rights to their languages and cultures. The activities of SPILL, the Kamanakao Association and the Naro Language Project represent an attempt at the revitalization of the languages and cultures of these speech communities that have been humiliated and dehumanized to the point where reference to them is framed in non-human terms. This thesis highlights similar pejorative references to the Tonga people in Zimbabwe in non-human terms. (Refer to Chapter 5, Section 5.2.1 for references to the Tonga people.) Thus, Skutnabb-Kangas (2000) argues that one site for the struggle for linguistic human rights should be resistance to the stigmatization of minority languages as ugly and non-human.

The Botswana case studies are also valuable for my research because they highlight the significance of collaborations between grassroots organizations and civil society organizations in their efforts to revitalize the minority languages. The UNESCO - University of Botswana project aims to develop and promote the Ikalanga and the Shiyeyi languages; the Reformed Church of Botswana aims to develop the Naro language. These efforts underscore the importance of broad-based partnerships between well resourced CSOs and grassroots organizations that lack the necessary resources for such actions. Adegbija (1997) underlines the significance of such collaborations between language committees formed by minority language groups and other stake-holders in civil society (refer to Section 3.5.4). Particularly significant is the fact that the minority language communities in Botswana maintain a leadership role in their efforts to develop and promote their languages and do not surrender agency to the collaborating partners within civil society. As Adegbija (1997: 20) advises, it is important for the minority language communities to maintain "deep emotional, intellectual and mental involvement" in efforts to revitalize their languages. The present study identifies the collaborations between CSOs and grassroots organizations in Zimbabwe as an invaluable aspect of their

struggles for the revitalization of the minority languages in Zimbabwe (refer to Chapter 5, Section 5.3).

Particularly important to my research are the findings regarding the successes and failures which can be drawn from the Botswana case studies. Firstly, with reference to the Naro Language Project, the efforts to revitalize the Naro language focus on corpus development. As Visser (2000: 196) points out, "in the present day society, a language which is written down has a greater chance of surviving, because without books or literacy materials, a language cannot be taught in school". Visser (2000: 199) also emphasizes the importance of research and the documentation of minority languages because "[n]ot only does this give positive attention to a language, but it also provides a means for substantive use of that language, and of cultural rights. Research on phonological, lexical and grammatical phenomena lays the foundation for literacy work as another stepping stone for development, and revitalization of a language." Visser's (2000) approach is aligned with Crystal's (2000: 138) fifth postulate for language revitalization in so far as, "an endangered language will progress if its speakers can write their language down". According to Fishman's (1991) RLS theory, the focus on reconstructing an endangered language as in the case of the Naro Language Project can be located at Stage 8 of the GIDS whereby "most vestigial users of Xish are isolated old folks and Xish needs to be re-assembled from their mouths and memories and taught to demographically unconcentrated adults" (p. 395). Further, the focus on corpus development can be located at Stage 5 of Fishman's (1991) GIDS, whereby efforts are directed at establishing "schools for literacy acquisition, for the old and the young, and not in lieu of compulsory education" (p. 395). Following Fishman's (1991) RLS theory, the Naro Language Project belongs on the weak end of RLS efforts in that the project does not challenge the authority of the state. This factor provides part of the explanation for why the Naro Language Project does not attract a hostile response from the state, as is the case with the efforts of SPILL and the Kamanakao Association. The Naro Language Project does not challenge government at all, seeking to develop and promote the language through localized corpus development and literacy promotion efforts. Visser's

(2000) comment suggests a need to pursue a conciliatory attitude towards government on behalf of the Naro people:

> We can be glad about the helping attitude of the Botswana government, in providing schools, clinics, boreholes, and drought relief to these marginalized people. But perhaps the government can lead the members of the public in a positive attitude toward the San people (p. 198).

Unlike the Naro Language Project, the language revitalization efforts of SPILL and the Kamanakao Association assume a confrontational stance towards Botswana's language policy, which they label as being discriminatory and undemocratic (Janson, 2000). The advocacy activities of both SPILL and the Kamanakao Association are couched in the language rights discourse where language rights are perceived to be "so fundamental, so inalienable that no state (or other person) is allowed to violate them" (Skutnabb-Kangas, 2000: 485). By demanding a strong presence in the education system for the Kalanga language, SPILL recognizes Crystal's (2000: 136) postulate for minority language revitalization such that "[a]n endangered language will progress if its speakers have a strong presence in the education system". The demand by both SPILL and the Kamanakao Association for political recognition and representation through their own chiefs can be construed as a direct challenge to the political system in Botswana. Fishman's (1991) RLS theory identifies such politically encumbered efforts as belonging to the strong side of RLS efforts, since they directly challenge the hegemony of the dominant languages that are supported by the state. Following Fishman's (1991) RLS theory, the Botswana government's hostile response to SPILL and the Kamanakao Association's RLS efforts is explained in terms of the perception that such efforts represent a challenge to the government's ideological position on language.

The Botswana case studies discussed in this section are considered particularly important in conceptualizing the intricacies around RLS efforts by marginalized language groups in situations of suppressed multilingualism in Africa and in Zimbabwe in particular.

### 3.6.2 Language Revitalization in Canada: The case of French in Quebec

In this section, I will consider the case of French Quebec as one of the success stories of reversing language shift through language revitalization efforts (Fishman, 1991; Bourhis, 2001). In the 1960's perceptions developed among French Quebecois that although they constituted 90% of the total population of Quebec, their language was under threat from English (Fishman 1991). Cases of language shift from French to English were considered to be rising at an alarming rate and were driven by a plethora of factors, and especially economic factors. According to Fishman (1991), the status quo in the work place favoured Anglophones, such that the more specialized and higher paying jobs were reserved for English speakers.

According to Fishman (1991) this happened although there was no disabling legislation against French. The status quo created fertile ground for language shift, in that Francophones who learned English and became English-speaking at work "immediately earned a sizeable bonus as a result" and because of the attractiveness of learning the English language "francophone parents were becoming more concerned about their children's mastery of English than their mastery of French" (Fishman 1991: 293). The Anglo-domination of Canada in general and in Quebec in particular, contributed to the marginalization of the Francophones who according to Fishman (1991) were referred to as "the White Niggers of America… laughed at, looked down upon, exploited and headed for cultural annihilation in their own region" (p. 294). For Fishman (1991), three factors contributed to the decline of French in Quebec and fostered the transfer to English for purposes of social mobility: (i) the decline of francophone society in the rest of Canada; (ii) the growing preference for English among immigrants and (iii) the growing Anglophone domination of Quebec's economic activity.

The revitalization of the French language in Quebec is traced to the "Quiet Revolution" instituted by the (Quebec) Liberal Party in the 1960's (Fishman, 1991; Bourhis, 2001). The successive Quebec governments targeted factors identified as undermining the French language: (i) the decline of Francophones in Anglo-Canada; (ii) the drop in the

birth rate of the francophone population; (iii) immigrant choice of the English rather than the French school system for their children; and (iv) Anglo-domination of the Quebec economy (Bourhis 2001). The new Quebec government of the 1960's promulgated laws designed to address each of the identified factors, the most prominent of which was the Charter of the French Language (Bill 101) (Bourhis 2001: 113). Bill 101, which according to Fishman (1991: 310) "was a compendium of measures covering the various domains of modern life" that concluded the following provisions:

- It established a 'Commission de toponymic' to replace English names of towns, rivers and mountains;
- It required all non-francophone professionals who wished to practice in Quebec to pass French proficiency examinations;
- It restricted attendance at English-medium schools to those Anglophone children at least one of whose parents had attended such schools in Quebec, thereby effectively disqualifying most of the children of "new Canadians" as well as children of "old Canadians" who came to Quebec from other parts of Canada (until the latter provision was rescinded under pressure in 1983);
- It required all commercial advertising and public signs to be in French, while permitting signs of government offices or services to be bilingual, provided the French portion predominated;
- It required the dubbing or sub-titling in French for all non-French films;
- It required that the courts and legislatures operate entirely in French and all municipalities (even English ones) were required to keep their minutes in French and conduct their official correspondence in French;
- It declared that only the French version of all Quebec laws was official (a provision later declared unconstitutional by the Canadian Supreme Court); and
- All businesses had to acquire French names and to use those names only in Quebec (Fishman 1991).

According to Bhourhis (2001) one of the most contentious aspects of Bill 101 was the "francisation of the Quebec linguistic landscape" which involved "changing road signs and government signs to 'French only' and replacing many English place names by

French ones" (p. 127). Bourhis (2001) observes that for the architects of Bill 101, the idea was that:

> These linguistic landscape requirements had the advantage of producing highly visible changes in favour of French within a year of the adoption of Bill 101, thus comforting Francophones that Bill 101 was achieving its immediate goals set by the Parti Quebecois Government (p. 127).

According to Bourhis (2001), the reactions of the Anglophones to Bill 101 were largely negative leading to many of them moved to other provinces of Canada. Bourhis (2001) reports that between 1971 and 1981, Quebec lost 12% of English mother-tongue speakers through 'emigration'. In spite of the opposition to the provisions of Bill 101, it is considered to have contributed a great deal towards the maintenance of French in Quebec (Bourhis 2001; Spolsky 2004) and is noted as a success story for reversing language shift (Fishman 1991).

#### 3.6.2.1 Comment on the Canadian case study

This section discusses the relevance and implications of the Canadian case study for minority language revitalization efforts in Zimbabwe. Particularly, this section focuses on the use of power to shift the linguistic status quo.

In Skutnabb-Kangas's (2000) terms, the success of language revitalization in Quebec reinforces the efficacy of reversing the fortunes of marginalized languages through legislation couched in a linguistic human rights discourse. The revitalization of the French language in Quebec manages to remove the subordinate status from the French language and demonstrates what Skutnabb-Kangas (2000) calls the pursuit of individual and collective enrichment-oriented rights.

The revitalization of French in Quebec affirms most of Crystal's (2000) postulates for language revitalization. By addressing the status of the French language in the economy,

the advocates for the French language in Quebec target what Crystal (2000) suggests as his second postulate for language revitalization: "An endangered language will progress if its speakers increase their wealth relative to the dominant community" (p. 132). Further, the insistence on increasing the visibility of the French language through the requirement that all commercial advertising and public signs be in French is in line with Crystal's (2000) suggestion that the domains of business, law and public administration are important targets and that "with political support, also, a high level of visibility can come from the use of the indigenous language in place names, on road signs, and on public signs in general" (p. 131). In addition, Crystal's (2000) postulate that "An endangered language will progress if its speakers have a strong presence in the education system" (p. 136) was vigorously pursued in Quebec to the extent that very few people qualified to send their children to English-medium schools and had to send them to French-medium schools.

In stemming the tide of Anglophone dominance, the Quebec case is cited as an illustration of successful language revitalization through the use of political power (Bourhis, 2001; Fishman, 1991, 2001; Spolsky, 2004). As discussed in Section 3.6.2, the change of fortunes for the French language in Quebec is directly linked to the 'Quiet Revolution' which placed power in the hands of a political body which was prepared to use power in favour of the endangered language in Quebec. It is important to consider some perspectives on how this use of political power is perceived.

For Rocher (1992) cited in Bourhis (2001),

> Bill 101 was salutary, as it did defuse a potentially explosive clash between a Francophone majority at the bottom of the labour market and dominant Anglophone elite at the top (p. 133).

Fishman (1991), also comments that the case of the French language in Quebec represents the attainment of the highest stage on the GIDS, whereby " cultural autonomy

is recognized and implemented, even in the upper reaches of education, work, media and government operations" (p. 404).

However, Fishman (1991) cautions that for all its successes, the Quebec case of reversing language shift does a disservice to the language revitalization project through its excesses:

> RLS advocates can and should stress, therefore, that no infringement of anyone's rights and no rejection of anyone's dignity or legitimacy is part or parcel of their program or goal…. [P]reviously disadvantaged RLSers who become cultural imperialists themselves, within their newly dominated networks, do great damage to the RLS cause, not only locally or regionally but internationally as well. Francophone Quebec's restriction of the public use of English on store and street signs, now that French has unmistakenly come to the fore there, has harmed the moral and political position of francophone minorities outside Quebec as well as the position of a variety of RLS-efforts far outside the borders of Canada (pp. 83-84).

Fishman's (1991) objections to the use of imperialist power by the RLS advocates in Quebec arises from a perception that power in this context is conceived as an 'either / or', 'us / them' dichotomy indicative of monolingual ideological commitments within regional boundaries. For Fishman (1991) it is possible for French and English to share the space of privileged, primary and secondary domains in the interest of multilingualism which recognizes the human rights of the different linguistic groups concerned.

The Canadian case study has significant implications for this study. Firstly, there are similarities in the language ideology pursued by the advocates for language rights in Quebec and in Zimbabwe. Both groups invoke a language-and-territory ideology as an imperative for the maintenance of their languages which they consider to be under siege. (Refer to Chapter 5, Section 5.2.3.2 for a discussion of the language-and-territory ideology as it is applied by the minority language rights advocates in Zimbabwe.)

Secondly, the Quebec case points to particular ways in which power can be used to attain linguistic human rights. The language rights advocates in Quebec institute political intervention which profoundly manifest in social action that transforms the linguistic status quo. However, in Zimbabwe social action is used in a different way. The minority language groups in Zimbabwe do not wield the political power similar to the Quebecois and therefore resort to the use of power associated with grassroots mobilization which takes the form of resistance. In Chapter 6, Section 6.2, I discuss how the advocates for minority language rights in Zimbabwe engage in various forms of resistance in order to transform the linguistic status quo in favour of their subordinated endoglossic languages. In this context, it is thus expected that the Quebecois are more able to institute fundamental changes to the linguistic status quo than the Zimbabwean minority language rights advocates are able to.

A significant observation with respect to the case of French in Quebec is that it demonstrates that it is not only the underdeveloped languages that are subjected to linguistic discrimination, but also languages that have established academic, intellectual and literary traditions. In this case language choice and language use are linguistic practices that are inextricably linked to power. The subordinate position of French vis-à-vis English is linked to the status ascribed to these languages. In the Zimbabwean case, the subordinate position of the endoglossic minority languages in comparison to the dominant endoglossic languages is linked to both the status ascribed to these languages, as well as the low levels of corpus development of the former languages. The crucial difference between the Quebec case and the Zimbabwean case is particularly important when considering the applicability of Fishman's (1991) GIDS model for language revitalization.

The Quebec case directly affirms Fishman's (1991) GIDS model in suggesting that in seeking to expand the domains of language use (Phase 2) advocates for RLS need to overcome the political encumbrances placed in their way by the dominant groups who also wield political power. For the Quebecois, the attainment of political power is

sufficient to achieve the highest level of RLS. On the contrary, in Zimbabwe, the attainment of the highest level of RLS is not necessarily achieved by the enhancement of the status of the minority endoglossic languages in the education domain. Corpus development challenges become particularly urgent and necessary (refer to Chapter 7, Sections 7.2 and 7.3). For this reason, I consider the GIDS model to be inadequate in its conception of the initiatives that promote the use of endangered languages in the secondary domains (Phase 2 of Fishman's GIDS) particularly in Zimbabwe and other developing nations in Africa. In Chapter 8, Section 8.3, I revisit the question of the adequacy of the GIDS model, particularly in the African context in which most of the languages still require concerted corpus development work.

## 3.7 Conclusion

This chapter has provided the theoretical context for this research. It locates the study in the field of Critical Applied Linguistics. The chapter highlights the factors that contribute to the endangerment of non-dominant languages, as well as the theoretical frameworks developed to explain the efforts of minority language groups seeking to revitalize their languages. Some case studies in two disparate contexts are described to provide a comparative framework for a discussion of the efforts of the minority language groups in Zimbabwe. In Chapter 4, I turn to a discussion of the context of this study.

# CHAPTER FOUR: THE RESEARCH CONTEXT


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4.4 The context of civil society organizations in Zimbabwe

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4.5 Conclusion

## 4.1 Introduction

Chapter Three provides the social and historical context of the research. Section 4.2 examines the broad African linguistic context, discussing the complex language planning decisions that arise from the high levels of multilingualism that characterize most African countries. This section includes a discussion of how this complex linguistic situation in most African countries has contributed to the myth of the 'Tower of Babel'. I examine the attempts at addressing the marginalization and stigmatization of endoglossic African languages, focusing on interventions at two levels: i) through the initiatives of language experts working on standardization and harmonization of African languages including the OAU and UNESCO sponsored initiatives; and ii) through a focus on the recent developments related to the African Renaissance and the African Academy of Languages. In Section 4.3, I narrow my focus to Zimbabwe as the particular context in which this research is located by firstly, giving an overview of the languages spoken in Zimbabwe and how their use has been shaped by language engineering processes initiated by the state during the colonial and post-colonial periods. Secondly, I describe how triglossia involving the use of English, Shona and Ndebele came about, and how the marginalization of other languages was initiated during the colonial period and subsequently got entrenched during the post-colonial period. In Section 4.3 I trace the state's attempts at language re-engineering in Zimbabwe following the country's hosting of the Intergovernmental Conference on Languages in Africa through the appointment of a National Language Policy Advisory Panel. This section includes a discussion of how these efforts in Zimbabwe have not yet yielded much in terms of improving the status of the endoglossic languages. In Section 4.4 I examine how civil society organizations in Zimbabwe have evolved through the colonial and post-colonial periods. Section 4.5 concludes the chapter.

## 4.2 The African Linguistic Context

Section 4.2 discusses the various perspectives related to multilingualism in Africa. Section 4.2.1 includes a discussion of how European perspectives on multilingualism have presented the multiplicity of languages in Africa as a problem. Section 4.2.2 discusses how the introduction of colonial languages impacted on the linguistic status quo in Africa. In Section 4.2.3 I conclude this section with a discussion of how African countries have sought to address the problems arising from the marginalization of African languages.

### 4.2.1 Tower of Babel: Multilingualism in Africa

Bamgbose (1991) describes the linguistic situation in most countries as being characterized by high levels of multilingualism. Table 4.2.1 below shows the size of the population of a selected group of countries and the number of languages, including the exoglossic languages spoken in those countries.

***Table 4.2.1*** *Linguistic profiles of selected African Countries*

| **Country** | **Population in millions** | **No. of languages** |
|---|---|---|
| Kenya | 30 | 56 |
| Sudan | 32 | 121 |
| Tanzania | 35 | 124 |
| Zaire (DRC) | 50 | 209 |
| Ethiopia | 63 | 78 |
| Nigeria | 120 | 485 |
| Cameroon | 14 | 274 |
| Ghana | 20 | 76 |
| Congo | 2,5 | 53 |
| Angola | 11 | 39 |
| Zimbabwe | 11 | 17 |

**Source*:*** Based on Batibo (2005:69).

The multiplicity of languages spoken in most African countries has led to a negative perception of Africa expressed by Prah (1997) as “a Tower of Babel where the natives babble away in unfathomable and indecipherable tongues” (p. 7). (Refer also to Mazrui

and Mazrui, 1998.) The reference to the building of the Tower of Babel and the confusion of languages in ancient Babylon is a biblical story found in Genesis Chapters 10 and 11. In this story, the descendants of Noah sought to build a city and a tower with its top in the heavens. The Lord is said to have noticed that the people were united and because they spoke one language, they were going to be successful in everything they did. The Lord decided to confuse their language so that the multiplicity of languages would cause confusion, and in the process cause disunity. In the resultant confusion and chaos arising from the mutual unintelligibility, the construction of the city and the tower was abandoned and the people got scattered all over the face of the earth (http://www.idolphin.org/babel.html). This logic has seen the perpetuation of a perception of linguistic diversity as a liability associated with "the curse of Babel" (Bamgbose, 1991: 2).

In most of Africa, colonialism introduced exoglossic languages that naturally assumed a higher status connected with the political, economic and social dominance of the colonizer. The post-colonial state in Africa has had to deal with the new linguistic status quo perceived in one sense, as a "legacy" or in another sense, pejoratively referred to as a "hangover".

### 4.2.2 Colonial Languages: 'Legacy' or 'Hangover'?

The colonial experience has bequeathed to Africa two dominant exoglossic languages, English and French, the other not so prominent languages being Portuguese and Spanish. The language policies pursued by these colonial powers continue to impact on the post-colonial language situations of the independent African states as a 'colonial hangover' (Le Page, 1964) or as a 'colonial legacy' (Bamgbose, 1991). References to a 'colonial legacy' or a 'colonial hangover' are both loaded metaphors that implicate obvious bias. Whereas the notion of a 'legacy' suggests a heritage for which one has to be proud and grateful, the word 'hangover' implies slavery, lack of pride and an unpleasant outcome. The notion of the colonial languages as a legacy and as a hangover captures the ambivalence with which these colonial exoglossic languages are regarded.

It is argued in the literature that although the colonial powers pursued different language policies in the African colonies, the ultimate goal was similar: economic, political and cultural domination (Bamgbose, 1991; Webb and Kembo-Sure, 2000; Phillipson, 1992). The French colonial language policy was assimilationist, promoting the use of French in all domains and discouraging the use of the African languages. According to Makoni and Meinhof (2003) French colonial policy:

> overrode local languages and attempted to 'erase' from view African varieties of French whose impact ironically is more evident in France than in former French colonies in Africa today (p. 2).

Makoni and Meinhof (2003) observe that in contrast, the British, while asserting their languages, effectively adopted a *laissez faire* attitude that led them to recognize local languages and local versions of 'metropolitan' languages.

Thus although the British did not discourage the use of African languages in private domains and for purposes of functional literacy, English was promoted as the language of all the important public domains such as administration, justice, education, science and technology. The ultimate effect of the colonial experience, be it in French or British colonies, was to give pride of place to the colonial languages and in the process, undermine and marginalize the endoglossic languages. As a consequence of colonialism, the existing language policies and practices in education, communication, administration, politics and development in most of Africa have their roots in the colonial experience (Bamgbose, 1991; Mazrui and Mazrui, 1998). The colonial experience resulted in the marginalization and stigmatization of the endoglossic languages which were branded as mere dialects, idioms, vernaculars or patois. On the other hand, French and English were glorified, French as the language of reason, logic and human rights, English as the language of modernity, parliamentary democracy, technological progress and national unity (Phillipson and Skutnabb-Kangas, 1995).

The colonial experience resulted in the structural and ideological entrenchment of the dominant exoglossic language in colonial empires. Post-colonial states find themselves in a dilemma in which they have to negotiate a balance between affording dignity to the hitherto marginalized endoglossic languages on the one hand, and the demands of a modern state that requires access to higher education, science and technology, attainable through the metropolitan exoglossic languages on the other (Bamgbose, 1991; Mazrui and Mazrui, 1998). This dilemma gives rise to what Lodge (1997) has called the 'access paradox'. Granville et al. (1997) spells out the access paradox in the following terms:

> If you provide more people with access to the dominant language, you perpetuate a situation of increasing returns and you may thereby contribute to maintain the language's dominance. If, on the other hand, you deny students access to the dominant language, you perpetuate their marginalization in a society that continues to recognize the value and importance of this language. You also deny them access to the extensive resources which have developed as a result of the language's dominance (p. 10).

The experience of this paradox is aptly captured in the words of a former Cameroonian Minister:

> Being so heterogeneous, so hopelessly fragmented, and none of these languages being the vehicle of science and technology, we are forced, for all our pride, to seek unity among ourselves, to seek modern development through alien tongues. And our ambition should be to give to those of our children who are able, the means to achieve great success in the use of these foreign languages, to possess over them the same mastery as their owners possess (cited in Bamgbose, 1991: 56).

A note of resignation about the linguistic status quo is evident in the Minister's tone, and for him, the way forward is for the younger generation to learn the ex-colonial languages well and appropriate them for their own purposes. Thus, Bamgbose (1991) notes that for

most African governments, “confronted with the colonial legacy and the difficulty of making a change, they may simply accept the situation as a fait accompli or they may remain indifferent” (p. 5). The acceptance of the colonial linguistic status quo is evident in countries such as Zambia and Zimbabwe, where English is even more favoured than the endoglossic languages (Kashoki, 1990; Ngara, 1982; Mparutsa et al., 1992; Chiwome and Thondhlana, 1992). It is against this historical backdrop that language planners have to contend with issues of linguistic human rights for the historically disenfranchised endoglossic languages.

Problems associated with the multilingual nature of African countries and the dominance of the exoglossic languages continue to be widely debated. The debates span a wide range of topics and domains including questions of restricted access to knowledge and skills, low productivity and ineffective performance in the classroom and the work place, and inadequate political participation in the domain of governance. In this context, lack of access to the exoglossic languages is identified as contributing to their manipulation, discrimination and exploitation by the ruling powers, giving rise to national division and conflict and issues of linguistic and cultural alienation (Webb and Kembo-Sure, 2000). Bamgbose (1991) addresses similar issues arising from high levels of multilingualism in terms of how language impinges on questions of national integration, communication and national development and more importantly on the provision of education.

### 4.2. 2.1 Perspectives on language and nation building

The perception of the multiplicity of languages in Africa as a threat to nation building would appear to be entrenched. The nation as a European construct is often equated to language, hence the multiplicity of languages is perceived to be a threat to the nation. A national language is a national symbol that is often invoked in connection with national integration. Webb and Kembo-Sure (2000) observe that the multiplicity of languages in most African states has created problems with respect to the choice of a national language, giving rise to the perception that indigenous languages cannot play a role in national integration because of their divisive potential. Because of these concerns, two

complementary myths have developed: that multilingualism is a barrier to national integration; and that national integration necessarily involves the emergence of a nation state with one common language (Bamgbose, 1991). These myths are reinforced through reference to some cases in Africa to illustrate how conflicts arise from such a construction of socio-cultural identity and the view that linguistic affirmation threatens national integration.

One example is the case of Nigeria where the predominantly Igbo-speaking Biafra wanted to secede from the country in 1967. Webb and Kembo-Sure (2000) argue that while language is not the direct cause of such conflicts, it can be a useful political tool. In the case of Biafra, Webb and Kembo-Sure (2000) argue that although the conflict arose from perceptions of marginalization, the fact that the people were Igbo-speaking was emphasized, while the issues that they raised were considered secondary. Igboanusi and Peter (2005) also point out that the Biafra case has been cited as an illustration of how multilingualism is identified as a threat to nation-building while the issues that were subject of the conflict were disregarded.

The second example is the case of South Africa where the multifaceted role of language to promote or undermine national integration is aptly described by Webb and Kembo-Sure (2000) with respect to Afrikaans:

> In some Afrikaans-speaking communities, for instance, Afrikaans is regarded as an indispensable part of sociocultural life (a belief expressed through statements of extreme language loyalty and 'language love'), while in others it is perceived as a tool or means of interaction. In many black communities, Afrikaans is regarded as a symbol of oppression, triggering anger and even resistance (p. 11).

In this context, language evokes strong emotions of love and hate that could be said to constitute a threat to national integration. It would, however, be improper to conclude that it is language per se that constitutes a threat to national integration. In the case of South Africa, it is the historical association of Afrikaans with apartheid that contributes to the

feelings of abhorrence in black communities, while the expressions of extreme language loyalty and love arise from a sense of bitterness as Afrikaans has lost ground to English as a high status language. Further, Webb and Kembo-Sure (2000) argue that ethnic self-awareness seems to be taking root among speakers of the endoglossic languages in South Africa as illustrated by the formation of an association called the Committee for Marginalized Languages representing speakers of Xitsonga, Tshivenda, siSwati and isiNdebele:

> In spite of the recognition of Xitsonga, Tshivenda, and siSwati as national official languages, these three language communities, along with isiNdebele-speaking people, have formed the Committee for Marginalized Languages, because of the sense they have of being threatened by Afrikaans and English, as well as by the other five 'big' Bantu languages (p. 12).

The fact that such fears of marginalization occur in a country where the protection of all languages is constitutionally guaranteed, points to the depth of the extent to which linguistic affirmation can be considered to be a threat to national integration and how much more so, in those African countries where such protection and guarantees are not in existence. However, in this context the tension seems to arise from the inadequate implementation of a policy that is meant to ensure the equality of all of South Africa's eleven official languages.

The case of Botswana is a further example that illustrates how the myth of multilingualism as a threat to national integration is constructed and entrenched. Botswana is a country that has widely projected itself as a monolingual state in which Setswana is the only native language. However, there are more than twenty other languages spoken in the country. According to Chebanne et al., (2001), the cultural hegemony has been expressed in terms of an ideology of national unity which has regarded assertions of cultural identity by other ethnic groups as divisive. This has meant that speakers of other languages have not enjoyed any language-related rights at all since they were expected to assimilate into the mainstream Setswana language and culture.

(Refer to Chapter 3 Section 3.6.1 for a discussion of the struggles for language rights in Botswana.)

The argument that language is a threat to national integration has had the effect that in some African countries, the political leaders elect to promote the ex-colonial language such as English, French or Portuguese as the language of national integration because they are considered to be neutral. However, these arguments disregard some of the underlying causes of such conflicts as, political domination of one group by another, language policies that undermine other languages and in some cases, inadequate implementation of the policies in place. As Nelde (1997) cited in Igboanusi and Peter (2005) has argued, language is used as a scapegoat and convenient political tool:

> Language problems in very different areas (politics, economics, administration, education) appear under the heading of language conflict. In such cases, politicians and economic leaders seize upon the notion of language conflict, disregarding the actual underlying causes, and thus continue to inflame "from above" the conflict that has arisen "from below" with the result that language assumes much more importance than it may have had at the outset of the conflict. This language-oriented "surface structure" is used to obscure the more deeply rooted, suppressed "deep structure" (social and economic problems) (p. 130).

As the cases of Nigeria, South Africa and Botswana demonstrate language per se does not constitute a threat to national integration; nonetheless, the language question has been manipulated in many African countries to create tensions that are ultimately attributed to language differences. As Bamgbose (2000) has argued having all the nationals of a country speaking the same language is not a necessary or sufficient condition for national integration. For Bamgbose (2000), factors such as equity, justice, fair play in the management and distribution of resources, respect for the rights of all groups, maximum opportunity for participation in the system, and equal access by all groups to benefits deriving from the state are significant in fostering national integration.

The case is made, therefore, that the multiplicity of languages in Africa does not constitute a threat to nation building. Arguments to the contrary exploit the existence of conflictual situations in some multilingual contexts to exaggerate the role that contestations over language play in such conflicts.

#### 4.2.2.2 Perspectives on language, communication and national development

Proponents of the monolingual ideology have cited early studies (Banks and Textor, 1965) that correlated linguistic heterogeneity of states with low economic status and vice versa, in order to legitimate suppression of linguistic minorities and the pursuit of monolingual, assimilationist policies. The argument that linguistic heterogeneity is a deficiency is poignantly articulated by Pool (1972) cited in Bamgbose (1991) as follows:

> It is said that language diversity slows down economic development, by, for example, breaking occupational mobility, reducing the number of people available for mobilization into the modern sector of the economy, decreasing efficiency and preventing the diffusion of innovative techniques (p. 37).

This argument associated with the Western language ideologies (Dorian, 1998) has given rise to two hypotheses. The first is that the greater the degree of linguistic heterogeneity in a country, the greater the frequency and severity of civil strife in that country. The second hypothesis asserts that the greater the degree of linguistic heterogeneity in a country, the lower the per capita gross national product is in the country. Fishman (2003) challenges these hypotheses in a study in which he correlates linguistic heterogeneity and civil strife on the one hand; and linguistic heterogeneity and per capita gross national product on the other. The study asserts that there are no negative consequences that are commonly attributed to linguistic heterogeneity. On the contrary, negative consequences such as low productivity and ineffective performance in the workplace are attributable to the dominance of the ex-colonial languages (Webb and Kembo-Sure, 2000) which continue to hold ground as languages of the workplace. To support this claim, Webb and Kembo-Sure (2000) use the case of South Africa to illustrate that these negative

consequences arise from the dominance of the English language as the language of economic activity in a country in which 25 per cent of the black population do not know the language well enough to be able to use it to participate in the economic life of the country. This fact gives credence to the argument that low productivity and ineffective performance in the workplace is not attributable to multilingualism, but rather on the contrary, to its suppression as a result of the dominance of English.

Similarly, Bamgbose (1991) argues that policies promoting linguistic homogeneity in Africa lead to illiteracy and communication problems that negatively affect national development. Heugh (1995) corroborates this assertion by arguing that denying validity of local languages in the educational system and the insistence on the former colonial languages as the legitimate language of education has the consequence of disregarding knowledge which children have in these languages. Bamgbose (1991) chronicles the benefits that accrue from functional literacy in the endoglossic languages:

> [Functional literacy] enables the peasant farmer to gain knowledge of the use of fertilizers, use of credit, marketing and price trends and other techniques; it helps the industrial worker to convert from old to new plants. And from being unskilled to skilled, and thus to improve production; it makes possible the training of women for employment not only in small-scale and cottage industries but also in matters pertaining to health, family planning, etc., thus leading to an improvement in maternal and child health and combating population explosion (p. 39).

Furthermore, Bamgbose (1991) asserts that literacy in endoglossic languages improves access of the populace to mass media (print and electronic) and in the process ensures a flow of information on various aspects of a country's socio-economic and political life. The media is a powerful instrument for political mobilization; hence it ensures the populace's full participation in the democratic processes of the country (Bamgbose, 1991; Mazrui and Mazrui, 1998). Because language can be used as a tool for purposes of political manipulation, discrimination and exploitation (Webb and Kembo-Sure, 2000) it is important that functional literacy in endoglossic languages is promoted and the media

content utilizes the endoglossic languages. It is therefore argued that far from being negative, multilingualism in Africa does not portend negative consequences, but on the contrary, where the positive aspects are harnessed, linguistic heterogeneity can be a vehicle for national development through improved communication of the populace. If literacy is the key, then it is necessary that we examine the literature on language in education in Africa

#### 4.2.2.3 Perspectives on language and education

Language in education policy involves the assigning of roles to language, such as medium of instruction, language as subject and languages of initial literacy in the formal school system (Bamgbose, 1991). Stroud (2001) observes that arguments for the promotion of LHRs in education in Africa centre around carving out a larger role for endoglossic languages, premised on the argument that such promotion enhances cognitive development and language maintenance.

However, attempts to use endoglossic African languages in education have been beset with problems of implementation and have been down-right failures in many contexts; and the reasons for this failure have been richly documented in a number of studies (e.g. Stroud, 2001; Skutnabb-Kangas, 2000; Bamgbose, 1991). According to Bamgbose (1991) the problems are attributable to language policies that allow for "avoidance, vagueness, arbitrariness, fluctuation and declaration without implementation" (p. xx).

Stroud (2001) identifies a number of problems that are assumed to militate against widening the use of endoglossic languages in education. Firstly, this has to do with the speakers' negative attitudes towards the endoglossic languages as languages of teaching and learning. For example, the speakers perceive that the endoglossic languages lack value and restrict access to important social and economic markets. Secondly, there is a general dearth of teaching materials and the syllabi are antiquated, in most cases being based on grammatical models of language acquisition and not on communicative or socially situated theories of language and literacy development. Those endoglossic

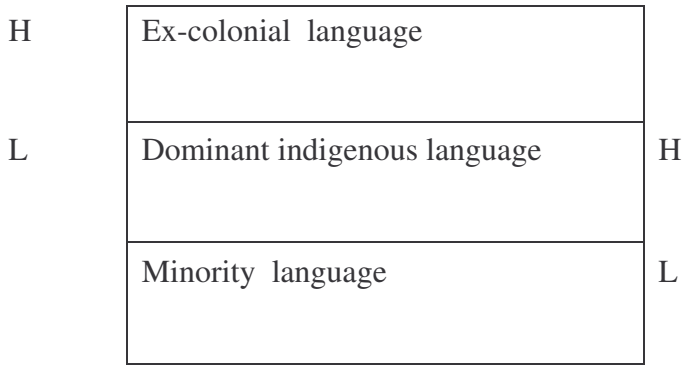
languages that suffer the greatest lack of materials or standardized grammars are also those languages that have been historically neglected and rendered politically insignificant, so as not to merit any attention from linguists or textbook writers. Thirdly, the curricula are so overloaded and oriented towards promoting content taught through the metropolitan languages, leaving little productive time to attend to the teaching and learning of the endoglossic languages. In such a scenario, Stroud (2001) observes that mother-tongue programmes "that fail most dismally are those that seek to use the 'minority' languages of the most marginalized and poverty stricken speakers as media of instruction" (p.341). It is important to note that Stroud's (2001) views regarding the failure of mother-tongue programmes are also echoed in South Africa and other contexts (e.g. Esterhuyse, 1982; Groenwald, 1990; Mparutsa, Thondhlana and Crawhill, 1992; Roy-Campbell, 1997).

In Section 4.2.2, I have argued that the colonial experience has bequeathed to Africa a language ideology in which multilingualism is viewed as a problem that threatens national integration, national development, as well as the provision of good education. In Section 4.2.3, I turn to a discussion of the patterns of language use that have arisen in Africa, embracing the multilingual character of Africa's linguistic milieu made up of the colonial languages, the dominant endoglossic languages, as well as the minority endoglossic languages.

### 4.2.3 Patterns of Language Use in Africa

The complex linguistic situation in Africa means that an attempt to describe the general pattern of language use is equally complicated. As Batibo (2005: 16) points out, given the "unique sociolinguistic ecosystem" arising from each country's history, as well as its "regional, national or areal peculiarities", one can only attempt to present a general scenario of the pattern of language use in Africa as a whole. Batibo (2005) has developed a triglossic structure model (Figure 4.2.3) to describe the general pattern of language use in Africa.

***Figure 4.2.3:*** *Typical triglossic structure of language use in an African country.*




# Key: H = High Code L= Low Code

**Source:** Batibo (2005: 18)

As figure 4.2.3 above shows, in most African countries the language use pattern is such that at the top, is an ex-colonial language holding official status and used as the language of higher education, science and technology and official government business. The ex-colonial language tends to monopolize all the secondary or high-level domains and is therefore the most prestigious. In the middle, we find a major endoglossic language, normally demographically dominant and socio-economically prestigious, serving as a lingua franca. Minority languages, which normally have few speakers and are socio-economically marginalized, occupy the lowest level.

