

CHAPTER 4

4.0. ANALYSIS OF DATA

4.1. Introduction

From the tabular presentations in chapter three, it is apparent that people have varied perceptions about the language policy and its implementation. This chapter will, therefore, focus on the analysis of the data in chapter three. In other words, the chapter presents the analysis of the responses from the questionnaire, the media and the interviews. Where applicable the analysis is done with the aid of related literature, that is, literature that focusses on current trends with regard to linguistic human rights and language as resource.

4. 2. ANALYSIS OF DATA FROM THE QUESTIONNAIRE

4.2.1. GENERAL LANGUAGE USE

Responses with regard to general language use are presented below and analysed. Where applicable the responses are grouped together to avoid unnecessary repetition.

4.2.1.1. Majority use the home language with their children

The results of question (a) show that 74,2% of the respondents use their home language when they interact with their children. 5% of the parents opt for English with their children and 20% use both English and the home language. Undoubtedly, the choice of English to interact with children is due to Private and Model C schools which most of the parents envy for their facilities, amenities and disciplined teaching staff. The use of English is aimed at improving proficiency in English so that their children can compete on an equal footing with their white counterparts. In fact, it is this rationale behind the practice that enticed some school principals to encourage parents to communicate in English with their children.

4.2.1.2. Majority prefer English when writing letters to friends

The results of question (a), Table 2, indicate an enormous preference for English to any other language when people write letters to friends. Though most of the speakers who completed the questionnaire and responded to interviews had a higher proficiency in African languages, they preferred English to African languages. This is indicative of the people's positive attitude towards English and, inversely, towards African languages and Afrikaans.

4.2.1.3. Majority use their home language with their sweethearts

The results of question (a), Table 3, indicate that the majority of the people use the home language with their sweethearts. The second group, which comprises mostly the young, uses English when they converse with their sweethearts. The third group uses both English and the home language. From the responses to the questionnaire, it is mostly those above the age of forty who use the home language with their sweethearts. In this case age counts. Among the youth English is synonymous with status. For one to appeal to a suitor one has to resort to English which has become a register in courtship. People who are not comfortable in either language are normally those who interact in two languages. Utterances range from code-mixing to code switching and language shift. What this implies is that if the situation continues unchecked, African languages will be in a precarious position in spite of their new status.

4.2.1.4. Diversity as a characteristic feature of South Africa

Question (a), Table 4, shows that language diversity is a characteristic feature of South Africa. The fact that the majority communicate with neighbours in at least three languages points to the fact that South Africa is a heterogenous country which boasts of individual multilingualism. This individual multilingualism according to Bloch and Mahlalela is of paramount importance to children for:

..children who use more than one language are often better able to make comparisons,

predictions and modify their ideas (Bloch and Mahlalela (1998:24).

By learning another language one learns the other people's sensitivities, values, norms, culture and circumstances. Individuals and groups are what they are because of their circumstances. Through acquiring their language one understands their circumstances. Thus, individual multilingualism broadens one's world view.

Multilingualism is also confirmed in question (c), Table 6, which indicates that 27% of the people have a working knowledge of eleven languages. Thus, the linguistic reality is that many people are proficient in more than one language. This evidently points to individual multilingualism as a characteristic feature among Black South Africans. Again, this confirms the heterogenous nature of the country. South Africa is truly a multilingual society. Hence, South Africans should appreciate multilingualism as a benchmark of being truly South African. This is congruent to Bengu's view that "Being multilingual should be a defining characteristic of being South African (Bengu, 1999:38). This is also compatible with Nyamende's views in his keynote address to The African Languages Association of Southern Africa (ALASA) in 2001 in which he explicitly propagates a scenario in which all South Africans should perceive all the languages of South Africa as "my home language". He proposes a complete departure from the colonial legacy of separate development in which people cited a solitary language as their home language. The situation he castigates is one in which, for example, a speaker of IsiXhosa views Xitsonga as the "other language". He contends that the distinction should be made only when citing the main language of communication.

4.2.1.5. Majority use their languages very often

Question (b), Table 5, points to the fact that the majority of the people use their languages very often. Those are people who work and stay in areas of concentration of their language. Those who seldom use their languages are employed in regions kilometres away from the area of concentration of their languages. As reflected on the questionnaire, a number of Setswana speaking people work and reside in Mpumalanga.

Tshivenda speaking people were recorded in the North-West Province while Xitsonga speaking people were found among the Sesetho and Tshivenda speaking people.

4.2.1.6. Languages at work and their domain

Questions (d) and (e) show that South African Blacks use their languages at work but not in domains associated with prestige, legal system, teaching and administration. As projected in the graph in Table 8 African languages find a place in communication with friends and colleagues and in certain cases in business not worth registering at the Stock Exchange.

4.2.1.7. English and Afrikaans are used for all transaction at work

That English and, Afrikaans, to a certain extent, are used in almost every transaction at the workplace is supported by the choice made by 71,1% of the respondents in question (f), Table 9. This concurs with the findings of the Pan South African Language Board (PANSALB) (2000: 8) which indicate that 72% interact with supervisors in Afrikaans and English.

4.2.1.8. English is used more often than any other language at workplaces

The results of question (g), Table 10, illustrate that English is used very often at the workplace. Only 4% seldom use English. As indicated in the regional response university and college lecturers do not use English very often in business. This is expected because respondents are lecturers in Departments of African languages. It may be an emotional response by advocates of mother tongue education. In other sectors and institutions the diffusion-of-English paradigm prevails. This also concurs with results of the survey carried out by PANSALB (2000:8) which indicate that "In communication upward in the workplace hierarchies English enjoys around five times its relative strength as a home language." Their findings also indicate the massive dominance of English in the education environment. What this means is that language practice in workplaces scoffs the

constitutional principle of language equity.

4.2.1.9. Afrikaans is now seldom used at workplaces

That Afrikaans is now seldom used at the workplace is confirmed in question (h). 71,5% seldom use Afrikaans. Only 10,8% use Afrikaans at the workplace. This clearly indicates that after the introduction of the new language policy Afrikaans lost the power and perquisites vested in it in the heyday of apartheid. Implicitly this could be an attitudinal response emanating from the rivalry that was created through the imposition of Afrikaans in African schools. Since its imposition, Afrikaans has been viewed as a language of oppression. Hence, its use in any institution or workplace these days is seen as the vestiges of apartheid. The other reason for the decline in the use of Afrikaans is affirmative action in parastatals and other institutions. Affirmative action has replaced Afrikaners with Africans at top management level.

4.2.1.10. Addressing the rural folk in a language other than their own is unacceptable

Addressing rallies in the language other than that of the rural folk they address was contrary to the expectations of the respondents. This is confirmed in Table 12 in which 86% as opposed to 14% concurred that it was unacceptable. Views such as "it is inappropriate and there is lack of communication" are plausible. What manifests in this situation is a presentation of self (by the politician) to the people without communicating anything to them. Views such as "it should stop forthwith because it is not empowering; it is a way of capitalizing on the ignorance or taking advantage of the loyalty of the illiterate; the practice is unbecoming; it is a travesty of justice to the indigenous people or speakers of the language" clearly depict the behaviour as outrageous and insipient. According to Robinson (1996: 43) "Language is a living tool" which suggests that local languages, the rural folk's mother tongues are privileged and empowering vehicles of communication. Thus, using another language other than that of the rural folk impacts on the effectiveness of the planned intervention. According to Robinson (1996:44) "... language choice has far

reaching effects on the implementation of rural development.” This is compatible with Le Page’s view that, “Language barriers are certainly barriers to economic progress” (Le Page, 1971:2). This concurs with Chimhundu’s point of view which is embedded in his rhetorical questions:

How can you use information to which you only have limited access? How can you participate fully in anything, or compete, or learn effectively or be creative in a language you are not fully proficient or literate?

(Chimhundu, 1997:7).

These rhetorical questions sum it up. If an audience is to be of active participants information must be disseminated in the language of the target audience. Indeed, any form of development can only be achieved through access to information, grassroots participation and grassroots leadership. What the respondents say also corresponds to views upheld by Rwambiwa (1997:2) who asserts that in development and wellbeing of a society the use of indigenous languages is more efficient than foreign languages. Prah (1995:68-69) also noted that prospects of democracy and development depend extensively on the degree to which the language of the broad sections of the population is used to empower them culturally, socially and economically. Hence, to guarantee success, knowledge and skills must be disseminated in languages easiest for millions to understand.

The third view given by the respondents points to stigmatization of African languages. It is said, “The use of English in such meetings creates the impression that African languages are inferior, they cannot be used for effective communication”. The view is also applauded because what the behaviour implies is that English is more logical and expressive than African languages.

4.2.1.11. Addressing the rural folk in English is acceptable to some

14% in Table 12 view the practice as acceptable. Reasons such as “English is a lingua

franca - it accommodates everyone ... English relates to ideologies and theories which are western thinking . That is what politics is all about ... he appears to be addressing the people in front when in actual fact he is conveying messages to the rest of the world” are convincing to a certain extent. However, the practice is as abhorrent as the practice of switching from an African language to English to accommodate one white person among twenty thousand African language speakers. The majority of the people should not be sacrificed. Access to information and grassroots participation are an essential ingredient for successful development.

4.2.1.12. To the majority, African languages are not adequate as languages for tuition, labour laws and government institutions

Results of question (j), Table 13, depict the lack of development as undermining the use of African languages as media of instruction, for labour laws and government institutions. 64,9% view African languages as not adequately developed in terms of terminology. What this presupposes then is the dire need for the development of terminology which should be followed by standardization to facilitate the effective use of those terminologies. In this way they will be developed enough to function in domains formerly associated with English only.

Some respondents went on to qualify why African languages cannot function in those domains. Views such as “cost of implementing such a policy; globalization and English as a constraint; lack of mutual intelligibility; differences in legal system; colonial legacy and attitude towards African languages” paint a sad picture in the sense that even with the much needed technical terms developed, African languages would not be equipped enough for use in those domains. The alleged shortcomings of African languages would lead people into believing that English is the only language that is developed enough to serve the nation. That the implementation of such a policy is astronomical in terms of monetary resources and because of the status of English corresponds to Desai’s view that “...funding to develop them (African languages) as media of instruction remains to be seen. It is even questionable... whether the current language policy can be fulfilled, given ‘the

unassailable position of English' (Achebe, 1986) in government, commerce and law" (Desai, 1994:21 in Watson, 1999:5).

4.2.1.13. To some, African languages are adequate for use for tuition, labour laws and government institutions

That African languages can be used in those domains in question (j), Table 13, is confirmed by 30,1%. Those respondents feel that the claims made are unfounded because the hypothesis has not been tested in South Africa. This argument is plausible and calls for action. The respondents' views that "perception or attitude and colonial legacy definitely played a major role in making people believe that African languages cannot be used in those domains" are convincing. This is because attitudes are like an indelible mark. They are difficult to change. However, respondents appeal to people to adhere to the constitution and cater for the illiterate because laws are not for the educated only. The illiterate should understand the laws of the country so that they abide by what they know. On many occasions it is the illiterate who are cornered by maxims such as, *Iuris ignorantia non excusacat*, the Latin expression for 'Ignorance of the law is not an excuse.'

4.2.1.14. Majority are aware of the new language policy

The results of question (k), Table 14, show that 85,7% are aware of the language policy of South Africa. This should be attributed to the effective way in which information about the language policy was disseminated by the media, politicians and the Department of Arts, Culture, Science and Technology which embarked on a year long awareness campaign aimed at *inter alia*,

(a) promoting multilingualism so that South Africans will view multilingualism as a valuable resource;

(b) bringing about an appreciation that, in a multilingual society, knowledge of more than one language is an asset both in an immediate economic sense and in the larger social sense;

(c) breaking down the legacy of apartheid by means of the promotion of African languages.

The elaboration, modernization and development of these languages are important requirements for the attainment of social and economic equality and justice for the majority of South Africans (Department of Arts, Culture, Science and Technology, 1998:20)

The political past contributed, indirectly, in that it was the language issue that led to political upheavals in 1976.

4.2.1.15. Some are not aware of the new language policy

The 14,3% that is not aware of the language policy reside in the rural areas where newspapers are scarce and, of course, where the culture of reading appears not entrenched. The 1998 research conducted in Pretoria only showed clearly that urban respondents were aware of the new language policy and some of its ramifications.

4.2.1.16. The language Policy is good

That the language policy of South Africa is one of the most progressive language policies is confirmed in the results of question (I), Table 15, in which 72% of the respondents unanimously agreed that the language policy of South Africa is “good”. The reasons for the choice of “good” are impressive. The most frequent reasons are that “it treats all languages as equal and that it takes cognisance of all the citizens and cultural groups”. This concurs with reasons advanced by the respondents in the 1998 research published in 2000:

- # It promotes languages previously ignored.
- # It helps improve our levels of literacy.
- # Everyone will have access to information.
- # It takes cognisance of all citizens and cultural groups.

(Mutasa, 2000:219).

The reasons also concur with views propounded by Mutasa (2000: 218) who attests that “A policy of this nature demonstrates that the government has the linguistic interests of all the people at heart.” and Chimhundu (1997:7) who perceives the promotion of all languages as “a way of democratising a language policy.” It is a policy that responds to the needs and interests of all segments of the population.

