

# **CHAPTER 1**

## **PROBLEM, OBJECTIVES AND RESEARCH METHOD**

### **1.1 Introduction**

The provision of education and training and the policies governing such provision has increasingly become a hotly contested area of public policy in South Africa since the advent of democracy in 1994. In 1998, the important Skills-Development Act (Act No. 97 of 1998) was promulgated by the South African parliament as a result of processes that began in 1991 when the National Training Board developed a provisional training strategy. The overall aim of the Act is to improve the skills of the people of South Africa by strengthening the government's commitment to overall human resource development that includes education reform and the transformation of health and welfare services.

The provisions of the Act removed all doubt that there is a need in South Africa for the development of skills among the country's workers as well as the unemployed. According to the National Skills-Development Strategy the Act is to pursue goals such as developing a culture of high-quality life-long learning, fostering efforts in the formal economy to promote productivity and employment, and developing skills for employability and sustainable livelihood. Accordingly, training companies, education institutions, non-governmental organisations, etc, are required to provide opportunities for skills acquisition in various strata of the working population (literate, semiliterate and illiterate) and the unemployed.

Central to the challenge to promote skills development is the language question. This question is more crucial in view of the fact that South Africa is a multilingual and multicultural country whose educational past is inextricably bound up with the language problem. It is therefore imperative to give due consideration to these matters in the present study so that the nature of the problem facing the government's attempt to address the skills-development issue can be realised.

## **1.2 Research problem**

An important part of the research problem addressed here is the lack of prior research on the implementation or facilitation of the Act regarding the medium of instruction. This in turn resulted in the lack of clear policy guidelines regarding the role of African languages as media of instruction in skills development in South Africa especially for employees who are at specific educational levels within specific industrial sectors such as mining, cleaning, security and construction. The existing indications point to English as the sole medium of instruction. The focus will thus be on the problem that will definitely arise if the relationship between language and skills development in South Africa is ignored. The researcher is of the opinion that the aims of the above mentioned Act can also be achieved through a practical choice of meaningful media of instruction in certain sectors of the South African work force.

As mentioned in 1.1 above, several processes were used to bring about the proclamation of the Act in 1998. Nowhere in the said processes was the issue of media of instruction ever mentioned. Evidence has it that despite various comments and representations on other issues, stakeholders never broached the subject of media of instruction, hence the Act is devoid of any reference to the issue.

Language is fundamental to skills development in South Africa because the mother-tongue of most of the employed, the unemployed and poor black South Africans is an African language. According to the South African Census 2001(2001:51 -52) 33.7% of South African population aged 15-65 are employed and 33.9% of the employed are black South Africans. Most of the people in this category have to rely mainly on English and Afrikaans to gain access to skills development. This condition undoubtedly impacts on their ability to acquire skills because, according to Unesco report *Vernacular Languages in Education* (1978:58) adult education should, wherever possible, be carried out in mother tongue. It is argued that most of adults do not have time to master a foreign (second) language sufficiently. Furthermore, the same Unesco report (1978:69) states that “a lingua franca is not an adequate substitute for the mother tongue unless a learner is familiar with it before coming to a learning situation.”

In spite of these facts supporting the role of mother-tongue in skills development, the Skills

Development Act (Act No. 97 of 1998) and the Green Paper: Skills-Development Strategy for Economic and Employment Growth in South Africa (1997:10), which lists a number of flaws in past policies and strategies relating to skills development in South Africa, completely ignored the issue of media of instruction especially the use of African languages in skills development.

### **1.3 The aims of the study**

This study has the following objectives:

- (a) *To show the importance of African languages as media of instruction in skills development in South Africa*

Since the advent of the new dispensation in 1994, African languages have been constitutionally accorded official status in South Africa. Unfortunately, as pointed out earlier, there are no clear language policy guidelines for skills development. This situation is bound to fragment or disjunct policy on the implementation of skills-development initiatives. The object of this study is to show the role of African languages as media of instruction in skills development specifically in the mining and minerals sector.

- (b) *Formulation of appropriate strategies and recommendations for the introduction of African languages in skills development*

The study is also aimed at the formulation of appropriate strategies and the submission of practicable recommendations for the implementation of functional multilingualism at Beatrix Gold Mine. These recommendations will also be relevant to different stakeholders such as the Department of Labour and the Mining Qualifications Authority (MQA). Stakeholders will need to take cognisance of the fact that it is feasible to use African languages to educate and train workers.

### **1.4 The term ‘skills-development’**

The term ‘skills development’ is defined in various ways in literature. Before defining this term, it is important to understand what the concept of ‘skill’ entails. According to Planas et al. (2001:320) the concept of skill “has been developed as a better means of describing the complex diversity of ways in which productive capacities of individuals are amassed”. They further argue that the skill of an individual is the conjunction of a number of elementary capacities (knowledge, know-how, life skills, etc.) Planas et al. (2001:322). Thus skills development may according to Devry et al.(1998 cited in Planas et al. 2001:322) be understood as the “efforts made by the company to create capital in the form of human resources and information.”

The term skills development is used in The Green Paper: Skills Development Strategy for Economic and Employment Growth in South Africa (1997:i) to refer to:

Specific perspective that the Department of Labour brings to the project of people development. This perspective emphasises the development of competent performance by an individual for a specified and yet dynamic social or economic purpose. Skills development should result in skilled performance such as is traditionally associated with the work of skilled craft workers, skilled managers and skilled professionals.

There are other terms related to skills development that are used in human resources development literature. These are terms such as technical and vocational education , education and training, vocational education and training (VET) and continuing skills development. Technical and vocational education is explained by Varma (2000:1) “as a way of preparing a work force for industry and then as a means to improve the formation of human capital and increase productivity and employment...as a tool to enhance human development.” In explaining education and training Varma (2000:2) states that education enables a person to acquire skills while training is the preparation of individuals to improve their capacity to perform functions valued by market and society. Training is viewed as a vehicle that imparts skills to be used in the performance of the said functions and it combines education, skills formation and training.

Continuing skills development is regarded as “self-education and/or training carried out on one’s own initiative and on the basis of an organised open programme that goes beyond initial education.” (Kailer and Gravert-Jenny 1996:3).

From the foregoing, the term skills development may be regarded as a superordinate term in reference to human resource development and will be used in this study to refer to acquisition of literacy and vocational skills.

### **1.5 Significance of the study**

The findings of this study will be useful to students, academics and linguistic experts who might use it as a tool in addressing some of the criticisms levelled against the use of functional multilingualism in education and training in general and for skills development in particular in South Africa and anywhere in the world where multilingualism is a feature. This will enable all stakeholders to realise that language - mother-tongue- cannot be divorced from skills development because they form a tripartite relationship.

The findings will also assist trainers and trainees who are African-language speaking and are sometimes impeded by the current sole use of English or Afrikaans in skills development in their quest to impart or acquire industrial and vocational skills.

### **1.6 The research methodology**

The study proceeds from the premise that the implementation of the concept of functional multilingualism alluded to above may solve the problem of lack of policy guidelines regarding the use of African languages in skills development. Functional multilingualism approach must be part of a clear policy framework to be applied in specific areas where it will be practicable.

Furthermore, the practicability of functional multilingualism depends on the adoption of holistic implementation strategy. A framework will be devised so that functional multilingualism would have to be considered for incorporation with everything and anything to do with the training of people who fall

under the categories identified earlier, for example teaching done by trainers or facilitators, as well as learnerships, skills programmes and training materials. The use of African languages, on their own or together with English, would have to be considered in all these instances.

In order to investigate the problem advanced in this study, various methods are used for data collection and analysis. Data collection was done through questionnaires, observation and follow-up interviews in implementing the combined qualitative and quantitative research methods. Data analysis was aimed at establishing skills-development trends at Beatrix Gold Mine and to measure the validity and reliability of the data collected. Definitions and detailed discussions on these methods are given in Chapter 3.

A literature review was conducted to identify trends in other countries regarding the use of mother-tongue instruction for skills development. The focus was on both the developed and developing countries. Two general regions were used as case studies, viz. the developed countries in Europe (the UK, Germany and France), North America (Canada) and Japan; and the developing countries, such as Singapore, India, Tanzania and Zambia.

From the linguistic point of view, the choice of these countries as case studies is based on the fact that developed countries are mainly monolingual and skills development in general is conducted in a language which is the mother-tongue of the majority of the people, whereas developing nations tend to be multilingual and the choice of common media of instruction tends to be problematic. For instance, in a developed country like the UK English could be used as a sole medium of instruction in skills development. In a bilingual country like Canada, either French or English could be used, depending on various conditions in the relevant provinces or counties.

## **1.7     Organisation of the study**

Chapter 2 will focus mainly on the literature review in order to identify trends in both developed and developing countries regarding skills development..

Chapter 3 covers a practical investigation by means of research procedures mentioned in 1.4 above with special reference to conditions prevailing on Beatrix Gold Mine in the Free State.

The findings resulting from the practical investigations will be analysed and discussed in Chapter 4.

Chapter 5 deals with language policy guidelines based on the conclusions and policy implications deduced from the literature reviewed in Chapter 2, as well as the findings analysed in Chapter 4. The information gathered and insights gained should strengthen and support the practical application guidelines towards a language policy for skills development, and by the same token, it should be helpful in designing a strategy that does not discriminate against anyone.

Chapter 6 contains the concluding remarks for the whole study. It gives a general summary of Chapters 1 to 5.

# **CHAPTER 2**

## **THEORETICAL BACKGROUND**

### **2.1 Introduction**

The aim of this chapter is to identify trends in other countries regarding mother-tongue use in skills development. The focus will be on both developed and developing countries. Three regions will be used as case studies, namely the developed countries in Europe (the UK, Germany and France), North America (Canada) and Japan on the one hand, and developing countries, namely Singapore, India, Tanzania and Zambia on the other. Developed countries are mainly monolingual and mother-tongue instruction is used in providing skills development for the majority of people, whereas developing nations tend to be multilingual and the choice of common media of instruction tends to be problematic. For instance, the scenario in the UK regarding the role of English and the nature of the language policy governing the use of English in skills development is somewhat similar to the one found in Germany. Both these developed countries provide mother-tongue instruction in skills development.

In discussing each region, an attempt will be made to identify reasons for the introduction of skills development, providers of skills-development programmes, methods used in skills development target groups and the media of instruction used. The question of media of instruction will be dealt with in conjunction with the extent to which language policies are used to facilitate the use of these media in driving skills-development programmes in the countries concerned.

### **2.2 Trends in skills development: Lessons from other countries**

Skills development is a worldwide priority because the improvement of skills levels in a given society is a function of the improvement of socioeconomic conditions in that society. In other words, there is

a vital link between socioeconomic development and skills development. Skills-development levels and strategies differ from region to region and from country to country, but on the whole it is true to say that the approach to skills development in a country correlates with its general literacy level, which correlates in turn with its general level of development.

### **2.2.1 Skills development in developed countries (UK, Germany, France, Japan and Canada)**

Skills-development initiatives and strategies in five of the countries in this category are included among the case studies for this research. Training and education of a wide range of employed and unemployed people has been mushrooming throughout western industrialised nations for many years. Levels and strategies vary from country to country. For instance, the higher productivity of German manufacturing firms in comparison with their British counterparts is attributable to the superior level of Germany's training of its shopfloor workers, particularly foremen who, unlike their British counterparts, would typically have an advanced craft qualification.

#### **2.2.1.1 Reasons for skills-development initiatives**

Various general reasons are given for the need to develop skills all over the world. Varma (2000:1) notes that skills development was first seen as a way to prepare a work-force for industry, but it subsequently came to be seen as a means to improve the formation of human resources and to increase productivity and employment. More recently perceptions changed again to seeing it as a vehicle to enhance human development. Thus human development is both means and end. All countries must keep improving their work-force competence to face international competition and restructure their own economies.

Skills-development provision in the UK, Germany and France is generally influenced by developments and policies within the European Union (EU). In the European Union (EU) skills development is regarded as crucial to the maintenance of employment, economic growth and the social integration of disadvantaged groups. The constant shift in employment levels in Europe can be seen as another contributing factor that motivates skills-development initiatives in various countries. For instance,

Forrester (1991:33) notes that “education and training schemes for unemployed people proliferated in the UK during the 1980s. This initiative included a heightened emphasis on retraining and continuing skills development.” People had to be trained in order to get them back to work. In the European Union skills development has gradually become an essential element in active labour market policy. While a skills-development policy cannot cure all economic and social ills, all EU member states now recognise that in combination with other measures it can be a potent means of alleviating many problems emanating from the labour-market, and regional and social policies. It has also been noticed that the recent upsurge of interest in skills development and adult education is to some extent inspired by recent theories of macro-economic growth. An important new idea in this field is that knowledge has the potential to serve the public interest if it is made available to many users at relatively low cost. European skills-development systems are seen as a means of addressing a special responsibility towards groups that are vulnerable to marginalisation and social exclusion, and towards those with limited employment prospects. Skills development is also expected to contribute to the social and cultural development of participants, with a view to enabling them to exercise their democratic rights and duties and thus contribute to the cultural and personal development of the individual person.

For example, in the UK a politically inspired debate about issues relating to school and further education continued through the 1970s and the 1980s. Gleeson (1990:ix) states that “at one level this debate has been fuelled by long-standing criticism of the apparent failure of schools and further education to ensure proper correspondence between the vocational needs of young people and those of the economy.” According to Gleeson (1990:ix) “unemployment and the dramatic change in pupil destinations have prompted greater awareness of the plight of school leavers, many of whom traditionally enter dead-end jobs and received virtually no further training.”

In Japan remarkable advances made in both human resource development and economic advancement are undoubtedly related to skills-development strategies that the country adopted when the initiative was started in the 1950s (Okuda 1996:306). The main purpose of this skills-development initiative in Japan was to equip job seekers “with basic skills and also provide training for graduates from schools as well as persons who lost, or intended to change their jobs.” However, as Okuda (1996:303) states, a shortage of skilled workers occurred once the Japanese economy entered the stage of rapid growth and

changing production technologies. This resulted in the “increased need to establish, in addition to the vocational training of graduates, a skills development system for adult workers that would enable them to receive skills training at any time.” Okuda (1996:306) further state that “it was under these conditions that the Vocational Training Law was revised in 1969, stating that skills development ought to be available throughout a person’s working life.” Given the advent of microelectronics, the structural changes in industry, “the aging of the population etc.” it became obvious and was strongly felt that besides the existing public vocational training and company-sponsored in-service education and training, a system of life-long skills development had to be developed to promote development of workers’ acquisition and maintenance of skills throughout their working life Okuda (1996:306). The result was the enactment of the Human Resources Development Promotion Law (similar to South Africa’s own Skills-development Act, No. 97 of 1998) in 1995. In essence this Japanese law acknowledges the development and enhancement of workers’ skills so that they could be better equipped to do their jobs. The law is indispensable for security of employment and the improvement of employees’ positions, and at the same time constitutes the foundation of economic and social development.

Canada provides another good example of an advanced economy in the Americas. In this country human-resource development through the transfer of skills received a noteworthy amount of attention from different providers. Various factors influence skills-development programmes in Canada. According to the Commercial Education & Training Profile issued by Industry Canada (1994:1):

The success of all industrial sectors will become increasingly dependent on the quality of their human resources. Greater access to high-quality skills-development programmes for workers and managers, combined with innovation and new technologies, will lead to increased productivity in the work place.

According to the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada (CMEC) Survey of trends in adult education and training in Canada Report to UNESCO on Adult Education (1997:7):

The idea of enhancing human capital and competitiveness with skills acquisition has gained ground with political decision-makers, business leaders, and the heads of educational

institutions. Union and community groups have responded to societal and technological changes, by expressing and calling for an active response to a need for education and training, mainly through literacy and basic training programmes, union and community education, and professional development, all of which should be recognised, transferable, and accredited.

Evidence drawn from the 1994 Adult Education and Training Survey conducted by Human Resources Development in Canada (1998:1) indicates that Lifelong learning has become a new reality for many Canadians. The nature of occupations is constantly evolving and only a well-trained labour force can provide the capacity to adjust to the profound changes facing the economy. This means that workers must acquire skills and regularly update existing ones to remain relevant.

The other factor is the process of upgrading knowledge and technologies, a process that started in 1985. The process has accelerated considerably and has led to a greater focus on lifelong learning (Human Resources Development in Canada 1998:1).

### **2.2.1.2 Skills-development methods used in developed countries**

Mason (1981:27) notes that:

Every educator knows that one of the primary goals of the educational process is to:  
Assist learners to develop a positive conception of their role in the world of work. The learner's self-concept must be related in a realistic way to the practical situation of employment, today and tomorrow. This process includes a periodical inventory of learners' abilities, interests, skills, and accomplishments, as well as an assessment of their ability to get along with their peers in the work place.

Central to this idea are the methods used by a given country to achieve its objectives regarding skills development. This study will investigate methods specifically directed at adult learners, and such methods can be identified as continual skills development.

According to the document titled European Community and Vocational Training (1980:12) skills development in the member states of EU, can be characterised by reference to two model systems:

- (a) the apprentice system, which is a combination of practical training in firms and theoretical training in schools and training centres;
- (b) full-time vocational training within the educational system, sometimes as streams within secondary schooling, and sometimes provided in separate training centres.

For the purpose of this study the focus will be on the first approach should be regarded as the most appropriate method for skills development to be scrutinised. The emphasis will be on the following phrases: in-house training provided by firms and theoretical training provided in training centres. This is commonly known as continuing skills development or lifelong learning. From the perspective of companies, further training is becoming an increasingly important factor that is crucial for success. According to Kailer and Gravert-Jenny (1996:3) further development of company employees' skills is mostly defined as further skills-development measures implemented by the companies themselves or by way of company employees' participation in skills-development programmes presented for a number of firms. Skills-development programmes are usually "seminars and courses of instruction conducted off the job." On the other hand Sauter (1996:114), notes that continuing skills development is "generally understood to mean the continuation or resumption of organised learning after completion of an initial or induction training stage and the commencement of work."

Information on employment and lifelong learning contained in a document issued by the Department for Education and Employment (Dfee) indicates that developments in the UK, which have made skills development flexible, include open and distance learning and flexible modes of study. Other initiatives include the introduction of Tax Relief and Training that help to reduce costs. Individuals who pay for their own vocational training may claim rebates under the Vocational Training Relief scheme. For employers and self-employed people the costs of training are deductible as a business expense.

The Basic Skills Agency in England and Wales is a national agency for literacy and related skills. Its

aim is to improve standards in basic skills for all age groups by promoting and developing innovative learning strategies and programmes.

In Germany, in-company skills development is the significant area and companies are the providers of training for their staff. There are collective agreements and legislation on educational leave which help to make continuing skills development more accessible. According to Sauter (1996:117) over 200 collective agreements containing clauses on continuing skills development were concluded in 1996. Some of the agreements allow employees to take educational leave while other agreements are “rationalisation protection” in that the emphasis is on training instead of dismissal whenever a company undergoes structural changes. In-company skills development takes the form of short courses of updating training which takes up to five days. (Sauter 1996:120) states that:

Almost three-fifths of all companies offer their staff training courses and seminars. Four-fifths of all companies use information sessions, learning in the work place and self-regulated learning by means of distance learning, books, videos and computer programmes. Certification is granted over time on the basis of external audits, and it is part of a quality assurance system.

