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Shifting the Language Policy Gaze: from Debates on Policy to a Dialogue on Practices

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ABSTRACT
There appears to be growing consensus among policy analysts and language practitioners that there is little, if any, substantive attempt at institutionalising the conditions necessary to promote and sustain multilingualism in South African schools. In shifting the gaze from debates on policy, to a dialogue on practices, the research informing this article focussed on schools that had, or were receiving support from NGOs for language policy development and language curriculum innovation. The article explores schooling sites that demonstrate attempts to move their language practices closer to official policy and may, therefore, be regarded as exemplary. An analysis of practices shows that the majority of schools in this study were left largely to their own devices. However, schools supported by the Home Language Project (HLP) exemplify the benefits to be derived from a community-initiated impetus for multilingual teaching and learning. In evincing a move towards additive multilingualism as a resource, this NGO intervention underscores the reality that the imperative for multilingual implementation can no longer be left solely to the discretion of government. Instead, the hope for a multilingual future lies in individual schooling communities assuming leadership, using beacons such as those explored in this article.

Key words: Multilingualism, policy intervention, policy advocacy, exemplary multilingual practices, NGOs

INTRODUCTION

Conceived within a pedagogy of hope and possibility rather than a pedagogy of deficit and despair, this article is the second in a series that focuses on language policy and practice in South African schools. In the first article, (Dhunpath & Joseph, 2014) we explored the perceived phenomenon of policy failure and argued that a more productive approach to policy analysis was to ask whether policy can learn from practice. We argued that if government policy recognised and rewarded schools with exemplary practices, "policy from below could contribute to an evolving multilingualism to complement multilingual policies from above" (ibid, p. 14).

In this article, I probe the policy phenomenon further, focusing on 'exemplary' sites of multilingual[1] activity. The schooling sites selected for this study were purposively sampled and confined to those serviced by three providers[2] that provided language policy intervention and support in South Africa, namely, the English Language Teaching Centre, (ELTIC) a well-known language development NGO which ceased operations on account of curtailed funding; the Home Language Project (HLP), a relatively unknown service provider in Johannesburg, which was active at the time of data collection; and the English Language Education Trust (ELET), a reputed NGO that has been involved in language teacher development for more than 35 years.

The research cited in this article was conducted in 2004 while I was a Senior Research Specialist at the Human Sciences Research Council, to investigate at the time, what progress South Africa was making in implementing its ambitious multilingual Language in Education Policy (LiEP, 1997). We contended then that "South African schools continue to face challenges in implementing the official bilingual policy at the level of policy development, teacher training, materials development, language pedagogy and assessment" (Dhunpath & Joseph, 2014, p. 1). We noted further that in general, "there is a growing sense of policy failure and a resignation that English will inevitably maintain its hegemony over African languages" (ibid, 2014, p. 1). However, in an attempt to resist submitting to the deficit discourse, we deliberately sampled

[1] A multilingual speaker is one who can communicate in more than one language, either actively (through speaking, writing, or signing) or passively (through listening, reading, or perceiving). These speakers will typically have acquired and maintained at least one language during childhood, without formal education called the so-called first language or mother tongue.

[2] These sites were chosen for cost and pragmatic reasons based on their accessibility to the research team. The research team acknowledges that there are other intervention programmes in the country which might provide richer insights into alternative practices.

schooling sites that were likely to challenge the dominant narrative of policy failure. The data was produced through document analysis, school visits and interviews with project leaders.

Many of the concerns and challenges emanating from that study continue to pervade the language policy landscape. Such debates also continue to occupy the global consciousness, (Alexander & Bloch, 2003; Granville et al., 1998; Heugh, 2003; Hornberger, 2010; Kamwangamalu, 2010; McGroarty, 2010; Phillipson, & Skuttnab-Kangas, 2012; Taylor, & Coetzee, 2013; van der Worp, Cenoz, & Gorter, 2016; Forman, 2016). It is therefore prudent at this time, to revisit the earlier study to establish what lessons might be learnt in re-envisioning a policy approach that draws on school practices that have made attempts to move their practices closer to official policy and may therefore be regarded as exemplary.

In this article, a discussion of NGO interventions in school policy implementation begins with an explication of each programme model, followed by an analysis of how these programmes have been received, and their influence on policy development and practice. A total of 19 schools were selected from three service providers. The researched schools ranged from urban to rural and farm schools, from primary to secondary schools, and from all-male to mixed-gender schools. While the data and analysis in this article are generalised from all three projects, for the purpose of this article, the Home Language Project (HLP) will be the focus of attention because it exemplifies the benefits to be derived from a community-initiated impetus for multilingual teaching and learning.

