The constitution and various policies, including the language-in-education policy for public schools, commit the South African state to the development and promotion of all official languages in the country.

In practice, however, research shows that English is still favoured above other languages. In the Western Cape, Afrikaans and Xhosa are being marginalised as languages of teaching and learning, while the dominance of English is being consolidated via the schooling system. Few, if any, public schools have formulated an appropriate school language policy that is based on the additive model.

This paper examines the language attitudes and perceptions of a local primary school community in the Western Cape as it seeks to arrive at a language policy for the school that is congruent with the official national policy of additive bilingualism.

Community perception of change in a school's language policy

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Community perceptions of change in their school language policy

Daryl Braam

Contents

List of Acronyms used

CLA: Critical Language Awareness
ESL: English as a Second Language
LANGTAG: Language Plan Task Group
LiEP: Language in Education Policy
LoLT: Language of learning and teaching
LP: Language planning
MTBBE: Mother-tongue-based bilingual education
MTE: Mother-tongue education
PANSALB: Pan South African Language Board
SGB: School governing body
SMT: School management team
SLP: School language policy
WCED: Western Cape Education Department

Abstract

The South African constitution, the South African Schools' Act and the Language in Education Policy (LiEP) each advocate the development and promotion of all official languages in the country. LiEP also gives a clear directive for additive bilingualism whereby the home language of learners should be encouraged as the foundation for learning additional languages. This policy is clearly aligned with the constitutional provisions for promoting parity of esteem between all languages.

In practice, however, research such as that conducted by the Report of the Presidents Education Initiative Project (1999) and Bowerman (2000), shows that English is still favoured above other languages in South Africa. In the Western Cape, Afrikaans and Xhosa are being marginalised as Languages of Teaching and Learning (Plüddemann 2004:34) while the dominance of English is being consolidated via the schooling system. Few, if any, public schools have formulated an appropriate school language policy that is based on the additive model.

Haugen claims, "acceptance is the hallmark of good language planning and policy implementation" (cited in Mesthrie 2002:398). Thus, as a first stage in determining a school language policy, I examine the attitudes and perceptions of a local school community. My thesis reports on the perceptions of teachers and parents at a primary school in the Western Cape, during the process of determining a school language policy in accordance with the LiEP's policy of additive bilingualism.

Opsomming

Die Suid-Afrikaanse grondwet, die Suid-Afrikaanse Skolewet en die Taalbeleid vir die Onderwys (TO) ondersteun almal die ontwikkeling en promosie van al die amptelike landstale. Die TO toon duidelik sy voorkeur vir toevoegende tweetaligheid waarin die leerder se moedertaal bevorder behoort te word as die fondament vir die aanleer van addisionele tale. Dié beleid stem duidelik ooreen met die grondwetlike voorsiening om gelykheid van aansien tussen al die amptelike tale te bevorder.

In die praktyk toon navorsing deur die President's Education Initiative (1999) en deur Bowerman (2000) egter dat Engels steeds hoër aansien as ander tale in Suid-Afrika geniet. In die Wes-Kaap word Afrikaans en isiXhosa gemarginaliseer as onderrig- en leertale (Plüddemann 2004:34), terwyl die dominante posisie van Engels deur die skolestelsel gekonsolideer word. Min, indien enige openbare skole het tot dusver 'n gepasde skooltalebeleid wat op die toevoegende model gegrond is, geformuleer.

Haugen beweer dat "aanvaarding die waarmerk is van goeie taalbeplanning en beleidsimplementering" (aangehaal in Mesthrie 2002:398). Dus, as 'n eerste stap in die bepaling van 'n skooltalebeleid ondersoek ek die houdings en persepsies van 'n plaaslike skoolgemeenskap. My tesis lewer berig oor die persepsies van onderwysers en ouers in 'n primêre skool in die Wes-Kaap wat besig is met die proses om 'n skooltalebeleid te bepaal wat met die TO se beleid van toevoegende tweetaligheid ooreenstem.

Isishwankatelo

Umgaqo-siseko woMzantsi Afrika, uMthetho weZikolo eMzantsi Afrika kunye noMgaqo-nkqubo wokusetyenziswa kweelwimi kwezemfundo zonke zixhasa ukuphuhliswa nokukhuthazwa kwazo zonke iilwimi zaseburhulumenteni apha elizweni lethu. Umgaqo-nkqubo wokusetyenziswa kweelimi kwezemfundo ukwanika nomgaqo ocacileyo malunga ne-*additive bilingualism,* apho ulwimi lweenkobe lwabafundi luthi lukhuthazwe njengolwimi ekunokusekelwa phezu kwalo xa kufundiswa iillwimi ezizezinye. Lo mgaqo-nkqubo uhambelana ngqo nemimiselo yomgaqo-siseko ekhuthaza ukulingana phakathi kwazo zonke iilwimi.

Kodwa xa kukhangelwa eyona nto iqhubekayo, ngokokutsho kukaBowerman (2000) uphando olufana nolo luqhutywe kwi*Presidents Education Initiative Project* lubonisa ukuba isiNgesi sisakhethwa ngaphaya kwezinye iilwimi eMzantsi Afrika. KwiPhondo leNtshona Koloni, isiBhulu nesiXhosa zikhethelwa bucala, azisetyenziswa njengeelwimi zokufunda nokufundisa, ngeli xesha ukuvelela kwesiNgesi ngaphaya kwezi lwimi kukwaqiniswa nayinkqubo yokufundisa esetyenziswa ezikolweni. Zimbalwa izikolo zikarhulumente, ukuba ngaba zikhona, eziqulunqe umgaqo-nkqubo ofanelekileyo wokusetyenziswa kweelwimi esikolweni eso, ongumgaqo-nkqubo osekelwe kumfuziselo wokufundiswa kwezinye iilwimi ngokuthi kusekelwe phezu kolwimi lweenkobe lwabafundi.

UHaugen yena uthi ukwamkeleka ngumqondiso olungileyo wokufezekiswa koqulunqo nomgaqo-nkqubo wolwimi (kuMesthrie 2002:398). Ngoko ke, njengenqanaba lokuqala ekumiseleni umgaqo-nkqubo wokusetyenziswa kweelwimi esikolweni, ndikhangela izimvo neembono zabantu kwingingqi esimi kuyo isikolo. Uphando lwam lunika ingxelo malunga neembono zootitshala kunye nabazali kwisikolo samabanga aphantsi eNtshona Koloni ngexesha bekumiselwa umgaqo-nkqubo wokusetyenziswa kweelwimi esikolweni, ngokuhambisana nomgaqo-nkqubo wokusetyenziswa kweelwimi kwezemfundo, umgaqo oxhasa ukufundiswa kwezinye iilwimi ngokusekelwe kulwimi lweenkobe lwabafundi.

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Introduction

This study is located within the field of Applied Language Studies (ALS), an interdisciplinary field of enquiry that seeks to apply language-based knowledge to problem sites (Young 2000). ALS incorporates a range of applications and work, and this study will draw on language planning processes that have resulted in education and language policies. School language policy is such a site where, despite the pronouncements of the LiEP, hardly any public schools have formulated appropriate language policies that are aligned with the principles and values that this document articulates. Default policies, or policies by virtue of practice, have become the norm at most public schools. Research into the determination of school language policy would be useful in informing implementation strategies and promoting the constitutional language provision that exists to advance the use and elevate the status of all official languages.

Using an action research approach, this study investigates perceptions of language policy implementation. Survey methods are used in order to represent the relational analyses of attitudes towards the unfolding school language policy that is informed by the LiEP.

An underlying objective here is to raise the status of Afrikaans and Xhosa. This could result in changing the functional allocation of Afrikaans and possibly introducing Xhosa at a later stage. For these reasons this study can be considered as a language planning (LP) activity. The following definitions of LP illustrate this:

> Language planning is, in fact, a part of, or the factual realisation of, language policy. (Appel and Muysken 1987: 47)

> Language planning [entails] deliberate efforts to influence the behaviour of others with respect to the acquisition, structure, or functional allocation of their language codes. (Cooper 1989:183)

Appel and Muysken's definition states the correlation between LP and school language policy (SLP) explicitly. By contrast, Cooper's definition makes the correlation implicitly, showing a link between 'functional allocation' on the one hand and medium of learning and teaching and the languages of external and internal communication of a school, on the other.

The research question

Despite the progressive rhetoric on language policy, articulated in the constitution and in LiEP, school communities are still facing the dilemma of language provisioning for speakers of different languages or language dialects. The Western Cape Education Department (WCED) has not provided institutional support in this regard, and this effectively perpetuates obsolete language policies and associated perceptions amongst school communities. As a result, School Governing Bodies (SGBs) and management teams face the challenge of changing the perceptions of teachers, parents and learners, so that there is acceptance of an appropriate language policy.

This is policy-orientated research that uses data derived from survey and action research methods. My research question investigates the perceptions of teachers, learners and parents of the implications of a change in their school language policy. The concept of perception in this thesis is similar to that of attitude;

> languages are not liked or disliked in a vacuum but rather liked or disliked as symbolic of peoples' perceptions of values, of ideologies of behaviour. (Fishman 1989: 251)

Determining these perceptions is integral to the overall policy realisation process which entails firstly, raising language awareness at the school so that teachers, parents and learners become reflective about the role of language in education and secondly, advocating the acceptance of all languages as vital learning resources.

Public perceptions of language in South Africa

In the post apartheid era, from 1994 onwards, English has come to be virtually the only language of government, in spite of its eleven-language policy. The practice of using mainly English has reduced the status of Afrikaans in this domain, although it continues to be used in police stations, courtrooms, municipalities and elsewhere.

> Language [policy] cannot be understood apart from its social context or apart from the history which produced that context. (Cooper 1987:183).

Tollefson (1991:2) explains in detail the interrelationship between language and power and how this is filtered through the state apparatus and eventually affects every aspect of life.

> language is built into the economic and social structure of society so deeply that its fundamental importance seems only natural.

He goes on to state that,

> language policy is one mechanism available to the state for maintaining its power through groups which control state policy. The policy of requiring everyone to learn one language is widely seen as a common-sense solution to the communication problems of multilingual societies. The assumption that learning the dominant language will solve economic and social inequality is an example of an ideology (1991:10).

In South Africa, the seed of this ideology was planted in the colonial period and it was preserved by the governments of the past century so that their position of power and privilege was maintained. More detailed

historical analyses, within this paradigm, are found in the works of Alexander (1989) and Heugh (2000).

The hegemony of English is consolidated by virtue of its widespread use in areas such as government, media, education and state services. A paradox exists here because English is undoubtedly the most prestigious and desired language but only used as a home language by 9% of the population. The perceived 'superiority' of English has spawned divisive language attitudes and has stigmatised groups who speak languages other than standard English – this attitudinal factor, is one of the major challenges facing the implementation of a mother-tongue-based bilingual education system. Research conducted by Plüddemann et al (2004) shows that the use and status of Afrikaans is on the decline at primary schools in the Western Cape.

This highlights the paradigm shift[1] that has to be made by the primary implementers of school language policy – from multilingualism as a problem to multilingualism as a resource. This paradigm shift entails debunking the notion that children should be assimilated into an English dominant school environment, irrespective of their home language promoting the idea that children's languages are rich and necessary resources for learning, to be used maximally in their learning environments.

The Research Problem and its Context
Political climate and its impact on educational practice

The post-apartheid South African Constitution, Act 108 of 1996 aimed at promoting the ideals of democracy and human rights. Arising from this were numerous policy documents that sought to operationalise the goals of freedom of speech and opportunities to participate freely in society. The leaders of the African National Congress (ANC) took on the responsibility to develop national unity and to bring about political reconciliation. Political goals determined educational priorities and the provisions of the language clauses of the constitution led to the adoption of a national language-in-education policy on the 14 July 1997. This policy aimed at providing a framework to enable schools to formulate appropriate school language policies.

In the Western Cape, as in other provinces, however, other areas in education received priority, such as the phasing in and reviewing of curriculum 2005, the training of teachers in outcomes based education (OBE) approaches, the implementation of whole-school development and other policies relating to school governance. Language policy developments, although crucial to teaching and learning at schools, did not receive the same kind of systemic intervention as these other areas. Evidence in a

language survey of 43 primary schools in the Western Cape shows that 91% of these schools were reportedly aware of the LiEP, but only 19% attempted to bring about changes to their SLP (Plüddemann et al. 2002). This indicates the minimal attention that SLP received in this period of transforming education. The result was that in most schools, OBE training was unlikely to attain its outcome of effecting positive educational change, because curriculum reform needed to be accompanied by a language policy making provision for the curriculum content to be mediated meaningfully.[2] As the political leadership did not consider the language policy as a priority, the education ministry and subsequent education departments at regional levels failed to formulate and initiate implementation strategies for promoting the concept of additive bilingualism[3] at school level. *De facto* school language policies thus undermined the LiEP framework, as political leadership remained mute about their significance at a critical stage in improving the quality of teaching and learning.

After the 1994 general elections the language profiles of many schools changed, particularly those in close proximity to the central business district and main roads that intersect linguistically diverse suburbs. In the last decade, two basic tendencies have been revealed in these schools. Firstly, there is a language mismatch where Xhosa-speaking learners have migrated into previously English and Afrikaans mainstream schools, with the most debilitating consequence being that the language proficiencies of the educators at these schools do not match those of the learners. Secondly, there has been a strong drive for English as a language of learning and teaching (LoLT), at the expense of learners' home languages – Afrikaans and Xhosa have been marginalised at these schools.[4] This has resulted in grave challenges within the schools, as the pedagogic and social implications have been seemingly insurmountable without intervention at a district level.

The hegemony of English

The hegemony of English continues to have an enormous influence on the policies that schools are currently implementing. Its prestige and status are being perpetuated via mass media, for example, 50% of SABC's programmes are imported from the United Kingdom and the United States (Kamwangamalu 2001). English is also the language of science and technology, of job opportunities, of cross-border and international communications and business of the state (Kamwangamalu 2001).

Parents generally respond by attempting to anglicise their children and by insisting that they learn English at school. This seems especially desirable for parents who have been locked out of the upper echelons of society and

who perceive the acquisition of English as being the stepping-stone to a life of upward social mobility.