In Japan various methods are used for the provision of skills development. According to Okuda (1996:303) “the mainstay of skills development in Japan has been the in-house programmes” offered by companies to develop human resource by means of in-company training, which forms an important part of all workers’ skills development. Therefore, the ratio of implementation of skills development within companies is quite high and increases with the size of the company. Approximately 60% of the companies concerned have a specific organisation or department in charge of skills development while 40% have documented programmes of their own for skills development. Some measures were put in place to promote in-company training. For instance, the employer has to select a person who will take charge of the planning, the promotion and the implementation of vocational-ability development programmes within the company. The national government provides training classes or meetings for these persons. Another example of the said measures could be the leasing of facilities for vocational training. These facilities can be leased by employers or employers’ organisations that provide skills development for either their employees or the unemployed. In the table below Okuda (1996:321)

illustrates percentages regarding the 1,400 facilities used by Japanese companies for the development of their employees' skills:

### **Facilities utilised by companies for education and training for their employees**

Private education and training facilities	51.2%
In-house facilities	48.9%
Public education and training facilities	36.7%
Facilities of related companies	30.4%
Correspondence education	16.3%
Special training schools and miscellaneous schools	2.9%
Universities and graduate courses	2.1%
Other	15.6%

*Table courtesy of Okuda (1996:321)*

The approach to skills development in Canada is characterised by a highly diversified skills-development industry comprising a mix of small firms, consultants and public and private-sector institutions that supply equally varied services to domestic and international markets. Courses are delivered in a classroom or in the work place. Consultation services are also offered in terms of training needs assessments, the evaluation of training programmes, and the development of educational software. Job-related training and skills upgrading for business and government clients are emphasised as primary services. The education and training services provide specialised skills development programmes and their accompanying products and services, manuals, training videos, curriculum design, train-the-trainer programmes and training-needs assessments.

#### **2.2.1.3 Providers of skills -development programmes in the developed countries.**

In the EU providers and their specific roles regarding skills development were identified from the outset when skills-development initiatives were launched, and innovative measures are being suggested with a view to improving the current state of affairs. According to Van Wieringen and Attwell (1999:5)

“there is recognition that investment in European economic competitiveness has led to greatly increased interest in skills development within labour organisations.” Although in principle staff training can be seen as the responsibility of the employer, governments are often involved in efforts to improve the quantity and quality of training activities. How this is done will vary from one EU member state to another, depending on numerous factors, such as the degree of concentration required, the level of product differentiation, and government policies, including statutory controls. Another important dimension has to do with the view in Europe that the different skills-development systems are communities of organisations that share the same aims and values and are subject to the same regulatory and endorsement procedures. Van Wierengen and Attwell (1999:10) state that within the broad skills-development system there is a complex relationship between the public and the private sector. This relationship can include the provision of skills development, the production of learning materials (ranging from textbooks to multimedia packages), physical infrastructure (including buildings and equipment), audiovisual, computer and telematics appliances and facilities as well as human resources (teachers, support staff etc.). The nature of these relationships can also vary according to whether they involve a client, producer, competitor or partner.

Regarding the providers in skills development, Gleeson (1990:43) considers that local coordination is necessary to link employers to education institutions and trainees. “Employer involvement is needed at a regional and national level to help develop curricula, monitoring of trainers, assessment procedures, and so on.” Gleeson further explains the role of unions, stating that union cooperation will be needed. “Union involvement in curriculum development and the like will also be important in balancing the power of employer organisations.”

Currently the main provider of skills development in the UK is the Department for Education and Employment (DfEE) which is responsible for skills-development policy in England. This department was created by merging the former Employment Department and the Department for Education in July 1995, and it is responsible to Parliament for developing and administering policies on education, training and employment. Skills development takes place in a free-market environment where employers and individuals decide what investment to make in skills development. Employers have developed a standard for effective investment in skills called *The Investors in People Standard* which links investment in training and development of employees to business needs and objectives. The Standard

is externally accredited and quality controlled by Investors in People UK. The Government encourages employers to commit themselves to achieving the standard.

Skills development is available from a wide range of private enterprises and the public sector provides funding structures to encourage training providers to be responsive to the market. The Government's main role is to provide guidance and to fund at national, sectoral and local levels where decisions can be taken. It also funds work-related training, especially for young people, unemployed people, and people with disabilities or special needs.

At a local level, Training and Enterprise Councils (TECs) - known as local enterprise companies (LECs) in Scotland - are a network of employer-led private companies set up in 1990, under the auspices of the Department for Education and Employment in England, the Welsh Office in Wales, and the Scottish Enterprise and Highlands and Islands Enterprise in Scotland. The Training and Employment Agency is responsible for training and enterprise measures in Northern Ireland. Skills for Business - a local competitiveness budget - offers flexible arrangements to enable the Training and Enterprise Councils and local partners to work with organisations, including small firms, to achieve the Investors in People Standard.

Directly linked to the provision of skills development to adult learners in the UK, is the National Institute of Adult Continuing Education (NIACE) whose formal aim is to promote and the general advancement of adult skills development. Less formally, this means advancing the interests of adult learners and potential learners. NIACE supports an increase in the total numbers of adults engaged in formal and informal learning in England and Wales. It is a membership organisation, with individual members and more than 260 corporate members across the full range of providers, policy makers and users of adult learning opportunities. Its headquarters are in Leicester, England and Cardiff, Wales.

The French approach to the provision of skills development involves three institutions: the state, the regions and the corporate sector. The state develops policies and strategies for skills development while regional councils carry out planning activities in line with the state policy. Activities may vary from region to region. At the end of the range are firms that implement and evaluate the planned procedures after applying their own planning procedures in the process. In addition, the state uses Training

Development Commitments (EDDF) to aid skills development in France. Aventur and Brochier (1996:104) state that the aid is offered to training companies and is conditional upon the fulfilment of a number of things including an increase in the employer's investment in training in both numbers and quality

Germany is another interesting case study of innovative approaches to the provision of skills development. When referring to the providers in skills development in the Federal Republic of Germany, the document titled European Community and Vocational Training (1980:21) refers to a dual system with three main characteristics:

1. After compulsory schooling, training is organised as an apprenticeship arrangement whereby the trainee enters into a training contract with a firm. The practical training in the firm is combined with part-time education in a vocational school.
2. Private firms are responsible for in-firm training, which, however, is regulated, guided and controlled by Federal legislation.
3. Apprenticeship training is mainly financed by the firms themselves, with some help from the state in special cases.

Another model comprises German skills-development agencies that have been organised into a model referred to as corporatist by Gleeson (1990:102) because, of his view that:

It depends upon agreement between the different interested parties - employers, educationists, unions, and the local and national levels of the state - and it is monitored, validated and coordinated by the federal government. The system is supported by the legal framework which, on the negative side, prohibits untrained people from passing themselves off as craftsmen, and from training apprentices themselves, while on the positive side it guarantees the legitimacy of qualifications obtained.

In Japan skills development is provided by the following providers:

1. By companies;
2. By public human resources development facilities;
3. By social education provided by higher education institutions; and
4. By skills development provided by private education companies.

Both the state (through legislation) and individual companies are involved in skills development. In 1969, following the rapid growth of the Japanese economy, the Vocational Training Law was introduced, stating that skills development ought to be available throughout working life. This law was revised in 1985, as mentioned earlier on, and turned into the Human Resources Development Promotion Law. The basic idea for the administration of vocational-ability development in Japan is to provide a foundation for realising systematic and continuing vocational-ability development and assisting both employers and workers to be involved in it. The national government budgets annually for the administration of vocational-ability development.

The Human Resources Development Promotion Law of 1985 also stipulates that it is incumbent on the national and prefectural governments to provide vocational training for workers who wish to change their jobs and for other persons who need assistance with the development and enhancement of their vocational abilities. Consequently the national and prefectural governments have established 354 Public Human Resources Development Facilities throughout the country to provide vocational training mainly for graduates from school, workers in small and medium sized enterprises, and persons who have either lost their jobs or wish to change jobs.

As in other regions discussed elsewhere, both government and the private sector are involved in education and training in Canada. The Council of Ministers of Education, Canada (CMEC) was established in 1967 by the ministers responsible for education in consultation with their respective governments.

The private sector gets involved in skills development in a form of employer-based training or employer-sponsored training. The 1994 Human Resources Development Canada Adult Education and Training Survey provided evidence that shows that, by providing training opportunities, the work place plays an important role in workers' skills development. The acquisition and maintenance of skills needed to effectively participate in the labour force is generally facilitated by access to employer training support. It was also shown that employer-sponsored training widens the gap in skills between the more and less educated leading to a virtuous circle of investment in human capital. In other words, employee investments in schooling are further augmented by employer investments in training.

Another survey was conducted by Human Resources Development Canada in 1997 whose findings show that the role of employees in training is much more important than has generally been realised. The document (1998:1) states:

First, more training takes place through the initiatives of employees on their own than through their employer. Second, even with respect to employer-sponsored training, employers often play a significant role while the driving force is employees themselves. On both accounts, the promotion of training should not only focus on employers but also on promoting a training culture among employees, and on maintaining an accessible training system.

#### **2.2.1.4 Target groups of skills-development strategies in the UK, France and Germany**

Target groups are the people who are meant to benefit from any skills-development initiative, be it through the means of general education and training or through vocational education. Adult learners have been identified as the target group for the purpose of this study. Furthermore, they can be categorised in accordance with Wood (1994:48) that there are three skill categories that appear to be essential when looking at labour markets. The first category is of workers with no (or virtually no) schooling called NO - EDs. These uneducated people work mainly in agriculture and other traditional activities, and are generally unsuited for manufacturing and other modern activities, which require at least literacy or primary schooling. The second category is of workers who have such basic general education, but no more. This group is referred to as BAS-EDs (pronounced *base-eds*, and not *bass-eds*, incidentally).

It is claimed that they are described as unskilled in the North [Europe and North America], but not in the South [Asia, Africa and South America]. The third category is called SKILD and it includes all workers with substantial post-basic education and training. It includes manual craftsmen who have undergone extended and structured training such as an apprenticeship, professional and technical workers with advanced education and training qualifications, and experienced managers and supervisors.

According to Van Wieringen (1999:1) “the skills-development system in Europe offers young people and adults the opportunity to learn to play an effective part in the work place and elsewhere in society.” The Department for Education and Employment (DfEE) publication (2001:3) states that in the UK at any time, one in seven adults aged 25 or over is actively engaged in formal learning activity. Two in three people either are or have recently been involved (between 1997 and 2000) in some form of learning activity. The trend suggests that learning amongst adults is rising.

Adults taking part in skills development in the UK are either from the employed or unemployed ranks, although employees are most likely to take part frequently and in larger numbers. In the United Kingdom, employed adults are more likely to participate in skills development than the unemployed, who in turn have higher rates of participation than the economically inactive population. In all countries the incidence of participation in job-related skills development is substantially higher than skills-development training undertaken for personal interest and other reasons. Lastly, adults who already possess higher educational qualifications are much more likely than others with lesser qualifications to participate in skills development, and when they do so the duration is longer for such reasons as their ability to comprehend complex concepts.

In Germany, the number of people participating in skills development in 1991 was around 17.2 million, a number that accounted for 37% of the German population aged between 19 and 64. In addition, about one in every two Germans has taken part in some form of skills-development initiative.

By the beginning of the 1990s skills development had become available to almost one-third of the economically active population of France. When the laws on skills development were passed in 1971

the rate of access to skills development was only 10%, and as Aventur and Brochier (1996:91) observe, this rate “increased sharply thereafter, reaching 18 to 19% of the economically active population within the first ten years. On average around one hundred hours of training per person are spent every year on training.” In 1990 adults (25-45) made up the largest proportion of skills-development trainees (80,5%), and overall access to skills-development programmes was standing at 82%. Adults who have been unemployed for extended periods (i.e. who have been registered for at least one year with the French National Employment Agency) have been key targets of public policies aimed at helping job seekers to develop skills in order to be employable. The documents announcing employment schemes for people over the age of 25 therefore make special provision for employed people in the said category.

According to the document titled European Community and Vocational Training (1980:15) providers of skills development in France are organised as follows:

1. *Salaried employees* in the private sector. Further training for these workers is financed by the firms themselves through a levy on firms with more than 10 employees. Subject to certain rules, the individual employee may claim educational leave in order to follow a course of further training.
2. *Civil servants* at both national and local level. Further training for these workers is provided by the government.
3. *The unemployed.* Special training and retraining courses for the unemployed are one of the fastest growing sectors in the training system.

In 1994 a survey commissioned in 1993 by Human Resources Development Canada resulted in a report titled Adult Education and Training Survey Statistics Canada, which showed (1996:1) that:

- (1) In 1993, 5.8 million or 28% of Canadians aged 17 and over participated in adult education or training activities. This represented an increase of one percentage point

from 1991. On average, Canadian adult learners participate in 1.6 activities or 103 hours per person.

- (2) Most adult learners (71%) participated in job-related education or training, and 70% of these learners could participate with the benefit of employer sponsorship.

#### **2.2.1.5 Media of instruction**

Germany, France and Japan are predominantly monolingual countries, hence the choice of media of instruction for skills development is easy there. However, as Egginton (1997:51) points out, British society has always been multilingual. He states that there are still more than 500 000 Welsh speakers in Wales (Census data 1991). Mackinnon (1988) identified at least 80 00 speakers of Scottish Gaelic. Irish Gaelic is still taught in some schools in Northern Ireland. It is estimated that throughout England bilingual pupils make up more than five per cent of the total population. However, bilingual pupils are rarely distributed evenly across municipal areas.

According to Bourne (1989:34) a survey carried out in 1987 for the National Foundation for Educational Research “found that upwards of 90 per cent of pupils in a number of schools shared a language other than English, especially in primary schools. Many large secondary schools have over 60 per cent of pupils sharing the same so-called “minority” languages.”

These factors indicate a need for language planning and, therefore, some kind of language policy in the UK. Egginton (1997:53) notes that “this need became evident in the NFER survey of 1987, which showed that local education authorities were keen to list any initiative on their part as an attempt at the provision of bilingual education.” More than one-third of all local authorities were then making some provision either for “bilingual support” for the curriculum or for actual language teaching.

On examining the case of Wales it becomes evident that the Welsh language made great strides to be where it is today. Earlier in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Welsh had no official status. But schools began responding

more or less informally to the linguistic-political demands of local communities by setting up classes to teach Welsh, sometimes through the medium of Welsh. Egginton (1997:53) notes that:

In Wales the development and teaching of Welsh in Welsh continued unofficially in many schools until quite recently. These schools were so successful academically, including the standard of English reached that demand increased. After the 1988 Education Act, the Welsh Office took more responsibility for education in Wales.

This had the effect of distancing Welsh education policy from English policy, relegating bilingual educational rights in Wales to a status below any recommended within England. Welsh has now been written into the National Curriculum as a core subject within the borders of Wales.

Recently published evidence indicates that in certain sectors of UK society people are passionate about the role of their languages in education and training. Here again, Welsh can be taken as a case in point. According to the Carmarthenshire County Council (2000:3) efforts were made by the Education and Training portfolio in the Assembly to announce that the activities of the Welsh Language Board will have “a marked influence on development in the field of education and training, and more particularly on the relationship between the Welsh language and education and training. It is noted that skills development is becoming a general ethos within the sector of education and training, and increasing bilingual skills lies very comfortably within that field.”

Another example of sentimental inclinations could be that of Germany where, although the country is typically monolingual and the German language is used generally in all education matters, there is a minority language called North Frisian (“Friisk”), a West Germanic language spoken by approximately 9 000 people on the North Frisian islands in the North Sea and on the west coast of the state of Schleswig-Holstein. The 1990 constitution of the State of Schleswig-Holstein makes provision for the protection and support of the North Frisian people. The German Federal Republic has no official policy regarding North Frisian (NF). The use of NF in education has been expanding since 1976 due to efforts by the ethnic Frisian leadership and by school officials rather than by parents, who after some early

opposition are now more in agreement with the policy. NF is offered as a subject in some institutions of secondary education. The few materials are for language teaching, history and geography. There has been a slight increase in the use of NF in the recent years. NF is not used in vocational and technical education and instead standard German is used for skills development.

Japan is a monolingual country whose language has been developed to such heights that it can be used in almost all spheres of life. Chapter 9 of the Japanese Government Policies in Education, Science and Culture has a section titled Recent Trends and Developments in Government Policies in Education, Science and Culture. This section Japanese Government Policies in Education, Science and Culture (1994:34) makes the following assertion:

Languages change in step with social change and shifts in people's attitudes to language. The Japanese language is also changing, and the government's policy toward the Japanese language must be adapted to ensure that it remains appropriate.

The National Language Council, which consists of specialists in this field, deliberates on Japanese language matters. Recommendations in its reports are implemented through cabinet notifications and directives. In November 1993 the Minister of Education, Science and Culture asked the twentieth National Language Council to conduct an inquiry into approaches to Japanese language policy to meet the needs of a new era. The council is progressively studying aspects of this inquiry, which encompasses all issues relating to the Japanese language, including skills-development. The National Institute for Japanese Language document (2003:1) states that Language development in Japan was also reinforced by the establishment of The National Language Research Institute, which was founded in 1948 to provide the organisation and facilities for scientific research on the Japanese language. At the end of World War II there was a great demand for reform in the written language to meet the needs of a rapidly changing society. Thus some of the earliest projects undertaken at the Institute stressed literacy and the written language, and the results provided data on which language reform was based. Such projects brought together specialists in language, education, sociology and statistics in a cooperative approach that was unique at the time.

From this early period the Institute has also been an innovator in developing techniques for handling massive quantities of linguistic and statistical data. The Institute itself is under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Education, Science and Culture, and much of its research has gone to meet the needs that led to its establishment. The Institute is an autonomous organisation and the actual research projects are implemented by a Research Planning Committee. The Institute has gradually grown and expanded its research programme.

Language matters in Canada can be divided into several categories. Firstly, Canada has two official languages: English, the first language of approximately 61 per cent of the population, and French, the first language of approximately 26 per cent. Most French speakers live in Quebec, where they make up 82 per cent of the population, but there are also many French speakers in New Brunswick, Ontario and Manitoba. In Canada, education is available in both official languages, to a greater or lesser degree, depending on the region. Secondly, a large number of aboriginal languages are spoken by the First Nations (Indians) and the Inuit (Eskimos). Lastly, the immigrant languages other than English and French are encouraged and supported by the federal government's multiculturalism policy. These are usually termed "heritage languages", such as Chinese, Italian or Portuguese.

Indications are that since education is the responsibility of provincial governments, important differences in language usage in education and language planning policies in general exist between the various provinces. For instance, in the provinces where French is the majority language such as Quebec as well as in adjoining parts of Ontario and a large area of the province of New Brunswick, education and training is largely in French. The same applies in the areas where English is dominant, in this case, most of the areas of the country outside those just mentioned, including the entire western half of Montreal, which is Canada's second-largest city. English is the mother-tongue of more than 90% of speakers in most of these areas.,

The only exceptions to English domination in the areas mentioned above are neighbourhoods of people

whose first language is one of the immigrant heritage languages. For example, there are neighbourhoods in Toronto where English is used as a medium of instruction in skills development although less than half of the people have it as their first language.

Another interesting dimension is that of official language minorities in the provinces minorities. The bottom line in this regard is that English is the dominant language in the areas (such as Quebec) where the first language of a large majority is French, although French is gaining ground now for various reasons not least of which is that the education system guarantees mother-tongue education to every French-speaking student regardless of the numbers of French speakers in a given locality. In Quebec, for example, three French-speaking community colleges - the two bilingual universities in Ottawa and one in Laurentian - have been created, and most undergraduate programmes, including law, are available in French at the University of Ottawa. Furthermore, in 1997 legislation was passed to create regional French-language school boards throughout the province. Earlier in 1977, the scene had been set for this breakthrough by the passage of Bill 101 which achieved the important object, among others, of entrenching the right of Quebecois to demand that their written and spoken communication with public agencies and business enterprises be conducted in French. Businesses with more than 50 employees were required to start "francization" programmes aimed at making French the language of work. In writing for the Department of Canadian Heritage (1999:1) Stacy Churchill observes that the test of Canadian political will to achieve a new balance in relations between English and French is whether democratically elected provincial authorities (elected mainly by persons belonging to the official language majority) will adopt measures that foster the development of their respective official-language communities. In the late 1960s political leaders in Canada felt that Quebec provided a model of bilingualism and treatment of its English minority that the rest of the country should emulate in dealing with French minorities.