THEORETICAL LENSES

A heuristic framework based on four quadrants was used to understand schools' language practices in terms of typologies of multilingualism ranging from weak to strong practices (Figure 1). The yardstick used was based on how closely they approximate an additive bilingual[3] approach of multilingual learning of African languages as required by official policy. The heuristic model was progressively refined to reflect multilingualism *as practiced in schools*, with a special focus on exemplary practices. Exemplary practices were identified under selected categories: exemplary management of multilingual resources; exemplary school Language in Education texts; exemplary curricular design, exemplary classroom pedagogies, exemplary co-curricular activities, and exemplary school environments.

[3] Additive Bilingualism refers to the learning of a second language by individuals or groups without compromising the development of the first language, which results in the acquisition of a second language without replacing the first language.

Schools were classified into four major typologies ranging from the weaker "Assimilationist" quadrant; the dominant "Transitional" Quadrant; the "Towards Multilingualism" quadrant and finally the utopian "Strongly Additive Multilingualism" quadrant.

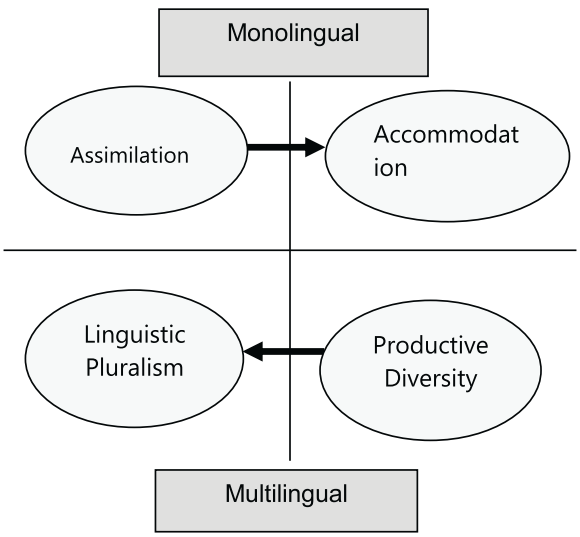


Figure 1. Typology of multilingual practices

The theoretical lenses are borrowed from Jim Cummins's Interdependence Hypothesis (1992) and his 4 quadrant clines of linguistic and cognitive complexity, to examine the levels of proficiency in African languages and English - actually used as resources for learning content subjects. Cummins's 4 quadrants, I believe, represent an advance over his earlier BICS (Basic Interpersonal Skills) and CALP (Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency) theory[4]. The Cummins model was a valuable tool in mapping schools onto our own heuristic Typologies of Multilingualism quadrants. The Typologies quadrant thus constructed on the basis of 19 schools, provides a referent to enable other schools to locate their current practices. It also provides a vision for the direction schools could be taking in their multilingual trajectories, based on alternative exemplars.

It must be emphasised here that my conception of 'exemplary practices' is not one that is utopian and idealised, but is understood to be vivid descriptions of noteworthy episodes of teaching, learning, curricular design, or strategies for managing multilingual resources (see Dhunpath & Joseph, 2014). Exemplars, I believe, have the capacity to provoke practitioners to question their practices, or affirm them. Exemplars also help to reconceptualise or illustrate abstract policy formulations in context. In pursuit of this outcome, the research sought to arrive at an exemplar-driven approach to policy reconstruction rather than a policy-driven approach to practices. Such an approach

[4] Jim Cummins clarifies the distinction between basic interpersonal communicative skills (BICS) and cognitive academic language proficiency (CALP) in order to introduce practitioners' attention to second language learners' experiences as they engage in academic aspects of the school language. BICS refers to conversational fluency in a language while CALP refers to students' ability to understand and express, in both oral and written modes, concepts and ideas that are relevant to success in school (see Cummins, 2008).

was open from the start to the possibility that some school practices might not just conform to, but possibly be richer than official policy.

EXEMPLAR 1: THE HOME LANGUAGE PROJECT (HLP)

Conceived in 2001, the Home Language Project (HLP- was introduced to selected schools in Gauteng to provide home-language support in a group of schools that use English as the language of learning and teaching (LOLT). The project targets seven languages at a first-language level (HL) – the Nguni group (isiZulu, isiXhosa, siSwati, isiNdebele) and the Sotho group (Sesotho, Sepedi, Setswana). It also offers a library service in all nine official African languages as well as a base for 'in-service educator training' (INSET).

The HLP project acknowledges, as a foundational principle, that the marginalisation of home languages results in significant cognitive and cultural deficits for learners and their families. Additive multilingualism, on the other hand, has significant cognitive, psychological, social and cultural advantages, but this implies ongoing maintenance and development of the home-language foundation. The project initiators argued that the practice in Gauteng of encouraging the selection of one African language to be added to the curriculum as an 'additional language' (AL) subject, but doing nothing about the other eight official African languages, will not achieve the goals of additive multilingualism in schools wherein learners have a wide range of primary languages.