For this study, I have identified a public primary school that is willing to pioneer a project of determining a school language policy that will raise the community's awareness of the hegemony of English at a time that presents many challenges. The most glaring of these challenges is that of negative language attitudes towards Afrikaans, a language that has been diminished in its perceived status by its speech community. This phenomenon of negative attitudes towards standard Afrikaans can, inter alia, be attributed to its political symbolism, in that it represents the 'language of the oppressor' in the Apartheid era. In the 1960s especially, it became the language of government and bureaucracy under the National Party and even threatened to marginalize English during the 1970s. Hence, English became the 'language of liberation' (Alexander 1996), and this outlook has impacted negatively in a post-apartheid period that seeks to acknowledge and promote a multilingual rather than a 'bilingual' society (Afrikaans and English as the only official languages). Insights gained from an Applied Language Studies (ALS) perspective need to inform the implementation strategies of multilingual policies if the residual traces of apartheid are to be eradicated.

The following clauses implicitly or explicitly provide the enabling policy framework for the enacting of progressive multilingual practices at schools.

Legislative Framework

The South African Constitution, Act 108 of 1996, makes provision for the promotion of multilingualism in the following sections:

- 6.4 All official languages must enjoy parity of esteem and be treated equitably;

- 29(2) 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.

  The constitution is based on the Bill of Rights, which lays the foundation for the development of democratic values and as such, it forms the basis for the language legislation and a policy framework to be derived.

- The National Education Policy Act (Act 27 of 1996) authorises the minister to determine national education policy in conjunction with the provision of the constitution, and in accordance with certain principles. Two of the directive principles are:

  4a (v) the right of every student to be instructed in the language of his or her choice where this is reasonably practicable;

  4a (viii) the right of every person to use the language and participate in the cultural life of his or her choice within an education institution.

- The South African Schools Act (Act 84 of 1996) states that the governing body of a school should determine the language policy of a school, subject to the National Education Policy Act and the Constitution and any applicable provincial law.

- The Western Cape Language Act: To provide for the establishment of a Western Cape Language Committee; to regulate and monitor the use of the three official languages Afrikaans, English and Xhosa by the provincial government of the Western Cape; to give increasing effect to the equal status of these languages; to elevate the status and advance the use of those indigenous languages of the Western Cape whose status and use have been historically diminished; and to provide for matters connected thereto.

Policy Framework

- The LANGTAG Report is the result of a task commissioned by Minister Ngubane in 1995, to address the growing tendency towards unilingualism in a multilingual South Africa, and lack of tolerance of language diversity. A language task group was formed to set out a National Language Plan that would seek to achieve that:

  all South Africans should have access to all spheres of South African society by developing and maintaining a level of spoken and written language which is appropriate for a range of contexts in the official language(s) of their choice (DACST, 1996: iii).

- The Language-in-Education Policy (1997) "should be seen as part of a continuous process by which policy for education is being developed as part of a national plan" (DoE 1997:1). One of its aims is to pursue the language policy most supportive of conceptual growth amongst learners, and hence to "establish additive multilingualism as an approach to language in education" (DoE 1997:2).

- The Revised National Curriculum (DoE, 2001) follows an additive approach to the promotion of multilingualism and states explicitly that learners home language should be used for learning and teaching wherever possible.

- The Draft Implementation Plan: National Language Framework (DACST, 2003) is to ensure that the Language Policy Framework has structures, mechanisms and timeframes for its implementation. The National Language Policy Framework is the culmination of the LANGTAG process that began in 1995.

- The Draft Language Policy in the Primary Schools of the Western Cape, 2002 recommends the following:

Attitudes and Perceptions: To embark upon an immediate, intensive and continuous programme to raise awareness on the motivation for, and benefits of, mother-tongue-based bilingual education specifically, and also additive multilingualism.

To achieve its objectives the programme needs to be multi-pronged and multi-layered, and should reach all stakeholders in all communities (DoE, 2002: 2-3).

Effects of the legislative and policy frameworks

Heugh argues that the "discriminatory policy of the former apartheid government continues to be practised in schools" (2000:3), and she explains how certain arguments are put forth by government to divert attention from implementing a language policy that is based on mother-tongue education, as advocated in the above-mentioned policy and legal framework. This is confirmed by the work of a Praesa team who conducted research into the problems and possibilities in multilingual classrooms in the Western Cape, and who describe their context as "both educators and learners who are virtually incommunicado in their relations with each other" (Plüddemann et al 2000:4).

On a broader and more grassroots level of consultation about the implementation of LiEP, it was determined by a Western Cape Language Survey, that out of a sample of 43 Western Cape primary schools, only 8 schools reportedly changed their SLP so that it fell in line with the provisions of LiEP (Plüddemann et al. 2002). Other evidence that the language policy and legislation have remained a 'dead letter' in schools and in education at large, is offered by Heugh (2002), Plüddemann (2002) and De Klerk (2002).

The inertia of government, manifest in its failure to support and drive the formulation and implementation of a school language policy, is one of the causes of high school-failure and drop-out rates, which in turn, hampers the potential of these school-goers to contribute to the economic, social and political advancement of our society. This is an educational dilemma that is further exacerbated by the perception among school communities, that learning through English, instead of Afrikaans or Xhosa, will provide access to a successful life (see October 2002: 42-78).

Literature Review and Theoretical Framework

In this study I gathered base-line data for the establishment of an appropriate school language policy that is based on the value of language diversity and on the principle of additive bilingualism as specified in the LiEP (1997).

The site of study is a primary school with the following characteristics:

- The school is promoting English as the legitimate language and Afrikaans is stigmatised
- There is no school language policy, apart from the *de facto* one, that drifts towards English-only.

Given this context, I focus on the following features as a theoretical basis:

a. Language-as-a-resource paradigm, for reshaping attitudes about language and language groups (cf. Ruiz 1984),

b. LP as a developmental approach in determining a school language policy,

c. Additive bilingualism as a theoretical concept that is derived from the language-as-a-resource paradigm and that provides direction for the policy-making process,

d. Language perceptions as an important criterion in determining school language policy,

e. Critical Language Awareness (CLA) as a way of fostering critical awareness of the role language plays in the context of power relations (cf. Kaschula 1995).

These theoretical features are discussed below, with reference to relevant literature.

Language-as-a-resource paradigm

"The languages of a nation are its natural resources on the same level as its petroleum, minerals, and other natural resources" (Chumbow 1987:22).

Language policy, as formulated in the National Constitution of 1996, the LANGTAG Report and the LiEP, assume a particular paradigm; namely, that South Africa is characterised by having a diversity of languages, which are a resource that should be developed like any other economic resource.

The South African constitution of 1996 advocates the recognition of language-as-a-resource:

Recognising the historically diminished use and status of the indigenous languages of our people, the state must take practical and positive measures

to elevate the status and advance the use of these languages (Constitution 1996, Act 108).

The Department of Arts, Culture, Science and Technology's (DACST) vision statement for promoting multilingualism is outlined in its corporate goal of supporting "the linguistic diversity of our country as a resource for empowering all South Africans to participate in their country's social, political and economic life fully" (DACST 1966:i).

These documents also encourage the protection of the language rights of citizens in terms of the distinction between the orientations of 'language-as-a-right' and language-as-a-resource (Ruiz 1984). The former is passive compared to the proactive stance of the resource paradigm, that requires no lobbying for protection, but seeks to provide language services that will enhance the status of dominated languages. All these documents are consistent with the resource orientation that (at face value) reinforces the establishment of a democratic society.

Language Planning

Cooper defines LP as "deliberate efforts to influence the behaviour of others with respect to the acquisition, structure or functional allocation of their language codes" (1989:183). Incorporated in this definition are three strands of planning:

- Acquisition planning in respect of languages that are used for learning and teaching at the schools;
- Corpus planning that involves the modernization and elaboration of the structure of a language so that it can cope with the developments of technology and science (among other things); and
- Status planning that seeks to change the functional allocation of a language.

Language planning is a phenomenon that traditionally goes as far back as the Greek and Roman Empires when deliberate efforts were made to establish Greek and Latin as symbols of power and prestige. Similarly, when Lord Charles Somerset issued a proclamation that English was to be the only official language in 1822, English and Scottish teachers were imported (Haarhoff 1943) to entrench it as a language of dominance and power. A more recent example of language planning is the Afrikaans Movement in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, which can be traced back to the *Genootskap van Regte Afrikaners* (The Fellowship for True Afrikaners), founded in 1875, and to the *Zuid-Afrikaanse Akademie vir Taal, Letteren en Kuns* (The South African Academy for Language Literature and the Arts), founded in 1902. These movements embarked on a range of language planning activities, such as terminology development, expanding Afrikaans

literature and elevating its status and intellectual base so that it could be used to unite the Afrikaners politically. These movements are examples of what Alexander (1992) describes as 'language planning from below', as opposed to the general pattern of government elites imposing a language policy on people.

One of the most significant LP tasks in South Africa was undertaken in 1995, after a Language Plan Task Group was established to advise the Minister of Arts, Culture, Science and Technology on language matters, and to devise a national language plan[5]. It arose from the need to address the intolerance of language diversity and the growing 'tendency towards unilingualism in South Africa' (LANGTAG 1996:1).

It subsequently set out to develop a plan that would, inter alia, seek to achieve the goal of all South Africans having access to learning languages other than their mother-tongue. In my section on 'Language in Education', a recommendation is made that the importance of additive multilingual education be promoted at institutional and public levels and especially among publishers. This would entail active participation of parents, teachers and learners at school level, as such intervention would challenge the post-apartheid trend and popular belief that English immersion leads to a brighter future for young children.

Cooper's (1989) explanation of LP is that of incorporating decision-making, a feature central to social and educational change. This change involves, among other things, addressing the language perceptions that inhibit multilingual awareness, and practice that is necessary to realise the intentions of the national language plan, LiEP and mother-tongue-based bilingual education.

LP involves clear decisions, involving the entire school community. Such decisions about LoLT have many social, economic and political ramifications. Cooper (1989) discusses this dimension of the study as an example of educational status-planning. In it, he notes that determining the media of instruction for school systems is, perhaps, the status-planning decision that is most frequently made and the one most often considered by educationists and by students of language planning.

Additive bilingualism

Additive bilingualism is described by Luckett as, "the gaining of competence in a second language while the first language is maintained" (1995:75). This is the concept that encapsulates the essence of the LiEP, which implicitly advocates mother-tongue education. It is derived from a psycholinguistic theory that has been developed mainly by Cummins (in Baker 1996) and it postulates that a child's, second language competence is partly dependent on the level of competence already achieved in the first

language. The more developed the first language, the easier it will be to develop the second language. Cummins distinguishes between basic interpersonal communicative skills (BICS) and cognitive/academic language proficiency (CALP)[6].

MacSwan and Rolstadt (2001) present an alternative to Cummin's theory, which they term 'second language instructional competence' (SLIC). SLIC denotes the grade-level competence of learners in understanding sufficient English (as a second language), to enable them to learn content in a range of learning areas. These authors argue that, "bilingual instruction allows them to keep up academically while they take time needed to master English" (2001). Both Cummin's and MacSwan and Rolstadt's theories provide insights for language planners and language policy-makers about the cardinal importance of developing the mother-tongues of learners for their educational advancement.

The concept of additive bilingualism has been central to the rhetoric in policy documents such as LiEP (1997), which has its origins in the National Constitution of 1996. These policy directives advocated additive bilingualism aiming at:

- promoting and developing all official languages
- promoting multilingualism
- establishing additive multilingualism as an approach to language in education. (DOE 1997)

The LiEP also states that an additive approach to bilingualism is to be seen as the normal orientation of our language-in-education policy (DOE 1997:1). The additive approach to bilingualism is based on the underlying principle that the home language of the learner is maintained while access to effective acquisition of additional languages is encouraged.

An important contribution to the South African debate was made in the book, *Multilingual Education for South Africa*, (Heugh et al. 1995). It makes an attempt to persuade readers that multilingual education works. The book came about as a response to teachers becoming increasingly aware of the need to meet the challenges in classrooms comprising speakers of different languages. It provides invaluable insights to the orientation of language diversity as a resource that can be used to the benefit of learners. It explains the educational value as articulated in Cummins' theses: "that as a rule, multilingual persons are better equipped cognitively than monolingual persons as they have to grapple with metalinguistic dimensions of language learning" (Alexander, in Heugh et al.1995:38). It also describes these learners as developing cognitive flexibility and benefiting from its associated achievements at school.

The importance of language perceptions in determining school language policy

A number of research projects have drawn correlations between learning in the mother-tongue and scholastic attainment, and between policy and practice. For example, Bamgbose (1984) reports on a six year project in Nigeria that demonstrates the benefits of mother-tongue based education. In this project, after a systemic evaluation, researchers established that learners who learnt in their mother-tongue (Yoruba), "performed better than all the other groups in all the tests on science, social and cultural studies and mathematics" (Bamgbose 1984:92). Furthermore, the evaluation states that:

the superior performance of the experimental groups could not be due to teacher effect nor to curriculum materials; and the likely reason for the achievement of the experimental groups was the use of Yoruba as a medium of Instruction (Bamgbose 1984:92).

A local and more recent study reports on an investigation into language policy and practice at four primary schools in four Eastern Cape Districts by Probyn et al. (2002). This research set out to investigate the constraining and enabling factors of language policy in these selected schools, with the intention of drawing up language policies for the schools that could meet the requirements of the national LiEP. A participatory research approach was used, which sought to bring together the knowledge of the school community and the researchers. The findings arising from the data-gathering were reported to the SGB and the teachers for use as a basis in their discussions and decision-making regarding their SLP's.