#### **2.2.1.6 Brief summary**

A number of issues and trends appear from the review of approaches to skills development in developed countries. Regarding the reasons for the provision of skills development in developed

countries, the skills-development system in the EU , in countries such as the UK, is used as a vehicle that offers young people and adults the opportunity to learn to play an effective part in the workplace and elsewhere in society. The system is seen as crucial to the maintenance of employment, economic growth and the social integration of disadvantaged groups. Initially the main purpose of skills development in Japan was to equip job seekers with basic skills, and to train school graduates as well as persons who had lost, or who intended to change, their jobs. In Canada skills-development services are aimed at increasing the quality of human resources to ensure increased productivity in the workplace.

The methods commonly used in skills development among developed countries involve both formal (schooling) and non-formal approach. The non-formal approach is in the form of on-the job training as practised in Germany in what is referred to as ‘in-firm’ training and ‘in-house’ training in Japan. Skills development approach in Canada is provided through both formal schooling and job-related.

Providers of skills-development programmes are commonly governments and the private sector. Government and the employer form partnerships for the provision of skills development. The private sector provides a form of employer-based training or employer-sponsored training. In the UK skills development is provided by the government through the(DfEE) and also funds skills-development project at local and national levels. The private sector is also involved through private enterprises. The same applies to Germany where private firms are responsible for in-firm training which is regulated by Federal legislation. A corporatist approach is followed where there is agreement between employers, educationists, unions and local government. Japanese national government has made several legislative provision aimed at skills development through formal schooling and the private sector is also directly involved. The provision of skills development in Canada is both government and private sector driven. Canadian provinces and territories have created departments of education that direct the provision of skills-development services.

The target groups are commonly adult learners who come from the employed ranks and also from the

unemployed as illustrated in discussion on the UK, Germany and France. The same applies to Japan and Canada. Canadians aged 17 and over who participate in adult education or training activities.

The chapter also provided an insight into the fact that a single national language is used in skills development if that language is predominant throughout the country concerned , e.g. Japan, France and Germany. The situation in is comparatively different from the rest within the developed countries category given the fact that Canada has two official languages, English, the first language of approximately 61% of the population, and French, the first language of approximately 26%. Education is provided in either of the two in respective areas where each is dominant. In some areas education is available in both official languages.

## **2.2.2 Skills-development initiatives in developing countries**

In this study the developing countries will be divided into two geographical zones, namely Asia and Africa. The choice of these two areas is based on the practical consideration that like South Africa, these regions are characterised by multilingualism.

### **2.2.2.1 Lessons from Asia as a developing region**

The Asian region is divided into the east and the south. East Asia includes such countries as Japan, Indonesia, Korea (North and South), Singapore, China, Cambodia, Viet Nam, the Philippines and Malaysia. South Asia comprises Pakistan, India, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka. As with the previous section on developed countries, the researcher will show here why various initiatives and strategies were used for skills development in some Asian countries. Different skills providers and the intended target groups will be identified and discussed. Lastly, different methods and the choice of media of instruction

will be discussed. It should be borne in mind that although Japan is part of this region, its economic status places it among the “northern” developed countries that featured in the previous paragraph. Singapore and India will be used as case studies in this section of the chapter since they both are multilingual and have made strides in dealing with relevant and practical choices of media of instruction. Another reason is that they represent the eastern and southern regions of Asia respectively.

#### **2.2.2.1.1 Reasons for skills-development initiatives in Asia**

Surging economic and industrial development is a compelling reason for the introduction of skills development in Asian countries. It was realised that sufficient numbers of adequately skilled people would have to be provided to enable further progress by meeting the demands of rapid industrial development.

#### **2.2.2.1.2 Providers of skills development, methods and target groups in Asia**

As noted by Vente and Chow (1984:16), skills development in Singapore is mainly provided by the Vocational and Industrial Training Board, which operates 16 training centres where 9 000 apprentices, skilled workers, etc. are trained every year. The programmes of this body are expanding rapidly. Skills development is also provided by the state-run Economic Development Board, which is primarily intended to procure, promote, plan and direct foreign investments. The EDB has succeeded admirably in achieving this objective, not least because it proceeds from the premise that training programmes that mainly benefit the foreign investors are a significant incentive for foreign investment.

Vente and Chow (1984:17) note further in this regard that foreign and particularly German companies have led the field in providing skills development within companies. The importance Singapore attaches to such initiatives is evident from substantial financial incentives (a significant proportion of training costs) and the installation of an extensive new training programme.

According to the information posted at Singapore's Ministry of Education (Singapore Website 2001:6):

The Institute of Technical Education (ITE) is a post-secondary institution that equips secondary school leavers and working adults with technical skills and knowledge to meet the manpower need of the various sectors of industry. It provides full-time institutional training and apprenticeship programmes for school leavers as well as continuing Education and Training programmes for workers. The Vocational and Industrial Training Board (VITB), a statutory body, is responsible for the provision, control and promotion of skills development and business education in Singapore.

#### **2.2.2.1.3      Media of instruction**

Singapore is a multiracial and, therefore, a multilingual society comprising Chinese, Indians, Malays and others (Eurasian and other minority groups). English is one of the official languages and it plays a major role in both Singapore and Malaysia. For example, in Singapore, English serves as the main official language and the language of instruction in a country where the bulk of the population are Chinese speakers. In Malaysia English is an important examination subject but not the chief language of instruction. After gaining independence from the UK in 1957, and especially after the secession of Singapore from Malaysia in 1965, the educational policies of these two countries began to diverge. In Singapore, the bilingual education policy ensures that pupils are equipped with viable knowledge of both English and (depending mainly on ethnicity and family background) one of the other official languages, namely Mandarin Chinese, Malay or Tamil. While these languages are taught in the classroom as indicated, English remains the primary language of instruction. For example, primary and secondary pupils are taught in English for an average of 6 hours a day and primary education is now compulsory, and according to the Lifelong Learning, Life skills and Lifestyle Division of the Singapore Ministry of Education, English will be the medium of instruction unless the contrary is indicated. However, since

three-quarters of the Singaporean population are ethnic Chinese, the Chinese language (especially Mandarin and Hokkien) is likely to exert a strong influence on the development of Singaporean English. Where this influence is felt there is a noticeable trend in the media to adopt Mandarin-derived terms (e.g. hongbao or 'red packet') in preference to traditional non-Mandarin equivalents (i.e. angtow) which are nevertheless popular in less formal situations. Moreover, the fact that Chinese speakers, particularly the older generation, understand English does not mean that they would not be more at ease speaking and learning in their mother tongue. And besides, as trainees' instructors are effectively bilingual, they are capable of switching from one language to another. Participants in training programmes are free to ask questions regarding the ability of a trainer or instructor to use more than one medium of instruction. For instance, a Chinese could expect a trainer to alternate between Chinese and English if the trainer is Chinese. The prevailing tendency towards bilingualism in education in Singapore is concretised in the Mother-tongue Language (MTL) programme that offers trainees a four-year course at the National Institute of Education (NIE). The Ministry of Education Newsletter (Issue No.19 August 2000:2) states that "the programme not only develops their mother-tongue proficiency, but also ensure that they are sufficiently bilingual to communicate fluently in both their mother tongue and English. Cultural studies are also provided to give trainees a good all-round knowledge of Chinese, Malay and Indian cultures."

In contrast, Malaysian educational policy emphasises knowledge of Malay, the exclusive language of instruction for almost two decades before its place was taken by English. Malay therefore exerts a continuing influence on the development of English in Malaysia where it is widely used in the private sector, notably in business.

India is the second most populous and diversified nation in the Asian region after China. Its diversity is found in religion, ethnicity, and most importantly, in language. It is therefore highly significant for this study to look at the use of language in skills development in India. As Hohenthal (1998:25) indicate, India has 15 national languages that are recognised as such by the Indian government, namely: Assamese, Bengali, Gujarati, Hindi, Kannada, Kashmiri, Malayalam, Marathi, Oriya, Punjabi, Sanskrit, Sindhi, Tamil, Telugu and Urdu. In many cases Indian state boundaries demarcate linguistic communities, and the country's languages are classifiable as either Indo-Aryan or Dravidian (Indian

Culture. 1998 in Hohenthal:25) (appendices 1 and 2). The most widely spoken national languages in India are (in addition to Hindi): Bengali (7,5%), Telugu (7,4%), Marathi (7,2%), Tamil (6,9%), Urdu (5,1%), Gujarati (4,2%), Malayalam (3,8%), Kannada (3,8%), Oriya (3,4%) (India 1996:18 in Hohenthal:25).

There is a persistent concern among certain Indian quarters that Indian languages will be eclipsed or supplanted as English becomes more and more popular in India. Hohenthal (1998:16) observes that “English is the official language of the two East Indian states of Meghalaya and Nagaland. It is the main medium of postgraduate instruction, and it is taught as a second language at every stage of education throughout India where, as in other multilingual and multicultural societies, the position of English is determined by various political, cultural and social considerations.” Kachu (1986:20 in Hohenthal 1998:31) notes three questions that continue to be discussed in India. The first question concerns “the position of English in early and higher education. The second concerns the respective roles of Hindi, the regional language, and English. The third question deals with the model of English presented to Indian learners, and how that presentation can be made uniformly and effectively.”

The position of the indigenous Indian languages in skills development can be illustrated by preceding from the premise held by Tully (1997:160 in Hohenthal 1998:27), namely:

That deeper knowledge of a culture can only be gained through knowledge of a language or languages of that culture. A criticism levelled against the current language policy (1998) is that it is causing a widening rift between young Indians and their cultural heritage. It is also denying them access to an education that would enable them to contribute to the solution of Indian problems in the future.

Hohenthal (1998:28) notes, however, that measures are being introduced to keep native Indian languages alive. For example, training centres have been set up to teach computer applications to

people in Indian languages, and Motorola has launched pagers in three Indian languages. This means that people who are not proficient in English can now send or receive messages in their mother tongue.

In recognition of the critical importance of language as a means of communication, the Indian government has placed an initiative to promote and develop Hindi and 17 other Indian languages, including Sanskrit and Urdu (all listed in Schedule VIII of the Constitution) at the centre of the National Policy on Education and Programme of Action. English and foreign languages are also included in the initiative. The efforts of the Department of Education to implement the said initiative are assisted by autonomous organisations and subordinate offices. According to the website of the Department of Education of India (2001:12) the Central Hindi Directorate was set up in March 1960 as a subordinate office of the Ministry of Education. The Directorate has since been implementing a number of schemes for the promotion and development of Hindi. The Commission for Scientific and Technical Terminology was established by the government to enrich and develop all Indian languages as media of instruction. The Commission has been developing technical terms in Hindi. It has also published 53 definitional dictionaries and is preparing and publishing monographs, digests and readings; monitoring activities in Hindi Granth Academies/University Cells in Hindi-speaking states, compiling and publishing Pan-Indian technical terms to propagate their usage and placement in the corpus of technical terms; bringing out a Journal of Sciences in Hindi (i.e. "Vigyan Garima Sindhu") with a view to encouraging standard writing in sciences; and producing and publishing university textbooks, reference works and supplementary readings in practical disciplines such as engineering, agricultural, medical and other sciences.

Lastly, reference should be made to the National Adult Education Program (NAEP) in Bihar, India. This used to be a literacy project aimed at one hundred million people in the age group ranging from fifteen to thirty-five in rural areas. According to Robinson (1992:15):

The method employed was that of classes with instructors teaching the three content areas with the aid of a blackboard and charts, the learners following with book and pencil. The languages used both for literacy instruction and interaction between instructors and participants were Hindi for Hindus and Urdu for Muslims.

It should be noted that these two languages are mutually intelligible to their respective speakers, but use a different writing system; the distinction is religiously rather than linguistic.

The programme had to contend with strategic problems that were compounded by language problems.  
According to Acharji et al. (1993:508) in Robinson 1992:16)

The analysis of the language problem is worth quoting in full since it raises interesting questions about the importance and seriousness accorded to the education and development of minority language groups. Being in Bihar the villagers should have had a working knowledge of Hindi.

Again, even if certain tribal groups in very isolated village centres did not know Hindi and/or were unable to follow dialects other than their own, the instructors, generally belonging to the particular tribe or caste groups, should be able to cope with the varied dialects or language groups. But in some areas there were barriers of communication caused by the fact that the selecting authorities needed to look into the needs of learners speaking different dialects, and it is not possible to print books in so many dialects of Hindi or tribal languages but the instructors could be inducted into the dominant dialects of a particular community to facilitate teaching and communication between teacher/instructor and learner.

Robinson (1992:17) notes that First of all, it is surprising that the villager does not know Hindi adequately - the problem is put in the lap of those whom the programme was intended to benefit. If no solution can be found at that level, then it is up to the instructor to “cope with the varied dialects” or “be inducted into the dominant dialects”: instructors must therefore be, or must become, bilingual/multilingual.

#### **2.2.2.1.4      Brief summary**

The foregoing literature review has shown that the Asian countries used as case studies embarked on skills-development initiatives mostly as a means to better economic development through improved human-resources development strategies. During the 1980s the Vocational and Industrial Training Board was at the forefront of skills development in Singapore.

Governments in some of the Asian countries form partnerships with private corporations to set up extensive skills-development programmes. They also provide substantial financial incentives intended to encourage training programmes within companies.

The methods used in the skills development strategies are formal education as well as the public and private sectors. In Singapore the Institute of Technical Education (ITE) is a post-secondary institution that equips secondary school leavers and working adults with technical skills and knowledge. As in developed countries, target groups are commonly school leavers and working adults

The choice of media used in skills development varies from the sole use of English, in the case of India, to the pragmatic approach adopted by Singapore where most training and classes or courses are conducted in English unless the contrary is indicated. However, in Singapore, the older generation are more comfortable speaking and learning in their mother tongue. Instructors are capable of switching from one language to another because they are adequately bilingual.

#### **2.2.2.2 Skills development in sub-Saharan Africa**

With a view to delimiting the scope of case studies within this sub-category, the study will focus on eastern Africa (Tanzania) and southern Africa (Zambia) as case studies. These are among the sub-Saharan developing nations where skills-development initiatives became particularly prominent in the post-independence period.

#### **2.2.2.1 Reasons for skills-development in Tanzania and Zambia**

High-quality vocational training is essential for economic growth and development in the modern era. This has been clearly recognised by the governments of Tanzania and Zambia. As indicated earlier in this chapter, education and productivity are correlated. As a strategy to link education with work, Tanzania and Zambia have introduced on-job education in addition to diversification of curricula in school education over and above professional training. Sub-Saharan countries have economies that are both spatial (urban-rural) and economic (rich-poor, formal-informal sectors). The nature of the economies have direct bearing on their skills-development approaches that the two countries had to use post-independence. Bennell (1991:2) says with regard to human resources and development that:

All African governments face the common challenge of having to eliminate acute shortages of skilled personnel in the formal sector while at the same time trying to provide productive employment for rapidly growing numbers of increasingly marginalised people in the rural and informal sectors of their economies due to lack of appropriate skills.

Among other factors, the shortage of skills stems from inferior education during colonial periods, which means that colonial hegemony has to be eliminated through a process of what Bennell (1991:6) calls “Africanisation” where human-resources development is dominated by the need for rapid replacement of expatriates and other foreigners occupying jobs in both public and private sectors. This led to the need for a process of “professionalisation” by means of education and skills transfer in order to maintain standards (Bennell 1991:07). Another factor behind skills-development efforts was the realisation that Zambia and Tanzania lack human resources, a condition which in turn led to low levels of economic development. Politicians and education planners embarked on systems to kick-start training.

#### **2.2.2.2 Skills-development methods in Tanzania and Zambia**

Sub-Saharan Africa's concept of on-job or enterprise-based training involves a form of training for skilled workers which has been considered to be more cost-effective than the alternative modes of formal training provision. It is a non-formal, job-related training mode. Bennell (1991:29) identifies three main types non-formal job-related training, namely:

- (1) On-the-job training where the worker acquires job-related skills, usually from experienced workers.
- (2) Off-site training at purpose-built training institutions run either by the enterprise itself, or by a group of enterprises (e.g. an industrial training centre); or by the state.
- (3) Vestibule training based on short periods of self-instructional training at or near the work place. While common in some industrial countries, vestibule training is very rare in sub-Saharan Africa.

It is said that, the more enterprise-specific job-related skills are, the greater the likelihood that the enterprise itself will provide the necessary training. Anglophone African governments like those of Zambia and Tanzania have always set great store by artisan apprenticeships. Apprenticeship boards and authorities have been established to promote and oversee this type of training. According to Bennell (1991:30) research has shown that “enterprise-based artisan training” is usually much more “cost-effective in social terms than alternative modes”, namely secondary vocational schools and pre-employment training for the following reasons:

- (1) Acquiring skills on the job, that is, learning by doing under actual production conditions is much more efficient than off-the-job training in formal institutions.
- (2) Apprentices spend relatively limited periods of time undergoing formal instruction, which means that they are productively employed during most of the apprenticeship so that both direct training costs and loss of potential income (opportunity costs) are generally much lower than those incurred for alternative forms of training where the trainee spends most of his/her time at the training institution.

However, there are problems in this regard in that, at the independence of Zambia and Tanzania, African workers in those countries were poorly educated, with the result that apprenticeships were seen as not only imparting trade skills but also as a way of improving the general intellectual ability of the worker.

#### **2.2.2.3 Major skills-development providers in Tanzania and Zambia**

Skills-development providers include governments and the private sector and, unlike the other two regions discussed above, the provision of skills development is largely handled by non-governmental organisations (NGOs) in these two countries, as also in some other developing nations. NGOs are mainly funded by overseas donors, in which regard, Maliyamkono et al. (1982:10) note that “the overseas training policies of recipient countries are an indicator of their socio-economic status and the nature of their requirements. During the colonial period these policies were determined by the colonial powers.” At the time the African component of the labour force was expected to be skilled to the level that would enable African employees to work under European supervision. In most of the benefiting countries the training of civil servants was the primary purpose of more advanced skills development abroad. In general most recipient countries sent trainees overseas to pursue courses that were not available locally. “Overseas training is one facet of aid that is often linked with other development projects carried out by donor countries.”Maliyamkono et al. (1982:10).

#### **2.2.2.4 Media of instruction**

The issue of language in education has preoccupied African scholars for many years. Like other regions that were colonised by European countries, Africa has to grapple with the issue of replacing the colonial foreign language with mother tongues or first languages as “media of instruction”. One of the main issues here will be the question: What are the effects of using a second language for skills development?

Some Africans have a utopian misconception of the state of indigenous language use in Tanzania. According to Rubagumya (1990:1), Tanzania is often given as a shining example of successful language planning in favour of an indigenous African language, whereas generally there is a shift in favour of European languages as media of instruction in African countries. Although Tanzania has made a lot of progress in developing Kiswahili as a viable national language which is now used in almost all spheres of national life, in the education field, the reality is that English is still considered the most suitable medium of instruction above the primary school level. However, Rubagumya states that:

Unlike most African countries, the Tanzanian authorities have on several occasions declared their intention to change the medium of instruction from English to Kiswahili. The question is: Why has Tanzania been unable or unwilling to change the medium of instruction as envisaged?

The inhibiting factor may be seated in the African psyche where the language of the former colonial rulers occupies a dominant position and is therefore naturally considered to be the correct choice as a medium of instruction that meets the following set of considerations proposed by Fasold (1984:292) as selection criteria:

- (1) Do the prospective students know the language well enough to learn effectively through it?
- (2) Would the proposed choice be consistent with overall national aims?
- (3) Is the language together with the material written in it an adequate vehicle for the intended teaching task at the proposed level? And are there enough people available who can perform the intended teaching task in the language proposed

as the medium of instruction?

The high prestige accorded to English is common all over Africa, specifically sub-Saharan Africa. Rubagumya (1990:2) endorses Ngalasso's assertion that European languages in Africa maintain the elitist nature of social status and level of one's education in Africa.

