CHAPTER 5

5.0.   DISCUSSION OF THE RESEARCH FINDINGS

5.1.   Introduction

This chapter, which is a follow up to the analysis, features a general discussion on the research findings and current trends with regard to language domains, linguistic human rights, language development, perceptions and implementation of the language policy. Current trends relate to what the world's or contemporary scholars' view is with regard to linguistic human rights. Obviously, current trends, as depicted in declarations and resolutions at international conferences, observe the diversity of mankind and uphold linguistic human rights. It is with this scenario in mind that the researcher discusses the research findings and highlights possibilities and improbabilities and the concomitant constraints that continue to hamper the actualization of the new language policy of South Africa.

5.2.   Research Issues Addressed

5.2.1. English as the People's Enigmatic Possession

The research findings confirm that although African languages have a place in the New South Africa as official languages, the speakers of those languages have a high regard for English. The results reveal that many citizens still believe that only English can effectively serve as an official or national language. What manifests concomitantly is an extraordinary admiration and aspiration for English. This intimates that to many South Africans English is a precious possession, an enigmatic aspect and a quintessence of the people's livelihood. This view stems from their perception of English as the key to success socially, economically, politically and educationally and, inversely, African languages are viewed as inferior, uneconomically viable and 'land locking'. This view concurs with Crystal's (1997:40) observation that "Blacks saw English as means of achieving an international

voice, and uniting themselves with other Black communities". In view of this, it is worth noting that the act of marginalising African languages and the inability of African languages themselves to serve as media of instruction and in other domains during and immediately after the demise of apartheid engender negative attitudes towards those languages. However, for African languages to be simply recognised as official nominally without implications is certainly an insult to some of the African language speakers for it excludes many Black people from participating in national affairs. It is difficult for the majority to operate in situations where reading, writing and counting in English is unavoidable. It is therefore necessary that African languages should feature prominently in national affairs and also make in roads into the mainstream of the economy. In this way the majority of the people will know what is going on and even participate in local, regional and national affairs. This is in line with article 48 of the Barcelona Declaration of Linguistic human rights which states:

> \#   All language communities have the right to use their language with full legal validity in economic transaction of all types, such as the sale and purchase of goods and services, banking, insurance, job contracts and others.

> \#   No clause in such private acts can exclude or restrict the use of a language in   the territory to which it is specific.

> \#   All language communities are entitled to have documents required for performance of the above-mentioned operations at their disposal in their own language. Such documents include forms, cheques, contracts, invoices, receipts, delivery notes, order forms, and others.
> (Bamgbose, 2000:18).

Indeed, people of different linguistic and educational backgrounds would certainly benefit from a scenario that subscribes to these stipulations under article 48 where all transactions and whatever concerns the lives of the people is printed in their languages.

5.2.2.   English Dominates the Speaking Life of Some Families

The findings indicate that although the respondents have a high proficiency in their languages some of them choose to communicate with their children, friends and sweethearts in English. Such behaviour is indicative of people's attitude to language because African languages cannot fail to communicate messages of love to sweethearts and regards to friends. One deciphers that African language communities are characterized by an exaggerated high esteem of English and unwarrantedly low opinion of African languages (Webb and Kembo-Sure, 2000:12). This behaviour is underpinned by the association of English with modernity, authority and power. Certainly people's minds are imbued with conceived perquisites vested in English. Indubitably, these convictions or the positive evaluation of English emanates from the instrumental roles and economic gains associated with English. Even many authors are convinced, too, that, "English is and will remain, the language of the majority of the private sector of commerce, as well as the language through which contact with a wider world is maintained and in that wider world English has become what Latin was to the Roman world" (Donaldson 1991:48). However, current trends put emphasis on linguistic human rights which is a complete departure from linguistic imperialism. Authors such as Skutnabb-Kangas (1998, 2000), Phillipson (2000) and Pattanayak (2000:47) in (Phillipson 2000) believe that "only acceptance of multilingualism and pluriculturalism as a point of departure is the only way to serve the world from self-destruction". By luring people to opt for globalization without enabling them to transact with the local and the proximate, their cultures are destroyed which ultimately leads to invidious feelings.

5.2.3.   English Requires Elaboration, too.

That English is more expressive than African languages is deeply embedded in the minds of the people. The hardened attitude blinds people from the fact that "there are many indigenous African concepts which English cannot express now" (Adegbija 1994:104). One can think of cultural implements, artefacts and the ecology associated with proverbs. Thus, English also requires elaboration in a number areas related to cultural activities in as much the same way as African languages require elaboration in domains associated with

English. However, the attitude dilemma has the potential to culminate in language shift or re-acculturation and language death which are deleterious to mankind. A language awareness campaign will definitely change the people's perception when they interact with children, friends and suitors. Use of African languages with those people in everyday life and business transactions will certainly help in developing African languages and promoting their image.

5.2.4. Societal and Individual Multilingualism as Resource for Socio-economic Development

The research findings also show strong evidence of societal and individual multilingualism in the country. Individual multilingualism is omnipresent in South Africa. Many people are proficient in more than one language with many more being able to communicate in five to eleven languages, especially, in the Limpopo Province and Mpumalanga. Needless to say, in the Babel tower story, the diversity of languages is seen as a curse which intimates the hegemony of languages as positive and natural and the diversity of languages as some form of punishment. In the case of South Africa, multilingualism should be viewed not as curse but a resource for socio-economic and physical development. In this way the country can realise its human resource capacity. According to Kashioki (1993:150), "Where multilingualism is consciously built into the country's language policy as the dominant principle, it has the likely consequence of broadening opportunities for more citizens to participate in national affairs". Maintenance of **active** multilingualism should continue to be an acme strategy to ensure participation in the national affairs and economic activity by the majority of the people. Unless African languages are used far more comprehensively in the economic life of South Africa the majority would be excluded from the mainstream of economic life. In any business enterprise in South Africa multilingualism would facilitate communication and transaction and thus improve the economic state of the country. From observation South Africa is one country in this world where one finds multilingualism being so active. A situation peculiar to South Africa is that when one enters a supermarket or a shop, there is a likelihood of one being greeted and served in one's own language or a language of one's choice which unquestionably facilitates business. If this scenario is

implemented at a higher level in the mainstream of the economic sector business would certainly thrive. The slogan "Our multilingualism is our strength" would suit and benefit the country in a way difficult to quantify.

Accepting diversity as positive should not be perceived as nostalgic primordialist dream but the norm because in this way a country can realise its human resource potential. Recognising multilingualism as a norm and individual multilingualism as human resource potential insinuates that those who are monolingual will have fewer chances in any sphere of activity than the high level multilinguals. According to Skutnabb-Kangas (2000:263), "The economist Francois Grin from the University of de Geneve argues that those with only good English plus their mother tongue will get fewer chances than high level multilinguals." Skutnabb-Kangas postulates that in future monolingual English is likely to lose out and that multilingualism will be a prerequisite for many high level salary jobs and many of the interesting jobs regardless of status and cash. Needless to say, it is interesting to note that people who are highly multilingual and cosmopolitan are approachable and, accordingly, colleagues of diverse linguistic background are comfortable when interacting with them. Hence, the policy advanced by Bengu (1999), effective acquisition of additional languages in schools, will in future give an economic bonus to products of schools that adopt that policy. Thus, the government, with the help of higher institutions of learning, will have to embark on training teachers on methods of how to handle multilingual classes and promote multilingualism itself. Apart from the advantages advanced above the scenario is certainly beneficial to children because as Wolff (2000:20) established individual multilingualism of childhood is an asset of increased intellectual and social competence because the child broadens his/her sphere. This concurs with Skutnabb-Kangas's (2000: 251) observation that:

> ... high level bilinguals (multilinguals) are better than corresponding monolinguals on ....aspects of intelligence, divergent thinking, cognitive flexibility, creativity, sensitivity to non-verbal meanings, metalinguistics and metacultural awareness, and efficiency in learning further languages.