Probyn et al.'s (2002) findings confirmed the need for schools to be supported in their structuring of appropriate school language policies. All of the schools were adapting to changing language conditions at their schools. One of the schools (the only well-resourced suburban one), had an official language policy that was formulated without being in accordance with the LiEP, as it advocated English mainly. These researchers also found that the socio-economic context of the school plays a significant role in their language policy choice and they explain, "Parents are poor, uneducated, often unemployed … Parents in these schools see English as a way to 'put bread on the table', a way out of the poverty trap" (2002:41). They found a prevailing perception that using English as a LoLT is the solution to breaking out of the shackles of poverty. This study highlighted

gaps between the political imperatives at policy-formation level and the socio-economic imperatives on the ground the concept of additive bilingualism that guided policy formation and perceptions on the ground; between

the desire for access to English and the capacity to support English, between
the desire for proficiency in English and the actual lack of proficiency
(Probyn et al, 2002:42)

It recommends that School Governing Bodies (SGB's) be mobilised in
formulating a school language policy that is guided by the theory and
context to develop an appropriate policy.

Interestingly, the category 'perceptions' was a unit of analysis in this
study, which confirms the description of public perception in the previous
chapter of the dominance of English, despite a sizeable Afrikaans and
Xhosa constituency. However, a proportion of learners reportedly expressed
a desire for Xhosa as a LoLT in spite of the overwhelming dominance of
English.

A two-part article by De Klerk (2002), reporting on a study on
language issues in Grahamstown, focussed on the role that parents and
SGBs have in the use of mother-tongue as a medium of teaching and
learning at schools. Like the afore-mentioned study, it identifies gaps
between policy goals and on-the-ground practice, and examines this
issue within the context of the declared need for democracy and consul-
tation with respective stakeholders in the school community. Once
again, the hegemony of English is highlighted, with the report noting
that English is the preferred language for teaching and learning, while
Xhosa is accepted for its pragmatic and symbolic value to be used for
communication in their Xhosa-speaking community, without active
support for it as a LoLT. Most parents make a financial investment in
having their children learn English and become "English" as "this
represents the wealthier and better educated sector of society and they
[decide] on the linguistic and cultural assimilation for their children
despite the loss that it [entails]" (de Klerk. 2002).

The PANSALB survey that was conducted to "cover a wide range of
patterns, issues and problems arising from language interaction in South
Africa" (MarkData 2000:1), is one of the few surveys that allows for
alternative responses from its respondents, as opposed to merely eliciting
the dominant ideology of English-only or -mainly. The following results are
relevant to this research:

more than 40% of the people in South Africa often do not, or seldom
understand what is being communicated in English' and schools are among
the prominent institutions that fail to accommodate the language preferences
of South Africans (MarkData 2000:189).

These findings point to the urgency of realising policies in schools that
could offer children a better chance of acquiring bilingual proficiency. My
study will also attempt to find alternatives to the dominant ideology by
eliciting responses of a qualitative and alternative kind.

Critical Language Awareness (CLA)

Kaschula (1995:113) describes CLA as, 'A recent approach in language
teaching which focuses on the ways in which language is used to dominate,
manipulate, or subjugate others.' CLA is thus an approach that could
influence people's perceptions of language. Among other factors, this
approach needs to take cognisance of the arguments that contribute to the
unilingual tendency in the schooling system.

Bureaucratic resistance to MTBBE relies on a series of arguments to
retain the status quo of promoting English at the expense of Afrikaans and
Xhosa in the Western Cape:

• Mother-tongue policies have been implemented in few countries in
Africa.

• Education in a local language will limit upward mobility in the wider world.

• The use of many languages in the education system is costly.

Heugh (2000) debunks these arguments as claims about public percep-
tions that have become mythologised and she expounds on the falsity of a
few of the several myths about language and education in South Africa. She
refers to at least five significant research projects that have been conducted
inside South Africa and abroad. These provide evidence that the maintenance
of the mother-tongue of learners is a prerequisite for the effective learning of
another language, or for developing bilingualism. She asserts that:

There have been numerous independent commissions of enquiry into the
state of education in Africa the last century. Each of these has identified the
importance of early mother-tongue literacy and home language maintenance
for successful education in the specific countries concerned in the investiga-
tions (2000:12).

In view of this trend towards English-as-a-second-language (ESL) based
education, the Western Cape's political will to implement mother-tongue-
based language policy will be put to the test. For there can be no doubt that
the thrust of ESL goes directly against the beliefs of some of the most
reputed educationists. Wolff captures the gist of the potential value of
realising additive bilingualism in our schools:

even before African children have mastered adequately and creatively two or
three more languages, and if this linguistic competence testifies to more
elaborate and complex patterns of the broader communicative competence of
these children as opposed to monolingual children, then anyone who bears
responsibility in planning and deciding on the linguistic aspects of educa-
tional policies would… be well advised to view multilingualism as an
important resource to be utilised as widely as possible since this draws on
the children's prior learning experience, their established abilities and relates
directly to their linguistic, social and, cultural environments (in Heugh
2000:27).

Research Design

The study of language policy is an inherently ideologically-charged activity. Among other things, it involves consideration of development and transformation. The data collection process of this study was intended to stimulate critical reflection on how perceptions are possibly perpetuating practices and attitudes that are counter-democratic, and to observe the impact of this process on the participating school community.

Research method

This study reports on collaborative research, where I acted as a co-participant with the learners, parents and teachers in the process of self-reflection on their understanding of language practice and policy at the school. My research is conceived of belonging to that form of educational research that "places control over the process of educational reform in the hands of those involved in the action" (Kemmis 1983:48). Surveys formed an important dimension of this study and were employed to collect information from the school population in order to illuminate the perceptions that are crucial to the process of policy formulation.

Research paradigm

Two theoretical premises informed this intervention:

- the conceptualisation of 'action research', which Cohen et al. describe as,

  feedback of findings being translated into modifications, adjustments, directional changes, redefinitions, as necessary, to bring about long-lasting benefit to the school community … only … achieved if teachers change their **perceptions and** behaviour (1984:174-179). [My emphasis added]

- Cummins' (2001:175-190) framework for intervention (empowering minority students) and the central pursuit of redefining personal and institutional power relations.

  The central tenet of the framework is that students from dominated societal groups are

  'empowered' or 'disabled' as a direct result of their interactions with educators in the schools. These interactions are mediated by the implicit or explicit role definitions that educators assume in relation to four institutional characteristics of schools. These characteristics reflect the extent to which (1) minority students' language and culture are incorporated into the school program; (2) minority community participation is encouraged as an integral component of children's education; (3) the pedagogy promotes intrinsic motivation on the part of students to use language actively in order to generate their own knowledge; and (4) professionals involved in assessment

become advocates for students rather than legitimising the location of the 'problem' in the students (Cummins 2001:178).

In accordance with this critical paradigm, Meerkotter asserts that

There is also no doubt in my mind that there are few social institutions which lend themselves so well to an emancipatory or liberatory approach to teaching and learning than the school (2003:37).

This can also be described as 'use-inspired research' (National Research Council 1999:46), because it attempts to illuminate how LP from below can be used as an approach in determining educational practice that may be empowering for school communities. Empowerment in its broader meaning in this study 'involved understanding the causes of powerlessness, recognising systemic oppressive forces and acting collectively to change the conditions of life' (Scott et al. 1999:31).

Research aims & objectives

The aim of this research was to investigate teachers, learners and parents perceptions on language at their schools and to establish how changes in these perceptions could lead to changes in their school language policy and practices. I also investigated two related questions:

- What model of bilingualism would be appropriate to implement at this school?
- What democratic process is required to formulate the language policy?

As the process of determining a school language policy falls under the rubric of language planning, this study incorporates status planning and thereby endeavours to elevate the status and use of Afrikaans which is undergoing a decline at this public primary school.

My hypothesis was that after gathering data on the perceptions of the role-players, providing them with feedback on this and reflecting critically on it, the perceptions of Afrikaans would change. This could lead to a change in its status at the school and eventually to the formulation of an appropriate school language policy.

My key objectives were:

- to embark on a participatory democratic form of educational research for educational improvement;
- to obtain data on the perceptions of the target population and to examine the relationships between perceptions and language use in the domains of home, school and broader community;
- to gather data on perceptions and uses as a basis for a self-reflection process by reporting these findings to the respective role-players in the school so that the empirical data could inform the process of participa-

tion, reflection and self-evaluation on the part of learners, teachers and parents.

The combination of these methods provides both qualitative and quantitative information. The survey itself provided a broad overview of a representative sample, while the action research-orientated component provided a high measure of reliability.[7] It also provided an opportunity for empowerment of participants in the research, to exert change on the unequal status of English and Afrikaans at their school.

Target population and sample

The school language policy realisation[8] process is considered as one means of building democracy, through developing participatory procedures in this school community. Crucial to this developmental process are the perceptions of the target population, described here.

The school in question is located within a mixed working class and lower middle class community that is English and Afrikaans speaking and is located in a Cape Flats suburb. Many of the parents of this school community, in the Cape Flats, battle economically and display minimal interest in stimulating their children socially and educationally. Most of the parents labour for most of the day in factories and nearby fruit and vegetable farms and are afflicted by the resultant problems of drug and alcohol abuse. Unemployment is a common dilemma many parents face, exacerbating existing unfavourable socio-economic conditions. The more affluent parents from the immediate environment, reportedly, send their children to better-resourced schools outside this suburb.

The school used to be an exclusively Afrikaans medium, but in 1990 switched to an English and Afrikaans parallel medium and since then there has been a growing demand for English as the LoLT. According to the teachers and to the principal, there is an insistence on the part of parents that their Afrikaans-speaking children should be admitted to English classes. Most parents want English as the LoLT for their children, as an English-medium education symbolizes a bright future and promises economic success for their children.

A representative sample of learners, parents and teachers formed the sample whose findings I then extended to include the target population.

Data collection instruments

Three instruments were used to elicit the data, namely: a survey questionnaire, an interview schedule and a classroom observation schedule.[9]

In the interviews, three domains of language use were used to reflect on the responses of the group of teachers as these categories emerged spontaneously in the interview;

- the classroom,
- the broader community and
- the language policy.

The feedback on learners given by teachers referred mainly to attitudes, performance and pedagogic challenges that they encountered.

The survey questionnaire was the main instrument for data collection and the interviews and observations served to triangulate information by gathering more in-depth responses and by making on-site observations that could provide a practical view of language practice at home and in the school.

The survey questionnaire was the tool used to collect data on the language perceptions of the sample group and this information, in conjunction with the interviews and classroom observations enhanced the validity and reliability of the study because useful inferences could be made about the effect of language perceptions on school language policy. The question of who had previous experience teaching in Afrikaans was used to determine teachers' ability to teach bilingually, because of the need to address the drift towards English and the subsequent declining status of Afrikaans.

The questionnaire was formulated in English and Afrikaans, as these are the home languages of both parents and teachers. It was in multiple choice format in order to give the respondents options to choose from. Although it was slightly adapted for learners, teachers and parents, the content was similar. Thus, concurrent validity could be attained since the evidence in the respective questionnaires could be correlated. In the design, I made use of Van der Avoird's, et al. (2001) set of indicators, describing perceptions of language:

- Language monopoly: the extent to which the language/s is used at home or at school,
- Language proficiency: the extent to which the language/s is understood, both in spoken and written form,
- Language choice: the extent to which the language/s is used in interaction with the family members, friends and colleagues at work,
- Language dominance: the extent to which parents and teachers speak a language/s best and most often,
- Language preference: the extent to which parents and teachers prefer to speak the language/s.

The indicators are derived from the concept of language vitality an ethnolinguistic term that measures the vitality of language in a group of people from a particular context (2001:10).

Sampling

The questionnaire was administered to a 10% sample of parents (n=30), who were selected randomly from each of the 15 classes. Each teacher handed a questionnaire to two of the parents in her/his class after I made a random selection. This was done to eliminate possible bias and to ensure that parents are represented across all grades.

There were 16 teachers, including the principal, all of whom completed an adapted questionnaire as their numbers made it very practical to administer and analyse a 100% sample.[10]

A sample of learners from both language streams completed a similar questionnaire and these learners were from two class groups in the senior phase.

The data was processed as soon as the questionnaires were returned and the Excel application was used for this purpose. My data provides for both quantitative and qualitative analysis, and is represented here as a combination of Figures and narratives.

Validity threat

The survey questionnaire is central to this study because valid and reliable responses are contingent on the comprehensibility and appropriateness of the questions. In order to eliminate the possible threat of an unstable instrument, precaution was taken to ensure that the formulation of the questions was unambiguous and clear, the questionnaire was trialed at another school to ensure that it was clear and comprehensible for children of primary school age. Their classroom was chosen as a comfortable and safe location, in which they could respond and the instrument was administered in the absence of their teacher so that they felt a sense of privacy about their responses. There were a few requests for clarification about the questions on the questionnaire and these were clarified by myself when they arose.

Secondary research instruments

Classroom observations and interviews focused on more in-depth aspects of language attitudes and use at school and in the community. Focus group interviews elicited perceptions of current policies versus changed policies and provided validation follow-up on the findings in the categories of language dominance, preference and attitude in the survey.

A focus group of five teachers from different phase groups and two groups of six parents from the respective language streams were interviewed. The interviews were conducted in the home languages of teachers and parents, with a series of open-ended questions to ensure spontaneous responses and to allow space for probing answers. In an attempt to create a relaxed atmosphere parents were interviewed on the school premises but separate from any children or teachers. The interviews were tape-recorded with the permission of the interviewees.

Findings

This section provides a description of the findings derived from the language survey, on the perceptions of role-players in the domains of the home, the school and the broader community. The rationale is that trends arising from these findings inform the approaches required to intervene at school and community levels on language policy and practice.

My findings are discussed as follows: Firstly, a comparative perspective of the perceptions of learners, parents and teachers is provided according to the language indicators. Secondly, the interviews with teachers and parents are discussed in relation to the survey, so that correlation patterns can be noted.

Language choice

Figure 1 indicates the percentages of learners who speak English and/or Afrikaans with various members of their families.

Figures 2 and 3 (over) indicate the percentages of learners who speak English and/or Afrikaans are with their families and members of their communities. Figure 4 indicates the percentages of learners who speak English and/or Afrikaans with their learners and in their homes.

