

ATTITUDES OF HIGH SCHOOL PUPILS TOWARDS AFRICAN LANGUAGES

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ABSTRACT

This research project aims to determine how high school pupils who speak African language feel about their languages.

In 1994 two major changes took place on the South African political scene, namely, the first general democratic elections and the elevation of nine indigenous languages to official status. It is therefore natural to encounter some changes which may be either voluntary or the result of governmental action. Whatever the case, one would expect that these changes would also affect the language behaviour and attitudes of South Africans. Prior to the 1994 democratic election, language use in South Africa was dominated by English and Afrikaans. What is the situation now? Will the people in general, and pupils in particular, be motivated to take these languages seriously? It is against this background that this research aims to investigate attitudes of high school pupils towards African languages.

This study concludes by highlighting the point that English and African languages are not mutually exclusive but can work together in a complementary relationship.

DECLARATION

I declare that this research report is my own unaided work. It is submitted for the degree of Master of Arts, in the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. It has not been submitted before for any other degree or examination in any other university.

T. GAMEDE

----- day of -----, 1996

DEDICATION

To my family
With sincere thanks
for their love and encouragement
during the writing of this thesis

PREFACE

This study aims to investigate the attitudes of black high school pupils towards African languages. It is believed that one of the factors that influence people's attitudes towards a language or languages is the status

of that language or languages; therefore a language which is an official language of the country will evoke different attitudes from a language which is ~~not~~ official. Since all nine indigenous languages in South Africa have attained official status, the question arises whether people now view those languages differently.

This study concentrates on data collected from three different types of schools, namely Model C, rural and township schools. The hypothesis was advanced that, depending on the context, members of these groups would display different attitudes towards African languages. The findings of this research reveal an important point about languages in South Africa, namely that people should see these languages as complementing instead of competing with one another. This research project is my contribution towards a solution to the language problem in South Africa.

This study is divided into six chapters. The first chapter is introductory and consists of the aim, rationale, methodology and hypotheses.

Chapter 2 discusses the background information by reviewing relevant works on the subject. In addition, it provides the theoretical framework for this research project.

Chapters 3, 4 and 5 examine data collected from Model C, rural and township schools, respectively.

Chapter 6 concludes by comparing and consolidating responses from the three groups. This chapter also summarizes the findings of the research project and highlights the complementary nature of African languages and English. Finally, this chapter makes recommendations arising from the findings.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 AIM

In 1994 two major changes took place on the South African political scene, namely, the first general democratic elections and the elevation of nine indigenous languages to official status. It is therefore natural to encounter some changes which might either be voluntary or come about as a result of calculated RDP¹ projects. One would expect that these changes would also affect the language behaviour of South Africans. This is suggested by scholars, such as Holmes (1992:346), who see language attitudes as being very susceptible to social and political change. Within this context, the aim of this research is therefore, to investigate the language attitudes of high school pupils towards African languages.

✓ Prior to the 1994 general election, language use in the South African socio-political context was clearly dominated by English and Afrikaans. African languages, as non-advantaged languages, were and are still mostly used

¹ RDP is an abbreviation for Reconstruction and Development Programme. This programme was instituted by the new government in order to redress the imbalances of the past caused by the apartheid government in the Republic of South Africa.

✓ in the home and for religious and cultural purposes. While English and Afrikaans enjoyed prestige, African languages were relegated to the background and had no public prestige at all.

The interim² Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, paragraph 3 (1) declares:

Afrikaans, English, isiNdebele, Sesotho sa Leboa, siSwati, Xitsonga, Setswana, Tshivenda, isiXhosa and isiZulu shall be the official South African languages at national level, and conditions shall be created for their development and for the promotion of their equal use and enjoyment.

✓ In other words, according to this constitution the above languages are now accorded equal legal status. But when we look at what is happening in practice English and Afrikaans were and still are the languages of the courts, education, administration and parliament. This continued use of English and Afrikaans in these areas has been observed by Maseko (1995). In his research report on the eleven language policy and vertical communication Maseko (1995:69) concludes that

2

Interim constitution: This Constitution was not a final constitution but was negotiated in order to serve the Republic of South Africa while the Government of National Unity was still writing the constitution that would accommodate all the inhabitants of South Africa in the same way. It has been effective since 1994 and will serve until the next general elections in 1999.

...the politicians still insist on equal status for all eleven languages. In practice, though, it is clear that English and, to a lesser extent, Afrikaans are used as languages of wider communication. The government continues to debate issues in the two languages. Moreover, the letters and public addresses by government officials to the citizens are still in English or both English and Afrikaans.

Maseko's observation implies that, in a multilingual state, assigning official status to more than one language does not necessarily mean that these languages will be treated equally or will share equal status in their use. For a language to acquire full official status it has to be used to govern the country, including use in governmental documents, publication of laws, government assemblies, record keeping, and so forth. According to Cabarrubias (1983:72-73):

The mere adoption of a language as an official language without it being used in the above mentioned functions casts doubt on the whole definition of official language.

Although minority³ languages do not enjoy public prestige, they do enjoy covert⁴ prestige. Regarding covert prestige, Holmes (1992:348) points out:

³ In this research, African languages will occasionally be referred to as minority languages because of the way they have been treated in South Africa, that is, they have been treated in the same way as minority languages are treated in other countries.

⁴ Covert prestige is the term used by sociolinguists to refer to the type of prestige that the speakers of minority languages attach to their languages even though sometimes such languages are not recognised by the dominant group.

The term has been used to refer to positive attitudes towards vernacular or non-standard varieties.

He goes on to say:

{ The speakers of these languages value their languages, otherwise they would not continue speaking them at all.

In other words covert prestige means that the speakers of minority languages need their own languages to express certain needs, such as that for group solidarity. In this work I shall be referring to public and not covert prestige.

The former TBVC⁵ states and the national states⁶ will not be included owing to the length constraints of this research project.

✓ In African⁷ schools African languages are used as medium of instruction only up to standard two and after this they are replaced by English.

⁵ TBVC states: The abbreviation stands for Transkei, Bophuthatswana, Venda and Ciskei. These were regions that accepted independence offered by the apartheid government of the Republic of South Africa. These regions were considered as sovereign states by that government. In these regions, the vernacular language was considered as an official language alongside English and Afrikaans.

⁶ National states: These regions were those that have refused the independence offered by the National Party government. They also had some measure of autonomy from the South African government but were considered part of South Africa.

⁷ African schools: In this report this term will be used to refer to those schools which used to be predominantly black and were reserved for the speakers of African languages. However, it should be noted that schools are now legally desegregated in South Africa.

✓ Although these languages are compulsory in all African schools, pupils do not seem to be motivated to take the study of these languages seriously, let alone have some respect for them. Because of greater focus on English and Afrikaans, pupils tend to put more emphasis on these languages and somehow fail to pay equal attention to their own languages.

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The question is, how then do, these pupils expect to pass their languages in their senior certificate examination? How do they convince themselves that they must begin to study these languages seriously, if they do not pass them they will fail the whole examination?

In an interview with two high school principals the following emerged: Although it seems as if the rule that forces pupils to pass their vernacular no longer applies, the situation is somewhat misleading in that the pass requirements for senior certificate demand that at least one language should be written as a first language. Furthermore, pupils have to pass their first language in order to satisfy this senior certificate requirement. By implication, speakers of an African language who are not proficient enough to write English as L₁ are forced by their position to write their vernacular as L₁ and pass it. Most pupils in township and rural schools find themselves in this position.

My research was conducted almost seventeen months after the citizens of

South Africa obtained political freedom. Theoretically this means that African languages have since been equal to English. Does this equality mean then that the attitudes of speakers of African languages towards their languages have changed? Will teachers now encourage their pupils to study African languages? Will parents and the community begin to treat these languages differently? Will pupils now be motivated to take their languages more seriously?

It is against this background that I intend to investigate the attitudes of high school pupils towards African languages. Only the attitudes of mother-tongue speakers of African language will be investigated.

1.2 RATIONALE BEHIND THE RESEARCH

- 5 1 Language planning in South Africa has always been a top-down process and this has not proved successful. Hartshorne (1995: 307) agrees that language policies were made without involving all concerned:

Until now, the decisions have never been taken by those who use African languages in their everyday lives.

The rejection of Afrikaans (in 1976) by the indigenous people of this country is living proof of the above statement. Although black South Africans were forced to learn Afrikaans, many of them do not like using it in their daily

lives and some of them cannot even communicate effectively in Afrikaans. Why? One of the reasons is the negative attitudes that these people had towards Afrikaans as the language of the oppressors. The popular equation of Afrikaans with the language of the oppressor is affirmed by Meerkotter's claim (1987:141) that although more South Africans use Afrikaans than English, many people will opt for English as a *lingua franca*. He goes on to say that

...the difference between the two languages lies in the fact that more people are willing to learn and speak English than Afrikaans because the latter tongue is associated largely with an establishment which is not perceived as a symbol representing an open, free, and united democratic country.

In other words, according to Eastman (1992:107): * ↘

People learn to speak and want to learn in a language that they like. D

10 starts
Most linguists agree that language policy-making should be a bottom-up process so as to involve the actual users of languages in decision-making. B

This view is summed up by Neville Alexander (1992:146) in his article "Language planning from below": P. 10

It is important to note that in the case of language ... any attempt by any central (or other) [sic] to prohibit or restrict to any appreciable degree people's right to propose has historically been perceived as an act of the most profound oppression and dehumanisation precisely because language

(even more than the capacity to work) is the hallmark of humanity.

It is clear, therefore, that it is only when the authorities have an idea of what high school pupils want and what their attitudes are that they will be able to design syllabuses for African languages that will correspond to the pupils' needs and aspirations. It is only when language-planners know what the speakers of African languages want to do with their languages that they will be able to produce an acceptable language policy. It is only when there is consultation with the users of these languages that the planners will be able to serve the African language population according to its needs and not according to what the planners think speakers of African language ought to need. In other words, the language-planners and policy-makers should bear in mind the interests of the society.

Since so many changes are taking place in South Africa it is only logical that language-policy makers begin to pay more attention to the beliefs and feelings of the people for whom the policy is being planned. In short, they must consider language attitudes as a serious factor that might affect the success or failure of a language policy.

Although consultation is very important, politicians should guard against selective consultation. In other words, consulting those people or groups who are likely to agree with their views or capitalising on the ignorance of

laymen may result in an unworkable language policy. This means that there is a need to distinguish between "grassroots" consultation and scientific consultation. Grassroots consultation entails asking for the opinions of the public. Although this kind of consultation is necessary, language-planners should not base decisions only on this because the responses might be clouded by emotions and ignorance. Sometimes even the kinds of questions asked are geared towards eliciting certain responses. On the other hand, scientific research such as this aims to be objective and its conclusions are based on the critical analysis of scientifically collected data.

At first glance the above paragraph contradicts what has already been said about the necessity of a bottom-up approach. This is not the case. Grassroots consultation is only a part of the bottom-up process, a part that cannot be used alone but should be supported by scientific methods of consulting ordinary people. What this means is that an integrated approach in which both kinds of consultation are used will result in a language policy that will be more acceptable and practicable.

2.5.5 The way African languages have been treated in this country is cause for concern. It is common knowledge that these languages were seen as good only for domestic use in that there were very limited places where speakers of African languages could speak their mother tongue. These were mainly

places of worship or cultural gatherings. Msimang (1992:9) states:

Vernaculars as a medium of instruction are losing the battle to English.

He continues:

After 1976 vernaculars lost ground once again, especially with the passing of the 1979 Education Act which authorised the parents to choose a medium of instruction for their children because they [parents] invariably scaled down the use of African languages to standard two.

This was a blow to African languages but, as if this was not enough, a further blow was administered in 1991

When this act was amended in 1991 to make provision for a complete phasing out of African languages, even in the lower primary level, if the Black parents are in favour of such a dispensation. (Msimang 1992:9)

The question is: why did the government decide to pass this act? Even though the old government was notorious for its culture of non-consultation, this must have been the result of serious discussions with certain educational bodies, more especially because this happened in 1991 when apartheid was crumbling and educational bodies were making their voices heard. Hartshorne (1995:312) suggests that this move was a result of teachers' and parents' bodies demanding that mother-tongue instruction be

limited to the first four years of primary schooling in order to be in line with most of the homelands. This new struggle, which was now directed at the Mother Tongue Principle, took place after the battle against Afrikaans as a medium of instruction had been won. What we see in the 1991 act are attitudes of parents and teachers' bodies. \

X Another question is: why do standard ten pupils ^{fail} ~~are~~ badly in their vernaculars? One might speculate that this has more to do with attitudes than with their ability to study or to comprehend their mother tongue. After all, this is the language they speak at home. Another reason may be the issue of diversity within a language, for example, the language of the senior certificate examination (standard Zulu or Sotho) is no one's mother tongue because it is far removed from what the pupils speak in their everyday communication. Here we see the problem of the prescriptivism and conservatism of the Language Boards at play. The Language Boards, with their purist approach to language select what they think is a correct form of language and dismiss other dialects as incorrect. As a result the language that pupils speak with their African-language teacher (who might also be a speaker of the so-called incorrect dialect) differs from what they encounter in their examination. These pupils are at a disadvantage because what they are expected to write is not actually their first language, yet they are required to pass it as a first language. This problem was picked up during interviews with pupils in township and rural schools. Most

of them said that they did not want to spend more time studying African languages because no matter how hard they work, in the examination they do not even understand words used in a comprehension test. One Zulu speaker summed up their concerns by saying that "they [examiners] want us to write the Zulu of Natal. Where are we going to learn this Zulu?"

Pupils also miss out on worthwhile literary texts which are declared as unsuitable for school use because they contain lexemes that are not standard. Edwards (1985:27) warns against prescriptivism by stating:

{ The notion of keeping one's language "pure" and free from foreign taint reveals a profound misunderstanding of the dynamics of all natural languages.

Regrettably, because of this gross misunderstanding pupils fail to achieve well in their languages. Basically, what this means is that in addition to attitudes, the problem is that the pupils are being examined in a language that is not really their mother tongue.

{ Some black parents already send their children to traditionally white schools where African languages are taught as **third** languages, if at all. Others even insist on speaking English with their children at home. This fact was established during interviews. Some pupils indicated to me that their parents did not want them to speak African languages because they wanted

them to improve their proficiency in English. Now, the question is, to what extent these parents are indirectly transferring their attitudes towards African languages to their children? Is their attitude the result of the fact that African languages are restricted to home, religious and cultural use? Have the African languages won the battle by being elevated to official status? Or are they losing it even more badly than before when these languages are rejected by the very people who had complained that their languages were ignored but who now refuse to speak them with their children?