Commenting on the triglossic structure as it applies to language use in African countries, Batibo (2005) observes that:

> Although a triglossic model presupposes a strict division of domains between languages, there is often an overlap in strategies of language choice depending on the level of technicality of the subject matter, the nature of the relationship between the speakers, the mode of expression, the context of discourse and other circumstances (p. 18).

Despite the uniqueness of the sociolinguistic profile of each African country, the triglossic structure model is a useful tool for understanding language use patterns in most African countries. The triglossic structure model demonstrates that the minority

languages in most African countries are marginalized. In the case of Zimbabwe, it is the positioning of the endoglossic minority languages at the lowest rung of the triglossic structure model which is contested by the organs of civil society whose interventions are the focus of this study. In Section 4.2.4 below, I discuss the interventions that have been designed to address problems associated with the marginalization of African languages.

## 4.2.4 Addressing the Problems of Marginalization of African Languages

Section 4.2.4 discusses initiatives that have been undertaken to address problems arising from the marginalization of African languages. In particular, Section 4.2.4.1 focuses on the initiatives undertaken by supranational organizations such as UNESCO and the OAU. Section 4.2.4.2 discusses attempts by language experts in Africa to harmonize and standardize African languages in order to facilitate their use in various domains. Section 4.2.4.3 discusses the more recent discourse around developing African languages in accordance with the new ideology of the African renaissance championed by the African Union.

### 4.2.4.1 UNESCO and Organization of African Unity initiatives

An important initiative by the Organization of African Unity (OAU) in addressing language problems in Africa was the adoption of the Language Plan of Action for Africa by the heads of state of the OAU's Twenty-second Ordinary Session in Addis Ababa in July 1986. Some of the key aims and objectives of the Language Plan of Action for Africa were that every Member State was supposed to have a clearly defined language policy and that all languages within the boundaries of Member States were recognized and accepted as a source of mutual enrichment, as well as to ensure that African languages, by appropriate legal provision and practical promotions, assumed their rightful role as the means of official communication in the public affairs of each Member State. The Language Plan of Action suggested methods and means to fulfill the aims and objectives which embraced most of the critical domains such as law, education and administration. It exhorted Member States to formulate without delay a language policy

that placed an indigenous language or languages spoken and in active use by its people at the center of its socio-economic development, and to establish where none exists, or strengthen it where one already exists, a national sounding board for the formulation of an appropriate national policy. In Zimbabwe, the government established a National Language Policy Advisory Panel in 1998 as a way of fulfilling this requirement. (Refer to Section 4.3.3.2 for a discussion of the initiatives leading to this panel.)

Further, the Language Plan of Action for Africa exhorted Member States to follow up the formulation of appropriate national language policies with an adequate and sustained allocation of the necessary financial and material resources to ensure that the language or languages prescribed as official languages achieve a level of modernization that met the needs of administering a modern state.

The Language Plan of Action for Africa also suggests that African Universities, research institutes and other institutions concerned with the study of African languages had a unique role to play in strengthening the role of endoglossic African languages. The establishment of ALRI at the University of Zimbabwe, as well as the establishment of the African Academy of Languages (ACALAN), the Project for the Study of Alternative Education in South Africa (PRAESA) and others could be seen as some of the initiatives that represent a response to this call.

Prior to the OAU initiatives, UNESCO has championed the promotion of endoglossic African languages through conferences at which declarations have been made regarding language problems in Africa. Notable among these conferences include: the UNESCO conference on the use of vernacular languages in education in 1953; the UNESCO conference on education in Africa in 1977; the UNESCO meeting of experts on the use of regional and sub regional African languages in Mali in 1979 and the intergovernmental conference of ministers on language policies in Africa held in Harare in 1997. The Intergovernmental Conference on Language Policies in Africa, coming ten years after the adoption of the Language Plan of Action for Africa meant to take stock of developments in Member States as well as chart the way forward. The Harare Declaration emanating

from the conference conceded that most of the recommendations previously made to develop and promote the endoglossic languages had not been implemented and that only very few African states had clear and comprehensive language policies and that even fewer had enshrined the stipulations of such policies in their constitutions.[6] The Harare Declaration of 1997 called for a re-activation of the Language Plan for Africa in the broader context of sustained moves towards embracing democratization on the continent. Thus, the main theme running through the Harare Declaration of 1997 is that of democracy captured in what is called the "Vision for Africa" (see Figure 4.2.4.1).

***Figure 4.2.4.1*** *Vision for Africa*

Vision for Africa

(a) a democratic Africa that seeks to enhance the active participation of all citizens in all institutions – social, economic, political etcetera;
(b) a democratic Africa where development is not construed in narrow economic goals but instead in terms of a culturally valued way of living together; and within a broader context of justice, fairness and equity for all; respect for linguistic rights as human rights, including those of minorities;
(c) in broader terms, Africa that acknowledges its ethnolinguistic pluralism and accepts this as a normal way of life and as a rich resource for development and progress;
(d) a democratic Africa that seeks to promote peaceful coexistence of people in a society where pluralism does not entail replacement of one language or identity by another, but instead promotes complementarity of functions of functions as well as cooperation and a sense of common destiny;
(e) Africa where democratization in a pluralist context seeks to produce through sound and explicit language policies Africans who are able to operate effectively at local levels as well as at regional and international levels;
(f) A democratic Africa that provides the environment for the promotion and preservation of an African identity as well as the cultivation of a proud and confident African personality;
(g) Africa where scientific and technological discourse is conducted in the national languages as part of our cognitive preparation for facing the challenges of the next millennium.

**Source:** Harare Declaration of March 1997.

It is noteworthy that the Harare Declaration of 1997 is molded around the same lofty ideals and the same appeals for Member States to develop and promote endoglossic

[6] Harare Declaration 1997: 2

languages as those made by the Language Plan for Africa ten years earlier, but this time with a spin around the notion of democracy. It is not evident that the Harare Declaration of 1997 takes stock of what transpired since the Language Plan of Action and how this time around the non-compliance by Member States would be addressed.

The main thrust of the OAU and UNESCO sponsored meetings and conferences were to find solutions to the marginalization of African languages that persisted despite the attainment of political independence in most of the states. In discussing issues of interventions to promote the endoglossic languages of Africa by these bodies, it is possible to assume consensus among the participating nations. Bamgbose (1991) discusses the internal contradictions among the African leaders, some of which reflect the competing interests of the colonial masters, especially France and Britain. The veneer of unanimity and consensus at such conferences eclipses deep seated suspicions between what has come to be called Francophone Africa and Anglophone Africa. This, according to Bamgbose (1991), is salient when one analyses the aims of a political and socio-economic movement called Francophonie whose aims are:

> To strengthen the French language by maintaining a standard variety; to modernize its words through indigenization of English neologisms or the invention of their own; to ensure that the language is used in all areas of communications, science, literature, interstate relations and organization; and to remind or convince people of its noble qualities (Weinstein, 1983 cited in Bamgbose, 1991: 61).

This divide between English and French-speaking Africa represents serious setbacks in the struggle to undo the 'colonial hangover' and to affirm the virtues of African languages and cultures. The internal struggles in the African camp only serve to undermine the efforts to address the marginalized state of African languages. Apart from the initiatives of the supranational organizations such as UNESCO and the OAU, scholars of African linguistics pursued the task of addressing the problems of the

marginalization of African languages through research into corpus planning, which involved language standardization, harmonization and unification.

#### 4.2.4.2 Harmonization and standardization of African languages

Language experts in Africa have complemented the work of international organizations such as UNESCO and OAU in addressing problems associated with the high levels of multilingualism in Africa, as well as those arising from the linguistic remnants of colonialism. Prah (1998) argues that multilingualism in Africa is exaggerated and calls for a harmonization and standardization of African languages as a way of addressing some of the problems associated with high degrees of multilingualism in Africa:

> The separate identification of a great many of these linguistic and ethnic groups was invented through the agency of the colonial process and related missionary linguistic activity… in actual fact most of what are regarded as autonomous languages are in reality dialects which can be pooled into wider clusters enjoying significant degrees of mutual intelligibility (p. 7).

Standardization, harmonization and unification are terms that are commonly used to describe the language engineering processes in situations where direct intervention is sought to address the multiplicity of languages or dialects in multilingual situations. The concept of standardization, popularized in the writings on language policy and planning by scholars such as Ferguson (1968), Rubin and Jernudd (1971), Fishman (1978) and later Hudson (1980), Crystal (1985) and Wardhaugh (1986), refers to a direct intervention that prescribes the grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation and writing systems of a language (Webb and Kembo-Sure 2000). For Hudson (1980), standardization aims at creating a standard language where before there were non-standard varieties or dialects. As Msimang (1998) observes harmonization and unification are used synonymously. According to Lestrade (1935) cited in Msimang (1998), unification:

> …seeks to construct a common language for such a dialect-group by employing as much as possible, forms which are common to all of the variants in the group, and, where this is not possible, by the use of forms common to the predominant majority, or in previously-attained literary forms (p. 165).

Issues of standardization and harmonization have been pursued in many African countries as a way of addressing some of the language problems of Africa. In South Africa, debate about harmonization has focused on the two main language families in the country, the Nguni (isiNdebele, siSwati, isiZulu, and isiXhosa) and the Sotho languages (Sepedi, Sesotho and Setswana) (Webb and Kembo-Sure, 2000). The aim of the harmonization process has been targeted at creating a common written variety for each of the two major Bantu language families, to be used in school textbooks and in formal documents. Harmonization of the Bantu language families is motivated on the grounds that it would be politically advantageous in forging black unity (Webb and Kembo Sure, 2000), and more cost effective for the broad-based implementation of multilingualism. Although the harmonization debate is still ongoing, it seems to be doomed for a number of reasons. Firstly, early suggestions for harmonization have been rejected as they were considered to be linguistically and attitudinally unsound. (Refer to Msimang (1992, 1993) for a detailed discussion of these efforts.) Secondly, the proposal is considered by the language communities to be a threat to their socio-cultural identities and has thus been rejected by many leading figures in those communities (Webb and Kembo-Sure, 2000). Thirdly, there are precedents in the South African context where the harmonization process privileged certain dialects. According to Webb and Kembo-Sure (2000) this was the case with Sepedi where standardization was based on the Pedi dialect; and Tshivenda where standardization privileged the Tshiphani dialect, with the result that there have been simmering internal tensions amongst speakers of the other dialects who have felt marginalized. Problems associated with harmonization are also evident in other contexts where it has been attempted. Similar concerns have been raised in Zimbabwe following the harmonization of several dialects to create the Shona language. (Refer to Section 4.3.3 below for a discussion of language standardization in Zimbabwe.)

Ghana provides another example of the constraints and difficulties associated with the harmonization and standardization of the Akan language. The main impediment, like in the South African context, pertained to fears of domination by the various dialect groups. According to Krampah and Gyekye-Aboagye (1998) the work of the committee set up to work on the harmonization process was complicated by the fact that, each of the members of the committee had an emotional attachment to his own dialect among the three. This gave rise to squeamishness and protectiveness as members from one dialect group or the other tried to promote their dialect at the expense of the others.

Such complications, including the general lack of commitment by the Ghanaian government, resulted in the standardization and harmonization of Akan taking forty years to complete. A number of case studies in Africa (see for example Prah, 1997) demonstrate that the standardization and harmonization of African languages is an emotive issue fraught with complications arising from the perception in most language communities that harmonization is a threat to their socio-cultural identity. These concerns are linked on a broader scale to issues of language and national integration discussed above. For Webb and Kembo-Sure (2000), problems relating to standardization of African languages have their roots in the colonial past of the African states which resulted in the grouping of linguistically disparate communities into the same states and linguistically related groups into separate states. This led to the development of economically and politically powerful communities alongside economically and politically powerless communities, resulting in asymmetric power relations between neighbouring communities.

In considering the difficulties encountered in the standardization of African languages, it is instructive to consider that early attempts at the standardization of the English language confronted similar constraints. For Pennycook (1994), the process of standardization of English was, and continues to be, a contentious issue because:

> It is connected both to the construction of social difference (by privileging one form of language over others and giving people differential access to that

> privileged form) and to the denial of forms of social difference (by regulating the forms of expression available in the language) (p. 110).

Pennycook (1994) traces the process of the standardization of the English language to the politics of language in the late eighteenth and the early nineteenth centuries when "a clear dichotomy was constructed between the 'refined' language, in which noble sentiments and higher intellectual ideas could be expressed, and the vulgar language, in which only base passions and expression of sensations was possible" (p. 112).

In spite of the attempts to standardize and maintain the 'purity' of the English language, varieties of the language have emerged. Graddol (1997) observes that the English language has continued to adapt itself to new circumstances and people. Graddol (1997) cites the case of the emergence of "New Englishes" in countries such as Singapore as an example of a language that is flexible and amenable to hybridity. Thus, concerns with the standardization of English have been disregarded in some circumstances producing a language that has spread globally. As Graddol (1997) has observed, "One of the few certainties associated with the future of English is that it will continue to evolve, reflecting and constructing the changing roles and identities of its speakers" (p. 6).

Drawing on the evidence from the contexts discussed in this section, standardization as a strategy for language development in Africa does not hold much promise. Furthermore, implementation of such well-intentioned declarations as the Language Plan of Action for Africa and UNESCO conference declarations seem to be lagging far behind. Recognizing this state of affairs, the successor to the OAU, the African Union (AU), has moved the African languages question to the fore, through a discourse of what has been called the African renaissance.

#### 4.2.4.3 The African renaissance and the African Academy of Languages

In spite of the numerous difficulties confronting African governments in implementing language policies that recognize the high levels of multilingualism in individual

countries, endoglossic language advocates continue to vocalize their concerns. These concerns insist on the role that endoglossic languages play in extending and consolidating people's democratic participation and access to human rights and are further fuelled by rhetoric of new African identities and an African renaissance (Stroud, 2001). The thrust of the African renaissance is captured in the words of President Mbeki of South Africa:

> The African renaissance demands that we purge ourselves of the parasites and maintain a permanent vigilance against the dangers of the entrenchment in African society of this rapacious stratum with its social morality according to which everything in society must be organized materially to benefit the few.
>
> As we recall with pride the African scholar and author of the Middle Ages, Sadi of Timbuktu, who mastered such subjects as law, logic, dialectics, grammar and rhetoric, and other African intellectuals who taught at the University of Timbuktu, we must ask the question: Where are Africa's intellectuals today? (Mbeki 1998, cited in Alexander 2004: 4)

The African renaissance represents a new ideological dimension adopted by the African Union (AU) to drive a new thrust towards political, economic and social development. An important dimension to this renaissance is the rallying of African intellectuals to drive Africa's revival in all spheres, including a cultural revolution. According to Alexander (2004), President Mbeki's call to take up the project of the African renaissance is also an exhortation for the intelligentsia, including language scholars and practitioners, to play their part in uplifting African languages against the backdrop of the dominance and hegemony of English, French and other exoglossic languages. Alexander (2004) notes that "Post-colonial governments, with very few exceptions, have failed singularly and repeatedly in addressing the language question with any measure of seriousness" (p. 4).

In the spirit of the African renaissance, an important development in Africa is the establishment of the African Academy of Languages (ACALAN), approved by the OAU Heads of State and Government in 2001. ACALAN's (2002) brief is to:

> [T]ake up the challenge to put in place a pan African institution capable of helping our states and our peoples to conceive and develop a language policy, relevant and efficient enough to quickly contribute to the renaissance and the Unity of Africa (p. 8).

The ACALAN project has found resonance in, among others, the work of the Project for the Study of Alternative Education in South Africa (PRAESA), and the National Association of Cameroonian Language Committees (NACALCO), which are working together towards the implementation of the Lagos Plan of Action for Africa.

This section has discussed the language question in the African context. I have broadly discussed the language problems in Africa as arising from the high levels of multilingualism, as well as the colonial legacy. I have highlighted how these problems have been grappled with through the initiatives of UNESCO, as well as the efforts of linguists to standardize, harmonize and unify the languages and dialects. The more recent efforts include the rhetoric of the African renaissance championed by the AU, which seeks to place the development and promotion of African languages, through implementation of the Lagos Plan of Action, at the center of development initiatives on the African continent. In Section 4.3, I shift from the African to the Zimbabwean linguistic context as the particular setting in which this research is located.

## 4.3 The Zimbabwean Linguistic Context

Section 4.3 discusses the Zimbabwean linguistic context. In Section 4.3.1, I focus on the statuses ascribed to Zimbabwean languages, as well as the use of the languages in the various domains. Section 4.3.2 discusses the colonial language policies and the influences the policies have had on the status and use of Zimbabwean languages in the post-colonial period. In Section 4.3.3, I discuss the language engineering processes initiated by the post-colonial government in Zimbabwe since assuming political power in 1980, and how

these initiatives shape the current statuses of the various languages and their use in various domains.

### 4.3.1 Language Status and Language Use

Zimbabwe is a multilingual country in which approximately sixteen African languages are spoken (Hachipola, 1998)[7]. Table 4.3.1a below presents the languages spoken in Zimbabwe and their designated statuses.

***Table 4.3.1a*** *Languages spoken in Zimbabwe*

| **Official Language** | **National Languages** | **Officially Recognized Minority Languages** | **Other Minority Languages** | **Other (of Indian or European Origin)** |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| English | Shona<br>Ndebele | Kalanga<br>Shangani<br>Chewa<br>Venda<br>Tonga<br>Nambya | Sotho<br>Chikunda<br>Sena<br>Xhosa<br>Tonga (Mudzi)<br>Barwe<br>Hwesa<br>Tshawo | Hindi<br>Gujerati<br>Greek<br>Italian<br>Portuguese<br>Hebrew |

**Source:** Adapted and compiled from Hachipola (1998).

The Zimbabwean linguistic profile conforms to Batibo's (2005) triglossic structure model discussed in Section 4.2.3 above on patterns of language use in Africa. In conformity with Batibo's (2005) schema, English, the ex-colonial language occupies the highest position as Zimbabwe's official language. In the middle, are the two dominant endoglossic languages designated as national languages, Shona and Ndebele. The lowest level is occupied by the endoglossic minority languages and some exoglossic languages which are mostly of Indian or European origin.

[7] For a detailed discussion of the linguistic configuration of Zimbabwe, refer to Ngara (1983); Chimhundu (1987); Hachipola (1998).

Shona and Ndebele are the two prominent endoglossic languages in Zimbabwe, spoken by approximately 75% and 16% of the population respectively. In contrast, the other endoglossic languages are only spoken by about 7% of the population. These so-called minority languages include Shangani, Venda, Kalanga, Tonga, Barwe, Sotho, Chikunda, Xhosa, Sena, Hwesa and Nambya. The general perception in Zimbabwe is that the country can be divided into two blocks, Ndebele and Shona-speaking areas, a situation that demonstrates the entrenchment of the hegemony of these two endoglossic languages. This is a situation that has not escaped the attention of the National Language Policy Advisory Panel (NLPAP)[8] which recommended that all Zimbabweans must be educated about the fact that in those areas that are officially designated as Ndebele-speaking, not every indigenous Zimbabwean is ethnic-Ndebele or Ndebele-speaking, and that in those areas that are officially designated as Shona-speaking, not everyone is ethnic-Shona or Shona-speaking. In making this recommendation the NLPAP (1998) notes that:

> Out of Zimbabwe's 55 administrative districts, 42 are in the predominantly Shona-speaking area and 13 are in the predominantly Ndebele-speaking area. In 4 of the latter 13 districts that are officially designated as being in Matabeleland, languages other than Ndebele are actually predominant, that is, Tonga in Binga, Nambya in Hwange, Kalanga in Plumtree and Venda in Beitbridge. In 2 of the 42 districts that are officially regarded as Shona-speaking, languages other than Shona are actually predominant, that is, Changana in Chiredzi and Tonga in Gokwe (p. 2).

The scenario outlined above illustrates that the designation of minority languages is actually misplaced in some contexts, given that the languages so designated are actually the languages of the majority in certain areas. Table 4.3.1b below shows the districts in which minority languages are predominant.

[8] The National Language Policy Advisory Panel (NLPAP) was set up in April 1997 to advise the Government on how a comprehensive national language policy should be formulated in Zimbabwe. A more detailed discussion of the role of the NLPAP follows in Section 4.3.3.2, where a discussion of the language engineering processes in Zimbabwe in the post-colonial era is presented.

***Table 4.3.1b*** *Districts in which minority languages are predominant*

| **District** | **Predominant Language** | **Other Languages** | **Designated National Language** | **Province** |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Binga | Tonga | Ndebele | Ndebele | Matabeleland North |
| Hwange | Nambya/Dombe | Ndebele<br>Shona<br>Nyanja<br>Lozi | Ndebele | Matabeleland North |
| Gokwe | Tonga | Shona<br>Ndebele | Shona | Midlands |
| Plumtree | Kalanga | Ndebele<br>Tswana | Ndebele | Matabeleland South |
| Beitbridge | Venda | Ndebele<br>Changana<br>Sotho<br>Shona<br>Lemba<br>Pfumbi | Ndebele | Matabeleland South |
| Chiredzi | Changana | Shona<br>Ndebele | Shona | Masvingo |

**Source:** NLPAP's Report on the Formulation of a National Language Policy (1998: 22).

Two percent of the Zimbabwean population represents exoglossic languages. It is estimated that approximately half of this population includes first language speakers of English, and the remaining one percent of this population includes speakers of Indian, Chinese and other European languages. Given the percentages proportionate to languages, one could assume that the relevance of the term minority languages would more appropriately apply to the exoglossic languages rather than the minority endoglossic languages. However, in this context, the linguistic status quo is less affected by the number of speakers than by the country's language policy.

Shona and Ndebele are the designated national languages of Zimbabwe, and English is the designated official language. The elevation of these two endoglossic languages as national languages has positively impacted on their status. A significant factor is that the implementation of this policy via acquisition planning has facilitated access to these languages at the expense of the other endoglossic languages. The status of the two national endoglossic languages ensures that they can be studied at every level of primary,

secondary and tertiary education (Roy-Campbell, 1997). The minority endoglossic languages have been taught only up to Grade 3 (Education Act of 1987). Thus it is not surprising that the two national languages (unlike the other endoglossic languages) are used alongside English in public domains such as parliament.

The current linguistic status quo in Zimbabwe continues to be shaped by the historical effects of British colonialism, which promoted the English language at the expense of the endoglossic languages. In Zimbabwe, like in other Anglophone African countries, English has assumed what Bourdieu (1991) calls 'symbolic' and 'material' power, such that the dominance of English over other languages appears to be natural and inevitable. Studies that have sought to understand the hegemony of English and attitudes towards its dominance (e.g. Webb, 1991; Baker, 1992; Adegbija, 1994; Pennycook, 1994; Kiziltepe, 2000; Granville et al., 1997; Crystal, 1997) claim that the status of English as a world language makes its position unassailable. Evidence of this is found in Zimbabwe, given that English is the primary language of the government sector: it is the language used in promulgating and interpreting laws in the judiciary and legislature; parliamentary debates are for the most part conducted in English; and national, regional and local administration and communication is done in English. In the business sector, advertisements, labels and instruction manuals are in English. It is also the language predominantly used in both the print and electronic media.

Further, the dominance of English has been the subject of most of the post-colonial studies on the linguistic status quo in Zimbabwe. Most studies championed by scholars like Ngara (1982); Chimhundu (1987); Mparutsa et al., (1992); and Chiwome and Thondhlana (1992) appear preoccupied with the role of English vis-à-vis the endoglossic languages (with an emphasis on Shona and Ndebele) in education. Their main findings were that English was the preferred language in education by both students and parents for reasons of social mobility and access to information and opportunities in the wider world. The minority endoglossic languages were valued mostly for reasons of ethnolinguistic identification and the preservation of culture and were also preferred for

purposes of primary education. English therefore predominates as the language of government, education, business, the media and the judicial system.

In this context, the linguistic status quo with respect to English the official language, Shona and Ndebele as the national endoglossic languages and the minority endoglossic languages would from the outside appear as a site of linguistic struggle.

## 4.3.2 Colonial Language Policies

It is important to appreciate that in Zimbabwe, like in other African countries, the current linguistic situation is shaped to a large extent by the country's colonial past. The status quo is traced to the recommendation by Clement Doke (1931) in his government commissioned report that only Ndebele be recognized in the western region and that only Shona be recognized in the rest of the country. The colonial establishment set up by Britain in Zimbabwe in 1896 meant that the dominance of English in domains such as administration, education, the media and other important areas, like in all the other colonies, was a fait accompli that was apparently uncontested. Shona and Ndebele are the two endoglossic languages that assumed national language status and for use among Africans in the more private domains. Fifteen other languages were not recognized and the speakers had to identify themselves with either Shona or Ndebele.

### 4.3.2.1 The development of Ndebele dominance

During the colonial era, a defining political event that entrenched the supremacy of the Ndebele state and language was the 1896 revolt against Cecil John Rhodes and his occupying company[9]. Ranger (1985) argues that after the revolts Rhodes sought to pacify the Ndebele and entered into an agreement with their leaders by granting them security of tenure on the land they occupied. The Ndebele were also to be considered for supervisory

[9] The description of the historical events around the clashes between the occupying colonial forces called the British South African Company given above is only anecdotal. For more detailed historical accounts see Ranger (2003, 2004) and Beach (1994).

positions in jobs ahead of other ethnic groups. Because of this, Ranger (1985) argues that all those in Matabeleland, which includes most of the minority language groups such as Kalanga, Sotho, Venda, Tonga and others, who felt insecure in land occupation found it prudent to declare themselves Ndebele to be identified with people to whom promises had been made:

> Under such circumstances, thousands of job seekers in the town and elsewhere claimed Ndebele identity, regardless of whether they came from areas as far from the sphere of the old Ndebele state or from subject groups which had begun to assert independence from Ndebele rule after 1896… Missionary work on language also helped add an intellectual depth to the emergent wider Ndebele identity… Hence in many places, children whose parents spoke other languages were taught SiNdebele in mission schools, and for them, SiNdebele became the language of history and culture (Ranger, 1985 cited in Bonde, 1994: 8).

This historical account tallies with Saul Gwakuba Ndlovu's[10] own account of how the minority languages were marginalized before and after the attainment of political independence in Zimbabwe. Hachipola (1998) also observes that the fact that the majority of minority languages are found in the Matabeleland regions (i.e. in regions where Ndebele speakers are found) has led to a perception among the Ndebele that attempts at ethnolinguistic affirmation involving minority languages is a threat to the hegemony that Ndebele enjoys in Matabeleland provinces and even "more so as some of the so-called minority communities (e.g. Kalanga and Tonga) claim a majority over the Ndebele people" (p. xxi).

[10] Interview with Saul Gwakuba Ndlovu on 10 July 2004. Ndlovu is the current chairman of ZILPA and a member of the Kalanga Language Committee. He explains that there are many people who were Kalanga, Tonga, Sotho and speakers of other minority languages who are still happy to pass as Ndebele because it is considered to be a superior language. He explained that even Joshua Nkomo, leader of ZAPU, a political party that had a predominantly Ndebele following and Vice President of Zimbabwe at the time of his death was uncomfortable with his Kalanga identity such that most people knew him as Ndebele. Ndlovu explains that soon after the attainment of independence in 1980, he approached Nkomo to find out what government was doing in order to uplift the status of minority languages and Nkomo told him that any attempt to do that would weaken ZAPU. Nkomo had argued that as a nationalist party, ZAPU had mobilized their membership mostly around the Ndebele ethnicity which he claimed was all embracing to the people of Matabeleland.

#### 4.3.2.2 The Shona people and language

Makoni (1998) and Makoni et al., (2006) argue that the Shona language is an "invention" during the colonial period, a conglomeration of five distinct but mutually intelligible dialects namely Karanga, Ndau, Manyika, Zezuru and Korekore. He argues that missionaries who pioneered the introduction of literacy in Zimbabwe set out to produce religious literature to serve their respective areas and in the process magnified differences between dialects. Ranger (1989) also observes that distinct dialects were pushed into prominence because the missionaries worked in rivalry for denominational influence and in isolation because of geographical distances between the regions in which they operated from:

> Missionary linguists created discrete dialect zones by developing written languages centered upon a number of widely scattered bases. The American Methodists at Old Umtali (Mutare), the Anglicans at St. Augustine's and the Mariannhill fathers at Trashill together produced Manyika; the Jesuits at Chishawasha, near Salisbury (Harare), produced Zezuru; the Dutch Reformed Church at Morgenster produced Karanga. Differences were exaggerated, obscuring the actual gradualism and homogeneity of the real situation. And once these forms had been codified, they were then expanded out from these missionary centres by means of the mission out-school networks until specific dialect zones had been created (Ranger, 1989, cited in Makoni, 1998: 159).

Because of the fragmented manner in which the missionaries' versions of dialects had been reduced to writing, a complication arose in unifying the dialects into a standard language form of the Shona language. Clement Doke, a linguist at the University of the Witwatersrand was commissioned by the colonial government to unify the Shona dialects in 1929 and published his report in 1931. Doke (1931) devised a Shona writing system that has come to be called the Union Orthography. Zezuru, Manyika, Karanga and Ndau

form the core of what is now called Standard Shona. However, Hachipola (1998) observes that the inclusion of Ndau is contested and pressure is mounting in Ndau areas to have Shona replaced with Ndau since pupils in schools cannot cope with standard Shona, which some claim is nothing more than Zezuru and Karanga. To address this problem, parents in the Ndau speaking area have been calling upon the Government to give the Ndau language minority language status just like the other minority languages such as Kalanga, Tonga, Nambya, Shangani, Venda and Sotho.

The elevation of the status of the Ndau dialect to that of a minority language would allow it to be taught as a subject in schools like all designated minority languages. An important observation pertaining to language policy during the colonial period is that a subtractive bilingual education policy was in use with Shona and Ndebele being used for the first three years of primary education. Roy-Campbell (1998) observes that the few Africans who managed to progress beyond a few years of education subsequently switched to English as the medium of instruction as English was considered to be the passport to opportunities and upward mobility in the formal employment sector.

Having discussed the historical precedence to Ndebele dominance over the minority languages in Matabeleland (Section 4.3.2.1), and the development of the Shona language from separate dialects (Section 4.3.2.2) during the colonial period, in Section 4.3.2.3 I trace the developments leading to the entrenchment of the hegemony of the two dominant endoglossic languages during the colonial period.

#### 4.3.2.3 The entrenchment of Shona and Ndebele hegemony during colonialism

According to Roy-Campbell and Gwete (1998) the official mechanism for handling languages in colonial Zimbabwe can be marked by three stages. The first stage is the period between 1903 and 1928 during which the Southern Rhodesian Missionary Conference handled language issues. The second stage is the period beginning 1929 when Doke began his study of how to unify the Shona language, which resulted in the Doke Report of 1931. The third stage is from 1932 to 1980 with the formation of

Language Advisory Committees for Shona and Ndebele following one of Doke's 11 recommendations. The committees' brief included monitoring the language situation and making recommendations to the Government. The language committees focused on orthographies, producing dictionaries and the development of literature. It is noteworthy that no language committees were set up for the minority languages. Roy-Campbell and Gwete (1998) further observe that language committees, which were set up within the Ministry of Education as advisory bodies, were made up of loose structures of individuals who were brought together from time to time and did not have any power to set rules since they were not normative bodies. A strange feature of the language committees was that although they were meant to monitor African languages, Africans did not have a voice on the committees until 1946 following demands spearheaded by Samkange (for Shona) and Hlabangana (for Ndebele) (Roy-Campbell and Gwete, 1998). The result of the standardization processes was the introduction of the standardized forms in schools through the teaching of these two African languages as subjects. Roy-Campbell and Gwete (1998) summarize the culmination of this process:

> Shona was introduced as a subject at O-Level in 1957 for African schools and Ndebele was introduced in 1967. In European schools Shona was introduced in 1964 and Zulu, instead of Ndebele, was offered in 1977. The first group of Shona graduates enrolled at the university in 1963 and Ndebele in 1968… Until the mid 1990's, much of the Shona taught at these levels was through the medium of English. And Ndebele, taking advantage of its similarity to Zulu, used Zulu texts in teaching literature (p. 160-161).

It is noteworthy that the neglect of minority languages has its roots in the colonial period and this has been perpetuated through the postcolonial period. Bonde (1994) questions why the minority languages were not of interest to the missionaries. It is reported that Doke (1931) told early Kalanga intellectuals that "they would have to translate the Bible themselves if they ever wanted to read the scriptures in their own dialect" and that it was only in 1957 that the four gospels and the Acts of the Apostles were published by the British and Foreign Bible Society (Bonde, 1994: 8). From the colonial period through the

post colonial period, there have not been enthusiastic historians or linguists among the minority language groups to undertake orthographic research on minority languages and to develop literature in these languages.

The current situation in which Shona and Ndebele are the dominant endoglossic languages in Zimbabwe can thus be attributed to the colonial language engineering processes, which were achieved through the pioneering literacy work of the missionaries. In Section 4.3.3, I discuss the language engineering processes that followed Zimbabwe's attainment of political independence in 1980.

### 4.3.3 Post - Colonial Language Policies

This section traces the language engineering initiatives following the attainment of political independence by Zimbabwe in 1980. It is argued that the post colonial government has to date done very little to change the suppressed multilingual character of Zimbabwe, but has rather entrenched the status of Shona, Ndebele and English at the expense of an estimated fifteen other languages. The section also demonstrates that some government initiatives, such as the formulation of a National Cultural Policy of Zimbabwe in 1996 and the commissioning of a National Language Policy Advisory Panel in 1997 did not go far enough in terms of redressing the linguistic status quo.

The Education Act of 1987 entrenched the hegemony of English, Shona and Ndebele in the Zimbabwean linguistic milieu and especially in the education domain. An analysis and interpretation of these provisions show that English assumes the position of the language of education while Shona and Ndebele are restricted to use as media of instruction in the early stages of primary education and as subjects in the rest of the education system. The provisions for minority languages constitute to what Hadebe (1996) calls "a noble idea without a purpose". The teaching of the minority languages is left to the Minister who "may authorize" their teaching. Skutnabb-Kangas (2000) describes this as an avoidance tactic by policy makers meant to water down the provisions and to create opt-outs. Concerning the policy provisions on minority

languages, Roy-Campbell and Gwete (1998) comment that the provisions did not give any guidelines as to how they would be implemented and consequently the policy has not been widely implemented. Hachipola (1998) also observes that most of the minority languages were not used as media of instruction in their respective areas due to reluctance by some school headmasters to implement a policy that was not supported by the Ministry of Education through such logistical support as the deployment of competent teachers and the provision of books in the languages.

Protests by the marginalized language groups were largely muted in the early period of the attainment of independence, but have subsequently become louder and more aggressive in the late 1980's, especially following the formation of the Venda Tonga Kalanga Languages and Cultures Promotion Society (VETOKA). (Refer to Chapter 5, Section 5.2.1, for a more detailed discussion of the initiatives undertaken by VETOKA during this period.) Some language groups, such as the Tonga, have become increasingly vociferous in their demands for the teaching of their languages. The Tonga have threatened to take their case to the Supreme Court, or withdraw their children from school if they continue to be taught Ndebele and not Tonga. The disenchantment of the other marginalized language groups such as the Kalanga, Venda, Shangani, Nambya and Sotho is reflected in their formation of the Zimbabwe Indigenous Languages Promotion Association (ZILPA) where they collectively mobilize for the revitalization of their languages. The processes leading to the formation of the grassroots organizations championing the cause of the minority languages are dealt with in more detail in Chapter 5. In Section 4.3.3.1 below, I turn to a discussion of the Zimbabwean government's initiatives to promote the endoglossic languages through a broad-based national cultural policy.

#### 4.3.3.1 Zimbabwe's National Cultural Policy of 1996

In 1996 the Zimbabwean Ministry of Sport, Recreation and Culture issued a National Cultural Policy which among other objectives sought to "promote the African Languages in order to make them effective tools in the country's socio-economic development" (The

National Cultural Policy of Zimbabwe 1996: 4). The National Cultural Policy of Zimbabwe (NCPZ) of 1996 proceeded from the premise that:

> Zimbabwe indigenous languages constitute a rich linguistic and literacy heritage for all Zimbabweans and should provide fertile ground for enhancing national understanding and national unity. Research will be carried out in indigenous languages so that dictionaries, orthographies, textbooks, literary works as well as scientific and technological works are available in these languages. Priority will be given to those projects which enable these languages to be developed to a stage where they can be utilized at the highest educational levels so that they are able to effectively deal with all development issues (NCPZ: 6).

It is important to note that The National Cultural Policy of Zimbabwe of 1996 places government at the center of the processes of endoglossic language development and promotion. Government's role in meeting the objective is spelt out as one involving the development and promotion of African Languages such that business, science and technology as well as history and literature will be accessible to Zimbabweans in the national languages. The policy identifies the publishing industry and the language dimension of literature as being integral in developing the national languages.

The agitations, lobbying and clamours for the recognition and promotion of the endoglossic languages during the late 1990's managed to provoke the national psyche to the point where the issue became a subject of heated debate in Parliament[11]. In responding to the issues raised in the parliamentary debates, the Minister of Sport, Recreation and Culture, whose ministry's role included the formulation of a national language policy acknowledged the members' arguments and further explained the ministry's position regarding the members' concerns:

[11] See for example Hansard 11th September 1996, Column 1478; Hansard 23 July 1997; Hansard 4th September 1996, Column 1168.

> Mr. Speaker, Honourable members have expressed very valid concerns on the status, use and development of our indigenous languages, normally referred to as national languages. Very good reasons have been given by several honourable members as to why we have to change the status of our languages both in terms of use and their teaching. There is no doubt, Mr. Speaker that the advancement of a nation depends on effective communication. It has been proved that the mother tongue is the true basis of effective communication. Indeed, it is within the language that the values, beliefs and ideology of the people are embedded. Our National Cultural Policy recognizes this critical role of language in national development. This is why it states that our national languages must be developed to the point where they can be used in sciences and technology (Hansard, 4th September 1996, Column 1168, quoted in the *Report on the formulation of a National Language Policy* 1998: 11).