The HLP also acknowledges that teaching all nine languages as first-language subjects in these schools is simply not feasible, given the present deployment of limited human and physical resources. The programme aims instead, at providing sufficient support, through a minimal intervention strategy, to achieve a sound base for multilingualism. It seeks to do this in a cost-effective and practical way, by sharing itinerant language teachers among clusters of schools and grouping languages into language families.

As its Operating Strategy the HLP supports home languages in five ways:

- Providing one special, intra-mural, home-language period per week to learners in Grades 1 to 9, teaching the home language as a subject;
- Setting up a library of African-language books, magazines and newspapers and encouraging reading for pleasure in the home language;
- Assisting the in-house teachers of an African language as an AL

subject to maximise the value of their classes for HL learners (via multi-level teaching and using peer-group 'helpers');

- Encouraging parents to support the home language at home;
- Influencing the whole-school language philosophy, particularly by encouraging teachers of other subjects, who use English as the LOLT, to support the home language in their classes.

THE SOCIAL MILIEU IN WHICH THE PROJECT OPERATES

The six Johannesburg schools, which initiated the project, are all historically advantaged former 'white' schools. The project is managed by a coalition of governing bodies (SGBs) of the participating schools, through their representatives on the HLP management committee. Most of the learners in these schools, however, are from historically disadvantaged backgrounds. Most do not reside in the vicinity of the schools, commuting to school by taxi or bus, while the majority of those living in the area are children of domestic employees. A significant proportion of the learners concerned have been granted either a full or partial remission of fees in terms of state legislation.

Another school, which has been added to the original six for research purposes, is a poorly resourced school in a high-density inner-city area notorious for its social problems and its high immigrant population (particularly from other parts of Africa). This school presented the project with an opportunity to test the effectiveness of the HLP model in a less-resourced, historically disadvantaged school facing an especially complex language situation.

The HLP was initiated by the parents and governing bodies of the original six Johannesburg schools with the primary aim of assisting their own pupils to enjoy all the advantages of additive bilingualism and, in particular, with the explicit aim of avoiding the educational disadvantages of home-language loss. However, the HLP also envisaged that all role players in the sector should be able to learn from the development and testing of an innovative model designed to achieve what they consider an important element of National Language and Cultural Policy. The intervention responds to the Department of Education's (2001) preamble to the National Language in Education Policy 14 July 1997 (4.1.5), which states that "an underlying principle is to maintain home languages while providing access to and the acquisition of

additional languages". The main aims of this policy are, amongst others, "to establish additive multilingualism as an approach to education" (4.3.2) and "to counter disadvantages resulting from…mismatches between home languages and LOLTs" (languages of learning and teaching) (4.3.5).

In addition to its 'leadership in innovation' role to assist the development and implementation of representative Language in Education Policy (LiEP), the HLP also seeks to develop institutional capacity by offering an ongoing support role via the provision of in-service teaching support (INSET), as well as guidance to administrators and schools to promote the maintenance and development of African home languages. This is grounded in the principle that an intervention in the status quo should be constitutionally defensible, promote social justice, and be practical and cost-effective.

THE BROADER AIMS OF THE HOME LANGUAGE PROJECT

The aims are articulated as:

- To develop a sustainable model which is replicable in other schools with multilingual learners;
- To develop a sound methodology for African home-language instruction at a first-language level;
- To convince teachers and parents that the neglect of the home language has serious drawbacks and that its promotion will advance, not retard the development of competence in English;
- To set up a base to provide in-service teacher training (INSET) to African-language teachers dealing with multi-lingual situations in historically disadvantaged schools;
- To create opportunities for research around the controversial issue of choice of 'language of instruction'.

MAIN ACTIVITIES AND INPUTS

Apart from the (irregular) payment of the teachers' salaries by the Gauteng Department of Education (GDE), the project depends on donor funding and will continue to do so until the GDE takes on the responsibility for implementing national policy. The HLP teachers, who rotate between the schools, providing one special HL lesson per week (intra-mural) to Grades 1 to 9 in each school, are employed by the GDE on temporary contracts. A project coordinator handles ongoing liaison with the schools, in the design and day-to-day management of each school's programme and the supervision of the teachers. Their original training in the HLP methodology was

provided by an education consultant with many years of experience in teacher training. He contributes to the continuous development of the model and gives ongoing feedback to the teachers.