Figure 1: Language choice: learners

According to Figure 1, learners reportedly speak more Afrikaans to their parents and grandparents than to their siblings, indicating a probable generation shift towards English. In Figure 2, the parents reportedly speak mostly Afrikaans and the same pattern can be observed with the responses of the teachers in Figure 4. Of significance in

Figure 2: Language choice: Parents at home

these Figures is the predominance of Afrikaans as a language of choice in the home while a generation shift towards English appears to be taking place more broadly. This shift is clear in the choices that learners make with their siblings, the choices that parents make with their children and the choices that teachers make with their children.
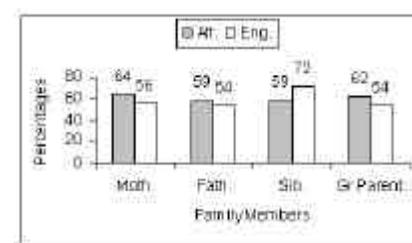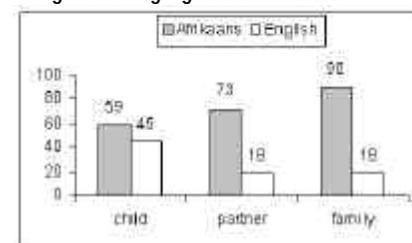
It is noteworthy that in almost all of the Figures, the total of the percentages of languages spoken by learners and parents exceeds 100%, with the exception of the partner and employer interlocutors (Figures 1, 2 and 3). This is due to the fact that their communication is bilingual; 40% of learners and 20% of parents speak both English and Afrikaans.

It is interesting to note that Afrikaans is reportedly spoken by parents in the home 90% of the times and that English is reportedly spoken by the teachers to their children 90% of the time. The fact that teachers speak predominantly English to their children implies that they value it and encourage

Figure 3: Language choice: Parents with
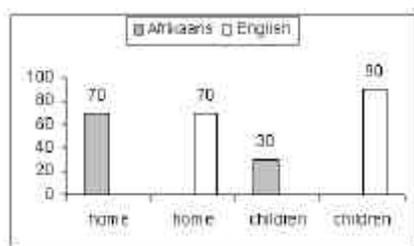
Figure 4: Language choice: Teachers

their children to develop a proficiency in it, which is a perception that could be transferred into in the classroom, on an attitudinal level. This tendency was confirmed in the interviews with teachers.

Figure 3 reveals the prevailing choice of Afrikaans by parents with friends (77%), which decreases in the formal environments such as with colleagues (59%) and with their employer (45%). It seems that English is used mostly with the persons in powerful positions, as the majority chose English for communication with their employer (54%). This implies that there is a link between power, economy and English in the minds of these parents.

Language preference

Figures 5 and 6 indicate the percentage of language preferences reported by learners and parents.

Figure 5 shows that learners prefer to speak Afrikaans at school (72%) and in the home (69%). This confirms the higher vitality of Afrikaans in informal contexts, such as with friends in their community and at school.

A similar pattern can be observed with the parents, where for their discussions at School Governing Body (SGB) meetings, Afrikaans is preferred (68%). Afrikaans is the language that parents most like to speak, and exceeds English by 22%, which reveals the strong measure of identity
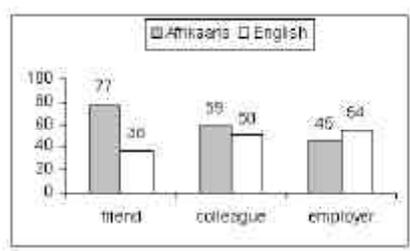
that parents place on it. Despite the fact that there are no Xhosa-speaking learners in the school, 36% of this sample of the parents feel that Xhosa should be offered as a language for their children to learn at school. This points to their awareness of the significance of Xhosa as a language of employment in the province.

Figure 5: Language Preference: Learners

According to Figure 6, the majority of parents prefer to receive their correspondence from the school in Afrikaans as indicated by 90% compared to the English preference of 68%. It is also noteworthy here if we add these two percentages then the balance of 100% indicates that 58% of them reportedly prefer English and Afrikaans or either English or Afrikaans, which shows that the majority of these parents are bi-literate.

Figure 6: Language Preference: Parents

Figure 7 shows the percentage of teachers' language preference with their staff and parents. 60% of teachers (Figure 7) reportedly prefer to speak English and 40% Afrikaans to their colleagues in the staffroom while 70% reportedly have Afrikaans as a language choice at home (Figure 3). English is used mainly, for administrative purposes such as decision-making in staff meetings.

Figure 7: Language Preference: Teachers

80% of the teachers speak English and 40% speak Afrikaans to the parents, which allows for a 20% bilingual proportion of communication with parents. This preference of communication does not match the 90% (Figure 2) predominance of Afrikaans in the home. These findings show a disjuncture between parent's use of home language and the language that they are communicated with at school. This could have an excluding effect on parents in school governing matters.

Language dominance

In terms of language dominance (Figure 8), 54% of the learners' dominant language is Afrikaans, while only 34% report that English is their dominant language. It is noteworthy that the remaining 10% did not answer this question probably because they use these languages so interchangeably that they are not certain about which one they speak best.

The media is apparently a major influence in determining their language dominance. 82% report that their favourite television programme is broadcast in English, compared to only 15% who rated Afrikaans programmes as their favourites.

Most of the parents (72%) report that they use more Afrikaans in the home domain and also that they speak it best (Figure 9). This is compared, for the same categories in English, with 41% and 36% respectively. Afrikaans has a higher dominance percentage than English in the home, in other words it is spoken best and most often in the home, while English has a far higher dominance as a media influence in the home, as 82% reportedly view English programmes.

Figure 10 extends the dominance question to compare the relationship between language medium, language dominance in the classroom and the reported confidence of teachers in the respective languages as media of teaching.

Figure 8: Language Dominance: Learners
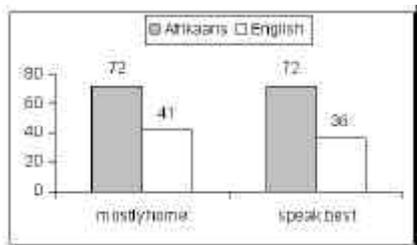
Figure 9: Language Dominance: Parents
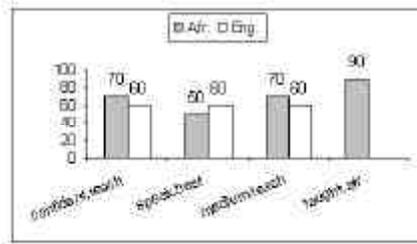
Figure 10: Language Dominance: Teachers

70% of the teachers report that they feel confident in teaching through the medium of Afrikaans, and this correlates with their home language choice (Figure 3). 60% report that they are confident in teaching through English, which indicates a bilingual intersection of 30 .

The higher dominance in English can be attributed, partly, to these teachers completing their tertiary education through the medium of English, thus having acquired higher levels of proficiency in English compared to Afrikaans. This is common among adults who completed their teachers' course during the 1970's and 1980's, when English was perceived as the language of social and political liberation among the disadvantaged groups and therefore as the best option for career purposes.

To the question on 'which language/s do you teach in', the response is exactly the same as 'which language do you feel confident to teach in.'. 90% of teachers taught through the medium of Afrikaans during the course of their teaching career and with the reported dominance of English, among them, are well equipped to teach bilingually. This is an important finding for considering the appropriateness of alternative bilingual models as implementing these require bilingually proficient teachers.

Language attitudes and awareness

With regards to negative language attitudes, 18% of the learners (Figure 11a) expressed a dislike for Afrikaans, 41% for Xhosa, and 13% for English. The parents' responses correlate with those of the learners with 27% and 32% respectively for Afrikaans and Xhosa (Figure 11b). This could imply a relationship between the parents' influence on shaping their childrens' attitudes in their primary domain. The reported dislike for Xhosa can be attributed to their lack of knowledge about the language because ignorance could be a cause of their negative attitudes.

72% of learners perceived the school to regard Afrikaans as an important language to learn, whilst 56% of learners perceived the school to regard English as important. The same pattern is shown for what the learners' perceive their parents regard as
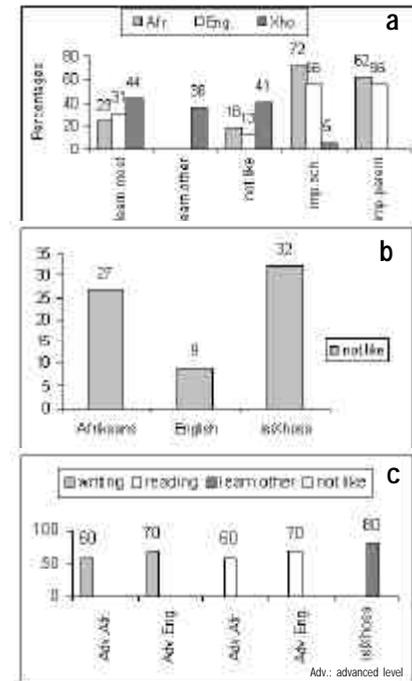
Figure 11: Language attitude and awareness:
a: Learners, b: Parents & c: Teachers

an important language to learn at the school. This may be explained by the fact that until recently, this school was an Afrikaans medium school and has, over the past ten years, shifted towards becoming an Afrikaans/English parallel medium school.

According to the Figure 11, teachers reportedly have no dislike for a language, and the majority of them (70%) also expressed a desire to learn Xhosa. Graded questions around their language proficiency were posed to correlate the teaching medium with proficiency. Most teachers have advanced levels of reading and writing in both Afrikaans and English.

Interviews

The interviews had a direct bearing on the questionnaire in two ways:

1. To follow up on survey findings and to attain convergent validity.

2. They were also used to raise language awareness around current language policy and to note how parents and teachers conceptualise a change in language policy. They served as a basis for role-players to reflect on their existing school language policies, their classroom practice, and the possibilities for change.

The interviews were a flexible and responsive tool that provided an opportunity for teachers and parents to reflect critically on language policy in its broader sense, with a view to considering alternatives to current perceptions and practice.

Interviews with Teachers

There is consensus that parents insist on their children being admitted to an English class, which presents teachers with the challenge of teaching concepts to Afrikaans-speaking children through the medium of English. This inevitably forms a pattern of Afrikaans learners lagging behind English-speaking learners, although there are isolated exceptions to this. To overcome the discrepancy, some teachers use two languages to explain certain concepts to learners. Other teachers from the intermediate and senior phases counter this by saying that even when they speak Afrikaans the learners cannot understand.

This reported phenomenon of Afrikaans-speakers performing below English-speakers appears to have spawned negative attitudes towards the former group, as is evident by the following kind of statement:

'Afrikaans children are weak'; 'Breeze to teach if I switch to teaching an English class.'

Children speak a dialect in the community, 'so even if we use Afrikaans terms when teaching, it does not facilitate learning. Nevertheless, there is a

demand from the community, to have their Afrikaans-speaking children admitted to an English class [consensus among all teachers and SMT].

Underlying teachers' responses to these status-related questions are definite classist attitudes about English and Afrikaans. '*Afrikaans leerders kom van die skriwwe flats hier agter en het 'n slegte invloed op jou*' (Afrikaans-speaking children come from the scruffy flats here at the back and have a bad influence on you. Another teacher, realising the harshness of this statement, exclaimed 'It was never like this before!' Implicit in these words is a stigma attached to Afrikaans and a description of social degeneration that is prevalent in all working class communities in Cape Town.

Teachers were unable to answer any questions when they were asked to respond to questions on their language policy, until they were probed. This concurs, firstly, with the fact that they are reportedly implementing a *de facto* policy that is based on the shift towards an English monolingual model and secondly, that there is a lack of awareness of how language policy could affect school and community change. Their *de facto* policy subscribes to the ideology that upholds the hegemony of English. They reported that they have no written language policy and are unaware of the implication of this, as they are drifting unknowingly towards a monolingual practice: 'One of the days we will become an English-only school. Teachers reportedly move excelling Afrikaans-speaking learners' from the Afrikaans classes to the English stream because they are performing well. This effectively entrenches linguicism and supports the misconception that English-speaking learners are intrinsically disposed towards better academic performance.

Interviews with Parents

Parent responses to policy-specific questions were similar to that of the teachers, basic, however their responses were more fervent when it came to questions relating to language attitudes and status.

Separate interviews were conducted for parents of learners from the Afrikaans and English streams respectively and the salient features of these interviews are below:

• Parents from the Afrikaans stream report that they do not speak a *suiwer* (standard) Afrikaans in their community, but that they do speak Afrikaans best, while the parents from the English stream speak both Afrikaans and English. There is a tendency that parents in the respective streams seem to have different levels of formal education. This was borne out especially when one parent in the Afrikaans group disclosed that he left school in standard three; this is one factor that distinguishes the Afrikaans group as belonging to a working class compared to the

more middle class English stream parents, who originally spoke Afrikaans as a home language but switched to English later in life.

- Descriptions of Afrikaans by the parents in this stream included, a mixed[11] language (English and Afrikaans), while English was described as a *fancy taal* (fancy language). The parents from the Afrikaans group reported that their church services are in English.

- Parents in the Afrikaans stream also reported that their children do not play with children that are from English homes, and that they notice discrimination against their children: *die Afrikaans klas word anders behandel/* (the Afrikaans class is treated differently). This was refuted by the other (English) focus group. They also feel that a dual-medium system, combining both languages, will be to the benefit of the children. However, the parents from the English stream did not agree to the dual-medium prospect so easily. They expressed concern about Afrikaans interfering with their children's conceptual understanding during lessons. On the other hand, one of the parents explained in a group discussion, that he thinks that dual-medium education will unite the school more and this led to the other parents conceding his point.

- Parents feel that the SGB should be involved in the decisions about language policy. They agreed that the SGB had minimum knowledge of the significant role that an active school language policy can play in the effective education of their children. Both groups expressed an interest in their children knowing English, as it is important for their future. The parents from the Afrikaans stream were more open to a change to a dual-medium system while the other group felt that teaching children in their 'mother-tongue' is more desirable. In both interviews the parents expressed a desire for their children to learn Xhosa as an additional language for the reason that the acquisition of Xhosa offers better job opportunities for their children in later life.