This concurs with Dascal's (1996 in Skutnabb-Kangas 2000:251) view that individual multilingualism trains the mind for shifting perspectives and enhances creativity. Thus multilinguals have broader overview of the world and life itself than monolinguals which intimates that multilingualism is vital in the cognitive and linguistic development of the individual.

5.2.5. Language policy promotes nation building

The research findings also indicate that the language policy is a preservation of linguistic and cultural heritage of mankind. To this effect, the promotion of multilingualism is hailed by the respondents and seen as **an essential component in nation building**, that is, with regard to unity and stability. The minds of people are imbued with a sense of belonging which curtails ethnic rivalry and sectionalism which normally retard growth and socio-economic development. In view of this, the government through the language boards and institutions should continue to enforce the promotion of multilingualism. This would be an answer to respondents who have already expressed their concern about discrimination of other languages. In general, problems pertaining to formerly marginalised and minority languages should be addressed with compassion so that they feel they are part of the greater majority. Encouraging greater use of all African languages in media, church and education will certainly incur some joy and ensure the survival of those languages.

5.2.6. Opportunities are Created If the Home Language is Used - English is a Barrier to Meaningful Participation

From the research findings, there is substantial evidence that African languages are used in domains related to ordinary conversation at home, and with friends, and colleagues and in small business enterprise. Afrikaans still features in the work environment but, of course, it has lost the privilege vested in it in the heyday of apartheid. English continues to gain territory in the work environment and business transactions. Hence, one feels that the government should enforce the implementation of multilingualism in all sectors to ensure participation by the majority of the people. According to respondents and to Webb and

Kembo-Sure (2000:7), at present it is evident that less than 25% of black population knows English well, which means less than 25% is able to use it meaningfully to participate in the economic life of the country. The other 75% of the people who cannot use English meaningfully are denied the opportunity to participate in the economic activity of the country. This intimates that English is a barrier to meaningful participation in the economy of the country by the majority of the people. However, alleging that English is a barrier does not intimate that it is the language itself that excludes people from participating but officers who institute the requirement at their workplace. It is for this reason that respondents require the government to give momentum to the implementation of the language policy by continuing to enforce linguistic diversity at workplaces and institutions.

There was also strong evidence of the use of English other than all the other languages when deliberating at political rallies and in parliament. With regard to this, it is worth noting that in the political spectrum if parliamentary debates, arguments and other deliberations are in the languages of the people, surely the 75% that does not understand English well would certainly participate in decision-making. A monolingual state prevents political participation of many of its citizens for they are not able to follow, evaluate and influence views of politicians. How can they participate if they do not speak the language that dominates their political life? If English continues to dominate then it becomes a barrier to meaningful participation in the politics of South Africa by the vast majority of the population. Using the people's languages dispels invidious judgments and, accordingly ensures unity, stability and national integration in the country. Hence, the government will have to institute or enforce a policy which gives African languages a major role in state administration, parliament and the legal system.

5.2.7. A Noble Language Policy is Viewed as Impractical

The research findings also show that people regard the language policy as a noble language policy but find the actual implementation of the language policy to be impractical. Those who concur that it can be used just underpin their arguments by a number of conditions which in essence intimate the language policy as insurmountable. Sadly, in spite

of the constitution being virtuous, respondents view that there is very little change in language policy just like in the rest of Africa which, unfortunately, intimates that the colonial legacy is a recurrent factor in the language policies of Africa. Some view the policies as geared to serve the interests of the white section of the population. However, people have to accept that implementing a new language policy is normally a very slow and painful process of development. In South Africa, like in the rest of Africa, it is a slow process because speakers of African languages themselves have reached a stage as Gilbert Ansre, a Ghanaian sociolinguist put it:

> ... in which the minds and lives of the speakers of a language are dominated by another language to the point where they believe that they can and should use only that foreign language when it comes to transactions dealing with the more advanced aspects of life such as education, philosophy, literature, governments, the administration of justice etc ... Linguistic imperialism has a subtle way of warping the minds, attitudes and aspirations of even the most noble in society and preventing him from appreciating and realising the full potentialities of the indigenous languages (Ansre 1979:12) in Skutnabb-Kangas and Phillipson (1995: 339-340).

Definitely, this scenario which is inclined to linguistic imperialism, has led to the underdevelopment of African languages which, in reality, are still viewed as inferior and as having no active function in administrative and educational domains. However, with the new progressive language policy that is accommodative, the government has to give fresh impetus to the development and promotion of the use of African languages, in particularly all fields, education, politics and development. Notwithstanding, it would certainly be unrealistic, too ambitious and wishful to opt for wholesale or large-scale use of African languages at the expense of English which features so prominently in major domains. English continues to feature prominently because a modern state, especially in Africa, requires English for its expedience and contacts with the outside world. Invariably, it should be emphasized that arguing for African languages does not mean dislodging English for English, in any case, is one of the eleven official languages of the country.

5.2.8. Language Equity Impossible to Achieve

Although the constitution has parity of esteem as one of its stipulations, equity in terms of language practice in national affairs is not possible and for one to expect it to be achieved is obviously an act of being unrealistic. According to the UNESCO Working Document (1997:1), "It is generally believed that the value, prestige and importance attached to a language are proportional to its perceived usefulness in various areas of activity." The function of a language determines its status. The document goes on to say, "... it is the combined effect of a variety of socio-economic factors and of 'linguistic ecology' that conditions and shapes the functions and status of languages in multilingual contexts." Thus, "a language that performs several functions inevitably acquires prestige and ... it gains access to new functions." In South Africa, English inevitably performs more functions than any other language and, because of that it has made further gains in status, especially, after the demise of apartheid. Because of this scenario it would be unrealistic to opt for wholesale use of African languages. A language of wider communication, English, is required for the expeditious functioning of the state. Thus, in multilingual societies what obtains is a complementarity of roles of languages. Some languages play roles other languages do not perform. These roles do not imply putting minority languages at any precarious position and major languages made to feel superior. Once minority languages are made to feel any serious disadvantage then equity ceases to exist. Equity demands that minority languages get the privilege accorded major languages, for example, cultivation through the media and use in other domains where it is reasonably. practical.

5.2.9.   Language Policy Upholds Linguistic Human Rights on Paper

The preponderance of the view, "the policy recognizes all languages" in the research findings indicates that the language policy is perceived as progressive in that it is accommodative and upholds linguistic human rights. As is already known, the policy is entrenched in the bill of rights. Linguistic human rights especially in education are vital for the maintenance of linguistic and cultural diversity and the development of languages. Language rights are important because intergenerational transmission of languages is the

most exigent factor for their maintenance. If speakers do not get the opportunity to use their languages and if children do not get the opportunity to learn their parents' language and become as proficient as their parents, the language is not going to survive (Skutnabb-Kangas, 1994:6). If a language ceases to exist the language group ceases to exist, too, for the group will not be identified by their language but the language of a dominant group which is certainly deleterious to mankind. Every language lost signifies great loss for mankind as the accumulated knowledge, wisdom and values die with those languages. Great traditions and cultures unique for thumbing drums would certainly die. Hence, a language has to continue to be learnt and be used for many language functions and domains, throughout life. This liberates speakers from linguistic dependence which deprives the growth and development of their languages. This scenario is in line with the *UNESCO Universal Declaration of Linguistic Rights* (1996) Article 3.1 which considers as intrinsic the right to use one's own language in private and public affairs. The stipulations are also in line with the Language Plan of Action for Africa which aims at, among, other things,

\#   To ensure that all languages within boundaries of Member States are recognized and accepted as a source of mutual enrichment;

\#   To ensure that African languages, by appropriate legal provision and practical promotions, assume their rightful role as the means of official communication in the public affairs of each Member State ...