The HLP project coordinator emphasises the need for high quality learning materials in all the languages being taught. Hence, preparing and organising seven sets of materials makes the assistance of a materials-developer necessary. Smith, the project initiator and leader, comments on the challenges faced by both learners and teachers:

> The task is made more difficult by the scarcity of good up-to-date dictionaries and the fluid state of languages which are experiencing major socio-cultural shifts. The lack of complete sets of classroom readers for all the languages at all levels – either because they have not yet been published or because they are out of print – is another problem. With cost-effectiveness in mind, the readers (textbooks) we have shared between learners and carried by the teachers between the schools. (Personal Communication, October 2003)

The HLP has been instrumental in developing a library of African-language books. These libraries are controlled in conjunction with the media centre supervisors in each school and are rotated between the schools every six months, to maximise usage of the limited resource. Each school currently has about 100 books in nine languages including Xitsonga and Tshivenda – the two official African languages that are not taught directly by the project. The ultimate aim of the project is to have 50 library books in each language in each school (that is, 450 per school), as well as every school carrying the cost of African-language newspapers and magazines (where they exist) and being motivated to develop their own supplementary set of African-language books. Smith (2003) explains further: To get the TV-generation learners to read is problematic, whatever the language, particularly where there is not a strong culture of reading in the home. But, we believe that for African languages to hold their own in the modern world, it is vital for them to become reading as well as spoken languages. The dearth of published books reflects a broader educational/cultural problem facing our African-language heritage; pressure from readers themselves, together with pressure from institutions requiring people to read, is needed before publishers will produce the books to underpin language heritage (Personal Communication, October, 2003)

An additional challenge impeding multilingualism is that many parents,

convinced that learning English is a priority for their children, deliberately suppress the use of African languages in the home. To counter this tendency, the HLP uses letters to parents and face-to-face meetings to inform parents and guardians of research which demonstrates that a strong home-language base assists the acquisition of English; and to discuss ways to support the home language at home. The HLP strategy involves not just the provision of books, but also a voluntary extra-mural African-language reading period in the afternoons; cajoling parents into encouraging their children to read in the home language in addition to English and to use their language in reading and telling stories to their children; and inter-school reading competitions between children of the same language group. The HLP has found that this low-level advocacy campaign has been pivotal in changing attitudes to African languages. Parents from these communities are now strongly in favour of home-language support and, in fact, regard it as a constitutional right.

Building a whole-school supportive environment is crucial in promoting multilingualism. This involves influencing the development of the school's language policy (based on the Gauteng Language Bill 1998) including, for example, the selection of languages for additional-language teaching, the provision of books in media centres and the approach to home languages. The existence of such a policy and the operation of the HLP in the school are intended to influence the attitude of the staff towards home languages, as Smith, (2003) points out: We encourage teachers of all subjects to consider other-language pupils as having an extra tool for thinking which can be used in a number of ways to handle difficult new concepts. We also encourage the use of posters in classrooms displaying vocabulary in all the African languages. And as with the provision of library books in their languages, the two which are not taught (Xitsonga and Tshivenda), also benefit from the development of a genuinely supportive environment for all languages. This is a further example of the project assisting in the implementation of what is, in fact, GDE policy (Personal Communication, October, 2003)

EFFICACY OF THE HOME LANGUAGE PROJECT

The HLP model is cost-effective and, where the school has been an enthusiastic partner in the process, it has also proved to be practical. It has demonstrated that providing home-language support as a base for additive multilingualism, in the face of nine official African languages, is not insurmountable.

The project has provided such support to approximately 650 learners each year for the preceding three years and, in the process, has focused the attention of the staff at these schools on the meaning and significance of the concept of additive multilingualism.

Its effect on the self-image of the learners and their attitude to their language has been significant. According to Smith, (2003), external evaluator Herman Kotze had this to say after an intensive evaluation of the Project in 2002: It was clear that the learners enjoy the lessons and they patently demonstrate high levels of performance in all aspects of language learning. Most notably, the high levels of productive skills in the home language attest to the learners' pride and joy in being able to express themselves with confidence in their home language. A common refrain from the learners' interviews was that they now feel personally empowered … have developed a pride and a passion for their home language and … see it as their right and responsibility to speak and write (it) with excellence … The overwhelming desire from the learners is to be granted the continuing opportunity to grow in competence and performance in their home language. They also expressed a desire to see this opportunity extended to many other learners. They also feel it is through their home language that their associated culture will be preserved and said that this is essential for their own identity and development, (Personal Communication, October, 2003).

The project has a mandatory evaluation component as well as a strategy to provide an ongoing theoretical basis for the intervention. In general, the HLP arguably represents one of the more sophisticated models of language intervention in the country in that it targets not just the language learners, but schooling communities more broadly. It is not clear why the Department of Education has not paid adequate attention to the possibility of replicating and up-scaling this model in other contexts.

The next section focuses on a retrospective analysis of the residual effects of the intervention programmes of the English Language Teaching Information Centre (ELTIC) which ceased to exist in 1990.