These debates in parliament took place just a year before Zimbabwe hosted the Intergovernmental Conference on Language Policies in Africa in March 1997. The Harare Declaration emanating from the conference provided the immediate background for the appointment of the National Language Policy Advisory Panel.

#### 4.3.3.2 The National Language Policy Advisory Panel

The Harare Declaration (discussed in Section 4.2.4.1 above) provided the impetus for the appointment by the Minister of Sport, Recreation and Culture of a National Language Policy Advisory Panel (NLPAP) in April 1997, to advise him on how to proceed with the formulation of a comprehensive national language policy. Table 4.3.3.2 below presents the composition of the NLPAP.

***Table 4.3.3.2*** *The National Language Policy Advisory Panel*

| **Name** | **Designation** | **Position in panel** |
|---|---|---|
| Dr. H. Chimhundu | Dean of the Faculty of Arts at the University of Zimbabwe | Chairman |
| Mr. M. D. Nkiwane | Deputy Secretary for Culture-Ministry of Sport Recreation and Culture | Secretary |
| Dr. J. N. Gutsa | Chief Research Officer-Ministry of the Public Service, Labour and Social Welfare | Member |
| Mr. J. D. Mano | Acting Assistant Director of Information-Ministry of Information, Posts and Telecommunications | Member |
| Mr. E. K. Matimati | Director of Non-Formal Education-Ministry of Education | Member |
| Mr. K. M. M. Muchemwa | Deputy Director for Teacher Education-Ministry of Higher Education | Member |

**Source:** NLPAP's Report on the formulation of a National Language Policy (1998: 11-12).

The composition of the NLPAP provides an insight into who government considered to be the key stakeholders in the language planning processes and points to a preoccupation with three main domains: education, the media and public administration. The brief of the NLPAP was not to make policy but to survey the context in which a comprehensive national language policy could be formulated. Figure 4.3.3.2 below provides the terms of reference of the NLPAP.

**Figure 4.3.3.2** The terms of reference of the NLPAP

Terms of Reference of the NLPAP

(a) To consider and recommend to government how a comprehensive national language policy should be formulated;
(b) To produce the type of documents that may be needed to introduce to those concerned, whatever methods, structures and procedures will have been recommend by the panel on the formulation of a comprehensive national language policy in Zimbabwe;
(c) To recommend whatever studies that may need to be undertaken in order to enhance the formulation of a comprehensive national language policy in Zimbabwe;
(d) To consider the need for language policy-formulation and monitoring institution or body in Zimbabwe and to recommend accordingly;
(e) To recommend to Government the nature of human, material and financial resources required in the formulation of a comprehensive national language policy.

**Source:** NLPAP's Report on the formulation of a National Language Policy (1998: 12).

In terms of Rubin and Jernuud's (197I) Classical Model of Language Planning, the task of the NLPAP could be classified as being at the fact-finding stage during which the goals of the language planning process are established, the means of achieving the goals are selected and a prediction of the outcomes of the language planning process is made in a systematic manner.

In May 1998, the NLPAP submitted a comprehensive report titled, *Report on the Formulation of a National Language Policy,* to the Minister of Sport, Recreation and Culture. The report made wide-ranging recommendations on policy and on implementation, monitoring and evaluation. In terms of policy, the report cited that the guiding principles in the formulation of a national language policy should be the recognition of linguistic rights as human rights which all citizens are entitled to use and enjoy in a participatory democracy, aided by the creation of structures and programmes that will protect, develop and promote all the indigenous languages, so that each will find its space in the life of the nation (NLPAP 1998). The report made recommendations touching on key areas such as education, law and administration, the media, translation, lexicography and language standardization. In all these areas, the report recommended that policy formulation should recognize all of the endoglossic languages.

To implement the policy provisions, the NLPAP recommended the setting up of two different types of bodies, with the first type being a decision-making body that will deal with policy matters relating to language; and the second type being an institute and service departments that will engage in research, documentation, promotion, use and development. In implementing these recommendations, the NLPAP acknowledges the central role of government in any language planning processes arguing that:

> Language policy is ultimately a political decision taken by Government which must enact the necessary legislation. However, such a decision must be informed by the research and advice of academics, language workers, officials and others. Similarly, any subsequent revisions of such policy must be the responsibility of government acting on advice (NLPAP, 1998: 47).

With the NLPAP having completed its work, all was set for the implementation of its recommendations. However, nothing has in essence changed the linguistic status quo and according to Chimhundu, the report is gathering dust on some shelf in a government building somewhere[12]. However some of the recommendations especially in the area of lexicography and language standardization have been implemented. This however can not be attributed to government initiative but to efforts of Chimhundu who was also the chairman of the NLPAP and Dean of the Faculty of Arts at the University of Zimbabwe at the time. (The role of Chimhundu in the language planning process in Zimbabwe is discussed in Chapter 5, Section 5.3.4.) In terms of lexicography and language standardization, the NLPAP had identified the areas of linguistic research that are being recognized internationally as being very important for language standardization and had thus recommended that a sustainable programme should be developed to support projects or teams to make dictionaries in the languages of Zimbabwe. The NLPAP (1998) therefore recommended that:

[12] Herbert Chimhundu in an interview on 13 July 2004. Chimhundu was the chairman of the NLPAP and Dean of the Faculty of Arts at the University of Zimbabwe in 1998. He is currently the Director of the African Languages Research Institute.

> The University of Zimbabwe should institutionalize the work that is currently being done by the ALLEX Project (the African Languages Lexical Project in the Department of African Languages and Literature) by creating a permanent research department or center to support the existing language literature and linguistics departments, as well as colleges and schools, that are otherwise primarily engaged in teaching, by producing much needed language reference works at a pace that would not be possible otherwise (p. 45).

Chimhundu is currently the Director of the African Languages Research Institute (ALRI) (formerly the ALLEX Project) based at the University of Zimbabwe. The ALRI is currently involved in a number of projects in lexicography and other research projects into the minority endoglossic languages. (Refer to Chapter 7, Section 7.4.1.)

In the education domain a recommendation by the NLPAP (1998) that "affirmative action should be taken for the training and development of teachers who speak local (i.e. minority) languages" (p. 42), is one of the important aspects currently pursued by advocates for the development and promotion of endoglossic minority languages in ZILPA. (Refer to Chapter 7, Section 7.4.2 for a discussion of the collaborations between ZILPA and teachers' colleges and universities.) ZILPA and its partners in civil society have sought to maintain the momentum for language policy review gathered from the Harare Declaration of 1997 and the NLPAP report through lobbying government to address the marginalization of the minority languages. Given the centrality of some organizations in civil society in the efforts to revitalize the minority languages in Zimbabwe, it is important to consider the context of civil society organizations in Zimbabwe, in order to understand the environment in which they operate as an important factor determining the possibilities of success or failure.

## 4.4 The Context of Civil Society Organizations in Zimbabwe

Section 4.4 traces the development of civil society organizations (CSOs) in Zimbabwe through two significant historical periods, the colonial and the post-colonial periods. Section 4.4.1 discusses how the colonial period was characterized by the denial of space for the associational life of Africans and how this shaped the possibilities for African CSOs. Section 4.4.2 focuses on the associational life of African CSOs after the colonial period. It traces the development of relations between CSOs from the early period of independence in 1980, characterized by a complementary approach to government, to the period in the early 1990's when CSOs began to raise dissenting voices against government policies. The overall aim of Section 4.4 is thus to provide a context for the role of CSOs involved in minority language rights in Zimbabwe.

### 4.4.1 An Overview of Civil Society during the Colonial Period

Moyo, Makumbe and Raftopoulous (2000) have summed up the state of civil society during the colonial period in the following terms:

> Until 1980, the settler state had evolved a political and economic strategy which was based upon the economic marginalization of the majority of the black population, the denial of universal suffrage and any form of democracy. Such systematic suppression of civil society, except among the whites, had led to the suffocation of most forms of non-governmental organizational work (p. xiii).

The political environment during the colonial period was thus only conducive for the development of those Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) that were promoted and initiated by the settlers through the white-run NGOs, white-led churches, and white elites. In the former category are such NGOs as Oxfam and Silveira House. Silveira House, a development education and leadership-training center founded in 1964 is particularly significant because it is one of the CSOs involved in the current struggles by linguistic

minority groups in Zimbabwe to develop and promote their languages. A detailed discussion of the organizational profile of Silveira House is elaborated on in Chapter 5, Section 5.3.2.

Associational life among black people has centered on support networks such as burial societies, women's clubs, farmers' clubs, dance societies, sports clubs and church groupings. Legislation such as the Law and Order Maintenance Act restricted the gathering together of people. Yet even under the prevailing restrictive environment, Africans formed other kinds of reform-minded organizations such as the National Home Movement in Matabeleland, the Rhodesian Bantu Voters' Association, the Rhodesian Native Association, the Southern Rhodesian Native Welfare Association, The Southern Rhodesian Bantu Congress and the Southern Rhodesia Missionary Congress (Raftopoulos, 2000). The period after the Second World War saw increased rural to urban migration leading to the growth of the trade unions in towns. According to Raftopoulos (2000), the 1945 Railway Strike and the 1948 General Strike marked the advent of a more organized labour voice that grew in strength in the 1950's and early 1960's. The growth of nationalist political organization in the 1950's and 1960's provided Africans with a broad civic forum in which to organize. This, however, had the effect of constraining the independent growth of other organizations that got subordinated to the nationalist movement such that by the time of independence in 1980, only a weak and fragile civil society was in existence.

### 4.4.2 An Overview of Civil Society in the Post - Colonial Period

According to Raftopoulos (2000), at independence in 1980 the government had substantial legitimacy founded on the legacy of the anti-colonial struggle and a developmentalist social programme. However, it still faced the task of consolidating its support base through control over civil society organizations, labour unions and student movements. Raftopoulos (2000) has written of this period:

> It was against this political background in the 1980s, punctuated by state atrocities in Matabeleland during this period, that NGOs sought a low profile, complementary approach to government activities, preferring an entryist approach to dealing with a populist state with authoritarian intentions. During the first three years of independence, existing NGOs, which were essentially welfare organizations, tried to reorient themselves and redefine their constituency and linkages to the state and civil society (p. 29).

Moyo, Makumbe and Raftopoulos (2000) developed a useful typology showing five phases in the development of CSOs in the post-independence era which I will elaborate on. The first phase is the period 1979 to 1981. During this period CSOs sought links with the ruling party and developed close links with external donors. They focused on mobilizing women in areas such as rehabilitation, relief and social services. Women's groups such as the Association of Women's Clubs, the Zimbabwe Women's Bureau, and the Young Women's Christian Association co-coordinated activities centered on such aspects as nutrition, etiquette, sewing and child care.

1982 to 1986 marks the second phase. CSOs activities during this period focused on income-generating projects. Prominent during this period were NGOs such as the Organization of Rural Associations in Progress (ORAP) and the Organization of Collective Co-operatives in Zimbabwe (OCCZIM). Such NGOs were set up to train rural people in agriculture and vocational skills in order to make use of abundant labour in the rural areas. These NGOs would constitute groups and receive development assistance.

The period 1987 to 1990 marks the third phase. This period saw the emergence of a reorganized labour movement, a radical student movement and dissenting members of the ruling party asserting their political independence. A new generation of technocrats began service organizations in fields such as human rights, culture, AIDS, women's issues and environmental concerns. Prominent NGOs in these areas included the Zimbabwe Environment Research Organization (ZERO), Women and Law in Southern Africa (WLSA), the Legal Resources Foundation and Africa 2000.

The fourth phase is the period 1991 to 1996. In 1990 the government adopted the structural adjustment programme. The economic difficulties as well as the increasing levels of poverty saw the emergence of NGOs such as the Poverty Reduction Forum, the Southern Center and Development Dialogue involved in poverty alleviation. The adoption of the Economic Structural Adjustment Programme (ESAP) also meant that the government had officially abandoned its Marxist pretensions. This saw the emergence of a new class of black entrepreneurs who mobilized around issues of economic empowerment of indigenous business people. They formed the Indigenous Business Development Center (IBDC) and later, in 1994 a more aggressive group, the Affirmative Action Group (AAG), to lobby for black economic empowerment.

The period 1997 to 2003 marks the fifth phase. This period saw the emergence of CSOs mobilizing around issues of governance, policy issues and constitutionalism. A significant event in this period was the launch of the National Constitutional Assembly (NCA) in 1997. The NCA sought to build a broad alliance of civic organizations around the issue of constitutional reform. The NCA is composed of 135 organizations and is the largest coalition developed in the post-colonial period. It has managed to unite a wide body of groups, ranging from the labour movement, the churches, human rights organizations, women's associations, political parties and individuals working in the area of coalition. The NCA successfully campaigned against the adoption of a government-sponsored constitution in a nationwide referendum. The government has labeled the NCA an opposition structure aligned with the opposition political party, the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC). The NCA refused to endorse the victory of the ruling party in the general elections in 2000, calling the process flawed, and has maintained a confrontational stance against government to date.

The current state of civil society in Zimbabwe is summarized by Moyo and Makumbe (2000) who observe that the political trend is towards increased pluralism in the form of a growing number of political parties able to organize and freely oppose the ruling party, as well as the growth of human rights and other CSOs which are more confrontational in their advocacy for policy change. This has seen a transformation of such organizations as

Silveira House into more engaging, if not outright confrontational, with the state in matters of linguistic human rights. However, the government has perceived this confrontational stance of some CSOs as evidence that they are working with opposition organizations to topple the government. For example, presently the Non-Governmental Organizations Bill[13] awaits the president's signature, as well as the Private Voluntary Organizations Act of 1995. The requirements of the Bill are that all NGOs must register with a government appointed regulatory council, comprising nine government officials and five civil society representatives, all appointed by the Minister of Labour and Social Welfare. The council will have the authority to decide whether or not to approve registration or to deregister an existing NGO. Under the Act, NGOs will have to disclose details of their programmes and funding sources and any foreign funding to NGOs dealing with issues of governance will be banned from operating in Zimbabwe. Such regulations arise from a perception by an increasingly paranoid government that NGOs operate as local puppets that champion foreign values. The current environment in which CSOs are operating in Zimbabwe can be described as hostile.

In Section 4.4, I have given a synopsis of the development of CSOs in Zimbabwe through the colonial and post-colonial periods. In Chapter 5, I provide a more detailed discussion of the CSOs involved in the struggles to develop and promote the minority endoglossic languages in Zimbabwe. These organizations which include Silveira House, the (CCJP(Z), and the SCF (UK), have teamed up with grassroots based organizations such as TOLACO and ZILPA to pressurize the government to recognize the rights of the minority languages and implement policies that would lead to their development and improved status vis-à-vis Shona and Ndebele as the majority endoglossic languages.

[13] See http://www.za.news.crossmap.com/article.htm for a detailed discussion of the Non Governmental Organisations Bill; see http://www.africafiles.org/article.asp?ID for a discussion of the Private Voluntary Organisations Act of 1995 and a discussion of the state of civil society organizations in Zimbabwe.

## 4.5 Conclusion

In conclusion, this chapter has provided a context of language policy in Africa, and in particular language planning problems arising from the high levels of multilingualism. The chapter has highlighted how in most African countries, multilingualism is constructed as a problem that impedes nation building, national development and provision of education. I have discussed how these myths have been used to perpetuate the marginalization of the minority endoglossic languages and promoted the use of the dominant endoglossic languages (Shona and Ndebele) and the exoglossic language (English). Language planning during the colonial and post colonial periods in Zimbabwe has shaped the current linguistic status quo. I have traced how current struggles for linguistic human rights have evolved and how the government has been a lethargic player in the language policy planning and implementation process. The struggle for linguistic human rights has been taken up by organs of civil society, particularly Silveira House and affiliated cultural organizations, as well as ALRI at the University of Zimbabwe.

# CHAPTER FIVE: INTRODUCING THE MAIN ACTORS

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## 5.1 Introduction

This chapter introduces the main organs of civil society involved in the efforts to revitalize the minority languages in Zimbabwe. The main import of this chapter is to address the following sub-research questions: How are concerns regarding minority endoglossic linguistic rights constituted by civil society organizations in Zimbabwe? What is the vision of civil society organizations with respect to minority endoglossic linguistic rights in Zimbabwe? What would the recognition of linguistic rights mean in terms of transformed practices in this context?

In Section 5.2, I introduce the grassroots organizations that drive the processes for minority language revitalization. In Section 5.2.1, I introduce TOLACO, which is the organization that pioneered the struggles for language rights in Zimbabwe. In Section 5.2.2, I introduce ZILPA, an association formed when five other minority language

groups joined with TOLACO to jointly mobilize for the promotion and development of the minority languages in Zimbabwe. In Section 5.2.3, I argue that one useful way of understanding the concerns and vision of the civil society organizations fighting for language rights in Zimbabwe is to focus on the sociolinguistic domains targeted by their activism. I further argue that it is important to examine the language ideologies of the language rights activists and contrast these with the language ideology of the state, as the target of the language rights activism.

Section 5.3, introduces four main civil society organizations which collaborate and act in partnership with the grassroots language and cultural organizations: the CCJP(Z), Silveira House, SCF(UK), and ALRI. I argue that the roles played by the CCJP(Z) and Silveira House arises from a long standing ideological position framed in the broader discourse of human rights and fighting for the rights of the oppressed. Following from this discourse, the marginalization of the minority language groups in Zimbabwe is considered to be a human rights issue. I further argue that the roles of the SCF(UK) and ALRI are focused on the technical and corpus development dimensions of language revitalization.

## 5.2 From TOLACO to ZILPA

Section 5.2 introduces the two language and culture organizations that are at the center of minority language revitalization efforts in Zimbabwe. I have titled Section 5.2 “From TOLACO to ZILPA” in order to capture the transition from the early stages in which the struggles for linguistic rights in Zimbabwe were spearheaded by one language group, the Tonga Language and Culture Association (TOLACO), to the present stage where six marginalized endoglossic language groups collectively mobilize for their language rights under the Zimbabwe Indigenous Languages Promotion Association (ZILPA).

### 5.2.1 The Tonga Language and Cultural Organization

TOLACO was formed in 1976 in response to the perception by the Tonga-speaking community that the Tonga language and culture was under siege. The formation of

TOLACO was driven by the need to address problems of linguistic, political and economic marginalization of the Tonga people. The problems affecting the Tonga people are traced to their forced removal from the Zambezi River valley during the construction of the Kariba Dam in 1957. The relocation of the Tonga people disrupted their social and economic life, which revolved around farming in the fertile Zambezi Valley and fishing in the Zambezi River. The Basilwizi Trust, an organization formed to spearhead an advocacy campaign for compensation by the Zimbabwean government for the forced removal of the Tonga people from the Zambezi Valley, is at the forefront of campaigns for the upliftment of the social and economic life of the Tonga people. The Basilwizi Trust argues that:

> After the relocation, the Tonga found themselves at the mercy of periodic droughts and famine. The resettlement areas were without any reliable source of water save for the seasonal streams, - and the semi-arid lands were neither suitable for crop production nor cattle ranching. The plight of the Tonga was further worsened by the government's designation of large tracts of land as wild-life sanctuaries and safari areas, which restricted the Tonga people's access to 'their' river and game[14].

According to the Basilwizi Trust, the net effect of these actions was that the Tonga peoples of the Zambezi River plateau are amongst the most marginalized ethnic minority groups in Zimbabwe, living in the poorest, most remote and least developed parts of the country[15].

The siege mentality with respect to the Tonga language and culture has to be understood in the broader context of their political and economic marginalization. As Dorian (1998) has argued, language is particularly susceptible to prestige transfer whereby the possession of wealth will enhance not only the social position of the wealthy people but

[14] The information on the Tonga people is contained in a Basilwizi Trust project document entitled "Project Summary: Tonga Advocacy Project" (p. 1). The document is undated, but the proposed project was set to cover a three year period, starting in January 2003 and ending December 2005.
[15] Ibid. (p. 1).

also the social position of the language they speak. Following Dorian (1998), it can thus be argued that the economic marginalization of the Tonga people partly contributed to the loss of prestige associated with the Tonga language and culture. Thus, in their struggles for the maintenance of the Tonga language and culture, the Tonga have also fought for economic upliftment. These struggles can be traced to events during the colonial period, when the Tonga language was replaced by the Ndebele language as a subject studied as part of the curriculum in schools. The Chairman of TOLACO, S.B. Manyena, recalls how the teaching of the Tonga language in schools had always been beset with problems associated with the shortage of textbooks:

> The Tonga language used to be taught up to Standard 4 or 5 in Binga and Hwange schools before independence. The missionaries played a pivotal role in sourcing the required Tonga textbooks from Zambia. The colonial government promoted the language by allowing missionaries to import Tonga books from Zambia and teach the language in the districts (Manyena 2001: 2)[16].

The teaching of Tonga in Binga schools was, however, interrupted as a result of the changing political situation in the country. According to Manyena (2001), the turning point was in 1974, when the Zambian government, as part of the international community's protest against Ian Smith's Unilateral Declaration of Independence (UDI), imposed economic sanctions on Southern Rhodesia (the colonial name of the country now called Zimbabwe). The sanctions included the banning of the exportation of Tonga books to Southern Rhodesia, as a result, it became difficult to source Tonga books and the colonial government introduced the Ndebele language in schools effectively replacing the Tonga language.

In response to this development, the Tonga chiefs protested against the imposition of the Ndebele language. According to Manyena (2001), the Ndebele language was introduced

[16] Manyena S.B. (2001) in "A paper prepared for the minority languages workshop held at Manor Hotel, Bulawayo" (p. 2). Manyena is the Chairman of TOLACO. He presented the paper on 24 March 2001. In Zimbabwe, levels of primary education used to be referred to as "Standards" before the conversion to the present use of the term "Grades".

in schools in the Binga district in 1974, in spite of strong protests by the Tonga Chiefs to the then Binga District Commissioner. They considered Ndebele language and culture to be alien. The District Commissioner responded to the mounting pressure from the Tonga Chiefs by encouraging the formation of a Tonga Language Committee in 1976 whose task was to spearhead the writing of more Tonga books (Manyena, 2001).

Chief Siachilaba of the Tonga people reinforces the negative attitude towards the dominant languages attributed to Tonga chiefs in comments he made at a meeting with Members of Parliament and officials from the Ministry of Education (refer to Chapter 7, Section 7.3.1). According to Mumpande (2006), Chief Siachilaba blamed the dominant languages for the loss of the minority languages:

> The youth of today are more Shona, Ndebele or Western-oriented than being Tonga or Kalanga. A lot of misunderstanding is going on between the old and new generations. Our ancestors are crying because our children no longer speak our languages. They even shun their own tribe and culture… as they do not want to be identified as Tonga (p. 37).

The Tonga chiefs were, therefore, at the forefront in resisting the imposition of Ndebele in schools in the Tonga District. In response to the pressure, the District Commissioner challenged the Tonga speech community to produce their own literature and general learning materials, and he would find the publishers. According to Manyena (2001), the community responded to the challenge by forming a group of writers called the Tonga Language Committee, (presently identified as the Tonga Language and Cultural Organization (TOLACO) in 1976, which went on to produce manuscripts for use in schools. Some of the Tonga scripts written by the Tonga Language Committee were published in 1978-9 but the process was short lived as the liberation struggle escalated leading to the attainment of independence in 1980. Following the attainment of independence, all pre-independence activities of TOLACO stopped. According to Musona, an Advocacy Officer at Silveira House, the expectation after the attainment of political independence was that the new democratic government would be more

responsive to the needs of the hitherto marginalized language groups. However, on the contrary, their hopes were shattered:

> The Tonga people expected the new black government to re-introduce Tonga in Binga schools. To their surprise, the 1980 Education Policy did not only ignore the teaching of Tonga and strengthen the [teaching of] Ndebele, but went further to label Tonga as a minority language, a discriminatory term which never existed in the colonial period[17].

The language policy of Zimbabwe, that became a bone of contention for the Tonga, is based on Section 62 of the Education Act of 1987 (Chapter 25:04) whose provisions are presented in Figure 5.2.1 below.

***Figure 5.2.1:*** *Section 62 of the Education Act of 1987 (25: 04)*

> 1) Subject to this section, the three main languages of Zimbabwe namely Shona, Ndebele and English shall be taught in all primary schools from the first grade as follows:-
>
> a) Shona and English in all areas where the mother tongue of the majority of the residents is Shona, or
>
> b) Ndebele and English in all areas where the mother tongue of the majority of residents is Ndebele
>
> 2) Prior to the fourth grade, either of the languages referred to in paragraph (a) or (b) of subsection (1) may be used as the medium of instruction, depending upon which language is commonly spoken and better understood by the pupils.
>
> 3) From the fourth grade, English shall be the medium of instruction, provided that Shona and Ndebele shall be taught as subjects on an equal time allocation basis as the English language.
>
> 4) In all areas where minority languages exist, the Minister may authorize the teaching of such languages in primary schools in addition to those specified in subsection (1) (2) and (3).

**Source:** Government of Zimbabwe Education Act (25: 04)

[17] I.M. Musona gives this narrative in his report titled "Silveira House Civics Department, Advocacy Programme Semi-annual Report 1 September 2000 – 31 March 2001" (p. 4).

The Tonga, Venda, Sotho, Kalanga, Shangani, and Nambya languages were identified as minority languages and could only be taught as subjects up to Grade 3 in those areas in which they were predominantly spoken, after which children were required to learn either Shona or Ndebele and English as subjects. English also became the medium of instruction from Grade 4 onwards.

Early challenges to the neglect of the minority languages were pursued by a loose coalition of Venda, Tonga and Kalanga speakers who formed what was called the VETOKA Publishing Company in 1985. According to Mumpande (2006) the aims of the VETOKA Publishing Company were to publish literature in the minority languages. The reason for establishing the company was that established companies were reluctant to publish literature in minority languages because of the limited market for such literature. Mumpande (2006) identifies four factors that militated against the company's existence leading to its premature demise. Firstly, the VETOKA Publishing Company failed to secure start-up capital. Further, the working relationship of the minority language groups was not strong enough to allow them to engage in fundraising activities as a unit. Secondly, Mumpande identifies the lack of advocacy and lobby skills as a factor that contributed to the company's limited impact. Thirdly, VETOKA lacked the resources required to convene regular meetings to discuss and map out operational logistics. Fourthly, Mumpande identifies the loss of the company's leading figures as a contributory factor in its demise; Gwakuba Ndlovu left the country to work in Swaziland and Malaba passed away. Following the collapse of the VETOKA project, Mumpande (2006) explains that the different minority language groups continued to lobby for the recognition of minority languages separately.

During this period, TOLACO remained dormant only to resurface as a rejuvenated organization in 1996. Following its revival in 1996, TOLACO defined its role as being that of developing and promoting the Tonga language and culture[18]. The organization

[18] The definition of who constitutes TOLACO, aims and objectives of the organization and their strategies are contained in a document entitled "A report on the 29-30 July 2000 TOLACO Workshop". That there

decided that they would constitute a powerful lobby group made up of informed and committed people. Its primary task would be to dispel and eradicate, among other things, the pejorative perceptions of the Tonga people. According to Manyena (2000):

> [TOLACO] aims at eradicating, among other things, the myths spread long back about the Tonga people being uncivilized, incapable of doing what other ethnic groups can do, and that the Tonga live in trees and have two toes, and other lies that have been spread about the Tonga people. Because of such untrue stories about the Tonga people, they have never been taken seriously in Zimbabwe. They have been underrated, overlooked and undermined in many respects. It is therefore the aim of TOLACO to correct all the myths and present a clear picture of the Tonga people to the country and the world at large (p. 10)[19].

The reconstituted TOLACO committee comprised of twelve members of which eight were graduates from the University of Zimbabwe. This main committee of TOLACO was based in the Binga district. The broad aim of TOLACO was defined as that of promoting and preserving the Tonga language and culture in all Tonga speaking areas. The concerns, as well as the wishes of TOLACO are clearly captured in a speech by the Chairman of TOLACO Mr. Manyena (2001), in the following terms:

> The Tonga people… wish to learn their language to a meaningful level - preferably University. The government should amend Section 62 of the Education Act to accommodate other African languages. We do not understand why we are denied a chance to develop our language and culture. We have never had a convincing explanation from the government as to why we still continue to learn Ndebele (Hwange and Binga) and Shona (Nyaminyami and Gokwe North) languages at the expense of our language. We strongly feel we are being discriminated against by our own government in our own country. The current

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were all sorts of myths about the Tonga was corroborated by Mr. Mumpande in an interview at his office in Bulawayo in July 2004.

[19] Mr. S.B. Manyena in "A Report on the 29-30 July 2000 TOLACO Workshop held at Binga Roman Catholic Hall on the teaching of Tonga language in Binga, Hwange, Gokwe North, and Nyaminyami" (p.10).

> language policy encourages tribalism and hatred among the ethnic groups as the disadvantaged ethnic groups feel their languages and cultures are being suppressed, and indeed they are being suppressed (pp. 3-4)[20].

A key concern of the Tonga was, therefore, that their language was not being taught in schools to any significant level, and that constituted discrimination. Following protracted advocacy and lobbying initiates aimed at the Ministry of Education and the Parliamentary Portfolio Committee on Education, TOLACO decided to incorporate other minority language groups so that a concerted effort could be made from a broader base, in order to influence the government to amend its language policy in a way that promoted the recognition and development of the minority languages. The initiatives that followed, led to the formation of ZILPA.

### 5.2.2 The Zimbabwe Indigenous Languages Promotion Association

ZILPA was formed in March 2001. ZILPA comprises of six language committees representing six minority language groups: Tonga Language Committee, Kalanga Language Committee, Sotho Language Committee, Nambiya Language Committee, Shangani Language Committee and Venda Language Committee. At its inception, the office bearers of ZILPA were as presented in Table 5.2.2 below.

[20] Mr. S.B. Manyena in "A paper prepared for the minority languages workshop held at Manor Hotel, Bulawayo on 24 March 2001" (p. 3-4)

***Table 5.2.2*** *ZILPA officials at the organization's inception in March 2001*

| **Name** | **Language Group** | **Designation** |
|---|---|---|
| Mr. S.G. Ndlovu | Kalanga | Chairman |
| Mr. S.B. Manyena | Tonga | Vice Chairman |
| Mr. E. Makwati | Sotho | Secretary |
| Mr. E.B. Ncube | Nambiya | Treasurer |
| Dr. Dabudabu | Kalanga | Ex officio member |
| Mr. Aaron M. Ncube | Venda | Vice Secretary elected in absentia |

**Source:** Silent Voices (2006: 30-31)

For ZILPA the main task was to push forward the agenda initiated by TOLACO, which was to challenge the provisions of Section 62 of the Education Act of 1987. As TOLACO had argued, it was on the basis of the Act that they were discriminated against. At its second meeting on 7 April 2001 the main task for ZILPA was to draft what they termed an acceptable alternative to Section 62 of the Education Act of 1987 (refer to Figure 5.2.2a). According to Mumpande (2006), the initiative to draft an alternative policy derived from established advocacy and lobbying strategies which suggested that "for any advocacy thrust to succeed, two or three alternative options to a problem needed to be presented" (p. 31).

***Figure 5.2.2a*** *ZILPA's proposed amendment to Section 62 of the Education Act of Zimbabwe 1987*

**Interpretation of terms**
In this Section:
i) **Indigenous language** means the following languages: Ndebele, Shona, Tonga, Sotho, Venda, Shangani and Nambiya
ii) **Area(s)** means district(s)

1. Subject to this Section, the indigenous languages of Zimbabwe including English and the Sign language shall be treated equally, taught and examined from first grade to university provided that, in each area or part of the area, the predominant indigenous language and English shall be taught.
2. The medium of instruction in any area or part of the area, shall depend upon which indigenous language is more commonly spoken and understood by the majority of the pupils and shall be used in addition to the English language.
3. All indigenous languages shall be taught as subjects on equal time allocation basis as the English language
4. Subsection 4 of Section 62 of the Education 2 is to be deleted

**Source:** Minutes of ZILPA meeting, 7 April 2001.

Further insight into the concerns of ZILPA is provided by an examination of the Constitution of the Association and in particular, its stated objectives. The aims and objectives of ZILPA are stated under Section 4 of the Constitution of ZILPA (refer to Figure 5.2.2b). It is important to note that the names of the minority languages are written in the ZILPA Constitution using an orthography which these language groups prefer to use and not the one commonly used in Zimbabwe which is based on Shona and Ndebele orthography. This can be interpreted to be an act of affirmation and a form of resistance to the hegemony of Shona and Ndebele. Thus, Kalanga is written as TjiKalanga, Tonga as ChiTonga, Venda as TshiVenda, Nambya as ChiNambya, Shangane as ChiChangana, and Sotho as SeSotho.

***Figure 5.2.2b*** *Objectives of ZILPA*

**Section 4: Objectives**

The objectives of the association are to operate on a non-profit basis and to:

4.1 Promote the teaching of TjiKalanga, ChiTonga, TshiVenda, ChiNambya, ChiChangana, and SeSotho in schools, colleges and Universities;

4.2 Lobby the Government of Zimbabwe to recognize and permit the use of TjiKalanga, ChiTonga, TshiVenda, ChiNambya, ChiChangana, and SeSotho as official languages;

4.3 Assist and encourage the writing and production of literature in TjiKalanga, ChiTonga, TshiVenda, ChiNambya, ChiChangana, and SeSotho languages for use in schools, colleges and universities;

4.4 Promote the use of TjiKalanga, ChiTonga, TshiVenda, ChiNambya, ChiChangana, and SeSotho languages on national radio and television;

4.5 Network with organizations with similar objectives in Africa and beyond;

4.6 Solicit for and receive donations;

4.7 Do all things necessary to further these objectives and for the general and cultural well being of the association's beneficiaries.

**Source:** Constitution of the Zimbabwe Indigenous Languages Promotion Association-ZILPA (undated).

Further, the Constitution of ZILPA provides an insight into the aspirations of the language groups in terms of the Government's ascription of language status, as well as their desires regarding language use in the various domains. Foremost among the objectives of ZILPA is the promotion and development of the minority languages for use in teaching and learning in schools, colleges and universities. They also want their languages recognized as official languages, as well as having their languages used in the media (radio and television).

## 5.2.3 Comment

The central concern of this study is to understand how organs of civil society in Zimbabwe have contributed to the development and promotion of the linguistic rights of minority endoglossic languages. Section 5.2 has provided an insight into the vision of civil society organizations with respect to minority endoglossic linguistic rights in Zimbabwe. This section has further highlighted what, for language rights activists in Zimbabwe, the recognition of linguistic rights would mean in terms of transformed practices.

An examination of the aims and objectives of both TOLACO and ZILPA as stated in their constitutions and mission statements, in Section 5.2 above, allows us to draw conclusions regarding the organizations' targeted domains, their expectations in terms of transformed practices and their language ideologies in the following sub-sections.

#### 5.2.3.1 The targeted domains of TOLACO and ZILPA

My comment in this section focuses on the domains of language use targeted by TOLACO and ZILPA that are perceived to be the most important in terms of addressing the marginalization of the endoglossic minority languages. By focusing on domains of language use, I follow Fishman's view that language choice, which is the core of language policy, is best studied in the context of sociolinguistic domains:

> Domains are a useful way of making the connection between sociological (macro-sociolinguistic) factors and linguistic (micro-sociolinguistic) realizations (Fishman, 1972, cited in Spolsky, 2004: 43).

The language and cultural activism of TOLACO, dating back to the colonial period, explicitly identifies language-in-education policy as a contested terrain. Soon after its establishment, one of the first tasks that ZILPA undertook was to draft their own language-in-education policy as an alternative to the official one in place. Further, the first item among ZILPA's objectives is that the organization should lobby for the teaching and learning of the minority languages not only in schools, but also in colleges and universities. The other objective was to lobby for the use of the minority languages on national radio and television. An assessment of both TOLACO and ZILPA's expectations in terms of transformed practices therefore points to two main domains of language use as targets for activism: education and the media.

There is a high degree of agreement on the centrality of the education domain to any efforts targeted at the revitalization of minority languages (e.g. Skutnabb-Kangas, 2000;

Spolsky, 2004; Bentahila and Davies, 1993; Phillipson, 1992; Crystal, 2000). For example, Spolsky (2004) argues that, "Of all the domains for language policy, one of the most important is the school" (p.46).

Also taking cognizance of the centrality of the education domain in language planning, Cooper (1989) added acquisition planning alongside status and corpus planning. According to Spolsky (2004), language acquisition policy, also referred to as language-in-education policy in this thesis, is crucial in that when and where schools exist, they take over from the family the task of socialization. One of the central features of schools is developing the language competence of young people.

Bentahila and Davies (1993) observe that giving a threatened language an important role in the community's education system is identified by a number of scholars as one of the most effective ways towards attaining revitalization of marginalized languages. For example, Bentahila and Davies (1993: 356) cite Slone (1989) who, writing about language revival in France, remarks that "school is, more than any other place besides home, the prime propagator of a language". Similarly, Crystal (2000) argues for a strong presence of marginalized languages in the educational system as a necessary measure for revitalization:

> The school setting provides an increasingly widening range of opportunities for children to listen and speak, as they learn to cope with the demands of the curriculum and come to use the language in school-mediated social occasions (such as religious and cultural gatherings) (p. 136).

For Crystal (2000), although the home is the priority with any endangered language, the knowledge and awareness which comes from the process of education can generate a confidence which stands the children in good stead, as they find themselves coping with the difficulties of language maintenance. Thus, in focusing on education as the prime site for challenging the linguistic status quo in Zimbabwe, ZILPA takes cognizance of the

importance of the domain in the overall struggle for the development and promotion of their languages and cultures.

ZILPA also identifies the media as one of the key domains in which they want their languages to make a strong presence. In so doing, ZILPA recognizes the critical role of the media in influencing language attitudes. The media is considered critical in that it helps marginalized languages increase their prestige and hence their chances of revitalization. According to Crystal (2001),

> Prestige comes when people start to notice you. An endangered community therefore needs to make its presence felt within the wider community. It needs to raise its visibility, or profile. Obtaining access to the media (traditionally the province of the dominant culture) is critical - to begin with, a regular column in a daily newspaper, perhaps, or an occasional programme exposing the language on radio or television, such as a cultural celebration or religious festival (p.130).