South Africa has already recognized multilingualism as a norm which implies that whatever decisions and strategies are adopted and implemented in language planning are, will be and should be in accordance with these stipulations.

5.2.10. Nature and Implications of Harmonisation Misinterpreted

Harmonization of African languages into two super-ordinate languages, Nguni and Sotho,

cannot be implemented at the moment because the speakers themselves are a major constraint in that they want to maintain the status quo. To them it is definitely an insult or unacceptable as depicted by political overtones and a number of rhetorical questions raised by respondents. It is, therefore, evident that no amount of pressure can succeed in enforcing a language on people who do not either wish to learn it or do not see the significant role for it in their lives (Agnihotri 1992:53). Some scholars, too, like Du Plessis (1990) and Cluver (1990) in Alexander (1992:57) do not think harmonisation of Nguni and Sotho languages can be achieved "because these languages already differ considerably from one another". Some UNISA lecturers have dismissed the notion outright and posed the question: "How can you create a language?" This response is sheer ignorance of the fact that languages are created. Some languages that have been created are Afrikaans, Tsotsitaal and Northern Sotho, which is a conglomeration of dialects. The National Language Services which coin terminologies are, in fact, creating language on a daily basis.

However, at present there is unrelenting resistance against harmonisation such that it would be a futile exercise to pursue the subject. With the current drive towards the recognition of all the languages as separate entities, each in its own right, there is a likelihood of no concerted effort being made into fully developing written standard varieties for Nguni and Sotho languages.

However, it is evident that people misinterpret Alexander and Msimang's notion of harmonisation which, in actual fact, is a common written variety which would certainly be economically and educationally viable. However, a dialect or variety seems to evolve on its own among Nguni languages on the one hand and Sotho languages on the other. One postulates that centuries to come this may be achieved. The axiom is underpinned by the nine o'clock Setswana and Sesotho news on SABC TV 2 where two presenters read news interchangeably without repeating what the other presenter has read in his/her language. This scenario clearly insinuates mutual intelligibility among Setswana and the two Sesotho languages.

Prah (at the 2nd International Conference held at the University of Pretoria in 2002) vehemently espoused that the exponents of harmonisation "cannot wait for people who do not understand the implications of the concept, the masses should enjoy the fruits of our efforts later". Jokweni (in a personal conversation at the same conference) echoed similar sentiments. He pointed out that the exponents cannot entertain emotions and acceded that it is important at times to consider what is good for the country.

What featured frequently, too, in the research is the argument that harmonisation would not work because of the conglomeration of dialects and small language groups that seek autonomy. Of course, the validity of the claim cannot be denied because the historical account bears testimony. However, some of those languages have already been influenced by the major languages of the area resulting in re-acculturation and language shift. A language like Khelobedu, for example, has a lot in common (in terms of lexical items) with Sesotho and Setswana languages and, especially, Setswana because of the symbiotic relationship that existed before the Balobedu migrated from the North-West Province to Modjadji area in the Limpopo Province. Thus, those languages, which certainly have been influenced by the major languages, would not be a deterrent for harmonisation if it is done with the approval of the speakers of the languages concerned and with compassion. Needless to say, for small language groups to seek autonomy for their languages is not a sin because the *UNESCO 1996 Declaration of Linguistic Human Rights* Article 8.2 supports the recognition of group or community languages in its stipulation, *pe se,* that "All language communities are entitled to have at their disposal whatever means are necessary to ensure the transmission and continuity of their languages" (Skutnabb-Kangas 1998:8). It is also to the best interest of groups to avoid linguistic and cultural domination of small groups by dominant language groups.

5.2.11.   English as A powerful Force to Reckon with

In Education, English is preferred as the language of teaching and learning by most parents and, university and college students. It is generally assumed that English is inherently superior and better suited for education. Conversely, African languages are considered

inferior and less suited for education. As Kamwendo (1999:229) put it, "English is synonymous with sound education whilst education through African languages is given second class rating". It is not surprising then that South Africans, like other Africans in sub-Saharan Africa, degrade the use of local languages in education. "The kind of attitude is akin to the kind of conceptual colonialism rooted in the functions in which the languages have been involved" (Adegbija 1994:104). Le Page in Sithole (1989:24) also summarised attitudes to English in Uganda in a manner pertinent to the South African situation. He says, "provision of education in the vernacular rather than an international language (like English) arouses resentment among students and parents". To many African language speakers the advantages of using English as the language of teaching and learning outweigh the merits of employing African languages in teaching and learning. To be realistic the use of English in education, especially higher education has its own merits. There is a dire need for a language of wider communication, English, so as to be able to communicate with the rest of the world and participate effectively in influential, international and financial organisations. Indubitably, the world can survive without South Africa but South Africa cannot exist without the world.

For the world, English remains a powerful force to contend with. As Moyo (2000:152) puts it, "... English has many kinds of power ... power to rule like the colonial powers did. ....power to influence and initiate and cause change...power to free oneself from the claws of poverty, ... oppression, ignorance, homelessness and many more". Indeed, at present English is synonymous with power. It is of paramount importance in state administration or machinery. According to Bamgbose (1991:5) "A modern state requires for its proper functioning high level manpower, technology and contacts with the outside world". Thus, in spite of whatever the country does with African languages the country requires English for access to higher education, science and technology. On this premise, English becomes a matter of life and death. This concurs with the President of South Korea, Kim Sung's pronouncement, in a New Year Conference Address in 2002 when he vehemently propounded, "Learn English or face being left behind." (A keynote address to IAWE by Gill). Graddol (1997) in Gill (2002:22) emphasises that the strength of English lies in "the complex mix of the economic, technological, political and cultural factors" evident in the

major international domains of English *viz:*

1. Working language of international organisations and conferences
2. Scientific publications
3. International banking, economic affairs and trade
4. Advertising for global brands
5. Audio-visual cultural products (e.g. films, TV, popular music)
6. International tourism
7. Tertiary education
8. International safety
9. As a 'relay language' in interpretation and translation
10. International law
11. Technology transfer
12. Internet communication

(Gill, 2002:22)

According to Gill, it is for these domains that Malaysia, Japan, South Korea and China are introducing English in their schools and making it a medium of instruction for science subjects. Gill propounded that in 1999 Malaysia replaced mother tongue tuition with English in science and technology. Malaysia realised that, after years of mother tongue tuition and phasing out of English, the number that could speak English had dwindled considerably. Unfortunately, when investors came from Australia and other countries they could only communicate with Chinese and Indians who had continued to run private schools in English. What entailed is that foreigners controlled commerce and industry. The locals who could not communicate with investors controlled government departments only while the economy and technology were administered by outsiders. A painful experience, indeed, a rude awakening it was (Gill, 2002). Thus, the policy, mother tongue only, nurtured on nationalism had dire consequences or repercussions on the development of the human resource potential of the indigenous people of Malaysia. Basing on Malaysia's experiences, it is therefore, imperative that the government strikes a balance between the use of African languages and English, especially in education. This implies the

acquaintance with complementarity of functions of languages immersed with a sense of common identity as the most acme strategy in multilingual societies like South Africa.