EXEMPLAR 2: THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING INFORMATION CENTRE (ELTIC)

The founding director of the project, Dr Paul Musker, reflected on the purpose of ELTIC, which was primarily to support teachers during the era of Bantu Education when African languages were relegated to

the level of 'vernaculars'. The programme comprised three broad areas:

- The first as the information phase aimed at conscientisation of school governing bodies. This involved information dissemination and advocacy around issues of bilingual and multilingual education.
- The second phase involved research skills development among teachers. The programme focused on how to analyse and interpret data, and how to use the data to draft a language policy.
- The third phase involved the drafting and redrafting of a language policy. This phase also considered curriculum, governance and deployment of teachers and resources.

The ELTIC's programme was essentially in-service distance education with an emphasis on open learning with a significant allocation of contact hours. The teacher trainees had to produce assignments based on observations and methodological changes to their teaching. ELTIC staff would occasionally visit their classrooms to observe lessons. Teachers offering the diploma were not only 'language' teachers but also 'content' teachers. They were drawn from primary and high schools drawn from all parts of South Africa. Musker (2004) explains: That was the big shift – not just the teaching of languages but the teaching of content subjects – a language across the curriculum approach … Distance education couldn't be done as distance education in the old sense… ELTIC was a pilot – with the idea of offering this programme in other parts of the country once it was stabilized. (Personal Communication, January, 2004)

The ELTIC did not try to advocate particular methods of multilingualism, but rather tried to make teachers aware of the multilingual practices already in practice. Attention was paid to code-switching[5], as indicated by Musker (2004): "As code-switching was the most common practice, we did not prescribe any approach." At the time, two attitudes to code-switching prevailed. The first – by African teachers (who used it anyway), the second by white, Indian or coloured teachers "who were afraid of code-switching because they couldn't understand the language" (Personal Communication: Musker, 2004).

The ELTIC believed it succeeded in changing these teachers' attitudes to code-switching from rejecting it to respecting and allowing it. In this sense,

[5] Code-switching is the practice of moving back and forth between two languages or between two dialects or registers of the same language in the same conversation.

ELTIC was promoting greater awareness of existing multilingual practices (code-switching) and deliberate 'pedagogical engineering' of code-switching for learning purposes through the Action Research model that teachers would implement. Musker (2004) contends that:

> ELTIC represented a strong form of intervention compared to conventional distance education models, though not as strongly interventionist as the Home Language Project. In this matter the HLP – ELTIC differences are interesting and a new model of intervention can be constructed by taking the differing strengths of both yet avoiding their weaknesses. (Personal Communication, January, 2004)

Musker (2004) also explains the value of ELTIC staff engaging in classroom observation: The observations were not only to support them, but also for triangulation. We had to see if their assignments matched what was happening (in their classrooms). Teachers were encouraged to 'change' their practices and write about them. ELTIC deliberately promoted action research and actively taught this concept to the teachers, encouraging them to find methods appropriate to their classroom contexts. (Personal Communication, January, 2004)

Although the project ceased to exist as a consequence of curtailed funding, it was interesting to learn that teachers from schools that participated in the project still had vivid memories of the programme. Teachers in the ELTIC schools recall the support to schools in the form of workshops that promoted code-switching as a teaching strategy used by teachers who used English as the medium of instruction. Teachers emphasised that their schools LiEP policies can be attributed to the work of the ELTIC programme: … as with the language policy the people who gave us real background were the ELTIC people … I think they gave us a little background because guideline alone cannot really make you to maintain what is expected of you. So I think they laid a foundation. Because with them I still remember something that we could see that it was really important … that the child must learn his mother tongue, must read books in his mother tongue because before he can master another language and as we did that I could see that it was really true. (Teacher interview 2004).

While the presence of ELTIC made a difference to this teacher and many others who endorsed its positive influence, this data cannot be generalised due to the time lapse in the history of participating schools. What is apparent from those who

did remember ELTIC, is that the project did not only help them with language policy interpretation, but also helped to raise awareness of the importance of the mother tongue in cognitive development.

The third service provider surveyed in this study is the English Language Education Trust (ELET), an NGO which has been involved in language development for more than 35 years.

EXEMPLAR 3: ENVIRONMENT AND LANGUAGE EDUCATION TRUST (ELET)

The ELET Language for Learning Project arose out of a concern around under-achievement in many Kwa-Zulu Natal schools, the key factor in this under-achievement being the language of learning and teaching (LOLT). Various reasons such as parental illiteracy, poor resourcing of schools, high learner-teacher ratios and poor school management have been cited for the low achievement. Increasingly educational disadvantage, as a consequence of language ability, is being acknowledged as a key contributor (Dominey, 2013; Perlovsky, 2009). This factor has become especially significant in schools comprising a linguistically diverse learner population where second language (L2) learners in English-medium schools are required to learn through an insufficiently acquired second language, (Hammarström, 2016).