In Zaire [the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)], as in other Francophone African countries, French is treated with almost mystical reverence akin to religious awe since it is a sign of being knowledgeable, it is a magic key to social prestige and power. Its use rarely corresponds to real need; instead it serves to indicate that the user has reached a level of linguistic competence that naturally entitles him or her to sweeping power and prestige.

Fortunately this mentality is changing in Tanzania. In comparing the use of English and Kiswahili, Rubagumya (1990:10), notes that many domains where English was routinely used before are now being taken over by Kiswahili. Nyerere in (Robinson 1992:19) emphasises on rural development, stating that it is the villages which must be made into places where people live a good life; it is in the rural areas that people must be able to find their material well-being and their satisfaction. What Nyerere means by rural development is a form of adult education that is integral to life and work and that will endow those receiving it with greater freedom and control over their future.

Robinson(1992:21) notes that between 1968 and 1975 Tanzania first undertook a pilot project (1968-1971) and then a national campaign to promote literacy; in both instances language was a significant factor in the planning and evaluation phases. It should be noted at the same time that the second Five-Year Plan (1969-1974), prioritised adult education and, specified that the language of instruction was to be Swahili. Instruction in Swahili was therefore a basis and a purpose of the two programmes.

Still on the issue of literacy as part of skills development, Bambose (2000:58) brings another dimension to the discussion by stating that "there is no unique solution to the choice of a medium of instruction for

literacy. The divergent experiences of Tanzania and Ethiopia show that alternative models are possible and equally effective.” Before 1974 Ethiopia’s literacy programme was based on Amharic, the national and official language, but after the revolution more languages were added to the programme. Tanzania’s literacy programme was based on its national language, Kiswahili. The Ethiopian literacy programme based on one language was a dismal failure because there were few native Amharic speakers in most of the areas where it was being used to teach, besides which many instructors also had a poor command of the language. Bambose (2000:58) state further that “on the other hand the Tanzanian campaign was a huge success with the illiteracy rate reportedly declining from 67% in 1971 to 20% in 1983. However, when Ethiopia changed to the policy of using several languages its illiteracy rate reportedly dropped from 93% in 1979 to 42% in 1990.”

Zambia also has its fair share of negative attitudes towards using African languages in teaching and learning. Siachitema (1986, cited in Gamede, 1996:29) points out that “Zambians associate English with social advancement and therefore adopted it as the exclusive medium of instruction in Zambian schools, a policy that has failed.”

#### **2.2.2.5      Brief summary**

A number of trends emerge from the review of Tanzania and Zambia as case studies. The Tanzanian and Zambian economies are characterised by spatial and economic dualism with acute shortages of skilled personnel in the formal sector and the elimination of these shortages should be addressed through skills-development initiatives. The two countries introduced skills development in order to transform colonial supremacy through the process of Africanisation whereby nationals were appointed to replace expatriates, including descendants of colonial settlers in jobs in the public and private sectors. Skills-development strategies were introduced to professionalise the work-force and transfer skills to nationals in order to maintain standards.

The realisation that both countries have low levels of economic development due to lack of human-resources development prompted Tanzania and Zambia to initiate skills development.

The two countries adopted the concept of on-job or enterprise-based training as part of a non-formal, job-related training approach. In addition to the involvement of government and private sector in skills development, non-governmental organisations (NGOs) play a great role in skills development in Tanzania and Zambia by using funds donated mostly by overseas countries.

The choice of an appropriate medium of instruction in both countries is problematic and both countries display neo-colonial negative attitudes towards the use of African languages in both education and employment. The Tanzania case study has illustrated the position that a language that excludes most of the learners is unlikely to be productive in skills development.

### **2.2.3 Skills development in South Africa**

#### **2.2.3.1 Reasons for skills-development initiatives in South Africa**

In South Africa there is a challenge to overcome the past because the country suffered a great deal under the burden of a huge range of socio-economic disparities, enshrined under the apartheid system. The object of eradicating these disparities is at the heart of government programmes and is reflected in the activities of the Department of Labour. Moreover, like other industrialising and developing countries, South Africa is faced with the problem of a shortage of skilled human resources in the most important sectors of the economy and, at the same time, a surplus of unskilled human resources.

Notwithstanding major differences between South Africa and other sub-Saharan countries, all these countries do nevertheless share key similarities. The most important of these is the highly dualistic nature of their economies, both spatially (urban-rural) and economically (rich-poor, formal-informal sectors). As mentioned above with regard to human-resource development, all African governments face the common challenge of having to resolve acute shortages of skilled personnel in the formal sector while at the same time trying to provide productive employment for rapidly growing numbers of increasingly marginalised people in the rural and informal sectors of their economies.

According to Gxilishe and Van der Vyver (1983:3) the projection of South African statistics indicated that by the beginning of the new millennium only 7% of new recruits into the labour market would be white, with the result that employers would have to rely heavily on black workers to grow the economy. Effective skills development is therefore essential. Gxilishe and Van der Vyver (1983:3) argue further that:

Because 54% of the blacks in the labour force are still employed as unskilled and manual labourers, there is an imbalance between highly trained and unskilled - the main problem in the SA labour market - which stresses the need for a greater emphasis on industrial training for black workers, not only at worker level, but also at first-line, middle and top management.

Recently the reasons for skills development in South Africa were formulated in the South African Government's White Paper on Education and Training (WPET) published in 1995 with guidelines on post-apartheid education policy. In this document the government committed itself to an integrated approach to education and training in South Africa because, as noted by Christie (1997:111), such an approach effectively rejects the established organisation of the curriculum with its built-in inequalities of occupation and social class that closely resemble ethnic divisions in South Africa. The said approach also reflects an emerging consensus on human-resource development in South Africa and a major international trend in curriculum development and the reform of qualification structures.

According to the ANC's Policy Framework for Education and Training (1994:10):

The separation of education and training [in South Africa] must bear a significant proportion of blame for the fact that most of our people are undereducated, underskilled and underprepared for full participation in social, economic and civic life. Most of the unemployed lack the basic education on which to build, and many of those in work are locked into low-skilled and low-paying jobs.

A vast proportion of students leaving the school system, either before or after completing the final year, do so largely unprepared for the rest of their lives. In order to begin to address the legacy, urgent attention will be given to the development of a national qualifications framework through which a much closer integration of education and training can be achieved. A national integration system will link one level of learning to another and enable learners to progress to higher levels

from any starting point in the skills-development system.

It is clear that the above statement gave birth to the thinking within WPET, which had an ambitious policy agenda for transforming skills development in South Africa, guided by the dual concerns of human rights and the urgent need for human-resource development. The governing principle here is that education, training and development are integral to the human rights spelled out in the Bill of Rights of the South African Constitution. Together with the integration of education and training, it highlights the establishment of a system of lifelong learning organised in terms of the National Qualifications Framework (NQF), which will increase learning opportunities and remove barriers to learning for all, including school pupils, out-of-school youth and children, as well as adults, employed and unemployed. As noted by Christie (1997:118), the NQF provides a framework for linking education and training, but the actual development took place in the context of training.

The Green Paper on Skills-development Strategy for Economic and Employment Growth in South Africa (1997:1) proposes a new approach to skills development which complements the formal education system. It links skill formation to the requirements of a growing economy and extends skills development to people both within and outside formal employment. It is primarily concerned with industry-based training, improving the intermediate-level skills base of the country and labour-market training for target groups “(including the unemployed, retrenched workers, youth, women, people with disabilities and people in rural areas).”

The Green Paper sets out clear objectives that concern the country as a whole, industry and specific

target groups. Prominent among these are:

- (a) to facilitate a general increase in the skills profile of the population, through accredited quality education and training linked to the National Qualifications Framework.
- (b) to facilitate more structured and targeted skills formation within enterprises
- (c) to increase access to entry-level education and training, etc.

#### **2.2.3.2 Major skills providers in South Africa**

Skills development in South Africa is mainly provided by the government, non-governmental organisations NGOs and the private sector. The efforts of these providers will be tied into a system of partnerships between the public and the private sector that will entail joint control over the Skills-development Strategy and shared-cost arrangements. The government has a role in supporting the shift in industry's approach to education and training. The Green Paper: Skills-development Strategy for Economic and Employment Growth in South Africa (1997:14) authorises government support for intermediary education and training institutions that will assist firms so that they can develop techniques to assess the learning needs of their employees so that they can develop training plans on which to base appropriate curricula, courses and training programmes. These institutions will "carry out proper evaluations of the impact of education and training on employers' performance, and feed this back into future programmes." The government is also authorised to "support the development of more structured and strategic-industry based training through various forms of funding incentives."

Lastly, the Green Paper envisages a new industry-orientated learning culture for South Africa, to which end coordination will be required that cuts across policies related to education and training, the labour market, science and technology, and industry with a view to creating a set of incentives that will persuade companies to make the required shift.

### **2.2.3.3 Skills-development methods in post-apartheid South Africa**

Implementation of the Skills-development Strategy in South Africa depends considerably on the establishment of an effective link between learning and the requirements of work in order to improve returns on education and training investments. The above-mentioned Green Paper (1997:20), proposes decentralised training decisions as a critical means of dovetailing learning with work, provided the articulatory mechanisms functions in “an enabling environment that supports more effective decisions by learners, regional or local authorities, education and training providers, career guidance and placement personnel, as well as companies.” The success of human-resource development programmes depends on how well they are integrated “with national macro-economic policies, industrial policies, company-level technology, work organisation and management practices, and future plans.” Green Paper (1997:20).

As Bennell (1991:42) rightly points out:

The challenge facing the democratic state in post-apartheid South Africa is posed by the inefficient apartheid structures of production, which have to be transformed in order to generate high levels of economic growth while ensuring a major redistribution of income and wealth. While the debate continues about the economic strategy that should be pursued, it is clear that the comprehensive restructuring of the whole labour force will be of critical importance.

Despite the introduction of numerous reforms contained in the Skills Development Act of 1998 the current government is still faced by above-mentioned challenges.

It is generally considered essential that the state establish specialised institutions and programmes that specifically cater for the needs of formerly disadvantaged people. Bennell (1991:44) is of the opinion that Technikons and technical colleges are likely to be of only marginal assistance to these groups. Improving the quality of general education should be the immediate priority in South Africa.

The Bill of Rights contained in the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996 (Act 108 of 1996) states that everyone has the right to a basic education, including adult basic education, or further education, which the State, through reasonable measures, must make progressively available and accessible.

South Africa has a single national education system which is organised and managed largely on the basis of nine provincial subsystems. The Constitution has substantial powers vested in the provincial legislatures and governments to run educational affairs (other than universities and technikons) subject to a national policy framework.

The Constitution stipulates that the national Department of Education is responsible for matters that cannot be regulated effectively by provincial legislation, and also for matters that need to be coordinated in terms of norms and standards at a national level. It has to prepare government policy on education and training for the country as a whole. Relations with provincial departments of education are guided by national policy, within which the provincial departments have to set their own priorities and implementation programmes. The Department's role is to promote the translation of the education and training policies of the Government and the provisions of the Constitution into a national framework.

Technical colleges and other institutions offer post-school skills development. The major categories of students are school leavers requiring career-oriented training, adults who want to improve their qualifications and/or retrain for another vocation, and/or undergo training in handicrafts, and/or enrol for commercial, social and community-orientated courses.

Instructional programmes are developed in terms of seven broad vocational fields: engineering, business studies, business language, arts, agriculture, utility industries and social services. The courses are practice-orientated and include theory and design. The levels of training, examination and certification extend from N1 to N6. Certificates for the programmes are issued by the South African Certification Council. A number of technical colleges have accreditation agreements with technikons, thus enhancing

the mobility of technical college students to tertiary education at a technikon. Part-time classes are provided for people interested in acquiring useful skills such as gardening, cookery and needlework. Language courses are also presented.

In the White Paper on Education and Training in 1995 the Ministry of Education declared its commitment to open learning, and especially to distance education which is an essential mechanism to realise the government's confirmed intention to provide quality education and to generally improve access to education and training.

Skills development will also be done in the form of resource-based and distance learning offered as part of an open learning system. The national Department of Education has demonstrated its commitment to distance education.

Skills development is also facilitated by providing adult basic education and training. In 1998 the Directorate: Adult Basic Education and Training announced that its primary goal would be to translate the national ABET Policy into practice. The Directorate aims to increase both the quality and the extent of ABET provision and delivery through the Adult Education and Training Multi-Year Implementation Plan (MYIP).

Organised bodies that provide adult basic education and training will produce user-friendly documents for learners and a series of norms and standards for practitioners, publishers, the Adult Education and Training Association of South Africa, the Metal and Engineering Industry Training Board, and the Mining Qualifications Authority.

The concept of human resources in Education is central to the skills-development strategy in South Africa. The Directorate: Human Resource Management and Development is responsible for measures to ensure that the available human resources are sufficiently trained and supported to deliver the quality of services required.

Lastly, skills development is provided through in-company training. The Green Paper: Skills-development Strategy for Economic Employment growth in South Africa (1997:14) prescribes specific measures to make the education and training system in South Africa more responsive to the needs of industry and social development. The measures include enhancement of the increasing incidence of in-company education and training and the growing competitive provider market, which is diversified into many forms. For instance, a private provider may focus on all aspects of training and competency development.

#### **2.2.3.4 Target group**

In the introduction to this chapter we referred to the importance of identifying target groups. Although this was not done separately in the case of other countries that served as case studies, it has to be done for South Africa in relation to what were referred to earlier as either BAS-EDs or NO-EDs, depending on common denominators of skill, level of education. In South Africa the black masses and their background of inferior education and high illiteracy and dropout rates are a critical target group.

Furthermore, the Green Paper: Skills-development Strategy for Economic and Employment Growth in South Africa (1997:34) asserts that in all societies there are groups of people who suffer discrimination in the labour market and are therefore vulnerable members of that society. “The composition of such groups changes over time as some groups advance and others are left behind.” In South Africa, resulting from the legacy of apartheid, a very large number of people are unemployed or underemployed and should qualify for special assistance. Different categories of people who should be targeted for training are given in the Green Paper *inter alia* as (1) the unemployed youth; (2) the disabled; (3) women, particularly in the rural areas and informal settlements.

#### **2.2.3.5 Media of instruction**

It stands to reason that language is fundamental to all forms of learning where learners are required to conceptualise and understand the contents of a given subject. There is no direct language policy regarding education and training or skills development in South Africa. However, the policy is indirectly incorporated in the general language-in-education policy of the country. In the Language-in-Education Policy Document released by the South African Department of Education (1997:1) it is stated that:

The policy is conceived of as an integral and necessary aspect of the 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 religion, while at the same time creating an environment in which respect for languages other than one's own would be encouraged. The right to choose the language of learning and teaching is vested in the individual. This right has to be exercised, however, within the overall framework of the obligation on the education system to promote multilingualism.

The aims of the Language-in-Education Policy are given as follows:

- to promote full participation in society and the economy through equitable and meaningful access to education;
- to pursue the language policy that is most conducive to widening the range and depth of learner's conceptual grasp, hence the establishment of additive multilingualism as an approach to language in education;
- to promote and develop all the official languages;
- to support the teaching and learning of all other languages required by learners or used by communities in South Africa, including languages used for religious purposes, languages that are important for international trade and communication, and South African Sign Language, as well as alternative and augmentative communication;
- to counter disadvantages resulting from different kinds of mismatches between home languages and languages of learning and teaching;

- to develop programmes to improve the viability and prestige of previously disadvantaged languages.

### **2.3 Conclusion**

The aim of this chapter was to show that the development of human resources through different skills-development initiatives, strategies and programmes can be the mainstay of socio-economic development in any given country. To this end skills-development trends in other regions of the world were shown with special reference to the relationship between reasons for the provision of skills development, methods, skills providers, target groups and the media. There are indeed commonalities and differences in these regions.

The development and introduction of skills-development initiatives is done for a variety of reasons mostly because of industrialisation of societies, innovative technological development and to address unemployment problems. In developed and developing countries skills-development initiatives are used to get unemployed people back to work, regarded as crucial for the maintenance of employment, economic growth and the social integration of disadvantaged groups. Through skills development both young people and adults are offered the opportunity to play an effective part in the work place and elsewhere in society. Like in developed and developing countries, South Africa needs to address the acute shortages of skilled personnel in the formal sector through skills-development initiatives. South Africa needs to also introduce skills development in order to transform the legacy of apartheid through the process of worker empowerment.

Regarding the methods employed in skills development, it became evident that skills development could be provided through in-house programmes as in Japan, Zambia, Tanzania and Canada where skills-development is provided by a mix of small firms, consultants and public-and private-sector institutions. The ideal provision of skills development should be in a form of partnership between various providers such as government, the private sector and NGOs. Like in developed countries such as the UK,

Germany, France, Japan and Canada adult workers living in developing nations are exposed to skills-development programmes that enable them to receive training for the advancement of their skills. The programmes based on life-long skills development

Target groups considered in the study are common to both developed and developing regions, comprising adult learners with varying levels of education, depending on regional affiliation. Providers include governments, employers, private service providers and NGOs. Although, in principle staff training may be seen as the responsibility of the employer, governments are often involved in efforts to improve the quantity and quality of training activities.

Developed nations were clearly distinguished from developing nations in terms of media of instruction, the reason being that whereas a single predominant language is used for skills development in developed countries, like the UK, Germany and Japan, multilingualism is common in developing countries with the result that a foreign language tends to be adopted as a medium of instruction in developing countries. However, current efforts are underway in developing nations to empower local languages to the extent that they can be used to facilitate skills development, prominent examples being India and Tanzania. Countries such as Japan and some EU member states like Germany and France are largely monolingual. This condition undoubtedly makes the provision of skills development successful because no foreign language is used in this regard. Functional multilingualism can be used successfully in skills development, as is the case with Canada where functional English and French are used in skills development. Similar approach is found in Singapore where instructors are capable of switching from one language to another because they are effectively bilingual. The choice of an appropriate medium of instruction in a multilingual society remains a relatively intractable problem. Like Tanzania and Zambia, South Africa is a neo-colonial state that is bound to be characterised by neo-colonial negative attitudes towards the use of African languages in education and training or skills development. As happened in Tanzania, South Africa should realise that a foreign language that excludes most learners is not conducive to productive skills development.

In accordance with the aim of this study regarding the promotion of functional multilingualism for the purposes of skills development in South Africa, the following chapters will indicate through a combination of different research methods and data analysis whether a policy of functional multilingualism is being followed by skills-development facilitators in the mining sector, with special reference to Beatrix Gold Mine in Virginia, Free State Province. In particular, the study will rely on questionnaire, observation and interviews to establish views regarding the best and most practical media of instruction for skills development in the Republic of South Africa.

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

The aim of this chapter is to discuss the research methodology to be used in investigating the role of African languages in skills development within the mining sector. The choice of research method depends partly on the demands of the research situation. A brief survey of the advantages and disadvantages of the main types of research methodology, that is of quantitative and qualitative research, is required to identify an appropriate methodology for this research and subsequently the combined use of the two methodologies will be discussed with particular reference to their advantages and disadvantages. It is imperative to appreciate from the outset that these methodologies should be viewed as far more than specific data-collecting techniques for the present study. It would be more appropriate to see them as paradigms that provide a theoretical and abstract structure that represents Beatrix Gold

Mine as an environment or situation to be studied. A paradigm is a world-view, or general perspective that serves to simplify the complexity of the real world. Paradigms tell researchers and practitioners what is important, legitimate and reasonable.

The first section deals with the discussion on research methodologies while the second section concentrates on the process of selecting the methodologies used in this study, namely a combination of quantitative and qualitative research methods. Data-collection strategies such as observation, questionnaire and interviews are discussed together. The third section covers data analysis and suitable ways of measuring the validity and reliability of the collected data. Triangulation was chosen as an alternative to "traditional criteria like reliability and validity" so that a more complete picture of the investigated phenomenon of skills development in South Africa could be gained.