At present African languages do not play a pivotal role in education in as much the same way as English does. It may be the wish and desire of some South Africans and proponents of mother tongue tuition, like Alexander, to use African languages in education. Unfortunately, it cannot be fulfilled at present because of crippling linguistic and sociolinguistic factors, the central ones being the attitude of parents and learners, the problem of academic register, lack of study material in African languages, the view that it is a way of compromising standards and certainly the power of English.

5.2.12. Parents' Perception as a Constraint in the use of African Languages in Education

At present the parents' perception of languages is one of the major constraints in the use of African languages in education. Hence, parents perceive English as the answer to their and their children's problems in that, at present, unquestionably, English is the gateway to success socially, politically and economically. Subsequently, many children are sacrificed as parents fail or refuse to acquaint themselves with the use of African languages in the first years of primary school. It is generally assumed that initial use of mother tongue results in regression in the acquisition of the mainstream, English. The use of African languages in teaching and learning is viewed as falling standards and depreciation in value. Parents continue to envy former whites only schools where no adequate facilities or infrastructure is provided for the teaching of African languages. Even if the language is catered for, in some of those former whites only schools, children deny the subject. It is worth mentioning, however, that the choice of school by parents should not be adjudged conclusively as blatant negative attitude of the parents towards African languages because former whites only schools are preferred for their better facilities, too.

Notwithstanding, English will continue as medium of instruction as long as parents envy it as a medium of instruction for their children. Anyway, there should not be any qualms about

the use of English for it is one of the official languages of South Africa. The choice is in line with stipulations of the constitution because the right to choose the language of learning and teaching is vested in the individual. Section 29 (2) of the constitution states that, "Everyone has the right to receive education in the official language or languages of their choice in public educational institutions where that education is reasonably practicable ...". Article 24 of the Barcelona Declaration of Linguistic Rights of 1996 also bestows on "All communities ... the right to decide to what extent their language is to be present, as a vehicular language and as an object of study, at all levels of education within their territory: preschool, primary, secondary, technical and vocational, university and adult education" (Bambgose 2000:18). What this insinuates is that the use of one's own language (an African language) in education is not obligatory. With this laisez-faire coupled with the attitude dilemma in Africa, at present, it is insurmountable to introduce African languages in education from preschool to university levels.

Black parents appear to be too ambitious and overzealous for their children' sake whom they want to see proficient in English from the early stages of development. As alluded to earlier, children are sacrificed in the name of English. Mother tongue tuition would benefit African language speakers and governments in that it is cost effective. As Bokamba in Webb (1996:149) observed empirically, the dropout figure in schools negatively correlated with the amount of expenditure in education. Bamgbose (2000:66) also contends that, "if African languages are not used in Education, and the result is high dropout rates and half-baked products emerging from the system, it is obvious the money spent is wasted." Governments lose exorbitant sums of money on education as long as they continue to educate people who are condemned at the end of the day. In this way the country incurs the heaviest waste of human resources. With respect to this, Nyati-Ramahobo (1999:626) poses rhetorical questions, " ... how are jobs localised when people are excluded from tertiary education? How is skilled labour to be achieved?" Definitely, it will not be achieved and the resultant effect is dependence on technical assistance from the West who come and occupy decision making bodies and dictate to locals. In a way, this is an immoral and an unjust strategy to safeguard and legitimise continued dependence on foreign expertise. The use of African languages or active bilingualism in education is to the advantage of the

African child. According to Pattanayak (1981:55) "Instruction in the mother tongue helps in the search for self-affirmation, establishes group identity, satisfies the national urge for cultural footedness and avoids fanaticism ... (helps) in concept formation, critical thinking, creativity and in imparting social values". In her studies on bilingualism, MacNamara in Chiwome (1992:248) established that learning takes longer in a foreign language than in the mother tongue which means mother tongue tuition ensures linguistic accessibility to studied material, helps to develop critical thinking and to foster effective communication. Vawda (1999:557) also noted that, "Investments in local language education are justified on the basis of greater student participation in schooling as well as improved student learning and achievement". According to Vawda (ibid) "... research indicates that mother tongue instruction results in improved learning achievements, low dropout rates, better adjustments to school, cultural preservation, and self-confidence in children". Thus, students are likely to grasp learning concepts much easier if educational materials are written in local languages and concepts taught through mother tongue. Success through the mother tongue is guaranteed or well-nigh certain. In view of this, it is worth mentioning that Education through the medium of English and the ability to speak the language does not guarantee success socially, economically and politically as most parents think. Is it not a fact that many Blacks who are proficient in English are roaming the streets today? Where is that guarantee? However, despite the above-mentioned advantages, demand for learning and teaching in African languages is limited.

5.2.13. Underdevelopment of African Languages as a Limitation

The underdevelopment of African languages is viewed as an acute shortcoming that jeopardises the use of African languages in major domains. In view of this, the unrecognised status of African languages during the apartheid era is their number one enemy. What it means is that they received limited financial support for their development. Although language boards existed the human resource was underdeveloped and ill equipped in terms of computers and the technical know-how. On the other hand, the use of English and Afrikaans as official languages during the heyday of apartheid meant that the two languages received strong government financial support for their development. This

is one reason why the birth and growth of Afrikaans is reckoned as a success story in South Africa and on the continent and why Afrikaans plays a major role in administrative and educational domains. For a renaissance of African languages to emerge as a success story, too, the newly established language boards should employ and send people for staff development and should link with international language boards for financial support and expertise. With determination they can succeed. Why not? Afrikaans is now a success story.

The development of African languages is necessary and inevitable and this would certainly bring the marginalised people on board in the economic mainstream and national affairs. However, all stakeholders, that is, speakers of the languages, language boards and interested parties should be aggressive in their endeavour to develop African languages. As alluded to in chapter four, aggression is a paramount ingredient in development without which the language policy is tantamount to being lip service.

5.2.14. Perceiving the Politics of Terminology with a Different Eye

Some feel African languages should be confined to domains related to cultural activities and the teaching of African languages themselves as subjects because of the politics of terminology that has been discussed briefly above. African languages are viewed as not adequate as languages of tuition for other subjects because of linguistic deficiency. On the one hand, the constraint of terminology is real. On the other hand, the whole question of terminology is part of the overall cultural, economic and social subjugation of Developing Nations by the West. Lack of terminology or academic register is advanced as the rationale for depriving African languages their rightful role in educational domain at all levels. Terminology is promulgated as an attribute of European languages only and yet, all languages have specialised terminology pertinent to social, economic and scientific domains. Does English have terminologies for all African artefacts? English also needs elaboration in this regard but who says anything about its shortcoming?