A comparison of the respective streams

As a follow up to this interview, I sought the empirical verification for the statement that teachers made about Afrikaans-speaking learners performing worse than their English counterparts. To this end, I gained permission to analyse the annual schedule of results of the previous year (2002), which provides all the results for all the subjects. Out of a total of 363 learners in 2002, a group of 21 learners required more attention before they could meet the minimum required standard

The following Figures compare the respective language streams' proportion of learners who fall in the category of 'more attention needed'[12], so that a clear picture can be formed of the actual performance discrepancies

between these groups. The sample chosen was from the classes in the intermediate to senior phases (grade 4 to Grade 7) as this was available at the time when this data was requested. It is nevertheless representative of approximately 85% of the school population.

Figure 12 gives an overall impression of the pass rate. More learners in the Afrikaans stream repeat their grade. Only one learner in the English stream did not meet the pass requirements. A closer look at the performance in the respective learning areas follows:

Figure 13a: In the learning area known as 'mathematics literacy, mathematics and mathematical science' (MLMMS), 67% of the learners deemed to require more attention are from the Afrikaans stream, while 33% are from the English stream. This learning area has the highest failure rate as it requires a higher level of abstract thought compared to languages and social sciences. The quality of learning support materials and teaching methods could also be contributory factors.

Figure 12: Pass rate 2002

Figure13a

Figure13b

A similar pattern is observed in the learning area of Social Sciences, with 66% of the learners in the Afrikaans stream requiring more attention, and 34% in the English stream.

Figure 13b: The disparity-margin is largest in the first language (English), with 71% of the learners from the Afrikaans stream showing a need for more attention, while only 29% in the English stream require attention.
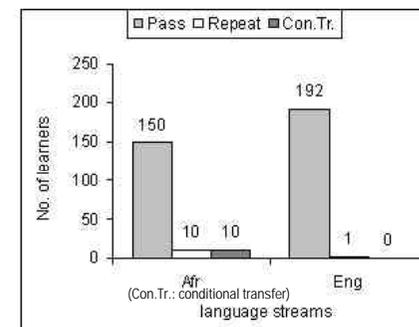
Figure 14 provides a comparative perspective on the performance of learners in the learning areas discussed here.

Language stigmatisation and the value of diversity

From the above Figures and Figures, it is clear that the failure rate in the Afrikaans stream is higher than that in the English stream. Given the power of English in South African society, together with the misgivings about the potential of the learners in the Afrikaans stream expressed in the interviews, the stigmatisation of Afrikaans is perpetuated. It is also apparent from interviews and observations, and teachers expressed this candidly that Afrikaans is associated with under-achievement, with being undisciplined and with low social and economic status. There is a need to disprove the notion of its inferiority as a language of teaching and learning and to unlearn the prejudices associated with it. This attitudinal dynamic is central to meaningful policy determination,

Figure 13c

Figure 14: More attention needed

in the sense that the perceptions or attitudes of teachers, learners and parents need to change before they can accept the value of language diversity and the principle of additive bilingualism as a basis for language policy and practice. Using these findings as a basis, I will now discuss the interface between perception and policy realisation.

Interpretation of key findings

The following trends emerge from the findings:

Survey Questionnaire:

1. Afrikaans has a high vitality in the domains of the home and broader community.
2. There is an intergenerational language shift from Afrikaans to English.
3. There is a language mismatch in communication between teachers and parents.
4. There is a desire among teachers and learners to learn Xhosa as an additional language at the school.
5. Most of the teachers have the experience and proficiency to teach bilingually.

Interviews:

1. Parents from both English and Afrikaans medium streams want their children to know English well.
2. Teachers are challenged pedagogically to deal with the language mismatch between medium of teaching and learning and the home languages of learners.
3. These teachers are willing to experiment with a dual-medium approach;
4. Afrikaans is stigmatised as the language of those who under perform at school. There is class distinction between English and Afrikaans-speaking learners, which causes problems of discipline when prejudice is expressed in their social interactions.
5. The *de facto* policy is promoting English as a LoLT at the expense of Afrikaans. There are negative attitudes towards Afrikaans on the part of the English-speaking children. This sentiment was unanimous among the focus group of parents from the Afrikaans stream but was rejected by the parents from the English language stream.
6. The parents from the Afrikaans medium stream welcomed the idea of experimenting with a dual-medium approach while the other group of parents had reservations initially.

As this research is located within a knowledge interest that seeks to understand and change conditions and to liberate people's thinking, the interpretation of these findings is framed within a critical theory paradigm.[13] Accordingly, as a preliminary step towards considering alternatives to the current language policy and practice, this section critically analyses five key issues that arise from the findings. The five key issues are

language policy and practice, disparities between the two streams, the language mismatch, language shift, and the desire to learn Xhosa.

Language policy and practice

As mentioned, the school referred to in this study shifted from being Afrikaans medium in 1990, to becoming parallel medium, with a tendency towards English only. The repetitiveness and consistency of this tendency is what defines it as a *de facto* language policy; in other words, "a 'standing decision' characterised by behavioural consistency and repetitiveness on the part of those who make it and those who abide by it" (Eulau & Prewitt 1977:465).

In considering the power relations of school language policy in a broader context, writers such as Baker (1995), Cummins (2001), Tollefson (1991), Alexander (2003) and Meerkorter (2003) have described language policy in education as a means to control, dominate and exploit people in society, by creating structural barriers that preclude speakers of low status varieties from entering tertiary level education and securing employment that provides reasonable remuneration. Instead, schools act as gatekeepers to filter through learners that are proficient in English and who perform well academically as a result, while others stand a lesser chance of upward social mobility and are more prone to leaving school earlier either to become part of a cheap labour pool or to join the unemployed. Unemployment and low wages, in turn, are linked to crime, gangsterism, disease, substance abuse and undisciplined behaviour.

The evidence shows exactly this: that there is a strong aspiration towards English in order to move away from the perceived low socio-economic status and the reported ethnic prejudices and stereotypes associated with the prevailing variety of Afrikaans. Through its current language policy and practice, the school thus unknowingly contributes significantly to the perpetuation of this class differentiation that has language as its primary marker in the community. From an institutional perspective, this school plays a decisive role in sustaining the social, economic and political deprivation of its community; a reflection of what is prevalent in society at large. Concomitantly, the language perceptions that it reproduces in its current practice, form a significant factor in determining the educational throughput and success of the learners - manifest in the disparity shown between the language streams.[14]

Clearly, this current practice has grave educational implications for children, as they internalise negative messages about their language, identity, cultural practices and ultimately, about themselves. This is borne out by the declarations teachers and parents made in the interviews about their

relative perceptions of speakers of these languages, which included references such as:

– *skriwwe flats,* (scruffy flats)
– *hulle is nie dieselfde kind nie,* (they are not the same type of child),
– *hulle is onbeskof,* (they are rude),
– *die ouers s tel nie belang nie,* (their parents do not take an interest),
– *hulle dink hulle is beter as onse kinders omdat hulle Engels praat,* (they think that they are better than our children because they speak English).

In view of this mindset of teachers and parents, classroom practice in the Afrikaans stream particularly, tends to deplore this low image and the learning experiences of the children become alienating in terms of their cultural identity. In other words, the content of the curriculum and classroom practice are not integrated with their daily experiences. This take-over of English in the classrooms deprives children of the primary support that is essential for their overall development. Baker describes this phenomenon as follows:

> heritage, family identity, subtle psychological processes that hold families in unity, especially in times of problems and crises, the cultural cement that holds minority families together, **will be lost**. [My emphasis added] (1993:184)

This has very damaging repercussions, particularly for these children from the lower economic strata of the community. Cummins makes a link between this cultural alienation and academic performance, "children who are empowered by their learning experiences develop the ability, confidence, and motivation to succeed academically" (2001:17).

Language practice at school

Another significant but expected finding is the absence of additive bilingualism, as a theoretical premise, in the practice and policy of the school. It is universally accepted that mother-tongue education is the most effective approach to teaching and learning. The current policy of the school is propagating a subtractive, instead of an additive approach, with English taking precedence over Afrikaans in spite of the two separate language streams.

The ethos and dominant use of English in the school makes the point clear to children and parents that English is the preferred language for matters such as correspondence to parents and the department and the answering of telephone calls. This anglicised administration of the school, increases the levels of cultural ambivalence, especially of Afrikaans-speakers, and gives rise to lower motivation levels to achieve at school. In turn, the inter-group power relations between the dominant group (English profi-

cient speakers) and the Afrikaans-speakers lead to a stratified type of social arrangement. Social division is created among the learners as a result of their language perceptions, and linguicist and classist attitudes sow disunity amongst them. There are reportedly ongoing disputes between individuals or groups from the different streams. It is noteworthy that sport is one area of the school where this in- and out-group consciousness is significantly absent.

Assemblies are held in both languages, which is another tradition that is positive and reassuring for creating an atmosphere of inclusivity at the school. However, the curriculum and classroom practices, which are regarded as being of a higher status, show definite tendencies towards favouring English. These practices are carried out unconsciously, as they are consequences of a *de facto* language policy rather than deliberate and conscious decisions that are based on sound educational theory and practice.

Classroom practice

Language practices are informed by an unwritten policy and the classroom observations show this. These observations revealed a distinction between the Afrikaans and the English classes. A transmission-like method of teaching was used in both streams, but applied with more rigid control in the Afrikaans stream, which has greater adverse effects on the learners with Afrikaans as a home language because of the alienating effect this has on their home culture and self-image. It was clear that these learners felt disorientated when higher-order questions were posed which was either out of their scope of experience and hence foreign to them or simply incomprehensible. This language practice did not allow for a collaborative approach that seeks to affirm the unique experience of learners and to open up space for an integrationist environment for the Afrikaans-speakers to feel affirmed and valued in their learning experience.

Bearing in mind that the research insights gained in this study are geared towards change, this finding points to the need for conscientising teachers towards reviewing their current language policy and practice. An approach using the theory of additive bilingualism to inform classroom practice could facilitate the improved concept-formation, self-confidence, communicative competence and general educational experience of the learners as explicated by Baker (1993).

Changing school language policy

As a starting point towards reversing the dominance of English at school, I set out to determine (via the survey) what the language perceptions are. It is apparent that the changes that are required in the category of language policy and practice are centred on the perceptions of the learners and

parents. In this sense, a change in their perceptions is a prerequisite to changed practice and accepted policy goals, which implies a mind-shift from the 'monolingual habitus' (Gogolin 1997), to an additive bilingual paradigm. Critical reflection sessions involving teachers and parents could form the basis for this, to transform the power relations between teachers and learners, between English and Afrikaans-speaking learners and between the school and the community. As far as language practice in the classroom is concerned, a model that integrates home culture with the content of the curriculum and neutralises divisive language perceptions could be implemented. An example of this is the appropriation of a dual-medium approach that aims at developing children who are "thoroughly bilingual, biliterate and multicultural'" (Baker 1995:147). Benson relates the success of an experiment in Mozambique, also conducted at a primary school where there was the phenomenon of dominant and dominated languages:

> Evaluations done during the final two years of the experiment using both quantitative and qualitative means demonstrate that students benefited greatly from use of the mother-tongue in terms of classroom participation, self-confidence, bilingualism, and biliteracy (2000:149).

Disparities between the two streams

The most striking finding that illuminates this trend is the under-achievement of the learners in the Afrikaans stream compared to the English stream, (showing a 14% disparity in the overall results of 2002). This tendency was confirmed during interview sessions with teachers. A trend such as this is cause for concern because it serves to reinforce the myth that Afrikaans is an inferior language, and that Afrikaans-speakers have an intrinsic lack of potential to perform as well as mother-tongue speakers of English. What emanates from this is a scholastic disaster that unfairly discredits almost half the learner population before they have been given a fair chance for their experiences to be affirmed as valid experiences in the schooling system. I offer four possible causal factors for this apparent disparity:

Firstly, the internalised inferior status of speakers of this dialect of Afrikaans. The classes that perform well are given credit and receive different treatment from their teachers as is evident (from the interviews) in the way incentives are provided for achievement at the school. What is reinforced are the overt and subtle messages that Afrikaans is a low-status language, useful for local purposes, but second to English for learning purposes. Stone explains,

> Both speakers and outsiders distinguish it from *suiwer* (pure, middle-class or standard) Afrikaans and generally stigmatise it as *kombuis* (kitchen) Afrikaans or *die slang* (the slang) … occasionally stigmatised as *plat* Afrikaans (com-

mon or vulgar Afrikaans …) The middle class tend to discourage their children from using it (2002:385).

This public perception in the community devalues Afrikaans, which effectively lowers the self-esteem of individual speakers of it. This phenomenon is entrenched by the public treatment of these languages. The transfer of learners who show academic potential, from the Afrikaans stream to the English stream, is a practice that typically demonstrates the high academic status that English is accorded in the school. It also manifests the belief that good academic performance is linked to speaking English. Again, this illustrates the pervading and dominant ideology of "English as the key to self-improvement, upward social mobility, sophistication and learnedness" (Broeder et al. 2002:29).

Secondly, and very much linked, is the schooling system which does not explicitly encourage the development of Afrikaans as a resource that can enrich the children's learning process and appropriately integrate their particular dialect into their learning experience as a means to promote strong identity linkages within their learning environment. Classroom observations show a different ethos prevailing in the respective classrooms, with the behaviour of the learners in the Afrikaans stream being more controlled compared to that of the English medium. There is far more freedom and interaction in the classroom practice of the English stream compared to the Afrikaans stream.

Ironically, the national curriculum statements advocate learner-centredness and cooperative learning as two of the significant pedagogic principles that should inform classroom practice, thus creating space for an integrationist approach that could affirm both Afrikaans and English speakers. The additive orientation is absent here, even though Afrikaans is offered alongside English. Collaborative teaching methods are absent and exclusionary methods seem to be more common. Cummins's conclusion that "Dramatic changes in children's academic progress can be realised when educators take the initiative to change this exclusionary practice to one of collaboration" (2001:183), can be amply illustrated at this school. What emerges regarding perceptions of Afrikaans, is that on the one hand, parents and children attach loyalty and significance to it in the domains of the home and the broader community, while on the other, the teachers' interaction with parents in their staff meetings and through the transference of excelling learners from the Afrikaans stream into the English stream, undermines the status of Afrikaans in the schooling system. This has adverse psychological effects on the Afrikaans-speaking learners, who need their identity and cultural practice to be visible and integrated into school life – their idiom, their struggles, their experience, their stories, their art, music and so forth. The school can play a decisive role in bringing about an affirmation of the poorer parts of the community's uniqueness, using, for

example, the learning area of Arts and Culture as a node around which to give expression and validation to the abovementioned aspects of their lives via painting, song and dance.