### **3.2 Selection of methodologies**

Research is a systematic investigation which is conducted for the purpose of finding solutions to a problem. Different research methods are used to achieve this goal. The process of selecting the methods to be used in this study is dealt with in this section.

The two main types of research methods are quantitative and qualitative research. Before dwelling on the reasons for selecting one or both two paradigms, the substance of each should be briefly considered.

#### **3.2.1 The quantitative methods**

Quantitative research is regarded as the traditional objective research method. The emphasis is on numbers, measurement, design aimed at conducting experiments and statistical analysis. Large numbers of cases are examined by means of instruments such as questionnaires, structured interviews and tests. According to Cook and Reichardt (1979:10) the quantitative methodology:

(1) advocates for the use of quantitative methods; (2) seeks these facts or causes of social phenomena with little regard for the subjective state of individuals; (3) is an obtrusive and controlled measurement; (4) is objective; (5) is outcome-oriented; (6) has reliable, hard and replicable data; (7) is generalisable; is based on multiple case studies; and (8) it allows a stable reality.

Filstead (1979:37) states the same opinion in that “quantitative researchers tend to translate their observations into numbers. Numerical values are assigned to the observations via counting and measuring.”

Bryman and Burgess (1999:143) feel that “standardised measures are required whenever quantitative methods are employed because standardisation ensures that the diversified opinions and experiences of people can be placed in a limited number of predetermined response categories to which distinctive numbers can be assigned.”

Quantitative research can suit this study because of its objective to ascertain percentages regarding conditions at Beatrix Gold Mine ranging from home-language profiles of miners to counter-productive consequences of miscommunication on the mine as a result of language problems. The method is also appropriate for this study because it will support the hypothesis that African languages should be enlisted in the service of skills development at Beatrix Gold Mine.

### **3.2.2 Qualitative methods.**

Qualitative methods are regarded as the naturalistic phenomenological methods that are used to establish general laws or principles. According to Burns (2000:3)

The naturalistic approach to research emphasises the importance of the subjective experience of individuals, with the focus on qualitative analysis. Social reality is regarded as a creation of

individual consciousness, with meaning and the evaluation of events seen as personal and subjective construction.

Burns's comments clearly indicate that in qualitative research the primary emphasis is on people. The method is employed to identify human behavioural patterns and trends within a given environment. Individual or group attitudes towards a given event or interaction are observed and analysed with the emphasis not on numbers or figures, but trends. The event or interaction being observed in this instance is skills development at Beatrix Gold Mine.

According to Dunzin and Lincoln (1994:23)

Qualitative research entails an attitude of detachment toward society that permits a researcher to observe his/her own and other's conduct, to understand the mechanisms of social processes, and to comprehend and explain why both actors and the processes are what they are. Qualitative methods can be defined as techniques of discovering personal understanding, common sense and introspection.

Finally one can say that effective qualitative methods are used to analyse human behaviour and culture relying on the feedback of those who are the subject of the research. The researcher relies on the depth of information and his or her personality is an important factor in this regard. Rubin (1983:349) states that "in qualitative research, the principal and most sensitive instrument is the researcher." The research techniques that one employs must be compatible with his or her own personality.

### **3.2.3 The dual approach (quantitative and qualitative research methods combined)**

The nature of the study warrants a complementary relationship between the two methods since the quantitative method will be used to test the hypothesis while the qualitative method describes multiple linguistic and skills-development realities in the same setting and, at same time, also enables the researcher to develop a deep understanding of the situation at Beatrix Gold Mine. Furthermore, besides questionnaire-based quantitative testing, some form of face-to-face data collection from participants is also required in order for one to be sure of the authenticity of data collecting procedures.

The advantage of a mixed-methodology approach is that both methodologies (qualitative and quantitative) have strengths and weaknesses, and that the weakness or deficiencies of one can be remedied or compensated for by the strengths of the other.

Fielstead (1970:15) states that the two methods could be used together to serve multiple research purposes where randomised experiments are done with participant observers functioning as investigative instruments, or “where the combined use can yield results that neither one alone could provide.” Since the two methods are differently biased it is therefore important that each be used to check on the other and benefit from the other where validity is the main concern. The strong emphasis of qualitative methods on descriptive validity and random sampling, can be used to influence quantitative sampling procedures.

According to Cook (1979:17) One of the disadvantages of the combined approach relates to costs. The data-collection costs per respondent for the ethnographic field worker are usually far greater than are the costs of administering the survey questionnaires of quantitative procedures. The costs of one method will naturally be added to those of the other if the two methods are combined. The second problem is that the use of the two methods can become too prolonged. The third demerit would be the lack of sufficient training in both methods where the researcher is concerned.

Rubin (1983:347) endorses the view that the quantitative and qualitative approaches complement each other and that:

Both kinds of data must be gathered with a view to triangulating findings. In practice, however, decision makers are often sceptical about qualitative data whenever the information differs from the quantitative data on the same subject.

This could be attributable to an inherent bias towards qualitative methodology. To avoid sceptical responses this study resorts to triangulation, which is the combination of two or more theories, methods and data sources in one study of a single phenomenon.

### **3.2.4            Ensuring a good balance**

In opting for the combined approach the researcher had to adopt certain premises or principles to ensure that the final product exemplifies the maximum benefit from the strengths of each of the combined methods.

- § During the initial phases of research, qualitative methods, especially observation, or unstructured interviews, to enable the researcher to develop an overall conception of the subject under investigation.
- § The descriptive analysis, which reflects such particulars as the educational standards and linguistic profile of the workforce, should be in a format from which a representative sample can be drawn for the qualitative analysis. Thus the combined methodology would guide the researcher in that the sample would bear some resemblance to the overall population involved in skills development in the mining and minerals sector.
- § Quantitative analysis would complement the findings of qualitative methods by quantifying data gained about the mining and minerals sector of South Africa.

- S Quantitative analysis would confirm or contradict any reasonably representative data that emerge from the study. For example, if the level of education appears to affect workers' skills acquisition then quantitative methods would be used to determine the statistical significance, if any, of the apparent correlation.
- S If a significant statistical correlation is found, the meaning of the correlation has to be determined, to which end quantitative methods are of limited use and qualitative methods have to be used instead to help the researcher to gain insight concerning patterns and trends which are central to this study.

### **3.3 The dual approach as the preference**

As seen in 3.2.3 above, using the two methodologies together has merits and demerits but the combined approach is nevertheless the most appropriate for this study. On the quantitative side the large number of South African miners who have only received formal education up to ABET level 3 is an essential consideration in determining the need for an appropriate medium of instruction for the purpose of skills development at Beatrix Gold Mine. On the other hand simply observing language use in training and communication to determine appropriate usage is inadequate by itself so it will be supplemented by qualitative data to determine trends in the medium of instruction used in skills development on the grounds of appropriateness, which is the principal issue where this study is concerned.

A study that combines quantitative and qualitative research methodologies follows a certain pattern. Its design needs to allow flexibility in the treatment of data, for example by subjecting it to comparative analysis, statistical analysis, and testing for repeatability of data-collection in order to verify reliability.

The design of this study needs to show prevailing conditions and attitudes of workers, educators and trainers in the work place regarding the use of the preferred medium of instruction for skills

development. The mine's choice of the dual approach seemed natural since the researcher's main task is to determine the perspectives of the people involved in skills development on the issue of the use of mother-tongue instruction. The qualitative nature of the research is also dictated by its educational objective and, as Burns (2000:11) notes:

The phenomenological field of educational action embraces the host of personal meanings that are derived from the context of direct experiencing. The reality of a given educational setting may be seen not as a fixed and stable entity but as a type of variable that might be discerned only through an analysis of these multiple forms of understanding. Quantitative methodologies provide ways that can lead to the discovery of deeper levels of meaning.

### **3.4 Data-collection**

The aim of this section is to give an indication of how the dual-methodology approach was applied in data-collection and analysis. The section covers certain steps in the quantitative and qualitative research procedure followed, namely: (1) choosing research site and sample population; (2) observing; (3) interviews and (4) organising and analysing the qualitative data gathered.

#### **3.4.1 Choosing the research site and sample population**

##### **3.4.1.1 Reasons for the choice**

The choice of the site derived from a variety of factors, the most basic and compelling being the linguistic diversity within the mining work-force. The other compelling factor is the workers' low skills given the level of formal education generally achieved by the target group within the relevant work-force. In the mining and minerals industry past legislations and social attitudes led to skewed distribution

of education and employment opportunities. Most miners have low education levels, ranging from no formal education at all to ABET level 3.

The mining sector was considered the most appropriate area in which to locate the research site sample group because of the intended phasing out of Fanakalo as the medium of instruction and communication within the minerals and energy sector. Functional multilingualism is recommended to be phased into the place of Fanakalo. According to *MQA Proposed Language Policy for the Mining Sector* document (2001:4):

In the mining industry, *Fanakalo*, which is not a language and has no use outside this sector, has been utilized as a means of communication. With more than eleven languages spoken in this sector, there is a need to recognise and preserve the richness in the diversity of languages and culture as well as develop a common means of communication.

Furthermore, regarding the use of Fanakalo in mines, the Leon Commission of Enquiry's report into mining health and safety contained in *The South African OHS Commissions: The Report of The Commission of Enquiry into Safety and Health in the Mining Industry* (2003:14) states that:

The Commission considers the use of Fanagalo (sic.) to be unsatisfactory because the language has a very limited vocabulary and is unable to convey subtle meaning. While it may be satisfactory for giving commands it is quite inadequate to convey the nature and extent of the dangers that lurk beneath the surface, the source of such dangers, and how best to avoid them.

The survey was conducted at Beatrix Gold Mine in the Free State, South Africa. The mine is situated near Virginia (Free State Province), and it has three operating shafts and produces about 500,000 ounces of gold a year and is owned by Gold Fields Ltd. Acquaintances introduced the researcher to staff members responsible for skills development at Beatrix who showed interest in the research topic.

### **3.4.1.2 Sampling**

As noted by Rubin (1983:350), the next step after the identification of sites is the sampling of its population. A sample is a restricted part of a statistical population whose properties are studied to gain information about the whole. In relation to people it can be defined as a set of respondents selected from a larger population for the purpose of a survey.

This study employs non-probability sampling which forms part of the qualitative approach. Representative participants were identified from the specified group mentioned above. Questionnaires were administered to a group of 100 participants chosen by facilitators from a group of 120 ABET trainees and observations were also made of the language(s) used by miners while off duty (see Appendix C).

## **3.4.2 Data collection methods**

### **3.4.2.1 Interviews**

Interviewing is one of the commonest and most effective methods used to understand issues surrounding us. It comes in many forms and has a variety of uses. Burns (2000:411) notes that there are two methods of data-collection, namely observation and interviewing. He notes that :

Observation and interviewing need to be used to compare what people actually do and say with what they purportedly did and said. An interview is a verbal exchange that can be conducted face-to-face or by telephone. In order to avoid instances where interviews become too conversational, specific questions need to be asked to which specific answers need to be given. Some of the questions are close ended in the sense that respondents have to select an answer from a limited set of predetermined responses.

Interviews were conducted with one of the skills-development facilitators as a follow-up to the data collection. This was done in order to verify data collected (see Appendix B).

### **3.4.2.2 Questionnaire**

In this section the focus is on the design of a questionnaire that is relevant to the study. According to Oppenheim (1992:100):

The term “questionnaire” can refer to many things. Some practitioners would use the term to refer to a tool that is self-administered and is then posted to the researcher on completion. Others would include interview scheduling (administered person to person or telephonically). A questionnaire is an important research instrument because it serves the important purpose of probing in data-collection.

The decision to use a questionnaire was informed by the facts that (1) the study was researching a set of attitudes of different stakeholders to the use of African languages as media of instruction in skills development at Beatrix Gold Mine; (2) category of respondents is adults who are workers, skills-development managers, skills-development service facilitators, etc. (3) respondents were offered anonymity and confidentiality. The different categories of respondents listed in (2) above constitute the variable for this research and each variable will have its own order of questions.

Given the diversified nature of the respondents, group-administered questionnaires were used. Oppenheim (1992: 103) refers to a group-administered questionnaire as the type that is usually given to groups of respondents assembled together. Depending on the size of the group and the level of literacy, two or more persons administer the process, offering assistance if necessary without being prescriptive.

This type of questionnaire is envisaged for respondents whose literacy levels are low such as miners. It was, therefore, administered to the miners at Beatrix Gold Mine. Closed questions were used because they limit response times and writing, are easy to process, and are usually designed to test specific hypotheses. The ABET facilitator translated the questions to miners while assisting them to complete the questionnaire.

### **3.4.2.3 Observation**

The accumulation qualitative data was done through visits and contacts with various stakeholders, such as trainers and trainees (workers). Observational techniques are integral to the process of qualitative data-collection. Dunzin (1994:377) notes that observation has been used as the base of human knowledge for as long as people have been interested in studying the social and natural world around them. It is inherent in the social behaviour of people in general and therefore of researchers in particular to appraise any given situation in a systematic and objective way. Lofland (1971:14) gives the following processes of observation:

- (1) *acts* as brief actions in a situation lasting for seconds, minutes or hours;
- (2) hands-on *activities* that last for days, weeks, months.
- (3) *meanings* of participants' statements about research activities;
- (4) subjects *participation* in activities, of those who are under study;
- (5) *relationships* evident from stakeholders' interaction within a given environment;
- (6) *settings* consisting in the research environment.

Observation was part of this study's qualitative approach because, as Bryman and Burgess (1999:152) put it, "what people say is a major source of qualitative data," whether reported verbally or in writing. Limitations exist concerning the reliability of what people say. Direct observation and interviewing are employed to improve reliability thus making the observer part of the entity or context being observed. In this study the researcher observed workers' language use at Beatrix Gold Mine in their off-duty verbal exchanges (see appendix C). What all this means is that the researcher adopts the position observer-as-participant where a field worker becomes closely involved and identified with the actors. In the present case the researcher mingled with workers in the local canteen and in the park to observe how they communicated with each other generally and in particular, what languages they used in doing so.

### **3.5 Data analysis**

At the end of a qualitative field-work project, one has a large collection of raw data. Before any conclusions and recommendations are made, the raw data must be organised into categories of interest and then subjected to different methods of analysis. In this study categorisation was done within the framework of two main categories, namely workers and their trainers in terms of home-language profiles and languages used for training and communication. In view of the decision to use a dual approach, quantitative and the qualitative approach, data analysis comprised statistical analysis as well as the identification of trends.

#### **3.5.1 Validity and reliability**

Validity and reliability are critical requirements for measurement. Once a research problem and the research method or methods have been identified, the validity and reliability of the operating measures must be demonstrated. According to Rubin (1983:104) the critical consideration determining validity

is whether the operating measure is appropriate as an instrument to measure relevant concepts while reliability depends on the extent to which the operating measure provides the same or consistent results time after time.

Objections to the qualitative approach are mainly pointed at the concept of validity because its results tend to leave a residue of doubt about the extent to which it reflects findings accurately. This study deals with peoples' attitudes towards mother-tongue instruction in skills development. The operating measure is required to support the hypothesis that people would like to change their attitudes towards employing functional multilingualism in skills development.

### **3.5.2 Triangulation**

Qualitatively oriented social scientists have often used the idea of triangulation to argue in favour of integrating qualitative and quantitative methods. Triangulation is an application and combination of several research methodologies for the purpose of producing a more complete picture from the study of the same phenomenon. It becomes an alternative to "traditional criteria like reliability and validity" as referred to above. Triangulation involves using several methods and may consist of within-method or between-methods strategies.

## **3.6 Conclusion**

The aim of this chapter has been to explain and justify the choice of the research methods employed in conducting this study. The introduction started with a brief outline of the two approaches to research methodology, namely quantitative and the qualitative research, with specific reference to the merits and demerits of each approach when used individually or jointly. Quantitative research methodology is a vehicle through which researchers translate their observations into numbers. Numerical values are assigned to their observations via counting and measuring, while qualitative research enables the researcher to observe his/her own as well as others' behaviour; to understand the mechanisms of social

processes, and to comprehend and explain why people behave the way they do. It is significantly dependent on a healthy infusion of common sense from the researcher's side.

The second section of this chapter concentrated on the choice or selection of a particular method. It was argued that a combined approach provides an effective means of solving evaluation problems and of dealing with a situation where research has multiple purposes. However, obstacles were also underscored, the most prominent and relevant to this study being that despite its appropriateness in theory, people tend to be sceptical about qualitative data whenever the information differs from the quantitative findings on the same topic. Ultimately, although the two approaches complement each other, qualitative methodology played a major role in data analysis for this study. It suits the researcher's main task of measuring the attitudes of stakeholders involved in skills development, with specific reference to the use of mother-tongue instruction at Beatrix Gold Mine.

The implementation stage deals with the choice of four main research approaches, namely, choosing the research site and a sample population; observation; interviewing and organising and analysing of the qualitative data gathered. The concepts of validity and reliability come into the picture here since no scientific study can be conclusive without the satisfaction of these conditions.

The choice of the type of questionnaire that would suit this study was influenced by factors such as the type of research and the category of respondents - adult miners in this case. The diversified nature of the respondents compelled the use of both self-administered and group-administered questionnaires in the study consisting of closed questions.

## **CHAPTER 4**

### **RESULTS**

#### **4.1 Introduction**

The aim of this chapter is to discuss the results of the survey conducted within a sample group of miners at Beatrix Gold Mine in the Free State (mentioned in Chapter 3). The many languages spoken by workers and the low education level of the workforce at the mine provides an excellent setting for a case study of the role of African languages in skills development. Poor language communication skills could be of a significant fact in the causation of accidents involving loss of life. It is estimated that more than 7 000 workers have lost their lives in South African mines since the start of the last century. According to Oosthuizen (2003:11-28) in 1999 alone, about 313 miners were killed. In May 2001 12 mine workers were killed by a methane gas explosion at Beatrix Gold Mine. Similar accidents were reported in other mines, such as African Rainbow mine in Orkney in North West Province where about 104 miners were crushed to death by an underground locomotive. Like most other work places, Beatrix Gold Mine is faced with the challenge to introduce progressive labour and safety measures that comply with the requirements of the Skills-Development Act and the Mining Safety Act.

Given this background, the object of the survey was to identify communication problems that inhibit skills-development initiatives and to propose alternative criteria aimed at promoting the languages to facilitate skills development in a context of functional multilingualism.

It is the hypothesis of this study that the use of African languages can significantly improve communication may go a long way in improving safety within the energy and minerals sectors of the South African economy. The main purpose of the survey was therefore to provide evidence that African languages can be used to facilitate skills development in the above-mentioned economic sector.

Questionnaires written in English, were administered by trainers to a small sample group of 100 mine workers from different ethnic communities. The contents of the questionnaire were duly interpreted to the sample group in Sesotho and isiXhosa by the facilitator. Due to reasons given in 3.4.1 above this group was considered appropriate and adequate for the research in hand. The questionnaire was intended to investigate specific matters that are integral to the hypothesis of the study namely:

- (a) Home-language profile of workers
- (b) Home-language profile of trainers (home-languages of trainers)
- (c) Languages used for communication amongst workers while at work.
- (d) Languages used for communication amongst workers while off-duty
- (e) Communication problems relating to language use
- (f) Languages used by trainers with workers (trainees)
- (g) Training offered
- (h) Language choices applied for effective training
- (i) Language policy in the organisation

It is essential at this stage to mention the fact that interviews and observation stated as part of data collection in Chapter 3, were conducted as ensuing measures in order to verify the reliability and validity of the collected data.