The ELET project is informed by research by Cummins (1985) on the distinction between two types of language skills: Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills (BICS) which we use in everyday, face-to-face interactions, and Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP), which is language used for learning; that is, language proficiency used in context-reduced, cognitively demanding situations. Since many L2 learners have not developed CALP adequately in their L2 and perhaps even in their First Language (L1) because it is not maintained, these learners find it extremely demanding to perform context-reduced, cognitively demanding tasks. Hence these learners, in particular, are in need of language support. The Language for Learning Project attempted to provide such support.

The project aimed to enable teachers to improve learning in Science, Mathematics and English by improving the use of language in these subjects in Grades 4 to 7. The specific objectives of the project were:

- to make teachers aware of the language demands of lessons in English, Science and Mathematics;
- to enable teachers to analyse the language demands associated with tasks, and

- to enable teachers to use different forms of support for reading, writing, listening and speaking in English, Science and Mathematics.

Using the workshop format, the project exposed participating teachers to five modules, namely Reading, Writing, Listening, and Talk. The workshops, supported by relevant guides, introduced teachers to key principles and concepts and provided guidance in the generation of language support materials using both visual and verbal texts for English, Science and Mathematics. The workshops were followed by school support visits and lesson observations of participating teachers to assist them in the effective implementation of the support programme and to evaluate the extent to which teachers and learners were benefiting from the project.

According to ELET trainers there are several factors hampering the full objectives of the support programme from being realised. Among these are:

- limited support from some school principals for the ELET project;
- poor attendance of some teachers that left significant gaps in their learning;
- opposition of some teachers to the classroom observations and general school visits of the trainer; and
- diminished funding for the project, which resulted in its premature termination.

Despite the barriers to the programme outlined above, various teachers who participated in the programme attested to its value. According to teachers in the ELET sample, the only real support for the implementation of multilingual education that the schools received was from ELET. They claim that the support they received was useful in sensitising teachers to the language challenges facing African learners in English-dominant school contexts. The programme encouraged teachers to implement various teaching and learning strategies and learning support materials to assist learners (both L1 and L2 speakers) to negotiate learning in a LOLT in which they had limited proficiency. A more enduring benefit of the ELET initiative was that it generated and cultivated agents of change at school level. The data clearly reflected that in the face of limited policy support, individual change agents exist in schools and can initiate and sustain the process of implementing multilingual education. The challenge, therefore, is to harness these pockets of energy and diffuse them into other schooling communities. Regrettably, the South African Department of Education is still to capitalise on this valuable resource.

An exemplary practice by an innovative teacher

Exemplary practices that encouraged the use of the learners' languages for learning, though rare, offer in embryonic form, the kind of practice that could be replicated and developed to a fully-fledged model of additive multilingualism.

The most innovative practice discovered during the course of the research was observed in one of the HLP schools in a Foundation Phase Information technology (IT) class. It should be noted that language and technology was at the time of this project still in an embryonic stage in South African Schools and was mainstreamed much later, (Wu, 2014). Three IT lessons were held each week, conducted by a teacher who uses the audiovisual computer software in the Media Centre of the school to teach Mathematics. The Mathematics software consists of a wide repertoire of learning materials offered in five different languages: English, Afrikaans, isiZulu, Sesotho and Setswana. The teacher makes selective use of this software by first investigating the teaching content of the week from the teachers of the three learning areas (numeracy, literacy and life skills). The teacher then tries to match these contents to what is offered by the computer software. For example, in solving a mathematical (numeracy) problem, the learners are given the option of reading and listening on the computer to the instructions/questions in five different languages related to a theme that is being taught in the content class.

The learning of the content can be done in any of the five languages. Learners are allowed to pick the language or languages that best clarify the problem. The learners can start with English and later switch to Afrikaans, Setswana or isiZulu and vice versa. They may finally decide to stay with their home language. This in effect means that the learners are able to have multilingual education and use their IT skills for cognitive development within the three learning areas and at the same time develop proficiency in both English and any of the other languages.

The teacher works cooperatively with the other teachers within the school to ensure that, whatever the learners are working with in their respective classes is actually being reinforced in the computer lessons. The researchers observed the enthusiasm of the learners during the lessons and found that many learners recorded significant improvements especially in numeracy. Learners showed improvements of between 28% and 52% as recorded in subsequent assessments.

According to the teacher, a primary motivating factor with the IT multilingual approach is its inbuilt self-assessment facility. The software programme allows learners to solve problems and then awards a mark, so that learners know how well they are doing. This innovation, spearheaded by a teacher, locates multilingualism as a resource at the highest level of academic literacy, within multimodal, multi-genre, self-access learner-centred resources with provisions for self-assessment and integrated with mainstream content areas (see Chapelle & Voss, 2017). The innovation is relatively low-cost (using an established media centre through an existing budget), and except for the initial costs of the software, uses computers already present in the centre. It is low-risk in that it plays a supportive role in facilitating mainstream learning areas.