4.2.1.17. The language Policy is a bad choice

The results of question (I), Table 15, show that 10,2% of the respondents regard the new language policy as “a bad choice”. The reasons advanced for the choice of “bad” are not convincing enough. Some say “it (the policy) is good on paper and is not practical.” They feel some of the languages are discriminated against. What this denotes is that the policy itself is a good one to them but what troubles them is the exclusion of other languages in major domains and in the media, television (TV) and newspapers. Some of the respondents advocate a one language policy. To them the official languages are too many. The reasons also tally with those given in the 1998 research:

- # Eleven languages are too many; we should have one lingua franca.
 - # It is a waste of time and money to encourage diversity. The sooner we agree that English is by far the only language we can use effectively to communicate across cultural lines the better for the country, e.g. printing in eleven official languages is a waste of time.
 - # South Africa is a multilingual country, therefore, we should use English because it is used in business and it is also a world language.
 - # Indigenous languages are not fully developed in the technical sense.
- (Mutasa, 2000:220)

The practicality of such a policy was also a concern that was raised by many scholars, among them Crystal (1997:40) who perceives that “... the difficulties of administering an

eleven-language formula are immense.” However, the reasons advanced belong to the old school of thought where some researchers argued that unity and progress can only be achieved through the use of one language; that language being that of the colonial master. Crystal who contradicts himself three years later argues that, “there is no plausibility in the view that ‘the fewer the languages the better’” (Crystal 2000:31). Mellanby in Crystal (2000:33), who concurs with Crystal’s view, contends that, “the diversity of things is directly correlated with stability”. Thus the only option for the respondents is to acquaint themselves with the eleven official language policy. If one language is selected for important official functions, the people whose language is promoted will have an advantage over others. Indubitably, the people whose language is promoted become an elite. This concurs with Weistein’s contention:

Clearly one language policy can serve different goals which can affect political development in different and contradictory ways. Once a language is promoted patterns of access to power, wealth and prestige would change. ~~The~~ those whose language is not promoted would find themselves at a disadvantage and even blocked (Weistein, 1990:29).

The choice of “bad” is therefore made out of ignorance of the limitations of the one language policy. It is also out of the ignorance of the Language Plan of Action for Africa whose aims, objectives and principles state *inter alia*:

- # To ensure that all languages within the boundaries of Member States are recognized and accepted as a source of mutual enrichment.
- # To liberate the African people from undue reliance on the utilisation of non-indigenous languages as the dominant official languages of the state in favour of ... indigenous African languages...
- # To ensure that African languages, by appropriate legal provision and practical promotions, assume their rightful role as the means of official

communication in the public affairs of each Member State ...

- # To encourage the increased use of African languages as vehicles of instruction at all educational levels

(Organisation of African Unity 1986).

However, in due course, with indoctrination the respondents will understand the privilege of the new language policy.

4.2.1.18. No judgment on language Policy

The results of question (I), Table 15, also show that 17,8% did not rate the language policy as good or bad. Disappointing enough among those respondents are university lecturers, people from whom one expects an input. However, the reasons advanced were authentic. To some the policy is not publicized and clearly explained and to others it is enigmatic. That the policy is not publicised and disseminated to people sufficiently was confirmed by Dr Neville Alexander in a personal interview. He contends that people need to be informed. To address the problem, his Institute, PRAESA, has since published a book which educates ordinary people about the new language policy.

As alluded to earlier, in 1998 The Department of Arts, Culture, Science and Technology that conducted a year long multilingualism awareness campaign and the radio played a major role in disseminating the information but unfortunately as the saying goes: "The palest ink is better than a thousand words from the Headmaster's mouth." What this means is that the written word is remembered much longer than what is heard. What is heard and not recorded is easily forgotten, never mind the number of times it is repeated.

4.2.1.19. Use of languages in offices, schools colleges and television not in line with the new language policy

That the use of languages in offices, schools, colleges and television was not in line with the new language policy is supported by 71.2% of the respondents in Table 16, question

(m). Those institutions continue to justify the hegemony of English on the grounds of linguistic diversity and cost. In their views about this dilemma, the respondents castigated the exclusive use of English and Afrikaans, the exclusion of African languages in some schools and some people's dissent towards African languages. It appears as if African languages continue to be relegated to second class status. If the situation continues unchecked it would be like maintaining the status quo or the colonial legacy which implies contravention of the constitutional principle of language equity or, in other words, the ecology-of-language paradigm..

4.2.1.20. It is possible to implement the new language policy

On the views about the possibility of implementing the new language policy, 73.3% of the respondents unanimously concurred. This is illustrated in Table 17, question (n). This response is contrary to the findings in the 1998 research in which almost the same percentage, 72% to be exact, acquiesced that it was difficult to achieve. Views advanced by the 73% were basically qualifications of or underpinned by "ifs" or conditions, which intimates that they are unsure. They unanimously regard all stakeholders' commitment as crucial in the implementation of the new language policy. This view and views such as "adopting functional multilingualism approach; equitable allocation of time on television; introduction of African languages in schools; awareness campaign programmes" perceived as the way forward, are applauded. What these views signify is that at present the policy is not being practised. However, one postulates that the language policy of South Africa will work or succeed because in Africa, South Africa is the only country where people attach more value to language. In essence, a taxi driver, a receptionist and/or a shop assistant gets agitated if a fellow countryman addresses him/her in English.

4.2.1.21. Application of the new language policy is insurmountable

36,7% viewed the application of the policy as difficult to achieve. Reasons such as "it is not practical because the languages are too many; resistance; financial constraints; lack of international status; lack of development and general shortcomings of African

languages” concur with the 1998 respondents’ views that:

- # It is not practical to implement such a policy.
 - # It is expensive to translate documents into eleven languages.
 - # There is general lack of interest or willingness on the part of stakeholders.
 - # African languages are languages without political and economic baggage.
- (Mutasa, 2000: 220).

These are views of people with no linguistic or sociolinguistic backgrounds. Because of this some of the comments were made out of ignorance of the capabilities of African languages. In a way they present the situation as they see it on the ground. However, adopting such views would be a retrogressive approach and, in turn, detrimental to the integrity of African languages. An urgent proposition should be adopted to conscientize people so that they realize that countries like Japan, Malaysia, China and others, use their languages when they manufacture gadgets, equipment, cars, radios and televisions and when they trade internally. They only use English or French or Portuguese when they sell to speakers of those languages and the colonies to which the languages were bequeathed. Hence, it would be incorrect to refer to Japanese or Chinese languages as languages without political and economic baggage. The same scenario could be applied in South Africa.

Some of the respondents argue that the language policy would not work because it is a top-down scenario, that is, a prerogative of national government. They postulate that a down-top policy could have been easy to implement. These respondents advocate that the people take a lead in policy formulation. This impressive view corresponds to Alexander’s views which relate to the sociology of language. Responding to an ethical question: “Do you, don’t you give people the lead?” Alexander purports that it is the people who should actually take the lead. He acknowledges people’s perception as the basis in policy formulation. For example, at present people obviously believe that English is the answer to their problems. Alexander asserts that after establishing that perception, the government then comes in and corrects that mind set so that the people behold the advantages of the

new language policy. This then dispels the myth that it is only the government that can make implicit and explicit decisions in language matters. However, this does not dispel the authenticity of the axiom that language policies derive from the fundamental principles and objectives of the ruling elite.

4.2.1.22. Lack of political will as a constraint in implementing the new language policy

The results of question (o), Table 18, show that the majority of the respondents, unanimously asserted that it is “the attitude of those in key positions, their lack of determination or commitment and political will; lack of material resources and facilities” that deter the implementation of the language policy. The same sentiments were echoed at recent conferences. At the 2001 International conference hosted by ALASA not less than four presenters viewed the government as not being committed to the implementation of the language policy. In their paper entitled, ‘African Languages in South Africa: The attitude dilemma.’ Dladla, *et al*, assert that the government has adopted one language, English as the national language of politics, diplomacy and national communication. In his keynote address to ALASA, Nyamende supported the view and proceeded to say, “We are now watching with desire to see if the government will support teaching in all African languages in the country.” Sigcau, in her paper, ‘Mother tongue Education: A key to success’ accuses the government of not being committed to the implementation of mother tongue education in schools in the Western Cape.

Certainly, political will is an integral component in policy implementation in the sense that government leadership gives momentum to the actual implementation of the language policy. With regard to this, Alexander equates ignoring the language issue to ignoring the AIDS issue. Ignoring either of the two is like condemning thousands to death or creating alienated people with no hope. The implication is that if we do not introduce mother tongue education the country’s Matriculation failure rate may remain alarming. This engenders serious socio-economic repercussions. Assuming that those Matriculation dropouts resort to crime, that connotes big budgets for policing and prisons. However, Alexander contends

that implementation should not be an issue because the present government is strong enough to deal with language issues. Needless to say, the constitution itself clearly prescribes that multilingualism should be promoted.

4.2.1.23. Colonial legacy prevails at workplaces

That the colonial legacy prevails at most workplaces is confirmed by 73,3% of the respondents in Table 19, question (p). All the respondents acknowledged the existence of the old language policy paradigm at their workplaces but not all condoned it. The respondents who acceded to it advanced reasons whose validity is not questionable. As alluded to earlier, reasons such as “they are languages of business; it facilitates communication at the work place” are inverse to what obtains in Asia where people use indigenous languages when they do business and foreign languages when they trade with speakers of those languages. Unfortunately, in Africa there is a problem of lack of confidence in African languages.

Some respondents made vitriolic statements against conservative managers and directors who maintain the status quo. This is plausible because the workforce cannot only rely on the languages bequeathed to the country by the colonisers. The compulsory unilingual transaction causes employees to become negatively inclined towards companies or organisations they work for. In addition to this, employees are disempowered if the proficiency in another language is a decisive factor.

4.2.1.24. Equity in Language use can be achieved

The results of Table 20, question (q), indicate that equity in language use can be achieved. The 74,5% that confirmed underpinned their viewpoint by a number of conditions. Suggested strategies such as “research, government intervention, media, developing African languages, educating the masses” are valid and plausible. Many believe that there is no country that has ever been successful in language policy implementation without government intervention, including among other things, monitoring companies. Needless

to say, in her address to the Department of African languages in September 2001, Prof C. Marivate pointed out that she, on a number of occasions, had intervened to resolve differences emanating from misinterpretation of the new language policy. A number of companies had adopted English only, a move that is contradictory to the stipulations in the constitution.

4.2.1.25. Equity cannot be achieved

25,5% believe that equity in language use will not be achieved in spite of all the concerted efforts that the government and the people make. Reasons such as “demographic representation, English as a constraint and cost” are convincing.

This concurs with Robinson’s view that where many languages are promoted not all languages will play a major role. He asserts that this puts minority languages in a precarious position (Robinson, 1996:5). The International Bureau of Education (IBE) also noted that:

... in practice it is impossible for all languages to acquire an equality of roles and functions and equality of prestige and status. In reality such an equality is not necessary. In multilingual context different languages and linguistic forms play different roles. What has to be aimed at is a dynamic complementarity of roles and functions of existing languages. (IBE, 1990:94)

What the IBE intimate is that a language like English is there to complement African languages just like English or French assists Japanese languages when they trade with speakers of those languages.

One of the most incisive responses was, “Time will tell.” Definitely this is a response that depicts the respondents concerned as people who are not perspicacious enough. In other words, the respondents are not bold enough to give any judgement. They lost hope. It may also intimate defeatism before attempting to implement the new language policy. In their contention it can never be achieved. What this insinuates is that African languages will

remain in the periphery, a scenario, which clearly scoffs the constitutional principle of language equity.

4.2.1.26. African languages will not die

That African languages will not die is confirmed by 74,7% of the respondents in Table 21, question (r). The reasons for the choice of “No” are valid and plausible. Among them, is the reason that “as long as the African people exist African languages will not die.” Respondents also concur that “languages do not die easily even if a few people will speak the language.” Rhetorical questions such as “African languages have been around for decades. Why should the situation change now? How can they die now?” clearly delineate eternity or timelessness on the part of African languages. In essence, what will people speak if they die? The new language policy itself, according to Mutasa (2000:217), is the most tangible manifestation of language revival leading to survival. In other words, the policy provides for the continued existence and cultivation of African languages. Thus, language death in this regard is not inevitable. The respondents’ estimation of 70%, which almost tallies with Webb and Kembo-Sure’s 75%, that cannot speak English at all, adds poignancy to the continued existence of African languages. (Webb and Kembo 2000:8)

25,3% of the respondents are of the contention that African languages will die. They cite the dominance of English in job market, limitations of African languages and globalization as reasons. However, globalization should not be a deterrent. According to Mazrui (2000) a country has to transcend dependency and rely on indigenous techniques, personnel and approaches for purposeful change. Mazrui asserts that indigenised approaches to globalization would include greater use of African languages in the pursuit of scientific, economic and constitution change. He argues that:

No country has ascended to a first rank technological and economic power by excessive dependence on foreign languages. Japan arose to dazzling industrial heights by ‘scientificating’ the Japanese language and making it the language of its own

industrialisation (Mazrui, 2000).

Mazrui's views concur with stipulations of the Harare (1997) and Asmara (2000) declarations on African languages which aspire to have "Africa where scientific and technological discourse is conducted in the national languages as part of our cognitive preparation for facing the new challenges of the next millennium" and Africa where, "The effective and rapid development of science and technology in Africa depends on the use of African languages".

Thus, as alluded to earlier, South Africa can follow the example of Asia where local languages were "scientificated" and made languages of instruction and technological take-off. In this way, indigenous languages of South Africa would be a central component in development.

4.2.1.27. It is to one's advantage to know English

The results of Table 22, question (s), indicate that 95,2% are of the contention that it is definitely to their advantage to know English. The reasons advanced are quite convincing. English is a universal means of communication. It is the language of the United Nations and other international bodies. This concurs with Watson's views:

.. multilateral agencies, such as the World Bank and International Monetary Fund, took conscious decision to conduct their business through English. (Watson 1999:5)

English is also a language for interviews, for business at workplace and it is a popular medium of instruction. Hence, the respondents purport that it is difficult to get a decent job without the knowledge of English. This concurs with Mbude's views that "in Africa English is a do or die situation. It is a question of survival." (Personal interview in November 2001 at PRAESA) This corresponds to Ngubane's (2001:2) view that English is still the centre of day to day interaction in all public domains. All these convictions also concur with views

upheld by McDermott that:

While the language clauses were entrenched in the constitution precisely to make eleven South African languages officially equal and to protect the existence of heritage languages, in practice, English is daily coming closer to being *the* language of governance and national communication.