## **4.2 Survey results**

### **4.2.1 Home-language profile**

The purpose of the question was to find out percentages of home-language distribution amongst the miners at Beatrix Gold Mine. Table 4.1 illustrates the distribution as follows:

**Table 4.1: Home-language profile of workers (Q3)**

<b>Home-language profile</b>		
<b>Home-language</b>	<b>No. of speakers</b>	<b>%</b>
isiXhosa	38	38
isiZulu	14	14
Sesotho	21	21
Fanakalo	07	7
Afrikaans	03	3

English	04	4
Tshivenda	01	1
Unspecified	12	12
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100%</b>

An interesting observation in this regard is the position of Fanakalo, a *lingua franca* that has been used for many years as a medium of communication both underground and during interaction off duty. It is also a medium of instruction in formal classes for those who have difficulty in understanding English. According to Encarta World English Dictionary [North American Edition] Fanakalo is derived from a combination of a number of indigenous languages, mainly Nguni (mainly isiZulu and isiXhosa), from the common phrase *fana ga lo* “like this” in the lingua franca of southern African mines. The language is most popular amongst non-South Africans, mostly Mozambicans who regard it as their first language within the mining environment. At Beatrix Gold Mine the language is used to train apprentices who are being introduced to the mining environment as well as workers undergoing refresher courses after periods of leave. Follow-up interviews indicated that some miners, mostly Tsonga speaking foreigners, regard Fanakalo as their home language due to, most probably, the negative attitude towards the use of Tsonga by Tsonga speaking foreign miners within the mine’s environment.

#### 4.2.2 Distribution profile of languages spoken by trainers

The aim of this question was to ascertain home-language distribution among trainers.

**Table 4.2: Distribution profile of languages spoken by trainers**

<i>Distribution profile of languages spoken by trainers, listed from most to least</i>	
Language	No. of trainers
isiXhosa	6
isiZulu	2
Sesotho	2
Fanakalo	1
English	3

Afrikaans	6
Other	2
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>22</b>

The home-language profile of trainers indicates that isiXhosa and Afrikaans have the highest number of trainers with six trainers for each language while English has three. isiZulu, Sesotho and other unspecified language(s) follow in that order while Fanakalo is used by only one trainer.

#### **4.2.3 Languages used for communication amongst workers while at work**

The purpose of this question was to establish the distribution profile of languages used by miners while interacting at work, the supposition being that the language used as medium of communication at work must be a natural choice for instruction, and that workers will naturally use an African language when they interact with one another.

**Table 4.3 Languages used for communication amongst workers while at work**

Language	No. of respondents	%
isiXhosa	04	04
isiZulu	0	0
Sesotho	06	6
Fanakalo	20	20
Unspecified	03	3
English	67	67
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100%</b>

The findings reveal that English unexpectedly enjoys high preference at 67%. Fanakalo occupies second place at 20%, while Sesotho and isiXhosa respectively account for 6% and 4%, with 3% unspecified and no isiZulu speakers. The high preference for English is rather surprising since the highest number most of respondents indicated (4.2.1) that isiXhosa is illustrated as the home-language of most miners

at the mine. However, this is clearly not the case because Fanakalo has always been the means of communication among workers while at work. Brown (1988:49) describes the use of Fanakalo in mining as follows:

The teaching of Fanakalo was (and largely remains) integrated into initial job training for African workers on the mines. The technical report written by the engineer in charge of training on the Rand Mines in the 1950s described the process as follows: on arrival at the training school, the men were introduced to a series of posters and the first lessons consisted of naming objects they encountered on the mine. The initiation consisted of approximately 100 words during the first 24 hours on the mine. Simple actions, such as sit, walk, put on and take off were taught. The entire process of becoming a miner was bound up with the learning of Fanakalo. A second part of lessons included the Fanakalo a miner would use from the time he awoke until he went underground. A third series concerned surface procedures, which started from the end of the shift to the time the miner went to bed, and included health issues. A fourth series dealt with drinking water facilities, underground telephones, air pressure metres, water control valves, overhead wires, etc. A final series dealt with specific job training, for example the language used and understood by the ‘tshisa boy’ (fuseman)

The information given above indicate that the contrast between the data contained in 4.2.1 and 4.2.3 may be attributed to negative attitudes towards other languages other than English, a language often associated with superiority or high prestige.

Question 3 established a profile that is evident in all other findings in this study. This profile influences many aspects of the Beatrix Gold Mine environment. According to the findings reported in 4.2.1, isiXhosa or isiZulu or Sesotho (given the geographic location of the mine in the Free State, a predominantly Sesotho speaking area) should have been spontaneous languages of communication amongst workers. However, the findings indicate the contrary thus casting doubt on the responses to the question. As mentioned in Chapter 1 the average level of education amongst mine workers is ABET Level 3, which shows that it is unlikely that mine workers would use English to communicate with each

other while at work.

On further investigation, it was established that Fanakalo is used underground because most of the foremen are Afrikaans speaking and will therefore, not use English while communicating with the rank and file of the workers, some of whom do not understand English well either. Fanakalo serves as a convenient compromise.

It also became apparent during a follow-up interview that some of the respondents within the sample group who understand English tended to adopt an air of superiority towards African languages

#### **4.2.4 Languages used for communication amongst workers while off duty**

The survey was conducted on the assumption that in certain labour-intensive sectors of South African economy, such as mining and construction, there is usually some link between the language of the majority and the language of communication both on and off duty. For example, if isiXhosa is the main language as indicated under question 3 of the questionnaire, then general communication will be conducted in isiXhosa. It was also assumed that surely an African language will be the most involuntary language to use for the purposes of communication while off duty. The purpose of the question was to confirm this assumption.

**Table 4.4      *Languages used for communication amongst workers while off duty***

<b>Language</b>	<b>No. of respondents</b>	<b>%</b>
isiXhosa	0	0
isiZulu	0	0
Sesotho	02	2
Fanakalo	36	36
English	62	62
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100%</b>

At 62% and 32% respectively English and Fanakalo accounted for the vast majority of the respondents. If the probable inaccuracy of the preference for English reflected in 4.2.3 is discounted a consistent preference for Fanakalo both on and off duty remains. As indicated in 4.2.3 above, a preference for English is unlikely in this instance too since most of miners are Xhosa speaking with Sotho speakers forming the second largest group. Either of the two main languages can be assumed to be the first or the alternative preference.

Observation of workers interaction in the canteen and in the local park, pointed to limited use of Fanakalo and the complete absence of English as a medium of communication amongst workers while off duty. A follow-up interview revealed the same reasons given in 4.2.3 above, namely that as a result of attitudes indicated in Chapter 1 African languages are dismissed as potential instruments in functional multilingualism where skills development in mining and mineral sectors is concerned. The prejudice towards African languages is historical in the sense that miners tend to come from communities abound with popular misconceptions around many aspects of mine life, including the myth that skills can only be learnt in Fanakalo, Afrikaans (the language of most foremen) or in English, and not in one's mother-tongue.

#### **4.2.5 Communication problems relating to language use**

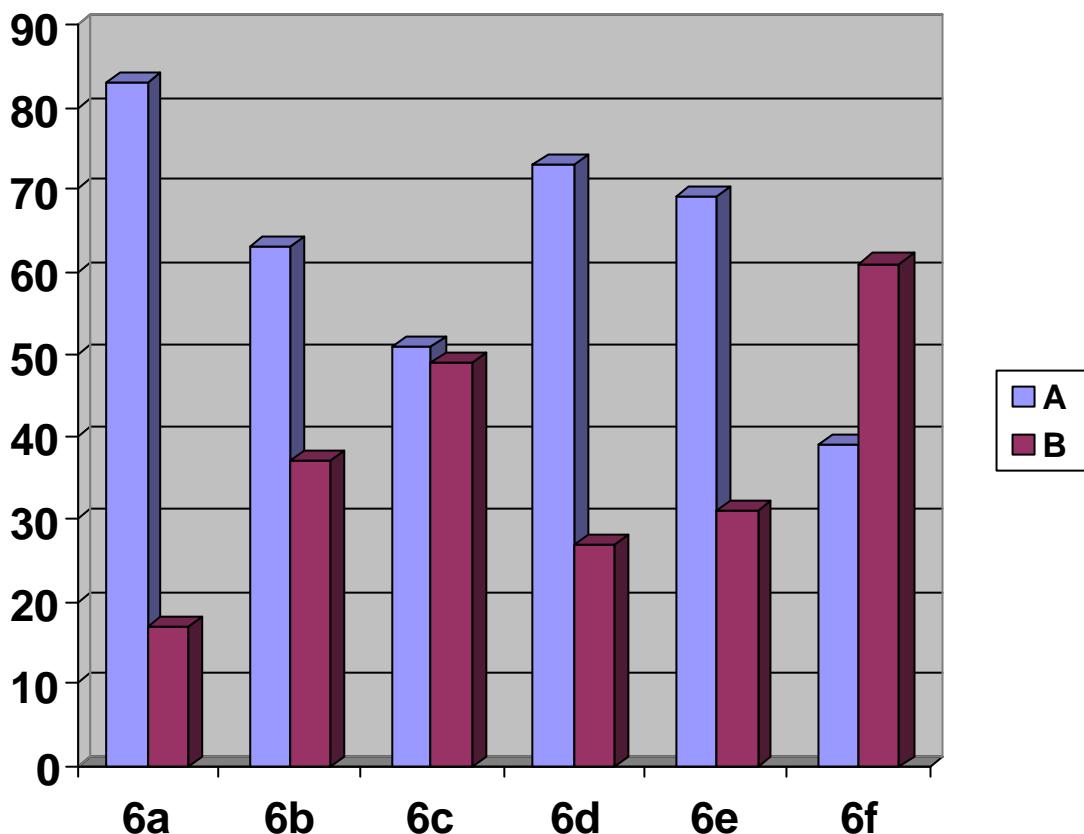
The aim of this question was to investigate the nature of language communication problems that might exist between trainers and trainees in a given learning environment due to the use of an inappropriate medium of instruction. It became clear that there is a need for the illustration of a relationship between communication problems and effective learning (skills development). The premise was that skills-development sessions are generally conducted in English or Afrikaans which could impede meaningful learning.

***Graph 4.1: Communication problems relating to language use***

**KEY:** A= A very serious problem

**B= Not a serious problem**

Graph 4.1 is a graphic presentation of the following facts:



- (a) 83% of the 100 respondents regard the inability of an unskilled worker to understand or follow spoken English or Afrikaans as a very serious problem. Only 17% do not regard this deficiency a very serious problem. This situation prevails underground where some of the instructions given to miners in a language other than their home-language can result in misunderstanding, fatal at times.
- (b) 63% of respondents regard instances where trainers cannot understand or follow the black unskilled or semiskilled worker's English or Afrikaans as a very serious problem, while 37%

do not see the issue as a serious problem. At Beatrix, Fanakalo is used in instances where this problem arises. Apprentices who fall into this category are taught Fanakalo, and their training takes place in the Fanakalo class rather than the English class.

- (c) 51% of respondents regard instances where a trainer is unable to understand or follow a spoken African language as a very serious problem against 49% that do not regard it as a serious problem.
- (d) 73% of respondents regard instances where trainer cannot formulate his/her instructions clearly in a spoken African language as a very serious problem whereas 27% do not regard the situation as a serious problem. It became apparent during the direct interview with the isiXhosa-speaking ABET officer (a skills trainer) at Beatrix Gold Mine that it is sometimes difficult for her to deal adequately with the African languages spoken by her learners (miners).
- (e) 69% of respondents regard a situation where an unskilled or semiskilled worker is unwilling to indicate that he/she has not understood instructions given in English or Afrikaans as a very serious problem, while 31% do not regard it as a serious problem. The ABET officer attributed this behaviour to an attitude problem in that miners would be branded inferior if they admit that they don't understand English.
- (f) When the interpreter's version is not always reliable (where such services are available) 61% of respondents regards it as a very serious problem whereas 39% say it is not a serious problem.

The validity of all the high percentage figures represented by the lighter bar from (6a) to (6f) in the graph was established during the follow-up visit to the mine, and point to a serious communication problem. Within the sample group 61% of the respondents indicated that they are gravely concerned about a series of incidents or instances that were the consequences of a breakdown in communication, while 39% of the respondents indicated that they were not particularly concerned about such instances or occurrences.

#### **4.2.6 Incidents or accidents caused by communication problems at the organisation in the past 12 months**

This question was aimed at corroborating the assumption that an uninformed or inappropriate choice of a medium of instruction may lead to avoidable incidents or accidents in a work environment. For instance, the mining industry is regulated by strict safety laws that need to be unambiguously communicated to all workers.

***Table 4.5: Incidents or accidents caused by communication problems at the organisation in the past 12 months***

<b>Response</b>	<b>No. of responses</b>	<b>%</b>
Yes	68	68
No	32	32
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 4.6 illustrates the position with 68% agreeing communication problems led to incidents or accidents at the organisation in the past 12 months while 32% of the respondents did not agree. As mentioned before in this study, underground communication at Beatrix and other mines is done in Fanakalo and follow-up enquiries revealed that Fanakalo is not entirely effective as a medium of instruction, and that its deficiencies are bound to cause breakdowns in communication that may cause accidents. An example of accidents that occurred at Beatrix Mine is the incident of May 8, 2001. According to a report by Barbra Slaughter that appeared on World Socialist Club Website dated 10 May 2001, twelve mine workers were killed in an explosion at the Beatrix Gold Mine on Tuesday, May 8. The explosion at the mine occurred about 850 metres underground and tore apart a development area where the men were working. The report goes on to state that the immediate cause of the disaster is thought to have been a methane gas explosion. A broken fan had been reported the night before, which would have reduced air circulation and increased the danger of a gas build-up. It is not

unreasonable to assume that this disastrous accident could have been caused by a misunderstanding of an explanation in Fanakalo of the term methane. In Fanakalo methane is referred to as “smogo” derived from the English word “smoke” or “smog”. Warning to miners regarding the dangers of methane are given in Fanakalo as ‘*Wena pasopa Smogo*’ which may convey the impression of visible smoke or smog instead of the lethal, colourless and odourless gas methane. The researcher contends that the use of African languages to conduct underground communication could have given a better understanding of the concept.

Current communication and learning strategies should be reviewed in order to make learning opportunities accessible to speakers of various languages who are employed in the mining and minerals industry and also to safeguard and improve the health and safety of employees through effective communication. It is essential that an alternative be found, depending on the linguistic disposition of the foremen leading the workers. For instance, if foremen are speakers of an African language, then that language should be used as a medium of instruction to train workers. This would facilitate learning and communication to the extent that accidents could be avoided.

Furthermore, like in many other industries, miners make errors. Some merely cause panic or fright but others often result in critical or fatal accidents. The other industry with documented evidence of accidents caused by error linked to problems in communication is the aviation industry. According to Jones (2003:235-236), there are symptoms of miscommunication within the industry listing some of them as “inability to understand computer-generated speech; confusion among dialects and blurred comprehension of procedures”

In elaboration Jones (2003:237) gives an extensive list of air crashes with ties to language stating that:

The accidents and incidents in the appended list all involve some degree of misunderstanding of written or spoken languages. They are historical examples where one link in the chain of events leading to tragedy was bad communication. Precision in this matter is impossible, because dead pilots cannot tell us exactly what induced them to do what they did. Why did they

not follow ground instructions; was it obstinacy or lack of understanding?

#### **4.2.7 Communication problems that inhibited training at the organisation during the past 12 months**

The aim of this question was to identify the extent to which a wrong choice of a medium of instruction can inhibit skills development in a specific learning environment.

**Table 4.6: Communication problems that inhibited training at the organisation during the past 12 months**

<b>Response</b>	<b>No. of responses</b>	<b>%</b>
Yes	70	70
No	30	30
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

70% of the respondents agreed that training was inhibited and 30% disagreed. The follow-up interview demonstrated the explanation that sometimes the main problem is the choice of the language used in training. Both English and Fanakalo are second languages to most trainees, and this retards the learning process.

#### **4.2.8 Training offered**

The purpose of this question was to ascertain whether training takes place at Beatrix Gold Mine, bearing in mind that an assumption of the obvious could be misleading at times since not all institutions or organisation necessarily offer work-based training. This question is obviously linked to questions such as language used by trainers and language preferences for effective training that were meant to establish the correct or incorrect medium of instruction and the consequences of choosing one or the other.

**Table 4.7 Training at the organisation**

<b>Response</b>	<b>No. of responses</b>	<b>%</b>
Yes	63	63
No	37	37
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

The data reveal that 63% of respondents agree that there is training at Beatrix Gold Mine whereas 37% disagree.

#### **4.2.9 Languages used by trainers**

This question was aimed at determining the attitude of the key decision makers at the organisation towards the use of African languages in skills development. It also sought to balance attitude against the overwhelming preference of English by trainers given the fact that the choice of a medium of instruction should be influenced by the realities of a given situation.

This question is related to a number of previous questions. For example, data for question 2 indicate that specific languages namely isiXhosa, isiZulu and Sesotho are so widely spoken that one could safely say that trainers would definitely use one of them as a medium of instruction. Also linked to this question is question 5 because an appropriate language choice must be made if communication problems are to be avoided. Accordingly, an attempt was made to establish whether trainers duly consider the use of African languages. Current trends regarding the use of African languages as preferred and preferable media of instruction are central to the study.

***Table: 4.8 Languages used by trainers***

<b>Language</b>	<b>No. of respondents</b>	<b>%</b>
isiXhosa	0	0
isiZulu	0	0
Sesotho	0	0
Fanakalo	21	21

Afrikaans	01	1
English	76	76
No response	01	1
Unspecified	1	1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100%</b>

It is interesting that 76% of respondents indicated that training is conducted in English while 21% said training is done in Fanakalo and 1% that is done in Afrikaans. These three languages accounted for percentages in excess of 0%, which is the value to indigenous languages that purportedly could have been more effective learning and communication choices if functional multilingualism had been an option at Beatrix. It is interesting that responses to this question were identical to responses to questions 4 and 5. Indications are that the responses were motivated by practicality (English is incorrectly viewed as functional) rather than an attitude towards the use of African languages as media of instruction since the mine disregards multilingualism as a matter of policy. As mentioned in 4.2.1 above, there are two distinct groups of miners at Beatrix: those who are semiliterate and have some understanding of English; and those who are illiterate and have no grasp at all of the English language. As refer to in Chapter 3, the questionnaire was explained to the respondents by the facilitator. Accordingly, two parallel streams of skills-development instruction have been established, one being presented in Fanakalo and the other in English. According to information obtained from an ABET officer, the two parallel systems are used in order to accommodate both those who have an understanding of English (trained in English) and those who are English illiterate. Indications are that the Fanakalo option will be phased out soon because according to Circular No.12/2001 of the Mining Qualifications Authority (MQA) (2001:6) the use of Fanakalo in the mining and minerals industry should be discontinued and the predominant language or languages in different regions and work places should be identified and used as a lingua franca alongside English.

#### **4.2.10 Language choices exercised for effective training.**

The purpose of this question was to ascertain miners' or trainees' preferences. This is the crux of the survey since the choice of medium of instruction should hinge critically on the preferences of trainees and the ability of trainers. Responses to most of the preceding questions yielded information about conditions prevailing at Beatrix Gold Mine. For example, the home-language profile is reflected in response to question 3, the language or languages of communication on and off duty were identified in questions 4 and 5.

**Table 4.9     Language choices exercised for effective training.**

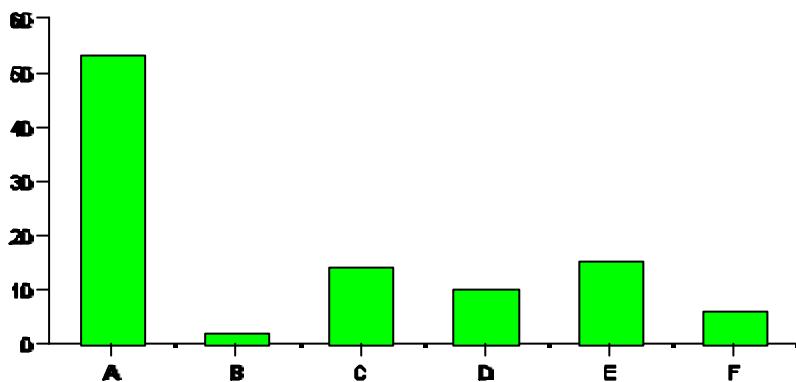
Language	No. of respondents	%
isiXhosa	0	0
isiZulu	0	0
Sesotho	0	0
Fanakalo	0	0
English	98	98
Unspecified	2	2
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100%</b>

The responses show a 98% preference for English, 0% for Fanakalo and 2% unspecified languages. These results are remarkably consistent with data gained from a number of previous questions. Subsequently, during the follow-up visit to the mine, it emerged that the positive attitude towards English that prevailed in responses to questions 4 and 5 is evident here too. The media of instruction currently used are Fanakalo and English and workers regard English as the only option worthwhile at their disposal, hence the choice.