It is, therefore, evident that for TOLACO and ZILPA education and the media are the two most important domains of language use in which the minority languages needed a stake in order for the languages to be revitalized. The initiatives undertaken to address the presence of the Zimbabwean minority languages in these domains, as well as the outcomes of such initiatives are discussed in Chapter 7.

#### 5.2.3.2 The language ideology of TOLACO and ZILPA.

For the minority language groups represented by TOLACO and ZILPA, the linguistic status quo is oppressive and unjust. In considering the language ideology informing the minority language groups' challenge to the linguistic status quo, Kroskrity's (2000) definition of language ideologies is instructive:

> Language ideologies represent the perception of language and discourse that is constructed in the interest of a specific social or cultural group. A member's

> notions of what is "true", "morally good", or "aesthetically pleasing" about language and discourse are grounded in social experience and often demonstrably tied to his or her political-economic interests. These notions often underlie attempts to use language as the site at which to promote, protect, and hence legitimate those interests (p. 8).

Minority languages in Zimbabwe, and specifically the Tonga, use language as a site to challenge their marginalization in both cultural and economic spheres. It is in this context that the Tonga's demand for compensation for their alleged impoverishment following their forced relocation due to the construction of the Kariba Dam has to be considered.

Further, the Tonga people identify stigmatization of their language and culture as one of the main reasons for the formation of TOLACO. As the Chairman of TOLACO demonstrates, the Tonga as a minority language group suffered humiliation through myths and untruths that portrayed them as sub-human. Skutnabb-Kangas (2000) identifies the stigmatization of minority language groups and their non-material resources as one of the ways of promoting hegemonic practices, as well as, language shift to the dominant language. Through stigmatization, dominated languages are labeled as ugly, not human, confused, not capable of being used for abstract thinking, insignificant, and not useful.

Further, Kroskrity's (2000) framing of language ideologies as representative of the perception of language and discourse in the interest of a specific social or cultural group is useful in understanding TOLACO and ZILPA's concerns about the language policy provisions of the Zimbabwe Education Act of 1987. Myhill (1993) maintains that depending on the social, political and economic conditions that prevail in the particular context in which minority language groups' language revitalization efforts take place, the language ideology invoked is decisive in determining success or failure:

> The fate of many minority languages is likely to be determined to a large extent by ideology - the ideology of people associated with minority languages and the ideology of those associated with mainstream ones (p. 34).

The notion of language ideologies with respect to the state, on the one hand, and TOLACO and ZILPA, on the other, is an important issue arising from the data on TOLACO and ZILPA's language revitalization activities. My discussion of the state's language ideology will draw on its language policy in education, while the language ideologies of the cultural organizations will be inferred from their pronouncements regarding the state's language policy, as well as, their suggested alternative to the state's language-in-education policy.

An important framework for understanding the ideological position informing the Government of Zimbabwe's language policy and in particular, its policy towards the minority language groups, is Ruiz's (1984) orientations of language policy defined as "a complex of dispositions toward language and its role… which are related to language attitudes in that they constitute the framework in which attitudes are formed" (p. 16).

According to Ruiz (1984), the basic orientations toward language and its role in society influence the nature of language planning efforts in any particular context. Ruiz (1984) distinguished between three ways of seeing language: language as a problem, language as a right and language as a resource. Extended to the education domain, Ruiz's (1984) orientations of language planning determine the kind of language policy that any state can implement. Thus, where minority languages are viewed as a problem, the language-in-education policy goals are geared towards the assimilation of minority language groups through transitional models of bilingual education. In a typical transitional model, the learner's first language is used as a medium of instruction at the initial stages and later switches to the second language as medium of instruction.

An alternative to the transitional model is the language maintenance model implemented when minority languages are viewed as a right and as a resource. In terms of Ruiz's

(1984) framework, the language in education provisions of Zimbabwe's Education Policy of 1987 arises from a view of minority languages as a problem, hence the need to teach them only up to Grade 3. It is important to note that in the context of Zimbabwe, the language policy's provisions in terms of the medium of instruction also places speakers of Shona and Ndebele into a kind of transitional programme, when after the fourth grade, they switch to the use of English as the medium of instruction. For minority language pupils, two transitions are imperative; from the minority language to one of either Shona or Ndebele, and then to English. This practice, according to TOLACO and ZILPA, imposes Shona and Ndebele on the minority language pupils, constituting a burden and an instantiation of hegemonic practice.

In considering the language ideology of the Government of Zimbabwe, it is important to consider Myhill's (1993) argument on the question of language ideology. Myhill (1993) argues that there are two different language ideologies that are invoked in multilingual communities: on the one hand, is the language-and-identity ideology which emphasizes the inherent emotional and spiritual connection between a person and his/her native language. On the other hand, is the language-and-territory ideology which emphasizes a connection such that in each territory a particular language should be the one generally used in public circumstances and intergroup communication, while other languages should be reserved for private interaction.

The naming of some of the country's provinces and the language-in-education policy of Zimbabwe points to an orientation towards the language-and-territory ideology. Firstly, some of the provinces are named after the languages spoken by the majority of residents. For example, the majority of the inhabitants of Manicaland Province are the Manyika people; the two Matebeleland Provinces of Matebeleland South and North have the Ndebele as the majority of residents; and Mashonaland West, East and Central are mainly Shona speaking provinces. Secondly, the language-in-education policy of Zimbabwe (refer to Figure 5.2.1) provides that the languages taught in the various *areas* of the country should be the languages spoken by the *majority of residents* in the areas. This language-and-territory ideology is applied by the state in a way that entrenches Shona

and Ndebele hegemony, in that the state disregards the situations where the minority languages are spoken by the majority of the residents in an area. For example, in areas such as Plumtree where the Kalanga are dominant, Beitbridge where the Venda are dominant or Binga where the Tonga are dominant, the government recognizes these as Ndebele-speaking areas. (Refer to Chapter 4, Section 4.3.3 for a discussion of how government demarcations of linguistic boundaries overlook the existence of minority languages in areas where they predominate.)

Like the state, TOLACO and ZILPA subscribe to the language-and-territory ideology as the best way of ensuring their survival but conceive the ideology in a different way. For example, the language-in-education policy suggested by minority language groups as an alternative to the official one (refer to Figure 5.2.2a) suggests that they, like the state, also subscribe to the language-and-territory ideology. For the minority language groups in Zimbabwe, the language-and-territory ideology would protect them from the hegemony of Shona and Ndebele through recognition of the dominance of their languages in certain territories. For example, ZILPA redefines *area* to mean *district.* Further, Sub-sections 1 and 2 of the proposed alternative to the official policy make provisions that the minority endoglossic languages should be taught, like Shona and Ndebele, in *each area or part of an area* in which they are the predominant language. Following Myhill's (1999) argument, by invoking the language-and-territory ideology, the minority language speakers under ZILPA are "making no effort to expand the territory they are used in, but are only trying to prevent further erosion of their ancestral territory" (p. 36). The language-and-territory ideology is further enunciated by the Chairman of ZILPA, Saul Gwakuba Ndlovu who presents the demands of the Kalanga people, the language group to which he belongs, in the following terms:

> [W]e, the baKalanga, have been demanding our sovereign right to speak and write our own language in our own territories… the government should, as a constitutional duty, order the use of indigenous languages in each administrative area, a move that would consolidate unity in Zimbabwe as a nation based on equality and equity (cited in Mumpande 2006: 36).

Further, the language-and-territory ideology is useful to the endoglossic minority languages which, like the ones under ZILPA, are endangered due to being seriously outnumbered. As Myhill (1999) argues, "Since such a language is at a grave demographic disadvantage, it is deemed that the best hope for maintaining it is to make it dominant in a particular defined geographical area" (p. 38). The language-and-territory ideology is considered to be an imperative for the maintenance of demographically inferior minority languages and credited for the survival of national minority languages such as French in Quebec and Catalan in Catalonia (Myhill 1999). Laponce (1987) cited in Myhill (1999) argues, "In so far as… languages exist only by communication, if they are to survive and flourish they need territorial niches that belong to them alone" (p. 37).

Further, Laponce (1993) in Myhill (1999) argues that the language-and-territory ideology is necessary for the survival of marginalized languages as a way of minimizing the risk of a shift from the minority to the majority languages:

> In order to survive, languages need to be concentrated over physical space so as to be able to resist the competition of the intruding languages that happen to penetrate 'their' territory. We can, without being metaphorical, speak of a language's territorial imperative (p. 39).

In this section, I have introduced the two main grassroots-based organizations involved in the development and promotion of minority languages in Zimbabwe. I have identified the Tonga-speaking community, through TOLACO, as the drivers of grassroots minority language revitalization initiatives. I have also traced the developments around TOLACO's initiatives that lead to the formation of ZILPA. Through an examination of the aim and objectives of TOLACO, and the constitution, aims and objectives of ZILPA, I have identified education and the media as the domains targeted by the organizations requiring reform. I have also argued that TOLACO and ZILPA invoke the language-and-territory ideological position in pushing the organizations' agenda. In Section 5.3, I turn attention to the CSOs that support the work of TOLACO and ZILPA.

## 5.3 Collaborations and Partnerships

In Section 5.3, I highlight the roles played by the institutions that have provided technical and financial support to the grassroots-based organizations. These organizations include the CCJP(Z), Silveira House, SCF(UK)), and ALRI. I particularly focus on the background to the organizations' involvement with the minority language groups' language revitalization projects. Furthermore, I examine their mission and policy statements in order to gain an insight into the ideological positions that inform their respective roles.

### 5.3.1 The Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace in Zimbabwe

An important organization in the fight for the language rights of the Tonga people was the CCJP(Z) (known as the Justice and Peace Commission (JPC) during the colonial period). The CCJP(Z)'s role has been in the form of financial and technical support for TOLACO and ZILPA. The work of CCJP(Z) spans the colonial and post-colonial periods of the history of Zimbabwe. The JPC was founded in 1972 in response to the perceived injustices perpetuated by the colonial administration against the black majority populace of Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe). According to Auret (1992), the philosophy underpinning the work of the Commission was captured in the slogan, "If you want peace, work for justice" (p. 29). Figure 5.3.1a states the JPC's objectives during the colonial period.

***Figure 5.3.1a*** *Objectives of the Justice and Peace Commission during the colonial period*

- Creating awareness among the peoples of Rhodesia of the social teachings of the church;
- Bringing to consciousness, the contradictions between these teachings and the growing situation of inequality and discrimination in Rhodesia and thereby also increasing understanding among the races;
- Obtaining as much information as possible on current social issues and problems and publicizing this information;
- Examining the restrictive controls on people, in order to make recommendations in the light of the Gospel;
- Researching and investigating allegations of injustice, and taking the necessary action, within the scope of the power of the Commission, to correct such violations of human rights.

**Source:** Auret (1992: 29).

In pursuit of these objectives, the Commission undertook numerous research projects to expose the exploitative nature of the Rhodesian government. These included investigations of instances of political, social and economic injustices. The late 1970s saw an escalation in violence associated with the war waged by the black liberation movements against the Rhodesian security forces and, it fell on the Commission to document such occurrences and challenge the Government to halt the atrocities. The Commission, through its Legal Sub-Committee, assisted black nationalists implicated in what were considered by the Government to be acts of subversion with advice and secured legal help. For example, Auret (1992) documents how the Commission assisted some nationalists to escape detention by the Rhodesia security forces:

> The Commission was also called upon to help a number of people who were afraid that they were about to be detained or arrested by the Special Branch. In some cases, such as those of Sabina Mugabe, sister of Robert Mugabe, and Willie Chirambasukwa MP, British passports were obtained in Pretoria by JPC members, and thereafter, the Commission gave other assistance to enable them to leave the country (p. 92).

The activities of the Commission resulted in strained relations with the Rhodesian government. Auret (1992) reports that in 1976 The President of the Commission, Bishop

Donal Lamont of Umtali (Mutare), was arrested, charged with failing to report terrorists and subsequently deported. This was followed by further reprisals as the Commission was branded a thorn in the side of the Government:

> [O]n 5 August [1977] CID officers swooped on the JPC premises, removed papers, confiscated files and destroyed all the copies of the banned publications in the JPC strong room. The following day Fr Dieter Scholtz SJ was declared a prohibited immigrant. On 31 August the CID arrived and at the Justice and Peace offices with warrants enabling them to search the offices of and residences of Br. Arthur, Sr. Janice McLaughlin, Fr Dieter Scholtz and Mr. John Deary. This exercise was to result in the arrest, imprisonment and deportation of Sr. Janice McLaughlin, a Maryknoll Sister (p. 97).

In spite of this harassment at the hands of the Rhodesian administration, the Commission continued to engage both the Government and the nationalist movement in search of justice and peace (Auret 1992). The Commission engaged the leadership of the nationalist movement including the current President of Zimbabwe, affording the members of the Commission the opportunity to discuss the future with him and to gain some insight into his vision of a future Zimbabwe.

The Commission continued to play a role in search for peace by undertaking diplomatic initiatives that involved drumming up support for peace initiatives in countries such as Britain, America, Zambia and others. According to Auret (1992) the Justice and Peace Commission is credited with contributing to the development of the final formula adopted by the Commonwealth Conference held in Lusaka in May 1979 which led to the Lancaster House Agreement which ended the war in Zimbabwe, and the attainment of political independence in 1980.

> It is very probable that these visits and the proposals made by the JPC delegation contributed to the development of the final formula adopted by the Commonwealth Conference held in Lusaka in May 1979, which led directly to the

convening of the Lancaster House Conference, followed by the Lancaster House Agreement, a cease-fire and finally, PEACE (p. 125).

Political independence brought together the two majority parties ZANU(PF) and PF-ZAPU in a coalition government. Following the attainment of political independence in 1980, the Commission, now renamed the Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace in Zimbabwe (CCJP(Z)), had to redefine its role to that of a watchdog. This new thrust is captured in the Mission Statement and the stated objectives of the CCJP(Z) (refer to Figure 5.3.1b below) .

***Figure 5.3.1b*** *Mission Statement and Objectives of the CCJP(Z)*

**Mission Statement**

A Catholic organization fighting against political, social, cultural and economic injustices faced by society with special emphasis on the poor, down-trodden and vulnerable. Inspired by the Social Teachings of the Church, to foster love, selflessness, commitment and integrity and the respect of the human dignity through evangelization, education on human and legal rights and duties

**Objectives:**

- Inform people's conscience and make people aware of their rights and duties as citizens.
- Investigate allegations of injustice and to take appropriate action.
- Encourage love, understanding and harmony through the promotion of the Church's social teachings.
- Advise the Bishop's Conference on justice, peace and human rights issues.
- Liaise with other organizations, both within the Church and outside with similar aims and objectives.

**Source:** The CCJP(Z) source document is available on:
http://www.kubatana.net/html/sectors/cat002.asp?sector=RELIG&details=Tel&orgcode=cat002

The breakdown of the coalition government of ZANU(PF) and PF-ZAPU in 1982 brought a new challenge to the CCJP(Z). Following reports that caches of arms had been discovered on a property owned by PF-ZAPU, it was alleged that this party was planning a military coup (Auret, 1992). The leadership of PF-ZAPU, including its President, Joshua Nkomo was dismissed from government. The Prime Minister, Robert Mugabe, invoked Emergency Powers (Maintenance of Law and Order) Regulations and began a wave of reprisals targeting what were labeled dissident elements in PF-ZAPU. This

scenario constituted a real challenge to the CCJP(Z) in post-colonial Zimbabwe. The Commission faced a scenario in which it had to challenge a government that comprised former allies in the struggles against the evils of colonialism. The CCJP(Z) went on to document atrocities perpetrated by the government security forces, and presented these to government with pleas for the abatement of the violence. Hostilities only ended in early 1984. However, violence again erupted in the run-up to the 1985 national elections. The CCJP(Z) again actively documented the atrocities characterized by abductions and torture of political opponents, which were mostly perpetrated by ZANU-PF supporters on PF-ZAPU supporters, although in some cases the reverse was true. According to Auret (1992), the CCJP(Z) actively sought peace by arranging a series of meetings bringing together leaders of ZANU-PF and PF-ZAPU to negotiate a unity agreement:

> A number of "brokers", of which one was the Justice and Peace Commission, were involved in mediating between the party negotiators and thereby assisting in keeping the talks moving (p. 165).

The culmination of these talks was the signing of a "Unity Accord" between Joshua Nkomo's PF-ZAPU and Robert Mugabe's ZANU(PF) on 22 December 1987.

What I have presented is a rather simplistic representation of the complex events in which the Catholic Church's JPC played a significant role during and after the colonial occupation of Zimbabwe. My intention has been to provide a context for the subsequent role that the CCJP(Z) has played in promoting human rights in Zimbabwe. The struggles for the promotion and development of the language and cultural rights of the marginalized language groups in Zimbabwe has been pursued in the contexts of the CCJP(Z)'s long standing position regarding human rights. The history of the CCJP(Z) also brings into focus the profiles of Fr. Dieter Scholz and Sr. Janice McLaughlin who, as Center Director and Director of Training respectively at Silveira House, have played significant roles in setting up the project that advocated for the development and promotion of the marginalized endoglossic languages (refer to Section 5.3.2).

In December of 1999, the CCJP(Z) established the Civic Education and Advocacy Department under the Binga Justice and Peace Project (BJPP). The programme is funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) through Silveira House. In considering the working relationship between Silveira House and USAID, Mumpande (2006) explains that Silveira House received funding under the USAID Democratization and Governance Programme. USAID, through its agent, the Zimbabwe America Development Fund (ZADF), also offered in-service training workshops for staff involved in all its advocacy projects. According to Mumpande (2006: 22-23), Advocacy Officers in the advocacy programme attended ten four to five-day training workshops organized by ZADF that focused on the following areas:

- Advocacy Research
- Lobbying Parliamentarians
- Advocacy and Lobbying Tools
- Advocacy and Human Rights
- Advocacy and Media Use
- Advocacy and Parliament
- Evaluating of Lobby work

The Advocacy Officers confirmed that they had benefited from the training programmes and said that it helped them drive the processes of minority language revitalization through the Binga Justice and Peace Project (BJPP). The aim and objectives of the BJPP project are stated in Figure 5.3.1c below.

***Figure 5.3.1c*** *Aim and Objectives of the Binga Justice and Peace Project*

**Major aim and objectives of the project**

The advocacy project aims at strengthening the ability of communities to effectively influence government policies which have a bearing on them primarily through interaction with Members of Parliament and Parliamentary Committees. This broad aim is to be achieved through a series of objectives as outlined below:

- To increase dialogue between communities and their elected representatives in government;
- To develop contact and interaction with Parliamentary Committees;
- Strengthening the ability of communities to recognize and articulate their concerns and needs;
- To promote citizen involvement in decision making;
- Develop an Advocacy model suited to specific communities and their concerns;
- Promote peaceful resolution of conflicts through mediation and negotiation.

**Source**: Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace, Binga Justice and Peace Project - Civic Education and Advocacy Department Annual Report Jan-Dec 2000 (p. 2) - compiled by I. Mumpande, Civic Education and Advocacy Officer.

In pursuance of these objectives, the BJPP commissioned two research projects focusing on the needs of the Binga community. One focused on the education-related problems of the Binga District, while the other focused on the legal aspect of the provisions of the language-in-education policy. The two reports that emerged gave expression to the deep-seated discontentment among the Tonga people and convinced the BJPP of the need for the design of additional interventions in keeping with its aim and objectives as stated in Figure 5.3.1c. The specifics regarding the reports and the strategies employed by the BJPP in seeking redress to the problems identified in the reports will be elaborated on in Chapter 7, Section 7.3.1. A key partner for the BJPP in the interventions on the minority language issue is Silveira House.

## 5.3.2 Silveira House

Silveira House is a leadership training and development center founded in 1964 and owned and operated by the Society of Jesus, more popularly known as the Jesuits[21]. Silveira House is organized into four main wings, each headed by a Director. These are the Training, Extension, Research and Administration wings. The management team is made up of the Center Director, Fr. Dieter Scholz, the External Auditor, Fr. Fidelis Mukonori, and the directors of the four wings. Table 5.3.2 below presents a summary of the organizational structure and the programmes of the three operational wings i.e. Training, Extension and Research in 1999.

***Table 5.3.2*** *Organizational structure and programmes of Silveira House 1999*

| Wing | Director | Departments | Activities |
|---|---|---|---|
| Training | Sr. Janice McLaughlin | Civics<br>Industrial relations<br>Youth<br>Primary Health Care | Includes skills training and employment creation programmes: Commercial School, Dressmaking School, Craft Skills, Blacksmithing and Building. |
| Extension | Ms. Thokozile Mugwetsi | - | Nutrition improvement, Community based AIDS programmes, Sustainable Agriculture, Tree Nursery development, Micro-enterprise development. |
| Research | Fr. Brian MacGarry | - | Carries out studies of current issues, evaluates training and extension programmes, publishes books and pamphlets. |

**Source:** Silveira House Civic Education and Advocacy Programme Report of August 1999-August 2001[22].

Silveira House has a staff complement of eighty-six. Its infrastructure includes classroom blocks and workshops, hostels, a dining hall, a kitchen, a chapel and offices. It also has a fleet of vehicles used for field work. Although the center raises 25% of its budget locally, the bulk of its funding comes from Misereor, the German Bishops Development Fund. The center, founded in 1964 by Fr. John Dove, is named after Fr. Goncalo da Silveira, the first Jesuit to set foot in Zimbabwe in 1560. Silveira House was started during a period of

[21] Information on the history, structure and activities of Silveira House is based on a document titled "Silveira House Civic Education and Advocacy Programme August 1999 – August 2001" by Sr. Janice McLaughlin

[22] Ibid. (pp. 4-5).

heightened political tension in Zimbabwe, then known by its colonial name, Rhodesia. The colonial administration of Ian Smith was involved in a dispute with the colonial master, Britain, and he was to declare the colony's Unilateral Declaration of Independence in 1965. Silveira House played an important role in the struggle to liberate the country from colonialism:

> During the years of the liberation struggle (1973–1980), Silveira House offered a relatively safe haven where academics, aspiring politicians and church personnel could meet and begin a reflection process on the new social order in an independent Zimbabwe and chart the crucially important road leading there. The results of these deliberations were collated in a series of small books, *From Rhodesia to Zimbabwe*, which were co-published by Silveira House and the Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace and helped to shape the new Zimbabwe[23].

A number of current leaders of the country, including the president, Robert Mugabe, have gone through Silveira House either as fugitives from Rhodesian forces, as trainees or as trainers. Silveira House was, therefore, actively involved in the struggle for the liberation of Zimbabwe from colonialism. For example, its Director Fr. Dieter Scholz, was also the Director of the JPC during the liberation war, but was deported in 1978 for his support of the liberation struggle. However, he did not stop his activism, but went on to work in London as Director of the Zimbabwe Project, which assisted refugees from Zimbabwe in the neighboring countries of Botswana, Zambia and Mozambique.

With the advent of political independence in 1980, Silveira House's role changed to focus on reconstruction and development. Attention, therefore, was given to skills training programmes and employment creation as well as community development.

In the period after 1999 Silveira House's focus shifted to respond to a new scenario characterized by an economic and political crisis, as well as perceived unaccountability

[23] Ibid. (p. 3).

and human rights abuses perpetrated by the political leadership. Silveira House shifted its focus to work on enhancing citizen participation in economic and political decision-making through advocacy training. This entailed raising consciousness and demanding accountability from local authorities and politicians including members of parliament, chiefs and headmen. The Civics Department introduced a Civic Education and Advocacy Programme whose aim was:

> [T]o promote integral human development and to strengthen civil society by creating an articulate, self confident citizen who knows his and her rights and responsibilities and is able to dialogue with political leadership to bring about desired change.[24]

The involvement of Silveira House in the struggle to develop and promote minority languages is traced back to the launch in 1994 of a book by Fr. Mike Tremmel, a Catholic priest based in the Binga District. According to Mumpande (2006), Fr. Tremmel wrote a book, *The People of the Great River,* which told the story of the Tonga people, their lives and experiences until the time when they were displaced from the Zambezi Valley following the construction of the Kariba Dam in 1957 (refer to Section 5.2.1). Mumpande (2006) explains that the ceremony to launch the book brought together members of the CCJP(Z) in the Binga District, Silveira House officials, the Tonga chiefs, the Tonga elders and many other members of the Tonga-speaking community. According to Mumpande (2006) it is at this book launch that Sr. Janice MacLaughlin made a resolution to champion the cause of the Tonga people:

> I went away feeling deeply moved by the stories of suffering and courage that I heard and by the dignity and wisdom of the elders who recounted their history… I kept it in my mind that something should be done for these people (Sr. MacLaughlin, cited in Mumpande, 2006: 20).

[24] Ibid. (p. 2).

This event, according to Mumpande (2006), sowed the seeds for Silveira House's advocacy project. In 2000, Silveira House's Civic Education and Advocacy Programme taken over from the CCJP(Z), aimed to promote the marginalized endoglossic languages, working with six language groups collectively organized as ZILPA. The three Advocacy Officers, Musona, Mumpande, and Mangodza, previously involved in the Tonga language efforts through the CCJP(Z) and the BJPP, continued in this role when the programme moved to Silveira House. The next section discusses the role played by Save the Children Fund, a United Kingdom based organization.

### 5.3.3 Save the Children Fund (United Kingdom)

The United Kingdom Save the Children Fund (SCF(UK) is one of the non-governmental organizations whose work has contributed towards the development and promotion of the marginalized endoglossic languages in Zimbabwe. The organization has a long history in fighting for the betterment of the lives of marginalized communities, with special emphasis on the welfare of children. This focus is captured in the mission statement of the organization:

> Save the Children fights for children in the UK and around the world who suffer from poverty, disease, injustice and violence. We work with them to find lifelong answers to the problems they face.[25]

Although SCF is based in the United Kingdom, its activities are global, funding projects in sectors such as emergencies, HIV/AIDS, health, education, poverty and economics, exploitation and protection, equality and rights.

In the education sector,

[25] http://www.savethechildren.org.uk/scuk/jsp/whatwedo/theme.jsp?section=education

> Save the Children works to ensure that all children get access to good quality education by tackling poverty, helping communities run schools, training teachers, developing education policies and curricula, supporting flexible learning schemes, developing educational opportunities for very young children, and providing education for children caught up in emergencies[26]

It is this particular focus that saw SCF(UK) initiating interventions in the education sector in the Binga District of Zimbabwe. SCF(UK) started an Education Programme in Binga in 2000 with the main objective of promoting the publication and reprinting of Tonga learning materials. This was in response to the persistent problem whereby Tonga textbooks were in short supply in those schools that taught the Tonga language as a school subject. As will be elaborated in Section 7.3.1 of Chapter Seven, schools were saddled with acute shortages of learning materials necessary for the teaching of the Tonga language. SCF(UK)'s aim was to promote the publication of Tonga learning materials through funding and training of writers identified through TOLACO structures. An important organization which complemented the corpus development work of SCF(UK) is the African Languages Research Institute based at the University of Zimbabwe, whose role will be discussed in Section 5.3.4 below.

### 5.3.4 The University of Zimbabwe's African Languages Research Institute

One of the important institutions in the promotion of Zimbabwe's endoglossic languages is the African Languages Research Institute based at the University of Zimbabwe. The section discusses how through the institutionalization of the African Languages Lexical Project (ALLEX) into a research unit, ALRI has sought to address the problems arising from the marginalization of the endoglossic languages. The data for this chapter is based

[26] http://www.savethechildren.org.uk/scuk/jsp/whatwedo/theme.jsp?section=education

on interviews conducted with ALRI staff as well as documents[27] produced by ALRI on their activities including evaluation reports on ALRI's projects.

The ALLEX Project was started in 1992, situated at the University of Zimbabwe in the Department of African Languages and Literature. The aims of the ALLEX project were to:

- Provide the population of Zimbabwe with dictionaries and other language tools to support the use of African languages in the country;
- Train Zimbabwean linguists at the University of Zimbabwe as lexicographers and as practical language planners;
- Lay the foundation for a centre for lexicography and language planning for the native languages of Southern Africa, based at the University of Zimbabwe; and
- Improve research opportunities in lexicography, African languages and linguistics generally for researchers associated with all participating universities[28].

The ALLEX Project was a cooperative project between the Universities of Oslo and the University of Zimbabwe (UZ), organized and financed under the UZ-NUFU agreement. NUFU stands for Committee for Development Research and Co-operation of the Norwegian Council of Universities. The University of Gothenburg has also participated in the ALLEX Project from its inception in 1992. The ALLEX Project is funded under the UZ-NUFU agreement. NUFU runs a number of programmes in Africa in the spirit of North-South Co-operation captured in the following terms:

[27] Two main documents were found to be useful in providing the background to ALLEX and ALRI as well as documenting the activities undertaken by both ALLEX and ALRI: Chimhundu's (2000) "The Agenda for the African Languages Research Institute" is a proposal providing the motivation for the establishment of a permanent research institute independent of the Department of African Languages and Literature at which the ALLEX Project was hosted; The "Report on the Retreat to Review the ALLEX Project, 21-27 September (2003)" edited by Chimhundu is a 143 page document that provides a summary as well as an evaluation of the activities and output of ALLEX and ALRI. I have also been able to access the University of Oslo websites that discuss the partnership between this University and the University of Zimbabwe on joint lexicography projects - http://www.uio.no/english/about_uio/international/north-south/nufu/afrika/zimbabwe.

[28] see http://www.uz.ac.zw/units/alri

> It is a reality that the greater part of the world's academic resources are to be found in the industrialized countries. Institutions and academics in the North therefore face a continuous challenge to contribute towards a more equitable distribution of knowledge and research between the North and the South. Institutional academic co-operation between North and South is an act of solidarity and an exciting academic challenge[29].

The University of Oslo spearheads NUFU programmes in the South. The University of Oslo's role in these processes is informed by principles stated in the following terms:

> The University of Oslo seeks to be an active partner in the international academic community, stimulating academic environments to quality and co-operation in research and education. A focal point of the university's internationalization strategy is continuation and expansion of our collaboration with universities in the South, the goal being mutual competence building and strengthened capacity at our partner institutions[30].

In 1996, the ALLEX Project published a monolingual Shona dictionary, a development which was hailed as a milestone in the history of lexicography in Zimbabwe:

> The existence of computer-stored monolingual dictionaries and language corpora at UZ is a good starting point for co-operation with other lexicographers and linguists in Southern Africa. There is already considerable interest for the ALLEX Project in Southern Africa, owing to the successful conclusion of Phase 1 with the publication in August 1996 of the "Duramazwi reChiShona" – the first ever monolingual Shona dictionary[31].

The University of Oslo considered this success important enough to motivate co-operating partners and sponsors to consider further funding to support the

[29] http://www.uio.no/english/research/international/catalogue/index.html
[30] Ibid.
[31] http://www.uio.no/english/about_uio/international/north-south/nufu/afrika/zimbabwe

institutionalization of the ALLEX Project. In motivating for the institutionalization of the ALLEX Project, Chimhundu (2000) cited the support for the ALLEX Project given by the funders. Further, he argued that the National Language Policy Advisory Panel's *Report on the Formulation of a National Language Policy* had recommended a macro-structure in which government oversees policy formulation and review with the national universities being assigned the greatest responsibility for language research and development. (Refer to Chapter 4, Section 4.3.3.2 for a discussion of the National Language Policy Advisory Panel.)

According to Chimhundu (2000),

> It is only through institutionalization that the Research Institute will be able to conduct such core activities as: (a) being responsible for policy; (b) being responsible for programmes of activities; (c) initiating and/ or conducting its own staff searches; (d) being directed by specialists in language research and its applications; and (e) being overseen by an adequately representative Management Board of national character and standing. The autonomy resulting from institutionalization will also give the successor to the current Project essential flexibility in dealing with those who will need its services and with those who can contribute to its work. For example, a variety of separate agreements with various bodies, both within and outside the University and the nation, could best be developed efficiently and consistently with an independent Institute. The commercial work of the proposed Institute would be more efficiently administered through its institutionalization as an autonomous unit (p. 3).

Chimhundu (2000) further argued that there were precedents in Africa that provided for a strong case for the institutionalization of language research. Citing observations made during tours of South Africa, Malawi and Tanzania, as part of the research on institutionalization of language research work, Chimhundu pointed out that it had been found that government departments assigned practical language work tended to flounder and make very little progress, while university-affiliated bodies were much more

productive. He pointed out that university-affiliated, semi-autonomous language research units had access to university resources, which led to the development of prestige for practical language work which requires an academic outlook and academic skills. University affiliation allowed for the establishment of collaborative strategic partnerships with other university departments such as those dealing with information technology which would assist in developing language technology applications. These developments paved the way for the establishment of ALRI as a permanent non-faculty unit in 2000. The organizational structure provides for a Director responsible for the day-to-day running of the institute and reporting to a Board of Management headed by the Vice-Chancellor of the University of Zimbabwe. (Refer to Appendix B for the organizational structure of the African Languages Research Institute.)

The board was constituted in order to be representative of a wide range of entities who had a stake in language issues. As an institute, ALRI assumed a wider mandate, which is reflected in its mission statement:

> To research, document, and develop Zimbabwean languages in order to promote and expand their use in all spheres of life[32]

Following the institutionalization process and in line with ALRI's new mission and wider mandate, a change in focus was instituted from mainly producing dictionaries (ALLEX Phases 1 and 2: 1992-2001) to focusing on creating study collections and research materials to be used as research packages for the production of more dictionaries, corpora/corpus collections, grammatical parsers and many other products and services (ALLEX Phases 3 and 4: 2002–2006)[33].

[32] "Report on the retreat to review the ALLEX Project Kadoma, 21-27 September 2003" (p. 4).
[33] Ibid. (p. 12-13).

### 5.3.5 Comment

In Section 5.3, I presented the backgrounds of the organizations involved in the struggles for the language rights of minority groups in Zimbabwe. I have pointed out that the organizations are involved in several projects which include in some instances the question of language rights. I have focused on four organs of civil society which have been instrumental in providing technical and financial support to the grassroots-based organizations. These organizations can be divided into two blocs depending on the particular dimension they bring to the struggle for the development and promotion of the marginalized endoglossic minority languages in Zimbabwe. The first bloc comprised of Silveira House and CCJP(Z) whose main thrust was to challenge the ideological basis of the marginalization of the minority language groups in Zimbabwe, which is framed in the broader discourse of the oppression of the marginalized by those who wield power. The second bloc is comprised of SCF(UK) and ALRI who are both involved in language corpus development.

Section 5.3 has highlighted the roles played by CCJP(Z) and Silveira House during the struggle to dismantle the racialism that characterized the rule of the colonial government, and later manifestations of undemocratic rule in independent Zimbabwe. The profiles of CCJP(Z) and Silveira House demonstrate a commitment and pedigree for fighting for human rights. The involvement of both CCJP(Z) and Silveira House in the struggle for the development and promotion of marginalized languages on human rights grounds, represent a particular orientation in which language rights are seen as an integral part of fundamental and inalienable human rights. The data presented in this section with respect to the initiatives undertaken by these particular organs of civil society partly address the following questions which this investigation sought to address:

- How are concerns regarding minority endoglossic linguistic rights constituted by civil society organizations in Zimbabwe?
- What is the vision of civil society organizations with respect to minority endoglossic linguistic rights in Zimbabwe?

- What would the recognition of linguistic rights mean in terms of transformed practices in this context?

The involvement of the Zimbabwean civil society organizations in the promotion and development of marginalized languages should be considered in the context of wide-ranging global phenomena. As Batibo (2005) observes, apart from UNESCO, a number of non-governmental organizations concerned with the development and promotion of African languages have been established in recent years.

It is significant that some of the individuals, such as Sr. Janice MacLaughlin and Fr. Fidelis Mukonori, who have been involved in lobbying the Zimbabwean government on the language question have a pedigree and standing that is recognized by the government, especially since they have played active roles in defending some of the new leaders currently in government when their own rights, and in some cases lives, were threatened during colonial rule. In this sense, the question of language rights is inserted into a broader discourse that views the denial of a people's language rights as similar to the denial of their human rights.

The role of ALRI in its efforts to revitalize the endoglossic languages in Zimbabwe is significant in that it brings to the fore important questions regarding institutionalization in general and in particular the institutionalization of language development and promotion work. Further, the collaborative relationship between ALRI and its Nordic partners from the University of Oslo and the University of Gothenburg raises fundamental questions regarding what has come to be called cultural imperialism (Galtung, 1971). Extending Galtung's (1971) theory of cultural imperialism to education generally and to universities in particular, some scholars (e.g. Carnoy, 1974; Altbach, 1981; Phillipson, 1992; Pennycook, 1994) have argued that collaborative partnerships between universities in developing countries and those in developed countries are exemplifications of cultural imperialism.

Citing Altbach (1981), Pennycook (1994) argues that:

> [T]he current intellectual Centres have a massive influence over the international academic system, providing educational models, publishing academic books and journals, setting the research agenda, and so on. The peripheral universities, while often playing extremely important roles in their own countries as central institutions, are often… little more than 'distributors of knowledge' from the Center (p. 48).

In a similar vein Grinevald (1998), focusing on the South American context, also interrogates the roles of foreign linguists, as well as South American linguists trained in Europe and the United States of America. Grinevald (1998) argues that some foreign linguists function on an individualistic basis and are only interested in furthering their own careers at the expense of local interests. She therefore calls for the development and promotion of linguistics done by Latin Americans. Grinevald (1998) further highlights the difficulties that arise when individuals from underdeveloped countries that do not have doctoral programmes enroll with universities in developed countries. For Grinevald (1998) the complications arise when they return to their country and find that the conditions are not compatible with their training. Grinevald's (1998) suggestion for avoiding the weaknesses whereby center-periphery relations are perceived to be unfavourable to the latter is significant in evaluating the relationships between ALRI and its Nordic partners. She motivates for collaborative work which will contribute to the strengthening of local linguistics through the training of locals to become the academic manpower at local universities and research centers.