(McDermott, 1998:105)

Mazrui (1998:18) also contends that “democratization in South Africa has given a fresh impetus to English” which depicts the prominence and dominance of English in public domains and hence, the advantage of proficiency in English.

4.2.1.28. Harmonization is not favoured by the majority

The results of Table 23, question (t), show that 79,7% of the respondents are not in favour of harmonizing Nguni or Sesotho languages. The reasons advanced are inclined to cultural identity, linguistic pride, diversity, orthography and the complexity of each language underpinned by the conglomeration of dialects. The reasons correspond to those expounded by opponents of harmonisation. Jokweni (2001:2) contends that “opponents of harmonization of Nguni concern themselves more about identity and status of their languages than the benefits of harmonisation.”

Jokweni views the opponents’ concern about language status and identity as genuine because languages as opposed to dialects are distinct and have a distinct history and culture. Once the languages are harmonized they lose the two characteristic features, namely, a distinct history and culture. Hence, the respondents’ views are applauded. The respondents’ convictions also correspond to proclamations by Alexander (1989:51 - 65) who asserts that “ All languages spoken by the people of our country should have an equal right to exist and to flourish.” Thus, Alexander’s contention and the views by the respondents concur with the stipulations of the new language policy that designate separate development of all eleven official languages and the principle of multilingualism.

However, Alexander (ibid) and Msimang (1998:172) concur on the need of a standard variety, that is, a common written variety (not spoken), a variety that does not deter speakers from expressing themselves in their languages. This is a view that is misinterpreted by speakers of the languages, language practitioners and respondents who advance views such as “harmonization will eventually ‘kill’ other languages”. To some respondents the proposal certainly has political overtones as discerned in responses from the Eastern Cape in which one acme one accedes that “harmonization makes Xhosas subjects of the IFP”. (Inkatha Freedom Party, one of the official political parties in South Africa). Thus, harmonization is insurmountable because of the hardened attitudes caused by the policy of separate development or Homeland system. The separate system of development transformed South Africa into a society in which language differences continued to be preserved, and the languages were regarded as separate languages each in its own right, each as the most distinguishing feature and symbol of a group which wants to continue to be regarded as such.

4.2.1.29. Harmonization is approved by some

20,3% of the respondents are in favour of harmonization. Reasons such as “mutual intelligibility, related speech forms, consolidation of the language policy and frugal” are also valid. These are compatible with views upheld by Alexander (1989), cited by Jokweni (2001:1) that a unification of Nguni dialects and Sesotho dialects, respectively, in South Africa would have economic, political and socio-cultural implications. Jokweni also cites Prah (1996) who highlights important benefits of language harmonization for Africa. Prah contends that:

... if African languages are cooperatively developed on the basis of harmonised clusters across borders, the resultant large population sizes of language communities provide a better basis for economies of scale in the production of educational and general media material of such harmonised languages. (Prah, 1996:13, in Jokweni, 2001:1)

Socio-economic considerations are also advanced by Nyombe (1998:125) who says:

... plethora of languages in one country has posed formidable challenges to national development, national stability, socio-economic advancement, and sound educational policies.

Alexander (1992:57) who concurs argues that “Harmonization offers an economically feasible opportunity for maintenance of African languages in schools and in higher education.” This opinion is driven by educational and economic considerations inclined to the guiding principles adopted for Standard Shona in Zimbabwe and Standard Igbo in Nigeria. Needless to say, if harmonization were adopted, the number of languages would be minimal and, hence, easier to cater for in the national media and in education.

4.2.2. LANGUAGE USE IN EDUCATION

Responses with respect to language use in education are presented below and analysed. Where applicable, responses are grouped together to avoid unnecessary repetition.

4.2.2.1. English should be the medium of instruction in schools

The results of Table 24, question (a) indicate that the majority of the respondents, 72%, to be exact, want their children to be taught in English only. This concurs with the 1998 research in which 99% of the respondents preferred English for the education of their children. Crystal (1997:40-41) found out that, “Enthusiasm for the language (English) continues to grow among the black population.” in South Africa. Webb and Kembo-Sure (2000:6) also established that “Black parents in South Africa overwhelmingly prefer English as the language of learning and teaching for their children, even in primary schools.” The reasons advanced by the respondents correlate with the reasons established by Webb and Kembo-Sure (ibid) that:

English is a world language, it provides access to almost all the sources of

knowledge (school textbooks) and entertainment (literature, television, films), it is the most important language of work in the country, it allows one to communicate with billions of people all over the world, it is the language of most successful people in the western world, and it is the language of the struggle against apartheid.

These “self-evident” reasons concur with the reasons established by Mutasa (2000: 220) that:

- # English is an international language.
- # English communicates concepts better.
- # Textbooks are written in English.
- # It is the language used at workplaces.
- # It enables communication between people of different cultures.

The abstractions about English are clearly bona fide. Hence, it is of paramount importance that Blacks are given the opportunity to learn English to the best of their ability. However, the statement does not insinuate less affinity for African languages for Blacks in South Africa accord high value to their languages in a way difficult to quantify. Unfortunately, the high value accorded English has led to the introduction of English as a medium of instruction from as early as the first day at some of the kindergartens. This relates to the French policy that “if the mastery of a European language was the ultimate objective, it was better to begin as early as possible to read and write in the European language.” (Prah, 1995:62). However, this approach has dire consequences in human development. According to Webb and Kembo-Sure (ibid)

This decision has most likely contributed to unacceptably low level of individual educational development in the country, since most black school children in South Africa simply do not know English well enough to be able to use it as a language of learning and cognitive development.

Webb and Kembo-Sure (2000:7) perceive that the answer to the parents’ needs and those

of their children lies in the use of a language of learning which their children know well, together with high quality teaching of English as a subject. This scenario concurs with views championed by sociolinguists in Nigeria, Cameroon and Kenya. As alluded to earlier, this scenario obtains in China and Japan where the Departments of Education do not use English as a medium of instruction but teach English as a second language. Thus, fundamentally as far as possible children should be taught in the mother tongue and when the children are in the position to understand through the medium of English one can choose whether to continue, to combine or use English only. This is not to deny the fact that there are Black people in South Africa who studied in English only and they are successful in life. Anyway, the fundamental premise is that mother tongue education is more effective.

4.2.2.2. An African language should be the medium of instruction

12% of the respondents in Table 24, question (a), prefer an African language only as a language of learning and teaching, that is, mother tongue instruction. Reasons such as “mother tongue should form the basis of learning; mother tongue instruction facilitates understanding; ensures creativity and interaction with our environment and children do not battle with two things; the language and subject matter” are cogent and credible. The facts correlate with views propounded by the UNESCO meeting of experts which recommended the use of mother tongue from an early stage and to continue to be the medium of instruction for as long as possible. The mother tongue is undoubtedly the language through which the child is inducted into this world and more so, it is through this language that the child will understand his/her environment and concepts far better. Indeed, learning is more effective if instruction is in the mother tongue. Several scholars, among them, (Afolayan, 1976; Bamgbose, 1979; Adegbija, 1994) emphasized that mother tongue education ensures learners’ performance at the maximal ability and psychological support which mother tongue can provide. Needless to say, Missionaries were successful in propagating their doctrine because they were sagacious enough to realise the impact of using indigenous languages. However, advocating wholesale mother tongue instruction is absolutely unrealistic in this era where a language of wider communication has become an essential component and the quintessence of national and global development and

integration.

4.2.2.3. Bilingual Education involving English and an African language should be instituted in schools

8,2% of the respondents want their children to be taught in both English and an African language. Some of the reasons advanced, “An African language helps in cognitive development; helps the child to understand concepts better; and that English is used for tertiary education, is an international language and boasts of all the literature in education; and that both languages would empower children socially and academically” are cogent and praiseworthy. The facts concur with views advanced by the proponents of mother tongue instruction in the early stages of development and the champions of bilingual education. Bilingual education, in this scenario means using an African language as medium of instruction allotted equal time with English. Undoubtedly, bilingual education has merits which manifest in improved transmission of educational content and improved interactions among pupils, teacher and the curriculum. Pupil participation in bilingual education classroom is significantly more than in the traditional classroom (Hornberger, 1987:214). Underpinning by this axiom, Alexander (in a personal interview) proposes that the country redirects its focus on rehabilitating African languages as it were, in the context of bilingual education because people are strongly directed towards English. It is self-evident that English is breaking the point. Its prominence worldwide has had substantial impact on its status in South Africa. Thus, the scenario, active bilingualism, (an African language and English) advocated by the respondents is in the best interest of the country. What needs to be done next is to determine the model and its ramifications, that is, whether it is going to be “additive” or “parallel”. The paradigm will however, depend on the resources.

4.2.2.4. Media of instruction should be English and two African languages

2,8% of the respondents prefer English and two African languages. The obvious reason was that they want their children to understand the two main African languages IsiZulu and

Sesotho. The scenario concurs with Bengu's (1999) language policy in education which stipulates that learning of two or more languages should be the general practice and principle in our society. This approach is founded on the verity that both societal and individual multilingualism are the global norm today, especially on the African continent. The policy is meant to facilitate communication across barrier lines of language and region. Hence, this scenario prepares children for the challenges associated with multilingualism.

4.2.2.5. Media of instruction should be English and Afrikaans

4,3% of the respondents prefer English and Afrikaans as languages of learning and teaching for their children. These respondents seem to be obsessed by the colonial legacy. The approach may have worked for those parents and hence, the choice of English and Afrikaans may be built on the presumption that the scenario could also work for their children. How can a child learn in a language that he/she does not understand? As alluded to earlier, the most effective educational policy is to begin instruction in the child's own language and switch to the second or third language at a later stage. This allows for the mastery of the first language and promotes cognitive development needed for learning a second language (World Bank, 1995:79). Hence, the scenario, English and Afrikaans, *pe se*, is a barrier to effective learning.

4.2.2.6. Medium of instruction should be Afrikaans

The 0,7% that opts for Afrikaans contends that Afrikaans is easy to understand. This is not an expected scenario since most of the Blacks detested Afrikaans and associated it with apartheid. As alluded to in the paragraph above, the premise is that it can also work for their children and that it has an inclination to employment prospects associated with Afrikaans. However, the constitution is at their mercy. Section 29(2) states: "Everyone has the right to receive education in the official language or languages of their choice in public educational institutions where that education is reasonably practicable...." This may be the policy but pedagogists and language practitioners would certainly be influenced by the linguistic position espoused by UNESCO in 1953. Hence, parents need to be educated on

the merits of mother tongue education.

4.2.2.7. Some children are taught in the language their parents prefer

The results of Table 25, question (b), indicate that 77% of the respondents' children are taught in the language the parents prefer. 23% that indicated that their children are not taught in the language of their preference are those who opt for the use of mother tongue, that is, an African language, in Education. 55% of those respondents think there is a problem. This is indicated in Table 26, question (c). These respondents propose the deployment of teachers to teach African languages in every school in the country. In addition, they propose the production of teaching material in African languages. The propositions are commendable but the practicality of it remains to be seen.

4.2.2.8. The majority of the children of the respondents learn an African language as a subject

That children of the 80,9% of the respondents learn an African language at schools is illustrated in Table 27, question (d). Children of the 17,8% do not learn an African language at all. Undoubtedly, most of those children go to Private and former Model C schools, where African languages were not catered for. In certain cases where those languages are offered children shun them. However, it is a question of time. African languages will be introduced in all schools. The argument is underpinned by the Zimbabwean situation at independence which was akin to the South African situation.

4.2.2.9. Children should acquire a language in addition to their own and English

The results of Table 28, question (e), indicate that the majority of respondents want students to learn another language other than their own. A reason such as "it facilitates communication with other groups" is applauded. As expressed earlier, this echoes Bengu's pronouncement *inter alia*:

The new language in education policy... is conceived of as an integral and necessary aspect of the new government's strategy of building a non-racial nation in South Africa. It is meant to facilitate communication across the barriers of colour, language and region, while at the same time creating an environment in which respect for languages other than one's own would be encouraged. This approach is in line with the fact that both societal and individual multi-lingualism are the global norm today, especially on the African continent. As such, it assumes that the learning of two or more languages should be general practice and principle in our society. This would certainly counter any particularistic ethnic chauvinism or separatism through mutual understanding. Being multilingual should be a defining characteristic of being South African. (Bengu 1999 in Alexander 2000:17)

Indisputably, learning another language assists in integrating the nation and facilitates communication at work places which subsequently impacts positively on economic development in the country.

Learning other languages has other merits, too. Champion in (Crystal 2000:44), argues that, "with each newly learned language you acquire a soul" and that, "a man who knows two languages is worth two men". What this means is that people who acquire other languages broaden their intellectual faculty.

4.2.2.10. English should be the medium of instruction at tertiary level except for African languages

On the languages to be used in the learning and teaching of the following subjects at tertiary institutions:

[African languages; maths; science; geography; English; history; agriculture; medicine; nursing and Afrikaans] in Table 29, question (f), the majority, opted for the respective language to be used to teach the respective language and English to teach the rest of the subjects. What this intimates is that the respondents who opt for this scenario are obsessed with the status quo. The reasons advanced are again self-evident. Reasons such

as “English is an international language; literature abounds in English; translating Maths into African languages would be uneconomical” are quite realistic but then to maintain the status quo is like putting old wine into new skins. To continue to argue that translating documents and developing terminology and material in African languages is astronomical in terms of finance is disputable because the government that declared the policy knew the financial implications of the language policy. Nevertheless, if languages are to grow they should be used in the educational domain. Translating concepts from African languages to English is the way to go. The Chinese and Russians developed their languages through translating from English. In this way a nation uses English to develop or “scientificate or technologize” their languages.

Some respondents view this scenario as the most viable approach because to them “The colonial legacy at universities underdeveloped African languages.” The validity of this contention is unquestionable because institutions were concerned more with academic rigour and producing an international scholar than developing African languages into adequate media of instruction. However, the researcher does not advocate a complete overhaul of the language situation to be administered overnight. Such an enterprise takes decades to achieve or accomplish. It needs careful planning.