There are strategies the language boards will implement, *inter alia*. compiling vocabulary

from the villages, coinage and borrowing. Loanwords can fill terminology gaps. It is an open secret that the renaissance of English was a result of the introduction of many Latin and French words into English which intimates that no language is self-sufficient as to shun adoption. Indeed, a living language's dynamism lies in its receptivity and susceptibility to new linguistic elements and its inability to subscribe to linguistic purism. Every language has the capacity to grow in consistency with technological developments. New objects come with new terminology and when the material object goes so does the lexical item. Thus, a language is like a snake that sloughs for another. A language is also like a river which picks what it can along the way and drops for another. Hence, most languages grew through appropriation, transformation and integration of terminologies (ATIT) or vocabulary of other languages to the extent that even the source language speaker and the recipient may not be able to detect after a long time. This is the case with peasant farmers and the informal sector who managed to "scientificate" their languages through appropriation, transformation and integration of terminologies from Afrikaans and English. Examples are:

inkampani	company
injini	engine
ikhaphureyitha	carburrettor
igiyabokisi	gearbox

Thus, appropriation, transformation and integration of terminologies (ATIT) is the most operational strategy that does not create a rift between language and the nation. As alluded to earlier, in chapter 4, language develops through use. The more social domains the language is used in, the more developed it would be. When teaching is carried out in the medium of African languages a challenge is posed for teachers to develop the appropriate metalanguage. More so, Teacher training in African languages and availability of suitable metalanguage means a widening of the base of possible textbook writers. (Bamgbose (1991:100 -101)

5.2.15. Learning Material as a Constraint

Learning material in African languages is one of the major constraints in the use of African languages in the teaching of all subjects other than African languages. If a subject is to be taught in a chosen medium of instruction it means teaching material should be readily available in that language. From material development perspective, there is little that the previous and the present departments of education have done as a preparatory measure to champion the use of African languages in the educational domain at all levels. The underdevelopment of African languages is now used as a reason for not using African languages in higher education for science and technology. The fact that efforts to develop and use African languages have met with resistance and the road is full of stumbling blocks implies that English will remain the language of teaching and learning for as long as material is not developed in those languages. Undoubtedly, English boasts all the literature that there is and is readily available and is cheap to buy. However, lack of teaching material in education should not mean waiting until language development has been achieved. Language development itself should not be a primordial condition for the use of African languages for such a development is supposed to be an ongoing process. The development of study material can be achieved through translating existing material from English to African languages. What this entails is the need for vibrant translation service with a high budget. This would be in line with article 25 of the Draft Universal Declaration of Linguistic Rights, handed over to UNESCO in June 1996 which states that,

> All language communities are entitled to have at their disposal all the human and material resources necessary to ensure that their language is present to the extent they desire at all levels of education within their territory; properly trained teachers, appropriate teaching methods, textbooks, finance, buildings and equipment, traditional and innovative technology (Skutnabb-Kangas, 1998:8).

As a way forward, at certain levels of education, educators can embark on tuition in African languages using the existing study material as practised at some universities.

5.2.16. Fear of the Unknown / Uncertainty

In spite of the fact that materials are available in African languages the policy will not be implemented at present because of resistance from vested interests, hardened attitudes or corrosion of minds and **fear of the unknown**, that is, the question of uncertainty. Due to these factors, very few people believe there is a way out. According to Okombo (1999:591):

> Although the more tangible obstacles such as the complexity of the language situation and the general lack of resources and materials are usually easier to display, the most formidable obstacle is in our minds.

Addressing the question of attitudes, Okombo cites Bamgbose (1996:14) who emphasised that,

> ... irrespective of recommendations of experts and resolutions of seminars and conferences, what happens on the ground in each country depends on the determination of the country concerned to embark on an innovation and its commitment to the ideals of democratisation and authenticity of education through the use of indigenous languages.

Indeed, no matter the degree of commitment of the government and language planners the implementation of a language policy depends to a large extent on the people's perception or attitude to a language. What appears to be crucial in policy formulation is the language's acceptability. The language the people have an aversion to will never be easy to use or learn through it. Definitely attitudes are difficult to change. Triandis (1971) quoted by Okombo (1999:591) observed that, "We have the technical knowledge to change the world, but we do not have the attitudes that bring the change."

The hardened attitudes that have existed time immemorial have had damaging consequences on the image of African languages. People can develop the necessary material but without the people's will and right attitude nothing can be achieved. Everyone knows that no army general can win a war if his soldiers are unwilling to fight, worse still, if they are so scared that they would rather be under the leadership of their adversary than

die. Now, since the underlying principle or clause in the Bill of Rights

guarantees the right of the individual to choose the language of learning there is a

likelihood of no concerted effort being made into promoting the use of African languages

as languages of learning and teaching because of their status. It is certainly difficult to

introduce languages as languages of learning and teaching which have a low status and

a low economic value and which have limited use. Thus, currently there is a widespread

mistrust of mother tongue tuition.

Fear of the unknown grips people due to dearth of tangible evidence of people who

have qualified through an African language. People are afraid to venture into the unknown.

It is like hunters who fear to venture into unknown hunting grounds which they perceive could

be infested with lions. Another perception is that products of such school system would not

be able to translate information learnt into English or any other language at international

fora. Undoubtedly, people fret over nothing. An interesting situation that pertains to

Zimbabwe is its thousands of teachers who studied their science courses in Spanish in

Cuba and today teach those science subjects in English, producing some of the best

results in examinations. This illustrates that facts learnt in any language can be translated

into English or any other language at international fora and in the classroom.

The question to ask is, 'What can Africans in sub-Saharan Africa do to change the minds

of the people and subsequently the current linguistic situation?' What the present situation

intimates is a need for a language awareness campaign and a new African consciousness

with a global perspective. The new African consciousness which integrates language and

content should be injected into our schools to replace the primordial "telescopic

philanthropy" type of approach existing currently in schools throughout Africa.

5.2.17.   Government Fears / Uncertainty as a Constraint

Government or lack of political will was cited as one of the major constraints in the

implementation of the language policy, that is with regard to the use of African languages.

This is in view of the fact that "language policy decisions are actually political decisions that

can only be taken by national governments" (recognized in the Harare Declaration 1997:138). Suitable examples to illustrate this are the African National Congress (ANC) government's decision to recognize and promote eleven languages and the National Party government that promoted Afrikaans when they came to power. It was only after the National Party had assumed power that Afrikaans was recognized, promoted in status and imposed in schools. Surely, the role the government plays cannot be underestimated. It is the government's duty to provide tools for language planning, that is, research and implementation. It remains the duty of the government to protect and preserve diversity of its citizens. The government's role is even greater when it comes to the implementation of language policy as the state is ultimately responsible for education and social upliftment of its people. It is also the government that provides financial resources for the implementation of the language policy. Finally, the use of mother tongue for learning and teaching largely depends on the government's readiness to actually implement it. However, the government appears not technically ready in terms of production of teaching material and training of teachers to teach in African languages.

The government itself may also be willing to risk but understandably resist large-scale changes when there is some uncertainty about the costs and benefits of adopting a policy. Most governments would certainly argue that they are not technically ready in terms of production of teaching material and training teachers. Studies by Vawda (1999 :560) have shown that production of local language materials is more expensive than that of non-local language materials. In addition to this, there is no guarantee that the material published will be used by teachers and pupils especially in cases where the material is not of high quality. Such materials may undermine the desired goals and the expected benefits on learning achievements of pupils. Promoting local language material includes salaries of specialised teams among others lexicographers, authors and vibrant translators, which means the whole innovation is costly and cumbersome.

Governments may not be able to institute mother-tongue in African languages due to economic considerations. These are not economic considerations pertaining to expenses incurred in production of teaching material but economic gains through use of English as

a medium of instruction. Economic gains in terms of foreign currency earnings necessitate the promotion of a labour force proficient in a language of wider communication. People proficient in languages spoken internationally can be recruited to work abroad and can earn foreign currency for their country (Chiswick 1998 in Vawda 1999:560). Hence, wholesale use of African languages in education and other domains remains undesirable for many governments and countries.

According to Prah (1999:552) the problem is the ruling elite. Prah contends that:

> It is unlikely that the political will necessary for adoption of African languages in education and social life will be easily forth-coming. There is need for a counter-elite to replace the dominance of values and basis of the post colonial elite. Strategies are needed to produce a new elite capable and determined to reverse the practices of the past.