An emphasis on the sandwich type of training programme can be considered to be an important aspect of the ALRI-University of Oslo partnership in terms of countering the trappings of cultural imperialism. In line with Grinevald's (1998) suggestion, the collaborative partnership between ALRI and University of Oslo focuses on developing academic manpower for Zimbabwean universities. The sandwich program, through its emphasis on joint supervision of research projects initiated from the parent institution,

ensures that agenda setting becomes a collaborative process that takes cognizance of the needs of the researchers' home country.

In a similar vein, the development of teaching and learning materials, just like the training of linguists, poses questions regarding the authenticity and relevance to local situations. In focusing on developing learning materials for the Tonga language, SCF(UK) recognizes the importance of developing relevant learning materials for the teaching and learning of minority languages in schools. As Crystal (2000) has argued, "no teaching programme can succeed without good materials" (p. 137). Further, by utilizing speakers of the minority languages as writers, SCF(UK) circumvents a common problem in the development of materials for marginalized languages. According to Stroud (2001), a common weakness in materials development is that language learning materials are developed without the input of the speakers of the language and the resultant product lacks relevance to the target community.

## 5.4 Conclusion

In this chapter, I have introduced what Crystal (2000: 154) refers to as the "language revitalization team" which comprises TOLACO, ZILPA, the CCJP(Z), Silveira House, SCF(UK) and ALRI. As Crystal (2000) argues,

> The saving of a language demands commitment, a shared sense of responsibility, and a wide range of special skills… That is why in many parts of the world, we see the emergence of a team approach to language maintenance-recognition of the fact that the task is so great that it needs proper planning and management, and the involvement of selected people with individual skills, acting on behalf of the community as a whole (p. 154).

I have demonstrated that the organizations, although emerging from diverse backgrounds play complementary roles in providing technical and financial support for the promotion

and development of the endoglossic minority languages of Zimbabwe. In Chapter 6 and Chapter 7, I turn attention to an in-depth analysis of the data obtained from the documents and interviews with members of these organizations with particular focus on addressing the research question:

- How have the organs of civil society responded to the existing linguistic status quo between the minority endoglossic languages on the one hand and English, Shona and Ndebele (as the languages of state policy) on the other?

In my analysis I will draw on Fishman's Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale (GIDS) model suggested in his Reversing Language Shift theory as a useful analytic rubric for assessing the RLS practices in speech communities whose languages are endangered. In Chapter 3, Section 3.5, I introduced Fishman's GIDS as a model that suggests that language revitalization efforts should be a gradual process organized in two phases and through eight stages. In line with Fishman's (1991) theory my analysis will be divided into two chapters. Chapter 6 focuses on TOLACO and ZILPA's search for consensus among the minority language groups as well as attempts at establishing priorities. Chapter 7 focuses on the analysis of the minority language groups' efforts to expand the domains of language use beyond the primary domains into the secondary domains.

# CHAPTER SIX: THE SEARCH FOR IDEOLOGICAL CONSENSUS

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6.4 Conclusion

## 6.1 Introduction

This chapter focuses on the efforts instituted by the advocates for minority language rights in Zimbabwe in order to mobilize the minority language communities in a process of "consciousness heightening and reformation" (Fishman, 1991: 394). (Refer to Chapter 3, Section 3.5.1 for Fishman's (1991) GIDS model.) These efforts correspond with the first phase on the GIDS which Fishman refers to as preoccupied with *RLS to attain diglossia (assuming prior ideological clarification)* incorporating Stages 8 to 5 on the GIDS. In this first phase, Fishman suggests that minority language groups should start by seeking to "establish both focus and priorities for RLS efforts" (Fishman 2001c: 465) and seeking ideological clarification among the main actors. In Chapter 7, my analysis focuses on the minority language groups' efforts that seek to expand domains of language use beyond the primary domains into the secondary domains. Thus following Fishman (1991: 410), Chapter 6 focuses on the ZILPA-affiliated minority language groups' efforts on the "weak side" and the "lower spheres" of language revitalization efforts, while Chapter 7 focuses on language revitalization efforts on the "strong side" and the "higher spheres" of RLS.

This chapter draws on the data to provide the first part of a response to the sub-research question: How have the organs of civil society responded to the existing linguistic status quo between the minority endoglossic languages on the one hand and English, Shona and Ndebele (as the languages of state policy) on the other? The second part of the response to this sub-research question is presented in Chapter 7. In addressing how Zimbabwean organs of civil society respond to the linguistic status quo in Zimbabwe, I argue in this chapter that the main strategy involved grassroots mobilization. Drawing on my data, I identify traditional leaders and chiefs in particular, as integral in the successes achieved by the minority language groups fighting for language rights in Zimbabwe. I argue that chiefs were instrumental in mobilizing the communities they lead to challenge the language policy of the state. I further ague that the initiatives for language revitalization involving grassroots mobilization seek to help foster the sense of community and pride in the languages and cultures of minority language groups necessary for language maintenance. Drawing on literature from other contexts, I argue that grassroots mobilization for language revitalization is an effective strategy successfully utilized by communities whose languages face endangerment.

In Section 6.2, I locate minority language groups mobilizing under ZILPA in Phase 1 and Stage 6 of Fishman's GIDS model. I also discuss the implications of such a placement for the RLS efforts of the minority language groups in Zimbabwe. In the next four sections, I demonstrate how the efforts of ZILPA aim at achieving ideological consensus among the minority language-speaking communities. In Section 6.2.1, I focus on the role of chiefs in mobilizing communities for RLS efforts. In Sections 6.2.2, 6.2.3, and 6.2.4, I discuss the strategies employed to mobilize the communities through Awareness Raising Workshops, the training and conscientization of School Development Committees and the celebration of culture through cultural festivals. Section 6.3 presents an analytic commentary for this chapter and Section 6.4 concludes the chapter.

## 6.2 Grassroots Mobilization to Attain Ideological Consensus

Research on the minority language groups in Zimbabwe (e.g. Hachipola 1998) suggests that the languages are widely used by the population of child-bearing age who transmit the languages to their children. However, there are perceptions especially in the minority language-speaking community that the encroachment of Shona and Ndebele into the primary domains of language use constitutes a threat to the languages. These perceptions are borne out by the high levels of bilingualism (minority language - Shona/Ndebele bilingualism) among the minority language-speakers. Hachipola (1998) observes that in the urban areas, most minority language-speaking families have shifted to either Shona or Ndebele. Further, there are growing concerns that the influence of the schooling system where Ndebele, Shona and English are the dominant languages have contributed to the increasing presence of the languages in the primary domains. These observations imply that according to Fishman's GIDS model Venda, Shangani, Tonga, Sotho, Kalanga and Nambya can be located in Phase 1 and at Stage 6 of the GIDS model. These languages may not be located in Stages 8 and 7 which according to Fishman (1991) are for languages at advanced stages of attrition. At Stage 8 the endangered language is only spoken by isolated old folks while at Stage 7, the language is mostly spoken by elderly people who are beyond child-bearing age.

Placing the ZILPA-affiliated minority language groups in Phase 1, and at Stage 6 of the GIDS is consistent with the findings of other studies (e.g. Adegbija, 2001) which point out that most African languages are at this stage on the GIDS model. Fishman considers Stage 6 to be so crucial in any language revitalization efforts that he emphasizes the need to "take special pains to facilitate the formation and concentration of the home-family-neighbourhood-community institutions and processes that constitute the heart and soul of Stage 6". Thus Fishman (1991:407) suggests the need for minority language communities to engage in "RLS neighbourhood building efforts" which "relate local spiritual beliefs, family values, informal neighbouring and self-help notions" which in turn help foster the sense of community necessary for language maintenance. This chapter focuses on TOLACO and ZILPA's grassroots-based mobilization of minority language-speaking

communities for the development and promotion of their languages. Consistent with Fishman's (1991) GIDS model, the efforts of the minority language groups in Zimbabwe at this first phase involved seeking "a prior value consensus among those who advocate, formulate, and implement" (p.82) language revitalization efforts. As Fishman (1991) further argues, "[w]ithout such prior consensus, RLS policy itself may become a bone of contention even among its own advocates" (p. 82). The rationale for grassroots mobilization is based on the argument that the affected language community should be at the center of language revitalization efforts. This position has been emphasised by a number of scholars (e.g. Batibo, 2005; Gerdts, 1998; Grinewald, 1998; Yamamoto, 1998; Furbee, Stanley, and Arkeketa, 1998; Dauenhauer and Dauenhauer, 1998).

As Batibo (2005) has argued, "Any measures to empower the speakers of a language that do not involve the speakers themselves are unlikely to succeed or be sustained. The speakers must be part of the process" (p. 128). Crystal (2000) also emphasizes the virtue of placing communities at the center of the efforts to revitalize their languages:

> The foundation [for language maintenance] must come from within the homes and neighbourhoods of the community members themselves. In an ideal situation, everyone plays a part: young parents actively discuss priorities; their older counterparts, with more experience and social standing, use their influence to give language measures a greater public voice; the elderly act as sources for the language and as role-models in its use. People who are part of the wider community also have a role to play. Their positive support for an indigenous language can give its speakers a feeling of worth, and boost their efforts to maintain it (p. 118-119).

In considering the grassroots-based measures in the struggles for the promotion and development of minority languages in Zimbabwe, I focus on how the strategies involved placing the traditional leaders, and especially the chiefs, at the center of community mobilization. I also consider how ZILPA and its collaborating partners undertook Awareness Campaigns, trained School Development Committees and organized Cultural

Festivals as strategies to attain ideological consensus as well as ensuring the active involvement of grassroots-based members of minority language groups in the advocacy activities for the promotion and development of their languages.

### 6.2.1 The Role of Chiefs

Chiefs are considered to be very important leaders in Zimbabwe. In recognition of the important role that chiefs play in the administration of rural communities, they are part of the Ministry of Local Government. Chiefs draw a salary like ordinary civil servants. Further, given the powers they wield in the communities under their jurisdiction, chiefs are considered to be influential political figures. The roles and duties of chiefs are regulated and defined in terms of the New Traditional Leaders Act of 1999 (Chapter 29: 17). According to this Act, the role of the chief includes:

> Promoting and upholding cultural values among members of the community under his jurisdiction, particularly the preservation of the extended family and the promotion of traditional family life[34].

For both TOLACO and ZILPA, chiefs were important in the struggles for the promotion of language and culture. The chiefs could not be considered to be promoting and upholding cultural values when their languages were being undermined. The importance attached to the role of traditional leaders and the role they were expected to play was an important issue for discussion at one of the meetings held to map out strategies for engaging government on the promotion and development of minority languages in Zimbabwe. The position adopted on the role of chiefs and headmen is captured in the following terms:

> The Chiefs and Headmen's support in this noble cause of promoting indigenous languages is very crucial and essential. It was argued that Chiefs and Headmen cannot be left out in this issue because they are the custodians of culture of which

[34] http://www.milgpwud.gov.zw/traditional_leaders.htp

> language is a vehicle of culture. Chiefs, it was argued, are important in two ways in this issue. Firstly, they are politically powerful in the current political landscape to draw the attention of the government. Secondly, as custodians of culture there is no way they can be left out as they should speak on behalf of their people. The meeting resolved that Chiefs and Headmen are really necessary and therefore should be seriously involved in this lobby process[35].

As a strategy to win the chiefs over to join in the struggle for the language and cultural rights of their people, two Advocacy Officers of the Binga Justice and Peace Project, Mumpande and Mangodza, paid courtesy calls to the chiefs in the Tonga speaking areas. The main objective of the visits was to establish one-on-one relationships with the chiefs and to discuss the importance of their role in addressing the problems affecting their people, especially the problems related to education. Following the visits, the Advocacy Officers reported that:

> The chiefs visited are Chief Binga, Chief Siachilaba, Chief Saba, Chief Siansaali and Chief Sinansengwe. These are believed to be capable of sound cooperation and have much energy and determination to spearhead the programme in their areas and positively influence other chiefs in the district. The visited chiefs showed a lot of interest in the cause and pledged full support.[36]

Chief Sinansengwe's views on the endangered position of the Tonga language and culture echoed the siege mentality that TOLACO demonstrated in Section 6.2.1 above:

> He pointed out that this is a precious programme that has come at a time when the Tonga are vainly battling to revive, promote and preserve the slowly dwindling Tonga language and culture

[35] This perspective is expressed in a document titled "Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace, Civic Education and Advocacy Department, Four Months Report: Jan-April 2001" (p. 8).
[36] See "Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace- Binga Advocacy Programme Two Day Chiefs Awareness Campaign 31 May to 1 June 2000" (p. 1).

> pollution due to the government sponsored Ndebele language intrusion into the district.[37]

The awareness campaigns targeting chiefs also brought to the fore some problems that threatened the strategy of obtaining the full cooperation of the chiefs. Firstly, the Advocacy Officers observed that the visits to chiefs came at a time when some chiefs showed a lack of interest in CCJP(Z) programmes because the programme did not offer them sitting allowances. In contrast, the reported perspectives of some of the chiefs point to the reason why they were considered to be progressive and capable of having a positive influence on the efficacy of the programme as well as reinforcing an appreciation for the weight of their office:

> Chief Saba strongly castigated other chiefs who want sitting allowances for every meeting or workshop they attend. Chief Siachiliba echoed similar sentiments, adding that chiefs are obliged by their office to attend meetings which have a bearing on their people. He further argued that chiefs are there because of the people they govern. If they fail to represent, protect and fight for their people, it means they will have failed to fulfill the duties of their offices[38].

Secondly, the strategy to involve chiefs faced the problem of some chiefs' unwillingness to be identified with the minority language groups, even when they presided over them. This problem is highlighted in a report that cites problems encountered in attempts to mobilize chiefs in the Tonga-speaking area of Nyaminyami:

> There are four chiefs in Nyaminyami, Chief Negande, Chief Moola, Chief Nebili and Chief Musambakaruma. Out of the four chiefs, only two chiefs Negande and Moola admit that they are Tonga while the other two say they are Shona. The Binga chiefs who happen to know these chiefs, who denounce that they are

[37] Ibid. (p. 1).
[38] Ibid. (p. 1).

> Tonga, said that the concerned chiefs are pure Tongas. And they can speak fluent Tonga language.[39]

The problems confronting the chiefs' involvement in the Nyaminyami area thus implicated Shona dominance and hegemony as being entrenched to the extent that some chiefs sought to disown their identity as speakers of the minority languages.

The third problem associated with mobilizing chiefs to spearhead the programmes to develop and promote minority languages was identified among the Kalanga. In this context, Ndebele dominance and hegemony are implicated as the main factors militating against mobilizing traditional leaders in minority language promotion. At a workshop conducted in 2001, the representatives of the Kalanga Language Committee pointed out how their efforts could be frustrated by the traditional leadership set up such that an Ndebele chief has been imposed on the Kalanga people dating back to the colonial period:

> The Kalanga representatives narrated a painful tale of how their legitimate Kalanga chiefs were demoted and replaced by typical Ndebele chiefs during the colonial rule. The colonial regime demoted Kalanga chiefs like Hikwale, Masindi, Madlembudzi, and Hingwe to headmen and then imposed an Ndebele chief on them, Chief Ndiweni. This anomaly has not yet been rectified by the post independence government. Up to date the former Kalanga chiefs are still headmen. The Kalanga delegates therefore expressed fears on the reaction of Ndebele chiefs, like Chief Ndiweni, to such an issue that they are intending to promote Kalanga language as that may undermine the Ndebele chiefs' authority.[40]

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[39] These observations, attributed to Chief Negande are contained in a report titled "Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace in Zimbabwe Binga Justice and Peace Project: A report on the 29-30 July 2000 TOLACO Workshop held at Binga Roman Catholic Hall on the teaching of Tonga language in Binga, Hwange, Gokwe North and Nyaminyami" (p. 11 Section7d).

[40] These sentiments attributed to the Kalanga Language Committee representatives at a ZILPA workshop are contained in a report titled "Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace, Civic Education and Advocacy Department, Four Months Report: Jan-April 2001" (p. 9).

The fourth problem associated with the chiefs taking on an active role in promoting the minority languages was the possible link that could be established between advocacy for minority language rights and oppositional political activism. This is illustrated in the case of the hurdles encountered by the Sotho Language Committee. Mr. Makwati, a Sotho Language Committee member, reported how the committee had not made much progress in mobilizing the Sotho-speaking community, because "the Chief, Mathe, was reluctant to attend meetings on languages for fear of victimization and being aligned with the opposition [MDC, an opposition political party]".[41]

In order to facilitate the participation of traditional leaders in the minority language question, one of the strategies that were adopted by TOLACO and the BJPP was to organize workshops that served as fora for conscientising the chiefs, and the general minority language speaking community on advocacy strategies. One such workshop held from 27 to 28 May 2000 brought together the chiefs and TOLACO members, in order that they might collectively brainstorm possible solutions to the problems related to education in the Binga District, as well as the Tonga language question. This was followed by a bigger two-day workshop organized by the BJPP at the Binga Roman Catholic Church on 29 to 30 July 2000. This workshop brought together 44 people, and included 14 chiefs and kraal heads from all of the Tonga speaking areas, the Member of Parliament for Binga, Mr. Joel Gabbuza, officials from the President's office based in Binga, representatives of the district Administrator's office, members of TOLACO, councilors and the Advocacy Officers from the BJPP. (Refer to Appendix C for the full list of all participants.)

The objectives of the July workshop were two-fold:

- To come up with strategies that chiefs can adopt in a bid to assist in solving the teaching of the Tonga language in Zimbabwe; and

[41] Mr. Makwati's concerns regarding Chief Mathe are contained in a report titled "Minutes of the ZILPA committee meeting held 06 December 2003 at Selbourne Hotel, Bulawayo at 0830 hrs." (p. 4).

- To select members to serve on a Taskforce that would be sent to meet with the Parliamentary Committee on Education, and the Minister of Education and Culture (on a date to be arranged) so as to discuss the teaching of the Tonga language in Zimbabwe.

At the end of this two-day workshop, chiefs made resolutions regarding the role they were prepared to play in promoting and developing the Tonga language in areas under their jurisdiction (refer to Figure 6.2.1 below).

***Figure 6.2.1*** *Resolutions on chiefs' role in preserving Tonga language and culture*

- Each chief was to meet his kraal heads, and the School Development Committees (SDCs) in his area and discuss the thorny issue of not learning Tonga to a meaningful level. The kraal heads will be requested by the chief to hold meetings with people in their areas so that they are briefed on these developments. The kraal heads will have to report back to the chiefs.
- Chiefs will report back to TOLACO what their people.
- Chiefs agreed on the need to encourage people to promote and preserve the Tonga culture.
- Chiefs agreed to instruct the SDCs to recruit Tonga youngsters first and outsiders later in schools since the new recruitment system requires the school to consult the SDCs when recruiting teachers.
- Chiefs agreed to instruct their people to withdraw the Tonga children from Ndebele/Shona lessons should the government turn a deaf ear to their calls of allowing Tonga to be taught to a more meaningful level.
- The chiefs concurred that Shona/Ndebele languages and cultures had done more harm than good on their people.

**Source:** Report on the 29-30 July TOLACO Workshop (p. 10-16).

Reflecting on the role of traditional leaders in the minority language revitalization programme in Zimbabwe, Mumpande (2006) observes that the success of the process depended to a large extent on the co-operation of traditional leaders. He argues that their impact was effective at two levels: during negotiations with policy-makers; and at community level, in negotiations with school headmasters regarding the teaching of minority languages in schools. For Mumpande (2006), the presence of traditional leaders at meetings with government officials dignified the ZILPA delegation and the government officials could not easily brush them off. At the community level, and

particularly regarding the teaching of minority languages, Mumpande (2006) observes that chiefs played an important role in ensuring that the languages were taught in those schools located in areas that fell under their jurisdiction. According to Mumpande (2006):

> This was no easy task, as many school heads interpreted the chiefs' involvement as a threat rather than a genuine contribution. Some chiefs resorted to using their political power to compel resistant heads into implementing the circular's rules, citing any resistance as a direct challenge to their traditional authority. Some school heads were forced to transfer as chiefs flexed their muscles (p. 47).

Apart from the traditional leaders, grassroots mobilization also took the form of Awareness Raising Workshops aimed at conscientising the broad spectrum of minority language speakers on their role in promoting and developing their languages.

### 6.2.2 Village and National Awareness Raising Workshops

This section discusses the strategies that were implemented in order to promote the idea of minority language revitalization among the speakers of the minority languages. The strategy was to conscientise the wider minority language speaking community through Village Awareness Raising Workshops. Village Awareness Raising Workshops were initially conducted among the Tonga-speaking community supported by the BJPP. When ZILPA was formed in March 2001, the national association organized National Awareness Raising Workshops throughout the country, supported by Silveira House.

Table 6.2.2a below presents a summary of the Village Awareness Raising Workshops that were conducted by the BJPP and TOLACO among the Tonga people. The aim of these workshops was to educate the communities about Tonga language issues.

***Table 6.2.2a*** *Village Awareness Raising Workshops*

| **Date** | **Ward** |
|---|---|
| 14 February 2000 | Siansali |
| 16 February 2000 | Sinamatele |
| 17 February 2000 | Chunga |
| 21 February 2000 | Mola |
| 22 February 2000 | Negande |
| 24 February 2000 | Simunchembu |
| 25 February 2000 | Nenyunga |
| 28 February 2000 | Sinatelele |
| 7 March 2000 | Hwange |
| 6 and 7 February 2001 | Bulawayo |

**Source:** Silveira House Semi-Annual Report, 01 September 2000-March 2001 (p. 6).

According to Musona, "these meetings were very successful and well supported by community leaders who include traditional chiefs, councilors, headmasters, teachers and the Tonga community"[42].

The culmination of the grassroots mobilization under TOLACO occurred at the 29-30 July TOLACO workshop held at the Binga Roman Catholic Church Hall. This workshop, apart from bringing together influential people from all important sectors of Binga society and beyond, got the much needed endorsement from the Binga chiefs. (Refer to Appendix C for the attendance list and Figure 6.2.1 for the chiefs' resolutions.) Further, the attendees at the workshop also came up with resolutions[43] on how to proceed with lobbying for the recognition and development of the Tonga language. (Refer to Figure 6.2.2 below for the list of resolutions.)

[42] Musona makes this observation in a document entitled " Silveira House Civics Department Advocacy Programme Semi Annual Report 1 September 2000 to March 2001"
[43] The recommendations are contained in "Silveira House Civics Department Advocacy Programme Semi Annual Report 1 September 2000 – 30 March 2001"

***Figure 6.2.2*** *Resolutions of the 29-30 July 2000 TOLACO Workshop*

1. A high powered delegation from TOLACO should arrange a meeting with relevant Parliamentary Committees and the Ministry of Education and Culture. The meeting should discuss the possible authorization of the teaching of the Tonga language up to 'O' Level. Such a delegation can only be sent after its members have been trained in Training for Transformation and Advocacy lobbying skills.
2. If the parliamentary committee refuses to amend the Education Act in favour of the minority languages then TOLACO will raise money to take up the case to court arguing that Section 62 of the Education Act is discriminatory and therefore, it is unconstitutional and must be amended. Section 62 of the Education Act contravenes Section 23 of the constitution of Zimbabwe because of its discriminatory aspect.
3. TOLACO should continue to do its best in promoting literature in the area. TOLACO once approached Longman Zimbabwe on the issue of Tonga books. Longman stressed that importing Tonga books from Longman Zambia is not a problem as long as the local market is assured then they will happily assist.
4. Other Tonga speaking areas: Places like Nyaminyami, Hwange and Gokwe should benefit from the Advocacy Programme if much cooperation is to come from Tonga speaking people in these areas and their members of Parliament (MPs).
5. The Advocacy Programme should work closely with TOLACO and Save the Children Fund (UK) since they have similar goals in Binga, Nyaminyami, Hwange and Gokwe districts.

**Source:** Semi-Annual Report 1 September 1999-31 March 2000 (p. 12).

The main thrust of the resolutions was geared towards engaging policy makers. Consequently, the subsequent struggle for language and cultural rights was to take place at the ideological level. (Refer to Chapter 7 for a discussion of the ideological measures implicated in endoglossic minority language revitalization in Zimbabwe.) In accordance with the resolutions of the 29-30 July 2000 TOLACO workshop, a seven member taskforce comprising of three chiefs, one kraal head, two TOLACO members and one other interested member was chosen as the delegation that would meet with the Minister of Education and the Parliamentary Committee on Education. The composition of the taskforce was representative of all of the districts in which Tonga is spoken (refer to Table 6.2.2b below).

***Table 6.2.2b*** *Taskforce chosen to meet with the Minister of Education and the Parliamentary Committee on Education*

| **Name** | **District** | **Designation** |
|---|---|---|
| Chief Negande | Nyaminyami | Chief |
| Chief Simunchembu | Gokwe North | Chief |
| Chief Siachilaba | Binga | Chief |
| Kraal Head Mapeta | Hwange | Kraal Head |
| S.B. Manyena | Binga | TOLACO Chairperson |
| D. Mundia | Binga | TOLACO Secretary |
| Ms.F. Dube | Binga | Female Representative |

**Source:** Report on the 29-30 July 2000 TOLACO Workshop (p. 15).

This particular taskforce did not ultimately meet with the Minister of Education, nor the Parliamentary Committee on Education, because before they could do so, a decision was made by TOLACO and the Advocacy Officers of the Binga Justice and Peace Project to nationalize the issue leading to the formation of ZILPA. At this stage, the minority language groups were making a shift from a grassroots level of activism to an ideological level of mobilization which I discuss in detail in Chapter 7, Section 7.3.

Subsequent to the formation of ZILPA in March 2001, there was a shift from Village Awareness Raising Workshops that were conducted among one minority language group, the Tonga, to National Awareness Raising Workshops that were conducted with all of the six minority language groups. According to Mumpande (2001), "These awareness campaigns aimed at strengthening the ability of communities to articulate the indigenous languages problem to local authorities including their Member of Parliament"[44].

Following the government's decision to allow for the teaching of minority languages beyond Grade 3 (a development discussed at length in Chapter 7, Section 7.2), the National Awareness Raising Workshops were used as platforms for explaining to the communities the implications of the amendment to Section 62 of the Education Act of 1987, especially regarding the role of the communities in ensuring that the schools taught the minority languages beyond Grade 3 as per the new provisions. Table 6.2.2c below

[44] Mumpande makes these comments in his report entitled "CCJP(Z) Binga Justice and Peace Project Civic Education and Advocacy Department Annual Report: January –December 2001"

provides a summary of the National Language Awareness Raising Workshops conducted by ZILPA with the support of Silveira House.

***Table 6.2.2c*** *National Awareness Raising Workshops*

| **Date** | **Language Group(s)** | **Attendants** |
|---|---|---|
| 29 September 2001 | Kalanga | 7 traditional leaders (chiefs/headman); 10 school heads; 1 Assistant District Administrator; 4 members from the Kalanga Language Committee in Botswana; Silveira House Facilitators |
| 24 November 2001 | Nambiya, Dombe | 3 chiefs; 9 headman; 9 village heads; 5 councillors; 2 Village Development Committee members; 1 MP for Hwange East, the Chief Executive Officer of Hwange Rural District Council; other interested members; Silveira House facilitators |
| 11 May 2002 | Venda | 2 chiefs; 5 headmen; 5 school heads; Assistant District Administrator; Silveira House facilitators |
| 31 August 2002 | Sotho | Total of 31 attendants comprising: Chiefs; headmen; school heads; SDC members; Silveira House facilitators |
| 2 November 2002 | Tonga | Total of 60 participants comprising: 2 chiefs; school heads; village heads; MP, other interested members; Silveira House facilitators |
| 13-17 November 2003 | Shangani | Total of 28 participants comprising: Chiredzi District Education Officer; teachers; school heads; SDC members; other interested members; Silveira House facilitators |

**Source:** This table is compiled from a synthesis of the following source documents: Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace-Zimbabwe Binga Justice and Peace Project Civic Education and Advocacy Department Annual Report: January-December 2001; Silveira House Advocacy Programme 2002 Advocacy Index compiled by I. Mumpande and I. Musona; Silveira House Advocacy Programme Bulawayo office November 2003 Monthly Report compiled by Isaac Mumpande.

It is evident from Table 6.2.2c that the Awareness Raising Workshops targeted a wide range of stakeholders which included traditional leaders, government officials, and teachers. These were considered important stakeholders who could influence both policy and practices in favour of the minority endoglossic languages.

Apart from conducting Village and National Awareness Raising Workshops, ZILPA and its collaborating partners sought to attain heightened consciousness and consensus among the minority language groups through the training of School Development Committees with the main goal of ensuring that these monitored the activities of schools in terms of the implementation of language policy.

### 6.2.3 School Development Committees

This section discusses ways in which TOLACO and later ZILPA sought to influence the implementation of the government's language policies in those schools where children who spoke minority languages were predominant. TOLACO's interventions regarding the role of the School Development Committees (SDC) happened during the period when the Education Act of 1987 was in operation, providing for the teaching of minority languages only up to Grade 3. As discussed in Chapter 5, Section 5.2.1, most schools did not comply with this provision and minority languages were taught at Grade 1 or Grade 2 only in some schools, and not taught at all in others. TOLACO's main thrust, which is discussed in Section 6.2.3.1 below, was to ensure that schools taught the minority languages at least up to Grade 3 as the policy stipulated. Further, TOLACO sought to ensure that School Development Committees monitored the practices of schools in their recruitment of untrained temporary teachers to ensure that speakers of minority languages were not disadvantaged.

Section 6.2.3.2 discusses how ZILPA sought to alert SDCs to their role in monitoring the implementation of the new language policy provisions following the enactment of the *New Provisions on the Teaching and Learning of Minority Languages* in 2002. (The activism leading to the new developments regarding the teaching and learning of minority languages is discussed in detail in Chapter 7, Section 7.3.2).

#### 6.2.3.1 TOLACO and the School Development Committees

TOLACO and the BJPP Advocacy Officers arranged a series of meetings with school administrators and SDCs. The major aim of these meetings was to strengthen the ability of communities to recognize and articulate their concerns; and to lobby the schools, headmasters and the recruitment committees to give first preference to qualifying local people for temporary teaching posts. This latter intervention was considered to be one way of setting the base for the potential employment of Tonga teachers since they would obtain some teaching experience that would enhance their chances of getting places in teacher training colleges. A key concern was that some SDCs were not aware of their role in the management of schools, and especially in the recruitment processes for temporary teachers where they were supposed to be actively involved in ensuring that qualifying local people got first preference. As the Advocacy Officers observed,

> In these meetings, it was realized that all SDCs do not have the Statutory Instruments which govern them. Also three quarters of the schools that attended do not have the same document. The meetings have proved to be very beneficial as they have educated them on their rights [which] they did not know before. The Advocacy Officers promised them copies of the document for each SDC[45].

Meetings with SDCs were not plain sailing as some school headmasters perceived the Programme as an attempt to undermine their influence. The success of these meetings owed to the tactics employed by the Advocacy Officer who lobbied the District Education Offices for their support by releasing an officer to accompany them to schools for the meetings:

> Bad blood between the Heads and the Programme surfaced during the SDC meetings. These meetings enlightened the communities who then queried some of

[45] The Advocacy Officer, I. Mumpande's observations are carried in the report titled, "Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace in Zimbabwe Advocacy Project Department 4 Months Report June-September 2000" (p. 5).

the unethical ways the School Headmasters operated. Far from discouraging the programme, the criticisms rather hardened the stance of the Programme because there was a legitimate cause to be addressed. The Programme had the blessing of the District Education Officer who made sure that he released an officer to accompany the Programme Officers to these meetings with the SDCs[46].

So in spite of the resistance from some of the School Headmasters the SDCs meetings took place with the support of Ministry of Education officials who were invited by TOLACO and the BJPP to facilitate the discussions. Table 6.2.3.1 below provides a summary of attendance at the SDC meetings in the year 2000.

***Table 6.2.3.1*** *Summary of attendance at School Development Committee meetings*

| Date | Venue | Number of schools invited | Men | Women | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 07 Aug 2000 | Manjolo sec. | 7 | 40 | 5 | 45 |
| 08 Aug 2000 | Tinde pry | 5 | 27 | 8 | 35 |
| 09 Aug 2000 | Mupambe pry | 3 | 30 | 1 | 31 |
| 10 Aug 2000 | Sianzyundu pry | 4 | 20 | - | 20 |
| 18 Aug 2000 | Siachilaba pry | 4 | 15 | 2 | 17 |
| 19 Aug 2000 | Chininga | 3 | 28 | - | 28 |
| 16 Nov 2000 | Siamupa sec | 6 | 58 | 6 | 64 |
| 20 Nov 2000 | Kariangwe pry. | 7 | 35 | 1 | 36 |
| 21 Nov 2000 | Pashu pry | 4 | 45 | 3 | 48 |
| 27 Nov 2000 | Lusulu sec. | 6 | 13 | - | 13 |
| 04 Dec 2000 | Siabuwa sec. | 6 | 16 | 1 | 17 |
| 06 Dec 2000 | Lubimbi 1 pry | 4 | 21 | 4 | 25 |

**Source:** CCJP(Z) Binga Justice and Peace Project Annual Report January - December 2000

Table 6.2.3.1 shows that the months of August and November 2000 were dedicated to conscientising the SDCs regarding their role in the promotion of the Tonga language. A salient feature in the attendance at the SDC meetings is the small number of women who

[46] Mr. I. Mumpande, Civic Education and Advocacy Officer, makes these comments in a report titled, "Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace Binga Justice and Peace Project Civic Education and Advocacy Department Annual Report January to December 2000" (p. 12).

participated as compared to men. Mumpande (2006) noted the low levels of women's participation as one of the constraints faced by the language rights advocacy programme. The low levels of women's participation was attributed to traditional practices whereby women do not attend meetings where crucial issues affecting the community were discussed, but rather waited for feedback from their men. This particular view was articulated by Ms. Clemencia Sianyuka, one of only two women in the ZILPA leadership structures. F. B. Mangodza, an Advocacy Officer at Silveira House also noted the low levels of women's participation as a weakness within the advocacy programme:

> [F]emale involvement has been minimal save for a few women… This might have been due to the target groups that the Programme was focusing on, namely, the traditional leaders and the language committee members. It used to be very difficult to penetrate traditional leadership structures (cited in Mumpande 2006: 54-55).

The marginalization of women in the advocacy activities linked to language development and promotion point to normative cultural practices that limit the Zimbabwean language rights advocates from seeing the role women and mothers could play in language maintenance and revitalization efforts. This is a particularly significant weakness of the language revitalization programme considering that women and mothers in particular are considered to play strategic roles in language choice and use in the primary domains of the home and the nighbourhood. Given that the minority language advocacy campaigns are directed at the promotion of minority languages in the school system, it is important to consider Rowsell's (2006) advice that "we need to build a bridge between the domains of home and school" (p. 7). An advocacy programme that marginalizes women is likely to face problems in that the women do not effectively participate in the processes that seek to bridge the bridge between home and school.

Despite the weakness regarding the gender imbalances, the strategy involving awareness raising through the conscientisation of SDCs was considered to be a major success:

> The SDCs became major allies for the Programme in ensuring their schools taught the affected languages and their official involvement [in] the running of schools made it difficult for school heads to accuse the Programme of causing chaos (Mumpande 2006: 50).

This role for the SDCs was continued when the minority language programme was expanded to include, not only the Tonga, but also other minority language groups. As the programme expanded, the SDCs in various districts in which minority languages were spoken collaborated with ZILPA and Silveira House officials.

#### 6.2.3.2 ZILPA and the School Development Committees

Following the enactment of the *New provisions on the teaching and learning of minority languages* in 2002, ZILPA sought to monitor the implementation of the new language policy through the active involvement of SDCs. ZILPA conducted workshops with SDCs in those schools where minority languages were spoken by the majority of the pupils to conscientise the committees about the new policy provisions and their right to demand that their children be provided with opportunities to learn their languages. This awareness raising culminated in some unpleasant situations in instances where school officials were considered to be blocking the implementation of the policy. An example is found in a report that describes one such incident and demonstrated the new kind of activism that was being championed by some SDCs:

> Of much interest is the fact that communities are no longer tolerant of people obstructing the teaching of their languages. In Chief Simunchembu's area, the community expelled a Deputy Headmaster early this year 2004, as he was said to be against the teaching of the Tonga language at the school. The issue caused chaos at the school when schools opened this year as parents demonstrated at the

> school clamouring for the removal of the Deputy Head from the school. As of now, the Deputy Headmaster has been transferred to another school[47].

Another incident reported by Mumpande demonstrates deterioration in the relationship between ZILPA affiliated language committees and the government. In his January 2004 report, Mumpande reports that in the third school term of 2003, the Ministry of Education expelled Tonga-speaking temporary teachers working in the Binga District because they were said to have not attended a national service training programme. For this reason, the Ministry of Education wanted to replace them with the graduates of the training programme. According to Mumpande,

> A truckload of Green Bombers came from Gokwe to fill in the posts left by the Tonga-speaking teachers. In response to this injustice, the parents in Binga withdrew their children from all primary schools until the Government reinstated the Tonga-speaking temporary teachers even if they had not done the national service[48]

The monitoring role of the minority language communities led by the SDCs was seen as a direct result of this growing sense of empowerment emanating from the training that SDCs had received[49]. Further to the awareness-raising activities targeting chiefs, the general members of the minority language communities and SDCs, the grassroots forms of mobilization involved the holding of cultural festivals.

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[47] This incident is related in a report compiled by Isaac Mumpane titled "Silveira House Bulawayo Office January 2004 Report" (Section 5).

[48] Ibid: Section 5.Green Bombers was a pejorative name given to the graduates of the government's national service programme. The national service programme, introduced during the peak of the contestations for political office between the ruling ZANU(PF) party and the opposition Movement for Democratic Change party, was generally considered to be a government strategy to brainwash young people who were considered to be opposed to the ruling party. Such perceptions were bolstered by the overzealous manner in which the youth campaigned for the ruling party, which included demanding that everybody should carry ruling party membership cards on their persons every time of the day (See e.g. Raftopoulos 2006).