4.2.2.11. Bilingual Education involving English and an African language should be the norm at tertiary level

The second group of respondents, 22%, to be exact, prefer bilingual education, that is, English and an African language as languages of teaching and learning at tertiary institutions. Some of the reasons advanced like, “We should strike a balance among languages. Using both languages helps students to pass easier at tertiary institutions. If the subject matter is explained first in the mother tongue, then English later, more students could do well. For South Africa to be able to promote multilingualism in our society or to be able to implement the language policy effectively you need to allow every language to be used but again to have a lingua franca which is English is important” are valid and meritorious. This approach, is progressive because it puts African languages into their

proper perspective in terms of integrity. As the respondents say, this will lead to the growth and development of African languages. African languages can only develop if they are seen not as passive objects but rather as active languages.

4.2.2.12. English only should be the medium of instruction at tertiary level

20% of the respondents in Table 29, question (f), opt for English only for all the subjects including African languages. The obvious reasons were advanced, "English is used at workplaces; terminology; literature is available." The reasons are realistic but unfortunately the scenario scoffs the constitutional principle of language equity.

4.2.2.13. An African language should be the medium of instruction

2% of the respondents prefer an African language to be used in the teaching of all the subjects except languages. The percentage for African languages as medium of instruction was higher for schools than for tertiary institutions. However, the choice concurs with the fundamental principle espoused by proponents of mother tongue education. As far as possible students should be taught in their mother tongue. Reasons such as "It becomes easy and simple for one to learn and study anything in his/her own language because he/she does not battle with the language first before the concepts....Less failure would be encountered...Education would become accessible to many." are applauded. English medium restricts learners' performance. Mother tongue accelerates learning and injects pride and independence. African languages may not be popular media of instruction for medicine, maths, science and other subjects at present because of the lack of terminology and literature. What this connotes is a dire need of some kind of renaissance of the African languages pertinent to that of Afrikaans which is a success story in the country and on the African continent. Afrikaners are capable of learning and teaching all subjects in Afrikaans from primary school through to tertiary level which puts their learners at an advantage.

4.2.2.14. English and Afrikaans should be the media of instruction at tertiary level

5% chose English and Afrikaans as the medium of instruction for tertiary institutions. Again this is a result of the impact of the colonial legacy which induced bilingual education involving English and Afrikaans. If such a paradigm continues to prevail then the language policy of South Africa will be partially realised. This scenario validates the apartheid language policy.

4.2.2.15. All official languages should be used as media of instruction at tertiary level

The 2% that opted for the use of all the languages indicates that reading material should be available in all the official languages. This scenario is congruent to the constitutional principle of multilingualism. It places all languages into their rightful place.

4.2.2.16. African languages should be used more for teaching and parliamentary debates than in any of the other domains given in question (g).

The results of Table 30, question (g), indicate that the majority of the people want their languages to be used more for teaching and parliamentary debates than for road signs and ceremonies. This signifies that respondents want their languages to be used actively in major domains which is integral to the constitutional principle of language equity. However, the choice of 'Teaching' is contradictory to the response in the next question which makes the whole question of attitudes a complex phenomenon to deal with.

4.2.2.17. Majority not in favour of using African languages as media of instruction at any level

That the majority of the respondents are not in favour of using their languages as medium of instruction is confirmed in Table 31, question (h). This result corresponds to the results of Table 24, question (a), and Table 29, question (f), in which the majority of the respondents opted for English as a teaching medium. In Table 24 only 12% opted for an African language and in Table 29 only 2% opted for an African language as a medium of instruction in tertiary institutions. This choice was made in spite of the fact that the majority of the respondents are Black teachers in former 'Black' only schools.

The reasons for the choice of "No" in Table 31, also concur with the reasons that were advanced in Tables 24 and 29. Needless to say, reasons such as, "The post-modern period largely supports globalization it is therefore imperative to acquire a global tool. Children will be landlocked." are convincing. However, nations should always strike a balance between localisation and globalization. Globalization implies hollowing a nation state by compromising ideological will, jeopardising political content and economic affairs. This scenario intimates dependency in toto which subsequently impacts on development and unfortunately on the language situation. Indubitably, the perception of the people on language matters waivers as manifest in interpreting one language as a global tool. However, in all honesty, Africa needs a new kind of consciousness with a global perspective for Africa needs to link with other nations for trade and participating in international affairs. Malaysia had a rude awakening because of their language policy which did not have a global perspective. Their experience is discussed in chapter five.

4.2.2.18. Use of African languages for tuition is favoured by university lecturers, college lecturers and KwaZulu-Natal residents

The results also indicate that the university, colleges, and KwaZulu Natal are in favour of using African languages. The choice of "Yes" by university and college lecturers may be due to the obsession with the new language policy which advances parity of languages. The choice of "Yes" by KwaZulu-Natal respondents corresponds to results from interviews in the same province in which the majority opted for IsiZulu as the language of learning and teaching. The choice may be due to the dominance of IsiZulu in South Africa and its role

as an “unrecognized lingua franca” that exists among Black South Africans.

The reasons for the choice of “Yes” which are pedagogical in nature are valid and plausible. Some of the reasons such as “This is the way in which African languages and their speakers can be empowered. Mother tongue would expedite the level of comprehension.... This can improve the pass rate in our institutions..languages develop if they are used outside the home environment” are convincing and praiseworthy. This clearly depicts a resounding contribution from university and college lecturers.

4.2.2.19. There are disadvantages in using African languages in Education

That there are disadvantages in using African languages in education is confirmed by 70,2% of the respondents in Table 32, question (I). The reasons raised concur with reasons advanced earlier. All respondents were unanimous in asserting that African languages had shortcomings that are related to academic jargon, standardization and reading material. In addition to this, respondents cite limitations in human resources. Rhetorical questions such as “How many Zulu scientists do we have? Books in English are readily available from donors.....how many books in African languages are readily available from donors?” point to the gravity of the situation and the sincerity of the respondents’ argument. Indeed, the linguistic and literary terminology necessary for teaching and learning through the medium of African languages is deficient. Thus, the underdevelopment of African languages will continue to be a hindrance to their use. Unfortunately, this compels teachers and students to use English where it could have been to their advantage to use African languages.

4.2.2.20. There are no disadvantages in the use of African languages as medium of instruction: Use of African languages in Education is favoured by some

29,8% see no disadvantages in the use of African languages in education. Reasons such as “the hypothesis has not been tested; you cannot have a disadvantage in something that

has not been tried; the taste of the pudding is in the eating. It was successfully done in the apartheid era.” are valid and laudable. What this denotes is the need for actualization of a policy of teaching and learning in African languages beyond the initial stages of primary school. The implication of the respondents’ view is that the more this scenario is adopted the more a natural process of developing African languages prevails. This concurs with Moutsetung’s philosophy, that ‘every great march begins with a step.’ Indeed, language nationalists and educators should break the ice or set the ball rolling in order to induce a major development and promotion of African languages in all domains formerly reserved for English. According to Chiwome *et al* (1992:256), this approach would “ensure grassroots participation in terminology standardization and development of linguistic and literary registers.”

4.2.2.21. Principals encourage pupils to use English during school hours

The results of Table 33, question j(i), indicate that the majority of school principals encourage children to communicate in English during school hours. 76,7% of the respondents in Table 34, question j(ii), view the practice as “good”. The reasons advanced, such as “It improves proficiency so that Black students will perform better; English is a requirement for admission to university; The practice encourages students to be more versatile and conversant in the use of English as medium of communication in a larger spectrum” are realistic and convincing. The practice of using English signifies what English has come to mean to South Africa: An epitome in the lives of the people of South Africa. Xola (of PRAESA. in a personal interview) contends that, “The power of English is so overwhelming in South Africa.” Anne-Marie Beukes (on Radio 5 of South Africa) referred to English as an important link language...a very important pivotal link language in South Africa.” Mbude delineates English as “a do or die situation, it is a question of survival” which insinuates that one is either proficient in it or completely cut out. This concurs with one respondent’s view which sums it up: “switch on a computer its English, touch a cellphone its English, open a newspaper its English, step into the bank, its English.” English is therefore ubiquitous and indispensable. Is it about English or knowledge and skills? However, the lingo-cultural gap that exists now between African languages and European

languages may be disastrous for reducing dependency in Africa's experience.

To the general public English is the answer to their problems for it provides access to information, serves as a medium of instruction and is the most important language of work in the country. Bamgbose (2000:76) also contends that there is "an obvious need for a language of wider communication, which every state requires for efficient functioning." It is of paramount importance then that schools (especially the former Blacks only) play a major role in improving proficiency in English. However, emphasis on English does not mean total neglect of other languages. Children should be proud of their languages and should learn through their languages whenever it is reasonably practical.

4.2.2.22. The practice of encouraging pupils to speak English during school hours is not appreciated

23,3% of the respondents disapproved of the practice of encouraging school children to speak English during school hours. To some it is akin to being recolonised and to others it entices children to look down upon their languages. Unquestionably, it may have some psychological impact on the children and so the practice should not be coerced but done within limits. Needless to say, the parents and the children need to be told the rationale behind the practice.

4.2.2.23. Children who go to former-whites-only schools lose their culture / language

47,3% of the respondents in Table 35, question (k), contend that learners who attend former whites only schools are cut off from their culture and language. In the Northern Province, Gauteng, the university and colleges more respondents accede that learners who attend those schools are cut off from their culture and language. The respondents uphold this contention because of Model C students' exposition. They claim that the learners look down upon African languages and see themselves as better. Due to that exposition they have earned themselves derogatory names such as 'American wanna be and coconuts.' That

the 'American wanna be' is anathema to the South African Black community is depicted by some of the respondents' views such as "They have lost touch. The Cockney accent is rubbish. They need to 're-Africanize'. They are a curse to our African renaissance and heritage...they are lingo-conquered species." Indeed some of the learners cannot read and write in African languages. One incisive experience involves a child who wrote kwaZulu as 'quaZulu'. The implications of this trend are terrifying. It denotes that if the situation continues unchecked African languages will be in a precarious position at some stage in spite of their official status.

4.2.2.24. Children who go to former whites-only-schools do not lose their culture / language

52,7% of the respondents concur that learners who attend former whites only schools are not cut off from their languages and culture. Reasons such as "A leopard can't change its spots. Are we not judging the book by its cover? They do not stay at Model C schools until they die" are reasonable and convincing. The implication is that they will not be severed or alienated from their culture. Model C products themselves assert vehemently that they are not cut off from their culture and language. They accede that they speak with an accent but still have a high regard for their languages and culture. They purport that accent or tone does not mean they are 'less Africans.' Some respondents embrace that instead of losing their culture Model C learners gain another culture. In addition they contend that Model C schools have assured learners a better future because most of them are employed. Needless to say, the situation will change at some stage. The basis of the argument is the Zimbabwean situation which was akin to the South African set up. In the early years of independence people were mesmerized by the 'American wanna be' type of accent but now it is anathema to the community. People realised that English is not monolithic. There are different varieties of English, for example, British English, American English and Black South African English.

4.3. STUDENTS ONLY

Students were approached so that the researcher could get from the horse's mouth the language preference in Education at tertiary level.

4.3.1. Students themselves opt for English as medium of instruction

On the language of teaching and learning, the majority of the respondents in Table 36 preferred English. The results concur with the results in Table 24, question (a), in which the majority of parents also opted for English as the medium of instruction for their children. The graph in Fig 67 illustrate a substantial margin between those who prefer English and those who opt for other media of instruction. The big question to ask is, "What is in English that makes English so popular as a medium of instruction?" Is it a question of seeing English playing a pivotal role in Education? This was echoed by one respondent who opts for English. In her own words she says, "I was taught in English the whole of my learning career so it is difficult to change." For one respondent the choice is made because English is the only language of teaching and learning for her subjects. This points to the inevitability and the "unassailable position of English" (Achebe 1986) in Education because from upper primary school level up to tertiary an alternative medium of instruction in the form of African languages is non-existent. In any case, it is not popular, vibrant and dynamic to the respondents as portrayed on the graph. Afrikaans which is developed enough to function as an alternative medium of instruction has lost the prerogative bestowed to it during the peak days of apartheid.

To underpin the choice of English as medium of instruction by economic grounds insinuates ignorance of the capabilities of African languages. It is worth noting that African languages are economically viable too. Is it not a known fact that in South Africa the majority of the workers in industry such as farming and mining are not proficient in English? Instructions and interaction at work are in African languages and nevertheless they do the bulk of the work that generates billions of rands to the country every year.

4.3.2. Medium for teaching African languages at tertiary level should be African languages themselves say University students

That African languages should be used as media of instruction for African languages at the university is confirmed by the majority of the respondents who are university students. The reasons advanced are quite plausible. Some of the incisive ones are : “I understand concepts better if I am taught in my language. It is pathetic to teach an African language in English. Where is the sense in that?” The responses may be influenced by the scenario, mother tongue education, that already prevails at the majority of the universities.

4.3.3. Majority of Technikon students opt for English as a medium of instruction for African languages

On the contrary, the majority of Technikon students opt for English as the medium of instruction for African languages. Reasons such as “for better understanding and to accommodate everyone.” are also convincing. Truly, the use of English is to the benefit of individuals and international linguists who are determined to learn about African languages. However, it is indisputable that college students succumbed to the policy adopted by Technikon Pretoria which stipulates *inter alia* that:

Traditionally and in accordance with Council Policy Technikon Pretoria is a bilingual institution where Afrikaans and English are spoken and where lectures are presented in Afrikaans and English. ...

(Published on a poster at Lesolanga High School in Mabopane.)

The choice of English also indicates their overt negative attitude towards African languages. What these Technikon students need is a course on language awareness campaign so that they comprehend the need to place African languages in their proper perspective.