If the speakers of African languages do not take pride in the speaking of their own languages, they cannot expect other people who are not speakers of these languages to take them seriously. Carranza (1982:69) demonstrates the importance of people's attitudes towards their languages by stating:

Fundamental to any official recognition of an indigenous language is a positive attitude towards the language by its speakers....This pride is essential to the development of an ethnolinguistic vitality regardless of any governmental actions.

The core of the above statements is that, unless speakers of indigenous languages have a positive attitude towards their languages, their official recognition will not achieve anything. Every effort by the government or educational institutions to encourage their use will just be futile. The language policy of Zimbabwe is a good example. Zimbabwe's official

adulthood and therefore serve as predictors of future community attitudes; they have an idea of what they want in life (they already have future plans regarding their careers) and these aspirations should be reflected in their attitudes; most of all they have been socialised at an important point in the country's history and their attitudes should reflect these important changes. It was thought that their counterparts at primary school would not really understand the complexities of their society.

The adult population could not be chosen because there would have been innumerable variables. For example, a response might have been affected by the kind of work an individual was doing, for instance, which language was required in Board meetings, or other meetings at work; whether the knowledge of one's mother tongue was necessary in the performance of one's duties; the *lingua franca* used in horizontal and vertical communication at work; or whether command of language (lack of proficiency) constituted an advantage or disadvantage. The attitudes of adults would have told us about the present state but would not have shed light on the future. Therefore, to all intents and purposes, the high school population was the most reliable group.

1.3.1 Questionnaires

To conduct this research, questionnaires were used in six schools. These

were two schools in rural areas and two schools in urban areas (townships). These schools were predominantly black. Finally, two predominantly white (model C) schools were also selected. The pupils were asked to complete the questionnaires in their classrooms. Where possible, pupils were supervised by their guidance teacher, whom they knew and trusted. Teachers of African languages were avoided because it was felt that the pupils might try to please their teacher instead of voicing their true feelings. For the same reason, English and Afrikaans teachers were also avoided. A total of 180 questionnaires were completed, thirty questionnaires in each school.

The sample represented the major African language groups, namely, the Nguni and the Sotho groups.⁸ An equal number of questionnaires was distributed among the two language groups, that is, to ninety Nguni-speakers and ninety Sotho-speakers. The assignment of pupils to one of the two groups depended on the mother tongue and not on the subject of study in standard ten. However, both groups were catered for in the first part of the questionnaire under personal particulars as well as by question one. Apart from indicating the mother tongue, the pupils were required to indicate the language spoken at home if not a mother tongue. In most cases the language spoken at home was the one which was the subject of study in

⁸ The Nguni group represents a group of sister languages which are mutually intelligible. In this group we have South Ndebele, Swati, Xhosa and Zulu. Languages in the Sotho group are also mutually intelligible. In this group we have Northern Sotho, Tswana and Southern Sotho.

standard ten. This was not necessarily a mother tongue. For example, Pietersburg is primarily a Northern Sotho area. Nguni-speakers are in the minority. Consequently, these Nguni-speakers were doing Northern Sotho as L₁ at school.

Gender was not considered an important variable since this depended mostly on the pupils' willingness to participate. In some schools more girls turned up than boys and in others the situation was reversed. In the end there were 100 female respondents as against ninety males. Furthermore, the situation was even more complicated in model C schools since there were relatively few speakers of African languages at high school level.

The collected data were then analyzed according to each sample population in order to avoid sweeping statements and over-generalizations because respondents from one type of school could differ in their responses from respondents from another type of school, for example pupils from rural areas might display certain tendencies which are different from pupils from Model C schools. On the other hand, respondents could agree on certain points. After obtaining the results from each group, these results were then compared and interpreted.

1.3.2 The Discussion of the Questionnaire

The questionnaire is reproduced in Appendix A1 page 124

In the questionnaire pupils were asked to fill in their age, sex, mother tongue and language spoken at home (if not a mother tongue).

The questions were arranged thematically according to the factors that influence language attitudes, namely, socio-economic background, academic and future expectations, status of language.

Section A

1.3.2.1 Socio-economic factors

The socio-economic factors were covered by Section A of the questionnaire. These questions covered the family background of the respondents, their speech patterns in different situations as well as their preferred television channels. All these questions would in one way or another reflect the pupils' attitudes towards African languages.

Questions 1 and 2: These questions dealt with the family background of the respondents, namely, the language spoken at home if not a mother tongue and the occupation of parents. The aim of question 1 was to establish whether the pupils spoke their mother tongue or some other language at

home. Question 2 was necessary in so far as it shed light on the background of pupils who were attending each type of school.

Question 3: Do you speak your mother tongue with your teachers, friends (inside school premises), friends (outside school premises) as well as with your nearest shopkeeper? The options were yes, no or unsure.

This question was aimed at finding out the extent to which pupils' use African languages in different situations. It was important to find out the extent to which African languages were used in pupils' communication with their teachers, friends and other members of society such as the shopkeeper. It was hoped that the answers to these questions would reveal the pupils' feelings towards their languages, especially the question on whether they spoke their mother tongue with their friends.

Question 4: Do you speak English with your teachers, friends (inside school premises), friends (outside school premises) as well as with your nearest shopkeeper?

The options were the same as in question 3.

This question was the opposite of question 3. It was aimed at finding out the popularity of English among high school speakers of African languages. The responses were expected to indicate whether there was a noticeable

shift towards English.

In general questions 3 and 4 were aimed at finding out the speech habits of pupils on the school premises, outside school as well as in the society. These questions were considered very important because they gave a picture of what was happening in different schools as well as outside school regarding language as a means of communication.

Question 5: How many times do you speak English at home?

The options were; 1 hour per day, 2-3 hours daily and never.

This question was aimed at finding out the popularity of English in the homes of speakers of African languages.

Question 6: How often do you watch TV1?

Question 7: How often do you watch CCV?

The options were: 1 hour daily, 2-3 hours daily, more than 2-3 hours daily or never.

These questions were meant to establish the pupils' preferences in viewing television. Which channel was more popular among these pupils? Was it the channel that was servicing mainly English and Afrikaans viewers or was it the one that was directed at the speakers of African languages?

Their viewing habits would imply their attitudes towards African languages.

Section B

1.3.2.2 Academic and future expectations

This aspect was covered by questions 8 to 10(a). It was hoped that the responses to these questions would indicate a correlation between language choices of high school pupils and their future aspirations.

The questions were as follows:

Question 8: When you leave school, do you want to go to university, technikon or college, get a job or tour the world?

The responses to this question were then compared with the responses to questions 9 and 10(a).

Question 9: Do you think African languages will help you to attain your goal?

The options were, yes, no or unsure.

This question was very important because the responses to it gave a fundamental reason why speakers of African languages preferred English to their own languages.

Question 10(a): Would you like to be taught content subjects in your mother

tongue? Options in this question were the same as in 9.

The responses to this question were meant to complement question 9. Question 10 (a) covered the controversial issue of the medium of instruction in South Africa. Were there any pupils who did not want to be taught in the language they understood better, that is, their mother tongue? Did language attitudes play a role in their choices? The pupils' responses to questions 9 and 10(a), if taken seriously, may have serious implications for language-policy decisions in education.

Section C

1.3.2.3 Political Factors

The issue of language status is about the politics of language, that is, which language or languages are likely to have official status in different countries. In multilingual countries, the official language is usually the language of the dominant group, in terms of economic and political power. Moreover, in most colonized countries of Africa, the official language is usually the language of the colonizers. An African language is sometimes added to this language.

In South Africa, the Government of National Unity decided to elevate all nine indigenous languages to official status so as to reflect the "Rainbow" nation. Regrettably, at the time this research was undertaken, there were

many questions surrounding the eleven-languages policy. These questions about the politics of languages in South Africa were covered by Section C in the questionnaire, that is, questions 10(b) to 13. It was thought that the responses to these questions would throw light on what ordinary people think about the official status of their languages. A discussion of these questions follow:

Question 10(b): Do you think eleven official languages are going to work?

The options were yes, no, unsure.

This was a very sensitive question in that it challenged the pupils' ability to distinguish between the theory and practice. It was hoped that the responses to this question would indicate whether speakers of African languages were willing to acknowledge the difficulties in the implementation of this policy. Once more, this question was meant to bring to light the uncertainty surrounding eleven official languages. This information would be shown by the number of "unsure" responses.

Question 11: Do you think African languages should be developed?

Options were the same as in 10 (b).

The importance of this question lies in its ability to indicate whether speakers of African languages do indeed value their languages even if they

are regarded as being unable to handle certain situations, such as being media of instruction in higher classes.

Question 12: Do you think African languages are equal to English? The options were the same as in 11.

Since these African languages are equal to English, it was important to find out whether the users of these languages perceive them as equal to English. Again, this question required the respondents to differentiate between the theory and practice, that is, between what is in the Constitution and what is happening in everyday interactions.

Question 13: African languages are useless and they should not be taught at school. This was a statement and the options were the same as above.

Once more this question was aimed at finding out whether speakers of African languages value their languages irrespective of whether they are able to fulfil certain functions. Although the aim of this question is similar to that of question 11, the wording of this question appealed to one's emotions whereas question 11 required the respondents to think more carefully.

1.3.3 Interviews

Interviews were also used to obtain data that were difficult to quantify, for example, questions that needed more extensive answers. Again, the interviews were used to compensate for the discrepancies in the questionnaires, for example, to clarify ambiguous questions such as question 12. The language used was the mother tongue of the interviewees. It was interesting to note that in most cases pupils used a lot of code-switching and code-mixing. The choice to use English was regarded as a reflection of their attitudes towards African languages.

From the exposition it is clear that both a qualitative approach and a quantitative approach were used- quantitative because numbers were used and qualitative because these numbers were also interpreted and conclusions drawn. Again, interviews covered the qualitative aspect of this research.

1.3.4 Hypotheses

The first hypothesis is that pupils in rural areas are more positive towards African languages while pupils in urban areas display more positive attitudes towards English, because of their constant contact with situations where they have to express themselves in English.

The second hypothesis is that pupils in predominantly white schools are less positive towards African languages and are more inclined towards including English in their repertoires.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This chapter deals with a brief review of major works on the study of language attitudes. This will help to provide a background for this research. In addition to the reviewing of literature, this chapter will also give an outline of the theoretical framework that will be used in this research.

2. 1 LITERATURE REVIEW

Over the years, how people feel about a language or languages had always had an influence on their behaviour towards such languages. Because of this, many scholars had been interested in the study of language attitudes. In this research, only few such scholars will be mentioned.

Although, much research has been done on the attitudes of speakers to given languages, this kind of research dealt mainly with attitudes towards nonstandard varieties of a specific language, for example, a study of attitudes towards nonstandard Xhosa which was undertaken by Nomlomo (1993). Bourhis (1982) also reviews the treatment of French in all the French cultures across the world. In both cases the nonstandard variety is

labelled as incorrect and deficient. According to Scott and Smitherman (1985:303):

A lot of literature indicates that attitudes towards a language or variety are actually attitudes towards the speakers of that language or variety.

Again, speakers of nonstandard varieties often try hard to speak like the speakers of standard varieties. This behaviour is driven by a need to be accepted by the speakers of a more prestigious language or variety. This same phenomenon is evident among speakers of minority and less prestigious languages who would take pains to imitate the speakers of a more prestigious language. In the South African situation the prestigious language is English.

In order to place this study of attitudes towards African languages in a broader perspective, reference will be made to the position of indigenous languages in neighbouring countries, such as, Kenya, Tanzania and Zambia. These countries have been chosen because they are somewhat similar to South Africa in that all share a common colonial inheritance. This view is endorsed by Schmied (1990).

2.1.1 Zambia

Schmied (1990:218) states:

In Zambia English is most deeply rooted in the national multilingual scene because of its contact with English native speakers from Britain and South Africa on the farms and in the mines since the days of the penetration by the British South African Company almost a century ago.

He also points out that Zambians were somehow reluctant to adopt African languages for official functions because they feared Bantu education. Because of this fear the Zambians, in 1967, opted for an English-only policy from the first day at primary school. Again, in Zambia English is widely used in administration, law and education.

Siachitema (1986) also did research on language use and language attitudes in Zambia. In her studies she claims that Zambians associate English with social advancement. She also points out that even during the times of the missionaries, their aim was to teach the people of Zambia how to read and write in their own languages so that they would be able to read the Bible but the indigenous people had a different aim in mind: to learn English so that they would be able to participate in "the white man's economy" (Siachitema 1986:164) - hence their choice of an English only policy. Heugh (1995:337) says that Siachitema (1992) blames the failure of

the English-only policy squarely on the government with its top-down approach. According to Heugh (1995:337) Siachitema claims:

This policy has benefited a small elite and has excluded the majority of Zambians from participating in the national political and economic systems.

The question is whether we, in South Africa, want a replay of what is happening in Zambia or do we want to create more positive attitudes towards African languages so that pupils at school as well as the nation at large may see that **life-skills** can also be acquired through African Languages?

2.1.2 Tanzania

In Tanzania, the generally accepted *lingua franca* is KiSwahili. Schmied (1990:218) points out:

English dominance in Tanzania (on the mainland) started only after World War 1, and was much less penetrating due to the country's uninteresting economic opportunities and its uncertain legal status as a League of Nations protectorate and, later, a United Nations B mandate.

Resulting from this state of affairs, it was much easier for Tanzania to adopt and propagate the generally accepted *lingua franca*, KiSwahili as an official

language in 1967. This implies that the well-developed nations were not interested in trading with Tanzania because it did not have much to offer.

In Tanzania Kiswahili is used up to the highest level in Parliament, in the government and informally even in parts of the university. As a result, English has been neglected in this country. However, one must not forget to point out that Tanzania has been forced to revise its language policies on account of the problems encountered by post-school pupils who have been unable to gain admission to English-medium universities. In recent policies, according to Schmied (1990:219), English has been re-emphasised but it is limited to the education sector where it is now a medium of instruction from secondary school onward. What has happened in Tanzania warns us that over-emphasizing an indigenous language at the expense of the language of wider communication is bound to be fraught with difficulties. Tanzania was more concerned with the political aspect and forgot the fact that she is part of a wider community (the world). Is this approach practicable in South Africa? If it is, will it serve the best interests of South Africans?

2.1.3 Kenya

By contrast, Schmied (1990:219) says the following about Kenya:

In the Kenyan context official language use has often been described as pragmatic, because despite the fact that frequent lip service is to the promotion of Swahili similar to the Tanzanian model, the influence of the local languages, the prevalent modernization strategy and strong international consideration have prevented major changes.

The meaning of the above statement is that in Kenya English is still more widely used than indigenous languages.

After investigating language use, attitudes and proficiency in these countries, Schmied (1990:233) came up with the following arguments against and in favour of African languages;

Zambia is more pro-English than Kenya and Tanzania concerning practical arguments about job requirements. In anti-tribal arguments both Kenyans and Zambians believe that English is a link language in contrast to Tanzania. On the other hand Tanzanians scored high in indicating that English is a superior language (although at home they don't rate English as such). (Schmied 1990:233)

Surprisingly enough, in Zambia, the general argument in favour of African languages met with much more agreement than arguments against English.