One shortcoming is that since mainstream assessments are not done in the languages of the learners, home languages are being used only for support and not for full-fledged additive multilingualism. A second shortcoming is that the teacher seems to be unaware of the significance and value of this innovation and it thus remains in the domain of private knowledge. Such innovations need to be identified by researchers and brought to the notice of the principal and other teachers, as well as of other schools, so that successful practices can be disseminated and replicated.

EMERGING TRENDS, ENDURING ATTRIBUTES

How do the de-facto practices in schools measure up to the prescripts of the typology of multilingual practices represented in Figure 1 of this article? Overall, the evidence from all three projects indicates that most schools surveyed fall in the 'transitional' quadrant where symbolic support for African languages is strong, but substantive support is limited to African languages as subjects. These schools affirm African languages as a 'Right'. The seven schools related to the Home Language Project alone fall into the typology 'towards additive multilingualism'. These schools indicate a move towards affirming African languages as resources. No school could be found to represent the highest level of additive multilingualism in quadrant D, but some educators' practices (in the HLP sampled schools) are moving in that direction. Quadrant D therefore represents a utopian typology towards which schools can strive.

The categorisation of Richard Ruiz (2013) of 'problem', 'rights' and 'resources' as applied to indigenous languages is useful in the South African context. The Typologies of

Multilingualism constructed on the basis of the data from this research, could enable language policy makers and practitioners to shift from seeing African languages as a 'Problem and a Right', to seeing them as a 'Right and a Resource'.

Intervention and advocacy: drivers of multilingualism

An enduring theme in all three projects is that even a little intervention goes a long way in raising consciousness and changing attitudes. It must be emphasised that all the projects analysed in this study are no more than symbolic interventions. Yet, their impact has been significant and in some instances - profound. Several studies (see Webb 1996; Granville, et.al, 1998; Williams, & Stroud, 2013; Kelly, 2018) have highlighted the consequences of uninformed language in education policy choices. It needs to be acknowledged that decades of apartheid education have succeeded in socialising South African society into seemingly indelible ideological views of language. Given the 'Bantu' stigma that continues to be attached to African languages, the politically uninformed will tend to adopt instrumental pragmatism in language choice and African languages will continue to be marginalised. The challenge is to be rid the 'Bantu' stigma in African languages in tandem with systematically challenging the hegemony of English, while at the same time guaranteeing access to it, through dual-medium education programmes.

Such a process of de-stigmatisation will not happen without deliberate and sustained intervention. To begin with, there are insufficient numbers of visible and influential champions for the preservation and promotion of African languages. Championing multilingualism needs to be supported by an advocacy campaign initiated from the highest levels of government directed at all levels of society, but in particular, a concerted campaign needs to be directed at schooling communities and school governing boards (Granville, et.al., 1998).

This study has signalled the value of advocacy campaigns represented by the HLP project. Notwithstanding its limited scope and reach, such interventions should not be underestimated as such campaigns can show-case exemplary practices elicited from schools through official surveys and researches. The HLP experience also reveals that the low-level, seemingly benign campaign conducted by an education consultant with school governing bodies and teachers had a profound effect in changing attitudes to home languages and largely underlies the success and sustainability of the HLP.

From a moral to an active role

Repeatedly, in our engagement with respondents, schools expressed the need for the DBE to play more than a moral role, and to transcend what they perceive to be the role of ritualised distributor of school funding. There was, however, a sympathetic recognition of the need for new expertise to emerge within district official circles. A network of partnerships between the school, the community, the Department of Education and higher education is seen as a possibility to alleviate the problems caused by the dearth of experts. This could be achieved by expanding the pool to draw teachers involved in innovative teaching practices. Training programmes can be conceptualised to mediate between multilingual LiEP and school practices. This has emerged as the key to the future of a viable multilingualism in schools.

A serious impediment to self-motivated teacher development, repeated ad nauseam in other studies, (Samuel, 2008; Heystek, & Terhoven, 2014) is the (in)competency syndrome, in the absence of incentives for teachers to improve their levels of competence in managing multilingual environments. This obstacle is often a source of de-motivation for teachers. Teachers express gross dissatisfaction with the Department's refusal to acknowledge academic achievements for career mobility, as indicated below:

> *I do not feel motivated because there are no incentives. Whether you study or not, will remain a foundation phase teacher, earning the same salary all the way. (Teacher interview, January 2004)*

Compensatory Multilingualism

The official language in education policy documents does make a demand for an additive multilingual education, that is, the use of African languages as media of instruction, referred to as bilingualism, as well as the teaching and learning of additional languages. In this study however, schools have diverged from this policy and implemented the weaker form of multilingualism, namely the tendency towards compensatory multilingualism by offering African languages as additional subjects.