4.4. MEDIA: NEWSPAPERS, TELEVISION AND RADIO

Responses with regard to the media are presented and analysed below. Articles from newspapers are cited, summarised and analysed.

4.4.1. Majority listen to an African language radio programmes

The results of Table 38, question (a), indicate that more people listen to African language radio channels. The majority of listeners with an affinity for African languages radio channels are based outside Gauteng, with the bulk of them residing in the Limpopo Province and Mpumalanga. Contrary to that, the majority of the people who listen to English radio channels reside in Gauteng. Among those listeners are college lecturers. What this intimates is that Gauteng has an omnipresence and affection for English much more than other regions. One postulates the high levels of urbanization, literacy and cosmopolitan cities, with high level of immigration that dates back to 1930, as dominant factors in the affinity for English.

4.4.2. Majority watch English television programmes

That the majority, of the respondents watch more television programmes in English than in African languages is confirmed by the results of Table 37, question (b). The results indicate that 73,5% watch programmes in English, 9,3% watch programmes in African languages and 17,2% watch programmes in both English and African languages. The results depict a negative attitude towards African languages and, possibly, a deficiency of programmes in African languages. The programmes are meagre in number and at the same time they are not vibrant and meritorious. Some of them are replays of yesteryear dramas which are repellent to viewers.

4.4.3. Programmes watched in the different languages per week

Table 40, question (ci), indicates that respondents watch the following South African Broadcasting Corporation Television (SABC TV) programmes in their languages per week:

English : 422

IsiXhosa :	5
IsiZulu :	9
Sesotho :	15
Sesotho sa Lebowa:	11
Setswana :	14
IsiNdebele :	02
Xitsonga :	02
Tshivenda :	02
Siswati :	02
Afrikaans :	39

4.4.4. Majority of African language speakers discontented by the meagre number of programmes in African languages

With regard to this meagre number of programmes in African languages, the results of Table 41, question (cii), demonstrate that the majority of the respondents are discontented. 79,5% unanimously accede that there should be more television programmes and channels to cater for African language groups. Respondents lament as they put it, "We are tired of American films. SABC must have fresh, original and vibrant programmes." The Tsonga and Venda are quite vocal: "I suggest we have our own television station...We are undermined, oppressed, in exile in our own country. There should be no more compulsory payment of TV licences." These and other views that are tabulated intimate the intensity of the drive for more television programmes in African languages. Their arguments are not without foundation. Basing on the November 2001 SABC TV programme line up, all African languages were on air for 16hours 45 minutes. The same month Afrikaans alone was on air for 16hours 20minutes and English which got the lion's share was on air for 200 hours. The discrepancy calls for redress and the restoration of the integrity of African languages so that the speakers can take their rightful place in the state and the world. Indeed, television is supposed to reach all viewers on a variety of issues in as much as it is a supplementary tool, a technological medium that could provide basic education and information to all. Broadcasting in all languages provides for the promotion of

multilingualism in the country.

4.4.5. African languages do not get enough airplay

On whether the SABC TV gives enough airplay to African languages, the majority said “No”. They concur that the number of English and Afrikaans programmes out-numbered African languages ones. Like in Table 41, the respondents bemoan the dominance of overseas music and American films over local content. They feel this is a perpetuation of the colonial legacy as SABC management continue to serve their own interests. It is interesting to see comments like “The SABC TV should be named ABC TV (American BC) or BBC (British BC) as all programmes are American and British products.” Such responses intimate the gravity of the situation. The Tsonga, the Venda and the Ndebele who are virtually not catered for on the main channels indicated the futility of responding to such a question. It is like rubbing salt onto their wounds. Indeed, the neglect of African languages *inter alia*, Xitsonga, Tshivenda, Siswati and IsiNdebele on television constitutes an infringement of the constitutional principle of language equity and the promotion of multilingualism. How do you ensure cultivation and growth of those languages if they are not catered for on television?

4.4.6. TV programmes in African languages are not watched frequently

The results of Table 42, question (d), demonstrate that the majority of the respondents do not watch television programmes in African languages at all. Of those who watch, the majority watch programmes in their languages once a week. The scenario clearly depicts the respondents’ inclination to English television programmes. This corresponds to the results in Table 39, question (b), in which the majority, 73,5% to be exact, watch programmes in English. This implies numerous deficiencies, among them, the shortage of original, vibrant and mellifluous films in African languages; absence of fascinating documentaries and general lack of interest in African language programmes. Undeniably, the attitude emanates from the colonial dispensation where everything African appeared worthless.

The researcher is taken aback by respondents who clamour for more television programmes in African languages and at the same time shun them. It may be with the understanding of this demeanor that one of the respondents, Dr Phaswana, objected to interfering with SABC TV 3 which broadcasts exclusively in English. I elicit from his contention that SABC TV 3 should continue to broadcast solely in English because fundamentally and pragmatically that is what the people cherish.

4.4.7. Some languages should be accorded more airtime

That some languages should be accorded more airplay is supported by 56,8% of the respondents in Table 43, question (e). Some respondents unanimously accede that languages such as IsiNdebele, Xitsonga, Tshivenda and Siswati should be accorded more airplay on television. In reality, the respondents are abundantly sympathetic with language groups that have been sidelined for decades. This suggestion is valid and laudable because it adheres to the constitutional principle of recognizing and promoting all the official languages within the borders of South Africa.

Other respondents concur that English should be accorded more airplay on television because it is a lingua franca. This view concurs with Pat Pillai's contention that "English is understood by the majority of the population, hence, more airtime is devoted to English" (Sowetan 1996). The choice of English may be due to the positive attitude towards English because IsiZulu is widely understood enough to be a viable option as a lingua franca. However, as alluded to above, people have an irresistible affinity for English. However, settling for one language flouts the constitutional principle of language equity.

4.4.8. Languages should be accorded equal airtime

That no language should be accorded more airplay than any other was supported by 43,2% that chose "No" in Table 43, question (e). Reasons advanced, such as, "All languages are equal before the constitution, so they should have an equal opportunity. ..TV ..should be ...for

all viewers, literate and illiterate” are reasonable and praiseworthy. Indeed, the constitution prescribes that all languages be treated equitably. Apparently, this scenario would incur gratification to both the literate and the illiterate.

4.4.9. Majority prefer reading a newspaper published in English

The results of Table 44, question (f), indicate that 27,2% of the respondents prefer reading an African language newspaper. Reasons advanced are underpinned by emotional attachment to language. The respondents are simply passionate about their languages. 72,8% of the respondents prefer an English newspaper to the one in an African language. Some of the tabulated reasons, such as, “English is easy to read; English is precise; English has more words to describe things, emotions and actions” show blatant negative attitudes towards African languages. Hence, the preference of English depicts the respondents’ positive attitude towards English. Indeed, English is regarded as a language that does not beat about the bush, a language which is more expressive than African languages. In addition, English is a language that is perceived as superior to African languages. The situation calls for an urgent need for a language awareness campaign in order to amend and reestablish the dignity and integrity of African languages.

4.4.10. To the majority SABC TV 1 should broadcast programmes in Nguni languages only; SABC TV 2 should broadcast in Sesotho languages and Afrikaans and SABC TV 3 should broadcast in English, Tshivenda and Xitsonga

The results in Table 46, question (h), indicate that the majority of the respondents, 62,8%, want SABC TV to restructure and regroup languages as demonstrated. Although it is not purely a linguistic question the issue is about ensuring the cultivation and growth of languages through the media on an equitable basis. In this way, the constitutional obligation of promoting multilingualism is achieved. Interesting enough, respondents were quick to express contentment, “This restructure could be good news to evolve since 1994. This caters for linguistic and cultural diversity I absolutely and without reservation support the

move.” Indeed, this scenario could be a source of gratification to the disgruntled minority language groups.

4.4.11. Restructuring SABC TV so that SABC TV 1 broadcasts in Nguni languages only; SABC TV 2 in Sesotho and Afrikaans and SABC TV 3 in English, Tshivenda and Xitsonga is unacceptable.

37,2% argue that the scenario propagates separate development. They suggest that all languages should be beamed on all the channels. However, whatever scenario is promulgated the most important facet is the cultivation of African languages and the promotion of multilingualism.

4.5. GENERAL VIEWS

This section gave room to respondents to express their views and outpourings freely. To avoid unnecessary repetition analysis is made on key issues and responses that have not been discussed.

4.5.1. Language policy is a lip service

That the language policy is viewed as a lip service is confirmed by 55% of the respondents. The policy is seen as pure “window dressing because it is impractical and cannot be effected.” To some the language policy is “a farce and it leaves English and Afrikaans as bread and butter languages.” The respondents’ views concur with Ayo Bamgbose’s observation that language policies in Africa, no matter how good they are, are characterised by, among other aspects “...declaration without implementation” (Bamgbose, 1991:111). Certainly, other African countries that had also made as one of their declarations (of intent) a commitment to multilingualism hardly achieved anything with legal implications. It is all lip service. The respondents’ observation may be correct then. If impracticality is what obtains, the situation then intimates odds against the implementation of those policies. As observed by Gill in her keynote address to IAWA, in 2002, language

policies enacted at independence are not pragmatic. They are policies born out of nationalism or nationalistic sentiments. However, the South African language policy is considered one of the most progressive language policies in the world. Hence, concerted efforts should be made to ensure the success of this noble language policy.

Interesting enough, one respondent appeals to people “to stop deceiving the nation by saying all languages are equal. They will never be!” Definitely languages can never be equal. The nation requires language awareness campaign so that they acquaint themselves with complementarity of roles of languages. Some languages exist to complement others. A home language can be used to communicate with friends and neighbours and can also be used in education where it is reasonably practical. Where it is impractical for one to go in that language, one resorts to another language, for example, English or IsiZulu. In this case IsiZulu or English complements the home language. This insinuates why the former minister of education, Bengu, championed individual multilingualism as a defining characteristic of being South African. This brings the discussion to a question of flexibility which is a crucial factor, an essential ingredient of multilingualism. Where one language fails to serve the interests of the individual, he/she is expected to be flexible enough to switch to another language.

4.5.2. English should be the sole official language of the country

In their general views 15% of the respondents opt for the promotion of English as the sole official language of the country. They advance that English, *inter alia*, should be the medium of instruction in schools, should be accorded more airtime on television, should be used for communication at work and in all communication and should be used to lure investors. To justify their views some cite translation as too costly and time consuming. These convictions depict the depth and the intensity of the damaging impact of the colonial legacy to the minds of the people. One respondent concurs that “The problem is with African people who were indoctrinated and now find it difficult to decolonize their minds.” Thus, the respondents’ views are certainly an excruciating misconception about language issues. Can people abandon their languages for a language that is spoken by the minority on the continent? Is

this not a blatant negative attitude towards one's own language? Is it not like cursing oneself? Is it not a known fact that South Africa is an economic powerhouse on the continent because of the mineral and agricultural merchandise produced by millions who are not proficient in English? Does one need English to dig in a mine or cut sugar-cane on a plantation or cultivate maize?

To opt for more English programmes on television is like advancing selfish ends in as much as the scenario denies the illiterate patriots the opportunity to be entertained and learn from the television. It is also like underdeveloping African languages by denying their cultivation and growth through the media. This proposal is a non-starter because it is retrogressive and it violates the fundamental axiom of language promotion and development.

4.5.3. African languages should not die

Progressive respondents want their languages to survive; to be developed so that they play a major role in education in order that not one language is used at the expense of others. These respondents opt for more television programmes in African languages. They wish the languages timelessness as discerned in the response, "African languages should not die." Some of these respondents suggest radio talk shows to make people aware and conferences and workshops for language practitioners to express their views regarding the language policy. Certainly, these meritorious convictions concur with the stipulations of the new language policy which advance the promotion of multilingualism.

The respondents' views concur with a Welsh proverb which supports the continued existence of languages. It reads: "A nation without a language is a nation without a heart" (Crystal, 2000:36). In this regard a language expresses identity. In the same vein, Mithun in Crystal (2000:38) advances the thought that, "the loss of languages is tragic precisely because they are not interchangeable, precisely because they represent the distillation of the thoughts and communication of a people over their entire history". Steiner (2000:35) also remarked that, "Everything forgets. But not a language". Thus, all languages, African

languages included, are crucial for the successful existence and continuity of humanity.

4.5.4. Hope is lost for any role of Xitsonga and Tshivenda in South Africa

Some Tsonga and Venda respondents from the Northern Province have lost hope of ever seeing their languages play a major role in public affairs and on television. One response reads, "I treat this questionnaire like all others... that passed through my hands....now gathering dust in the dustbinNO change will come forth out of this." The response intimates despondence in toto and ultimate dream and longing for the language to play an active role in major domains and for the language to be accorded slots on the national television. To resolve the quagmire, stakeholders who include the speakers of the language, the Language Board, language practitioners and the SABC, and interested parties should devise strategies to implement so that the speakers can take their rightful place in the country. Needless to say, stakeholders could adopt and implement recommendations by researchers and scholars.

4.6. ANALYSIS OF RESPONSES FROM INTERVIEWS

(Interview transcriptions are in the Appendix for reference)

Responses of interviewees are presented below and analysed.

