



Language Rich **Africa**

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Section 1:

Language policy



Searching for an optimal national language policy for sustainable development

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Introduction

According to Hornby (2000), development occurs when a new stage is reached in a continuing situation. Development therefore implies visible and often motivated change, which could be socio-economic or a way of living in general. The former president of Tanzania, Julius K Nyerere, used to emphasise that development requires five factors, namely people, land, capital, entrepreneurship or proper management and good governance. The people are a key factor, as they are not only the instrument of development but also the object of development, as beneficiaries. They are the heart of the whole process.

In order to achieve a meaningful and sustainable socio-economic development, one needs to consider all the factors as resources, which require proper planning and management so as to yield optimal results. People, also, as resources need to be planned.

Language as people's resource for development

The people, as the centre of development, have usually many attributes, which include physical strength and stamina, acquired professional skills, emotional disposition, including attitudes and self-determination, collaborative spirit and teamwork, communication and interactive competence as well as general knowledge. Most of these attributes require language.

In order to ensure holistic development, language should be involved at all levels, from infancy to adulthood. Usually the mother tongue or home language would be required in order to promote affective and cognitive development at the formative stage of a child. At that level the mother tongue would also be needed to link the home and the school, providing the child with a smooth transition between family life and school life. Moreover, the mother tongue would also be important in enhancing literacy and home-based skills (Alexander, 1999).

On the other hand, a lingua franca or common national language is essential in fostering unity and a sense of identity and togetherness as a nation. This would also be the language that spearheads national development through socio-economic plans and the use of national resources. At the same time, there would be a need for a language that facilitates technological transfer, provision of foreign skills and global information flow. This would be inevitably an international language. In the case of Africa, it would be the ex-colonial language, English, French or Portuguese. Such a language would also be used for diplomacy and international relations.

From the above, it is clear that to have an optimal national language policy, one needs all the three types of languages, namely mother tongues (including minority languages), national languages (the nationally dominant languages, which serve as lingua francas) and the ex-colonial languages, which are recognised by the African Union as partner languages (Alexander, 2006; Bamgbose, 1991; Batibo, 2012).

Current language policy options in Africa

Many national language policy options have been adopted in Africa, depending on the country's political orientation and local circumstances. Little regard has been paid to maximal participation of the people, linguistic rights and true democracy, where all the people would participate in national affairs and take note of vital national information. The language policy options in Africa can be summarised as follows:

The Inclusive National Language Policy

This is a national language policy that aims to promote all the indigenous languages in a country to a national level, so as to be used in all public functions, including education, administration, judiciary and the media, as far as possible. This category constitutes 10.3 per cent of the African countries and includes countries like Namibia and quasi-monolingual countries, like Lesotho and Swaziland.

Partially Inclusive National Language Policy

This is a national language policy in which only a selected number of indigenous languages, usually the major ones, are promoted and used in education, administration, judiciary, media and other public functions. This category constitutes 13.8 per cent of the African countries including South Africa, Zambia, the Democratic Republic of Congo and post-Banda Malawi. It is usually opted in situations where languages are too many for an inclusive national language policy.

Exclusive National Language Policy

This is a national language policy in which only one indigenous language, usually the most dominant in the country, is selected, as national language, to be used in all public functions, including education, administration, judiciary and the media. It is based on the European principle of 'one country, one language'. This category constitutes 32.8 per cent of the African countries and includes countries like Algeria, Botswana, Kenya, Libya, Madagascar, Tanzania and Tunisia.

Hierarchical National Language Policy

This is a policy in which the status of a language is graded hierarchically, starting from official, national, provincial, district, areal and then localised. At each level several public functions would be allocated. The functions may involve lower education, higher education, customary courts, magistrate courts, media, local administration, central administration, informal and formal sectors of trade and commerce. This category constitutes 6.9 per cent of the African countries and includes countries like Ethiopia and Zimbabwe in the earlier years of independence.

Colonial National Language Policy

This is a language policy that has been adopted by some countries, particularly those former French or Portuguese colonies in which the ex-colonial language was both the official and national medium. Such countries have decided to adopt the language policy left behind by the colonial administration, in which the ex-colonial language is not only the official language, but also the national medium used in national affairs and mass mobilisation. This category constitutes 36.2 per cent of the African countries and includes countries such as Ivory Coast, Togo, Benin, Senegal and Angola.

Isolation National Language Policy

Some countries, like Ethiopia, Somalia and Tanzania, during their socialist heydays of the 1970s and 1980s decided to go further by degrading the ex-colonial languages, considering them as remnants of colonialism and imperialism. Thus, such countries applied a policy of subtractive bilingualism. This cost them international contacts as no country is an island or exists in isolation. All the countries in this category (5.1 per cent) have since abandoned this policy.