[49] Ibid: (Section 5).

### 6.2.4 Cultural Festivals

The holding of cultural festivals is a prominent feature of the activities organized by ZILPA as a strategy for language and cultural affirmation as well as an avenue for grassroots mobilization. Festivals organized by the Kalanga Language Committee and the Shangani Language Committee for example are highlighted as success stories in terms of developing minority language groups' sense of ethnolinguistic identity and pride in their languages and cultures. In his report on the cultural festival organized by the Shangani, Mumpande, an Advocacy Officer at Silveira House reports on one of the festivals:

> The festival was organized by the Shangani in collaboration with the Bulawayo advocacy office. The Shangani Language and Cultural Committee made preparations on the ground while the Bulawayo office coordinated the preparations. The festival held on the 12th of June [2004] at Rupangwana Growth Point was well attended by over 300 people. Senior dignitaries like the Chiredzi Education Officer, Mr. Rubaba, and senior Chiredzi Council officials attended the function. The local Chief Tsovana also attended the function together with the local Headman. Seven schools performed at the function. There were good cultural music and dances[50]

The report highlights the fact that the festival was well attended and patronized by prominent people from both local and national leadership in order to demonstrate their acknowledgement of the existence of the Shangani-speaking community.

The Kalanga Language Committee also held a cultural festival that was considered successful in that it brought together senior officials from various sectors and the grassroots Kalanga-speaking community to enjoy Kalanga cultural activities. Mumpande's report on the cultural festival organized by the Kalanga captures the sense in which this festival was considered to be a success:

[50] Isaac Mumpande, Advocacy Officer at Silveira House makes this observation in his report titled "Silveira House Bulawayo Office June 2004 Report" (p. 2).

> On 23 October [2004], the officer together with other Programme Officers from Harare attended a Cultural Festival held in Masendu area of Plumtree among the Kalanga people. The festival was well attended by over 1000 [one thousand] people who thronged the venue at Masendu Primary School. A lot of cultural dances, songs and drama were performed at the function. Different forms of traditional food was also prepared and served to the guests at the function. The Chief of the area and five Headmen attended the function. Scores of teachers from the surrounding schools together with their Headmasters attended the function[51].

The festivals organized by the minority language groups also provided opportunities for some of these minority language groups to interact with speakers of the languages in other countries as was the case with the Tonga:

> A festival was organized in August [2004] in Chief Siachilaba's area and a number of other chiefs attended including Chief Mwemba from Zambia who came with about 200 people. The chief gave a deep moving account of the Tonga tradition[52].

Through cultural festivals, the minority language communities were able to assert their ethnolinguistic identity as well as fostering cultural links necessary for consolidating their languages in the primary domains. Similar cultural festivals were held and continue to be held annually in a number of minority language-speaking communities. These strategies present the ZILPA-affiliated minority language groups "at the forefront of returning communities, neighbourhoods and families to the values, norms and behaviours that have preferential and historical validity for them" (Fishman 1991: 410).

[51] Isaac Mumpande, Advocacy Officer at Silveira House describes events around the Kalanga Cultural festival in his report "Silveira House Bulawayo Office October 2004 Report" (p. 2).
[52] The details of this festival are contained in a document titled "Minutes of the ZILPA meeting held 11-12-04 at Basilwizi Center, Bulawayo" (p. 4).

This chapter has discussed the strategies used by the minority language rights advocates in order to mobilize the minority language community to actively participate in initiatives to revitalize their languages. Section 6.3 provides an analytical commentary of these grassroots mobilization strategies.

## 6.3 Comment

In this section I comment on the significance of the grassroots measures undertaken by the minority language groups in Zimbabwe in terms of Fishman's GIDS. I also draw on literature from other contexts which discuss the place of grassroots measures in minority language revitalization efforts.

In Section 6.2 I located the grassroots mobilization strategies of Zimbabwe's minority language groups in Phase 1 and at Stage 6 of Fishman's GIDS. The data presented in this chapter affirms Fishman's GIDS model in that the initial level of RLS activity is undertaken by a small band of RLS advocates operating on a voluntary basis. As Fishman (1991) observes:

> [T]he earliest stages of RLS efforts usually require the generous and voluntary devotion of committed individuals, organized into voluntary associations which no one but such individuals themselves support and accept as authoritative (p. 82).

Similarly, TOLACO and ZILPA appear as voluntary organizations driven by passionate individuals acting out of their own volition. Mobilization of the broader minority language community proceeds by persuasion and not compulsion. Fishman's (1991) model anticipates the likelihood of failure to attain consensus among speakers of the endangered languages when he observes that a big threat to RLS efforts is not so much external but internal in the form of unsympathetic insiders. It is in this context that we may consider the reluctance of some chiefs to be associated with the RLS movement in Zimbabwe. Particularly relevant to the Tonga chiefs, who denied their Tonga identity in

preference of a Shona identity in spite of their true identity being common knowledge, (refer to Section 6.3) is Fishman's (1991) observation that:

> Because the latter have already begun to fashion a new identity, based, in part, on their greater and seemingly more rewarding association with Yish and with Ymen, RLS-efforts on behalf of Xish make them doubly uncomfortable (p. 83).

By adopting strategies to win over the ambivalent chiefs and other indifferent potential members into active members of the RLS movement through Village and National Awareness Raising Workshops, the RLS advocates in Zimbabwe take cognizance of the counter-productive nature of coercive tactics. As Fishman (1991: 83) advises, "Cultural democracy is possible and its pursuit must be an honest and deep commitment" and that "RLS advocates can and should stress, therefore, that no infringement of anyone's rights and no rejection of anyone's dignity or legitimacy is part or parcel of their program or goal". It is also instructive to note that the efforts by TOLACO and ZILPA to attain ideological clarification and awareness through advocacy and awareness raising workshops are identified by Fishman (1991) as integral to the success of any RLS efforts because lack of clarity on the goals of RLS efforts from the outset would lead to conflict in the future.

Further, in this chapter, I have observed that TOLACO and ZILPA's strategies that placed chiefs at the centre of RLS efforts also involved mobilization strategies such as Village and National Awareness Raising Workshops. In addition, conscientisation initiatives targeting SDCs, as well as the holding of cultural festivals, affirm Fishman's GIDS model as a useful tool for assessing RLS efforts. As Fishman (1991: 407) argues, minority language communities need to engage in "RLS neighbourhood building efforts" which "relate local spiritual beliefs, family values, informal neighbouring and self-help notions" which in turn help foster the sense of community necessary for language maintenance. ZILPA's strategies for language revitalization take cognizance of Fishman's suggestions insofar as they involve activities that seek to consolidate the home-family-neighbourhood-community links as well as countering the increasing

influence of Shona and Ndebele. However, the role of the SDCs, although championed at the grassroots level target a higher level domain, education. Fishman (2001c) describes this phenomenon as a linkage factor whereby Stage 6 (or any other stage) acts as a fulcrum from which other stages can be targeted.

An important consideration in the initiatives undertaken by SDCs is that they involved overt resistance which included ejecting school headmasters from their schools when they were considered to be a hindrance to the minority languages promotion goals. The case of the SDCs points to a growing use of power, in this instance parental power, to assert their position regarding the promotion of their languages' legitimacy. These initiatives represent the opening up of spaces that are not readily granted but fought for through active resistance. The use of overt power is an aspect that Fishman's (1991) GIDS model does not address.

Case studies from diverse contexts support the efficacy of the grassroots mobilization of TOLACO and ZILPA. One example is the Tlingit language revitalization project. Tlingit is a language spoken by the Tlingit Indians who live in Southeast Alaska. Drawing on their experience with the Tlingit language revitalization project, Dauenhauer and Dauenhauer (1998) argue that language experts can do their part but communities need to be empowered in order to play a significant role in these processes:

> Sealaska Heritage Foundation, where we are employed, can contribute staff expertise in Tlingit literacy, applied folklore and linguistics, and book production; but we still require the talent, cooperation, and good will of the individual tradition bearers. We can provide professional consultation and technical training for communities, but people must want it first. We can document stories, but we cannot create them out of nothing, we can produce grammars and instructional material, but they are nothing unless people actually speak the language to each other in the home and the community (p. 69-70).

In their assessment, Dauenhauer and Dauenhauer (1998) argue that language revitalization efforts need to have grassroots support in order to be successful, apart from the technical measures that can be instituted. For Gerdts (1998) cited in Crystal (2000), "Not only must the work be 'on a language, for its speakers and with its speakers', it also needs to be 'by its speakers'" (p. 157).

In a similar vein Valiquette (1998) cited in Crystal (2000) has argued that language revitalization efforts need to recognize the language community as the central actor in the preservation of its language:

> The community, and only the community, can preserve a living language. If the community surrenders its responsibility to outsiders, or even to a few persons within the community (such as school teachers), the language will die. Language preservation efforts must involve the total community, and not just part of it (p. 154).

The use of cultural festivals as avenues for fostering positive attitudes as well as promoting the visibility of marginalized languages is also widely documented (e.g. Crystal 2000; Dauenhauer and Dauenhauer 1998). For example, Crystal makes the point that minority language communities need to organize community activities which celebrate and showcase their language and culture:

> Art is another major way of boosting self-esteem, through the promotion of story-telling sessions, drama groups, poetry readings, public speaking competitions, singing galas, and cultural gatherings (Crystal 2000: 116).

> Traditional religious links and practices are especially important in the way they provide motivation for language revival, as are the arts (Crystal 2000: 131).

Dauenhauer and Dauenhauer (1998) also document how the Tlingit language revitalization activities witnessed a gradual increase in groups that took part in activities to celebrate the language and culture of the language community:

> An exception to the generally negative associations with Native language use is the dramatic increase in Indian pride as manifested in the many community dance groups that have blossomed in the last twenty years. Very few in number in the early 1970s, more groups formed in the 1980s, and there are now many in the 1990s. In June 1996, over 1 200 Tlingit, Haida, and Tsimshian dancers convened in Juneau for "Celebration '96" (pp. 65-66).

Thus as the Native languages gained in prestige, many people became interested in associating themselves and joining in festivals to celebrate their language and culture.

The Chairman of ZILPA, Mr. Saul Gwakuba Ndlovu's comments on the festivals organized by his association encapsulates the vision of ZILPA in organizing these functions:

> Events of that kind are very effective in the cultural sensitization of disadvantaged communities. They enhance their self-esteem and encourage them to assert their identities and [their] rights as integral parts of their respective nations[53].

The measure of success that the minority language groups have witnessed can partly be credited to the strategy to place the marginalized communities at the center of the language revitalization efforts.

[53] These sentiments are expressed in Mr. S.G. Ndlovu's 2004 annual report titled "Zimbabwe Indigenous Languages Promotion Association (ZILPA) Chairman's Annual Report December 2004" (p. 4).

## 6.4 Conclusion

In this chapter, I have used Fishman's GIDS model to discuss the grassroots language revitalization efforts of the minority language groups in Zimbabwe. I have demonstrated that the grassroots mobilization strategies targeted chiefs to be part of the language revitalization efforts in recognition of the importance of their roles as the custodians of culture. I have examined the strategies employed to empower the minority language communities through National and Village Awareness Raising Workshops and training programmes for School Development Committees. Cultural festivals held by the minority language groups have been identified as one of the key tools of grassroots mobilization aimed at enhancing the visibility of the minority language groups as a way of promoting pride in their languages and cultures. In Chapter 7, I turn to a discussion of the efforts instituted to address the marginalization of the Zimbabwean minority languages in the higher spheres, and particularly in the education domain.

# CHAPTER SEVEN: TACKLING THE HIGHER SPHERES

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## 7.1 Introduction

In Chapter 7, I use Fishman's GIDS model to discuss the initiatives undertaken by the minority language groups in Zimbabwe in terms of their ideological and technical orientations. In Fishman's GIDS model, these efforts are located in Phase 2 of the GIDS which Fishman (1991: 395) calls *RLS to transcend diglossia, subsequent to its attainment,* incorporating Stages 4 to 1. Fishman (1991: 400) refers to RLS efforts at Stages 4-1 as geared towards "crossing the 'continental divide'" from a situation of "second class citizenship" (in Stages 8-5). According to Fishman, the efforts at Stages 4 to 1 are directed towards transcending diglossia as RLS movements "seek to push on beyond [attaining diglossia] into the upper reaches of sociosymbolic life" (ibid.). Thus, Chapter 7 focuses on RLS efforts that are politically encumbered in that they constitute "entering into competition with Yish on the very turf that Yish controls" (Fishman 2001c: 476).

Chapter 7 draws on the data gathered in this study to provide the second part of the response to the research question: How have the organs of civil society responded to the existing linguistic status quo between the minority endoglossic languages on the one hand and English, Shona and Ndebele (as the languages of state policy) on the other?

In this chapter I draw on my data and argue that CSOs in Zimbabwe sought to address the linguistic status quo in favour of the minority endoglossic languages by initiating ideological and technical measures that sought to promote the use of minority languages in a wider range of domains. Ideological measures involved targeting the state policy identified as the basis on which their marginalization was legitimized. The technical measures involved initiatives aimed at corpus development to counter the legitimation of the marginalization of the endoglossic minority languages on the basis that they were underdeveloped and therefore incapable of being used in secondary domains.

In Section 7.2, I locate ZILPA's ideological and technical language revitalization efforts in Phase 2 of Fishman's GIDS model. In Section 7.3, I discuss the initiatives of ZILPA and its collaborating partners as a challenge to the linguistic status quo on the ideological and political fronts. In Section 7.4, I focus on the technical or language-based strategies instituted to develop the minority languages and prepare them for use in the secondary domains. Section 7.5 presents the conclusion to the chapter.

## 7.2 Tackling the Higher Spheres: Ideological and Technical Measures

In Chapter 6, I discussed the grassroots measures instituted by TOLACO, ZILPA and their collaborating partners in the NGO sector. I argued that the main focus of the grassroots measures was the mobilization of the minority language-speaking community in order to attain consensus on the need to challenge the linguistic status quo. Fishman (1991) describes grassroots efforts as being "on the weak side" or concerned with the "lower spheres" of language revitalization efforts. Fishman's (1991) GIDS model locates

ideological and technical language revitalization initiatives on "the strong side" and is concerned with the "higher spheres" of language use. For Fishman (1991) language revitalization efforts at Phase 2, which he labels *RLS to transcend diglossia, subsequent to its attainment,* incorporate Stages 4 to 1 on the GIDS model. According to Fishman (1991: 406), initiatives at Stages 4 to 1 "stress on the institutions of modernity and on the structures of cultural autonomy (control of education, the work sphere, media, governmental services)".

According to Fishman (1991), Phase 2, Stage 4 on the GIDS model involves the incorporation of the minority languages in the education system in two types of schools: type 4b and type 4a schools. Type 4b schools are those in which the authorities in control of the education system (and mostly speakers of dominant languages) allow schools funded through public funds to use the minority languages as co-medium of instruction in schools attended primarily or only by children who speak the minority languages. This according to Fishman (1991), constitutes a compromise on the part of the authorities "in so far as the general social consensus is concerned with respect to what is minimally adequate and desirable in education" (p. 99). It is these types of schools that the minority language groups in Zimbabwe struggle to claim a bigger stake. I will return to an in-depth discussion of these efforts in Section 7.3 below.

For Fishman (1991) an alternative to Type 4b schools are Type 4a schools which are "more under Xish control and may better reflect the subtleties of Xish society and culture". These are schools whose administration and curriculum content are controlled by minority language communities themselves. The advantage of Type 4a schools, according to Fishman (1991), is that they provide an environment conducive for greater parental support, involvement and commitment and a sense of community which is vital for RLS efforts. In Zimbabwe, Type 4a schools mostly exist in the form of mission and private schools. However, even the mission schools do not provide the kind of latitude as envisaged in Fishman's GIDS model in the sense that the schools have to follow a government approved curriculum and are supervised by government officials in the Ministry of Education, hence their autonomy envisaged in Fishman's (1991) GIDS model

is constrained. Further, the minority language communities lack the capacity to establish their own schools, and in any case would not be able to pursue RLS goals as the Type 4a schools envisage, because they would still need to follow the guidelines on language-in-education policies which are provided by the government.

Stage 3 on the GIDS deals with the lower work sphere which can be of two types: on the one hand, the Xish-controlled enterprises and services which seek to meet the needs of the Yish market, and on the other hand, Yish-controlled enterprises and services which seek to meet the needs of the Xish market. The minority languages in Zimbabwe have very limited presence in the work sphere. Shona and Ndebele are the languages predominantly used, and mostly in the lower work spheres of the service industries. However, in the higher work spheres such as higher education or the financial sector English is the dominant language. The endoglossic languages are normally used in informal interactions.

Stage 2 on the GIDS involves the use of Xish in lower governmental and mass media domains which are firmly under Yish control. Fishman (1991: 105) observes that very few RLS-movements manage to reach Stage 2 and Stage 1 of the GIDS and further argues that "Stages 2 and 1 represent government itself or are most closely governmentally regulated because of their importance in the formation and preservation of integrative attitudes, opinions, identities and the top-most skills and statuses". In terms of RLS efforts at Stage 2, Fishman suggests that some levels of success are possible in situations whereby the pro-RLS contingent utilizes grassroots involvement. These are situations whereby the pro-RLS contingent is more demographically concentrated, and has already become involved in the educational, economic, and political processes at the grassroots level. At this stage, RLS advocates demand programming in Xish on national radio and television. Fishman (1991) cautions that Stage 2 poses a danger in that it "further integrates Xish and Xmen into polity-wide reward systems. This is a stage at which brain-drain possibilities become particularly worrisome" (p. 106), in the sense that there are likely to be more rewards for excellence in Yish than in Xish. In Zimbabwe, only Shona and Ndebele have a notable presence in the lower government services. These

are the languages that are mostly used for informal interactions among workers and are used mostly to communicate with their clients. In the media, although English is the predominant language, Shona and Ndebele have a strong presence especially on radio where Radio Zimbabwe broadcasts exclusively in Shona and Ndebele. The improved presence of the minority endoglossic languages on national radio is a recent development which is identified as a major spin-off of the speech communities' cultural and linguistic activism. In 2001, the Ministry of Information and Publicity established a radio station, National FM, which broadcasts in fourteen minority languages. This development is identified as one of the "ripple effects" (Mumpande 2006: 45) of ZILPA's initiatives at the level of ideology. Describing these developments, Mumpande (2006) reports that:

> Before 2001, the affected languages were allotted only one hour a week for news bulletins on Radio 4. Later that year, the Ministry of Information [and Publicity] finally accepted that minority language groups should be given an increased radio airtime and National FM was established to broadcast in the fourteen affected languages and soon became very popular with its listeners (p. 45).

According to Mumpande (2006), the Ministry of Information and Publicity had also been lobbied to open up television airtime to the minority languages, and had received an undertaking that a television channel called National Television would be established to cater for the minority language-speaking segment of the population.

Stage 1 on the GIDS seeks the use of Xish in higher level educational, occupational, governmental and media efforts. For Fishman (1991), Stage 1 represents the highest possible achievement for minority language groups seeking the promotion and development of their languages when the group's cultural autonomy is recognized and implemented, particularly within those regions in which the minority language groups are highly concentrated. In Zimbabwe, only Shona and Ndebele feature in higher education as subjects. Adegbija (2001) observes that only very few African languages have anywhere attained this stage on the GIDS. For minority language groups in Zimbabwe,

the more immediate goal is to engage universities and colleges to have these languages developed so that they can be taught in schools as subjects just like Shona and Ndebele.

In this section, I have attempted to give an overview of Zimbabwe's linguistic profile in terms of Fishman's (1991) Phase 2 (Stages 4 to 1) of the GIDS model. A more detailed description of Zimbabwe's linguistic profile was provided in Chapter 3, which presented the context of the study. In Section 7.3, I turn to an in-depth discussion of the efforts of the Zimbabwean minority language groups to develop and promote their languages particularly through challenging the status quo in the education domain. My data points to two main strategies that were adopted to address the linguistic status quo at this level. These strategies include challenging the ideological basis of the marginalization of the minority endoglossic languages as well as initiating measures to develop the languages. These measures, which I will call ideological and technical measures, are concerned with the status of minority languages, as well as the language corpus development of these languages.

## 7.3 Ideological Measures

In this section, I discuss the ideological measures undertaken by the Zimbabwean minority language groups and their collaborating partners as part of the strategies and tactics employed in seeking redress to the marginalization of the endoglossic minority languages in Zimbabwe. Adegbija (2001) refers to these measures as politically-oriented strategies for language revitalization. According to Batibo (2005), ideological measures are those which concern decision-makers and are concerned with the status dimension of language planning. Language revitalization measures, at this level, recognize the state as an important institution in seeking redress to marginalization on the basis of language and language status. As Blommaert (2003) observes:

> The state can contribute a materiality to its role as a centering institution in a way hard to match by others. The state has the capacity to provide an infrastructure for the reproduction of a particular regime of language: an education system, media,

> culture production - each time a selective mechanism which includes some forms of language and excludes others (p. 9).

The strategies employed by the minority language groups in Zimbabwe recognize the importance of the state as a centering institution and hence the decision to channel their advocacy and lobbying energies towards language policy changes. In Chapter 5, Section 5.3.1, I highlighted that as part of the baseline research undertaken before deciding on the nature of their work in the Binga District, the BJPP of the CCJP(Z) commissioned two research projects which culminated in two research reports: *Education Related Problems in [the] Binga District;* and *Section 62 of the Education Act (Chapter 25: 04): A Constitutional Perspective.* The two reports constituted the basis for action at the ideological level in that redress to the problems that were highlighted in these reports by implication meant engaging the state on policy matters. The two reports constitute what Fishman (1991) calls prior ideological clarification which according to Dauenhauer and Dauenhauer (1998) is:

> The essential beginning for any programme dealing with language and cultural preservation. This calls for an open, honest assessment of the state of the language and how people feel about using and preserving it, replacing wishful thinking and denial of reality with an honest evaluation leading to realistic recommendations (p. 63).

The findings highlighted in the two reports constituted base-line data which justified initiatives that sought to challenge the government's language ideology. In Sections 7.3.1 and 7.3.2, I discuss the findings of these reports and how strategies for intervention were mapped out to tackle the issues that were raised in the reports at the level of ideological interventions.

### 7.3.1 Education Related Problems in the Binga District

The research report titled, *Education Related Problems in [the] Binga District* was produced in July 2000 and focused on three areas: (i) the availability of Tonga books, (ii) the staffing of schools and (iii) the general teaching and learning environment of schools in the Binga District. Table 7.3.1a below presents information on the availability of Tonga text books in schools in the 56 schools found in the Binga District.

***Table 7.3.1a*** *Tonga text books in schools*

| | Grade 1 | | Grade 2 | | Grade 3 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Buka Mwana Pupils book | Buka Mwana Teacher's book | Eenda Mwana Pupils book | Eenda Mwana Teacher's book | Cijaana |
| Total number of books in the District | 1046 | 20 | 466 | 7 | 0 |

**Source:** CCJP(Z) Binga Justice and Peace Project Annual Report January to December 2000 (p. 4)

The findings of the report pointed to a dearth of teaching and learning materials for the Tonga language. Very few books were available for Grades 1 and 2 and nothing at all for Grade 3 although the language-in-education policy provided for the teaching of the language up to Grade 3. The 1046 textbooks available for use by the 56 schools for the teaching of the Tonga language at Grade 1 level means that there is only an average of 20 books per school. The situation became more precarious at Grade 2 and Grade 3 levels. This lack of resources points to the difficult conditions confronted by those committed to the learning and teaching of the Tonga language.

The report also revealed that there were very few qualified Tonga-speaking teachers working in the district. Table 7.3.1b summarizes the information regarding the availability of Tonga-speaking teachers in the Binga district.

***Table 7.3.1b*** *Tonga-speaking teachers in the Binga District*

| | **Total number of teachers in district** | **Trained** | **%** | **Untrained** | **%** | **Total number of Tonga-speaking teachers** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Primary school | 734 | 62 | 8 | 250 | 54 | 312 |
| Secondary school | 128 | 11 | 9 | 4 | 3 | 15 |

**Source:** CCJP(Z) Binga Justice and Peace Project Annual Report January to December 2000 (p. 5).

The shortage of qualified Tonga-speaking teachers, especially at primary school level where the policy provided for the teaching of Tonga up to Grade 3, portended a negative impact on the quality of the teaching of the Tonga language. Worse still, of the 734 teachers working in the primary school sector in the Binga District, only 312 were Tonga-speaking. This meant that the schools' capacity to teach Tonga was greatly undermined. This particular fact was borne out by the findings regarding the number of schools teaching Tonga and the levels at which the language was taught.

***Table 7.3.1c*** *Teaching of Tonga in Binga Schools*

| **Level to which Tonga is taught** | **Number of schools** | **%** |
|---|---|---|
| Not taught at all | 41 | 73 |
| Grades 1-2 | 5 | 9 |
| Grades 1-3 | 10 | 18 |
| Grades 3 and above | 0 | 0 |

**Source:** Report on the 29-30 July 2000 TOLACO workshops (p. 7).

The findings regarding the teaching of Tonga in Binga schools showed that very few schools taught Tonga at all (15 out of 56 primary schools in the Binga District). This was

in spite of the fact that the language-in-education policy provided for the teaching of minority languages in those areas where such languages were predominant. In 1990 the African Languages Team of the Curriculum Development Unit in the Ministry of Education produced a report titled, *A Report on the Survey of the Teaching/Learning of Minority Languages in Zimbabwe* which established that 99.9% of the population of Binga District was Tonga-speaking. This made the Binga District a perfect candidate for the teaching of Tonga up to Grade 3 in all the schools in the district as per the provisions of Section 62 of the Education Act of 1987 (Chapter 25: 04).

The report on the education-related problems in the Binga District pointed to an under-resourced district which struggles to provide a proper education for its citizens. For the CCJP(Z) which commissioned the investigation, the report raised fundamental issues that bordered on discrimination based on ethnicity. The marginalization of the minority language group was considered to be a human rights issue. The failure to provide for the learning of their language was therefore considered to be linguistic human rights issue. It was on this basis that the CCJP(Z), through the BJPP, commissioned another investigation focusing on the legal aspect of the language-in-education policy of Zimbabwe discussed in Section 7.3.2 below.

### 7.3.2 The Legal Aspect of the Language-in-Education Policy of Zimbabwe

Having identified the language issue as one of the main problems affecting the Tonga-speech community in Binga, the BJPP commissioned a Constitutional Lawyer, Dr. Lovemore Madhuku, to look into the constitutionality of the provisions of Section 62 of the Education Act (Chapter 25: 04) of 1987 (see Chapter 5 Section 5.2.1). In his report titled *Section 62 of the Education Act (Chapter 25: 04): A Constitutional Law Perspective* (refer to Appendix D for a full text of the lawyer's findings), Dr. Madhuku asserted that Section 62 of the Education Act could be successfully challenged in the constitutional court. Dr. Madhuku's report emphasized the fact that Section 62 of the

Education Act of 1985 discriminated against minority language groups and was therefore unconstitutional.

Drawing on the legal perspective provided by Dr. Madhuku, the Advocacy Programme Officers of the BJPP, Mangodza, Musona and Mumpande, compiled the following assessments of Section 62 of the Education Act of 1987, with specific application to the Tonga speech community:

> The assessment of the above paragraphs (Section 62 of Education Act chapter 25:04) reveals gross oppression and description of the minority tribes of Zimbabwe. If paragraph (a) of Subsection (1), is applied to Nyaminyami and some areas of Gokwe (particularly Simunchembu and Nenyunga), [it] is oppressive in the sense that the majority of residents in these areas are Tonga speaking but Shona is taught there. At the same time, if paragraph (b) of subsection (1) is applied to the rest of Binga and most parts of Hwange, it is also oppressive since the majority of residents in those areas are Tonga speaking but are taught Ndebele.
>
> Subsection (4) gives the Minister of Education powers to authorize the teaching of a "Minority" language in its areas but only at primary school level. Subsection (4) is also very discriminatory. While the "majority" tribes have their languages taught up to university, the "minority" tribes are denied such a privilege. Subsection (4) goes beyond discriminating the minorities. It also severely burdens Grades 1-3 children from the 'minority' tribes who battle to cope with learning three languages, Tonga, Ndebele and English in [the] case of Binga at such a very tender age while a privileged Ndebele/Shona child only learns two languages, either Ndebele and English or Shona and English only as from Grade 1 onwards[54].

[54] Advocacy Officers F.B. Mangodza, I.M Musona and I. Mumpande made the interpretation of the lawyer's findings and applied them to their case in a report titled "Silveira House Civics Department Advocacy Programme Semi-Annual Report 1 September 1999 to 31 March 2000" (p. 9).

Extending Dr. Madhuku's argument that Section 62 of the Education Act of 1987 infringes Section 23 of the Constitution of Zimbabwe and applying it specifically to the Tonga, the Programme Advocacy Officers argued that,

> The Tonga are being discriminated against on the grounds of tribe. They are being subjected to a restriction (of learning their language only to a limited level) to which other persons of another description (Ndebele and Shona) are not subjected[55].

They further argued that the oppressive aspect of the Education Act of 1987 is realized when one looks at Articles 19 and 22 of the African Charter on Human and People's rights, given that Article 19 and Article 22 state that:

> All groups of people must be equal and have the same respect and same rights. Nothing can justify the domination of one group by another[56] (Article 19).
> All the people have the right over their economical, social and cultural development. States have the duty to ensure these rights[57] (Article 22).

On the basis of these two Articles in the OAU Charter on Human and People's Rights, Mangodza, Musona and Mumpande argued that the language policy of Zimbabwe was oppressive and discriminatory:

> Article 19 clearly spells out the invalidity of the Zimbabwean government's policy to let the Ndebele dominate the Tonga, Venda, Kalanga and Nambiya in Matebeleland North; and Shona to dominate the Tonga in Gokwe, Nyaminyami and Shangani in Chiredzi. The absence of minority languages in the school syllabus of the Tonga, Venda, Kalanga etc is a direct antithesis of social and cultural development referred to in Article 22 above[58].

[55] Ibid. (p. 10).
[56] Ibid. (p. 10).
[57] Ibid. (p. 10).
[58] I.M. Musona in "Silveira House Advocacy Programme 2002 Semi Annual Report" (p. 4).

Buoyed by the submissions of the constitutional lawyer, Dr. Madhuku, and the findings in the report, *Education Related Problems in [the] Binga District,* the next step was to formulate the strategies for seeking redress of these issues. The BJPP considered Dr. Madhuku's suggested courses of possible action (refer to Figure 7.3.2a below) and decided that the more desirable route was to engage government on the issue through ZILPA, rather than adopt a confrontational approach through a process of litigation.

***Figure 7.3.2a*** *Constitutional lawyer's suggested courses of action*

**Way forward**

There are two main courses of action to follow.

The first is to convince the government and /or Parliament of the unconstitutionality of Section 62 and ask for its repeal. This is a matter of political pressure and if it succeeds, it is less costly and convenient.

The second is to take the matter to the Supreme Court of Zimbabwe under Section 24 of the Constitution of Zimbabwe and seek an order declaring Section 62 of the Education Act unconstitutional.

In the long run it is important to review the constitution and ensure that it has adequate protection of minority language speakers. The South African Constitution is a good example. For example, Section 6 of [the] South African Constitution makes almost all languages spoken in South Africa to be "official languages". Furthermore, Section 30 of the South Africa Constitution provides:

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

In Uganda, Section 37 of the Constitution of Uganda provides:

*"Every person has a right as applicable to belong to, enjoy, practice, profess, maintain and promote any culture, institution, language, tradition, creed or religion in community with others".*

Thank you

**Source:** Section 62 of the Education Act (Chapter 25: 04): A Constitutional Law Perspective (p. 2).

The starting point was the identification of relevant stakeholders in all relevant districts, such as the chiefs, TOLACO, SCF(UK), the Ministry of Education, Rural District Councils and the District Administrators. ZILPA's main thrust was to challenge the language policy of Zimbabwe and in particular, the language-in-education policy on the grounds that it discriminated against the country's minority languages. In line with this objective, the Silveira House Advocacy Officers, together with ZILPA, arranged a series of meetings with the Parliamentary Committee on Education as well as the Ministry of Education officials.

The first meeting took place on 23 January 2001 at the residence of the Chairman of the Parliamentary Committee on education, Mr. Fidelis Mhashu. Two Silveira House Advocacy Officers, Mumpande and Musona, met with Mr. Mhashu to lobby him to accept a proposal that a delegation of representatives of minority language groups meet with the parliamentary committee to discuss issues related to the country's language policy and its impact on minority language groups. Mhashu agreed to the suggestion and referred the Advocacy Officers to the Parliamentary Clerk of Committees for arrangements regarding the proposed meeting.

The second meeting took place on 24 January 2001. The Advocacy Officers, Mumpande and Musona, met with the Clerk of Parliament to plan for the meeting. The Clerk of Parliament suggested a seminar instead of a meeting as more ideal forum for the debates that were envisaged. A date for the seminar was set for 17 May 2001.

The third meeting, which was in the form of a seminar, took place on 17 May 2001 at the Harare Holiday Inn Hotel. Mumpande (2006) refers to this meeting as the "watershed seminar" in the sense that it marked the turning point for the minority languages advocacy programme. Attending as advocates and sympathizers of ZILPA's cause were the representatives of the six minority language groups that make up ZILPA, 3 chiefs, 22 parliamentarians, an official from SCF(UK), and the constitutional lawyer, Dr Madhuku. The Ministry of Education was represented by the Director of Curriculum Development. At this seminar, representatives of minority language groups made presentations which

provide an insight into the ideological positions that inform the struggle for minority language rights in Zimbabwe. Mr. Emmanuel Baloyi Ncube, a representative of the Nambya language group, made a presentation which focused on linguistic oppression and the lack of representation for minority language groups, an anomaly in what was supposed to be a democratic country.

> This language oppression has worked its way into the lives and psyche of the people. Those who endure it internalize the attitude of those who oppress them. The anger becomes so intense that it is often directed inwards and the people fall into deep silence. They witness, daily, in their lives the continuing oppression and disdain shown towards them. So how can they speak? And to who? Who out there is prepared to listen when the black government is ignoring them? This shame and grief accumulates from generation to generation among the speakers of the 'minority' languages (Emmanuel Baloyi Ncube, quoted in Mumpande, 2006: 35).

The presentation by Makwati, representing the Sotho language group, focused on the minority language groups' demands with regard to the role of minority language groups in the education system of the country:

> [T]he Ministry of Education should put in place accelerated training courses in collaboration with other countries to develop these languages. From neighbouring countries, with more viable facilities in the production of teaching and learning materials, the government may import books, Tonga from Zambia, Shangane from Mozambique and South Africa, Sesotho from South Africa and Lesotho, Kalanga from Botswana, and Venda from South Africa (Makwati, quoted in Mumpande, 2006: 36).

Other presentations at the seminar were made by the three chiefs who accompanied ZILPA officials (Chiefs Simchembu, Siachilaba and Nekatambe), as well as Dr Madhuku who presented his paper on the constitutional perspectives regarding the minority language issue. Mumpande (2006) notes that following the presentations, the majority of

the MPs were convinced that the minority language groups' cause was justified and that "if a vote had been taken among the MPs at the seminar, 95 per cent would have voted for the immediate amendment of Section 62 of the Education Act" (p. 40).

The seminar was considered to have been an ideological coup which led to the series of events culminating in a victory for the minority language rights advocates. On 17 October 2001, ZILPA held a follow-up meeting with the Ministry of Education regarding what could be done following the insights arising from the seminar of 17 May 2001. The meeting which was attended by Fr. Fidelis Mukonori and Advocacy Officers, Musona and Mumpande on the one hand, and the Permanent Secretary of Education and the Director of Curriculum Development on the other, focused on the possibilities of amending the Education Act of 1987 to allow for the teaching of the minority languages beyond Grade 3. At this meeting, Mumpande (2006) reports that the Permanent Secretary made an undertaking to address the concerns of the minority language groups. According to Mumpande (2006), a landmark decision by the Ministry of Education followed in the form of a circular, Secretary's Circular Number 1 of 2002 (refer to Figure 7.3.2b).

***Figure 7.3.2b*** *New provisions on the teaching and learning of minority languages 2002*

3rd January 2002

**SECRETARY'S CIRCULAR NUMBER 1 OF 2002**
**POLICY REGARDING LANGUAGE TEACHING AND LEARNING**

**1. MINORITY LOCAL LANGUAGES**

These are languages that are spoken by relatively small indigenous groups in various parts of Zimbabwe. They include, but are not restricted to Kalanga, Tonga, Venda, Nambya and Sotho. These languages are currently being taught up to Grade 3. From January 2002 the languages will be assisted to advance to a grade per year until they can be taught at Grade 7. The table below shows how this will happen.

| **GRADE** | **YEAR** |
|---|---|
| Grade 3 | Already in place by 2001 |
| Grade 4 | January 2002 |
| Grade 5 | January 2003 |
| Grade 6 | January 2004 |
| Grade 7 | January 2005 |

The annual progression of the classes will enable the necessary inputs to be made in advance. This includes teachers, classrooms and materials. By the time these languages are offered at Grade 7 in 2005, new arrangements will be made for their further development. In other words, we will cross this particular bridge when we come to it.

**Source:** Ministry of Education and Culture, Secretary's Circular Number 1of 2002 Policy Regarding Language Teaching and Learning.

For the minority language groups, the Secretary of Education's circular marked a victorious outcome of a protracted struggle (Mumpande, 2006). After the Ministry of Education's amendments to Section 62 of the Education Act of 1987, ZILPA defined its role in terms of monitoring the implementation of the new provisions. For ZILPA it was important to ensure that the policy was implemented because, as Heugh (1993) has pointed out, "statements of policy on their own are seldom efficiently implemented without comprehensive strategy designed for such purpose" (p. 8). ZILPA's strategies involved publicizing the new policy amongst its grassroots constituents (some of these activities have been discussed in Chapter 6, Section 6.2), as well as initiating technical measures (discussed in this chapter in Section 7.4 below) that would provide support for the smooth implementation of the revised policy provisions.