4.6.1. Interviewee Number 1, a former employee in the Department of Education in Gauteng

Interviewee number 1 is aware of the new language policy. Of course, this is expected of a former senior employee in the department of education. To the interviewee the policy represents the political aspirations of the government. The implication of his contention is that the government wanted to win votes from people of different linguistic backgrounds. He bases his view on the notion that African languages are not economically viable. The interviewee emphasized that "as long as a language group owns nothing (in terms of business companies) their language cannot be official. ... If you own nothing, then you must forget. Your language is nowhere." A simple example is, "if a Venda man owns an hotel,

patrons tend to greet him in Tshivenda, his own language.” In order to comprehend the interviewee’s conviction, delineation of key words, ‘official’ and ‘official language’ becomes necessary in order to delimit one’s scope. Official relates to power. If a language is official it is powerful. Technically, an official language is a language that has to be used for all official transactions, including government business, record keeping, laws and judicial proceedings in most courts, administration, and teaching medium at most levels of education (Bamgbose, 2000:1). In short, an official language is the language in which the government does business. In this sense, the government declared eleven official languages (spoken). However, the impression created is that some languages are more official than others. In other words, the implication is that some of the languages are only official in name but not in substance. This is basically the quintessence of his conviction. Alexander (in a personal interview) concurs that, “some languages are more official than others in the sense that only two languages, English and Afrikaans, are used nationally. Other languages are used provincially, that is, if they are used in government business at all. They are hardly used as national languages and that is why in that sense in national issues these languages hardly feature.” Hence, most African languages are less official and will remain in that state until every African language is represented in all Language Boards established in all provinces just like English and Afrikaans are today. In this way, every province would serve the interests of the minute number of African language speakers who emigrated and settled in another province.

That the English and the Afrikaners own ‘something’ that consolidates the status of their languages is authentic. Xola, who concurs, asserts that, “When Afrikaners were poor their language was nowhere but after establishing their own business companies they became rich and subsequently their language gained territory in terms of development and privilege.” Needless to say, because of money the Afrikaners bought more airtime on television in 2000, forcing SABC TV to restructure some of its programmes involving minority languages. In this way Afrikaners made further strides in cultivating their language through the media. The minority language groups who own nothing have to contend with the thirty and fifteen minutes programmes that they watch on a weekly basis. Those are programmes that are subsidized by the government to show their political will to ensure the promotion of

multilingualism. On a positive note, Xola contends that African languages will follow the Afrikaans trend because Blacks are infiltrating big companies. The infiltration in the economic sector implies that African languages are making inroads which will eventually witness power and perquisite bestowed on them. However, Xola concedes that, "Economic power takes time to achieve and hence, it will take years and generations to empower the majority of the people and their languages." Unquestionably, for a language to develop and gain status it is a process not an event.

For a language to gain power and status visibility is also fundamental. If the Venda businessman, referred to by the interviewee, were to use English and Tshivenda for instructions and labels, for example, ENTRANCE / MUNANGO, visitors to the hotel would realize the existence of that language and inevitably they would accord the language due respect. The impact of visibility cannot be disputed. It is so effective in a way difficult to quantify.

Dr Alexander perceives the whole issue raised by Interviewee number 1 as a vicious circle which he equates to the hen and egg story. He contends that unless the languages are given power by the government and stakeholders they are not going to accumulate status. A bright example would be to adopt a policy which makes African languages compulsory to civil service employees, universities and colleges. That practice would certainly have a psychological effect on the community as a whole. This compulsory requirement will influence the community to accord African languages the perquisites, power and the status they need.

4.6.2. Interviewee Number 2, an administrator

Interviewee number 2 who is also aware of the new language policy advocates the promotion of English as the official language. He castigates Afrikaners who continue to grumble about their language and emphasizes that Afrikaans will take Afrikaners nowhere, not beyond the Johannesburg International Airport. This is another awful misconception about language issues. Championing for the existence and rejuvenated role of Afrikaans

in public affairs and media does not mean neglect of English. However, if their campaign were underpinned by selfish grounds, then, it would deserve condemnation. Examining their plight positively, witnessing the reduction of programmes in their language and observing English gain territory flouted the constitutional principle of language equity. Politics aside, Afrikaans is widely understood in South Africa to the extent that even the illiterate Blacks boast of their knowledge of Afrikaans. It is the language that is used more in business. This concurs with Interviewee number 1's view that "When people go to look for work they go in English and once they are employed they speak Afrikaans." With regard to this, Interviewee number 9 advocates the teaching of Afrikaans apart from English. He emphatically said, "Please do not forget Afrikaans in the curriculum. To get a job, my brother. Where will they (his offsprings) work if they do not know Afrikaans?" So there is that concern which gives Afrikaans an upper hand over African languages. In spite of the simulated hatred of Afrikaans, it is interesting for Interviewee Number 1 and the researcher to observe that blacks need it as a prerequisite to get a job and needless to say, it is largely the Black who greets first in Afrikaans and not the white. In any case there should not be any qualms about this state of affairs for a language knows no colour.

In broad and general, to succeed in any enterprise one needs to be aggressive. Aggressiveness is an integral component of development. The researcher postulates that it is also because of this aggressiveness that Afrikaners made strides in developing their language. Politics aside, Afrikaans is one of the most tangible manifestations of language renaissance in the country and on the continent. Hence, at times it is necessary, to chew pride and learn from fellow compatriots. If the approach to lure their assistance is in the form of workshops then, it is 'education without fees'.

Finally, aggressiveness remains a crucial element to be adopted in the development of African languages. Xola sums it up when he says, "People need to have commitment or dedication to their language. It is not up to the government. It is not up to the private sector. It is not up to institutions to ensure the development of African languages. It is up to the speakers themselves. If the speakers do not have the will, it will not happen." Hence, the speakers should take the initiative so that the government, the private sector and institutions

feel obliged to assist. Thus, Interviewee number 2 should not bother himself about what happens when the plane takes off for some unknown destination beyond the blue but about prospects in the country.

4.6.3. Interviewee Number 3 from Unisa

Interviewee number 3, a lecturer in the Department of African Languages is certainly cognizant of the language policy of South Africa. He regards it as a commendable language policy but is quick to castigate it as a death knell for African languages. It is ironical that a language policy that has good intentions is berated. In his contention the language policy is not bequeathing perquisites to African languages but creates fresh inducement for English and Afrikaans. This perspective corresponds to viewpoints alluded to earlier, authored by Mazrui (1998) and Robinson (1996), which insinuate that the multilingual language policy imparts a fresh impetus for English and creates a delicate position for other languages.

4.6.4. Interviewee Number 4, a student at Unisa

Interviewee number 4, a student at UNISA is aware of the language policy. To her what prevails in education is the colonial legacy, that is, bilingual education involving Afrikaans and English. The student advocates mother tongue education from primary to university. Although she is not a language practitioner her views correspond to those of proponents of mother tongue education. The choice of African languages means deliberately allowing them the benefit that English had, that is, the opportunity to grow and develop in the educational domain. Bloch who concurs argues that, "Any language can do anything and there is no reason why we should use English and not IsiXhosa for Maths. Not at all. It is only our particular tradition where teachers have been taught in English and the literature is in English."(personal interview at PRAESA). Allowing indigenous languages to move from the lower rungs of Education means according them the opportunity to develop and grow. This scenario eventually exerts a crucial influence on the image of the languages which in turn impacts positively on the people's attitudes.

The reasons advanced by Interviewee 4 such as, “Students will understand easily. It (language) is something they are born with, something that originated from the home, a language that exists in their environment” are cogent and laudable. Her views concur with the proclamation espoused by Malmberg that:

Elementary schooling in a language other than the child’s mother-tongue represents a serious departure from the fundamental educational rule that one should move from the known to the unknown. Only the mother-tongue with its link to the child’s environment and experiences can introduce the child to the world of abstract experiences and higher culture. (Malmberg, 1964 in Kennedy, ed. 1984:180)

The interviewee alleges that she could have passed her examinations with distinctions had she written her papers in African languages. This corresponds to claims made by Interviewee number 10 whose Venda cousins failed to secure jobs at the Electoral Commission because the examinations were in English and Afrikaans only. They claim they could have got the job if the questions were set in Tshivenda. These views intimate change of attitude by some people towards the use of African languages in education and other domains because earlier on, as Adegbija (1994:100) noted, some speakers of indigenous languages did not wish to see their languages used in education and other domains because of lack of confidence in the languages.

Some speakers may wish to see African languages actively involved in the educational domain, but unfortunately, it is insurmountable. It appears there are odds against their success as media of instruction as evidenced by the fifty years that have expired since the original UNESCO proposal on mother tongue education was published and that seventeen years have gone by since the Draft for Language Plan of Action for Africa was drawn up but nothing has been achieved. Even monolingual countries such as Swaziland and Lesotho have not achieved anything. Why is it so hard to achieve? The inability of African languages to perform in administrative and educational domains can be explained in terms of two broad facets, namely, duration of colonial domination and dependency syndrome. Unlike Asia, Africa has been under colonial rule for decades. The time span of colonial rule has

adversely impacted on the minds of the inhabitants of sub-Saharan Africa. The title of Ngugi wa Thiongo's book, "*Decolonizing the Mind*", bears testimony to the degree of entrenchment of lingo-cultures which are now burdensome to dissuade. Where in this world except in Africa do you find a book that bears the same title, *Decolonising the Mind*?

Dependency syndrome manifests itself in the continued use of colonial languages with the excuse that African languages will landlock them, block the window on the world and exclude them from participating in international affairs. One of the gross linguistic anomalies of post-colonial Africa is to group countries after the imperial language they adopted as the official language. African countries are constantly referred to as Francophone Africa or French speaking countries, Anglophone Africa or English speaking countries and Lusophone Africa. Asian countries were colonized and yet nobody refers to them as Anglophone Asia (Mazrui:1998:26). Those groupings have nothing to do with indigenous languages and cultures. Thus, they are a pointer to lingo-cultural dependency on the societies concerned. To forge ahead African countries need to focus on localization or development which should be equated to globalization minus dependency, more so, rejuvenated and revitalized efforts are needed to revamp the process of developing African languages so that they can play a major role in administrative and educational domains.

4.6.5. Interviewee Number 5, a parent in Gauteng

Interviewee number 5 is aware of the new language policy. He wants to see the language policy practised but what he does not want is mother tongue education up to university level. To him it is like 'destroying the country'. He emphatically argued, "If people do that they want us to 'kill' the country....We want English." With regard to this, Bloch asserts that, "Many people think it is easier to work in one language than all the languages. People hope that that is the easier option, that is, for everyone to be educated in one language. People think it is easier rather than working up all the complexities." Indeed, there are misconceptions about language issues. Undeniably, there are gross misgivings about African languages which are generally rated poorly because they are restricted only to local aspects of internal communication. Hence, it is increasingly difficult for African languages to break the point as

the speakers themselves are not willing to see their languages used in education. Thus, there is a need for language awareness programmes so that people comprehend the social repercussions of denying school children mother tongue education, at least in the early years of school.

4.6.6. Interviewee Number 6, a student at the Pretoria Technikon

Like most interviewees, Interviewee number 6 is aware of the new language policy. In her contention African languages should continue to be used for communication purposes at home, police stations and hospitals and not for educational purposes. She laughed as she related her mother's experience of studying Julius Caesar in Sesotho. She claims that if they were to teach information technology in African languages it would be very difficult to translate. Her convictions concur with those of her college mates who completed the questionnaire. Because she was introduced to Information Technology in English she perceives it as insurmountable to learn and teach the subject in African languages. As alluded to earlier, the language policy of the college may be having serious psychological effects on the student community as a whole.

One reason advanced for the choice of English is, "If not (English) you won't go to America." Do people learn English to go to America? One questions why people would want to go to America? How many people in South Africa will go to America, anyway? Does America deny entry to people who cannot speak English? Facts about using a language for learning and teaching and knowing the language and being able to communicate in it are misconstrued. Is it not a fact that Germans go to school in their language but when they come to South Africa as tourists they communicate in English, a language which is not their medium of instruction? This is simplistic conception about language issue.

4.6.7. Interviewee Number 7, a city council employee also a Unisa student

Interviewee number 7 acknowledges that he knows the language policy but casts doubt on the possibility of implementing mother tongue education at all levels in education. To show the extent of total denial he questions, "How will we do that?" He asserts, "No matter how you develop the language it will not be possible. ... Let's speak the language and it ends up there. ... It will take us another hundred years, not now after all who wants it?" Xola who concurs asserts that "African languages cannot be used in education beyond primary school because they are still developing ... it takes time, takes decades, even hundred years for a language to reach the level of development where languages can compete. The tide is against us for two reasons: the power of English and multiplicity of our languages. We talk of nine languages, that is, nine challenges. It is unlike Afrikaners who had one language to work on." The views intimate that it is extremely difficult to break away from existing practices in which English and Afrikaans are the dominant media of instruction. As Bamgbose (2000:3) rightly observed, "...as a practical undertaking, there is considerable emotional reaction against it (mother tongue instruction) because attitudes have hardened over the years about perceived lack of value in African languages as teaching media." Thus, it is well-nigh impossible for African languages to penetrate the educational and administrative domains in spite of the fact that those are the languages spoken by the majority in the country.

Interviewee number 7's reactions such as "My brother we cannot use our languages like in China or Asia. We are late. We are late. Very late" point to the alluded to impact of the length of time of colonial domination and the dependency syndrome in Africa as opposed to Asia. However, African languages should be used in education and administrative domains so that they develop. Bamgbose (2000:67) who concurs asserts that, "...language development ...is a... vicious circle. Unless a language is developed, it cannot be used in education and , unless it is used in education it cannot be developed." Undeniably, it is only and only after attempting to use African languages that people may establish the terminology, the linguistic and literary jargon, and the human and material resources that are available and that are required. However, at present it is unrealistic and against the will of the people to practise wholesale mother tongue instruction. May be the way forward at present is to practise active bilingualism involving an African language and the hailed triumphant language, English, an axiom that corresponds to the proclamations of the Pan

South African Language Board.

4.6.8. Interviewee Number 11, a lady teacher at Mandela College in North-West Province

The interviewee who is well versed in the language policy appreciates the bilingual education that is implemented at the local Lehurutshe College where Setswana and English are the media of instruction. Adversely lecture notes are kept in English only, which points to the lack of value of African languages. However, a comment like, "If people are serious about mother tongue education from primary to tertiary level ... give me a Tswana book so that we can start" insinuates that the interviewee is positive, unfortunately, material resources remain a veritable constraint.