Schmied (1990) concludes:

This is very interesting when considering that Zambia has never undergone language policy campaigns such as were implemented in Kenya and Tanzania.

This statement suggests that language policy campaigns will not necessarily change the way people think about a language or languages. People should feel the need to retain these languages.

Looking at language use and attitudes in these countries, one can safely conclude that no matter what policy is put in place, language attitudes will be a major factor in determining that policy's failure or success. KiSwahili as a lingua franca is most stable in Kenya and Tanzania but Bemba and Nyanja (Zambian lingua francas) are not truly accepted by the Zambians. They prefer their own ethnic languages. It is possible that language planners did not consult the people in order to find out their attitudes about Bemba and Nyanja. The bottom line is that the language policy of a country has to achieve certain goals either in the economic or in the political sphere. For example, the Tanzanian policy is aimed at training people for rural production whereas the Kenyan government is more interested in providing equal opportunities for the people to compete for relatively few positions in the modern, urban sector (Zuengler 1985:250).

Mparutsa *et al.* (1992) also did research on the language attitudes of

secondary school pupils in Zimbabwe. Their study is relevant to this topic because it was done after independence. Mparutsa *et al.* (1992:238) discovered that

...since independence English has remained the *de facto* language of power and economic advancement....It is possible that teachers reproduce this contradiction through their own attitudes and actions.

In their responses to questions pupils indicated that they understood the subject matter better if it was explained in their mother tongue, that is, Shona or Ndebele. But, interestingly enough, when a pupil had to choose between A and O levels, many chose English instead of Shona/Ndebele. Mparutsa *et al.* (1992:238) state that by so doing

The pupils were reflecting a widely held belief that a certificate in indigenous languages is not likely to help young people in the job market.

This then shows that any form of language planning that ignores social and economic forces will not produce a successful language policy. Market forces always win.

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When these pupils were asked to respond to a statement such as "Shona/Ndebele is a useless language, there is no reason why it should be taught in schools and university" only 4 per cent said yes and 96 per cent

said no. This is an indication that pupils or people in general might choose the language of the dominant group as a vehicle for upward social mobility but this does not mean that they do not like their languages. Perhaps what they need to know is that one can choose the language of wider communication without sacrificing one's own language.

Scott and Smitherman (1985:303) also state the conclusions which have been drawn from studies of language attitudes and education. Only those that are more relevant to the topic will be cited here, namely:

- * The teacher's expectation of a pupil's academic performance sometimes has an unplanned yet significant influence on the actual performance of that pupil.
- * The school strongly shares in maintaining the organisational structure of the society.

These conclusions imply that teachers as members of the society hold the same attitudes about a language, languages or language varieties as the society in which they live. In African schools, because most teachers are members of a group whose languages have been relegated to the background by the dominant group, they also maintain less positive attitudes towards their own languages. By so doing, according to Williams (1970b:383),

They reaffirm those distinctions of social structure stored in our stereotypes and manifested in our behaviour.

This means that if the language has a low status in society, it will be treated likewise at school since the school is just an extension of the society.

Ramorola (1995) also undertook research on teachers' attitudes. She discovered that teachers supported the idea of the development of African languages and they also felt that these languages should be taught at school. However, the majority of teachers disagreed with the idea that these languages should be used as media of instruction. We will see in the conclusion that these ideas are consistent with the findings of this research. It is therefore clear that teachers attitudes do affect their pupils.

2.2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

As a point of departure, attention will be paid to the definition of the concept of attitudes. Petty and Cacioppo (1986:12) define language attitudes as "General evaluations people make about themselves, other persons, objects or issues".

These attitudes are based on people's experiences about certain things.

According to this definition, language attitudes can be said to be evaluations people make about a particular dialect, language or languages.

Fasold (1990:148) states:

Most often, the definition of language attitudes is broadened to include attitudes towards speakers of a particular language or dialect....Language attitudes imply all sorts of behaviour concerning a language to be treated, including attitudes towards maintenance and planning efforts.

Siachitema emphasizes the idea that attitudes are learnt by pointing out that although scholars differ widely on the interpretation of the concept attitude, they agree on the fact that "Attitudes are learnt from previous experiences *Attitudes* and they are not short-lived but fairly enduring". (Siachitema 1986:152)

All the above definitions imply that attitudes are the result of experiences which unconsciously and unintentionally affect a person's behaviour. In the case of a language, this means that a person's behaviour towards a specific language or languages will depend on his evaluation of the language in question.

This research will also move from the premise that there are certain factors *Factors* that influence language attitudes. Among these are academic expectations, language status, socio-economic background and future aspirations. These factors will be used to determine the extent to which such factors have influenced the attitudes of mother-tongue speakers of African languages towards their own languages.

2.2.1 Socio-economic Factors

The pupils' family background will influence their attitudes towards African languages. Pupils from families where African languages are seldom used will have a different attitude from pupils who come from families where an African mother tongue is used more often.

class ranking { It is also a common phenomenon in all multilingual countries that languages are hierarchical. The languages spoken by the most prestigious group or groups are usually ranked higher than those spoken by the lower classes of the society. Cooper (1985:237) observes that an unnamed Israeli psychologist found out that there is

... a high correlation between the social prestige of various immigrant groups in Israel and the social prestige of their mother tongues.*

He then goes on to claim that immigrants to the United States and South Africa are generally accorded high prestige and their language (English) is highly rated as well. Conversely, languages that are spoken in third-world countries are not ranked highly in other parts of the world, especially in well-developed countries.

Pupils from the lower socio-economic level will realize the importance of a

language of wider communication, such as English. They become aware that knowledge of English has economic attractions as well as high social status. This causes them to be less positive or to pay less attention to the language that does not have these rewards. Cooper (1985:235) points out that "in Israel, of all the jobs advertised, 10% of them mentioned English as a job requirement".

What about African languages? Without mentioning numbers, it is an indisputable fact that proficiency in African languages **alone** does not allow a person to compete effectively in the job market. A person will need English as well. One needs to note that some people perceive that some advertisements that specify African language competence are sometimes a disguise for affirmative-action posts.

2. 2. 2 Language Status

How people react to a language depends on its status. A minority language will evoke a different attitude from an official language. People who speak minority languages usually develop less positive attitudes towards their languages. This view is shared by Day (1982:124), who points out that "minority children with exposure to the majority culture tend to display attitudes which reflect their exposure".

This means that speakers of minority languages also see their languages through the eyes of the dominant groups. In the South African context, as these children progress through the school system, they become more and more convinced that their mother tongue is inferior to English and Afrikaans. This is emphasized when suddenly, in standard two, their mother tongue is replaced by English as the medium of instruction. From then onwards almost all the school activities are done in English. Debates are held in English. Even physical education is in English. Day (1982:124) warns, however, against over-generalization:

People should not think that language attitudes of the majority are always acquired by all the members of a given speech community.

The validity of this statement will be proved by the results of this research.

2.2.3 Academic and Future Expectations

Pupils' attitudes are, to a large extent, influenced by their academic expectations. People believe that in order to succeed academically, one has to be proficient in English or in a language of wider communication, especially if that language is also a medium of instruction.

2.2.4 Teacher Attitudes

The teachers' attitudes also play a role in shaping pupils' attitudes towards a certain language. Scott and Smitherman (1985) affirm the importance of teachers' behaviour by pointing out that

School setting accords a high status and a dominant role to the teacher; consequently, teacher attitudes play an important role in shaping pupils' expectations and perceptions of themselves as well as of the teacher.

In other words when the teacher is in the classroom he or she is revealing social reality. Fasold (1990:148) also agrees that "Language attitudes may influence the way teachers deal with pupils."

Teachers sometimes equate proficiency in English with intelligence. Pupils who struggle with the subject matter because it is taught in the language they do not understand are labelled as slow-learners and they in turn develop a low self-esteem. These pupils then put all their efforts into acquiring proficiency in English and they begin to see their mother tongue as a hindrance.

2.3 Conclusion

In the concluding chapter findings of the research will be discussed. Recommendations will then be made as suggested by the overall results. It will also be shown that this study is not against the use of English in schools. It is only an attempt to highlight the point that English can be used without sacrificing African languages or any other language for that matter. Conversely, proficiency in English should not mean lack of proficiency in a mother tongue.

Concluding

CHAPTER 3

ANALYSIS OF DATA FROM MODEL C SCHOOLS

This chapter deals with the analysis and interpretation of data collected from Model C schools. It was hypothesized that this sample population will be less positive towards African languages. Responses to the questionnaire will be presented by means of tables and only the percentages will be used.

As mentioned in the previous chapter language policy in South Africa has always been a top-down exercise with the government controlling and directing its implementation. Heugh (1995:329) observes:

The language policy of a country is very often a complicated set of relationships between overt political ideology and the more covert aspects of the politics of economy.

This simply means that the language policy of a country is usually compatible with the ideology of the government which is in power. In a country where people are treated equally, one would expect a language policy that allows citizens equal access to government and job opportunities. From a different angle, this also means that a language policy can also be used to exclude certain people from government and

from participating fully in the economy of the country. The case of the old South Africa and its promotion of Afrikaans is a good example of how language can be used to exclude certain groups of people.

Political change does not develop at the same pace as linguistic and economic changes. In South Africa under the apartheid government, economic power was in the hands of Afrikaans and English-speakers. Seventeen months after independence things have not yet changed. What are the linguistic implications of this state of affairs? The answer is that, although the indigenous people of this country have attained political power, they still have to know English (or sometimes Afrikaans) in order to earn a living. Therefore, although politically all eleven official languages are equal, economically African languages are at a disadvantage because their speakers do not have economic power.

That language behaviour is closely linked with the economic structure of a country which, in turn, is closely linked with the social structure of the society is not a subject for debate. What is questionable is whether it would be wise for the government to espouse a language policy that ignores the economic factors even if there were sound political reasons for such a move. A language policy that did so would be difficult to implement and if the government persisted some people might even perceive such a policy as indirectly denying them a chance to participate meaningfully in the

economy of the country. It is highly likely that people will continue using the language of the economy and parents will also continue encouraging their children to speak English as long as there are still social and economic imbalances and as long as English is still recognized as a world language. People look at the functional value of a language and whether that language manages to satisfy their needs.

It is a widely held view that African Languages are used exclusively for religious and domestic purposes. This view is held not only by non-African language speakers but by the speakers of African languages themselves. This emerged during interviews with pupils. When they were asked to express their feelings about African languages the majority said that they wanted these languages to be retained and learned at school because they were part of their culture. Some pupils even indicated that they would like to see their white counterparts learning African languages. When asked why that should happen, the interviewees said that they would like others to know their (the respondents') culture. The fact that when this research was undertaken African languages were regarded as good for domestic purposes may also be seen in the behaviour of large companies such as the South African Airways. During 1995 I used to fly to and from Durban every month. In all these trips, Zulu and Sotho were used only for greetings

and leave takings (*Sanibonani/ Dumelang. Hambeni kahle/ Salang hantle*⁹). Serious announcements were then made in Afrikaans and English.

The situation is even more complex in Model C schools because teachers are mostly first-language speakers of English or Afrikaans. This means that pupils in these schools have to know English well in order to be able to understand the teachers' instructions, let alone the subject matter. This situation places an extra burden on both the teacher and the pupils but mostly on the latter, whose future depends on their mastery of the English language. How much extra effort went into addressing this language problem was not so clear. In many instances though, speakers of African languages are admitted to these schools only if they already have attained a satisfactory level of English then it is a case of sink or swim. It is logical that pupils who find themselves in such a situation have to work hard in order to improve their proficiency in English, which usually means speaking English regularly. The real situation in these schools will be provided by analysing the data which is described below.

⁹ *Dumelang* (Sotho) is equivalent to "good morning/day/afternoon or evening".
Sanibonani (Zulu) also has the above meanings.
Salang hantle/sintle (Sotho) is equivalent to an English leave-takings and to *Hambeni kahle* (Zulu).

3.1 SECTION A

3.1.1 Socio-economic Factors

What is important in this section is the degree to which the socio-economic factors influence the speakers of African languages attending Model C schools.

Firstly, in question 1, 100 per cent of respondents indicated that they spoke an African language at home. Only 1,6 per cent indicated that they spoke English in addition to their mother tongue. This is interesting when considering that 45 per cent of this sample population had indicated in question five that they used English at home at least two to three hours per day. This gives an impression that the majority of pupils did not realize the significance of their language behaviour at home. In other words there was a difference between what they actually did and what they thought they were doing.

In question 2, which requested information on parents' occupations, it appeared that a large majority was from a middle-class background for example, their parents were doctors, teachers, financial consultants, supervisors, chief cashiers, police officers, businessmen, court interpreters, managers, and so forth. This information was important in so far as it helped to determine the socio-economic background of this sample

population.

Questions 3 and 4 were aimed at investigating the speech patterns of these pupils both inside and outside the school premises. In short, which language was used extensively by speakers of African languages? Their responses, in percentages, were then put in the table below.

Table 3(a): Responses to questions 3 and 4

Question	Yes	No	Unsure	No Response	Total
3(a)	5%	95%	-	-	100%
(b)	66,6%	21,6%	10%	1,6%	100%
(c)	11,6%	80%	6,6%	1,6%	100%
(d)	56,6%	36%	-	6,6%	100%
4 (a)	100%	-	-	-	100%
(b)	59,3%	21,6%	18,3%	-	100%
(c)	51,6%	40%	6,6%	-	100%
(d)	36,6%	56,6%	6,6%	-	100%

On whether they spoke their mother tongue with their teachers, it appears from the table that a large majority of pupils in Model C schools did not speak their mother tongue with their teachers. This was not surprising

since almost all the teachers in model C schools were not speakers of African languages. In fact, responses to this question were predictable. This question was asked in order to compare the responses with the data obtained from schools that were predominantly black.

Although the majority indicated that they spoke their mother tongue with their friends on the school premises, there was still a considerably percentage who did not. What was interesting was that although these were non-racial schools, in most cases pupils still grouped themselves along racial lines; hence, the majority that spoke their mother tongue with their friends on the school premises. Again, there could be numerous reasons for this pattern. The first reason relates to the language issue, that is, pupils find it easier to communicate with those with whom they share certain things, for example, language and culture. It could also happen that speaking a mother tongue emphasized group solidarity among themselves, especially because speakers of African languages were in the minority in Model C schools. The second reason could be ascribed to their lack of communicative competence in English. Some pupils pointed out during interviews that they did not feel free to speak English because they did not know it very well and therefore did not want to appear stupid in front of English speakers. These pupils were self-conscious and they preferred to use the language that they knew well.