Indeed, the elite favour education in English, the language that they have acquired and were educated in. With respect to this, Africa needs to refrain from colonial subjugation and entertain a new African consciousness with a global perspective. The new kind of consciousness which integrates language and content should be injected into schools so as to replace the primordial "telescopic philanthropy" type of approach existing currently in schools. In other words Africa needs a reawakening which gives impetus to a resurgence of African languages so that they carry philosophical and scientific discourse to unprecedented heights. Integration of African languages and content is the most acme strategy in charting a revolutionary warpath to dazzling technological heights and modern efficiency. If Israel resurrected a dead language Hebrew and made it a language of efficiency, why should Africa fail to "scientificate" its living languages using English or French for that matter?

The new consciousness referred to above is one with a global perspective - global in the sense that Africa needs to link with other nations for trade and participation in international affairs. This intimates the need for an international language for such purposes. Indeed, the

world can survive without South Africa but South Africa cannot exist without the world. Apart from the demands of globalization it is worth noting that the lingo-cultural gap that exists now between African languages and European languages may be disastrous for reducing dependency in Africa's experience. The gap is a stumbling block or an impediment to Africa's maturation of Africa's scientific genius. Due to this dilemma the strategy is **to implement mother tongue instruction coupled with high quality teaching of English and use of English for instruction when situations demand it.** Such an approach preserves and promotes African languages and at the same time preserves the people's interests on the global stage or the global village that is often referred to in economic circles.

5.2.18. A Long Term Plan: A Prerequisite in the Use of African Languages in Education

The use of African languages in education and professions such as medicine, nursing counselling and law is the most powerful strategy for empowerment of languages. Employment of African languages in education ensures rejuvenation and revitalisation of African languages and enhances their image when people realise that concepts and subjects formerly reserved for English can be taught in African languages too. The use of African languages in education is cost effective in that it minimizes failure rates. Pedagogically, concepts are understood readily as students do not grapple with the language of learning and teaching but concepts only. However, the use of African languages in education requires **a long-term programme**. The languages require a process where they are revitalised to suit educational needs. As Xola of PRAESA put it, the development of African languages is not going to be easy. He contends that it is a process that will take years. From the respondents' general views, language policies and all declarations on language issues or linguistic rights are difficult to implement, especially, in education and to a certain extent in economic affairs. Arguably, there is not a single major business that functions today without English in South Africa and other Anglophone countries and without French in Francophone countries. Thus, the use of indigenous languages in education and the economic mainstream is insurmountable considering the

fact that it is now more than fifty years today since the UNESCO meeting of experts espoused mother tongue education from early years of primary school and beyond but, unfortunately, nothing has been achieved at primary school in some countries and beyond primary school in the majority of African countries. It is also about seventeen years since the dynamic 1986 OAU Language Plan of Action for Africa was adopted; it is six years after the Harare Declaration (1997); it is seven years after the Barcelona Declaration of linguistic rights (1996) and it is three years after the Asmara Declaration (2000) and many conferences on the renaissance of African languages but nothing tangible appears to emerge out of these even in relatively monolingual countries. This intimates odds against their success as media of instruction and for business transactions for it is definitely difficult for African languages to displace English which is in fact gaining territory.

5.2.19. Projects as a Practical Approach to Pave the Way

Practically, the way forward would be to establish institutes like the Project for Alternative Education In South Africa (PRAESA) run by Neville Alexander that experiments on bilingual education. Such institutes would introduce mother tongue tuition in some schools on a provisional basis for pilot studies. Undoubtedly, initially teachers in those schools would resist, too. The success of such institutes would serve as demonstration models for those who resist adopting the use of African languages because of uncertain consequences. Their successes would carry substantially more force than coercion in overcoming resistance. Persuasion alone is not enough to influence behaviour. Accelerating change through exhortation is more often than not achieved at a cost.

5.2.20. Psychological Approaches as a Strategy

As alluded to earlier, attitudes are very difficult to change. Thus, to change attitudes one strategy is to apply psychological approaches. The preconditions for change are created

by increasing people's awareness and knowledge of the would be new policy in education. People need to be provided with information about the purpose of the new practices, their relative advantages, and how adopting them is going to affect their lives. Political, personal and media presentations serve to inform and arouse interest in new practices (Bandura 1986:160). Failure to disseminate information to particular desires and cognitive capabilities of the people impedes a diffusion program at the outset (Rogers and A Adhikarya 1979 in Bandura 1986:160). In this regard language awareness campaigns through the media and political rallies are crucial in changing attitudes of parents and the elite.

According to Bandura (1986:161) "The process of change from normal practice, which departs markedly from tradition, usually undergoes a history of initial rejection, followed by qualified acceptance, and eventually, widespread adoption with reinterpretation in terms of customary beliefs". Indeed, uncertainty manifests itself in times of adventure and overwhelming acceptance entail once people become abreast of the new practice or innovation.

5.2.21. Empowering African People Economically and Technologically as an Essential Ingredient in the Promotion of African Languages

As stated by interviewee no 1, "if you own nothing your language is nowhere". Undoubtedly, if a group of people is empowered enough to own something in terms of big companies and industries that produce market products that sell, the group can fund the development of its languages and can also buy airtime for the cultivation of the languages on television. Needless to say, it was after making inroads into the economy that the Afrikaners developed their language, which as alluded to earlier, is a success story on the continent. They were also able to buy more airtime for the cultivation of their language on television thereby forcing restructuring at SABC TV in 2000. The Tsonga and Venda who had nothing in terms of big companies could not buy airtime for the cultivation of their languages in the same year. They had to contend with the few programmes that the government secured for them as a token to show the government's support for the promotion of

multilingualism.

It is also important to mention that languages get continuity through market products that sell. If a group of people has big companies or industries it can make products and give them names in its own language. In that way a language becomes distinct or visible. For example, in the case of the Japanese, names such as Panasonic, Toyota, Sony, and so on, are distinct or visible on their products. This visibility of a language is an essential component in according status to a language. In addition to this, manuals that are prepared first and foremost in their own language then in languages of competing markets are essential elements in promoting a language. In this way, global pride is communicated through a distinct and visible language.

Another simple example, in terms of products, is the drama, *Muvhango*, a product of the Venda, a minority language group, that was not well known in some parts of South Africa. *Muvhango* made history by making the language, Tshivenda, distinct or visible within the borders of South Africa. Thus, products ensure the continuity of languages and make languages official in essence. Needless to say, now everyone views Tshivenda as a national language of South Africa.

Empowering African communities economically and technologically, therefore, helps them take control of their destiny. In that way they become innovative. From innovation their world view is projected through the medium of their language. After creating they think of what to call their objects in their world view. Obviously, they cannot name them in a foreign language. By naming objects in their language, it means, the language will not die. This can make African languages live and be official in essence.