On harmonization of Setswana and Sesotho languages, she contends that it "would not be in the best interest of people here. ... we are struggling to harmonize the eleven dialects of Setswana. How will we manage when we add another problem on top of another? In Sesotho sa Lebowa there are dialects which I think are still not harmonized. So how will we achieve this." The contention concurs with views advanced by some opponents of harmonization. Among them, Interviewee number 12, a Unisa employee who perceives it as unobtainable. "How can you create a language? Let languages follow a natural metamorphosis," he argues. Du Plessis (1990:104) also contends that, "The notion of a standardized Nguni is somewhat bizarre. It amounts to a proposal for tinkering with language." In addition, Benjamin (1990) asks, "How will it work in practice?" However, as alluded to earlier, there is a misinterpretation of the notion as depicted by the question raised by Benjamin (ibid) "...will Xhosa and Zulu speakers give up their spoken variety in order to adopt the standardised variety;...will they ever become proficient in the standard variety?" The standard variety that is promulgated is a written variety (not a spoken variety)

which is akin to the Zimbabwean situation where the standard variety of ChiShona is restricted to writing.

4.6.9. Interviewee Number 13, a Bank teller in North West Province

Interviewee number 13 who is also aware of the language policy claims that no language is going to subdue English. Although this contention points to overt attitudes towards English her views concur with Xola who accedes that, “The tide is against us forreasons. English is so overwhelming.” Crystal (1997:10) also contends that English is fast becoming a global language because of its general competence. Asserting that, “No subject like Science will be taught in African languages in South Africa. It will never happen,” intimates her loyalty to English and “attitudes hardened over the years about the perceived lack of value in African languages as teaching media.” (Bamgbose 2000:3). The interviewee also expects her son “to venture and visit America.” Of course this is another revelation of misconception about language issues. Would one claim that all the tourists who visited South Africa are English speaking? Like Germans, Chinese and Japanese learn in their own languages and still communicate well in English. Thus, although people are aware of the language policy, still, there is a need for language awareness programmes.

4.6.10. Interviewee Number 14, a manageress from Mpumalanga

Interviewee number 14 also opts for English. She contends that, ‘Mother tongue education for subjects other than African languages is wrong....They cannot take us back to apartheid days, the days they wanted us to learn mathematics in Sesotho, Siswati and Xitsonga.’ The interviewee’s conviction corresponds to Bamgbose’s claims that “in South Africa even enlightened people view mother tongue as another way of bringing back Bantu education.” What appears to be implied here is that the apartheid policy of mother tongue that was rejected was in line with the 1986 OAU Language Plan of Action for Africa, unfortunately, the government that promulgated it that time was not democratically elected by all South Africans.

4.6.11. Interviewee Number 16, an administrator in Gauteng

Interviewee number 16 salutes the language policy and the people who promulgated the language policy. He claims that “minority language groups were not free to express themselves freely in Gauteng. They existed in our streets but no one could tell for they were hiding behind the majority language of the area. Now they have discovered that they have a place in South Africa.” The interviewee’s views insinuate that the government has the linguistic interest of all segments of the population at heart for the scenario ensures the continued existence and growth of all languages on an equitable basis. Thus, the avoidance of loss of some languages complies with part of the resolution of The Permanent International Committee of Linguists which reads: “..the disappearance of any one language constitutes an irretrievable loss to mankind.” (CIPL. 1992 in Bamgbose 2000:40). Now, that the minority language groups are confident to use their languages in public intimates that their languages cease to be in a precarious position of language loss and language death.

4.6.12. Interviewee Number 17, a young woman from the Eastern Cape

Interviewee number 17 who is also aware of the new language policy contends that African languages will not play a major role except for the teaching of African languages themselves. For other subjects she views mother tongue as insurmountable because of a number of constraints: “..most academic books are in English and lecturers are English speaking. How then can we change to mother tongue? How and when? It is going to cost a lot of money. Who is going to translate all these books?” The constraints concur with those raised by Bamgbose (2000:66-68) and Adegbija (1994:100) who cite the constraints of cost, language development, attitudes and political will. Definitely, these are odds against the success of mother tongue education in South Africa.

In spite of the fact that mother tongue at all levels is considered to be a nebulous and non-functional abstraction, the interviewee prefers mother tongue education with high quality teaching of English. She argues, “..the reality is in order to survive in the world you have to

know English or .. one is going to be stuck in South Africa for ever. Even in Asia people need English and they learn it. English should be taught for people to survive.” Her convictions are wonderful. The view, ‘mother tongue and high quality teaching of English’, is echoed by Webb and Kembo-Sure (2000:7), Alexander (in a personal interview in 2001) and Mazrui (2000 in *The Herald of Zimbabwe*.)

Like Interviewee number 1, Interviewee number 17 has misgivings about parity of esteem with regard to all the languages. She asserts that, “Now our languages are not official in the practical sense of the word. They are also official but the reality is that they are not official. An official language is supposed to be everywhere. Take for example, toothpaste you find instructions in English and Afrikaans in a country with so many blacks. They say the languages are official but they are not catered for.” The essence of her argument is that some languages are more official than others. Her views concur with those of interviewee number 1 in terms of visibility. An official language should be visible so that it can be accorded due respect. Indubitably, instructions on commodities could play a major role in bestowing integrity and privilege on African languages.

The interviewee perceives lack of political will as a constraint. In this case, she wants the government to give impetus to the implementation of the language policy at workplaces and in institutions where, in some cases, some students are not appropriately catered for in terms of the language of their choice. She argues that, “Even the mere fact that universities are teaching African languages in English that should tell you a lot. They teach you IsiZulu but the lecturer is white and teaches you in English. That tells you a lot. When they teach English they do it in English and when they teach Afrikaans they do it in Afrikaans. Teach IsiZulu in IsiZulu.” Definitely, the interviewee’s views are cogent and plausible. It is very unfortunate that years after the demise of apartheid the country has colonial aspect deeply embedded in the education system. There is, certainly, a need for restitution and restoration of the integrity of African languages.

On harmonization, the interviewee was quick to disapprove of it because to her “it is like losing ..culture.” The view may be a result of ignorance of the proponents’ concept of

harmonization which, as indicated earlier, is based on a written variety.

For the interviewee, the way forward is to change the mind set of the people by encouraging them to use their languages confidently. She castigates celebrities who opt for English at the expense of their languages. She affirms that, "Television presenters (SABC 1) are not using their languages and yet there is nothing that stops them from doing that. Look at soccer players. They are interviewed in English and you find the players struggling to answer questions. They think if they answer in African languages they look stupid. An Afrikaner rugby player is interviewed in English but responds in Afrikaans. No one says he is stupid." The behaviour of African celebrities intimates an attitude constraint resulting from the expectations of a community whose minds have been influenced greatly by the colonial legacy. As the interviewee has observed, on many occasions some African celebrities such as boxers, musicians and soccer players use English during interviews on television and radio even if they are not fluent in English. They grope for words and struggle to construct good sentences. One wonders if this is necessary, given the fact that they grew up and became famous through singing in African languages and most of their audiences are fellow blacks. As the interviewee proposes, there is a need to propagate a sense of pride in the use of African languages at all levels, that is, in administrative and educational domains and media.

4.6.13. Interviewee Number 19, from Pietermaritzburg

Interviewee number 19 is interested in IsiZulu as the language of learning and teaching for his children. This points to a positive attitude and a sense of pride needed to give momentum for the growth and development of the language and subsequently for its use as a teaching medium.

The interviewee is not bothered by harmonization because he feels his language will not be affected. However, he is abundantly concerned about minority languages Siswati and IsiNdebele which may be placed in a delicate position.

4.6.14. Interviewee Number 21, from KwaZulu-Natal

Interviewee number 21, a teacher, contends that, “use of all languages is not very versatile at the moment because the commercial language is English.” The contention concurs with views upheld by Phaswana (1994:36) who contends that, “As long as English is still perceived as the language of power, the economy and education, it will be preferred as the medium of instruction.” The scenario signifies low regard for African languages which are perceived as incapable of advancing the academic or educational and economic interests of the speakers of the languages.

The interviewee is also abundantly sympathetic with minority language groups. He advances that, “..as long as there are people who are speaking the language they should be catered for.” Indeed, this altruistic nature of compatriots gives a tremendous impetus to the promotion of multilingualism in South Africa.

4.6.15. Interviewee Number 22, from South Coast, KwaZulu-Natal

Interviewee number 22, views harmonization of Nguni languages as feasible because the languages are related.

On the introduction of African languages such as Tshivenda in schools in KwaZulu-Natal as a way of fulfilling Bantu's pronouncement on individual multilingualism as a benchmark of being South African, the interviewee appreciates it if there is a need. He argued emphatically, “ If the language benefits the students economically then why not.” Thus, if the introduction of languages in other schools is underpinned by economic benefits, Bantu's benevolent proposition might not be a success story, especially in areas of concentration of dominant languages.

The interviewee is convinced that mother tongue education is not a viable option because English has already taken centre stage. He cites continued dependence on western countries as a constraint and impediment to the promotion and growth of African languages.

He attests, “They are first world countries who continue to play a role in our affairs. The value of their money determines our money. We cannot go to those people in IsiZulu.” As indicated earlier, introduction of mother tongue does not imply scraping English from the school timetable. English remains an important medium for business enterprises and trade just like in Asian countries where they employ English when they trade with speakers of the language.

4.6.16. Interviewee Number 23, from KwaZulu-Natal

Interviewee number 23 acknowledges the impact of globalization and that it is the government that should contribute considerably to improve African languages. Indeed, political will is certainly very important in giving the impetus or setting the ball rolling. The interviewee views the policy as good but was quick to remark “..but it looks like it is just lip service. Nothing practical is coming...” Undoubtedly the long years of colonial rule impressed upon the people a notorious belief that African languages cannot be developed to function like English as was the case with Swahili and Afrikaans.

4.6.17. Interviewee Number 26, from Giyani

Interviewee number 26, a senior teacher, who is aware of the language policy advises all Tsonga people to inject a sense of pride in themselves. He asserts, “One should not feel inferior when he/she speaks his/her language.” The interviewee observed that, “In Gauteng if they speak Xitsonga or Tshivenda people stare at them and say they are inferior.” He encourages speakers to “do away with the complex.” In this regard it is of paramount importance then to introduce an awareness campaign on linguistic and cultural diversity so that speakers of those languages assume their rightful place in the state and in the world.

4.6.18. Interviewee Number 27, from the Northern Province

Interviewee number 27 views the language policy as a way of expanding culture. His view

is applauded because this certainly manifests in the promotion of individual multilingualism. To the interviewee, the “choice of eleven languages was not political. It was a way of accommodating the illiterate” because “Illiteracy rate is very high in this country.” Certainly, the language policy was meant to promote the linguistic interests of all the people of South Africa, both literate and illiterate.

4.6.19. Interviewee 28, a young man from Gauteng

Interviewee number 28 is also aware of the new language policy. He equates resorting to mother tongue tuition to retrogression because to him it implies starting all over from the bottom and move upwards again which will take time. He argues that, “Instead of researching and marching forward we focus attention on the starting point.” He sees the constraint of cost as a stumbling block, and so, he contends, “We are going to spend millions paying authors and translators who convert all those languages. The languages are so many.” His views concur with Xola’s view that “the tide is against us” because the languages are many. He argues, “We talk of nine languages to be developed, so the task is times nine challenges.” Undoubtedly it requires careful planning and time to prepare. However, in spite of the cost, translation remains a necessary evil because the advantages of mother tongue tuition are too good to disregard, especially in the early years of primary school education.

4.6.20. Panel Discussion involving teachers at Bankuna High School

Panellist **A** and **B** admit that the policy is clear and so they understand its stipulations. However, they regret that the Tshivenda and the Xitsonga are marginalised as evidenced by the time slots allocated to Xitsonga and Tshivenda on television. Television itself remains a thorny issue. Out of 233hours 5 minutes of broadcasting at SABC TV in November 2001 only 16hours 45 minutes were allocated to all the nine African languages. Minority languages are beamed to provinces of their concentration for thirty minutes utmost, which leaves a lot to be desired. Television is a technological medium that plays a major role in the growth and popularity of a language and hence, the promotion of multilingualism. As an indication, the

play, *Muvhango* contributed to the promotion and popularity of Tshivenda in a way difficult to quantify.

Panellist **A**. advocates mother tongue education from primary school through to tertiary institutions and the use of Xitsonga in government transactions. The proposal is highly applauded for mother tongue education plays a crucial role “as a means of ensuring that learners perform at their maximal ability and receive the necessary psychological support which the medium of instruction can provide.” (Adegbija, 1994:114). Surely, mother tongue education facilitates learning for students do not grapple with two things, language and learning material. In this sense, the students’ attention is drawn heavily on the content only.

The second proposal, which is the use of Xitsonga in government transaction, is appreciated. If Xitsonga is to be a legitimate official language it should be visible in all government (especially regional government) transactions, if not, then it is official in name and not in essence.

On learning another language apart from their own, Panellist **A**, approved of the policy so that they can follow programmes broadcast in other languages. As alluded to earlier, another language promotes individual multilingualism and ultimately national integration. Learning another language means learning another way of thinking, learning another way of living, learning another culture and developing another way of understanding. In this way people get to know each other better, and subsequently live and work together harmoniously. Accordingly, acquiring one more language broadens one’s scope or one’s world view.

Panellist **C** claims that, “..in the year 2023 there will not be African languages because our children are now sent to multiracial schools where Xitsonga and Tshivenda are neither used nor taught. They communicate in English only. ...We need a solution to change the mind set.” The belief that African languages will die in 2023 because of the meagre number that goes to multiracial schools is a myth. Is it wishful thinking? As alluded to earlier, products of Model C schools have overwhelmingly denied that they lose their culture and language.

However, it should be reiterated that the stipulations in the constitution which designate the recognition of African languages as official and prescribes the promotion of multilingualism guarantee their survival. Needless to say, nature cannot be controlled. Some situations simply evolve. Every language has the right to live if circumstances allow and dies when nature takes its course. To fight for the existence of a language that is threatened with extinction is an act of being reactionary.