### 7.3.3 Comment

In Section 7.3, I have described the strategies employed by ZILPA and its collaborating partners in their efforts to develop and promote the minority languages in Zimbabwe. I have identified two significant outcomes of these processes: the amendment of the Education Act of 1987 to allow for the teaching of minority languages beyond Grade 3 and the setting up of a radio station broadcasting exclusively in the minority languages.

Drawing on the data from my study, it is evident that the minority language groups in Zimbabwe are preoccupied with an improved presence in the education domain, particularly in schools that according to Fishman's (1991) model would be identified as Type 4b schools. In this section, I discuss the data in terms of Fishman's GIDS model, particularly with reference to RLS efforts directed at the schooling system. With reference to the literature on ideological or politically oriented RLS efforts, I further argue that the success achieved at this stage is attributable to the strategies employed by the cultural organizations and their collaborating partners in challenging the linguistic status quo at the ideological level.

In Section 7.2, I argued that with reference to Fishman's (1991) GIDS, in Zimbabwe children from minority language background attend schools of Type 4b. These are schools that are funded by the state and in which the state has a say in determining the curriculum, including the language(s) to be used as medium of instruction and those to be studied as subjects. I have also indicated that the main bone of contention for the minority language groups in Zimbabwe was that their languages were only taught as subjects up to Grade 3, unlike Shona and Ndebele which were taught as subjects through school and up to University level. For the Zimbabwean minority language groups lobbying under ZILPA, the new policy regarding language learning and teaching was a major achievement. The new policy, particularly in its provision for the annual progression beyond Grade 7 from 2005 was, for ZILPA, an opportunity to achieve parity with Shona and Ndebele. The data from this study has shown that minority language groups in Zimbabwe identify Shona and Ndebele (the major endoglossic languages and the

languages of state policy) as constituting the biggest threat to their languages. The literature on language endangerment discussed in this study also suggests that the biggest threat to minority languages in Africa is posed by the dominant endoglossic languages. It is in this context that ZILPA considered the moves towards parity with Shona and Ndebele in the education domain, and to a lesser extent in the media domain, a major success.

Fishman (1991), however, cautions that schools of Type 4b have limitations in terms of RLS in that they are controlled by the dominant class who are likely to promote the dominant languages in terms of the provisions of learning materials and other materials necessary for effective language learning. The efforts to initiate measures to address the language corpus development dimension discussed in Section 7.4 is identified as a proactive intervention by ZILPA, recognizing that Shona and Ndebele did not only have a head start but would continue to be promoted ahead of the minority languages.

Fishman (1991) thus suggests that for purposes of RLS schools of Type 4a are more effective in that they are under direct control of the minority language speaking communities themselves. The main limitation of type 4a schools for RLS is that establishing them is an expensive process and most minority language communities are not well endowed with resources. For minority language groups in Zimbabwe, establishing their own schools of Type 4a is still a remote possibility, hence the significance of their initiatives to seek accommodation within the state schools.

The literature on ideological and politically-oriented RLS efforts is also important in assessing the efforts of the minority language groups in Zimbabwe. One important perspective is provided by Stroud (2000) who argues that it is important to consider the way advocates of RLS frame their discourse. Following Stroud (2000), by seeking to affirm their language rights through challenging the constitutionality of the provisions of Section 62 of the Education Act of 1987, ZILPA inserts the minority language issue in Zimbabwe into ideological and political discourses where “language is made into a

central de facto political issue and tool, a legitimate form, target and instrument, of political action" (p. 272).

ZILPA utilizes a discourse in which the right to language practice follows from the concept of citizenship whereby the notion of linguistic citizenship links language, subject position and issues of redistribution by locking language as a political and social concept (Stroud 2001). For Stroud (2001) there is merit for minority language groups to adopt the notion of linguistic citizenship:

> As with extensions of citizenship to cover issues of economy, gender and sex that link these issues to a spectrum of social concerns, extending the notion of citizenship to address issues emanating from language as a political construct means intimately linking questions of language to sociopolitical discourses of justice, rights and equity. Consequently, the concept articulates well with other global processes that center on empowerment of peoples and acknowledgement of diversity (p. 351).

By focusing on the ideological basis of linguistic marginalization of the minority language groups in Zimbabwe, ZILPA inserts the language issue into politically empowering discourses. In this instance, ZILPA takes a cue from global trends whereby major political stakeholders are becoming increasingly more sensitive to the idea that people must enjoy LHRs in order for them to reap the benefits of global technological advancement (Robinson, 1993).

Thus the degree of success in the minority language revitalization processes championed by ZILPA is significantly attributable to the strategy of inserting the language problem into politically significant discourses, which challenge indefensible practices characterized as exploitative, unconstitutional and hence undemocratic. Supported by empirical research, the minority language groups succeed in framing their language resistance within the notion of language rights and the distribution of resources, and hence manage to debate points of language usage in the context of the global debates on

ideological, economic and social conditions that determine their lives. Stroud (2000) observes that there is a growing trend in some countries in Southern Africa whereby language-based social movements are challenging civil society to re-dress the ills that oppressive language policies have inflicted on minority-language populations for decades. ZILPA and its collaborating partners are part of this band of language-based social movements, whereby following Stroud (2001) they manage to:

> [I]nsert local languages into the dominant political landscape, creating a space where communities can negotiate political visibility, and formulate new demands for justice and redistribution: the community is its own agent, and the political discourses it formulates with demands for new inclusive forms of citizenship are carried in language political activities and strategies of opposition and resistance that contest power relationships in government circles (p. 352).

It can be argued that confronted with arguments framed in the discourses of linguistic human rights, the Ministry of Education and the Parliamentary Committee on Education could not come up with a counter discourse that would justify denying the minority language groups their language rights in what is supposed to be a democracy which should champion social justice. Further, similar recommendations to promote and develop all of the endoglossic languages of Zimbabwe had also been made by the NLPAP (refer to Chapter 4 Section 4.3.3.2), hence there was mounting pressure for the government to revise its education language policy.

The data from this study has shown that part of the response to the marginalization of endoglossic minority languages involved the undertaking of ideological or politically oriented measures, which entailed challenging the government's language policies on the basis that they were discriminatory. In the next section, I turn to the technical measures undertaken by minority language groups in Zimbabwe as part of the broad strategies adopted to empower their languages.

## 7.4 Technical Measures

In mobilizing for the development and promotion of the endoglossic minority languages of Zimbabwe the SCF(UK), the BJPP, the CCJP(Z) and Silveira House together with ZILPA recognized the importance of the technical dimension in language revitalization. Adegbija (2001) refers to these types of measures as linguistic or language-based strategies for language revitalization. Batibo (2005) emphasizes the importance of the technical aspect in language empowerment measures as follows:

> As regards the technical aspect of language empowerment, a language is made more capable through the process of technicisation, which refers to a set of measures taken to meet the various needs of the speakers, including those that involve public interaction (p. 117).

In order to fulfill their objectives which included promoting the teaching of the minority languages in schools, colleges and universities; the recognition of these languages as official languages; as well as promoting their use on national radio and television, ZILPA and its collaborating partners recognized the importance of the technical dimension of the language revitalization efforts. (Refer to Section 5.2.2, Figure 5.2.2b for the objectives of ZILPA.) In this vein, ZILPA's strategies for mobilizing for the development and promotion of the minority languages involved undertaking initiatives that addressed the technical aspects of language planning identified by Batibo (2005) to include codification, language elaboration and stylistic cultivation.

As ZILPA's main concern was to promote the teaching of minority languages in schools, colleges and universities, the issue of the unavailability of teaching and learning materials was identified as a major impediment towards achieving this goal. The report on problems afflicting the education sector in the Binga District had highlighted that textbooks for use in the teaching and learning of the Tonga language were in short supply. With the amendment of Section 62 of the Education Act of 1987 problem of the unavailability of teaching and learning materials became more acute given the bigger

pool of learners that had to be catered for. It was felt that the Government was not committing itself towards alleviating this problem:

> While ZILPA recognizes government efforts to promote the teaching of Sesotho, chiKalanga, chiChangana, chiNambya, TshiVenda and chiTonga; it feels that the government should do much more practically through the production of suitable teaching material and personnel using all colleges[59].

The shortage of learning and teaching materials had long been cited as an impediment to the implementation of the policy that provided for the teaching and learning of the minority languages up to Grade 3. Government had not been proactive in alleviating the problems of shortages of learning materials because of its other priorities. The economic factor was therefore a major issue in the promotion and development of the minority languages through undertaking technical measures of language planning. As Grenoble and Whaley (1998b) have argued, "economics is a key factor in literacy issues, for literacy is dependent upon the writing and production of textbook materials, references, and teacher training, all of which are costly" (p. 53).

Given that past experience had shown that the Zimbabwean government could not be counted on to provide adequate technical support, ZILPA and its collaborating partners, notably SCF(UK), and Silveira House provided the leadership in addressing the problems associated with the technical dimensions of minority language revitalization by adopting a two pronged strategy: The first strategy involved establishing links with institutions such as universities and colleges so that they could establish training and research programmes in the minority languages. One of the key institutions that were identified is the African Languages Research Institute based at the University of Zimbabwe which was already involved in lexicographic work on the Shona and Ndebele languages. Other universities and teacher training colleges were also lobbied to enroll speakers of the minority languages to train as teachers and contribute towards the development of

[59] These sentiments are expressed in a report compiled by Adelaide Musekiwa, Finance Officer at Silveira House titled, "ZILPA Seminar 26 June 2004 Bulawayo Rainbow Hotel" (p. 5).

teaching and learning materials in the minority languages. The second strategy involved training text-book writers who are the speakers of the minority languages. In the sections below, I elaborate on these technical measures by highlighting the synergies established amongst the institutions such as ALRI and other universities and colleges, as well as ZILPA's own initiatives geared towards addressing the technical dimensions of the revitalization of the endoglossic minority languages.

### 7.4.1 Collaborations between ZILPA and ALRI

In this section, I discuss the collaborative relationships established between ZILPA and ALRI. The collaboration between ZILPA and ALRI can be traced back to the period when ZILPA was established in 2001. However, as I indicated in the background to the establishment of the African Languages Lexical Project (ALLEX) in 1992, and its institutionalisation as ALRI in 2000 discussed in Chapter 5, Section 5.3.4, endoglossic language work at ALRI mainly focused on two languages, Shona and Ndebele. In this section, I argue that ALRI has concentrated on developing the major endoglossic languages and the minority languages have only recently started to receive some attention. I briefly highlight the kind of endoglossic language work done at ALRI and then turn attention to how the Institute has started to attend to the development of the endoglossic minority languages.

According to the director of ALRI, Dr. Herbert Chimhundu, the ALLEX Project is considered to be the flagship in the NUFU-UZ programme. In clarifying the relationship between ALLEX and ALRI, Dr. Chimhundu explains that:

> It should be noted that, in institutional terms, there is no ALLEX without ALRI and there is no ALRI without ALLEX. However, ALRI is bigger than ALLEX because ALRI is now an independent Institute and ALLEX is the main project in ALRI[60].

[60] The ALRI Director Dr. Chimhundu makes this explanation in a document titled, "Report on the retreat to review the ALLEX Project Kadoma, 21-27 September 2003" (p. 10).

Table 7.4.1a below provides a summary of the main projects undertaken by ALRI. In a review of these projects, Chimhundu observed that all the projects were in progress and due for completion at the end of Phase 3 in 2006[61].

***Table 7.4.1a*** *Summary of ALRI Projects*

| **Phases 1 & 2 1992-2001** | **Phase 3 2002-2006** |
|---|---|
| The following dictionaries were produced:<br>• Duramazwi reChiShona (Shona Dictionary)<br>• Duramazwi Guru reChiShona (Advanced Shona Dictionary)<br>• Isichazamazwi SesiNdebele (Ndebele Dictionary) | Current Projects:<br>• Shona Children's Dictionary<br>• Advanced Ndebele Dictionary<br>• Shona Musical Terms Dictionary<br>• Ndebele Musical Terms Dictionary<br>• Shona Dictionary of Linguistic and Literary Terms<br>• Shona Dictionary of Biomedical Terms<br>• Revision of Duramazwi reChiShona<br>• Mathematics Dictionary<br>• Zimbabwe Sign Dictionary |

**Source:** Report on the retreat to review the ALLEX Project Kadoma, 21-27 September 2003 (p.8-9).

Table 7.4.1a above shows that the projects undertaken at ALRI focus on language corpus development. The first phase dealt exclusively with lexicographic work focusing on the dominant endoglossic languages, Shona and Ndebele. The second phase expanded the lexicography work to include specialized dictionary projects. The projects in the second phase point to an orientation whereby the projects seek to develop and promote the languages so that they can be used in expanded and specialized domains, such as in education, in medicine, in cultural consumption etc. The significance of these projects, particularly for this study lies in the fact that they provide an important research tradition that can be utilized for the development of all Zimbabwean endoglossic languages. In Chapter 8, Section 8.4.3, I make the recommendation that the ALRI projects could be replicated with the minority endoglossic languages as a strategy to develop the languages for use in expanded domains.

[61] Ibid (p. 8).

Apart from undertaking these projects, the other objective of ALRI is to train Zimbabwean linguists as lexicographers and practical language planners. The training is provided through a sandwich programme whereby students register for PhDs and are assigned supervisors from both the University of Oslo and the University of Zimbabwe, while Masters Degree students only register with the University of Zimbabwe. The fact that three PhDs had been completed, three were underway and 12 Masters Degrees had been completed was cited as an indication of ALRI's success in attaining its goal of training Zimbabwean linguists[62].

Although it is evident that ALRI has done a lot to develop Shona and Ndebele, the endoglossic minority languages have not featured prominently in ALRI's projects. Possibilities for collaboration between ALRI and minority language groups existed through the presence of a representative of the minority language groups on ALRI's Board of Management. (Refer to Appendix B for the list of members on the Board of management of the African Languages Research Institute.) Dr. B. M. Dabudabu is a member of the ALRI Board of Management and a founding member of ZILPA and acts as a link between ZILPA and ALRI. Dr. Dabudabu's role was to encourage the members of minority language groups to make use of ALRI. For example, he encouraged each minority language group to identify qualified people who could register for postgraduate studies majoring in one of the minority languages[63]. As part of the initiatives to promote the minority languages ALRI registered students to conduct research related to the Nambya, Kalanga and Shangani languages. Chimhundu (2003) explains this new thrust at ALRI in his report:

[62] This information is based on a paper presented by Dr. Oddrun Gronvik and Professor Herbert Chimhundu. Dr. Oddrun Gronvik is the Co-coordinator of the ALLEX Project, and also a researcher based at the University of Oslo's Department of Nordic Studies, Section for Lexicography. Professor Herbert Chimhundu is a researcher and the Director of ALRI. They presented a joint paper on "Lexicography in Zimbabwe: The ALLEX Project " in Kampala, Uganda on 9 November 2004.

[63] Dr. Dabudabu's address at the ZILPA meeting is reported in "A report on the minority languages workshop held at Manor Hotel Bulawayo on the 24th of March 2001" (p. 2-3).

> [R]esearch in minority languages [is] part of the ALRI agenda and some work [is] already being done in Kalanga and Nambya. As a native speaker of the language, Ms. P. Mabaso [has] been recruited to assist in initiating a project in Shangaan[64].

Table 7.4.1b below summarizes information on the postgraduate degree programmes on minority languages undertaken at ALRI.

***Table 7.4.1b*** *Postgraduate students researching minority languages at ALRI*

| **Name** | **Degree** | **Year registered** | **Topic** |
|---|---|---|---|
| Emmanuel Chabata | PhD | 2002 | Derivational Morphology of the Nambya Verb |
| Esau Mangoya | PhD | 2003 | Morphophonological Change in Kalanga |
| Cornelius Ncube | MPhil. | 2002 | Problems associated with Orthography Designing: The case of Kalanga language |

**Source:** Derived from the "Report on the retreat to review the ALLEX Project Kadoma, 21-27 September 2003" (p. 67-72).

ALRI's current thrust to recruit more graduate students, who are speakers of the minority languages, and the support provided by ZILPA to assist in encouraging minority language speakers to register for postgraduate degrees, signals a positive turn in the research and development of the minority languages.

[64] Professor Chimhundu expresses these sentiments in the" Report on the retreat to review the ALLEX Project Kadoma 21-27 September 2003" (p. 102).

### 7.4.2 Collaborations between ZILPA and other Universities and Teachers' Colleges

Apart from establishing a collaborative relationship with ALRI, ZILPA also sought to address the technical dimensions associated with the revitalization of the minority languages through lobbying colleges and universities to play a part. At its meeting on 16 March 2005 at the Basilwizi Center in Bulawayo, ZILPA resolved to send delegations to teacher training colleges and universities to seek ways of establishing working relationships with these institutions. The delegations were given terms of reference to guide them in this exercise when they visited these institutions (refer to Figure 7.4.2).

***Figure 7.4.2*** *Terms of Reference for ZILPA members visiting educational institutions*

As part of ZILPA's networking efforts, the ZILPA members would like to visit your institution and discuss with you on the following:

- Enquire about existing programmes offered by the college that have to do with the promotion of indigenous languages – Tonga, Venda, Sotho, Shangane, Kalanga, Nambya, etc.
- Enquire about how the programmes operate.
- How successful the college has been in securing lecturers for these languages and what are the challenges, if any related to the recruitment of lecturers in these languages.
- Enquire about how ZILPA and the college could work together.
- Enquire about programmes in the pipeline that are geared towards the promotion of the above languages.

**Source:** Terms of reference for ZILPA members visiting educational institutions (Undated p. 1).

Three delegations were established to visit the colleges. Appendix E. summarizes information pertaining to the composition of each of the delegations, the institutions and staff they met, a summary of the findings of the delegations and the outcomes of each of the visits.

The three ZILPA delegations' visits to institutions of higher education yielded important insights into the possibilities that were available for strengthening the partnership

between ZILPA and these institutions. The findings of the delegations that visited Joshua Mqabuko Nkomo Teacher's College indicated that the college was geared to be an important institution for the development of the minority languages in that it had already put in place structures for the teaching of two of the minority languages, Venda and Sotho, and were in the process of setting up a structure for the teaching of a third minority language, Kalanga. The developments at Masvingo State University were also promising in that the ZILPA delegation established that Shangani and Venda were to be part of the degree programmes to be introduced at the University in 2006. This meant that only two minority languages, Nambya and Tonga would not be part of the study programmes at institutions of higher education. The responses to the possibility of introducing minority languages at the United College of Education and at Masvingo Teachers College indicated that the institutions considered the idea noble and could consider implementing it. These particular institutions still need to put their weight behind their sentiments through programmatic action. The next section discusses another corpus development initiative which involved the training of minority language speakers themselves to become writers.

### 7.4.3 The Training of Writers

Another way ZILPA sought to address the problem of the shortage of teaching and learning materials was through training potential writers from amongst speakers of the minority languages. A major initiative in this regard was a three-day Writers Workshop held from 17 to 19 August 2004. The aim and objectives of the workshop are stated in Figure 7.4.3 below.

***Figure 7.4.3*** *Aim and Objectives of the Writers Workshop*

**Aim**

- To equip the language writer with book/literature writing skills

**Specific objectives for participants**

- To be able to write school books using syllabuses
- To be able to produce any other reading material for use in schools

**Source:** A Report on the ZILPA Writers Workshop held at Basilwizi Centre, Bulawayo, 17-19 August 2004 (p. 2).

The Writers Workshop was facilitated by book publishers from Zimbabwe Publishing House and Independent Publishers Association and covered such aspects as the general publishing of books in Zimbabwe, using the syllabus to write books, orthography, syllabus-topics linkages, evaluation and editing. (Refer to Appendix F for a list of the participants who attended the Writers Workshop.)

The presence of the three delegates from South Africa at the Writers Workshop bears testimony to the networks established by the minority language groups with speakers of similar languages in other countries. Further, the presence of the Shangani speakers from South Africa also corroborates perceptions highlighted in Chapter 3 regarding the discontent expressed by speakers of languages that are spoken by relatively fewer speakers in South Africa. In Chapter 4, Section 4.2.2.1, I alluded to the perceptions by the South African speakers of languages such as the Venda, Shangani, Swati and Ndebele that in spite of the existence of an official language policy that recognizes these languages, there were simmering feelings of marginalization among them. Remarks alluded to Mathonsi in his speech at the Writers Workshop lend credence to such sentiments.

> He attacked cultural imperialism as something that must be done with immediately. He said that he will continue to work with ZILPA and they are working on a similar body in South Africa that will promote all the languages found in the country[65].

According to the Chairman of ZILPA, the training of writers from the minority language groups was a milestone in the struggle for the development and promotion of literacy in the endoglossic minority languages in Zimbabwe:

> The most important event to ZILPA in 2004 was without any doubt the Silveira House Advocacy Programme Writers Workshop held in Bulawayo from the 17th to the 19th of August. Every language group was represented by not less than two people. It was very significant that these were all school teachers. Also present were three very staunch friends from the South African Tsonga language group – they were a source of very deep inspiration to participants[66].

The Writers Workshop was therefore considered to be an important event for the ZILPA affiliated minority language groups in that it was committed to helping to develop materials necessary for the teaching of minority languages in schools. The expectation was that the writers would contribute to the proliferation of literature for use in schools and scripts for television and radio. In Chapter 8, Section 8.4.2, I suggest that further research should consider the possibilities of building on the writers training initiative to further promote the position of minority endoglossic languages in the education and media domains. The next section is an analytic comment on the technical and language-based language revitalization strategies discussed in Section 7.4.

[65] Mr. Mathonsi's remarks are recorded in the document "A report on the ZILPA Writers Workshop held at Basilwizi Center, Bulawayo, 17-19 August 2004" (p. 6) compiled by I. Mumpande.
[66] Mr. S.G. Ndlovu made these remarks in a report titled "Zimbabwe Indigenous Languages Promotion Association (ZILPA) Chairman's Annual Report December 2004" (p. 4).

### 7.4.4 Comment

In Section 7.4, I have described measures undertaken by ZILPA and its collaborating partners towards addressing the technical dimensions implicated in the revitalization of the minority languages. These included lobbying colleges and universities to train manpower in research, and the training of teachers, the teaching of the minority languages, at tertiary level, as well as the training of writers to produce materials for the learning and teaching of the minority languages. According to Fishman (1991), these corpus planning activities are "more crucial in connection with RLS than in connection with language planning for unthreatened languages" (p. 347). This is because minority languages are generally characterized by low levels of corpus development as compared to the dominant languages.

It is important to note that the corpus planning initiatives undertaken by ZILPA and its partners are not at the level envisaged by Fishman's (1991) GIDS model. In Fishman's GIDS model the corpus planning activities are undertaken at Stage 8 which entails reconstructing the minority language and "reconstructing norms of Xish grammar, phonology, intonation and prosody, ideomaticity and semantic typologies" (p. 397). On the contrary, the corpus planning efforts of the Zimbabwean minority language groups are geared towards what Fishman (1991) calls "lexical elaboration for modernization purposes" (p. 347). This is because the Zimbabwean minority languages have a history of some presence in education and that they are also spoken in neighbouring countries (Venda, and Sotho in South Africa; Shangani in South Africa and Mozambique; Tonga and Nambya in Zambia; Kalanga in Botswana). Venda, Sotho, Shangani and Tonga are actually taught as subjects in universities in the neighbouring countries, which suggest that advanced corpus development of these languages has already taken place in these countries.

For the Zimbabwean minority languages, the technical measures are geared towards what is termed language intellectualization (Liddicoat and Bryant, 2002; Finlayson and

Madiba, 2002; Gonzalez, 2002; Bull 2002). According to Liddicoat and Bryant (2002) the intellectualization of a language involves:

> [T]he development of new linguistic resources for discussing and disseminating conceptual material at high levels of abstraction. A key component of this is the development of academic discourse in the language at various levels of education (p. 1).

Gonzalez (2002) notes that language intellectualization is a process that happens in phases, which in the education domain includes the development of a language for use at pre-school level, through primary and secondary school levels and finally at university level. Further, Gonzalez (2002) makes a distinction between intellectualization for purposes of using the language as a medium of instruction and for purposes of teaching the language as a subject at various levels of the education system. Thus, Gonzalez (2002) speaks of the gradations of academic discourse whereby one can speak of intellectualization at the primary and secondary school levels and at the tertiary level where knowledge of an advanced nature is dealt with.

The efforts by ZILPA and its partners to establish collaborative relationships with universities and other institutions of higher education for purposes of language corpus development, as well as training teachers to teach the minority languages represent a deliberate process geared towards language intellectualization. For Finlayson and Madiba (2002), intellectualization is an important process especially for languages which are developing an expanded range of functions in their societies. In developing languages such as those of Africa and particularly the endoglossic minority languages, intellectualization is a way of providing:

> More accurate and detailed means of expression, especially in the domains of modern life, that is to say in the spheres of science and technology, of government and politics, of higher education, of contemporary culture, etc (Garvin, 1973, cited in Finlayson and Madiba, 2002: 40).

In this section, I have presented the process of the intellectualization of the Zimbabwean minority languages. The key strategy for this intellectualization process has involved the lobbying of universities and teacher training colleges so as to involve them more actively in minority language intellectualization processes.

The case of the Mayan efforts towards language preservation provides evidence to the possibilities that arise from a partnership between grassroots language organizations and tertiary institutions. England (1998) describes how the language preservation efforts of the Mayas in Guatemala have, like in the case of ZILPA, utilized institutions which have provided linguistic training to Mayas, thereby contributing to the creation of a necessary pool of individuals who will be responsible for the technical decision-making required in corpus planning activities. England (1998) chronicles the role that tertiary institutions have played in promoting the Mayan languages:

> The PLFM [Proyecto Linguistico Francisco Marroquin] taught basic descriptive linguistics and dictionary-making procedures to about eighty people between 1972 and 1977, and taught intensive descriptive linguistics and Mayan grammar to about forty more individuals in 1988 and 1989. OKMA [Oxlajuuj Keej Maya' Ajtz'iib'] is a linguistic research group formed by some of the people who were in the 1988 and 1989 classes at the PLFM, and has continued the study of Mayan linguistics and the production of grammatical and scholarly materials about Mayan languages (p. 109).

The net effect of these initiatives, according to England (1998) has been the increased visibility of the Mayan languages in many domains of language use. For example, several newspapers had columns written in the Mayan language and new radio stations broadcasting in the Mayan languages were established. Further, greater visibility of Mayan languages was acquired through calendars, appointment books, invitations, posters, and fliers in Mayan languages which appeared with greater frequency.

The Mayan efforts approximate, to a great and lesser extent, the kinds of conceived and potential synergies established by ZILPA and ALRI, as well as with other universities and colleges.

The strategies by ZILPA and its partners take cognisance of the fact that the shortage of learning and teaching materials in minority languages is a key factor among the impediments to minority language revitalization programmes (e.g. Grenoble and Whaley, 1998b; Crystal, 2000, Stroud, 2001; Batibo, 2005; Spolsky, 2004). By training minority language speakers and lobbying local institutions to spearhead the development of learning and teaching materials in minority languages, ZILPA and SCF(UK) demonstrate an awareness of the need to empower speakers of minority languages to participate in the production of learning materials. As Stroud (2001) has argued, greater grassroots participation in the writing and production of language materials not only increases the cultural relevance and authenticity of materials, and thereby also their availability to a wide range of readership, but also helps restore community ownership of languages, and facilitates the spread of varieties available for literate use.

The importance of grassroots participation is also emphasized by Dauenhauer and Dauenhauer (1998) in their work targeted at the revitalization of the Tlingit language:

> When it works, local production of materials is perhaps the best. There are many benefits, especially the sense of personal pride and local ownership of the final product. People also learn from the process of developing the materials. We encourage local materials development. We also encourage local developers to gain experience in applied folklore and linguistics. Over the last twenty-five years we have seen that local communities tend not to have the skills or resources for production entirely on their own (p. 93).

The experience gained from the case of Tlingit is instructive for ZILPA in that it has stood the test of time, having been pursued for over twenty-five years.

The data on the technical measures instituted by ZILPA and its partners demonstrate a concerted attempt to engage in corpus planning activities that would enable the languages to be used in the secondary domains of language use. The experiences from other contexts, particularly those of the Mayas of Guatemala, suggest that the co-operation of tertiary institutions in matters of minority language corpus development is vital in minority language revitalization efforts. Similarly, the experiences of materials development amongst the Tlingit carry important learning points for similar initiatives such as the training of writers by the Zimbabwean minority language groups.

## 7.5 Conclusion

Drawing on my data, I have argued in this chapter that in order to transcend the linguistic status quo characterized by the marginalization of the minority languages, ZILPA and its partners employed two main strategies. The first strategy involved challenging the ideological basis of their marginalization, particularly the provisions of Section 62 of the Education Act of 1987, which they identified as contributing to the marginalization of their languages in the education domain. The second strategy which I have identified related to the technical measures which involved establishing collaborative relationships with institutions of higher education to conduct research and train students in the minority languages, as well as mobilizing speakers of minority languages to produce literature and learning materials in the minority languages. I argued that the rationale for the technical measures was that the underdevelopment of the minority languages and the shortage of teachers trained in the teaching of these languages had been used as the reason why they could not be taught in schools beyond the first three years of schooling. Using Fishman's (1991) RLS theory, I have argued that the ideological and technical measures instituted by ZILPA and its collaborative partners sought to promote the use of minority languages, beyond the primary domains of the family and neighbourhood, in the secondary domains particularly education and the media. For the minority language groups in Zimbabwe, their advocacy activities had been a major success because the government had made significant concessions to their demands in two domains they had targeted for transformation: language-in-education policy and the media.

# CHAPTER 8: A SUMMARY OF THE MAIN RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DIRECTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH


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8.2.1 How are concerns regarding minority endoglossic linguistic rights constituted by civil society organizations in Zimbabwe?

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8.4.4 Sociolinguistic Research

8.5 Conclusion


## 8.1 Introduction

This chapter, which concludes the thesis, is divided into four sections. Section 8.2 restates the research questions which guided this investigation and goes on to summarize the main research findings. Section 8.3 presents the main findings of the research in relation to the GIDS model as the theoretical framework that guided the investigation. In Section 8.4, I suggest directions for further research.

## 8.2 Findings in Relation to the Research Questions

### 8.2.1 How are concerns regarding minority endoglossic linguistic rights constituted by civil society organizations in Zimbabwe?

For the civil society organizations involved in the advocacy for endoglossic minority linguistic rights in Zimbabwe, the language policies of the country perpetuated domination and marginalization of minority language groups in the country. These concerns, which are highlighted in the various policy documents that informed and guided the intervention of the civil society organizations (refer to Chapter 5), drew from an orientation where the negation of linguistic human rights is viewed as a denial of fundamental human rights. The initiatives to challenge the linguistic status quo are therefore guided by the principles of democracy, equity, access and redress.

### 8.2.2 What is the vision of civil society organizations with respect to minority endoglossic linguistic rights in Zimbabwe?

The vision of civil society organizations with respect to minority endoglossic linguistic rights in Zimbabwe is evident from the policy documents, mission statements and constitutions of the various organizations that formed part of this study (refer to Chapter 5). For these organizations, linguistic human rights in Zimbabwe foresee a situation where, like the other endoglossic languages (Shona and Ndebele), the minority languages are developed, promoted and accorded legal recognition.

### 8.2.3 What would the recognition of linguistic rights mean in terms of transformed practices in this context?

The documents accessed for this study, as well as the interviews conducted with primary informants point to education and the media as the two main domains of language use in which advocates for minority language rights in Zimbabwe sought to influence a transformation of practice. For the Zimbabwean minority language groups that formed

part of this study, the language policies in these two domains served to perpetuate the marginalization of the minority languages and hence advocated for a language policy that would facilitate the development of the minority languages and promote their use at all levels of the education system, and for the media to promote the use of the minority languages on radio, television and in the print media.

### 8.2.4 How have the organs of civil society responded to the existing linguistic status quo between the minority endoglossic languages on the one hand and English, Shona and Ndebele (as the languages of state policy) on the other?

The data from my investigation points to three main strategies that were employed in the efforts to revitalize the minority endoglossic languages in Zimbabwe. In this section, I will highlight each of the strategies in turn, pointing out where relevant, the strengths and constraints associated with each of the strategies.

#### 8.2.4.1 Establishment of collaborative networks amongst relevant stakeholders

The first strategy which involved the establishment of collaborative networks amongst the relevant stakeholders is discussed in Chapter 5. In Section 5.2 of Chapter 5, I traced the expansion of the collaborative networks from the early stages when the struggles for language rights were championed by one minority language group, the Tonga, through the Tonga Language and Cultural Organization (TOLACO), to the present stage where six endoglossic minority language groups collectively mobilize for their language rights under the Zimbabwe Indigenous Languages Association (ZILPA). The language activism of these language and cultural organizations was fuelled by the language-and-territory ideology and targeted the media and education domains. TOLACO, and later ZILPA benefited from collaborative networks established with the Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace in Zimbabwe, Silveira House, Save the Children Fund (UK) and the African Languages Research Institute at the University of Zimbabwe. The main contributions of the Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace in Zimbabwe and Silveira House (discussed in Chapter 5, Section 5.3) were through technical and financial

support for the grassroots based organizations whose initiatives were grossly affected by lack of resources. Further, the pedigree of the actors in these organizations, particularly Sr. Janice MacLaughlin and Fr. Fidelis Mukonori, whose roles in the fight for justice, equity and redress spanned the colonial and post-colonial periods, was invaluable to the advocacy activities around the revitalization of minority languages in Zimbabwe. (Refer to Chapter 5 for a comprehensive discussion of the roles played by the main actors involved in the struggles for language rights in Zimbabwe.) The roles of Save the Children Fund (UK) and the African Languages Research Institute (discussed in Chapter 5, Sections 5.3.3 and 5.3.4) were mainly in the areas of corpus development of the minority languages to facilitate their use at higher levels of the education domain, as well as in other secondary domains of language use.

#### 8.2.4.2 Mobilization of the minority language communities

This section provides a summary of the second strategy employed by the collaborative actors (identified in Section 8.2.4.1 above) in revitalizing Zimbabwean endoglossic minority languages through the mobilization of the affected minority language communities to actively play a role in initiatives geared towards developing and promoting their languages. This strategy, which is discussed in Chapter 6, was multipronged, involving the mobilization of chiefs, the organization of Awareness Raising Workshops, consultation with School Development Workshops and the hosting of cultural festivals. The strategy to mobilize the minority language community is discussed in Chapter 6 in terms of Fishman's (1991, 2001a) GIDS model of minority language revitalization. Following this model, the language revitalization initiatives of minority language groups in Zimbabwe are located in Phase 1 of the GIDS model (refer to Chapter 3 Figure 3.5.1, *RLS to attain diglossia (assuming prior ideological clarification)*), which emphasizes the need for the advocacy of minority language revitalization to first seek consensus among the actors and to establish ideological clarification in order to avoid contradictions when the language revitalization initiatives got under way. The main thrust of the community mobilization initiatives discussed in Chapter 6 was to attain consensus amongst the minority language community members

regarding the desirability and feasibility of efforts targeted towards addressing the marginalized state of their languages. This involved a wide range of initiatives summarized below.

- The role of the **traditional leaders**, and particularly **chiefs**, in the language revitalization efforts in Zimbabwe is discussed in Chapter 6, Section 6.2.1. The data for this study indicates that the involvement of chiefs constituted both strengths and challenges for the minority language revitalization process. As community leaders are recognized by government through the New Traditional Leaders Act (29: 17), as well as them being respected traditional leaders in their respective communities, the chiefs' endorsement of the minority language revitalization initiatives constituted a major advantage, in that they were able to mobilize their communities to actively participate in the minority language revitalization initiatives, and because they could lead their communities in resisting attempts by individuals or government officials who sought to obstruct these initiatives. The main constraint regarding the involvement of the chiefs was the lack of consensus amongst them on the need to revitalize the minority languages (refer to Section 6.2.1). This challenge is poignantly illustrated in instances where the chiefs deny their own identity as speakers of specific minority languages. Further, other chiefs presiding over minority language communities speak and identify themselves as speakers of the dominant endoglossic languages (Shona and Ndebele). In this context, the involvement of the chiefs plays itself out as an ongoing site of struggle.

- The data for this study points to the conducting of **Awareness Raising Workshops** as an important strategy for community mobilization of the minority language communities. In Chapter 6, Section 6.2.2 I discussed how in the period between 2000 and 2003 a series of Awareness Raising Workshops were conducted in order to conscientise the minority language communities about their language rights. The impact of these workshops is evident in that the communities were able to articulate their grievances concerning the Ministry of Education and

other government officials. (Refer to Chapter 6, Section 6.2.2 for some of the instances that demonstrate that the community felt empowered enough to challenge the practices that were perceived to perpetuate their marginalization.) Further, as Table 6.2.2c in Chapter 6 illustrates, an attempt was made to cover all the areas where the minority languages are spoken and to bring together most of the important stakeholders. However, the extent to which these Awareness Raising Workshops managed to reach every individual concerned is not evident. Further, considering the resource constraints that accompany outreach programmes of this magnitude, the frequency of these workshops is an important aspect in considering the potential efficacy of the Awareness Raising Workshops. It is evident from the data on the Awareness Raising Workshops that the outreach programmes were not able to cover all the relevant areas in which minority language communities are found. Although other reasons such as the inaccessibility of some places because of poor roads could account for some places not being reached, the question of the financial implications is a very important factor.