5.2.22. Media: The Television remains a Thorny Issue

Mass media, televison, especially, remains a thorny issue, especially among minority

language groups who rarely or hardly have anything to cheer about in their languages on television screens. It is worth noting that the television is supposed to reach all viewers for it serves as an effective instrument for human development. It teaches people competencies, enlarges their perspectives, and inform them on matters that affect their lives. The television has the potential to inform, to teach and transact activities. In South Africa such goals cannot be achieved because programmes in African languages are far fewer than expected in a country with about thirty eight million speakers of African languages and among them is a big number that is illiterate. Some of the programmes are repeated, which certainly cannot be expected to be vibrant and meritorious. Minority language groups watch 30 minutes news fortnightly which from the responses to the questionnaire is an insult. However, these are programmes which are subsidised by the government as a token to highlight the government's commitment to the promotion of multilingualism in the country. Arguably, minority language groups are fragmented audiences that do not constitute a large enough market to support specialised interest. Albeit, as a Public Broadcaster the SABC has the duty to make provision for diversity of interest including language. It should give the people what they should get. Unfortunately, as Lukas Oosthuizen pointed out in a personal conversation, the SABC does not appear to be a true Public Broadcaster but a Hybrid. A real public broadcaster would not source income from advertisements but from licence fees. Now that the SABC derives about 50% of its revenue from advertisements it is the economic interest that influences content on television, which implies that programmes in African languages and especially minority languages will remain restricted.

Afrikaans is one language that continues to benefit in the sense that Afrikaners who were not disadvantaged financially have enough money to buy more airtime. As alluded to earlier, English enjoys the lion's share because of the affluent viewers and private business that contribute advertisement revenue that sustains programmes. Accordingly and unfortunately, African languages will remain in the periphery because without making inroads into the mainstream of the economy it would be difficult for disadvantaged communities to fund for their programmes. In addition to this, material in the form of dramas and films were characterised from the outset by social bias and, indigenous themes,

dramas and film makers have always come from dominant language groups. As a solution incentives in the form of tax cuts should be instituted to companies that contribute to the cultivation and growth of African languages, especially, minority languages on television. This would certainly constitute social responsibility on the part of companies. However, implementation of such a strategy would depend to a large extent on the government's commitment and government priorities. Minority language groups themselves should also produce mellifluous and vibrant dramas and films for the main channels like the Tshivenda drama, *Muvhango,* which took the country by storm. And, the SABC itself should act as a true public broadcaster and rely heavily on licence fees and serve the interests of all the viewers.

The fact that respondents were disgruntled by the foreign content and English that dominates SABC TV intimates that the SABC TV does not contribute much to the cultivation and development of African languages. Pseudo or derogatory names such as 'American BC and British BC' for SABC TV depict the intensity of SABC's indifference to the empowerment of African languages through the television. What happens in broad and general is that most countries adopt television systems without having adequate production resources to supply their own programming needs. Most third-world countries import more than half of local television programs. As Bandura (1986:166) noted, it is much cheaper to air foreign reruns than create programs domestically. There are not many rich nations who can afford the huge capital investment and expense of operating broadcasting systems (Bandura, ibid). Consequently people throughout the world, European, Asian, African and South American are viewing primarily the American television serials of yesteryear. Accordingly, some respondents' demand for more SABC channels is futile for SABC appears to have limited financial resources to fill channels with programmes.

It is important to note at this point that the SABC policy itself is based on home language as well as shared languages. The guiding principle of the policy specifies proportionality in the allocation of airtime. What this entails is that languages that command bigger groups would be allotted more airtime. The contention is that English is understood by the majority of the population, hence, most of the airtime is devoted to English. Unfortunately, in some

quotas the argument does not hold water because isiZulu is also widely understood in South Africa. It is a lingua franca for 70% of the population (Pansalb Annual Report of June 1999). Added to this, there is mutual intelligibility among four languages, Siswati, isiNdebele, isiXhosa and isiZulu which are referred to as Nguni languages which makes isiZulu a viable option. To argue like this does not imply that the programmes in African languages are popular with many African language speakers. As alluded to earlier, in Table 42, question (d), many demand programmes in African languages but at the same time they shun them. This concurs with Bandura's (1986:166) observation that viewers, (especially the educated) may cherish their national culture, but they are reluctant to part with too many of imported televison programmes, what has been dubbed "media imperialism" which entails a two way transaction in which American exporters of programmes happily supply desirous foreign customers. Shunning programmes intimates a problem of elitism where consciousness on programmes with local content is conceptualised with the illiterate in mind. Undoubtedly, this is a prescriptive approach adopted by the elite. The elite see the problem not for themselves and their children but for the lower class. This is lack of consciousness among the elite who seem not to realise they are losing identity or disenfranchising themselves. This kind of elitist behaviour should be viewed as a condescending approach to life and, it is unfortunate that it affects people subconsciously.

Efficiency in broadcasting in African languages manifests on radio. All the major African languages are cultivated through the radio which features news, drama, folklore, novels, poetry talk shows and music. The radio is a much cheaper and adaptable medium than television, in that radio time can be essentially filled with talk and music whereas televised productions are costly and unwieldily. What needs to be done on radio is to minimise western type of music on some of the channels. Stations that broadcast in English like Radio Metro, Kaya FM and Radio 702 which feature talk shows should allow speakers of African languages to participate in their languages where the host is an African language speaker. A case in point is the 6pm Metro Sport talk show that is so popular with soccer fanatics. Unfortunately, the illiterate who have that relentless affinity for soccer are left out in the cold. To this effect, a language is a barrier to their participation.

5.2.23. Parting Shot: 'Our Minds Remain Our Number One Enemy'

In spite of all the advantages of using mother tongue and broadcasting in African languages, despite political will, production of reading material, establishing effective language boards, 'our minds remain our number one enemy'. Definitely, the use of African languages, especially in education, is likely to continue to meet with resistance for quite some time in the whole of Africa. Hence, there is a need to warn people that the popularity of English in Africa may be to its detriment for it may lead to its death centuries to come. The argument is underpinned by Latin that was popular and dominant during the heyday of the Roman Empire but today it is a dead language. Commenting on a paper that claimed that English was there to stay in South Africa, (at The Fifth Annual Meeting of The International Association of World Englishes in 1998), Professor Alatis of Georgetown University warned that people make a wrong assumption that English will continue to dominate even after two hundred years. This may not be the case because there are global events that can change the state of affairs. Needless to say, some languages like Spanish are also gaining territory, especially, in South America. Thus, as stated earlier, Africa needs a new kind of consciousness with a global perspective that integrates the African language and content and helps to counter the "telescopic philanthropy" type of approach that exists currently. In other words, Africa needs a reawakening that induces member states to give an impetus to the resurgence of African languages so that they carry philosophical and scientific discourse to unprecedented heights. This concurs with Gandhiji's views (in Acharlu 1975:54 quoted by De Wet and Niemann 1999:96) which educate and advise that:

> Our language is a reflection of ourselves and if it is said that our languages are too poor to express the best thought then the sooner we are wiped out of existence the better for us. You enrich your language only if you love and respect it. To develop a language and stick to the false notion that English alone can express our thoughts or transmit them, then there is no doubt that we shall continue to be slaves for all time. With a little effort we can impart the knowledge of even the new science

through the mother tongue. It is only our mental slavery that makes us feel that we cannot do without English.

Thus, Africa needs to liberate itself from the vestiges of the colonial legacy and recognize the vitality and equality of African languages in the practical sense of the word. Unfortunately, at present it is a lost battle. It is impractical. The painful part of it is that people have lost the vigour they had prior to independence. Notwithstanding, at least in South Africa the government has taken the first step in making African languages "official" and "National" in the statute book. What is needed is concerted effort or **everyone's** contribution to achieve that status in practice. Indeed, a battle is not won by one soldier. Everyone also knows that no army general can win a war if his soldiers are unwilling to fight, worse still, if they are so scared that they would rather be under the leadership of their adversary than die.

CHAPTER 6

6.0.   **CONCLUSIONS**

6.1. Introduction

The purpose of this study was to establish the attitudes of the public towards the New language policy of South Africa, that is, how they realize the language policy and its implications. The research was carried out at the most opportune moment in that it was executed long after the Department of Arts, Culture, Science and Technology had carried out its year long language awareness campaign. In this regard responses were based on a subject that the respondents were aware of.