What about those who did not speak their mother-tongue with friends inside the school premises? It is possible that these respondents had friends who were not mother-tongue speakers of African languages. The other related reason could be that these pupils had friends who were speakers of a different African language and had to use English in order to communicate. The environment might have been another reason, in that these pupils found themselves in an environment in which English was a dominant language and therefore they had to assimilate to the mainstream culture. Hartshorne (1995) confirms this by saying that the most important reason a person learns a second language stems from a need to integrate with the speakers of that language.

That there were also pupils who were not sure whether they spoke their mother tongue with their friends in and outside the school premises may be explained by the probability that the choice of a language at a given time may take place at a subconscious level, hence the uncertainty.

The percentage of respondents who did not speak their mother tongue with their friends outside the school premises was amazingly high. Although it was expected that this percentage would be higher than those who spoke their mother tongue inside the school premises, the figure of 80 per cent was unexpected. What do we read from these numbers? They may mean that these pupils had accepted English as *the* language and because they

used it so often at school they did not feel that they should speak African languages, at least not with their friends. It would be interesting to see whether these pupils spoke their mother tongue with their parents or stuck to English even at home. Another important point is that some speakers were attracted by the "snob-value" of English (the Zimbabwean characterization of "ama-nose"¹⁰). English distinguished them from their counterparts who were attending school in the township or rural areas. In an interview, a standard nine pupil from a Model C school said that he liked the look of admiration and surprise he usually saw in people's eyes when he spoke English.

Question 3 (d) required the respondents to state whether they spoke their mother tongue with their nearest shopkeeper. This question was rather vague when considering that some pupils were living in areas which were predominantly white and the nearest shopkeeper was not likely to be a speaker of an African language. The vagueness was deliberate, as the aim was to establish the socio-economic background of the sample population. The 36,6 per cent who gave negative answers were likely to be living in grey areas¹¹ or to belong to the small group of elites that is emerging in the

¹⁰ Black people try to assume an English accent. It is reported that in Zimbabwe this is done by the black youth who try to adopt the accent of English-speakers.

¹¹ Grey areas: Areas which were meant for whites only (in terms of the Group Areas Act) but have since been populated by blacks as well.

townships. On the other hand, the majority agreed that they spoke their mother tongue with their nearest shopkeeper. This group may have been living in the townships and were therefore forced by circumstances to speak an African language when buying bread.

The non-responses might mean that the respondents did not really take note of what language they used when buying bread, the reason being that in the townships around Gauteng speakers of African languages can speak most languages that are spoken by other language-groups in their township. As a result the choice of a language usually depends on who speaks first. The norms of interaction demand that when one is spoken to, one should respond in a language used by one's interlocutors if one knows that language. Alternatively, non-responses may also imply that the respondents did not really perceive a pattern regarding the issue. Further research in this field might be helpful in finding out what really happens.

Question 4 was aimed at finding out the popularity of English among high school speakers of African languages who were attending Model C schools. The responses to these questions were expected to give a clear picture whether there was a definite shift towards English during the time when this research was undertaken. About the patterns of English language use, it is clear from the table that respondents used English extensively when communicating with their teachers as well as with their fellow schoolmates.

That 100 per cent spoke English with their teachers is consistent with question 3(a), where 95 per cent indicated that they did not speak their mother tongue with their teachers. Once more this response was predictable in this sample population; this question was important only in so far as it was used to gain a clear picture of a similar situation in African schools, that is, to what extent pupils in African schools speak English with their teachers.

What was interesting were their responses to the questions whether they spoke English with their friends on as well as outside the school premises. In both cases, the majority did speak English with their friends.

It is understandable when 59 per cent high school speakers of African languages use English even when communicating among themselves on the school premises but when 51,6 per cent of the respondents indicate that they use English even outside the school premises, this is a significant statement. Inside the school premises one could argue that these pupils were driven by a need to belong to the mainstream culture but outside the school premises the use of English was by choice. The language behaviour of these pupils concurred with Chick's (1995:230) view:

What happens in everyday conversational exchanges affects and is affected by such circumstances of institutions and the wider society as prevailing ideologies, value systems and the inequitable distribution of power and resources among various

cultural and social groups.

It is therefore apparent that the behaviour of these pupils was influenced, to a great extent, by the circumstances prevailing in the wider society. These pupils preferred the language of the group which had more economic power, hence the assumption of the second identity. These pupils had acquired the value systems of the dominant group and they saw their languages through the eyes of this group. However, it is important to point out that the latter statement is not always true. The minority that did not speak English with their friends, especially outside the school premises serves as proof of this. The other reason could be that their friends were not attending these Model C schools or they belonged to the same language group as their friends.

Now that we have a clearer picture of how this sample population used English and their mother tongue for communication both inside and outside the school premises, it is important to find out about patterns of language use in their homes. The question required pupils to indicate the frequency with which they used English at home. The table below summarizes the responses acquired:

Table 3(b): Responses to question 5

Question	1 hr/day	2-3 hrs/day	never	Total
5	33,3%	45%	21,6%	100%

Although in question 1 all respondents gave their mother tongue as the language used at home, only 1,6 per cent indicated that they spoke both English and a mother tongue. However, their responses to question 5 painted a different picture of their language habits at home. That 45 per cent of the sample population used English at least two to three hours per day was a clear indication that English was finding its way into African homes. An important implication here is that in 1995 the majority of speakers of African languages from Model C schools used English much more often than one might have thought.

Although pupils claimed that they spoke English with an average regularity of two hours per day, the important question arises: What sort of English? Because the data were self-reports, one could not know for sure since some speakers may have overestimated their language behaviour. They may have reported speaking English a lot, when what they really spoke was "urban", that is, a language variety with much more mixing and switching of codes, and this behaviour is quite different from speaking English at home. Unfortunately this is another limitation of the questionnaires data, that is, in

addition to the general one of self-reports. What is important though, for the purpose of this study, is that the majority of pupils were speaking some sort of English in addition to their mother tongue.

On the basis of the information already discussed, the respondents showed bias towards English in their speech patterns. Since television ^{and radio} is the most popular medium for the dissemination of information as well as for entertainment purposes in most homes, it was necessary to find out what this group's viewing habits were like. The following are their responses to questions 6 and 7.

Table 3(c): Responses to questions 6 and 7

Question	1hr/day	2-3hrs/day	more	never	Total
6. TV1	28,3%	33,3%	31,6%	6,6%	100%
7. CCV	10%	18,3%	68,3%	3,3%	100%

→ It was interesting to note the popularity of CCV compared to TV1, which was, until 3 February 1996, broadcasting in English and Afrikaans. Numbers showed that CCV was more popular than TV1, at least to the school-going group. How does one explain this sudden change? The main reason was that although this channel was directed at the speakers of

African languages, it used to broadcast in both English and African languages and by so doing it accommodated the dual identities of the respondents. The second reason could be that CCV included entertainment programmes such as soap operas, music and television plays. Msimang (1992) pointed out in his Inaugural address that this channel was not so popular when it was still divided into TV2 and TV3, which were broadcasting exclusively in Nguni and Sotho languages respectively. Still on the unpopularity of these channels Msimang (1992:10) states

The establishment of Radio, TV4 and CCV was partly an effort by the SABC to capture those listeners and viewers who preferred stations which broadcast in English.

Although this explanation might sound too simplistic one might say that to a greater or lesser extent English contributed to the popularity of CCV.

3.2 SECTION B

3.2.1 Academic and Future Expectations

As mentioned in the previous chapter, some sociolinguists believe that a country's choice of language policy depends on that country's goals, especially in matters pertaining to the economy. Narrowing this assertion down, one may be inclined to think that a person's choice of language, especially in education, will be to a larger extent, influenced by his or her

future goals. Questions 8, 9 and 10 (a) were used to find this information and the pupils' responses appear below.

Table 3(d): Responses to question 8

Question	Varsity	Technikon or College	Job	Tour the world	Total
8.	55%	41,6%	3,3%	-	100%

Table 3(e): Responses to questions 9 and 10(a)

Question	Yes	No	Unsure	No Response	Total
9.	51,6%	21,6%	25%	1,6%	100%
10(a)	38,3%	40%	20%	1,6%	100%

It was discovered that although the overwhelming majority of 96,6 per cent had indicated in question 8 that they wanted to proceed to tertiary institutions, only a 51,6 per cent thought that African languages would help them to attain their goals. It was also interesting to note that all those who were intending to seek jobs when they left school were in the group which answered negatively. To think that even those who intended to get employment when they left school did not think that African languages would help them to attain their goals endorses a widely held belief that an African language is not likely to help one in the job market.

There was also much uncertainty regarding the ability of African languages to help one in the attainment of one's goals. This was indicated by a significant number of unsure responses in the sample population.

Again, looking at the table, it is apparent that the majority did not want to be taught content subjects in their mother tongue. In fact, this also emerged during interviews. These respondents said that they wanted to be taught in English so that they would not experience problems in tertiary institutions. Some pupils said that they would not mind being taught in an African language but only if these languages would also be used as media of instruction in tertiary institutions. They qualified this statement by saying that they would need assurance that their academic qualifications would be given the same value as those obtained through the medium of other languages such as English and Afrikaans; otherwise they would rather be taught in English.

3.3 SECTION C

3.3.1 Political Factors

As it has already been established that political factors are one of the determinants of language attitudes, it is important to find out how different people react to certain emotive issues about language.

Table 3(f): Responses to questions 10(b) to 13

Question	Yes	No	Unsure	No response	Total
10(b)	50%	23,3%	25%	1,6%	100%
11.	85%	8,3%	5%	1,6%	100%
12.	51,6%	40%	6,6%	1,6%	100%
13.	6,6%	88,3%	3,3%	1,6%	100%

It was important to find out what this sample population thought about African languages. Although those who thought this language policy was going to work made up 50 per cent, there was still a considerable number that was split between those who did not think so and those who were not sure. Perhaps one could say that 50 per cent was operating on an a more emotional ideological level whereas the other 50 per cent was more realistic and practical. Another reason for such divergent views may be mixed feelings that people have about eleven official languages.

Concerning the development of African languages it appeared that respondents were unanimous that these languages should be developed. What was most interesting was that most of these respondents were those who had earlier indicated that they did not want to be taught content subjects in an African language as well as those who thought that African

languages were not going to help them to attain their goals. This means that although some pupils did not think that African languages could be used as media of instruction in higher classes, they acknowledged their value, albeit in other matters.

Regarding the equality of African languages to English the majority indicated that these languages were equal to English, but still the number of those who gave negative answers was quite large. The importance of this question cannot be overemphasized because it compared theory and practice: that is, although pupils know consciously that African languages are now equal to English (at least constitutionally), their speech patterns as shown in table 3(a) contradict this. According to the data, most of these pupils used English at home as well as with their friends. This implies that status is expressed by the language behaviour of people rather than by the constitution.

When asked to respond to the statement that "African languages are useless and should not be taught at school", they responded like their Zimbabwe counterparts, that is, the majority (88,3 per cent) did not think so. Obviously this means that the majority of respondents did have covert prestige for their languages.

3.4 Conclusion

The responses from these pupils indicated that although the majority spoke African languages with friends inside school premises, English was still a much more popular *lingua franca*. Surprisingly, a considerable, though not a majority, number of these pupils also preferred to be taught content subjects in their mother tongue. Once more, this group was expected to be less positive towards African languages but their responses to Section C proved otherwise.

CHAPTER 4

ANALYSIS OF DATA COLLECTED FROM SCHOOLS IN RURAL AREAS

This chapter deals with the analysis of the questionnaires which were completed by high school pupils in the rural areas of Mosterlus and Bochum in the Eastern and Northern Transvaal respectively. Two schools were visited and in each school thirty pupils completed the questionnaires. The school in the Eastern Transvaal (Mosterlus) had a majority of Nguni speakers while the one in the Northern Transvaal was predominantly Sotho.

Although some of the schools did employ teachers whose home language was not an African language, for example, whites and Indians, a larger percentage of the teaching staff were speakers of African languages. Most of these teachers were local people therefore in most cases they shared a mother-tongue with most of their pupils. In a school in the remote areas of Pietersburg all teachers were Northern-Sotho speakers because the area was largely populated by Northern Sotho-speakers. On the other hand the school in the Eastern Transvaal included both Nguni-and Sotho-speakers, reflecting the composition of the community, which consists largely of South Ndebele and Northern Sotho speakers. The composition of the teaching staff was important in so far as it influenced the speech patterns of the pupils.

4.1 SECTION A

4.1.1 Socio-economic Factors

The responses to questions 1 and 2 indicated that all respondents spoke an African Language at home and that most pupils were from families with a very low socio-economic level, with a few exceptions whose parents were teachers, nurses or businessmen. Most parents, especially men, were unemployed while their spouses were housewives or domestic workers.

Questions 3 and 4 were aimed at finding out the patterns of language use of high school pupils in rural areas. The summary of their responses is found in the table below. To avoid repeating information which is already given in the table, the discussion will concentrate only on the interpretation of the responses.

Table 4(a): Responses to questions 3 and 4

Question	Yes	No	Unsure	No Response	Total
3(a)	41,6%	51,6%	6,6%	-	100%
(b)	60%	30%	10%	-	100%
(c)	68%	31,7%	-	-	100%
4(a)	3,3%	88,3%	8,3%	-	100%
(b)	21,6%	40%	38,3%	-	100%
(c)	41,6%	53,3%	5%	-	100%
(d)	40%	50%	10%	-	100%

It was hypothesized at the beginning that these pupils would be more favourably disposed towards African languages. Since these pupils lived in rural areas it was assumed that they would have been less exposed to situations where they had to express themselves in English. Hence it was thought that they would not feel that they were at a disadvantage if they were not fully competent in English. Following hereunder is the discussion of their responses to these questions.

On the question of the use of African languages at school there was a large positive response. The number of respondents who indicated that they spoke their mother tongue with their teachers was much higher than their counterparts in Model C schools. It is worth noting, however, that in Model

C schools the environment was different since almost all the teachers were not mother-tongue speakers of African languages. What is more important in this group is that although almost all the teachers were speakers of African languages, there was a significant (over 50 per cent) number of pupils who indicated that they did not speak their mother tongue with their teachers. The reason such a significant number did not speak their mother tongue with their teachers may be that some teachers were trying to encourage pupils to speak English rather than African languages. This applied particularly in class, unless it was an African-language period. Another reason could be that some pupils did not share a mother tongue with their teachers. This was established in an interview when some pupils indicated that although they often spoke an African language with their teachers, it was not always their (the pupils') mother tongue because they normally used the mother tongue of the teacher concerned. Perhaps the questionnaire should have been more explicit about which language the pupils used with their teachers, that is, whether it was their mother tongue or the teacher's in cases where both parties did not speak the same African language.