- Chapter 6, Section 6.2.3 discussed how the mobilization of the minority language communities made use of **School Development Committees,** in order to enforce the implementation of the policies regarding the teaching of minority languages in schools. The data points to how the School Development Committees later became important centres of resistance to practices in schools that did not recognize the place of the endoglossic minority languages, particularly after the enactment of the *New Provisions on the Teaching and Learning of Minority Languages of 2002.* (Refer to Chapter 7, Section 7.3.2 for a discussion of the new provisions on minority language teaching and learning.) The main challenges regarding the role of the School Development Committees were associated with the deterioration in the working relationship which followed when some school headmasters interpreted the role of the School Development Committees to include acts of 'interference' in the running of their schools. A further constraint was that official government documents on the role of the School Development

Committees, especially those pertaining to the management of schools were not readily available for school use leading to problems of structural co-ordination in some instances (refer to Chapter 6, Section 6.2.3.1).

- An important feature of minority language community mobilization was the holding of **cultural festivals**. This strategy, which is discussed in Chapter 6, Section 6.2.4, was geared towards cultivating an appreciation and enjoyment of the minority languages and cultures amongst their members as a strategy for language and cultural affirmation. An important feature of the festivals is that they did not only bring the Zimbabwean minority language communities together, but also language groups from Botswana and Zambia, providing opportunities for cross-cultural appreciation. However, a major constraint of the cultural festivals is their reliance on the motivation of particular individual personalities which makes their longevity dependent on individual drive. Further, the fact that the cultural festivals are not factored into the national events calendar means that other events happening in other spheres in these communities negatively impacted on attendance and participation. Thus this factor may account for the differential attendance figures for example, at the Shangani and Kalanga cultural festivals (refer to Chapter 6 Section 6.2.4).

The community mobilization strategies discussed in Chapter 6 are considered to be an affirmation of Fishman's (1991) GIDS model, particularly its emphasis on the need for RLS advocates to first focus on the "lower spheres" geared towards the attainment of ideological clarification before tackling the "higher spheres". Further affirmation of this strategy is discussed in terms of Crystal's (2000) and Adegbija's (1997) theoretical frameworks for language revitalization (refer to Chapter 3, Section 3.5).

#### 8.2.4.3 Expanding the domains of language use for the minority endoglossic languages

The third strategy, which is discussed in Chapter 7, focused on the initiatives by the advocates of minority language revitalization to expand the domains of language use for the minority endoglossic languages. These initiatives, which focus on what Fishman (1991, 2001a) calls the "higher spheres", are identified as belonging to Phase 2 of the GIDS model which focuses on attempts to introduce marginalized languages into the secondary domains associated with institutions of modernity. The data for this study points to two main measures that minority language groups in Zimbabwe undertook in their attempts to expand the domains of language use for the minority endoglossic languages.

- **Ideological or politically-oriented** measures are discussed in Chapter 7 Section 7.3. The main thrust of these measures was to challenge the state's language-in-education policy as contributing to the marginalization of the minority endogossic languages. The advocates for minority endoglossic language rights commissioned two research projects that formed the basis for challenging the state's language ideology. Two research reports that culminated from this process, *Education Related Problems in the Binga District* (discussed in Chapter 7, Section 7.3.1) and *Section 62 of the Education Act (Chapter 25: 04): A Constitutional Perspective* (discussed in Chapter 7, Section 7.3.2) were used as the basis for demanding that minority languages needed to be developed and promoted in Zimbabwe's education.

  However, there are notable constraints that are associated with the reports on which advocacy initiatives were conceived. Although the *Education Related Problems in [the] Binga District* report highlighted glaring shortcomings in the education sector in this district which warranted action, the fact that the report focused on one district does not provide a comprehensive picture of the state of

education infrastructure in other districts where minority endoglossic languages are spoken and possibly taught and learnt in schools.

The constitutional lawyer's report, *Section 62 of the Education Act (Chapter 25: 04): A Constitutional Perspective* presented the minority language rights advocates with additional ammunition with which to confront government policy makers. The prospect of a legal challenge to the country's language-in-education policy can be credited with the urgency with which parliamentarians and officials in the Ministry of Education sought to address the demands of the minority endoglossic languages lobby group. Although the quick capitulation by government led to the enactment of new provisions on the teaching and learning of the minority endoglossic languages meant that the strategy to pursue a legal route was not resorted to, it is important to consider the likely constraints of this strategy. In the event that the legal route had been followed and judgment granted in favour of the minority endoglossic languages lobby group, the challenge remained that the policy was meant to be put into practice in the absence of state resources to stimulate its uptake in practice. This is especially relevant given the economic crisis facing the country at the time.

- **Technical measures**, also referred to as linguistic or language-based strategies (Adegbija, 2001), involved attempts to develop the corpora of the minority endoglossic languages so as to facilitate their use in secondary domains (refer to Chapter 7, Section 7.4). The main initiatives in language corpus development involved (i) collaborations between ZILPA and ALRI (ii) collaborations between ZILPA, Universities and Teacher Training Colleges, and (iii) writers trained from amongst speakers of the minority languages. The major constraint discussed in this thesis in connection with the corpus development initiatives is the shortage of resources, particularly given that the prevailing political climate is such that the economy is very seriously undermined and hence the crisis over access to resources may for a very long time to come militate against substantial state support.

## 8.3 Findings in Relation to Theory

This study has affirmed the usefulness of Fishman's (1991, 2001a) RLS theory in both assessing the status of a language, the prospects of intergenerational transmission of a language, and the steps that can be taken by ethnolinguistic communities seeking to revitalize their languages. The initiatives of the Zimbabwean minority language groups involving the search for ideological consensus among the grassroots members of the affected linguistic communities are in conformity with Fishman's Phase 1 of the GIDS model which suggests that there is a need to establish value consensus amongst the advocates for RLS, before attempts are made to seek redress in the secondary domains where language use and language status is closely monitored by the dominant language groups, who in most cases wield political and economic power.

However, it is with respect to Phase 2 (Stages 1-4) of Fishman's GIDS model that the data from my study points to some limitations in this model. Fishman's (1991, 2001a) GIDS model emphasizes that Phase 2 is politically encumbered and therefore requires politically and ideologically oriented strategies in order to promote and entrench the use of the marginalized languages in: (i) the education system (Stage 4); (ii) in the lower work sphere (Stage 3); (iii) in lower governmental service and the mass media (Stage 2); and (iv) higher level educational, occupational, governmental and media efforts (Stage 1). The Quebec case (referred to in Chapter 3, Section 3.6.2) illustrates how politically and ideologically oriented language revitalization initiatives are adequate to promote the use of a hitherto marginalized language in the important secondary domains. For the French language in Quebec, the political changes and the attendant language policy legislative transformations were adequate to provide the necessary conditions for the entrenchment of French in the secondary domains of language use (Phase 2, Stage 1 of the GIDS).

The data from my study also affirms the usefulness of the political and ideologically oriented efforts in seeking to expand the domains of language use for the endoglossic minority languages in Zimbabwe. In Chapter 7, Section 7.3, I illustrated how the political and ideologically oriented initiatives contributed to the policy changes that led to the

promotion of the endoglossic minority languages in the education system of the country. However, unlike in the case of the French language in Quebec, the Zimbabwean case points to the inadequacy of Fishman's GIDS model in that the political and ideological measures that gave birth to the status planning decision directing that the minority endoglossic languages be taught and learnt in schools, like the other endoglossic dominant languages, is shown to be inadequate in fully promoting the use of the endoglossic minority languages in education and in the other secondary domains. Drawing on this finding from by study, I conclude that the underdeveloped state of most of the African languages poses a challenge that is not adequately addressed by Fishman's GIDS model.

As my study has demonstrated, addressing the status of the Zimbabwean endoglossic minority languages in the education system raised new challenges that had to be addressed through linguistic and technically oriented language revitalization measures. Drawing on the findings from my research, I would like to develop both the theory and practice of minority endoglossic language revitalization in the following ways:

(i) The model affirms the usefulness of the two language revitalization measures suggested by Fishman (1991) such as: (1) the search for ideological consensus and (2) political measures to transcend diglossia.

(ii) The model draws on the data from my study and also from Adegbija's (1997) insights regarding the measures that are necessary in addressing the problem of the scarcity of resources which affects initiatives geared towards the corpus development of endoglossic minority African languages. Further, the model draws on Crystal's (2000) insights in order to improve the effectiveness of the strategies for the revitalization of the endangered languages.

(iii) The ALRI projects are also useful in directing the kinds of corpus development research projects that would benefit the minority endoglossic languages.

Table 8.3 below presents the proposed model for minority endoglossic language revitalization. The model functions as both a desription of how successful minority language revitalization in Zimbabwe actually unfolded as well as a set of guidelines to those engaged in attempts to revitalize marginalized languages, particularly in the African context, in a more general sense.

**Table 8.3** ***Endoglossic minority languages revitalization model***

| | |
|---|---|
| **Collaborative Networks** | The formation of collaborative networks include:<br>• Associations or committees representing speakers of endoglossic minority languages.<br>• A national association representing all concerned minority language groups.<br>• Organs of civil society concerned with minority language rights.<br>• University departments involved in language teaching and research.<br>• Teachers' college departments involved in training minority language teachers.<br>• Establishing collaborative networks with speakers of similar languages in other countries. |
| **Grassroots mobilization for ideological consensus** | • Mobilization of traditional leaders e.g. chiefs, headmen, kraal heads, councilors, village heads etc.<br>• Mobilization of the minority languages-speaking communities through awareness raising workshops.<br>• Conducting cultural festivals. |
| **Ideologically oriented language revitalization measures** | • Lobbying local political leadership e.g. Member of Parliament.<br>• Lobbying local government leadership e.g. Councilors.<br>• Lobbying relevant national government ministries e.g. Ministry of Education; Ministry responsible for media: radio, television and newspapers; Ministry responsible for local government; Ministry responsible for the administration of justice.<br>• Lobbying relevant parliamentary committees: e.g. Committee on Education, Committee on Local Government, Committee on the Media, and Committee on Higher Education. |
| **Technically oriented language revitalization measures** | • Training literature and academic book writers from amongst speakers of the target minority endoglossic languages.<br>• Lobbying colleges and universities to conduct research and publish books and journal articles.<br>• Academic projects to develop specialized dictionaries and other lexicographic work.<br>• Share research and materials with academics and speakers of similar languages in other countries. |

As indicated above, the model draws on the findings from my study as well as on Fishman's (1991) GIDS model. Further, the model draws on Crystal's (2000) and Adegbija's (1997) insights on how to improve the effectiveness of the strategies employed in the revitalization of minority languages.

## 8.4 Directions for Further Research

In Zimbabwe, minority languages have received scant attention. Thus, the recommendations for further research in this section cover a wide range of possible research areas that would further inform language revitalization efforts in the country.

### 8.4.1 Educational Research

Findings from this thesis indicate that for the minority language groups in Zimbabwe the education domain was perceived to be the most critically important (refer to Sections 5.2, 7.3 and 7.4). It is in this context that the Ministry of Education's capitulation, leading to enactment of provisions for the teaching and learning of the minority endoglossic languages beyond Grade 3 is considered to be a major success for the advocates for minority language rights in Zimbabwe. It is on this basis that my first recommendation for further research focuses on research that would consolidate the presence of the endoglossic minority languages in the Zimbabwean education system. Research projects in this line could pursue a number of directions:

- **The development of learning materials:** I suggest that further research should be undertaken to pursue avenues that could lead to the amelioration of the situation regarding the sparse availability of teaching and learning materials in the minority endoglossic languages. I suggest that such research should build on the collaborative relationships established between minority language groups in Zimbabwe with language groups that speak the same language across the borders.

(Refer to Chapter 7, Section 7.4.3 for an example of collaborative relationships established between ZILPA and academics from South Africa.) The rationale for pursuing such research is based on the fact that most of the minority languages in Zimbabwe are cross-border languages with readily available learning and teaching materials in South Africa (e.g. for Venda, Sotho and Shangani/Tsonga), Zambia (e.g. for Tonga) and Mozambique (Shangani/Tsonga). Research could focus on theorizing the development and/or adaptation of materials for teaching and learning in each of the minority endoglossic languages. Hachipola (1998) provides a list of some of the learning materials available in cross-border languages which further research can build on and recommend ways and means of using them in schools in Zimbabwe. Thus, it is recommended that research should be undertaken focusing on the similarities and differences of the orthographies of the cross border languages with a view to adopting and adapting them for use in Zimbabwe. Further research in this mold could also involve collaborative efforts between teachers' colleges in Zimbabwe and similar structures in neighbouring countries focusing on possibilities for exchange programmes involving students and lecturers involved in the study and teaching of minority languages.

- **Language-in-education policy research:** Further research could focus on the possibilities and challenges faced by each of the minority language communities clustered in various districts in terms of the implementation of the language-in-education policy.

- **Pedagogy:** Further research could also focus on pedagogic innovations in the teaching of minority endoglossic languages in selected sites in Zimbabwe. This can be in the form of classroom-based minority endoglossic language studies focusing on curriculum and pedagogy in the modes of case study and/or classroom based action research.

### 8.4.2 Media Research

The media is considered to be an important domain for minority endoglossic language revitalization in Zimbabwe. The increased visibility of minority languages through media programming explains why the improved presence of minority languages on radio (refer to Chapter 7, Section 7.2) was considered to be a milestone achievement for the advocates for minority endoglossic language rights in their efforts to promote the minority endoglossic languages in Zimbabwe. Research could be conducted into ways of consolidating the presence of the minority endoglossic languages on radio through the improvement of the quality of the broadcast content to help the RLS endeavor. Research could focus on the possibilities for the training of script writers for the enhancement of the quality of broadcast content. Further research could focus on the possibilities of extending the use of the minority endoglossic languages to other media such as print and television. Research in this mode could look into the possibilities of setting up more community newspapers, community radio stations and community television stations. Further research could also investigate possibilities of using the media to complement the learning and teaching of minority languages in schools.

### 8.4.3 Corpus Development Research

One of the enduring effects of the marginalization of the minority endoglossic languages in Zimbabwe has been that the languages have received very little attention in terms of corpus development. It is important that the minority languages benefit from the language corpus research currently taking place at the African Languages Research Institute at the University of Zimbabwe (refer to Chapter 7, Section 7.4.1). The research at the African Languages Research Institute currently focuses on the development of Shona and Ndebele dictionaries as well as technical terminologies in these dominant endoglossic languages. Similar research focusing on the minority endoglossic languages would greatly benefit the use of the minority languages in expanded domains of language use. Research should therefore be undertaken to consider possibilities of replicating and

advancing the research at the African Languages Research Institute to also include the minority languages. This implies further research into possibilities of developing children's dictionaries, musical terms dictionaries, dictionaries of linguistic and literary terms and other corpus development work for the minority endoglossic languages, similar to that undertaken for the dominant endoglossic languages.

### 8.4.4 Sociolinguistic Research

Very little is known about the minority languages in Zimbabwe. Research is needed in order to develop a better understanding of the sociolinguistic situation of Zimbabwean minority languages.

- **Research into intergenerational transmission of minority languages:** An important area of study relevant to understanding language revitalization projects is one that focuses on the intergenerational transmission of minority languages. Such an investigation would focus on aspects relevant to the ethnolinguistic vitality of the Zimbabwean endoglossic minority languages, their transmission across generations, and how these impact on the possibilities for revitalizing the languages. Related research in this area could be of a psycho-sociological nature to ascertain the ethnolinguistic vitality of the Zimbabwean endoglossic minority languages. The findings of such investigations in Zimbabwe would provide relevant data useful for both government and organs of civil society involved in language policy and planning to use to evaluate past, present and ongoing language maintenance initiatives.

- **Language attitudes:** An important area of study in this mould would include surveys of language attitudes. I suggest that studies should be undertaken to ascertain the minority endoglossic language communities' attitudes towards language shift and death of the non-dominant languages, attitudes towards the hegemony of Shona and Ndebele, as well as attitudes towards efforts that aim at reversing language shift.

- **Ethnographic research:** The data from my study supports the arguments by Skutnabb-Kangas (2000) and others that minority language groups endure dehumanizing labels ascribed to them by dominant language groups (Refer to Chapter 5, Section 5.2.1). References to speakers of minority languages in sub-human terms arise from ignorance and a general fear of the Other. The data from my study, however, presents minority language groups in a positive light, indicating complex capacities for organizational negotiation. Given the dearth of studies that have investigated the minority endoglossic language communities in Zimbabwe, I suggest further research of an ethnographic nature that would provide insights into the lives of minority language groups at the grassroots level. This type of research is likely to contribute to a growing body of knowledge on the positive perceptions of minority language groups by correcting some of the myths that present them in a negative light.

- **Gender Research:** In Chapter 6, Section 6.2.3, I pointed out that women are marginalized in the initiatives to develop and promote the minority endoglossic languages in Zimbabwe. I argued that this is a weakness of the initiative given the central place of women in matters of language choice and language use in the primary domain. Further research could look at the socio-cultural factors that militate against the participation of women in issues that affect them, their children and their communities. This type of research would inform the strategic formulation of similar projects, for example advocacy, education and literacy projects that seek to benefit from the participation of all possible actors.

- **Research into the implementation of OAU/ UNESCO resolutions:** In Chapter 3, Section 3.2.4 I discussed the initiatives undertaken by supra-national organizations such as UNESCO and the OAU that are aimed at addressing the marginalization of African languages in the various domains of language use. I pointed out that in 1986 the OAU adopted the Language Plan of Action for Africa which exhorted African governments to develop and promote the endoglossic

African languages. I also highlighted that ten years later in 1997, the OAU adopted the Harare Declaration where further resolutions were made regarding the need to develop and promote the endoglossic African languages. It was conceded in the deliberations leading to the Harare Declaration that very little had been done to address the problems associated with the marginalization of African languages by the Member States. I suggest that research should be undertaken in the various Member States of the OAU to take stock of what language planning activities have taken place between the period after the adoption of the Language Plan of Action for Africa in 1986 and the Harare Declaration of 1997 to the present. Research that assumes this focus will be helpful in terms of alerting policy makers to the imperatives regarding the position of the endoglossic African languages vis-à-vis language policy and planning in Africa.

## 8.5 Conclusion

This investigation has enhanced our understanding of the complexities involved in the advocacy for minority endoglossic language rights in an African context. I am not aware of any systematic studies that investigate the involvement of organs of civil society involved in efforts to develop and promote minority endoglossic languages in Zimbabwe, making this thesis a significant contribution to this field of study. The strategies employed by the advocates for minority language rights in Zimbabwe, as well as the success they achieved in a generally hostile economic and political context, provides important learning points for advocacy for language rights generally, and in particular, the intricacies involved in such initiatives in an African context. This research has affirmed Stroud's (2000) argument that most programmes geared towards endoglossic minority language development and promotion in Africa have failed because they mostly involve tinkering with "technical linguistic solutions" (p. 342) instead of broad-based initiatives that address fundamental issues of access, power and domination. This study also affirms Fishman's (1991, 2001a) GIDS Model for minority language revitalization, and particularly the advice to advocates for RLS to pursue broad-based strategies that

involve grassroots mobilization for the attainment of ideological consensus followed by initiatives that tackle the more complex secondary domains. The strategies employed by the advocates for minority language rights in Zimbabwe, apart from addressing the technical dimensions of minority language development and promotion, also tackle the question of linguistic marginalization at the grassroots and ideological levels.

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## *APPENDIX A: Organizations Working on Endangered Languages*

**Ad Hoc Committee on Endangered Languages**
c/o Universite de Quebec a Montreal, CP 8888, succ. Centre-ville, Montreal, Quebec H3C 3P8, Canada.

**Committee on Endangered Languages and their Preservation (CLEP)**
c/o Linguistic Society of America, 1325 18th Street, NW, Washington DC 20036-6501

**The Endangered Language Fund, Inc**
c/o Doug Whalen, Department of Linguistics, Yale University, New Haven, CT 06520, USA. http://sapir.ling.yale.edu/~elf/study.html

**Endangered-Languages-L Electronic Forum**
c/o: Mari Rhydwen, Graduate School of Education, University of Western Australia, Nedlands, Perth, WA 6009, Australia

**Ethnologue**
c/o Barbara Grimes, Summer Institute of Linguistics Inc, International Linguistics Center, 7500 West Camp Wisdon Road, Dallas, TX 75236, USA. http://www.sil.org/ethnologue

**European Bureau of Lesser Used Languages**
c/o Information Center, rue Saint-Josse 49B/sint-joostraat 49B, 1030 Brussels

**The Foundation for Endangered Languages**
c/o Nicholas Ostler, Batheaston Villa, 172 Bailbrook Lane, Bath BA1 7AA.
http://www.bris.ac.uk/Depts/Philosophy/CTLL/FEL

**Gesellschaft fur bedrohte Sprachen (Society for Endangered Languages)**
c/o Hans-Jurgen Sasse, Institut fur Sprachwissenschaft, Universitat zu Koln, 50923 Koln, Germany
Institute for the Preservation of the Original Languages of the Americas
c/o Executive Director, 713 1/2A Canyon Road, Santa Fe, New Mexico 87501, USA

**International Clearing House for Endangered Languages (ICHEL)**
c/o Kazuto Matsumura, Department of Asian and Pacific Linguistics, Institute of Cross-Cultural Studies, University of Tokyo, Hongo 7-3-1, Bunkyo-ku, Tokyo 113, Japan
http://www.tooyoo.L.u-tokyo.ac.jp

**Language Documentation Urgency List**
c/o Dietmar Zaefferer, Institut fur Deutsche Philologie, Universitat Munchen, Schellingstr.3, D-80799, Munchen, Germany

## *APPENDIX A continued.*

**List Endangered-Languages-L**
http://carmen.murdoch.edu.au/lists/endangered-languages-l/ell-websites.html

**Logosphere**
c/o David Dalby, Observatoire Linguistique, Hebron, Dyfed SA34 OXT, UK

**Network of Endangered Languages**
c/o T. Matthew Ciolek, Computer Center, Research School of Pacific and Asian Studies, Australian National University, Canberra, Australia

**Society for the Study of the Indigenous Languages of the Americas**
c/o Victor Golla, Department of Native American Studies, Humboldt State University, Arcata, CA 95521.

**Terralingua: Partnerships for Linguistic and Biological Diversity**
c/o David Harmon, PO Box 122, Hancock, Michigan 49930-0122, USA
http://cougar.ucdavis.edu/nas/terralin/home.html

**UNESCO (Study of Endangered Languages)**
c/o Jean Biengen, Secretary-General, CIPSH (International Council for Philosophy and Humanistic Studies), l rue Miollis, 75732 Paris, France

**UNESCO (World Languages Report)**
c/o Paul Ortega, UNESCO Center Basque Country, Alameda de Urquijo, Spain.
http://www.unescoeh.org

**Universal Declaration of Linguistic Rights**
c/o Follow-Up Committee, Rocafort 242 bis 2n, =20, 08029 Barcelona, Catalunya, Spain.
http://www.linguistic-declaration.org

**Source: Crystal (2000)**

## *Appendix B: ALRI Board of Management 2000*

| **UZ Members** | |
|---|---|
| **Name** | **Designation** |
| Prof. F. W. G. Hill | Vice Chancellor(Chair) |
| Dr. H. Chimhundu | ALRI Director |
| Dr. G. Pwiti | Dean of Arts |
| Dr. C. Dyanda | Dean of Education |
| Dr. G. T. Hapanyengwi | Computer Center Director |
| Mr. J. Mbirizah | For Librarian |
| **Non-UZ Members** | |
| **Name** | **Designation** |
| Eng. P. C.Bamu | Council Member |
| Dr. H C. Sadza | Council Member |
| Mr. E.K Matimati | Senior Education Officer |
| Mr. B.C. Chitsike | Shona Language Committee |
| Mr. P. Damasane | Ndebele Language Committee |
| Dr. B. M. Dabudabu | Prominent Citizen/ minority languages |
| Mr. C. Chirikure | Publisher |
| Mr. W. L.Chigidi | Tertiary Institutions |
| Mr. S. Nondo | Tertiary Institutions |
| Mr. D. Maravanyika | Corporate Business |
| Mrs. B. Nkala | Corporate Business |
| Mrs. P. Manala | Electronic Media Business |
| Mr. H.E. Muradzikwa | Print Media |

Source: http://www.uz.ac.zw/units/alri/alri_board.htm

## ***APPENDIX C: List of Participants at TOLACO Workshop 29-30 July 2000***

| Name | District | Position |
|---|---|---|
| 1. Chief Dobola | Binga | Chief |
| 2. Chief Sinamunsanga | Binga | Chief |
| 3. Chief Sinakatenge | Binga | Chief |
| 4. Ms M. Mutale | Binga | Assistant |
| 5. Chief Siachiliba | Binga | Chief |
| 6. Chief Siansaali | Binga | Chief |
| 7. Chief Siamupa | Binga | Chief |
| 8. Chief Sinampande | Binga | Chief |
| 9.Chief Kavula | Binga | Chief |
| 10. Chief Saba | Binga | Chief |
| 11. Chief Sinansengwe | Binga | Chief |
| 12. Chief Sinakooma | Binga | Chief |
| 13. Mr. Mwinde | Binga | Chief |
| 14. Chief Binga | Binga | Chief |
| 15. Chief Pashu | Binga | Chief |
| 16. Chief Sinamweenda | Binga | Chief |
| 17. D. Malomo | Binga | Kraal Head |
| 18. Gabbuza Joel Gabbuza | Binga | Member of Parliament. |
| 19. M. Dauramanzi | Binga | President's Office |
| 20. P.Muleya | Binga | Rep. of District Administrator's Office |
| 21. S.B. Manyena | Binga | TOLACO Chairperson |
| 22. D. Mundia | Binga | TOLACO Secretary |
| 23. C.S. Mutale | Binga | TOLACO V/Secretary |
| 24. E. Kawina | Binga | TOLACO Treasurer |
| 25. F. Cumanzala | Binga | TOLACO Member |
| 26. S.B. Mutale | Binga | TOLACO Member |

***APPENDIX C continued.***

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 27. T. Mweembe | Binga | Interested member |
| 28. J. Muleya | Binga | Interested member |
| 29. Ms. F. Dube | Binga | Interested member |
| 30. M. Siakwenga | Binga | Interested member |
| 31.C. Munzabwa | Hwange | TOLACO Member |
| 32. M. Mapeta | Hwange | Kraal Head |
| 33.Chief Negande | Nyaminyami | Chief |
| 34. Chief Simunchembu | Gokwe North | Chief |
| 35. Cllr. S. Mahlakanipeni | Gokwe North | Chief Nenyunga's Representative. |
| 36. S. H. Simunchembu | Gokwe North | Councilor |
| 37. T.M. Sibanda | Gokwe North | Councilor |
| 38. J. Mudenda | Gokwe North | TOLACO Chairperson |
| 39. I. Mumpande | Binga | Programme Officer |
| 40. F. Mangodza | Harare | Programme Officer |
| 41. I. Musona | Harare | Programme Officer |
| 42. K. Dembe | Harare | ZADF PACT Officer |
| 43. S. Zisengwe | Harare | ZADF PACT Officer |
| 44. L. Chiti | Harare | Interested member |

**Source:** Report on the 29-30 July TOLACO Workshop (p. 1).

## ***Appendix D: A Constitutional Law Perspective of Section 62 of the Education Act of Zimbabwe***

Section 62 of the Education Act (Chapter 25: 04) provides for the teaching of only three main languages in Zimbabwe['s] primary schools. A cording to the section, Shona must be taught in 'all areas where the mother tongue of the majority of the residents is Shona' while the same must happen to Ndebele where the mother tongue of the majority of the residents is Ndebele. This means that the minority languages cannot be taught in areas where they are the predominant languages.

It is submitted that Section 62 of the Education Act infringes Section 23 of the Constitution of Zimbabwe which outlaws discrimination on a number of grounds including tribe, place of origin, and so on. The relevant part of Section 23 reads:

*"…No law shall make any provision that is discriminatory either of itself or in its effort and no person shall be treated in a discriminatory manner by any person acting by virtue of any written law or in the performance of the functions of any public office or public authority."*

It further provides that*:*
*"… a law shall be regarded as making a provision that is discriminatory and a person shall be regarded as having been treated in a discriminatory manner if, as a result of that law or treatment, persons of a particular description by race, place of origin, political opinions, colour or creed are prejudiced…"*

There is little doubt that the choice of one language in preference to another is discrimination on the basis of either tribe or place of origin. No one language is inherently superior to others and the fact that Shona and Ndebele are spoken by a larger number of people than the other languages is irrelevant. It is also important to observe that Section 23 does not accept any derogation therefrom on such

***Appendix D continued.***

grounds as "reasonable justification". This means that once a discrimination on the prohibitedgrounds is shown, the purported law is null and void. This should be the position regarding Section 62 of the education Act[67].

Section 62 also contravenes Section 62 of the Constitution of Zimbabwe. Section 15(1) provides that:

*"no person shall be subjected to torture or inhuman or degrading punishment or other such punishments."*

It is submitted that forcing a person whose mother tongue is a given indigenous language to learn some other indigenous language in circumstances contemplated by Section 62 amounts to, "inhuman or degrading treatment".

Although Zimbabwe does not have a very clear equality clause in its constitution, Section 62 of the Education Act arguably contravenes Section 18(1) of the Constitution of Zimbabwe which entitles everyone to "the protection of law". This provision implies equality of treatment and Section 62 falls foul of it.

**Source:** Dr. L. Madhuku (undated) "Section 62 of the Education Act (Chapter 25: 04): A Constitutional Law Perspective". (p. 1-2).

## ***Appendix E: Meetings between ZILPA and Institutions of Higher Education***

| Date | ZILPA delegation | Institutions and staff | Findings and Outcomes |
|---|---|---|---|
| 20 April 2005 | Mr. R.J. Butshe and Mr. E. Makwati | Joshua Mqabuko Nkomo Teacher's College<br><br>Principal Mr. M. Dube<br>H.O.D Languages Dept. Mr. Mutambudzi<br>Lecturer in Charge – Venda<br>Mr. Tabela<br>Lecturer in Charge – Sotho Mr. Tlou | The college had established a Local Languages Division that had been approved by the Ministry of Higher Education.<br>The college had already introduced Venda and Sotho but had not found a Kalanga lecturer.<br>The college faced lack of funds to use in staff development programmes.<br>It was suggested that:<br>The college could assist in the production of examination papers and other literature in the affected languages<br>ZILPA could encourage members with Diplomas and Degrees in languages to apply for lectureship posts<br>ZILPA could invite members of the Division of Languages to attend its workshops |
| 09 May 2005 | Mr. P. J. Chauke N.S. Ndou and Mr. E. Zava | Masvingo State University<br><br>Vice Chancellor Prof. Maravanyika<br>Dean of Students Mr. C. Denhere<br>Head of Curriculum Studies, Mr. K.T. Gondo | The university advised the ZILPA delegation that they had plans to introduce Shangani and Venda courses in March 2006. (The courses were introduced as planned). |

***Appendix E continued.***

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 12 May 2005 | Mr. P.J. Chauke, N.S. Ndou and Mr. E. Zava | Masvingo Teacher's College Principal Mr. M.R.K. Masarira<br>Vice Principal Mr. Chindanya<br>H.O.D. Languages Dept.<br>Lecturers in the Dept. | The college staff agreed on the nobility of the idea but had not considered introducing minority languages in the curriculum.<br>The college staff promised to consult the Academic Board on the issue, but expressed reservations concerning unavailability of textbooks and qualified lecturers, |
| 27 May 2005 | Mr. R.J. Butshe | United College of Education<br><br>Principal Mr. Mlambo<br>H.O.D Ndebele Mrs. Khona<br>Senior Lecturer Mrs Mbona | The Principal pointed out that they did not have an existing programme geared towards the promotion of the minority languages. He was not even aware of the circular promoting the teaching and learning of minority languages beyond Grade Three.<br>He was prepared to:<br>Conduct a survey to establish if there were students interested in studying the minority languages<br>All members present expressed a willingness to attend ZILPA workshops in future<br>The Principal requested ZILPA to provide national anthems in minority languages. |

## *APPENDIX F: List of Participants at the ZILPA Writers Workshop*

| Name | Sex | Institution or Language Group Represented |
|---|---|---|
| 1. I. Mumpande | M | Silveira House – secretariat |
| 2. I. G. Musona | M | Silveira House – secretariat |
| 3. A. Musekiwa | F | Silveira House – secretariat |
| 4. Sr. Janice McLaughlin | F | Silveira House - secretariat |
| 5. Misheck Ndlovu | M | ChiTonga |
| 6. Edward Paricha | M | ChiTonga |
| 7. George Ndlovu | M | ChiTonga |
| 8. Clemencia Sianyuka | F | ChiTonga |
| 9. T.I. Tshuma | M | Tjikalanga |
| 10. G. Nleya | M | TjiKalanga |
| 11. Gerald Ncube | M | Tjikalanga |
| 12. R.J. Ncube | M | Tjikalanga |
| 13. S.G. Ndlovu | M | TjiKalanga & ZILPA Chairman |
| 14. R.J. Butshe | M | TjiKalanga |
| 15. M. Gwande | F | Shangani-Zimbabwe |
| 16. T. Chauke | M | Shangani –Zimbabwe |
| 17. Prof. N.C.P. Golele | F | Shangani- South Africa |
| 18. Imram Maleyana | M | Shangani- South Africa |
| 19. R.J. Mathonsi | M | Shangani- South Africa |
| 20. E. Makwati | M | SeSotho |
| 21. R. Kokobele | M | SeSotho |
| 22. L. Noko | M | SeSotho |
| 23. S. Mahumutsha | F | SeSotho |
| 24. Adrein Masole | M | Nambya |
| 25. Vincent Nyoni | M | Nambya |
| 26. Virginia Ncube | F | Nambya |
| 27. Neshavi C. Prosper | M | Nambya |
| 28. L. Muleya | M | TshiVenda |
| 29. M. Muleya | M | TshiVenda |
| 30. E. Mudau | M | TshiVenda |
| 31. P. Ngcobo | M | Facilitator from ZPH |
| 32. E. Mutwira | F | Facilitator from IPA |

**Source:** A Report on the ZILPA Writers Workshop held at Basilwizi Centre, Bulawayo, 17-19 August 2004 (p. 9).

## *Appendix G: Declaration of Consent*

**Below is a declaration of consent form that explains what the research is about as well as the assurances of confidentiality that I make as the researcher. I would like to ask you to complete and sign in the relevant sections as an indication that you agree to participate in this research.**

I, ---------- (first name)---------- (Surname), do agree to participate in the following research project: A case study of Civil Society Organizations' initiatives for the Development and Promotion of Linguistic Human Rights in Zimbabwe 1980-2004) (a PhD research project for the Division of Applied English Language Studies, School of Literature and Language Studies, WITS University, 2004).

- I prepared to spend up to two hours (at times convenient to me) being interviewed by the researcher, Nicholus Nyika.
- I have been informed that the focus of these interviews will be on my perceptions of the notion of linguistic human rights in Zimbabwe.
- I have been advised that these interviews will be recorded on audiotape, and transcribed, and hereby grant permission for this to occur.
- I have been informed that my responses to interview questions constitute data for the purposes of the present research and I consent to this.
- I grant my permission to be quoted for research purposes.

***Appendix G continued***

I have been assured that:

- My right to privacy will be respected – personal information obtained during research proceedings will not be shared with persons other than those with professional interest in the project.
- Should I wish to, I am entitled gain access to the documents.
- For the purposes of the research report pseudonyms will be adopted.
- I acknowledge the researcher's right to report research findings, provided that the accounts are fair, relevant and accurate.
- I have been informed that I may negotiate accounts with the researcher in this regard, and may challenge the researcher, or lodge a personal protest, should these opportunities not be afforded me.

Name: (print)……

Signature……..

Date…….

Place……

Signature (researcher)…….

## *APPENDIX H: REVIEW OF SILENT VOICES*

**Book Review**

Silent Voices: Indigenous languages in Zimbabwe.
A report compiled by Isaac Mumpande

**Publisher:** Weaver Press
P. Box A1922
Avondale
Harare
ISBN-10: 1 77922 050 2

*Silent Voices: Indigenous languages in Zimbabwe* is the story of the struggle of minority endoglossic language communities for recognition in Zimbabwe. Issac Mumpande, the author of the book, is a key figure in the efforts to develop and promote Zimbabwe's endoglossic languages having worked as an Advocacy Officer at Silveira House and the Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace in the Binga District. The book is therefore an insider's report on what the struggle to develop and promote the minority endoglossic languages in Zimbabwe entailed.

The 64 page book is divided into five chapters. Chapter One provides the broad context of the Zimbabwean minority endoglossic languages promotion efforts by highlighting the problems that confront minority languages in the world. The chapter considers some of the responses that have been initiated by the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity.

Chapter Two presents an overview of the sociolinguistic situation in Zimbabwe. The chapter identifies the languages spoken in Zimbabwe, and briefly discusses the statuses ascribed to the various languages spoken in the country.

Chapter Three focuses on the efforts that have been made to promote the minority endoglossic languages in Zimbabwe before and after the attainment of political independence in 1980. This chapter which takes up more than half of the volume of the book (pp. 12 to 51) traces the initiatives that have been undertaken to promote the Zimbabwean languages up to the present day.

Chapter Four highlights some of the challenges and limitations that have been confronted in the efforts to promote the endoglossic minority languages in Zimbabwe.

Chapter Five concludes the book and provides some recommendations on what can be done to take the minority language promotion programme forward.

The strength of the book lies in the fact that it is written from an insider's perspective and reports authoritatively on the events surrounding the initiatives to promote the Zimbabwean minority languages.

## ***APPENDIX H continued.***

> The main weakness of the book is that the attempt to capture a complex process covering a long period of time in 54 pages glosses over some of the intricacies involved in the efforts to develop and promote the minority languages in Zimbabwe. The result is that the book presents the struggle for language rights in Zimbabwe in a rather simplistic manner which does not adequately capture the complexities involved in the process. Reading through the book gives the impression that the minority language groups only had to ask the government to accommodate minority languages in its language policy and it was granted.

The book is an important resource for individuals and organizations interested in minority language rights issues. However, the book's simplistic presentation of the events and initiatives surrounding minority language development and promotion would not be adequate for a rigorous interrogation of the complex process that accompanied minority language revitalization in Zimbabwe.