6.2. Different Outlooks on Policy and its Implementation

Basically, the study was an exploration of the different patterns that exist within the country, that is, with regard to general language use, the multilingual nature of the country and its implications. Language preference in various domains was assessed. The study also strove to establish the reasons for the choice of languages in different domains. Concern over the dominants and threat of English on African languages and the implementation of the new language policy were assessed. The research also tried to establish the popularity of the controversial subject, harmonization of Sotho and Nguni languages.

6.3. Methodology

For this study a variety of methods were used to gather data. The study involved extensive reading on the topic and on the framework on which the research was grounded, that is, language planning. The research study involved visits to different regions of the country so as to establish the patterns and trends in different regions. Interviews were conducted and responses were transcribed. In addition to the oral interviews a questionnaire was administered in all provinces. The data gathered was analysed and described systematically so as to establish what transpires from the respondents' point of view and their current expectations and wish.

Observation technique was also employed but not extensively or on a large scale.

6.4. Analysis and Observation

The analysis of the research findings confirm the triumphant nature of English. English dominates in almost every sphere of the people's lives. Consequently, the respondents have a high regard of it as a tool in communication and a passport to better life.

It is observed that many view the language policy as a noble one but consider its application as impractical. For some, it is increasingly difficult for an African language to do all there is to be done by English, a language of wider communication. Thus, in South Africa where a language of wider communication, English, exists, it is increasingly difficult to speak of 'language equity' or parity. At present it is appropriate to speak abstractly of language equity as an ideology in the mind rather than a reality to which actual usage or implementation may conform. This is because English continues to dominate. English has established itself in domains such as administration, education, jurisdiction and other government controlled and non-governmental institutions to the extent that it has become a major impediment, a brake or constraint on the promotion and implementation of the language policy. Perceptions have not changed. People still view English as a language with far-reaching socio-economic implications for nations. This political and economic dominance that some people advance will disadvantage the African languages, especially when the control or potential for economic improvement continues to be associated with one language, English, rather than with other languages. In this regard, the nation should acquaint itself with a dynamic complementarity of roles and functions of languages. Where it is impractical to go in one language one resorts to another. English, the triumphant language, will play a major role where it is impractical to use all the other languages. Thus, all other languages remain viable options where it is reasonably practical.

6.5. Recommendations

The following recommendations may be adopted and implemented when and where it is

reasonably practical.

1. A down to top approach in language policy formulation is perceived as the most effective and ethical strategy. Such a policy adheres to democratic principles and this dispels the view that the policy is an imposition from above which leaves stakeholders with no opportunity to contribute to the policy. A consultative approach involving all stakeholders who include the speakers of the languages, the government and language practitioners should be adopted on matters related to language issues.

2. Language awareness campaign should be launched in different forms such as, books or pamphlets with information on mother tongue instruction and significance of multilingualism in nation building, multilingualism in the classroom, bilingual education and career guidance on the usefulness of specialising in particular languages. Government departments could organise literary competitions on the advantages of using African languages and the value of these languages and present best scripts on radio and television. The government and other stakeholders should draw all segments of the population on facts such as that unity and progress cannot be achieved through the use of one language, that people can only be empowered through their languages, that it is a myth that African languages cannot be developed to function like English as was the case with Swahili (spoken in East Africa) and Afrikaans (one of the official languages of South Africa). This language awareness campaign allows people to make balanced and informed decisions in language policies implemented in different government departments and the private sector.

3. Mother tongue and or bilingual education with a high quality teaching of English should be the norm in schools so as to ensure high pass rates and school products that can compete nationally and internationally. The autonomy of African languages as medium of instruction is realised in the teaching of African languages in schools. The use of African languages needs to be supported by research in the

development of terminology and standardisation. In addition to this, there is a need for research on the use of African languages for operational efficiency in industry, media, commerce, essential services and community work. Without appropriate research guidance, valuable efforts can be in vain.

4. People in leadership positions should address rallies and meetings in the audience's languages where it is reasonably practical in order to show commitment to the policy. Leaders should be sensitive to language situations of the home environments and communities.

5   There is a need for vibrant translation service and it requires a high budget because a language requires a long process of development whereby its vocabulary is 'modernized' to suit educational and administrative needs.

6   All transactions should be done in the language of the client to ensure mutual understanding of contents of contracts before the client signs.

7. There is a need for language revalorisation: This raises both the functional usefulness and the prestige or social status of African languages. African languages should be instituted as working languages in industry and other domains. Transaction should be done in the language of the client to ensure mutual understanding of contents of contracts. Documents such as bus tickets, cheques, invoices, bank statements and certificates should be printed in the local people's language.

8. The government should devise means of empowerment and participation for disadvantaged groups such as minorities and children who are forced to learn through non-mother tongue instruction from the first year of primary school.

9. Universities should teach African languages using African languages as media of instruction. Universities teaching African languages in English are impeding and

retarding the development of African languages. What transpires at the university is likely to impact on what goes on in schools and in the community.

10. People should demand that their children receive education through African languages if they want it that way.

11. African languages should be a requirement for entry into universities and colleges in as much as the same way as English is today. Instituting or enforcing English and not other languages as a the only requirement undermines the development of millions of talented African people who master all subjects except for English. The requirement of certain level of attainment of English to access tertiary education and jobs creates the heaviest waste of human resources.

12. There is need for human resource development to handle the use of African languages at all levels of education and to handle multilingualism in the classroom. This includes, among other things, teacher training and in service training of existing teachers. Programmes to train teachers to teach in African languages should be designed

13. Literacy should be in the mother tongue as research has shown that the acquisition both of oral fluency and literacy in the second language is most successful when there is a strong foundation in the first. In other words, children are best able to learn a second language if they are well grounded cognitively in their first. In addition, teaching and learning is more effective if instruction is in the child's own language.

14. There should be incentives for the learning of African languages. African languages can be made compulsory languages. For promotion in the public service, African languages should be a requirement. Effective acquisition of two or more languages should be the norm in order to enhance multilingualism.

15. Establish national and regional institutes that develop all languages. Financial and

human resources should be made available nationally and regionally so as to cater for the promotion of all languages. Operating from those institutes, research programmes should be designed and undertaken with speakers of the languages. The country should create an infrastructure for a huge services development

16. A bottom-up harmonisation should be complemented by the top-down approach starting with the harmonisation of orthographies followed by terminologies. Apart from harmonisation, orthographies of all languages should be standardised so that it becomes easy to learn another language. An example is the sound /tshi-/ of isiZulu which is spelt as /xi-/ in Xitsonga. If the orthography is standardised it would certainly be easy to learn other African languages.

17. The onus is also on speakers of languages to promote their languages. Languages should be used in all domains, in interviews, courts, offices, schools, churches and hospitals when it is reasonably practical.

18. SABC TV should focus on the diversity of interest including language. Listening to their own language and music and the voices of people they know opens up unimagined horizons and the feeling that they are not worthless. In addition to this, broadcasting in particular hours contributes in some measure to maintaining African languages.

19. Incentives in the form of tax cuts should be instituted to companies that contribute to the cultivation and growth of African languages, especially, minority languages on television.

20. Newspapers should be established in order to cultivate African languages.

21. Television presenters should treat African languages with respect by avoiding unnecessary willy-nilly mixing of languages..

22. Educate people about the dynamic complementarity of roles of languages and instill in speakers a sense of common identity.