On the question of their communication with their friends inside the school premises, it is clear from the table that the majority used their mother tongue. Those who did not speak their mother tongue, however, were by no means also a small minority. The reason others did not speak their

mother tongue with their friends inside the school premises may have been that on the school premises the environment demanded that they sometimes speak a language other than their own, for example, English. Again, in some schools pupils were forbidden to speak an African language on the school premises because their teachers wanted them to improve their proficiency in English. There were also a number of unsure responses (11,6 per cent). This was an indication that sometimes pupils do not really check which language they speak, more especially in schools where pupils know more than one African language. Another inference is that sometimes people are not conscious of certain patterns in their use of language.

On their language behaviour outside school premises, it was obvious that their mother tongue was more popular than any other language. Those who indicated that they did not speak their mother tongue were also a large number. This may be interpreted in two ways: (1) that these respondents spoke an African language which was dominant in that particular area; for example, Nguni speakers in the rural areas of Bochum were in the minority and as a result usually spoke Northern Sotho; (2) it may also mean that they spoke English or some kind of *Tsotsitaal* or *isiCamtho*.

It also emerged that the majority used their mother tongue with their nearest shopkeeper. Only 36,7 per cent indicated that they did not. Once more, one cannot just assume because some pupils did not speak their mother

tongue that they spoke English. The possibility exists that they were thinking of another African language.

Question 4 was meant to investigate the frequency with which pupils in rural schools use English outside the classroom, that is, in contexts when it was not being used as a medium of instruction or taught as a subject. The table shows that an overwhelming majority of 88,3 per cent reported that they did not use English with their teachers whereas only 3,3 per cent indicated that they did. What is the reason for this infrequent use of English between teachers and pupils? It may derive from some rural teachers' lack of competence in English. When this research was undertaken it was very common to find teachers who were not very competent in English, although there were some who spoke very good English. Therefore, it was not only pupils' attitudes that determined the pattern here. Teachers' attitudes were as important, especially since teachers occupy a higher social position. This seems somewhat strange when one looks at their responses to 3 (a) where 51,6 per cent of the respondents indicated that they did not speak their mother tongue with their teachers. A more logical explanation may be that of the 51, 6 per cent in 3 (a) who reported that they did not speak their mother tongue with their teachers, only a tiny minority spoke English. On the basis of the above information in the table, one could say that the rest spoke some other African language.

On the popularity of English as a means of communication among friends, the situation was as follows: on the school premises only a small number indicated that they used English. Surprisingly, the number of unsure responses was unusually high. Perhaps this group could be indicating the way in which English and African languages were used by high school pupils when they were not in the classroom, that is, they would use a little of each so that they themselves were not really sure whether they were speaking English or their mother tongue. Code-switching may explain what was really happening among these respondents but unfortunately the question of code-switching was beyond the scope of this research. However, it may form the bases of further research in this field. It is also worth pointing out that during our interview, many pupils did much code-switching which was at a conscious level; for example, pupils would choose to begin a sentence in English and when they could not finish it because of their lack of vocabulary, they would return to their mother tongue.

Regarding language use outside the school premises, the majority indicated that they did not use English. Nevertheless, a significant number reported that they did. The question then arises why English was more popular for these pupils outside school than inside? The reason may be that these pupils did not have sufficient confidence to use English in front of their schoolmates but when they were alone, away from school, they felt less inhibited. Another explanation is that these respondents had a different

set of friends. The positive answers were very important since they were an indication that some pupils preferred to communicate in English even outside school premises.

Once more an overwhelming majority indicated that they did not speak English with their nearest shopkeeper. The remainder (2 per cent) was not sure. That the majority would give negative answers was predictable but that there would be some who were not sure was not. However, this may be attributed to code-switching or code-mixing, which made it difficult for them to say unequivocally that they used or did not use English.

Question 5 was intended to move the focus away from the school and to gauge the extent to which English was used in the homes of speakers of African languages who lived in rural areas. Was there a preference of English among these people?

Table 4(b): Responses to question 5

Question	1 hr/day	2-3 hrs/day	Never	Total
5	35%	33,3%	31,6%	100%

Among those who took part in the questionnaire, only 31,6 per cent indicated that they never spoke English at home whereas the majority reported that they spoke it for at least one hour per day. Although these

numbers are relative, one could not help noticing that, although the process was very slow, English was penetrating the homes of African-language speakers even in rural areas.

It was necessary that these pupils' viewing habits be investigated. Their viewing habits were then summarized in the table below.

Table 4(c): Responses to question 6 and 7

Question	1hr/day	2-3 hrs/day	More	Never	Total
6. TV1	26,7%	30%	16,6%	26,7%	100%
7. CCV	18,3%	23,3%	43,3%	15%	100%

Question 6 in particular was aimed at finding out whether pupils in traditionally black schools watched the channel which was (until the launch of the new SABC television programmes on 3 February 1996) meant for English and Afrikaans viewers only. Before the above date the television channels of the SABC were divided according to colour and not according to languages as is the case with the new language policy of the SABC. TV1 was directed at Afrikaans and English-speakers. These languages were advantaged by having the whole channel to themselves. On the other hand, CCV had to provide a service for speakers of African languages.

Because of limited time not all nine indigenous languages were accommodated, only the larger groups such as Xhosa, Zulu and the Sotho languages. Smaller groups such as Tsonga were marginalized. It was therefore common knowledge that blacks were expected to watch CCV and whites were expected to watch TV1. In the new policy, Afrikaans shares with the Sotho languages as well as with Tsonga and Venda whereas English shares with Nguni languages. This arrangement forces people to be programme loyal and channels are not designated according to colour. In the survey only 26,6 per cent indicated that they never watched TV1. What does this mean? It implies that the majority of the sample population watched the Afrikaans/English channel at least one hour daily.

Question 7 was aimed at finding out the frequency with which pupils in rural areas watched CCV. In rural areas only 15 per cent indicated that they never watched CCV and among those who watched it, the majority watched it for more than three hours daily. It was surprising that there were pupils who never watched CCV. An important question is whether all the pupils who filled in the questionnaire had television sets at home? It may be that the respondents who indicated that they never watched CCV or TV1 comprised of those who did not have access to television sets, which is not uncommon in rural areas. What is important, though, is that although these numbers are relative, they do give a clear picture of the pupils' viewing habits. At a glance CCV appears to have been more popular than TV1.

This popularity may be attributed to its broadcasting in English and African languages and to the way it did not force speakers of African languages to choose between English and their own languages. These reasons will become more pronounced when all three groups are compared in the concluding chapter.

4.2 SECTION B

4.2.1 Academic and Future Expectations

As discussed in the previous chapters, one's future plans may to a lesser or greater extent influence one's choices in life. Pupils will choose a language that will help them in the attainment of their goals. This section was therefore aimed at investigating the future aspirations of pupils in rural areas and to match these with their attitudes towards African languages. The data from rural areas concerning this aspect are presented in the tables.

Fig 4 (d): Responses to question 8

Question	Varsity	Technikon or College	Get a job	Tour the world	Total
8.	51,7%	38,3%	10%	-	100%

Table: 4(e) Responses to question 9 and 10(a)

Question	Yes	No	Unsure	No Response	Total
9.	23,3%	46,7%	25%	-	100%
10(a)	13,3%	63,3%	23,3%	-	100%

It was important to find out what the respondents wanted to do when they left school. This was covered by question 8. According to the given information, it appeared that a large percentage intended to go to university as against those who preferred a technikon. The number of those who wanted to find a job when they left school was 10 per cent, which was much higher than for their counterparts in Model C schools. Perhaps their choice of going to work may be attributed to their socio-economic conditions at home. These were mentioned at the beginning of the chapter.

Questions 9 and 10 (a) were intended to show the functional value of African languages in relation to the rural pupils' future aspirations. When asked in question 9 whether African languages would help them achieve their goals, the majority indicated that they did not think so and only 23,3 per cent thought that African languages would help them to attain their goals. There were also a considerable number of unsure responses as one can see from the table. The reason why some pupils were unsure was that they did not know the language requirements of the tertiary institution they wished to attend. This was established in an interview when one pupil said

that she was not sure whether African languages would help her because things were changing so fast that she did not know whether African languages would in the end be used as media of instruction for certain subjects at a technikon since she wanted to be a fashion designer.

In question 10(a), when asked whether they would like to be taught content subjects in their mother tongue, only 13,3 per cent gave positive responses as against 63,3 per cent who indicated that they did not want African languages to be media of instruction. The rest were unsure. It was also noticeable that all those who wanted to find a job when they left school did not want African languages to be media of instruction.

4.3 SECTION C

4.3.1 Political Factors

This section was intended to elicit political responses from respondents in rural areas. How did these pupils see African languages? Was there a fundamental difference between these pupils and their counterparts in urban areas? Their responses were summarised in the table below.

Table 4(f): Responses of question 10(b) to 13

Question	Yes	No	Unsure	No Response	Total
10(b)	43,3%	33,3%	23,3%	-	100%
11.	53,3%	37,7%	10%	-	100%
12.	45%	53,3%	5%	-	100%
13.	30%	56,7%	13,3%	-	100%

Pupils had first to answer question 10(b), which was more focused on the workability of the eleven official languages. Their answers would help to reveal whether they were aware of the implications of this policy and whether they were realistic in their answers.

The respondents' views concerning the practicality of the eleven official languages were very divergent. Although 43,3 per cent thought that this policy was going to work, a considerable number did not think so. In fact, there was only a 10 per cent difference between those who gave positive answers and those who gave negative answers. It also appears from the table that quite a large number of respondents were unsure. These unsure responses might be very important in that they make us aware of the uncertainty surrounding this policy.

Regarding the development of African languages the majority thought that

these languages should be developed. It is worth noting, however, that this was a small number compared to the positive responses in Model C schools. The reasons for this will be explored in the concluding chapter. There was also a large number, that is 37,6 per cent, who did not think that these languages need developing. The reason that speakers of African languages thought that their languages should not be developed must be that they thought their languages did not need to be taken seriously. The number of unsure responses was rather small. Nevertheless, these responses helped to highlight the point that some pupils did not understand why these languages should be developed. In other words, they had no idea of the importance of these languages or of the career opportunities associated with them. This came up during an interview with pupils at a school in the Eastern Transvaal Province. The pupils wanted me to explain to them why these languages should be developed if they were not used as regularly as English. Some said that they would like to study these languages but only if someone could explain to them whether one could make a career (besides teaching) out of them.

On whether African languages were equal to English, it was amazing to discover that although all eleven South African languages had been declared equal by the new constitution, there were respondents who still thought that African languages were not equal to English. This opinion was held by 53,3 per cent of the sample population. The minority thought that

these languages were equal to English. It should be noted, however, that some responses may be attributed to an ambiguity in the question itself. It is possible that some pupils understood constitutional equality whereas others understood social utilitarian equality. Although this may be the case, it is clear from the table above that the majority were thinking of utilitarian equality.

The last question attempted to draw out responses that could give a clear picture of the respondents' loyalty towards their languages. It was very surprising to discover that 30 per cent thought African languages were useless and should not be taught at school. However, the majority did not agree. 33 per cent of the respondents who had indicated earlier that they did not want African languages to be the media of instruction were among those who indicated in this question that they did not think that African languages were useless and should not be taught at school. This is important because it is an indication that although some pupils did not think of African languages as suitable media of instruction, they still thought that these languages were important and should be taught as subjects at school. Perhaps this point will help when language policy-makers discuss language issues in education.

4.4 Conclusion

According to the analyzed data, it is apparent that pupils in rural areas were using African languages more frequently than English in their speech. It also appeared that even in rural areas English was gradually gaining ground, at least among the youth. One would not have thought that pupils in rural areas could choose to speak English outside the school premises. Again, a large percentage did not think that an African language would help them in the attainment of their goals and as a result the majority did not want African languages to be media of instruction. At a political level the majority in this group acknowledged the value of African languages by indicating that these languages should be developed and taught at school.

CHAPTER 5

ANALYSIS OF DATA COLLECT FROM SCHOOLS IN THE TOWNSHIP

According to the hypothesis, pupils in these schools would be more favourably disposed towards English than their counterparts in rural areas because such pupils often encounter situations where they have to express themselves in either English or, to a lesser extent, Afrikaans. When they fail to communicate effectively in these languages they find themselves at a disadvantage.

In this chapter the data which were collected from two high schools in Mamelodi will be discussed. Mamelodi is a township east of Pretoria in the Gauteng Province. This township is populated by speakers of Nguni, Sotho, Venda and Tsonga.

5.1 SECTION A

5.1.1 Socio-economic Factors

On their family background, all respondents indicated that they had an African language as a mother tongue and all of them indicated that they spoke an African language at home. These respondents also came from

diverse backgrounds; for example, their parents consisted of professionals, skilled and unskilled workers as well as the unemployed. In 60 per cent of the cases both parents were working or earning some form of income. There were also very few pupils whose parents had businesses such as shops.

As in the preceding two chapters, pupils' responses to question 3 onwards will be presented in the form of a table.

Questions 3 and 4 were directed at testing the speech patterns of pupils who were attending school in the township. When one thinks about language behaviour in South Africa some of the following questions come to mind: Do people use African languages much more than English? Is there any evidence of a shift towards English? These questions will be answered by the interpretation of the figures below.

Table 5(a): Responses to questions 3 and 4

Question	Yes	No	Unsure	No Response	Total
3(a)	45%	43,3%	11,6%	-	100%
(b)	63,3%	30%	8,3%	-	100%
(c)	65%	25%	10%	-	100%
(d)	48,3%	30%	21,6%	-	100%
4(a)	76%	16,6%	6,6%	-	100%
(b)	36,6%	53,3%	10%	-	100%
(c)	35%	51,6%	13,3%	-	100%
(d)	50%	43,3%	6,6%	-	100%

Question 3 was aimed at finding out to what extent pupils in township schools used their mother tongue in different situations. On the question of whether they spoke their mother tongue with their teachers, it appeared that there was no dramatic difference between those who indicated that they spoke their mother tongue with their teachers and those who did not. It also emerged during an interview that some of those who did not speak their mother tongue with their teachers preferred to speak English. The reason that they put forward was that they wanted to improve their proficiency in English. As one can see from the table above, 11,6 per cent of the respondents were not sure which language they used with their teachers. The uncertainty may be attributed to the environment at school,

that is, teachers and pupils were from different ethnic groups, resulting in the teacher-pupil interaction in any language understood by the two parties. In such situations it is difficult to keep a check on one's speech patterns.

How did these pupils communicate with their friends on the school premises? According to the information in the table, a larger proportion of the sample population used their mother tongue. Perhaps this was an indication that things were changing and some schools no longer forbade pupils from speaking their mother tongue on the school premises. It also appeared that the number of those who indicated that they did not speak their mother tongue with their friends was not very low. However, one should be very wary of drawing conclusions here. For example, not speaking one's mother tongue does not necessarily mean that these pupils used English in their communication with friends inside the school premises. They may have spoken another African language. The reason for unsure responses may be the same as in their communication with their teachers, that is, since they could speak one another's language, they could not detect any pattern in their speech habits.