4.7. ANALYSIS OF DATA FROM MEDIA BROADCASTS AND PUBLICATIONS

The responses to the questionnaire that SABC TV was biased in favour of English is confirmed by the findings from the SABC TV programme line up for November, 2001. Table 47 shows that the weekly airplay for African languages is 16hours 45 minutes which is almost equivalent to one language, Afrikaans' 16hours 20minutes. English which takes the lion's share is on air for 200 hours. The imbalance intimates that African languages are not highly valued and hence, they are not taken seriously. The content of most of the African language programmes is dominated by musical and repeated dramas which are repulsive to some of the adults. This accounts for the poor viewership of African language programmes that is confirmed in Table 40, question (d). Needless to say, increasing the number of African language programmes beamed on national television creates an awareness of the multiplicity of languages that exist in the country. This acquaintance would certainly culminate in due respect being accorded to all African languages and viewers would desire to learn some of the other languages. The positive attitude that developed and prevailed towards Tshivenda when *Muvhango* was on air is a case in point. More programmes of this nature in minority languages would certainly accord them perquisites and ameliorate their status which undoubtedly would ensure an ecology-of-language paradigm to prevail in the country.

It is worth noting that English is triumphant in national and regional newspapers, among them, *The Pretoria News*, *The Star*, *The Sunday Times*, *The Citizen*, just but to mention a few. Among African languages, IsiZulu and Setswana feature as the only media for some of the regional newspapers. Setswana boasts of *Seipone/The mirror* while IsiZulu commands

the majority of the newspapers, among them, *Ilanga (day)* and *Isolesizwe (the eye of the nation)* which was launched in February, 2002. *Isolesizwe*, the recently launched IsiZulu newspaper, is a milestone in the promotion and cultivation of an African language. It is hoped that this major stride paves way for the other African languages which are not cultivated through newspapers. It is worth noting that virtually, none of the minority languages is cultivated and preserved through newspapers. What this implies is that English continues to be a mighty force in newspapers which in essence flouts the ecology-of-language paradigm policy.

An examination of reports broadcast on radio indicate that a diffusion-of-English paradigm policy exists. On the 4th of January, 2002, 9:00pm - 9:30 pm, Radio Netherlands via The BBC (British Broadcasting Corporation) featured Con. Viljoen alleging that “There is suffocation of Afrikaans with Anglicization.” and that “There is an unofficial declaration of English as an official language.” This echoes what Radio 5 SA FM (1998) reported during the Multilingualism Awareness Campaign that “English is an important link language, a very important pivotal link language.” All these views evince increased use of English and divesting Afrikaans and African languages of their privilege and status. Thus, although the term multilingual principle refers to the formal equality of eleven official languages, in essence some languages are more equal than others. Speakers of languages other than the dominant ones are always at a disadvantage because there is always a tendency by the government and various organizations to disseminate information in the triumphant language, such as English.

On the BBC programme *Focus on Africa* it was reported that, The South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC) was committed to broadcasting in eleven official languages. In spite of the commitment one Senior Executive Officer interviewed by the BBC said implementing the policy would be very expensive on two grounds. The first is that the SABC replaces American and British company programmes which are relatively cheap to buy. What this means is that the SABC has to prepare programmes and incur production costs. The second is the question of opportunity cost or loss because locally produced programmes in African languages do not attract the affluent market or viewers. In addition

to this, the Senior Executive Officer argues that it would also be difficult to attract advertisement revenue for the programmes. Thus, the affluent viewers and the private sector who are targeted for their big moneys exacerbate the problem by supporting English. Thus, the SABC's budgetary constraints undermine the government's declared goal.

On a number of occasions SABC Radio FM, PM LIVE , 4pm to 6pm, invited comments on language issues. Interesting comments were aired. Among some of the comments that were made in February 2001, was an acme one by a listener who advocated a countrywide survey to establish what people want. Undeniably, it was that listener who prompted the researcher to establish people's perceptions. This contention concurs with Alexander's view that the people should lead in language policy decisions. He treats that strategy, giving the people a lead, as the most ethical approach. If they do not contribute the language policy is perceived as theirs (the government's) not ours.

On the 22nd of February, 2002 a number of comments were aired. Responding to the host's hypothesis, "Not all mother tongue languages are used as widely as possible", one listener who acceded contends that "there is no political will among leaders to promote the languages. They say they recognize those languages meanwhile nothing goes on on the ground." The view is valuable and plausible and it concurs with views already propounded by a number of respondents who claim that the language policy is a lip service. However, comments like those emanate from listeners and respondents who are not abreast of what transpires around them. That the President's office has interpreters for all languages, courts are multilingual, the constitution is in all the official languages, major entry points to South Africa have a number of officers who are multilingual and Telkom publishes in all official languages goes unnoticed. Comments such as 'it is all lip service' are indicative of failure by respondents to comprehend and interpret two facets of the principle of multilingualism. One positive one, is the formal equality of languages and the negative aspect is the axiom that in practice some languages are more equal than others. Hence, in multilingual societies people must acquaint themselves with the triumphalist nature of some languages, complementarity of roles or functions and flexibility in language use. Flexibility denotes that one is not self-centred, does not uphold the principle of separate development, is accommodative as manifest in the will to switch to another language where it is impractical

to use one's own language.

One emotional listener on the same programme alleged, "It's absolutely absurd. It's high time we review the whole language situation and you find it won't be more than three official languages and certainly not eleven official languages. It's a waste of money we cannot afford it." All his allegation intimates is the notion that some languages are more official than others. In other words some languages are official in the true sense of the word and the others just nominally which means what prevails at present violates the constitutional principle of language equity.

Newspapers have also contributed considerably to the language debate. The contributions come from journalists who report their views on language issues. The rest of the contributions comes from readers who air their concerns with regard to the language situation.

On the 17th of February, 2002 the *Sowetan Sunday World* featured an article by Thabile Mange of Soweto, entitled "11 languages? There is only 1" in which she laments the promotion of English only at the expense of the other languages. Her views correspond to those upheld by Vukile Pokwana and Sipiwe Mboyana who published articles entitled, 'Little done for equality of language' and 'Remember our languages' respectively on the 6th of April, 2000. Vukile Pokwana argues that, "... the languages spoken in public places are English and Afrikaans only". Her view corresponds to Sipiwe Mboyana's conviction that "The policy, on paper at least, is impressive. But the actual implementation of the policy has not progressed as expected." The gist of their argument is that African languages are just official in name and not in substance. They want to see them play a major role in administrative and educational domains. To highlight her plight, Vukile Pokwana, poses three rhetorical questions: "... are individuals prepared to uphold their languages? Is the elevation of African languages a pipe dream? Are institutions willing and able to adopt African languages?" Such questions, appealing, like those of a preacher confronted by people who do not want to repent are understandable. However, it is the hardened attitude of everyone, including the government, the department of education, parents, educators and

the authors of these articles themselves, towards English that appears to be a deterrent. English continues to be a mighty force in their minds, becoming a dominant or domineering language each day. The projection of English as the only official language relegates the other languages to second place status, which in itself is an infringement of the constitutional principle of language equity.

Like Vukile Pokwana, Thabile Mange alleges that, "African languages are perishing." The big question to ask is, Will they die? The answer is, "Not now of course." The problem here is that when people become educated they tend to think that a language kills another language. The fear that African languages will die is a problem of the alienated from their roots. If people know English does it mean they cannot speak African languages? Our worries are a reflection of fear of myth. Belief in myth is necessary because the colonial authority gave the impression that everything African was going to die. Of course that is wishful thinking. People are at war with nothing: it is a war of illusions. What will people speak if they die?

The Sowetan Sunday World (4/6/2000) also featured an article, 'All languages must be equal' written by Noga Kobe of The University of Venda. Like Thabile Mange, Sipiwe Mboyana and Vukile Pokwana, Noga Kobe advocates mother tongue education. He is convinced that "Should these languages be employed in teaching mathematics and science the country would not have a shortage of graduates in these disciplines. Perhaps even the Cuban doctors would not have to come here." Unquestionably, mother tongue education is immensely beneficial to the country. As Noga Kobe pointed out it would not have been necessary to employ doctors from Cuba because many South Africans could have qualified as doctors if the courses were offered in indigenous languages. With regard to that, Bokamba rightly believes that the continued use of the English language is to the disadvantage of countries that are promoting its use. Bokamba (1995) in Sukumane (2000:7) states that "... the biggest and the most important threat arising from the elevation of a particular language or groups of languages over others is the perceived de-empowerment that such a language or languages accord the speakers, especially L1". Thus, as alluded to, the old education policy that advanced the use of English and Afrikaans

for medicine deprived South Africa of effective human resource development programmes in medicine and other disciplines.

The Star (6/11/98) published an article by Mondli Makhanya entitled, 'Tongue of SA? English, of course: Our countrymen pay lip service to other 10 languages.' Mondli Makhanya castigates the exclusive use of English by provincial and local leaders and other politicians while addressing the broad masses of the people whose English is elementary at most. He perceives the language policy as progressive but argues that, "... provisions do not seem to have progressed beyond the paper." He sees in political formations and media indigenous languages giving way to English. As alluded to earlier, English is a triumphalist language that continues to dominate in all spheres of life because of the attitudes hardened and entrenched by years of colonial dispensation which gave the impression that anything African was worthless. As reported in the *Sunday Independent* 27/9/98 "English is a kind of monster, stomping on other languages." Undoubtedly the supremacy of English is problematic in that it is plundering languages across the globe.

Mondli Makhanya like Prah in the *Sowetan* (21/9/98) is saddened by "a generation of youngsters who do not understand their mother tongue because parents whose children attend Private and former Model C schools insist on the use of English to their children." It is worth noting that sending children to those schools is not indicative of the parents' negative attitudes towards African languages. Parents are interested in the facilities in those schools. Undeniably, the amenities or facilities are marvellous and etiquette and discipline on the part of the teachers and pupils is commendable. The use of English by parents to their children is meant to help the children improve on their proficiency so that they can match their white counterparts. However, it is of paramount importance to note that mother tongue education is crucial in the early years of education. When children are sent to English medium schools the early years of school they are being sacrificed in the name of English such that in life they may not be confident enough in both languages.

Alexander warned vehemently that, introducing English to children on the first day at school can work only on well-resourced conditions, that is, with well trained teachers who are first

language speakers of English. However, if the situation is allowed to escalate unchecked it can put African languages in a dangerous position of extinction centuries to come.

The Sowetan (29/3/99) also featured an article by Nkosana Ka-Muthunzimuhle entitled, 'What is so special about Afrikaans?' Nkosana questions: "Why should Parliamentarians single out Afrikaans at the expense of other previously marginalised languages?" He also contends that, "... we continue to allay the fears of the Afrikaners unduly. Meanwhile Tshivenda, Xitsonga, Siswati and isiNdebele continue to get a cold shoulder from the SABC. This kind of treatment is uncalled for." Television itself is a thorny issue as demonstrated by some respondents and Mr Worried who wrote, "Let us fight our own battle for more airtime." (*Sowetan*). Nkosana Ka-Muthunzimuhle's concerns are justified and convincing. However, Nkosana should realise that the use of Afrikaans is within the constitutional provisions that recognizes eleven official languages. Instead of complaining about Afrikaans the wise approach would be to fight for increased use of African languages in those domains in which Afrikaans features considerably. With regard to SABC TV programmes, Afrikaners bought more air time for their programmes apart from the programmes that are subsidised by the government. Minority language groups who are economically disadvantaged have to acquaint themselves with the thirty minutes' programmes that are subsidised by the government as a token to show its commitment to the promotion of multilingualism. Thus, financial constraints divest minority languages of growth and development through the media. This alludes to interviewee number 1's contention that "if you own nothing (in terms of business companies) your language is nowhere."

On the 11th of March 2002 *The Sowetan* featured an article by Mandulo Maphumulo entitled, 'White is right syndrome: Using English at the expense of indigenous languages is contrary to the re-awakening of Africa we are working towards'. The author castigates television viewers who ridiculed a young music celebrity who failed to express himself in English fluently when he appeared on SABC television programme, *People of the South*. Thus as alluded to earlier, under interviewee number 17, celebrities are pressurised by the

community which has been brainwashed, a community whose attitudes have been hardened by the long years of colonial domination. The years of colonial rule created the impression that being able to communicate in English well intimates a mark of intelligence. Hence, on many occasions people comment on people's good English and rarely do people comment on the mastery and felicity with African languages. As Mandulo Maphumulo has observed everything African is rated poorly and does not attract the affluent Blacks. Indeed, a language awareness campaign is necessary in order to redress such situations and restore the dignity of African languages.

On the 13th of January, 2000 *The Citizen* published an article entitled 'Democracy hits language barrier' which reports on the conference called "Against All Odds: African languages in the 21st Century." According to *The Citizen*, the conference urged governments to "free people linguistically, giving them the option to be empowered, to take part in government, to be part of the social, economic, and cultural life of their countries". Such a scenario ensures total democracy because the laws of the country are understood in the language of the people and it ensures full participation in anything, learning effectively and being creative.

On the 19th of January, 2000 *The Citizen* featured another article entitled 'Declaration aims to boost influence of African languages.' Obviously, this is the Asmara Declaration which states *inter alia*:

- # African languages' vitality and equality must be recognized ...
- # All African children have to attend school and learn in their mother tongues.
- # Every effort should be made to develop African languages at all levels of education.
- # The effective and rapid development of science and technology in Africa depends on the use of African languages.

The declaration itself has good intentions since it ensures a major role for African languages in domains formerly reserved for English and French in Africa. In addition, it ensures survival

and preservation of African languages. If implemented, therefore, the declaration itself would be a milestone in the promotion of African languages.

On the whole, this analysis shows that although most of the Blacks value their languages highly they have an extraordinary affinity for English emanating from the perception that it is the answer to their problems and that it liberated them from the colonial legacy that bequeathed power to Afrikaans.