#### **4.2.11 Use of African languages to facilitate effective training**

The purpose of the question was to counterbalance the trainees' choice of a relevant and most effective medium of instruction in 4.2.10 by asking a direct question regarding the use of African languages as alternative media of instruction.

**Graph 4.2    Use of African languages to facilitate effective training**



**KEY:** A = A great deal

B = Significantly

C = To a fair extent

D = Very little

E = Not at all

F = Wrong responses

The results reveal that 53% of respondents indicated that the use of African languages would greatly facilitate effective training; 2% perceive a significant role for African languages as media of instruction; 14% perceive a fairly significant role for African languages; 10% consider African languages insignificant. 15% said African languages have no potential at all as media of instruction; and 6%

responded erroneously. The 53% in favour of African languages clearly shows that although there is a high preference of English in reality, miners are aware of their limited knowledge of this language. This augurs well for the introduction of functional multilingualism at Beatrix Gold Mine and at other similar work places despite the unfavourable response to African languages that became evident from dealing with the question on language used while off duty.

#### **4.2.12 Language policy in the organisation**

The purpose of the question was to find out if Beatrix Gold Mine has a language policy because the response would help the researcher to discover the origins of attitudes and trends pertaining to the establishment. Moreover, language policies are a mainstay of certain countries, governments, public and private organisations and institutions. Statutory obligations are currently in place in South Africa that mandate different establishments to implement a national language policy.

***Table 10: Language policy in the organisation***

<b>Response</b>	<b>No. of responses</b>	<b>%</b>
Yes	78	78
No	21	21
Wrong response	01	1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

In this survey, 78% agreed that Beatrix Gold Mine has a language policy while 21% disagreed. Erroneous responses amounted to 1%. The existence of such a policy was confirmed during the follow-up interview. It came to the attention of the researcher that Beatrix Gold Mine has a language policy for ABET and for other skills-development facilitation with respect to occupational safety, health, etc. The ABET programme offers literacy and numeracy skill development. Trainees are assessed by means of portfolios which are marked at Unisa ABET Institute. The length of the programme is determined by skill levels, for instance, for ABET Level 1 and Level 2 the programme takes three months to complete while ABET Level 3 trainees take four months to complete their programme. Fanakalo is used for

underground communication and for underground skills development in the case of miners who do not understand English. The ABET training centre relies mainly on English, while off-duty miners use their own languages or the most widely understood language. This policy has been formulated in English and is readily available, and 78% of workers are aware of its existence. In its present form it excludes the recognition for the role of functional multilingualism in skills development given the fact that Fanakalo is not widely supported by the general South African public.

### **4.3 Conclusion**

The aim of this chapter was to analyse the findings of a survey aimed at supporting the premise that African languages should be used as part of functional multilingualism in skills-development strategies in South African work environment. This was a necessary step given the overriding purpose of the study and results of a review of skills-development trends in different parts of the world, including South Africa. The survey and the subsequent discussion of its results is also a litmus test for the methodologies selected for the purpose of this study as indicated in Chapter 3. A combination of two methods was decided on and a questionnaire was selected as a measuring instrument to be used in the field at Beatrix Gold Mine in Welkom, in the Free State. The findings from the sample group can be divided into four main categories, namely (1) language use (general communication, training and work place); (2) language attitudes; (3) reality (communication problems) and (4) language policy. Pivotal to all these categories are the findings of the study that indicate a hierarchy within a profile of languages spoken at Beatrix Gold Mine.

The findings of this study have provided insights regarding the position of African languages, English and Fanakalo where skills development in South Africa is concerned. Since a large majority at the mine speak isiXhosa, followed by Sesotho, and isiZulu the researcher believes that one or two of the said languages would be appropriate as a medium of instruction in skills development. However, it is interesting to note that Fanakalo has been used for many years at mines, is still in use as a medium of instruction at Beatrix and other mines although plans are afoot to phase it out. At Beatrix Mine, it is used in formal classes for the benefit of those who find English difficult to understand. It is also used for the

initial training of apprentices who are being introduced to the mining environment and for the presentation of refresher training courses. It is used underground because most of the foremen are Afrikaans speaking and will, therefore do not use English to communicate with miners, some of whom find English difficult to understand in any case. The findings also show that English rather than an African language, is the most dominant training medium by far.

This study has shown that Beatrix Gold Mine's choice of English and Fanakalo as media for skills development is reasonably well motivated although there is marked lack of support for Fanakalo throughout South Africa and the mine does not recognise the role of functional multilingualism in skills development. On view of these flaws the most suitable approach would be a combination of English and an African language, particularly since 53% of survey sample agree that African languages can be used to facilitate effective training compared to 40% that do not agree. The data collected show the need for a clear language policy framework that promotes the use of indigenous languages in skills development. Such a framework will be the focus of the next chapter.

# **CHAPTER 5**

## **PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS**

### **1.5.Introduction**

As indicated in Chapter 1, the objective of this study is to show communication problems in the mining sector and the role of African languages as media of instruction in skills development in South Africa. This objective is pursued with due cognisance of the challenges facing the use of African languages in learning in general and in skills development in particular. South Africa has nine African languages that have been accorded official status under the constitution. The challenge that this study has to deal with is the problem of the simultaneous use of all the official African languages as media of instruction given the magnitude of expenses involved. The challenge is greatly magnified by the language preferences and attitudes among the different communities of South Africa regarding the use of African languages in learning in general and in skills development in particular. Most people prefer to use English as a result of its established hegemonic position as part of South Africa's colonial heritage.

An attempt will be made in this chapter to establish a framework for the use of African languages in skills development in accordance with the principles of functional multilingualism in South Africa. This framework will starkly strive to offer clear and practical guidelines that are intended to provide the means to resolve the issue of using all nine indigenous languages in skills development. This model

framework could also be useful in language planning exercises undertaken by various institutions and organisations in the public and private sectors other than the mining and minerals sector. The chapter begins with a discussion of language problems found in different domains at Beatrix Gold Mine, and then goes on to provide a framework/model that can be used for skills-development.

## **5.2 Language problems**

A multilingual and multicultural society such as ours is susceptible to language problems that often result in general communication breakdown that affects many areas. Such language problems often impede the participation of members of the society concerned in the socio-economic, educational and political activities of that society. As Webb (2002:6) puts it, “access to educational development and economic opportunities and participation in political life and social advancement are directly determined by language.” He further indicates that “knowledge cannot be acquired without understanding the language used in explaining concepts and ways of reasoning” (Webb 2002:6). The same applies for managers and workers who happen not to share the language of the work place, in which case it would be difficult for workers to perform effectively or have a career path that is characterised by untrammelled and sustained progress. The level of education of miners at Beatrix becomes a critical issue in the light of Webb’s assertions. According to Gxilishe and Van der Vyver (1981:5), most workers in most South African work places are unable to follow a set of simple instructions, or to repeat simple messages accurately, or to describe a simple process in any language other than their own. The average education level of the sample group of miners at Beatrix Gold Mine has been determined as ABET Level 3, an education level at which susceptibility to communication problems is exceptionally high if any language other than an African language is used as a medium of instruction or communication. The survey results indicate that in the case of Beatrix Gold Mine a proportion of communication problems appears to be comparatively attributable to the choice of any language other than an African language (English) and a *lingua franca* (Fanakalo) as media of communication and learning instead of African languages.

### **5.2.1 Language problems in the work environment (work place)**

The mine work place is defined in the MSA language policy document (2001:8) as “an area where work is done such as a shaft, plant or pit”. A work environment such as a mine relies considerably on good communication techniques of communication. According to Gxilishe and Van der Vyver (1981:6) communication should be viewed as the sending and the understanding of information from one person to another. A relationship exists between what the sender sends to the receiver, what the receiver understands and the results of that understanding. According to the MSA language policy document (2001:8) communication in the mining and mineral sector “is the act of giving or receiving information, ideas and thoughts in speaking, writing or in signs; the process of expressing self and understanding others”. The language used by an underground foreman or supervisor (the sender) determines the understanding of the message received and decoded by the miner (receiver) and the results of such decoding. Use of a foreign language and the deficient or erroneous deciphering of messages coached and received in a foreign language often lead to inability to formulate thoughts accurately and clearly.

### **5.2.2 Language communication problems that affect training**

There are two types of training offered to miners at Beatrix Gold Mine, ABET and underground training. ABET training is offered by a group of qualified officers who use English as medium of instruction while underground safety and skills training is offered in Fanakalo. Webb (2002:14) observes that “language plays a crucial role as an instrument of education and training. It is very important for the development of vocational skills, and thus for productivity and competitiveness.” Often the language medium used in training or skills development becomes either a barrier to or a facilitator of economic development in a given country. Conditions at Beatrix Gold Mine should be viewed in the context of multilingualism as a factor in the economic development of South Africa where the use of an appropriate language in training will enable the mine to be more productive and therefore, to contribute more to the economic development of the country. The same is true for miners in that the use of an appropriate medium of instruction will also enable them to participate effectively and make a positive contribution

to the economic activity of mining. African languages have no role in this regard because they are not credited with the potential to make multilingualism functional.

Linked to the process of learning is the notion of conceptualisation. According to Weissenhofer (1995:1), “conceptualisation is considered to be mental representation that is related to objects or a set of objects that can be material or immaterial.” Skills development at Beatrix Gold Mine is supposed to be conceptual rather than instructive. Conceptualisation is most effective and possible and feasible when a first language is used rather than a second or third language.

### **5.3 Negative attitude towards African languages**

Edwards (1994:97) asserts that “attitude is a tendency to react favourably or unfavourably to a class of objects or situations. The tendency is made up of three components: feelings, thoughts and behaviour.” People first have knowledge of or a belief in something and then develop a subjective emotional attachment or commitment to it which they display in practice according to their feelings and thoughts. Hohenthal (1998:38) states that attitudes are crucial in language growth or decay, or in their rehabilitation or destruction. These attitudes can be displayed towards the language itself, but also towards the speakers of a particular language. Post-colonial Africa has always had to contend with problems of negative attitudes towards African languages. In Zambia, as Schmied (1990:218) observes,

English is most deeply rooted in the national multilingual scene because of Zambian people’s contact with native English speakers from Britain and South Africa on farms and in mines since days of the operations of the British South Africa Company.

According to Schmied (1990:219-233) a positive attitude towards English is also evident in Kenya and Tanzania although Kiswahili is widely used as a language of learning in Tanzania.

Given the pre-1994 history of the status of English, Afrikaans and the African languages in South Africa, the feelings or beliefs of many mother-tongue speakers of African languages undoubtedly influenced

their reaction towards the said languages. Many South Africans regard English as the best or elective means of communication that can be used for learning when compared with African languages.

A link between attitude and education should be considered here. Since most miners' education level is the equivalent of ABET Level 3, it is a very moot point whether they can function competently through the medium of English or Fanakalo. On the other hand mother-tongue (first-language) use facilitates skills development more successfully than a foreign language in the sense that a person's life experience, life philosophy and aspirations are expressed better in his or her first language, which is part and parcel of his or her culture. The experience that the adult learner brings into the class or training venue is expressed and enhanced through the use of his or her mother-tongue or first language.

The findings based on responses given by the sample group once more point to attitude rather than real circumstances in the sense that the type of learners involved in skills development at Beatrix are predisposed to be extensively influenced by socio-cultural learning theory whereby social life is regarded as the springboard to individual cognitive development. the basic view of the socio-cultural approach to mind and learning is that human mental functioning is inherently situated in a social interaction, cultural, institutional and historical context. Socio-cultural theorists maintain that human learning and thinking processes are best understood in the setting or context in which the learning and thinking occurs. It explores some of the contexts within which learning occurs and the social and cultural dynamics that influence learning and teaching. The theory aims to create an awareness of the importance of context in adult learning and to encourage adult educators to be thoughtful of their practice, "to understand how social and cultural contexts influence classroom conditions, and to take critical action to ameliorate hegemonic practices in adult education" (Alfred 2004:1). Wertsch et al.(1995:3) state that "the goal of a socio-cultural learning approach is to explicate the relationships between human mental functioning, on the one hand, and the cultural, institutional and historical situations in which this function occurs, on the other"

Against the historical background given earlier regarding the education levels of most of the miners, it would be correct to suggest that since language and culture go hand in hand, most of the trainees,

novices or otherwise, would be best served by using their first language in skills development because most concepts are better understood when explained within the triangle of language, culture and learning. Trainers need to be aware at all times that their training methods or styles and the learning styles of mine workers at Beatrix are significantly determined by cultural and linguistic influences. Gxilishe and Van der Vyver (1983:8) give a number of factors that influence communication and learning. Among these factors they mention social and cultural factors when they state that “ where the sender [of message] has a low level of proficiency in the receiver’s language, it can be expected that irritation, frustration, uncertainty and/or insecurity, misunderstandings, and communication breakdowns may occur.” Gxilishe and Van der Vyver further state (1983:8) that the key to successful recruiting, training and motivation of workers requires a conscious effort to understand these workers. The understanding referred to above requires one to appreciate, respect and value other peoples’ customs , culture and idioms.

## **5.4 Towards a model for introducing African languages into skills development**

Regardless of the presented language attitudes and realities among miners at Beatrix Gold Mine, the existence of language problems at that mine in areas of learning and communication indicates an urgent need to develop a language policy framework that can be implemented as a vehicle to promote the use of African languages in skills development and communication at the mine. The language policy framework should be based on South Africa’s multilingual realities and various constitutional and other statutory commitments. Concerted efforts should be made to determine the best approach to the use of functional multilingualism in order to circumvent language problems that are currently experienced in communication and training at Beatrix Gold Mine. The envisaged functional multilingualism framework is based on the South African constitutional provisions and the MQA language policy.

### **5.4.1 South Africa’s multilingual reality**

In discussing the principle of multilingualism for empowerment, Alexander et al (1995:37) asserts that verbal communication and learning in South Africa can best be addressed by promoting multilingualism

among the population at large. Agnihotri et al (1995:5) points out that multilingual societies are normal and more widespread than any other type, occurring commonly in continental and sub-continental countries such as Russia, China, and India and naturally also in Africa. The literature review in Chapter 2 has also shown that multilingual society such India has been successful in skills-development initiatives through the use of multilingualism. This condition will influence the model to be proposed in the latter part of this chapter. A skills-development facilitator who recognises multilingualism as an asset is bound to find ways and means of exploiting the different available languages in a situation where learning occurs in the work place or some other venue.

One of the aims of exercising the right to choose a language of instruction is to promote full participation in socio-economic affairs through equitable and meaningful access to education. This constitutional obligation, within the realm of multilingualism, cannot be ignored by stakeholders at work places like the Beatrix Gold Mine or by the state itself; nor can the impediment of training at the same mine by the choice of English and Fanakalo as media of learning and communication at the mine. It follows indisputably that a clear, effective and practical choice of a medium of communication and instruction needs to be made at Beatrix Gold Mine and other places where similar conditions prevail.

#### **5.4.2 Constitutional language stipulations**

Section 6 of the South African Constitution names and states the uses of the following eleven (11) official languages - Sepedi, Sesotho, Setswana, siSwati, Tshivenda, Xitsonga, Afrikaans, English, isiNdebele, IsiXhosa and isiZulu. The right to their promotion is also specified, including their use in learning and teaching. Section 29 of the Constitution states that everyone has the right to receive an education in the official language or languages of their choice in public educational institutions where such education is reasonably practicable.

It was noted in Chapter 2 of this study that the Language-in-Education Policy Document released by the South African Department of Education (1997:1) expounds that:

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 religion, while at the same time creating an environment in which respect for languages other than one's own language would be encouraged. The right to choose the language of learning and teaching is vested in the individual person. The principle of linguistic rights should also be considered in this regard.

The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (1996:15) pronounces that :

31 (1) (a) and (b) Persons belonging to a cultural, religious or linguistic community may not be denied the right, with other members of that community -

- (a) to enjoy their culture, practise their religion and use their language; and
- (b) to form, join and maintain cultural, religious and linguistic associations and other organs of civil society.

It is common practice throughout the world that laws and regulations are used to formulate language-in-education policies. The different types of legislation available in South Africa related to language promotion and development, language-in-education and linguistic right oblige institutions such as MQA to develop a language policy that will enable learners at Beatrix Gold Mine to access skills without difficulty.

The Mining Qualifications Authority (MQA) Language Policy (2003:10) states that the Policy's scope of implementation includes all work places where English and/or Afrikaans were previously used as media of communication. Work places such as Beatrix Gold Mine fall under the same scope of implementation, hence the need to develop a language model or framework for Beatrix Gold Mine in particular. The same framework can be generally used in the mining and minerals sector if need arises.

### **5.4.3 Proposed policy model for the introduction of functional multilingualism at Beatrix Gold Mine**

Innovative ways to make use of the most feasible and directly practicable approaches to skilling South Africans should be devised , as will be suggested below, with due cognisance of the different levels of education among miners at Beatrix Gold Mine. The study proposes that functional multilingualism should be the solution in this regard. According to the Draft Discussion Document of the Pan South African Language Board (PanSALB) (1998:05), functional multilingualism refers to situations where people use different languages in different context. According to this document, only a specified number out of eleven official South African languages may be used for functional purposes, provided they are appropriate for a given linguistic group, or for several such groups. It makes functional sense to use the appropriate language(s) for the purpose of learning and communicating, and the main criteria in this regard should be language preference, extent and intensity of use, and proficiency.

The same view is held by the Mining Qualifications Authority whose statutory mandate extends to areas of interest for the purpose of this study. In MQA's proposed language policy document (2001:5) MQA declares that the principle of functional multilingualism is the cornerstone of its language policy proposal and is aimed at contributing to the changing of attitudes towards different languages and cultures that exist in the mining and mineral industry in order to make learning opportunities accessible to employees in the mining and minerals sector who speak a variety of languages and also to contribute towards safeguarding and promoting the health and safety of employees through effective communication.

#### **5.4.3.1 Main aims of policy model**

The factors mentioned above given above reflect an overview of the main aims of the policy model which can be stated more specifically as follows:

- (a) To introduce the use of one or two African languages (isiXhosa alone or isiXhosa and Sesotho) in learning and communication at Beatrix Gold Mine alongside English.

- (b) To eliminate language problems currently experienced at the mine and thus ensure effective communication.
- (c) To ensure, through existing constitutional language stipulations, the changing of attitudes towards different languages and cultures that exist at Beatrix Gold Mine in particular and in the mining and minerals industry in general in order to make learning opportunities accessible to speakers of various languages, for example by eliminating language barriers. Training materials that are currently in English should be translated into preferred African languages.

Mandated institutions such as the Mqa should be used to encourage the use of African languages in the development of learnerships.

The language-in-education policy predominating in the mining and minerals sector must be changed to accommodate African languages.

Miners and trainers at Beatrix Gold Mine in particular and generally must be appraised on recruitment to determine whether their English proficiency meets the requirements. The same appraisal should be conducted after a given period while in employment to determine their level of Fanakalo proficiency. The Mining Qualifications Authority (Mqa) Language Policy has laid a foundation for the change of language-in education policy because in discussing the need for new language policy for the minerals and energy sector it states (2003:4) clearly that:

There is the need to develop the previously marginalized languages so as to empower people from previously disadvantaged communities to effectively participate in decision making forums at the workplace and in society at large.