While the additional subject route might be seen from a historical point of view as progressive - in allowing schools to move away from Afrikaans to African languages - it does little to disrupt the hegemony of English and the marginal status of African languages. Part of the problem may be ascribed to the relative freedom accorded to school governing bodies in determining language policies. A semantic analysis of the 1996 South

African Schools Act reveals a potential ambiguity, as it does not oblige schools to comply with official policy. The word "may" in the first line confers discretion. The discretionary latitude here poses a somewhat paradoxical and potentially paralysing bind for policy development. In the first instance, the discretionary powers accorded to schooling communities are in themselves consistent with democratic principles of the constitution, since over-regulation is perceived as a form of social control. In addition, the latitude accorded to schools provides spaces for schooling communities to tailor their policies to their peculiar needs and conditions.

By implication therefore, whether or not a school adopts a democratic route to policy formulation, it does not constitute a de-jure violation of the Act. Although additive multilingualism is advocated, implementation is morally obligatory rather than legally enforceable. In this context, the latitude accorded to schooling communities may be construed as inordinate and inappropriate, since schools reserve the right to preserve their conservative practices. However, if one adopts a more pragmatic view, then one has to admit the possibility that schools do not change because they lack the capacity to change, particularly since the management of change is extremely complex for institutions that have been socialised into valuing monolingual environments. This became apparent as all schools in the survey bemoaned the adequacy of support in the interpretation and translation of the official LiEP into school policies. An enduring complaint was that the national language policy expects schools to deliver democratic language policies in the absence of policy support.

Can Practice inform policy?

Policy is often seen as a top-down phenomenon whose primary purpose is to regulate practice. Yet, if the prospect of practice informing policy is acknowledged, then classroom pedagogy can be eminently useful in driving policy, (Dhunpath & Joseph, 2014). Some of the exemplars identified in this research show practice that is richer than policy (either in the policy texts or actual practices). These exemplars have the potential to instil fresh vigour into basic and higher education and lead to exemplar-driven teacher development.

The HLP has also demonstrated the value of collaboration between external stakeholders in education, the DBE, higher education, NGOs, freelance language consultants, and private companies with an educational vision. The education ministry has acknowledged that the task of instituting a multilingual education is

beyond its limited capacity. Yet, the HLP has demonstrated that the capacity for collaborative activity exists, lies dormant and waits to be enacted in terms of the management of multilingual human and material resources, as well as the design and implementation of innovative pedagogic practices, especially in the use of African languages in texts and assessment practices. Pioneering service providers like the HLP and ELET should be targeted for specific support, both materially and intellectually, so that they do not suffer the fate of ELTIC, one of the pioneers of multilingual education that had to close down due to lack of support in the mid-90s. Such practices could drive processes of change by re-writing policy texts to incorporate the principles behind these practices, infuse training programmes, and motivate further research, especially by postgraduate students, who could adopt participating schools as research sites.

CONCLUDING OBSERVATIONS

The research from which this paper derives, confirms the widespread assertion that multilingualism in South African schools exists at the level of policy rhetoric (as expressed in policy as text). Attitudes to English as a medium and African languages as medium showed the highest divergence among the various respondents. Overall, English was supported for instrumental/pragmatic purposes and African languages for social solidarity purposes, while there is strong support for English as a Resource, and for African languages as a Right. In relation to educational domains, English dominates the instrumental domains, namely the medium of instruction for content subjects, whereas African languages are supported in the domains of additional languages as subjects and on the playgrounds and staff rooms. Wherever respondents' attitudes to the instrumental domains, namely content learning areas, were sought in terms of the medium of instruction, African languages were seen as a problem.

Actual practices show that the schools sampled were left to their own devices, with the principals and the heads of the learning areas providing leadership. The success of the interventions by service providers was also shown to depend on how receptive and cooperative school principals were. Principals with a clear vision and commitment proved to be decisive agents in determining whether the school had a progressive language policy. Symbolic support for African languages is strong, but substantive support is limited to African languages as subjects. These schools affirm African languages as a 'right'.

In content classes, however, these schools symbolically devalue code-switching in content classes, but for pragmatic reasons tolerate it. The HLP schools alone fall into the typology 'towards additive multilingualism'. These schools evince a move towards affirming African languages as resources. No school could be found to represent the highest level of additive multilingualism, but some teachers' practices (in the HLP-sampled schools) are moving in that direction.

Finally, meaningful policy implementation requires a combination of persuasive and cohesive pressure, especially from government agencies. Apart from political rhetoric, government has failed to provide substantive leadership to date, with the possible exception of the recent exhortation by the former Minister of Education that African languages are to be made compulsory at higher education universities. The prospect of meaningful government intervention in general schooling in the immediate future is, in our view, remote. This places the onus on individual schooling communities to assume leadership, drawing lessons from beacons such as those surveyed in this article, which signal the value of shifting the policy gaze from debates on policy to dialogues on practices.

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