Thirdly, the values and beliefs of the respective social groups play a role in the literacy practices that these children are exposed to at home. Exposure to reading and writing in the home domain has been proved to significantly increase the academic performance of learners. The Haringey project in Britain, with a similar socio-economic context as the school in this study, experimented with two groups of learners, both of whom did not read or use English at home. After involving parents in getting them to listen to their children reading, this project established the following:

> Parental involvement had a pronounced effect on the students' success at school. Children who read to their parents made significantly greater progress in reading than those who did not engage in this type of literacy sharing. Small-group instruction in reading given by highly competent specialists did not produce improvements comparable to those obtained from the collaboration with parents (cited in Cummins, 2001:183).

In interviews with parents it was noted that in the Afrikaans group parents did not encourage reading, while in the other group this was more evident. This also relates to class differences and what value is placed on literacy in the home. Literacy practices in the home have been shown to play a decisive role in the academic performance at school.

Fourthly, the basis of their assessment is psycho-educational. This implies attributing low academic achievement to psychological causes without taking into account the effects of the dominant groups on the dominated groups in the community, and the mental and cultural disabling that ensues in the classroom (Cummins 2001). Under-achievement is considered by Cummins as a pathological state, intrinsic to this group, and is not considered within the context of the societal power relations that play a critical role in the kind of assumptions that are embedded in tests and assignments. For example, in the sciences, aspects like micro-wave ovens, computers, travelling on holiday and other experiences that are absent in the home experiences of these children, often form contexts for questions in one or other aspect of the assessment rubric that are alien to these learners, compared to their English middle class counterparts. More appropriate assessment strategies that are context-relevant and are empowering, rather than disabling experiences for learners should be devised.

Furthermore, within the English medium stream itself, this disparity[15] is also evident with the admittance of home language speakers of Afrikaans into English medium classes at grade one level. These learners have to contend with acquiring a new set of grammatical rules and structures in English to make progress in their learning and (new) conceptual development, while the home language speakers of English in the same classes,

learn more rapidly because they do not need to contend with morphological and syntactical acquisitions to make their conceptual development possible. The following research highlights the disastrous pedagogic effects of learning through English as a second language prematurely,

> There is no disputing that in a country like South Africa proficiency in a language like English is necessary for interaction at particular levels ... But it is problematic to make the possibility of such interaction the basis for designing language in education policies ... In the process, as my data shows, learners do not acquire English effectively nor do they develop proficiency in their mother-tongue (Desai 2003:47).

Teachers reportedly admit these learners to these classes because of the right that parents have to choose the language of learning for their child (inscribed into LiEP), knowing that it presents them with didactic challenges that they are not ready to address. This inevitably exacerbates the performance disparity phenomenon of Afrikaans and English speakers on two levels at the school, namely, between streams and between learners. Desai's (2003) experiment on MTE in a school in Khayelitsha shows that limited understanding of LoLT at an early age could undermine the learning capabilities of children later on. The resultant effect is that Afrikaans is tending towards local functions in the community with English replacing it as a LoLT. This mismatch is also one of the causes of underachievement, which will be discussed as a separate trend. It is confirmed by the preference that parents have for English as a medium of learning compared to Afrikaans and this has direct bearing on children's perceptions of English. One of the concerns here is the support of a monolingual ideology, which spawns prejudices towards speakers of Afrikaans while in actual fact,

> [this dialect or accent] of Afrikaans does not reflect either linguistic or aesthetic quality per se, but rather forms an expression of social convention and preference which, in turn, reflects an awareness of the status and prestige accorded to the speakers of [English] (Appel & Muysken 1987:19).

Perception of their languages impacts on their performances and "the power and status relations between dominated and dominant language groups exerts a major influence on school performance" (Cummins 2001:178).

Conversely, changing their language perceptions through changed practice can be expected to have a positive effect on their academic performance. The effective appropriation of pedagogic principles, as outlined in the national revised curriculum statements (DOE, 2002) of learner-centredness, a reviewed approach to assessment, collaborative teaching and learning methods within an additive paradigm will be fundamental to addressing this disparity.

The language mismatch

The high vitality of Afrikaans in the home and the community at large compared to the predominant use of English for administration and for communication with parents at schools, represents a language mismatch between the school and the community. The language that is used in the community is not part of the classroom practice of the children.

Two concepts are useful in explaining the choices that parents make in the home and with their employer. Fishman (cited in Appel & Muysken 1987) describes such choices as being determined by the domain. Ferguson (1959), on the other hand, offers the concept of diglossia as a premise for language choice. In this instance English represents the high and standard variety that is probably used with employers, whereas Afrikaans is the low variety that is the popular variety used at home. Both of these concepts have a bearing on the language mismatch at this school and point to one of the influences of language perception that accounts partially for this language mismatch.

The only situation where parents reportedly choose English rather than Afrikaans, is when interacting with their employer. Underlying this is a power relationship that positions them unequally. Apart from their English-speaking employer's ability to maintain privilege, due to the exclusive potential of such a situation, it also predisposes these parents to perceive and want English as a language medium for their children.

The detection of these influences seen alongside the perceptions of learners, teachers and parents, unmasks their monolingual (English) habitus. Gogolin describes this condition as:

> founded on the basic and deep-seated conviction that monolingualism in a society, and particularly in schools, is the one and only normality, forever and always valid … This leads to what I describe as the monolingual "*habitus*" the deep-seated habit of assuming monolingualism is the norm (1997:41).

The mismatch feature has educational and psychological consequences, such as cultural ambivalence, that discredits the one language against the other; home language speakers of Afrikaans have disempowering rather than empowering experiences at school.

The extensive use of English especially as a LoLT in the school domain is also based on the assumption that early exposure to English would provide better educational and life opportunities for children. However, according to Cummins's interdependence hypothesis,

> to the extent that instruction through a minority language is effective in developing academic proficiency in the minority language, transfer of this proficiency to the majority language will occur given adequate exposure and motivation to learn the majority language (2001:177).

Language shift

Language shift emerged as one of the significant findings in this study and is a well-known sociological consequence of assimilationist societies "where more and more speakers use the [dominant] language in cases where they formerly spoke the [dominated] language" (Appel & Muysken1987:32). El Aissati describes this phenomenon from a research perspective as follows:

> In measuring language shift, the researcher is interested in possible changes that an individual or a community has undergone with respect to the habitual use of language (1997:18).

Both of these descriptions of language shift stress the degree-of-language-use. My research has shown that there is an increase of English use in the school. And I discuss this under three broad categories: status, societal pressure and institutional factors. These factors will be considered within a critical paradigm of how socio-hierarchical relations have influenced language shift at the school.

Status Factor

The community has always been characterised by social deprivation and political oppression. This condition of disadvantage has been acculturated via a dialect of Afrikaans that marks it as a distinct underclass on a regional and national level. In the early 20th century, Afrikaans was regarded as the language of the slaves and was "derogatorily referred to as a kitchen language or *kombuistaal,* or as a bastard jargon, the present atrocious vernacular of the Cape" (Ponelis, cited in Kamwagamalu 2001:367). With the societal pressure to tend towards English as the language that is used in high status domains and that symbolises a prestigious image, this community considers the acquisition of English by their children as an opportunity and as access to a better life.

Linked to the aspect of status is their self-identification and sense of group identity considering the high vitality of Afrikaans in the home and broader community. The impact on their self-concept and group identity is felt in their low levels of participation in the activities of the school. These self-perceptions are what revealed the reported lack of community involvement in the life of the school. The languages of these people and their socio-economic status are the two aspects of their identities that came through clearly as strong influences in their self-perceptions, and in their perceptions of how others perceive them. Forces in society at large reinforce this low group and self-esteem and this has a direct bearing on the shift towards English, with unprecedented educational consequences, such as early school-leaving and general under-achievement at school, notwithstanding, the importance of acquiring proficiency in English at school.

The notion comprising the interlinking elements of this dialect of Afrikaans of low status and inferiority is consolidated in the minds of people, and this spurs on the drift towards English. This kind of thinking is described by Skutnabb-Kangas as 'the deficit model', because it projects the idea that there is

> something wrong with the [Afrikaans-speaking] child, that they have a language-related handicap, that they have a socially conditioned handicap, that parents are working class and that they see the child as lacking and deficient and they need to change the child to fit the school [my emphasis added] (1988:10).

But the basis of this thinking that was apparent in teacher interviews is wrong, as Skutnabb-Kangas goes on to explain that the alternative model is the 'enrichment theory' where bilingualism/biculturalism is seen as stimulating and beneficial for the child; schools should be adapted for the children and not vice versa and bilingualism enhances development of the individual.

In giving effect to this enrichment model, which coincides with the theoretical basis of this thesis, namely additive bilingualism, Cooper explains that, "status planning is usually invoked when changes in the functional allocation of a community's language is seen as desirable" (1989:109). For this reason, the changed perception is crucial to the raising of the status of Afrikaans via language planning activities such as language policy realisation, literacy campaigns and changing the medium of teaching.

Societal pressure

Societal pressure has the effect of making proficiency in English a norm or requirement for meaningful participation in the social, political and economic spheres of society. Statistics from an extensive study on the language profiles of primary schools in the Western Cape (Plüddemann 2004:69) mirror this language shift trend in the Cape Town city bowl area. The statistics for Grade 7's suggest the beginning of a language shift from Afrikaans to English. The Grade 7's use English with their siblings (48%) more than with their father (43%) and their grandparents (39%).

> Conversely, fewer use Afrikaans with their siblings (32%) than with their grandparents (35%). This implies the shift is happening rapidly, within the same generation, not just across generations, and points to the formative influence of schooling in the anglicisation of Afrikaans-speaking children on the Cape Flats (Plüddemann et al. 2004: 20).

The same trend has been observed on a national level (Alexander 2000; Heugh 2000; Plüddemann 2000). This tendency points to the widespread prevalence of a shift to English. This shift needs to be addressed directly, at school level, so that the realisation of a progressive school language policy can take its course.

Societal pressure, combined with the significant structural feature of class that is based on socio-economic status is aligned with marked and unmarked varieties of English and Afrikaans. Despite the fact that many children speak dialect versions of Afrikaans and English, societal pressure puts the forces in favour of English.

Institutional Factors

Findings from the survey reveal three important features related to the apparent decline of Afrikaans in the school domain: firstly, the pattern of reported preferences of the learners, teachers and parents, secondly, the admittance of Afrikaans-speaking learners into the English medium stream and, thirdly, the stigma attached to this variety of Afrikaans. Appel & Muysken claim, "when speakers generally become less proficient in the minority language, language loss is taking place" (1987:33), and this could potentially happen at this school, given the discrepancies between Afrikaans use and the status of English.

This has far-reaching consequences insofar as the institutional factors of the school and the media are concerned.

Firstly, it is evident that the school attaches more importance to English than Afrikaans. This has a long-term effect on Afrikaans, with educational, social and economic consequences for the community that it serves. Fishman explains the following about language maintenance,

> if the dominated language is used only at home it will have much less chance of maintenance than if it were used in domains crucial for language transmission, like schools, to subsequent generations (cited in El Assati 1997:18).

The intergenerational transmission of Afrikaans in the Western Cape is a significant factor in its overall maintenance as a language, and thus the shift at this school has to be viewed with caution, because history has proven the threat that it can have on dominated languages in a broader sense. The best way to stimulate its maintenance is by elevating its status as a medium of teaching, broadening its use as a language of school administration and acknowledging its cultural richness in the curriculum. These will be essential steps in the status planning of Afrikaans at the school.

The other significant institutional influence is the media. As indicated earlier, the majority of learners prefer viewing English television[16] and, in conjunction with the school, this provides a powerful institutional influence in shaping learners' pro-English attitudes. The mass media is an enormous obstacle in the maintenance of the Afrikaans language, and classroom influence plays a crucial role in cultivating an ethos of respect for human dignity rather than stereotypical images of English at the expense of Afrikaans. Teachers can, for example, attempt to direct learners to particular programmes that are multilingual or texts that transmit multilingual and multicultural messages.

There is value placed on Afrikaans for its symbolic purposes, such as group solidarity, and the essential feeling of identity, among its speakers.

The school language policy should take cognisance of this, by giving recognition to both Afrikaans and English home-language groups by integrating the learner's experiences into their classroom practices.

Desire to learn Xhosa

Xhosa, the second largest spoken language in the country[17], forms part the Nguni group, the largest language group in South Africa, comprising 18 million speakers. Most Xhosa-speakers are in the Eastern and Western Cape. Given its predominance, it plays a significant role in the social, cultural, economic and political spheres of the Western Cape community.

Xhosa-speakers also constitute the second largest language group in the Western Cape. According to the 2001 Census, 23,7% of the population in the Western Cape speak Xhosa as a home language, and 19,3% speak English as a home language, while 55,3% speak Afrikaans as a home language (StatsSA, 2003) and it is thus the largest group of the three official languages in the province. It follows, that on a number of levels this language plays an important role in society at large: in work contexts, where people have to co-operate with each other in the process of their production (on the level of social interaction they also need to speak the language of their regional co-inhabitants); in the state's provision of social services, it is also important to relate to people in the language that they understand best. For purposes of protection and survival in courtrooms and in hospitals, it plays an important role. For communicative competence and entry into society at large it provides the people of the Western Cape with a sense of regional identity in that they are able to speak to each other and identify with each other on linguistic grounds. All these functions have the instrumental value of communication and the symbolic value associated with being South African.

Xhosa is also perceived as a language of low status in the province, with a similar tendency among its home language speakers to acquire English, at the expense of maintaining it as a language. The perceived status of Afrikaans and Xhosa prevents their speakers from realising that these languages are capable of all the educational, social, political and economic functions that English performs.[18]

The school is well placed to address this language dichotomy of status and prestige on the one hand, and language for symbolic and communicative purposes on the other. In doing so, an intervention plan ensued so that the community can address this psychological burden of class struggle and the stigmatisation of their language as their core cultural value. This vision of working towards trilingualism is implicit in the additive model. The addition of Xhosa to their existing repertoire of languages could enable the current generation with a communicative competence that will allow them to participate confidently in the various spheres of society.