Once again, on their communication with friends outside the school premises, their mother tongue was used much more often. Only 25 per cent indicated that they did not use their mother tongue. When one looks closely at the table above, it becomes apparent that the language behaviour

of this sample population both inside and outside school premises was not very different. The mother tongue was popular in both cases.

On whether they spoke their mother tongue with their nearest shopkeeper, the situation was different. The number of those who used their mother tongue decreased by almost 25 per cent and the number of unsure responses increased. This is to be expected when one considers that in the townships around Gauteng Province people can speak more than one African language. As mentioned in an earlier chapter, the language used with the shopkeeper normally depends on who speaks first. On the other hand, those who indicated that they did not use their mother tongue might have been living in areas where their mother tongue was not a dominant *lingua franca*.

Question 4 looked at the use of English both inside and outside the school. An overwhelming majority of 76 per cent indicated that they spoke English with their teachers. This is in strong contrast with rural schools where only 3,3 per cent indicated that they spoke English with their teachers. According to the figures in the table only a small minority indicated that they did not speak English with the teachers. The unsure responses, though very few, may be attributed to the ambiguity of the question itself. Some pupils thought about communication in the classroom whereas others thought about outside the classroom or both. However, during interviews

with both rural and township pupils, it emerged that pupils in township schools did use English much more often with their teachers both in and outside the classroom than pupils in rural schools.

According to the table, English as a means of communication among friends appeared less popular. The majority of pupils indicated that they did not speak English with friends inside the school premises. What was the cause of such a difference between teacher-pupil interaction and the interaction among friends? The only sound reason is that although pupils were not forbidden to use African languages, they were encouraged by their teachers to use English. As a result, many of them felt obliged to speak English with their teachers but not with their friends.

The situation outside the school premises was not much different. Once more the majority did not speak English with their friends. This could only mean that this group felt more at home with their mother tongue than with English. Another reason could be that pupils had friends with whom they shared a mother tongue and therefore they did not need English to transcend language barriers. Unsure responses may be explained in two ways: pupils included much more code-switching in their speech or (2) they were speaking *isiCamtho*, which is common among township youth. In both cases it was difficult for them to classify what they were speaking as either English or an African language.

On whether they spoke English with their nearest shopkeeper it was surprising that 50 per cent indicated that they did. However, the difference was not significant because those who gave negative answers were 43,3 per cent of the sample population. What is more important in these figures is that they reveal that English was not only limited to formal situations at school or used only among friends but it was also used in the society. As it was seen in the analysis of data from the rural areas, English was gradually penetrating most levels of the society.

The above claim was also supported by the pupils' speech habits at home. The table below shows the frequency with which English was spoken in the homes of speakers of African languages who lived in the township.

Table 5(b): Responses to question 5

Question	1 hr/day	2-3 hrs/day	Never	Total
5	25%	46,6%	28,3%	100%

The table shows that only 28,3 per cent indicated that they never spoke English at home as against the majority who spoke it at least two to three times daily. The only difficulty here was to find out the type of English that the pupils claimed to be using. One important factor, though, is that about 70 per cent were speaking some form of English for at least one hour per day on average.

It was also important to investigate the viewing habits of the high school pupils in the township in order to establish which television channel was more popular than the other one. Their responses are laid out in the table below.

Table 5(c): Responses to questions 6 and 7

Question	1hr/day	2-3hrs/day	More	Never	Total
6. TV1	30%	26,6%	33,3%	10%	100%
7. CCV	30%	(30%)	31,6%	8,3%	100%

Only 10 per cent indicated that they never watched TV1 as against 8,3 per cent who never watched CCV. Considering that TV1 was serving Afrikaans- and English-speakers it is really surprising that the majority claimed to watch it at least more than three hours daily. On the whole, the table shows that there was a very slight difference between TV1 and CCV viewing. That there were respondents who claimed that they never watched CCV may be an indication of the urban people leaning more towards English than African languages. Again, looking at these figures, it became apparent that TV1 was becoming popular among township residents.

5.2 SECTION B

5.2.1 Academic and Future Expectations

Question 8 was meant to find out the future aspirations of pupils in the township. Their responses to this question were expected to correlate with their responses to questions 9 and 10 (a). As with the other data, their responses are tabled below.

Table 5(d): Responses to question 8

Question	Varsity	Technikon or College	Get a job	Tour the world	Total
8.	25%	38,3%	25%	11,6%	100%

The future aspirations of township pupils were very different from those of pupils in rural areas. Only 25 per cent showed interest in university education as against 51,6 per cent in rural areas. Again, this group had more pupils who wanted to find jobs when they left school. In fact, the number of respondents who wanted to find jobs was the same as those who indicated that they were going to university. There was no obvious reason for this difference. One could not say that these pupils were forced by their family background because they were better off than their rural counterparts in terms of the standard of living. Once more, this sample population had

the highest number who wanted to tour the world. It should be pointed out that this was the only sample population with respondents who had an interest in touring the world.

Questions 9 and 10 were meant to indicate a correlation between the future aspirations of pupils in the township with and attitudes towards African languages. In their responses below, the following appeared:

Table 5(e): Responses to questions 9 and 10(a)

Question	Yes	No	Unsure	No Response	Total
9.	40%	48,3%	11,7%	-	100%
10(a)	28,3	65%	6,7%	-	100%

Firstly, their responses to question 9 indicated that the majority did not think that African languages would help them to attain their goals but nonetheless a significant number thought that African languages would help them to attain their goals. All those who wanted to tour the world were among those who gave negative answers. In other words, these pupils were acknowledging that they needed an international language more than an African language. None of those who wanted to get jobs when they left school thought that African languages would help them to attain their goals.

On the question of whether they would like to be taught content subjects in

an African Language, only 28,3 per cent said yes. A large majority did not want to be taught in their mother tongue. Perhaps they also, did not trust that the certificates acquired through an African language would have the same value as the one acquired in English.

5.3 SECTION C

5.3.1 Political Factors

The questions in this section were aimed at investigating the feelings of township pupils about their languages. The questions were political in nature and also asked the respondents to think carefully since the issues were sensitive and could be clouded by emotions. The table below shows the summary of their responses.

5 Table(f): Responses to questions 10 (b) to 13

Question	Yes	No	Unsure	No Response	Total
10(B)	38,3%	46,7%	15%	-	100%
11.	58,3%	28,3%	13,3%	-	100%
12.	25%	60%	15%	-	100%
13.	23,3%	60%	15%	-	100%

Responding to question 10(b), the majority of the pupils did not think that

the policy of the eleven official languages was going to work. Those who were not sure formed 15 per cent of the sample population. One might interpret this as indicating that the majority of respondents were realistic in their answers and could see that eleven languages could not operate at the same level as was the situation with English and Afrikaans in the old South Africa.

On the development of African languages the majority thought that they should be developed. Those who thought that they should not be developed were also quite considerable, at 28,3 per cent. Surprisingly, it appeared that pupils in the townships favour the development of African languages more than their rural counterparts.

About the equality of African languages with English, the majority of the respondents in the townships did not think that African languages were equal to English. This means that these respondents understood the question as referring to utilitarian equality. Respondents who were not sure may have thought about both "utilitarian" and "constitutional" equality and in the end been unable to decide which one was more important. During interviews, it became clear that some pupils did not understand "how we could possibly compare things which were not comparable". According to these pupils, English was important but African languages were also important in their own right. One pupil even said that he needed English to

prosper in life but he needed his language to know his roots. How many people hold this is not very clear.

Responding to the statement that "African languages are useless and should not be taught at school", only 23,3 per cent gave positive answers and the majority rejected the statement. 15 per cent of the respondents were not sure. 55,5 per cent of those who rejected this statement were those who had indicated earlier that they did not want to be taught in their mother tongue. This implies that although the majority of pupils did not want African languages to be media of instruction, they still need them for other functions.

5.4 Conclusion

The analysis of data shows that this sample population used African languages much more often than English. Their future aspirations were quite different from those of their rural and Model C counterparts. The majority in this group did not think that African languages were capable of helping one to achieve one's goal. On political issues, like their rural counterparts, they did value African languages but they were also realistic in seeing that African languages were not equal to English.

CHAPTER 6

CONSOLIDATION OF DATA AND RESEARCH FINDINGS

This chapter deals with the consolidation of data pertaining to model C, rural and township schools. The chapter will concentrate on differences and similarities, the research findings will be discussed and, finally, recommendations arising from these findings will be made.

6.1 Socio-economic Factors

The data showed that respondents were from diverse family backgrounds. The rural and township groups indicated that the language spoken at home was an African language whereas a tiny minority from Model C schools indicated that they at home spoke English in addition to an African language.

Regarding the occupation of parents, it also became apparent that the group from Model C schools was well off in that the parents held good jobs and no respondent had parents who were unemployed. On the other hand, pupils from rural areas came from families where males were mostly ordinary labourers and their spouses were housewives or domestic workers. Moreover, the number of unemployed parents was very high in this group.

The respondents from township schools were better off than their rural counterparts, as many parents had some form of income. This information can be very useful in trying to understand the responses to question 8.

6.1.1 The Use of African Languages with Teachers

The speech habits of different groups depended largely on the environment. Regarding the use of African languages, it appeared that in Model C schools 95 per cent did not use their mother tongue with their teachers whereas the majority of pupils from rural schools admitted that they used their mother tongue with their teachers. It also appeared that even those who did not use their mother tongue were using another African language and not English. This was deduced from the responses to question 4(a) where only 3,3 per cent from rural schools indicated that they spoke English with their teachers.

6.1.2 The Use of African Languages with Friends Inside the School Premises

It was also important to compare the extent to which speakers of African languages used their mother tongue in their communication with friends both inside and outside the premises. Surprisingly, the data show that the majority of pupils from Model C schools did use African language when communicating with friends on the school premises. The same was true of pupils attending school in the township and in rural areas.

6.1.3 The Use of African Languages with Friends Outside the School Premises

According to the data the majority of pupils from Model C schools did not use their mother tongue with their friends outside the school premises. This appeared strange considering that the majority of these pupils had indicated that they used their mother tongue when speaking to friends inside the school premises. The question is why these pupils would prefer their mother tongue when they were in a situation where, as speakers of African languages, they were in minority? Why, then, would they suddenly abandon these languages when they were among their own people? The reasons for this behaviour may be twofold: (1) They used their mother tongue inside school premises in order to express group solidarity and membership and (2) they used their mother tongue in order to exclude those who did not speak these languages. In other words language is used as a way of building a wall that separates "them" from "us".

Another question is, why would 80 per cent of pupils from Model C schools prefer not to speak their mother tongue outside the premises? The probable cause is the snob value attached to English. Perhaps by speaking English, a prestigious language, they felt different from those pupils who were attending schools that were predominantly black.

The majority of respondents from African schools used their mother tongue

in order to communicate with their friends outside the school premises.

6.1.4 The Use of African Languages with the Nearest Shopkeeper

The shopkeeper represented the community where these respondents lived. Their language behaviour towards him can be interpreted as language behaviour in the society. According to the data, the majority of pupils from all three groups used an African language when communicating with their nearest shopkeeper.

Findings: Looking at the speech habits of the respondents, it was found that the majority used African languages when communicating with friends as well as when communicating with other members of the society such as the shopkeeper. The major difference between the sample population from Model C and the one from African schools was that in Model C schools very few pupils used their mother tongue with their teachers whereas in African schools the opposite was true. Another difference is that the majority of pupils in African schools used African languages on the premises as well as outside the school premises whereas about 80 per cent of the respondents from Model C schools indicated that they did not use their mother tongue outside the school premises.

6.1.5 The Use of English with Teachers

As expected, all respondents from Model C schools spoke English with their teachers. What was interesting was the pupil-teacher communication in rural and township schools. In the township, 76 per cent reported speaking English with their teachers whereas in rural areas only 3,3 per cent indicated that they used English with their teachers. The possible reason for this situation was discussed in chapter 4 where the data from rural schools were analyzed. It is important to note that this situation refers to communication outside the classroom because in the classroom English is the medium of instruction.

6.1.6 The Use of English with Friends Inside the School Premises

Responding to the question whether they spoke English with their friends on the school premises, the majority of positive responses were from Model C schools. The group from rural schools was the one with fewest positive answers and the township schools were in the middle.

6.1.7 The Use of English with Friends Outside the School Premises

The majority of those who spoke English with their friends outside the school premises were from Model C schools. Very few pupils from African schools said that they spoke English with their friends.

6.1.8 The Use of English with the Nearest Shopkeeper

The majority of pupils from Model C schools used English much more often than pupils who were in African schools. It was, therefore, unexpected that the largest number of respondents who claimed that they spoke English with their nearest shopkeeper was from township schools. Although this claim could not be dismissed out of hand, it is possible that these pupils were referring to some form of "urban" register (this term was discussed in the preceding chapters). If this is the case, it is also interesting that these pupils preferred to classify the mixture that they were speaking as English instead of an African language.

English is gaining ground among township schools

Findings: The large majority of pupils who used English in their repertoire were pupils from Model C schools. They used English with their teachers and with their friends both on and outside the school premises. Some of them also used English with their nearest shopkeeper. The group that used English with the least frequency was from rural areas. The group from the township was in between the two groups. One can therefore conclude that although English seemed to have been more popular among Model C pupils, it was also gaining ground, albeit very slowly, among the youth in African schools.

6.1.9 The Use of English in African Homes

This question managed to test the extent to which English was used in

African homes. The data show that pupils in Model C schools used English much more often than pupils from township and rural schools.

Findings
Findings: Although the rate at which English was penetrating the homes of these pupils was not the same in all groups, it was found that English is spreading to the homes of speakers of African languages.

6.1.10 Viewing Television

TV1 Channel

The three groups did not differ much in their viewing habits, though one channel appeared to be fairly popular with one of the groups. Regarding TV1, only 6,6 per cent of pupils from Model C schools indicated that they never watched it. Among pupils from township schools, only 10 per cent indicated that they never watched it, whereas this number was 26,6 per cent for the group from rural areas.

CCV Channel

Only 3,3 per cent from Model C schools claimed that they never watched this channel. The sample population from rural areas had 15 per cent of pupils who reported that they never watched CCV. Only 8,3 per cent from the township schools admitted that they never watched CCV.

Findings: At first glance the figures suggest that CCV was more popular

than TV1. What is the reason for this sudden popularity? It is important to note that when this channel was still TV2 and TV3 broadcasting solely in Nguni and Sotho respectively, it was not popular. As mentioned in Chapter 3, the answer to this sudden popularity may be that when this channel replaced TV2 and TV3, it began broadcasting in both African languages and English; by so doing it accommodated the dual identities of those people who were speaking English in addition to their mother tongue. Conversely, CCV did not put people in a situation where they had to choose between English and their own languages. Entertainment programmes were also an attraction. In short, these findings support Msimang's claim (1992), as discussed in Chapter 3, that English played a role in the success of CCV .