The same document argues further on the benefits of functional multilingualism (2003:5) stating that “Functional Multilingualism should contribute to changing attitudes towards the different languages and cultures which exist within the industry”

MQA should use this study’s recommendations in providing justifications for the use of African languages in skills development within the minerals and energy sector. Such a study coupled with awareness campaign at Beatrix Gold Mine and within the mining and minerals sector would facilitate changes in negative attitudes towards the use of isiXhosa and Sesotho.

- (d) To ensure that Beatrix Gold Mine complies with the constitutional language and education obligations.

#### **5.4.3.2 Application of proposed model for Beatrix Gold Mine**

The envisaged policy model is predicated on language issues such as language problems, language preferences, language use, language proficiency and constitutional obligation as discussed in 5.2, 5.3 and 5.4 above. Its adoption should be based on the following guidelines for Beatrix Gold Mine in particular and the mining industry in general:

With due allowance for language preferences, use and proficiency interpreted from the data of the survey:

- (a) Functional multilingualism should be implemented at Beatrix Gold Mine in the areas of general communication, underground communication and general training. Central to this recommendation is the need to introduce measures to combat or reduce incidents of misunderstanding that can jeopardise the safety of miners as accidents at mines could be inferred to the non-availability of skills-development programmes offered in African languages, and also to reduce the incidence of other problems that relate to communication such as delays and waste, which ultimately become expensive or even prohibitive for business enterprises. The use of Fanakalo must be phased out and

isiXhosa and Sesotho be gradually phased in.

- (b) Since the survey conducted indicated that accidents may have occurred that were attributable to communication breakdowns or misunderstandings relating to matters such as safety procedures, terms related to natural phenomena, for example seismic events that are commonly associated with mining activities and natural gases such as methane, any information about these matters should be disseminated in the two main African languages reflected within the home-language profile at Beatrix Gold Mine, namely isiXhosa and Sesotho. This will be part of the process of “technicalisation” of African languages, a process which, as noted by Webb (2002:268), would equip African languages “with technical registers and styles of speaking. It is a process that requires two types of activity: the acquisition of terms and the development of technical varieties.” Linked to the issue of “technicalisation” of African languages is the matter of African language development for economic development. Webb (2002:22) is of the opinion that “languages should be used as means to the provision of services in instances such as adult education, health agriculture, legal assistance, recreation and social welfare.” In order to achieve this, African languages should be developed to the level where they can function as media of instruction in the mining and minerals sector. The present standard forms of almost all South African official languages warrant their use in skills-development programmes at Beatrix Gold Mine and in mines generally for learners who are at ABET Level 3. The development of African languages corpus for the mining and minerals sector can be achieved through cooperation between the MQA and academic institutions through research studies. The studies will be aimed at developing standardised isiXhosa and Sesotho terms suitable for use at Beatrix Gold Mine and also in other African languages for use at other mines.
- (c) Skills-development facilitators (trainers) and foremen/supervisors should acquire proficiency in at least two main African languages within Beatrix Gold Mine acquired through courses designed for the purpose. The main aim of such courses would be to enable facilitators or trainers to administer skills development in isiXhosa and Sesotho

which are the two main African languages spoken at the mine, because the present use of English or Fanakalo by foremen or supervisors leads to communication problems. Language courses for facilitators and foremen/supervisors should be planned and implemented in conjunction with labour unions and management. This approach can be model on the corporatist model used in Germany (cf Chapter 2) where agreements reached between the different interested parties - employers, educationists, unions, and the local and national levels of the state - are monitored, validated and coordinated by the federal government.

- (d) The phasing out of Fanakalo at Beatrix Gold Mine should more or less coincide with the introduction of simplified courses in isiXhosa and Sesotho. This recommendation is related to a provision in the MSA language policy that commits the mining and minerals industry to replacing Fanakalo with African languages as part of functional multilingualism in order to make learning opportunities accessible to employees who are speakers of various languages in the mining and mineral sector, and also to contribute towards safeguarding and promoting standards of the health and safety for employees through effective communication.

#### **5.4 Cost-benefit analysis**

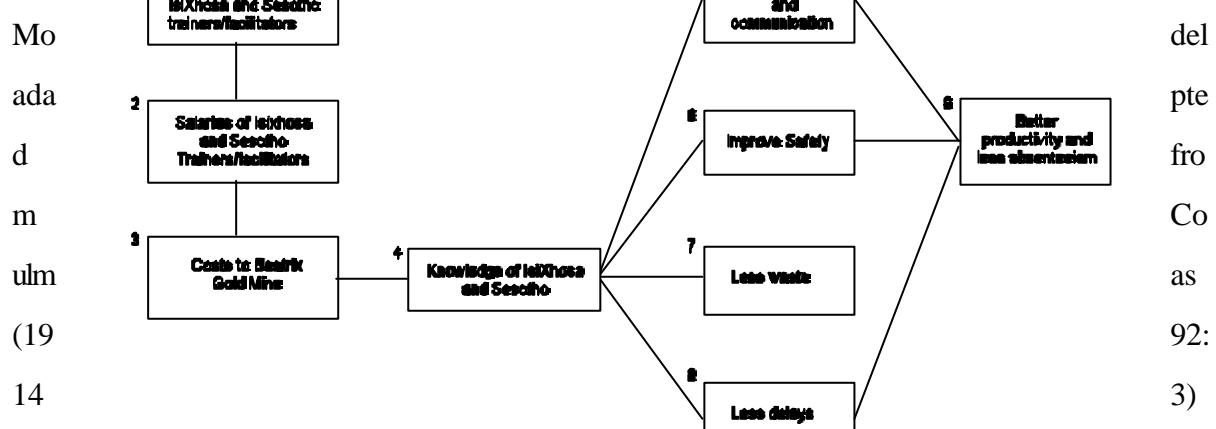
The adoption of this policy model undoubtedly implies costs that would have to be borne by Beatrix Gold Mine. However these costs should be weighed against the economic value of African languages, i.e. the costs and benefits of using them to promote micro-and-macro economic development at national level. For the purpose of this study attention will be given to the micro-economic cost-benefit ratio that can be achieved by using African languages at Beatrix Gold Mine. Webb (2002:228 siting Grin 1997:23) makes a distinction between private market benefits and social market benefits in this regard. This study will concentrate on the former where the value or benefits of using African languages at Beatrix Gold Mine will be the provision of access to skills development or training programmes. These benefits must be offset against the cost also in terms of

the private market, of the acquisition of proficiency in isiXhosa and Sesotho by trainers or facilitators engaged at Beatrix Gold Mine, and of producing or translating learning material into the said two African languages from other source languages. Language-proficiency development costs will naturally be incurred during the development of course curriculum and material production. However such costs could be offset by employing or out-sourcing multilingual trainers or facilitators whose language proficiency would be up to standard.

In calculating these possible costs, care should be given to defining costs in relative terms in the sense that costs are not only in terms of text to be translated, ink used, fees for translators and consultants, paper, etc. Cost could also be incurred, as noted earlier, in safety, waste and delays. The cost of using English and Fanakalo at Beatrix Gold Mine could be high too, in the sense that workers have to be proficient in both languages, to which end prolonged upgrading and much effort would be needed. Moreover, in South Africa the general level of proficiency in English as perceived by the public at large is significantly at odds with real figure which is quite low. The Markdata Report of 2000, a sociolinguistic survey commissioned by PanSALB, revealed that the understanding of English seldom exceeds 30% among speakers of African languages, and that most South Africans are dissatisfied with the way their languages are used in the public sector. The cost-benefit analysis is represented as follows:

**Fig 2**

<b>Costs</b>	<b>Benefits</b>
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### **misde**

With a view to the successful implementation of the provisions of the Skills-development Act, 1998 (Act No. 97 of 1998) different stakeholders involved in skills development in South Africa need to take

cognisance of a number of factors. The first of these comprises the effect of historical educational imbalances on the effectiveness and efficiency of the labour force. This factor is itself significantly attributable to the by now automatic and habitual choice of medium of instruction or learning providers, e.g. government in particular need to pay attention to prevailing language attitudes among workers, service providers, etc, which lean predominantly towards the perception that English is the only possible and practical choice of a medium of instruction. This kind of thinking is also reflected in the attitude of trainers (one of the strongest links in the chain) towards the use of African languages as media of instruction and the suitability of this media to serve as vehicles to impart knowledge effectively at the required level of technical sophistication. As stated in Chapter 2, the trainer is regarded as a *change agent* in view of his or her task to facilitate development in an individual, which is skills development for the purpose of this study. According to Robinson (92:37), communication is very important for a change agent in development intervention because the kind of communication involved determines the choice of language medium in a multilingual environment.

Stakeholders in South Africa need to learn from universal trends and practices followed internationally. Success stories of skills-development initiatives and strategies are found all over the world. The case studies reviewed in Chapter 2 have indicated that skills development is used to address the need for human development (upgrading workforce skills levels), reduce shortages of skilled workers fight unemployment and cope with special situation of transition economies. The methods used for the employed are mainly in-house training where workers are trained in a classroom situation or on job. Private companies and governments are the providers of skills development. Monolingual societies use one language as the medium of instruction in skills development whereas multilingual societies such as ours, for instance India and Canada use a multilingual approach . African countries such as Tanzania and Zambia use English, a foreign as a medium of instruction in skills development.

In the long run decision makers in South Africa need to acknowledge that English is not the only possible means of learning and communication. Functional multilingualism should be promoted in all aspects of South African life, including the introduction of African languages into skills-development programmes. Attitudes towards African languages need to be changed in the sense that languages need

to be viewed as resources and therefore, that the introduction of isiXhosa and Sesotho languages as media of instruction at Beatrix Gold Mine should be viewed positively. As at the Beatrix mine, the problems of the language of learning and working (performing) at many work places can only be solved through clear, practical and effective means. Coupled to the use of multilingualism as a strategy to remedy current problems, are innovative ways that stakeholders should identify, define and employ. Among the innovative methods, could be the colour coding system whereby different colours are used to identify speakers of different languages. At the Beatrix mine for instance, there are intentions to use colour coding by providing miners with helmets of different colours, each of which would represent a specific language (e.g. English or Fanakalo). In line with the study's proposed multilingual model for skills development, foremen (supervisors as they are commonly known nowadays) would be expected to be multilingual. It is envisaged that very soon the majority of supervisors in mines will be black people with multilingual skills.

This study has led the researcher to the conviction that if the policy of functional multilingualism as proposed in this model could be implemented successfully then the prevailing language problems associated with education, training and communication at Beatrix Gold Mine would be in development intervention considerably in development intervention. If the same policy is implemented in other industrial sectors, South Africa would approach parity with countries throughout the world whose skills-development programmes or strategies were reviewed in Chapter 2. There is no doubt at all that these countries have succeeded in developing and implementing the most sophisticated and successful skills-development programmes in the world, some of which were used by this country (South Africa) as models for its own skills-development strategy in the early 1990s in conformity with both the Green and the White Paper that preceded the promulgation of Skills-Development Act (Act No.97 of 1998).

## CHAPTER 6

## **GENERAL CONCLUSION**

The main aim of this study was to address the issue of a lack of clear guidelines regarding the use of African languages in skills development in South Africa. The premise was that South Africa is a multilingual developing country which needs to adopt the use of indigenous languages as part functional multilingualism in addressing the skills shortages. Extensive evidence that skills development is the mainstay of socio-economic development was given in Chapter 2. It was shown that different countries throughout the world develop human resources through different skills-development initiatives, strategies and programmes. Skills-development trends in other parts of the world with special reference to the relationship between language, methods, providers and target groups. Developed nations were clearly distinguished from developing nations in terms of media of instruction. For example, one main language is used in skills development in countries like the UK, Germany and Japan. On the other hand multilingualism, which is common in developing countries, leads to the adoption of a foreign language as a medium of instruction. However, current efforts are underway in developing nations like India and Tanzania (Kiswahili) to empower local languages to the extent that they will be able to facilitate skills development.

The choice of the research methods appropriate for this study was made in Chapter 3. Qualitative methods (observation, questionnaires and follow up interviews) were used because the study is concerned with both numbers and trends in skills development at Beatrix Gold Mine. The choice of the type of questionnaire that suited this study was influenced by the type of research and the category of respondents - adult miners in this regard. The diversified nature of the respondents warranted the use of group-administered questionnaires in the study. The questionnaires were administered to a group of respondents by a facilitator.

An analysis of the findings of a survey conducted at Beatrix Gold Mine was done in Chapter 4 as an endeavour to support the premise that African languages must be introduced in skills development initiatives and strategies as part of functional multilingualism at Beartrix in particular and in the mining and

minerals sector in general in South African. Pivotal are the findings of the study indicating that within the profile of languages spoken at Beatrix Gold Mine, the largest spoken languages are isiXhosa (38%) and Sesotho (21%). The reasons for isiXhosa reflecting such a large percentage figure is that Free State gold field mines have always been a favourite place of employment for isiXhosa speaking miners. The results also revealed that Beatrix Mine's language policy employs a combination of English and Fanakalo providing skills development whilst excluding the recognition for the role of functional multilingualism. The data collected showed the need for clear language policy framework or policy that advocates the introduction of indigenous languages in skills development. A functional multilingual model was thus proposed in this chapter.

This study faced a number of limitations, for example, initially the study was envisaged to include a number of sectors other than the mining and minerals sector. Due to limited time and resources a delimitation of sectors had to be done. These limitations warrant that further and broader studies on the same subject be conducted within other sectors, for example, security, cleaning and the construction sectors.

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## APPENDICES

**OPINION SURVEY**  
**ON THE NEED FOR THE USE OF AFRICAN LANGUAGES**  
**IN SKILLS DEVELOPMENT IN SOUTH AFRICA**

**Prepared for Beatrix Gold Mine**

**by**

**Ndivhuho Mutsila, Department of African Languages, UNISA**

**CATEGORY A (MINERS)**

**PLEASE COMPLETE THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONNAIRE**

Your answers will be regarded as confidential.

- N.B. (1) Any question which is not applicable should be left blank.  
(2) A box should contain one letter or figure only

**LANGUAGE PROFILE IN RESPECTIVE SECTORS**

Please supply the following information about your organisation. (Please put X in appropriate box/boxes.)

**1. Sector**

Manufacturing .....

Mining .....

Construction .....

Building Trade .....

Railways .....

Agriculture .....

Other (Please specify) .....

**2. Please indicate the language you use as a HOME LANGUAGE**

(Please tick appropriate box with X)

Afrikaans	
English	
isiZulu	
Other (please specify on the dotted line below)	

- .....
3. Please indicate the approximate number of trainers at your organisation who speak as a HOME LANGUAGE

Afrikaans	
English	
isiZulu	
Other (please specify on the dotted line below)	

- .....
4. Which language do you use when you communicate with fellow workers while at work?

Afrikaans	
English	
isiZulu	
Other (please specify on the dotted line below)	

5. Which language do you use when you communicate with fellow workers when you are off duty?

Afrikaans	
English	
isiZulu	
Other (please specify on the dotted line below)	

.....

6. Which language do you use when you communicate with fellow workers when you are working?
7. Please indicate the seriousness of the language communication problems listed below:

In each of the six boxes (a) to (f), write down one of the two codes which reflects your opinion. If, for example “Not a serious problem” reflects your experience, write code “B” in the relevant box.

The codes:      A:      A very serious problem

                  B:      Not a serious problem

- (a) The unskilled worker is unable to understand/follow spoken English/Afrikaans
  - (b) The trainer is unable to understand/follow the unskilled/semi-skilled worker's English or Afrikaans
  - (c) The trainer is unable to understand/follow a spoken African language
  - (d) The trainer is unable to formulate his/her instructions clearly in a spoken African language
  - (e) You as the unskilled/semi-skilled worker is unwilling to indicate that he has not understood training instructions given in English or Afrikaans
  - (f) The interpreter's version is not always reliable  
(Where such services are available)
8. Have you during the past 12 months had any incidents/accidents caused by language communication problems at any training session?

Fill in Y (for Yes)

or N (for No)

--	--

9. Did language communication problems inhibit *training* at your organisation during the past 12 months?

Fill in Y (for Yes)

or N (for No)

--	--

10. Will, in your opinion, the workers' ability to read, write and learn in any of the official languages contribute to the elimination of language communication problems

Fill in Y (for Yes)

or N (for No)

--	--

11. Do you receive training at your organisation?

Fill in Y (for Yes)

or N (for No)

--	--

12. If the answer to Q5 is “yes” please indicate the language used by trainers.

Afrikaans	
English	
isiZulu	
Other (please specify on the dotted line below)	

.....

13. What language would you prefer for effective training ?

Afrikaans	
English	
isiZulu	
Other (please specify on the dotted line below)	

.....

14. Please indicate to what extent, in your opinion, would the use of African languages facilitate effective training at your organisation. Write down the code in the allocated box (e.g. for “Significantly” fill in B)

- (A) A great deal
- (B) Significantly
- (C) To a fair extent
- (D) Very little
- (E) Not at all

15. Do you have a language policy for your organisation?

Fill in Y (for Yes)

or N (for No)

--	--

Thank you very much for your cooperation

**Ri a livhuha**

**Siyabonga**

**Siyabulela**

**Dankie**

**Re a leboha**

**Te a leboga**

**Ha khetsa**

## **APPENDIX B**

### **Follow-up interview schedule**

**This schedule of questions is used as a control instrument or counter check of data received.**

**Number of questionnaires issued : 100**

**Number of questionnaires received: 100**

#### **Data to be verified:**

**(a) Languages used for communication amongst workers while at work.**

**Issues:** Why the discrepancy between the data for home language profile (4.2.1) and the data for languages used for communication amongst workers while at work (4.2.3)?.

**(b) Languages used for communication amongst workers while off-duty**

**Issues:** Same as above.

**(c) Languages used by trainers with workers (trainees)**

**Issues:** What is English language proficiency of trainers?

**(d) Training offered and language choices applied for effective training**

**Issues:** - What training is offered?

- Language used in training.
- How did you decide on it?
- How often do you use the language?
- Why did workers choose Fanakalo and English as media of communication at work and off duty?

**(e) Language policy in the organisation**

**Issues:** - Does the language policy really exist?

- Are the workers aware of its existence?
- What is the language policy?
- Is it in a written form (documented)?
- Is it readily available?
- What is the language used in its compilation?

**(f) General**

- Issues:**
- Would you say there are negative attitudes towards African languages within the mine?
  - Is it true that accidents or incidents occur because of communication problems?

## **APPENDIX C**

### **Observation notes**

The initial observation of communication on the premises of Beatrix Gold Mine took place when the research visited the mine for the first time one Saturday morning. On arrival the researcher was directed to the contact - Mr Fans Swart's office- by the receptionist. The office is in a separate building a good hundred or more metres away from the administration building. The distance gave the researcher an opportunity to observe the medium of communication amongst workers along the way. The media were clearly predominantly isiXhosa and Sesotho depending on a group of workers.

On failing to find Mr Swart, who was working underground at the time, the researcher waited in the shade of a nearby *lapa* which he shared with off duty worker who were relaxing having some refreshment. This gave the researcher an opportunity to observe conversations among the workers. Since this was mostly a Sotho group, Sesotho was the medium of communication and not English or Fanakalo.

On receiving the completed questionnaire the researcher was amazed by the data showing English as the main medium of communication for workers while off duty. This reflection warranted a follow-up visit to Beatrix to verify the data for this specific question and others. The visit was made on a week day and during lunch the researcher visited a local canteen to observe the interaction amongst workers. Once more, communication amongst workers at lunch time was in Sesotho and isiXhosa. In fact Sesotho was largely used given the fact that the canteen staff was mainly Sotho speaking. Before concluding the visit the researcher had an opportunity to sit in a park in close proximity to three off duty Sotho miners who on finding the researcher seated, greeted in Sesotho and subsequently conversed with each other in Sesotho.

It should be pointed out that no opportunity came by to enable the researcher to observe communication in the workplace. Followup interview and literature review given in Chapter 4 prove beyond doubt that Fanakalo and not English is the medium of communication while miners are at work (underground).