My Intervention

Parents want their children to know English, Afrikaans and Xhosa well.

There is an interrelatedness of educational, social, economical and political factors that contributes to the formation of language perceptions of the role-players in this school community. Central to this intervention, was the aim to change the perceptions and practices that undermine the instrumental and symbolic value of Afrikaans in the school community. At the very least, I felt that the community has to be brought to the realisation that high-level bilingualism and biliteracy is a much better option than low-level proficiency in English.

The findings on perceptions of the school community were used as a starting point for critical reflection sessions. A crucial aspect of these reflective sessions was the motive to transform the language practice of teachers, especially. Consensus building on a staff level ensued for approximately 8 months before a turning point was reached. It entailed three basic procedures: feedback of findings on perceptions, discussion of these within a language-as-a resource paradigm and implementing plans to address the challenge of the status of Afrikaans. The school's structural features of decision-making and power-relations were such that the plans that were made were executed in a participatory manner. This allowed for sufficient contemplation and reflection, without coercion to implement decisions. Teachers, parents and learners were significant role-players in this, where the contexts of the teacher versus class and the school versus community became dimensions on most attention was focussed.

The trends of language shift, language mismatches, academic underachievement, and the aspiration to learn Xhosa are trends that reflect the pressure of society at large. With the exception of the inclination to learn Xhosa, other trends present dismal educational prospects for the majority of learners. The phenomenon of the school reflecting society's dominant ideology is the main challenge faced, and this needs to be reversed in order to create conditions for "embracing language policy intentions with what occurs as a result of the intention" (Jones 1977:4).

Our schools are lauded by others, as having all the rhetoric for a changed democratic society, however, the structural forces and attitudes remain in-tact to support oppressive and discriminatory practices that are reminiscent of the apartheid period; those who were disadvantaged before apartheid remain disadvantaged after apartheid. Thus, although the policy and legislative clauses are important, they are not sufficient to effect change.

The intervention aspect of this study aimed to change the way teachers interact with their learners and the communities that they serve. This framework assigns a central role to three sets of power relations: teachers and learners, schools and community and community and society. In this process the focus was on the changed perceptions of the teachers, parents and their children as a starting point to altering the power relations. In spite of the view that schools tend to reinforce stratification processes that support the needs of a particular economic dispensation in society, I am convinced that there exists ample opportunity for progressive teachers to function as agents for social change. A turning point was reached after the following process.

The Process

For one year, a series of intense sessions of critical reflection, consensus building, planning and implementing became the essential elements of the intervention process. The data on the perceptions of the teachers, learners and parents were used as a point of departure for the critical reflection periods. Findings were reported to teachers and parents with a view to open planned discussions on how these can be reconciled with mother-tongue-based bilingual education. Informative sessions formed part of a series of meetings to enlighten teachers on the educational and related advantages of this approach.

The principle of mother-tongue-based education, as formulated in LiEP, was vital to these discussions and after its benefits were communicated to teachers they started to engage in critical analysis of their own practice. A variety of sources were used to advocate MTE. Included were videos, Figures, and relevant research reports, such as the 'Six year Primary Project' in Nigeria experiment (Bamgbose 1984). This case study in Nigeria, where the outcome of the superior performance of the experimental groups as a result of Yoruba being used as a medium of instruction was highlighted, was very useful in underlining the educational significance of MTE.

Inviting specialists in applied language studies to be part of discussions and to have their perspectives shared with teachers had a motivating effect on the group. No sudden or clear-cut change in their perceptions was noted, but a gradual curiosity and interest started emerging. Discussions and open dialogue about the interplay between language policy and practice did not remain at the psychological level but the thinking was translated into practice. Evidence of this was the introduction of alternative literacy practices in the classrooms by the teachers, allowing learners to read at their free will, from a range of different Afrikaans and English stories that were placed in a few of the classrooms. This was intended to stimulate a voluntary interest in reading and storytelling[19]. Furthermore, a decision was made to pilot a dual-medium approach at the school. This will be described shortly.

Consensus Building

After a period of introspective analysis of the language practice of teachers, decisions had to be made about a set of procedures directed towards changed practice, as an outflow of their deeper understanding of the role of language in their school life. This comprised a consensus building process because these were decisions that had to be carefully taken, as they held far-reaching implications for the language practice of teachers. Two significant outcomes were achieved in this regard: firstly, a set of guiding principles for the formulation of a school language policy was agreed upon and secondly a decision to experiment with a dual-medium pilot study was made. These were significant steps as it would not only serve to later popularise the thinking and practice of the additive model but would also provide a directive for how policy can inform changed practice. The language policy provisions were achieved after several sessions, where teachers could consider their perceptions critically and, with hindsight, make a commitment to translating these changing perceptions into action. The relationships between language and power, language and identity and literacy practices, were ideas that deepened the teachers understanding of the stigmatisation of Afrikaans and the stereotypical thinking associated with it. These relationships are important as they could determine the eventual participation of children in the social, political and economic spheres of society. As a growing understanding of this analysis became clearer among teachers and parents over a period of time, consensus was established on a strategy to give effect to the belief in mother-tongue-based bilingual education.

This was evident in the next stage, which involved an experiment with a dual-medium language model entailing three basic changes in language practice in the classroom: use of English and Afrikaans as mediums of teaching, equal time allocation for both languages and the development of learning support materials in both languages. The aims were:

• to enable more meaningful learning,

• to attain bilingual proficiency; to improve levels of communicative competence,

• to ensure that all learners (English and Afrikaans-speakers) are given an equal opportunity to perform well at school, and

• to neutralise tensions between the respective groups.

The purpose was to demonstrate to a wider group that dual-medium education would address perceptions that sow divisions among learners and that it would improve their overall performance at school.

This was initiated in the third quarter, in a Grade 6 class where there was a balance of English and Afrikaans learners. A consultative meeting with the parents secured their support and also served to raise awareness around effective methods of attaining bilingualism in a mother-tongue-

based bilingual educational system. Meetings with the SGB also formed an important aspect of the consensus building process as they, together with a language committee, acted as the agency that would oversee the formulation and implementation of a new language policy.

Salient outcomes of intervention

The intervention concentrated mostly on how the teachers could transform their language practice in the classroom, as they are the primary implementers of language policy. The parents were more involved in decisions regarding the content of the policy. This approach shifted the thinking of all parties concerned towards the additive model of language practice. The inextricable link between good teaching and learning and language policy became clearer in following discussions.

To evaluate a broader acceptance of the additive-policy intention by the parent constituency, a snap survey was conducted. This was administered after a similar process of consensus building among the teachers was concluded, and took the form of a series of meetings with the SGB, a report-back session to parents on the findings of the survey, and sessions informing them about the value of mother-tongue education. This process contributed towards increased language awareness.

The question posed to the parents in the final quarter of the year was formulated as follows:

Which language/s would you like your son/daughter to know well? English only; Afrikaans only; English and Afrikaans; English and Afrikaans and Xhosa.

The return rate of this survey was poor (below 50%). According to the principal, this is usual and demonstrates the lack of parental involvement in school activities and probably their uneven literacy rates as well.[20] Nevertheless, the parents reported a preference for Afrikaans, English and Xhosa. This indicates an acknowledgement of all three languages being perceived by them as being educationally significant. This acknowledgement mandated the language committee to formulate a policy that could give effect to the realisation of trilingual proficiency for learners. The acquisition of Afrikaans, English and, later on, Xhosa as an additional regional language, is described in the LANGTAG Report (1995) as "functional multilingualism" which, if implemented systematically, would breathe life into the theory of additive bilingualism/ multilingualism.

Which language would you like your son/daughter to know well?

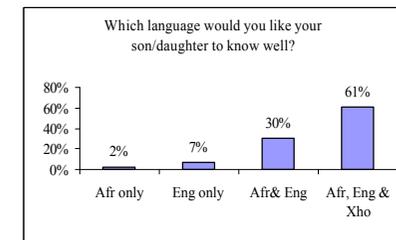| Afr only | Eng only | Afr& Eng | Afr, Eng & Xho |
| 2% | 7% | 30% | 61% |

Figure 15

The other significant outcome was the experimentation of a dual-medium system in the school. Changes in performance levels were not forthcoming, but the short period of four months is unlikely to show up such differences. However, anecdotal evidence suggests that there was a difference in the classroom behaviour of learners. Learners reportedly demonstrated increased levels of co-operation, tolerance and interest in approaching their tasks. The application of the principles of dual-medium education and the subtle differences in attitudes towards each other instilled hope in the teacher to continue to experiment with it. Other observations related to an increased involvement of the Afrikaans-speaking learners in answering questions and participation in classroom discussions.

My research question was to investigate the effect of changed language practice for educational improvement on perceptions. The community's original, stigmatised perceptions of Afrikaans and the practical measures that the SGB and the teachers have taken to address its declining position in the school, confirms the hypothesis that perceptions can change after a certain kind of intervention.

Parents, teachers and, to a lesser extent, the learners, perceived Afrikaans as a language second in importance to English. This mental orientation of the school community was bolstered by perceived societal pressures, the media and a shift towards English unilingualism at the level of the school as an institution. Subsequently, the language committee has formulated a language policy that has been circulated and adopted by the parents and teachers. This policy gives directives on language practices and the attainment of policy goals. A language committee comprising school governing body members and teachers has been selected to oversee the implementation and monitoring of the policy.

As a language planning exercise this action research project provides evidence to suggest that the process of SLP formulation, decision-making, planning, selection of languages for LoLT and administration, was owned by the role-players. This was the main reason for its acceptability and for its successful implementation. In addition, inclusive teaching practice and the redefined role of the school as an institution that address the needs of the people it serves, will most likely serve to ensure that the hegemony of English is tempered and the status of Afrikaans is improved. Learners could develop higher levels of proficiency in both the global and local language. The envisaged changes in classroom practice in the school and the policy document intend to encourage more wide-spread additive bilingual practice in the school and in turn, the cultural ambivalence of the marginalised Afrikaans-speakers could be neutralised. The functional allocation of Afrikaans is changing, in other words, its purpose and the way it is being perceived by its users is under reconstruction within the school domain. The teachers, parents and SGB expressed an interest in continuing this project and I intend to monitor its implementation over the next few years.

Conclusions and Recommendations

In this study, the combination of survey and action research methods was used to obtain an understanding of the language perceptions in the community, with a view to informing and improving classroom practices. The significant domains of focus were the school, the home and, to a lesser extent, the broader community, including places of work and friends. The data gathered via the survey was used for critical reflection with teachers, to gain a deeper understanding of the relationship between language and its social and political dimensions.

The hypothesis that motivated the study was confirmed:

- data gathered on the perceptions of the school community reflected the dominant ideology,

- through discussion, dialogue and experimenting with changed class-room practice, within an additive bilingual paradigm, perceptions started changing,

- this formed the basis for the formulation of a SLP that accords with LiEP.

A major aim of this research project was to use empirical data for the purpose of encouraging a change in perspectives on the value accorded languages in and out of school so as to activate changes in policy and practice. The following conclusions and recommendations are offered:

Findings show that this school reflects the dominant ideology of post apartheid South African society, insofar as there is a perceptible shift towards English as the sole language of power. Their current SLP and classroom practices are the results of internalised thoughts, actions and perceptions that require change at the levels of awareness, practice and policy. This orientation is clearly reinforced by the class and social differentiation within the broader community and so the linguistic differences tend to match social and economic inequalities. The curriculum and administration of the school are the key areas that could reverse this ideological position so that language is used to provide meaningful opportunities for both English and Afrikaans home-language speakers. Yet it also became clear that the change in the school's language policy cannot address the magnitude of the socio-political and socio-economic dilemma. What was achieved was consciousness-raising in the school community, who became more critical and introspective about the interplay between language policy and social practices. This is evident in the decisions that the teachers have made with regard to their language policy, most clearly reflected in their decision to experiment with a dual-medium model.

As a process of staff development, Whole-School Evaluation, gazetted under the National Education Policy Act (No. 27 of 2000), the Education

Department is expecting schools to give attention to school improvement and quality enhancement. This policy specifies "Language of instruction"(DOE, 2000) as a process indicator in how the school is going to achieve its goals. It is to be given emphasis by district officials, SGB and School Management Teams as the overseers of the implementation of this policy so that school drop-out rates can be decreased as a result of language medium (Meerkotter, 2003) and that learners' standards of attainment can be improved. The intervention described here is a possible model for certain contexts.

In most schools, the subtractive model with its "deficit theory" base is practised ignorantly and this requires informed interventions in order to counter the deleterious effects of the hegemony of English. The dual-medium experiment was an intervention that created new awareness among the learners in that class, their parents and the teachers at the school, because it attempted to make the "human experience of individuals" paramount (Tollefson 1991), through teachers incorporating the daily experiences of the children in their lessons. The adoption of this approach validated learners' efforts and demonstrated how to implement MTBBE in terms of the additive paradigm. In addition to this experiment, critical-language-awareness (CLA) was achieved through the survey, dialogue with parents and teachers, and refreshed literacy practices in some classes. It served as an opportunity to find alternatives to the current pedagogic obstacles and social tensions that the subtractive model contributes to-wards. Due to commitment on the part of the SGB and the teaching staff, a language committee was established. This committee was tasked to ensure sustainable momentum and to oversee co-ordinated progress in the imple-mentation and monitoring stages of this SLP project. The determining of SLP's at other schools should incorporate intervention in the form of data-gathering and opening dialogue within a CLA framework among the school community, so that changed perceptions accompany a changed policy document.

The enlightened understanding by many people in the school commu-nity of therelationship between theory and practice has been a significant outcome of this action research project. It became apparent in the changed perceptions of teachers and parents. Engaging with the relationships between language and power, language and social class and language and identity has been a breakthrough for teachers because it has shed light on many of their questions and misgivings about the stereotypical elements of Afrikaans, such as poor academic performance, undisciplined behaviour and low socio-economic status. This reflects the value of a systematic process of awareness-raising through revealing and problematising percep-tions that were obtained via empirical methods. A similar process should be extended to other schools so that the LiEP can be realised in practice.