It is worth noting that language is not the only variable determining whether someone watches one channel or another, especially when it comes to young people. So, ultimately; one cannot conclude anything about whether it is language or content (or both) that determines what is watched. It is also possible that there may well be other people in the household who control television viewing.

6.2 Academic and Future Expectations

The aim of comparing the future aspirations of the three different groups of pupils was to see whether the differences in their attitudes were somehow

influenced by what these pupils hoped to achieve in future. Was there a difference between pupils who wanted to tour the world and those who were going to tertiary institutions? What about those who wanted to find jobs when they left school?

6.2.1 Life after Standard Ten

6.2.1.1 The Group from Model C Schools

A large majority of pupils from Model C schools were planning to proceed to tertiary institutions when they left school. Only 3,3 per cent wanted to seek jobs immediately.

6.2.1.2 The Group from Rural Areas

This group was not far off the mark from their counterparts in Model C schools. Only 10 per cent from this group wanted to find jobs when they left school.

6.2.1.3 The Group from Township Schools

There was a marked difference between this group and the other groups. This group had the highest number of those who were planning to find jobs when they left school. In fact, the number of those who were planning to find jobs was the same as the number of those who wanted to proceed to the university. Again, interestingly this was the only group with respondents who wanted to tour the world.

The above data show that pupils from Model C schools and those from rural areas were closer to each other regarding their future expectations than to the group from the township. If one were to predict the attitudes of these three groups, one would expect the group from Model C schools and the group from rural areas not to differ much in their responses to questions 9 and 10 (a). These responses were as follows:

6.2.2 Attainment of Goals

The responses to whether the pupils thought that African languages would help them to attain their goals were diverse and very interesting.

6.2.2.1 The Group from Model C Schools

The responses from this group were least expected. This group was expected to be positive towards English but the opposite was true. More than 50 per cent in this group thought that African languages could help them in the attainment of their goals.

6.2.2.2 The Group from Rural Areas

The responses from this group were a direct opposite of the responses from Model C schools and they were unexpected too. It was hypothesized that pupils from rural areas will be more positive towards African languages. What emerged from the analysis of the data was that, although this group

used an African language much more often in their speech, the majority did not think that African languages would help them achieve their goals. In fact, only 23,3 per cent gave positive answers and a significant number was unsure. This uncertainty could mean that pupils did not really know the role of African languages. This was not unique to pupils: even some teachers who teach these languages do not really know what to tell their pupils regarding the functions of these languages. This emerged during my conversation with some teachers, who were worried that they could not answer questions that were asked by their pupils regarding the reasons these languages should be studied.

6.2.2.3 The Group from Township Schools

The majority in this group denied that African languages would help them to achieve their goals.

6.2.3 African Languages as Media of Instruction

The responses to the question whether these high school pupils would like to be taught content subjects in an African language were also interesting, especially the rural and Model C groups.

6.2.3.1 The Group from Model C Schools

The highest number of those who wanted to be taught content subjects in an African language were from Model C schools. This was quite interesting

when considering that this was the group that used English much more often than the two groups. In other words, the feelings of this group contradicted their speech patterns.

6.2.3.2 The Group from Township Schools

The majority of respondents from the township did not want an African language to be the medium of instruction. There were very few unsure responses in this group.

6.2.3.3 The Group from Rural Schools

Like their township counterparts, the largest number in this group was those who did not want African languages to be the media of instruction.

Findings: Although pupils from Model C schools used English more often in their speech, they expressed more positive attitudes towards African languages. On the other hand, the group in schools that were predominantly black expressed more positive attitudes towards English than towards their own languages.

NB That only a very small number wanted to be taught content subjects in an African language is clear evidence that many pupils do not want African languages to be media of instruction. This point also came up during interviews, where many interviewees from African schools said that they did

not want to be taught content subjects in an African language because in tertiary institutions they would experience difficulties in coping with English as medium of instruction.

Once more, most of the interviewees who were adamant that they wanted to be taught content subjects in an African language were from Model C schools. Perhaps what was being revealed here were signs of frustration from the speakers of African languages who were in non-racial schools. They found themselves in a position where their proficiency in English had to match that of English speakers. As a result they felt that in class, they were competing at a disadvantage. In a way, their unique circumstances forced them into believing that if they were taught in their own languages, they would be in the same position as other pupils who were being taught in their mother tongue, be it English or Afrikaans.

The opposite was true with rural and township pupils, who were all on the same level, that is, they were all learning through a language which was not their own. These groups' responses were more realistic and were not clouded by emotions.

The unsure responses may have been from those pupils who felt caught between the two choices: they would have liked to be taught in an African language but at the same time they were aware of reality, that is, somehow

they cannot do without English.

6.3 Political Factors

It was necessary to know how pupils felt about their languages on a political level and whether one group was more realistic than the others.

6.3.1 The Eleven-Language Policy

On whether this policy was going to work, the groups responded in the following manner:

6.3.1.1 The Group from Model C Schools

The highest percentage were those who believed that the eleven-language policy was going to work.

6.3.1.2 The Group from Township Schools

The majority in this group gave negative answers and 15 per cent were those who were not sure whether this policy would work.

6.3.1.3 The Group from Rural Schools

The majority of respondents from this group also did not think that the eleven-language policy was going to work. As in the latter group, the number of unsure responses was quite large, at 23,3 per cent.

Findings: Although pupils from Model C schools thought that this policy was going to work, the majority of respondents in the whole sample population did not think so. Having seen the responses of Model C pupils to questions 9 and 10(a), it may be deduced that these pupils reacted emotionally to question 10(b). Perhaps these pupils from Model C schools saw this policy as an answer to their prayers. A large number of unsure responses may be interpreted as revealing that there is a lot of uncertainty surrounding this policy.

6.3.2 The Development of African Languages

Concerning the development of these languages, the majority in all three groups thought that there was a need for the development of these languages. Even though the majority in all groups was positive, it was interesting to note that Model C schools had 85 per cent positive responses whereas, the comparable figures for rural and township schools were the majority of 53,3 per cent and 58,3 per cent, respectively. This means that the highest number of those who did not think that African languages were worth developing was from rural areas.

Findings: Model C pupils were more positive towards African languages than their rural and township colleagues. If one can speculate, one might say that pupils in Model C schools are in a position where they are forced by the situation to appreciate the value of their own languages. It was

surprising that pupils in rural areas were the least enthusiastic group about African languages considering that they turned out to be the main users of these languages. The reasons for this could form the basis for further research.

6.3.3 Equality

Regarding the equality of African languages to English, the majority in the two groups from African schools did not think that African languages were equal to English. The only group with a majority who thought that African languages were equal to English was the one from Model C schools. As mentioned in the preceding chapters, pupils might have understood the issue of equality differently. Perhaps the group from model C schools understood the question as referring to constitutional equality. But even if that is the case, it is clear from the responses of rural and township groups that most pupils in the sample population understood the question as alluding to utilitarian equality.

Findings: The majority of high school pupils did not believe that African languages were equal to English, at least in the way they are treated by the society. It emerged during interviews that trying to compare African languages to English was considered by some pupils as trying to compare things which were incomparable.

6.3.4 The Value of African Languages

Responding to the statement that "African languages were useless and should not be taught at school", all the three groups were unanimous that African languages were not useless and should be taught at school. It is important to note the highest number who thought that African languages were useless and should not be taught at school was from schools in rural areas, followed by schools in the township. Only 6,6 per cent in Model C schools thought that African languages were useless.

Findings: The majority of high school pupils valued their languages and wanted them to be taught at school. Again, the data also revealed that pupils in Model C schools were more positive towards African languages than pupils in African schools.

From these findings, we can see that the frequent use of English by Model C schools was mainly for functional reasons although one cannot rule out that some pupils also used English as part of a second identity. The most important thing, though, is that the majority of pupils in all the three groups do value their languages.

6.4 Conclusion

The important question in this section is to consider how the findings are related to the hypotheses. This relationship will be discussed briefly.

6.4.1 Hypothesis 1

Pupils in rural areas are positive towards African languages while pupils in the township display more positive attitudes towards English, because of their constant contact with situations where they have to express themselves in English.

- * Looking at the findings, it becomes clear that the frequency with which a person uses a specific language does not necessarily translate to attitudes towards that language or languages. The findings show that pupils in rural areas use African languages more often than pupils in urban areas.
- * The findings also show that the majority of pupils in rural areas do not think that African languages will help them to achieve their goals and also do not want an African language to be a medium of instruction.
- * The majority of pupils in rural areas believe that African languages should be developed. They also see that these languages are not useless and should be taught at school. This group also has a large

number of those who thought these languages were useless and should not be taught at school.

- * The data also show that pupils in the township, while using African languages more often, also use English more often than their rural counterparts.

According to the above points, the hypothesis is only partly true. The data from rural areas disprove the first part namely that, "Pupils in rural areas are more positive towards African languages". The data suggest that these pupils are less positive towards these languages.

6.4.2 Hypothesis 2

Pupils in schools that are predominantly white are less positive towards African languages and are inclined to use English in their repertoires.

The discussion of this hypothesis will begin with the part of the hypothesis that has been proved correct. According to the data that were collected from Model C schools, only the second part of the hypothesis is true, namely that "Pupils in predominantly white schools are inclined to use English in their repertoires". Responses in the questionnaire did show that although pupils in African schools do use English in their speech, this happens much more often among pupils from Model C schools.

The first part of the hypothesis was proved wrong by the data from Model C schools, which revealed the following:

- * This group had a majority of pupils who thought that African languages would help them attain their goals.
- * The majority of pupils in this group also expressed the desire to be taught content subjects in an African language.
- * Regarding the development of languages, the majority in this group indicated that these languages should be developed. Although this was also the case with pupils in African schools, this group had the highest majority. This group also had the highest majority who rejected the statement that "African languages are useless and should not be taught at school".

Contrary to the hypothesis, the data show that pupils in predominantly white schools are not just positive to African languages but are also more positive than pupils in African schools, especially those in rural areas. This was also proved by interviews where most pupils from Model C schools desired the preservation of these languages, whereas some pupils from rural areas even uttered statements such as "African languages should be killed because they do not help us" (my translation).

Generally, what emerges from the above discussion is that the study of

attitudes is a very complicated issue. Although attitudes are abstract and can be observed only in people's behaviour, it should be borne in mind that sometimes the behaviour can be inconsistent with an attitude. Data from rural areas prove this point: pupils from rural areas used their mother tongue more often but their attitudes towards African languages were not very positive. On the other hand, pupils from Model C schools used English more frequently in their speech but they appear to be more positive towards African languages than their counterparts in African schools.

In conclusion, the data bring out certain important points which could minimize uncertainties surrounding African languages. (1) African languages and English have different roles to play in society. The majority indicated that English is acceptable as a medium of instruction and English can also help people to achieve their goals. (2) African languages can also play a unique role as a means of expressing group solidarity and membership among the indigenous people of this country. It may be dangerous, however, to pretend that the utilitarian value of African languages is equal to that of English or to force them to compete with English. The data show that English can be used without doing away with African languages. African languages and English are not mutually exclusive but can function in a complementary relationship.

6.5 RECOMMENDATIONS.

6.5.1 Concerning Schools

Since South Africa's independence in 1994, there have been numerous language debates. The elevation of indigenous languages to official status was an acknowledgement by the government that something needed to be done, that is, the imbalances which surrounded the treatment of languages in the past had to be redressed. Schools as providers of information can also play a role in redressing the imbalances in education. It would therefore be good if the government were to look objectively and scientifically at the language issue in education, more especially the issue of African languages in predominantly white schools. According to the data, the majority of pupils in these schools expressed a need for their languages to be introduced. This came up more often during interviews than in the questionnaires. However, people ought to be aware of certain contradictions in the behaviour of these pupils: for example, some pupils in Model C schools expressed the desire to be allowed to take their languages as first languages but one wonders whether they would choose African languages if they were given a chance to do so. When I talked to the principal of a model C school, it emerged that he was encouraging the speakers of African languages in his school to take their mother tongue as a first language but only one pupil was interested. As a result, he had made arrangements with a school in Mamelodi to help the pupil. Perhaps

this contradiction reveals the confusion surrounding languages in this country.

6.5.2 Issues Concerning the Syllabuses

The syllabuses for African languages need to be analyzed critically. Does the content of the syllabuses provide for the development of the pupils' life-skills? Does the syllabus allow flexibility needed by languages which are still developing such as African languages?

It also emerged from the pupils that they would like these languages to be accommodative of other forms of the particular language. In other words, the issue here is the democratization of the Language Boards. This means that Language Boards should accept that too much prescriptivism in a developing language will end up disempowering the people. There is also a need for sociolinguistic research which will inform the Language Boards so that they understand that these are living languages therefore dynamic. Language Boards should not hinder the process of language development.

✓ 6.5.3 Expansion of Roles

It was revealed often during interviews that pupils did not know the value of African languages or why they needed to study African languages. As indicated earlier, even some teachers did not have answers concerning the role of African languages. This suggests that the role of these languages

needs to be redefined.

This redefinition of roles will eliminate much uncertainty about these languages. In other words it will give them a fair chance to hold their own in the daily activities of the people. As mentioned earlier, to insist that these languages are equal to English (at least functionally) is more damaging to them than to acknowledge that they are not equal to English but can nevertheless be used in certain domains such as local government, community meetings and day-to-day communication.

6.5.4 African Languages in the Workplace

It is human nature that people want to do things which will give them reward. Wagner (1969:5) cites Katz's theory which states the instrumental function of attitudes. This theory is based on the assumption that a person seeks to "maximize rewards and minimize punishments; that is, he develops positive attitudes towards those objects or ideas that are rewarding or lead to reward and negative attitudes toward those that are punishing or lead to punishment". If people do not anticipate any reward from their knowledge of African languages they will not take them seriously. In short, people should have a reason for studying African languages. Perhaps the case of Québec would help in South Africa. In Québec the dominant language was English and in order to promote French the government made it a rule that everyone seeking a job had to have a knowledge of French otherwise

the onus was on the employer to prove that knowledge of another language was necessary. In this way knowledge of French was rewarded (Heller 1985:78). With nine indigenous languages, the situation may be quite complex in South Africa, but this can be worked out in regions, for example, knowledge of Zulu in Kwazulu-Natal. ✱

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INTERVIEWS

PRINCIPALS

Mr P.M. Selesho 28 February 1996

Mr P. Skhosana 15 February 1996

PUPILS

Rural Schools 12 -13 October 1995

Township 15 February 1996

Model C 17 February 1996

APPENDIX A1

QUESTIONNAIRE ON LANGUAGE ATTITUDES

Kindly complete this questionnaire for me. I am presently conducting a survey about your feelings, as a high school pupil, about African Languages. Your views will contribute towards the formulation of a more acceptable language policy.