The concept of language planning from below (Alexander 1992) can be applied in the determination of school language policy that should incorpo-rate educational theory and practice in such a way that the participants become conscientised about the social, economic and political implications of language practice and policy. This project has given rise to a change in the perception towards Afrikaans among teachers and parents. It has not had the effect of raising the status of Afrikaans yet, because of the short duration of the process hitherto, but the essential principle that both Afrikaans and English are resources for meaningful learning has been planted in the minds of teachers and parents. This has created the paradig-matic conditions, for continued work in the direction of language equity in the school community. If such LP exercises can be embarked upon, prefer-ably in school clusters or circuits, then one of the main structural and policy obstacles that impedes meaningful learning and teaching can be addressed in a systematic manner especially if there is active support from the WCED. The Department could be the agent for providing the resources to facilitate this type of systemic change.

The role of the school in the community and that of the teachers in the classroom is an important dimension in this thesis. The changing of the power-relations involved here can change the internalised inferior status of Afrikaans-speakers in this community. One way of contributing to this change, is by redefining their roles within an additive-bilingualism para-digm so that the learner's academic performance can be improved and enhanced social integration can be achieved. This leads to increased com-munity involvement, as the school has to build a bridge between its people and itself in order to elicit support and gain information for making their daily experiences part of the school. This develops a sense of efficacy among parents that is inevitably transferred to their children (Cummins 2001).

Teachers and parents who showed commitment and experienced a better understanding of the role of language in the school and the commu-nity could work towards validating their dialect of Afrikaans and its cultural practices. This will pave the way for developing children who could become proficient in English, Afrikaans and Xhosa. Introducing Xhosa as an additional language of the province could serve the function of wider regional communication and the development of improved social cohesion. It can also form part of a broader strategy to encourage respect for all languages as resources, thereby cultivating meaningful learning and teach-ing at all levels of education. Developing the capacity of the school in this regard is important in working towards this aim, which could be realised with in-service training programmes that are specifically geared towards implementing multilingual classroom practices.

Language policy realisation processes like that described in this study can be explored at other schools in this area with similar conditions, so that

general school improvement can be achieved by using changed language perceptions, policy and practices as points of departure. In so doing, a contribution towards democratising schools, empowering our communities and creating better chances for the younger generation to participate confidently in the social, economic and political spheres of society in the near future, will be made possible.

Afrikaans is the language that carries the collective memory of the majority of the relevant community under discussion, and raising its status is likely to have positive educational effects on learners. Status-planning efforts would be required to accomplish this because it will entail deliberate efforts to "change the function" (Cooper 1989) of Afrikaans in this community into one which is an expression of pride and self-determination of its people.

The Western Cape School Language Policy will be phased in from 2005 and the experience of this project could serve to inform policy realisation in schools with similar socio-linguistic conditions. This is the beginning of a much longer transformative initiative, to use language policy realisation as a node around which to increase participatory capacity of learners, parents and teachers in the school.

Endnotes

1. Paradigms 'are basic to language planning in that they delimit the ways we talk about language and language issues, they determine the basic questions we ask, the conclusions we draw from data, and even the data itself. Orientations (that paradigms provide) are related to language attitudes in that they constitute the framework in which attitudes are formed: they help to delimit the range of accepFigure attitudes toward language, and to make certain attitudes legitimate' (Ruiz 1984:16).
2. For a more detailed discussion on this 'separate development' of curricula and language policy, see Heugh (2002).
3. *... to maintain home language(s) while providing access to the effective acquisition of additional language(s)* (LiEP 1997).
4. See Braam et al's (2003), Report on Greater Cape Town/Urban and Western Cape/Rural Survey: Language Vitality and Policy Implementation.
5. Dr B. Ngubane, the Minister of Arts Culture Technology and Science initiated this project.
6. Cummins distinguishes between these as two different levels of language learning, where CALP is required for more decontextualised learning.
7. Trends in the survey could be confirmed in the ongoing dialogue in classrooms, during workshops and meetings as a trusting rapport started to develop between the teachers, parents, learners and myself.
8. Plüddemann (2003) follows Bourdieu in distinguishing between symbolic and material policies; and prefers the term policy *realisation*, as it implies a more gradual negotiation amongst stakeholders and has fewer top-down connotations than policy *implementation*.
9. see appendix
10. Teachers are the primary implementers of the language policy.
11. Against the background of social oppression in community's with these features Stone (2002:385) describes stigmitisation of Afrikaans, as ' Afrikaans as not a language but an informal, disrespected admixture of terms.'
12. Those cases where this standard is not met, are labelled 'requiring more attention', in keeping with a developmental paradigm, as opposed to the label 'fail', which was used in the previous discourse on assessment.
13. 'Critical theory has an interest in changing the world. It is a different interest that is emancipatory and involves the unmasking of ideologies that maintain the status quo, by restricting access to the means of gaining knowledge and hence to the means of raising consciousness or

awareness about oppressive material conditions and structures that lead to the failure to fulfil basic social needs' (Scott et al. 1999:31).

14. Three dimensions have bearing on this disparity, namely, language, socio-economic status and perceptions of cultural practices.

15. The Threshold Project researched the disparity between English as a subject and English as the medium of learning in the fifth year of schooling and the pilot indicated that the standard of English that the children speak was poor, and that they were far less capable of handling content subjects, for example, general science and geoFigurey, through English, than through their mother-tongue (Human Sciences Research Council 1990).

16. Kamwangamalu (2001) reports that 91,95% of South African television is broadcast in English, compared to a mere 5,66% in Afrikaans.

17. After Zulu (Census 2001)

18. In this regard, we can turn our attention to the language planning agencies that were initiated by the Afrikaners and draw on their experience of how they developed the corpus of Afrikaans to be competitive in a modern, technologically driven society like South Africa in the 20th and 21st centuries. They set up a language infrastructure with a central bureau for "translation in the civil service, assisted by similar bureaus in a host of government institutions" (Kamwangamalu 2001:361), so that it can be elevated as a literary language and as language of science and technology.

19. Melanie Zeederberg co-ordinated this literacy intervention, under the supervision of Carole Bloch, as a separate but inclusive overall strategy at the school.

20. The survey was conducted at the end of the fourth term which could also have been a factor in the low return rate because it was the time of their final examination.

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Appendices

Questionnaire for Learners

A	Language Choice	Afrikaans	English	isiXhosa	Other
1	Which language do you speak to your mother?				
2	Which language do you speak to your father?				
3	Which language do you speak to your brother/sister?				
4	Which language language do you speak to your grandparent/s?				
B	**Language Preference**				
5	Which language do you mostly like to speak at school?				
6	Which language do you mostly like to speak at home with your friends?				
C	**Language Dominance**				
7	Which language do you speak best?				
8	In which language is your favourite TV programme?				
D	**Language Proficiency**				
9	In which language can you write best?				
10	In which language can you speak best?				
E	**Language Attitudes/Awareness**				
11	Which language would you like to learn the most?				
12	What other language would you like to learn?				
13	Which language, if any, do you not like?				
14	Which language/s do you think the school sees as important to learn?				
15	Which language do you think your parents see as important to learn?				

Taalvraelys vir Leerders

A	Taal Keuse	Afrikaans	Engels	isiXhosa	Ander
1	Watter taal praat jy met jou ma?				
2	Watter taal praat jy met jou pa?				
3	Watter taal praat jy met jou broer(s) of suster(s)?				
4	Watter taal praat jy met jou ouma en oupa?				
B	**Taal Voorkeur**				
5	Watter taal praat jy die meeste by die skool?				
6	Watter taal praat jy meestal by die huis?				
C	**Taal Oorheusing**				
7	Watter taal praat jy die beste?				
8	Wat is jou gunsteling TV program?				
D	**Taal Bevoegtheid**				
9	Watter taal kan jy die beste in skryf?				
10	Watter taal kan jy die beste praat?				
E	**Taal Houdings/Bewustheid**				
11	Watter taal/tale wil jy die graagste leer?				
12	Water ander taal/tale sou jy graag wou leer?				
13	Watter taal, indien enige, hou jy nie van nie?				
14	Watter taal/tale is belangrik vir leer werk in die skool?				
15	Watter taal dink jy, beskou jou ouers, as belangrik om te leer?				

Questionnaire for Parents

Please tick the appropriate block for the first 13 questions.

		Afrikaans	English	isiXhosa	Other
1.	Which language/s do you speak to your children?				
2.	Which language do you speak to your spouse/ partner?				
3.	Which language do you speak to your close friends?				
4.	Which language do you speak to your family?				
5.	Which language do you speak to your colleagues at work?				
6.	Which language do you speak to your employer?				
7.	Which language/s would you like your child/ren to learn at school?				
8.	Which language/s should the school governing body choose to communicate with you?				
9.	Which language/s should the school governing body choose as a language of teaching and learning?				
10.	Which language/s, if any, do you not like?				
11.	Which language/s do you speak best?				
12.	Which language do you mostly like to speak?				
13.	Which language is spoken mostly in your home?				
14.	Would you like to make any comments about the language situation at * Primary?				

_____

_____

_____

_____

Taalvraelys vir Ouers

		Afrikaans	Engels	isiXhosa	Ander
1	Watter taal/tale praat u met u kinders?				
2	Watter taal/tale praat u met u eggenoot?				
3	Watter taal/tale praat u met u vriende?				
4	Watter taal/tale praat u met u familie?				
5	Watter taal/tale praat u met u kollegas by die werk?				
6	Watter taal/tale praat u met u werkgewer?				
7	Watter taal/tale wou u graag hê u kinders moet by die skool leer?				
8	Watter taal/tale moet die beheer liggaam gebruik om met u te kommunikeer?				
9	Watter taal/tale moet die beheerliggaam kies vir u kind om in te leer?				
10	Watter taal/tale, indien enige, hou u nie van nie?				
11	Watter taal/tale praat u die beste?				
12	Water taal/tale verkies u om meestal te praat?				
13	Watter taal/tale word die meeste by u huis gepraat?				

14. Will u graag enige kommentaar lewer oor the taal situasie by die skool?

— —
— —
— —
— —

Questionnaire for educators

Respondents Details:　　　Number of years of teaching experience

Grade/s that you teach

Please tick the appropriate block for the first 12 questions.

		Afrikaans	English	isiXhosa	Other
1.	Which language/s do you speak at home?				
2.	Which language/s do you speak to your children?				
3.	Which language/s do or would you feel confident teaching in?				
4.	Which language do you prefer to speak to parents?				
5.	Which language/s do you prefer to speak in staff meetings?				
6.	Which language/s do you speak best?				
7.	Which language medium do you teach in?				
8.	In the past, which language/s did you teach in?				
9.	What other language/s would you like to learn?				
10.	Which language/s, if any, do you not like?				
11.	In which language/s can you read? Choose advanced (A) or intermediate . (I) where relevant	A　I	A　I	A　I	A　I
12.	In which language/s can youwrite? Choose advanced (A) or intermediate . (I) where relevant	A　I	A　I	A　I	A　I

13. What learning areas do you teach?

— —

14. What is your understanding of the school's language policy?.

— —
— —
— —

Interview Schedule for a Teacher and Parent Focus Group

Date: _____

Number of teachers: _____

Grades represented: _____

Language streams represented: _____

The purpose of this interview is to gain information about the perceptions of teachers to a change in language policy.

A] Current Policy:

1. Describe your current language policy.
2. What are the languages of teaching and learning?
3. Which languages are taught as a subject?
4. Is this the ideal policy for your school?
5. What do you think should be improved about this policy?
6. Who made the decisions about this policy?
7. Are Afrikaans and English enjoying the same status at the school?
8. Do you feel this should be changed and how do think this can be changed?

B] New Policy

1. What should be changed about the policy?
2. How do you think this change must take place?
3. What do you think the parents will feel about this?
4. Are you prepared to teach in two languages?
5. What do you understand by a dual-medium system of teaching?
6. Do you think that a dual-medium system will make a difference to the quality of teaching and learning?
7. How can a new policy change the negative attitudes towards Afrikaans?
8. What is the most challenging aspect about a new language policy?

Taal Onderhoudskedule vir Ouers/Leerkragte

Taal Oorheusing/Voorkeur

1. Watter taal praat u die beste?
2. Watter taal/tale praat u by die huis met u kinders?
3. Watter taal word die meeste in die gemeenskap gepraat?
4. Hoe vergelyk dit met die taal wat die meeste by die skool gepraat word?
5. Watter tale sou u verkies dat u kinders by die skool leer?

Taal Houdings/Bewustheid

1. Wattter taal/tale dink u sou in die toekoms belangrik vir u kind wees? Afrikaans allenlik, Engels allenlik of Afrikaans en Engels?
2. Dink u die skool behandel Afrikaans en Engels as gelyke tale?
3. Hoe voel u omtrent die idee, dat u dogter/seun onderig ontvang in vakke soos Wetenskap Wiskunde, Geskiedenis, Aardrykskunde in albei Afrikaans en Engels.
4. Watter ander taal sou u wou hê dat u seun/dogter by die skool moet leer?

Taal Beleid

1. Hoe sal u die taalbeleid van die skool beskryf?
2. Is u ten gunstig van 'n verandering in die huidige taalbeleid?
3. Wie dink u, moet deelmaak van die besluite omtrent die taalbeleid van die skool?

Classroom Observation Schedule

Determining a School Language Policy for * Primary

Date: ....

Language Stream: ....

Grade: ....

Learning Area/Subject:...

Duration of Observation: ....

The purpose of the observation is to gather information about classroom practice versus language use under the following categories.

1. Language Distribution:
*   greetings/instructions: ....
    ....
*   announcements/prayers: ....
    ....
*   introducing lesson: ....
    ....
*   questions/explaining/recapping: ....
    ....
*   writing by teacher: ....
    ....
*   writing by learner: ....
    ....

2. Teacher's Language Use and Learner's Language Use:
*   Materials: ....
    ....
*   Assessment: ....
    ....
*   Learner participation: ....
    ....

Print environment: ....
....

General Comments: ....
....

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