The questionnaire is confidential. You do not have to give your name but please give me the following information as it is important to the interpretation of your views.

Age :

Sex :

Standard:

Mother Tongue.....

SECTION A

Social factors :

1. Language spoken at home (if not Mother Tongue).....
2. Occupation of:
 - i. Mother.....
 - ii. Father.....

USE AN X TO MARK YOUR ANSWERS

	Yes	No	Unsure
3. Do you speak your Mother Tongue with:			
Your teachers?	☐	☐	☐
Your friends			
(inside the school premises)?	☐	☐	☐
Your friends			
(outside school)?	☐	☐	☐
Shopkeeper at your nearest shop?	☐	☐	☐
4. Do you speak English with:			
Your teachers ?	☐	☐	☐
Your friends (inside the school premises)?	☐	☐	☐
Your friends (outside school)?	☐	☐	☐
Shopkeeper at your nearest shop?	☐	☐	☐
5. How often do you speak English at home?	1 hr/day	2-3hrs/day	Never
	☐	☐	☐

6. How often do you watch 1hr/day 2-3hrs/day More Never
TV1? ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
7. How often do you watch ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
CCV?

SECTION B

Future expectations:

8. When you leave school do you want:
go to varsity ☐
go technikon/college ☐
get a job ☐
tour the world. ☐

- | | Yes | No | Unsure |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 9. Do you think African languages
will help you
to attain that goal? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 10.A Would you like to be taught
content subjects in your
Mother Tongue? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |

SECTION C

Political Factors:

- | | Yes | No | Unsure |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 10.B Do you think 11 official languages are going to work? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 11. Do you think African Languages should be developed? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 12. Do you think that African Languages are equal to English? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 13. African languages are useless and they should not be taught at school. | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |

THANK YOU FOR YOUR CO-OPERATION!

APPENDIX A2

INTERESTING COMMENTS FROM PUPILS:

Pupils were asked to express their feelings about African languages. These were written down and returned to me together with the questionnaire. These comments had to be edited due to topographical and grammatical errors. Comments written in an African language were translated and were made to be as close to the original words as possible.

MODEL C PUPILS

1. Northern Sotho Female

I think the reason why we speak English with our friends is because the school we attend is an English school and English is an International language. The whole world should learn to speak English because our languages are not the same. So if we want to understand one another we must use one language to communicate.

2. Zulu Female

I would like to say that English is an official language and everyone must be fluent in it. One should not only read it but must also learn to speak it. We Blacks should speak it with others and by doing so we heal the land. Be proud of what you are. Do not be shy.

3. Tswana male

They should try to cut out the languages spoken by only few people
e.g. Tsonga

4. Zulu male

I think African languages must be fully introduced to white schools.
The whites must study African languages too and not just English.

5. Zulu male

African languages are not useless even though you cannot attain
your goals with them. They are important and can be used among
family and friends but English cannot be compared to them.

6. Tswana male

I think that African languages should be taught at school because
there are some words that you don't understand and the dictionary
is going to confuse you.

7. Northern Sotho Female

I think that African languages should be developed but for
communication we must have one language. I also think English is
a language we can use because if you leave Africa and go to
another continent you will find that people use English.

8. Tswana Female

I think Afrikaans should not be taught the same way to us as it is
done to whites because it is very confusing to have to translate it to
English first and then to our mother tongues. I think it should be

made a little easier for us.

9. Northern Sotho male

Why can't we study other African languages at school?

10. Tswana male

I think that everybody should be allowed to speak his mother tongue because that is the language you were born with and you should be proud of it. If somebody asks you something in English you should answer in English but then you should speak your mother tongue.

11. Tswana Female

I don't use African languages. I think English is better because almost everywhere you go you will find that people can speak English. Nowadays almost everybody understands English. So we have nothing to do with African languages. They are useless. Thank you, too.

12. N. Sotho Female

I think Afrikaans should not be necessary for one's University entrance because I, for instance, do well in all my 5 subjects except Afrikaans (I take it at Standard grade). I am worried about not entering university which is my greatest goal.

13. Tsonga male

I feel that because the Tsonga population is so small we are often neglected and nobody pays any attention to our needs. I would like

to see more TV programmes broadcast in Tsonga. I also think that African languages as a whole are being thrown aside and suppressed at school.

14. N. Sotho male

I think that I should be able to learn my mother tongue as a first language at school.

15. Northern Sotho Female

N. Sotho is a good language, I like speaking it.

16. Ndebele Female

I think that every white person should know an African language. We Blacks also want to know their language.

17. Northern Sotho Female

I think that in order to learn 11 official languages, we have to work together both Black and white people so that Blacks can teach Whites and Whites can teach Blacks. I also think that if schools can make classes fun, everyone will be able to learn all languages.

18. Zulu Female

African languages are also as important as other languages are. I think that African languages should be developed in our country. Black children should know where they come from. I also think that English schools must teach at least one African language to every child in the school.

19. Xhosa Female

I think African languages are equally as valuable as English. They definitely have to be taught at school. They should be introduced to private schools and model C schools as 1st and 2nd languages.

20. Tswana male

My African language, Setswana, keeps me in touch with the past and will surely help me with my future. A woman who was an actor in the excellent series "I'll fly away" said "The key to the future is always in reliving the past". I believe in those words. Whenever I use my mother tongue it gives me a sense of belonging to the rest of the Batswana people. Addressing my elders in Setswana shows respect in every way. I want to improve my language. I want my children to learn this beautiful language. English is nothing compared to my language. English is just a medium of instruction, nothing else.

21. Zulu male

I think African languages should be developed and should be taught in schools all over the country.

22. Northern Sotho male

Your African language is important to you because you know it fluently. I don't think they should be removed from model C schools. Sometimes we find English very difficult to understand.

23. Tsonga/ Northern Sotho

I don't really have a specific language that I speak at home. I was raised in a family where all African languages are spoken including

English and I think all African languages are fine and they should all be made official.

24. Ndebele Female

I think African languages should be taught at schools, even in white schools because most white children want to learn how to speak African languages.

25. Northern Sotho Female

African languages are very important because they are our own languages. You cannot expect a small child to know English and not his/her own mother tongue. It is our tradition to know our mother tongue and I think everyone's mother tongue should be his/her first language subject at school.

26. Northern Sotho Female

I think that African languages should be taught at school because they are part and parcel of our culture and society. Although English is an international language I still think that African languages should still be taught at multi-racial schools, even though we are now with other races. African languages still remain our culture and form part of our history of where we come from, our mother continent, Africa.

27. Northern Sotho Female

African languages should also be taken seriously. I mean, most of the people nowadays speak English more than their mother tongue. Even though English is an international language, African languages

should also be spoken. The English speaking people must learn an African language. That is why I believe in 11 official languages. In that way communication will be easier.

28. Northern Sotho male

It is impossible to use African languages to foreigners so let's keep only one official language. Let us not think about ourselves. Let us involve a wider range of people, including foreigners. They cannot speak Zulu or Sotho, it is definitely impossible.

29. Zulu male

African languages are important and, as part of our culture, they should be used frequently. There is no use learning someone's language if you can't speak yours. I think our languages should be respected just like English is respected. Now that we are in the new South Africa, I think our languages should be taught and that will make communication between people a lot more easier.

30. Swati male

They should be taught at schools, whether model C schools or not. They should be used as much as English and Afrikaans, i.e. given equal recognition. We should all learn to speak at least 6 out of 11 languages. They should be taught and examined at schools.

31. Xhosa female

I think Africans should be taught their mother tongue and they should be proud of them. Any individual has the right to learn his/her mother

tongue. You should know your roots, otherwise you will be lost and not know where you come from.

32. Sotho Female

African languages are basically there to keep our tradition, customs etc. They are not as useful as English. You would never get around the world speaking only one of the African languages. Yes, we have to learn our languages, but still, we have to face the fact that they won't get us anywhere in life, but stay in SA.

33. Xhosa Female

African languages are the fruit of your being. They are your roots and should not be forgotten because without a past your future is not so genuine. Although I prefer to be taught in English, it doesn't mean I should forget my culture and traditions, it simply means that I know that at university you are taught in English.

34. Northern Sotho Female

African languages are not useless. They should be taught from the primary school level so that when a child gets to high school he/she has that background. It is a right for everyone to know their mother tongue; use it and be proud of it. It is just like any other language.

35. Ndebele male

African languages are as important as any other language and to hear white people adding an unnecessary accent to any black language irritates me (individually) so I think they should be

developed. It irritates me to hear that the only word they know is a swear word.

36. Zulu Female

African languages are what we speak, and the best for us to present ourselves. I think if we want to make a better country, the views of all the people should be taken into consideration. So I say African languages should remain undisturbed in their country and should be taught at school.

37. Tswana Female

African languages are also important like any other language i.e. (English). Most black people feel confident when speaking their language which they understand more than anything else, but that does not mean that they don't have to learn other languages. People must stop criticising African languages because they are our root and soul.

38. Tswana Female

From my point of view, I think African languages are still alright, and some people ought to learn them more. But if I had to choose what language should be the official language, I would choose English, not that I have a negative attitude towards African languages but for the sake of young people who wish to tour the world one day, English should be the main language. I know that many people do not really know English but I am sure that each person in South Africa uses

English everyday in their lives. African languages can still be of use to the next generation to know where they come from.

39. Tswana Female

I think everyone has the right to speak any language they want. Any language is just as good as English and I think it is wrong not to allow people to speak their mother tongue.

40. Zulu female

African languages should be taught more in model C schools because I think they are as important as English, Afrikaans and other foreign languages like French and German and I think it will be a wise idea if one of the South African languages could be taught in other countries.

41. Northern Sotho female

From my point of view, I think African languages are just languages and if someone wants to learn them that is okay and if they do not want to learn them it is also okay. I mean they are not like English which needs to be learnt because it is an international language. I believe in freedom of choice.

42. Swati Female

I feel that at the moment, we as Black people, are not made proud of our languages, e.g. at school we have to do English and Afrikaans. Most programmes on TV are in English and Afrikaans. I

think we should develop in black communities our most widely spoken language and make it official alongside English. This way it would help us to get to universities.

43. Zulu Female

I feel very great about African languages as I think that we people should be proud of our languages and what we are. Another thing is that we must not be ashamed of our languages.

44. Xhosa Female

I think African languages should be taught in schools because we black pupils suffer when learning the Afrikaans language. Instead of doing Afrikaans we would rather do the languages that we know from home.

45. Tswana Female

When I was young I was taught to speak Tswana. I went to a Tswana primary school. It all grew as a part of me. I don't think I can just leave it like that. Each and every culture has its own language and I think I have the right to know my language better.

46. Zulu male

Why does the questionnaire say "African languages are useless"
Why don't you want to know my name? It means you don't care about our language.

RURAL AREAS

47. Ndebele Female

My mother tongue is too difficult. Some years ago the school I attended offered Zulu and Northern Sotho. If they taught my mother tongue at school, I would find it difficult.

48. Northern Sotho female

Maikutlo a ka mo go polelo ya geso ya Northern Sotho ke gore ke a e rata, e re ruta ka ditaba tse dintsi. Re kgona go e bolela le go e ngwala. Ke e rata kudu polelo ye ya Sesotho. E reta maele go tse dingwe. [My feeling with regard to our language, Northern Sotho, is that I like it. It teaches us many things. We are able to speak and write it. I like it very much. I prefer it to others.]

49. Northern Sotho male

I feel very confident when I speak my mother tongue to other people. Our language must be improved like other languages.

50. N. Sotho Male

At home we speak English. Since we like to speak English I think we should not speak our mother tongue. English is an international language. When we speak our mother tongue other people might not understand us but when we speak English we will co-operate and build one nation. Unity is power.

51. Zulu Male

I think African languages should not be developed because when

you go to university you will be interviewed in English not in an African language. English should be the medium of instruction.

52. N. Sotho Female

Nna e be ke nyaka gore N. Sotho sa bo rena se bolawe because se ya re bolaya. Ga ke proud ka sona. E be ke nyaka gore re phele re bolela English ka gore ge o tswile ka monntle go apiwa English. [My feeling is that Northern Sotho should be killed and not be taught at schools because I'm not proud of it. I want to speak English all the time because when we are not at home, we speak English]

53. Northern Sotho Female

Maikutlo a ka ke be ke nyaka gorre polelo ya N. Sotho e bolawe ka ge modikolong esa some le mobathong ba go se tsebe N. Sotho. ka ge e sena mohota mabothong ba go se etsebe. [My feeling is that Northern Sotho should be killed in schools because you cannot speak it with other people except those who understand it. It is not important to those who do not know it.]

54. Northern Sotho Female

Maikutlo a ka ma bapi le polelo yaka ke gore re elahle ka gore polelo ye ya rona gae re gole ka sepe gere setsa re leditsa mo dekolong. Ga re bolele yona re bolela English. Le ge ka bolela polelo ye ya rona masomo oka seokhumane. Nna ke rata English. [My feelings about my language is that it should be thrown away because

it does not help us with anything when we complete our schooling.
We do not speak it, we speak English. Speaking an African language
does not guarantee you a job. I like English.]

55. Northern Sotho Female

Polelo ya rena ya N. Sotho e ka bolewla gomme batho ka moka ba
e tsebe. [Our language, Northern Sotho, can be spoken and
understood by everybody]

56. Northern Sotho

Sepedi must be killed because it does not help us.

TOWNSHIP

57. Zulu Female

Ngiyasithanda isiZulu, futhi ekhaya bakhuluma sona, kodwa futhi
ngiyazi ukuthi ngeke singise ndawo. Kungcono umuntu azi isiNgisi
kakhulu. [I love Zulu. At home they speak it. But I know that it (Zulu)
will not take me anywhere. It is better to be perfect in English.]

58. Northern Sotho Female

There are many languages, they confuse us. It is better if we all
speak English. I speak Northern Sotho with my grandmother.

59. Northern Sotho male

English must be compulsory to all South Africans.

60 Northern Sotho Male

Leleme la se gageso le monate go feta English. [Our language is

more beautiful than English.]

61. Zulu Male

Our mother tongue should be taught like any other language. This must be done without hesitation.

62. Tswana Male

I do not like African languages and Afrikaans because when it comes to looking for a job, a person needs English not these languages. It is a waste of time to learn these languages at school.

64. Northern Sotho Male

I am proud of my language because it is my mother tongue. All I can say is that N. Sotho is the best and must continue to be taught at school.

65. Tswana Female

I suggest English should be used in South Africa because it is used all over the world. African languages are not useless, they should be taught but they should not be used as official languages.

66. Zulu Male

African languages are useful to us as a nation. Our grandmothers and grandfathers did not use English therefore we must follow their culture by speaking African languages.