From the above one may make the following observations:

- The majority of countries in Africa (82.4 per cent) have adopted a national language policy that excludes some or the majority of the other languages in national affairs. These national language policies are: Status quo national language policy; Exclusive national language policy; Partial Exclusive national language policy (Bamgbose, 2000).
- Given that, as stated by Fishman (1971, 1974), African countries had aspired to develop on the basis of three types of visions, namely *unity*, *identity* and *modernity*, these models have so far failed to promote proper education for all, acknowledged human rights, true democracy or all-encompassing economic advancement. All these aspirations would have been based on an optimal national language policy and a participatory approach to language use, given that no country in the world has developed on the basis of a foreign language (Batibo, 2005).

- The African Academy of Languages (ACALAN), which is the linguistic arm of the African Union, is advocating, through its focal points, inclusive national language policies where languages are few and language hierarchical policies where languages are many, in order to ensure that there is true democracy, equality and fulfilment of human rights. Such national language policies also promote cross-border language development for regional communication and integration. Unfortunately not much implementation has been carried out so far (ACALAN, 2002).
- As stated by Julius Nyerere (1974), development does not only mean higher per capita income or improved social services. It should also involve, especially, the ability for each person to have self-esteem, self-determination and be able to feel that she or he is equal to all others. This is what the Khoesan people of southern Africa and other marginalised minorities throughout Africa need to achieve (Batibo, 2006; Smieja, 2003).

What should be an ideal language policy?

An ideal language policy should bridge the gap between school and the home by allowing members, including parents and community leaders, to interact with the school. Also, an ideal language policy should have elements put in place to make the minority groups sustain their cultures and traditions as valuable life skills. Such a policy should recognise linguistic and cultural diversity in the country and allow diversity to play a role in development, especially with regard to education, administration, judiciary, media and other public involvements.

Moreover, an ideal national language and cultural policy should advocate the promotion of indigenous life skills for survival, especially in the current situation where formal employment has become problematic. It should advocate self-esteem, self-determination and a feeling of being valued, by everyone. Equally, it should ensure a consultative approach to all social, cultural and political issues concerning a community, without being discriminatory.

One reason there are so many developmental challenges in Africa is the fact that the human factor has not been properly taken on board. The people are a crucial factor in development. One needs to maximise the role of the people as a resource in development. Development is not only socio-economic growth, but also the ability to reach self-esteem and self-determination, as is also the case where minority language speakers have developed their language and are able to use it in public. The case of Naro in preschools in Botswana or the case of the minority

languages used in education in Namibia should be a lesson, that when a mother tongue or home language is used in school, there are not only good results, but also a solid foundation is built for the child to learn other languages, such as the lingua franca and the ex-colonial language, more effectively, because of maximum participation of students in class (Bokamoso Educational Training Centre, 2000).

An ideal national language policy should be the one that mobilises all citizens in national development by involving all language and cultures at different levels, facilitating maximum participation by each citizen in national affairs, providing access to vital national information and involving all citizens in national activities. Such a policy should be seen to benefit all the ethnolinguistic communities, including the minority language speakers, given that the strongest part of the rope is its weakest point. Unfortunately most countries in Africa have not used an objective method in formulating their national languages policies (Bamgbose, 1991; Jernudd and Das Gupta, 1971).

One needs to have all voices heard in order to ensure that all children go to school through a medium that is most accessible to them, which will ensure proper cognitive and affective developments and that all skills acquired at home by the youth are systematically translated into modern skills and technology through a language and a culture familiar to them. In addition, the young adults gain literacy and access to information through a language and methods that are most familiar to them, all citizens in a country participate fully in socio-economic activities, and technology transfer and other national activities occur through media in which all are proficient.

The current challenges

Many of the African countries are, however, experiencing a number of challenges in trying to formulate optimal and relevant national languages policies. These include the pressures of globalisation and increased volumes of information in English via the internet. In addition, there are many logistical hurdles in promoting bilingual and multilingual education and literacy, which include increasing the number of multilingual and multicultural teachers, developing appropriate teaching materials and providing safe learning school environments for the intermixed nature of the population. Another factor often suggested is the risks of ethnic divisions, if all the languages and cultures are promoted, but this factor has been found to be baseless, as people tend to co-operate more when their languages and cultures are respected.

Although many of these challenges may be considered realistic, a number of case studies have shown that a multilingual and multicultural-based inclusive or hierarchical language policy brings a holistic approach to socio-economic growth.

Namibia is one of the few countries in Africa to adopt an inclusive national language policy, whereby all the indigenous languages are national languages, while English is the official language. The country conducted an education policy review in late June 2013. It concluded that all the indigenous languages are being promoted and used in education. So far, 16 out of 26 languages in the country have been adequately documented and have teaching and learning materials to be used at primary school level (Legère, 1996). Ten years after the vigorous implementation of this policy, one notices a lot of enthusiasm on the part of both teachers and learners in using languages in the classroom that were familiar to them. Therefore they can participate fully and understand the content of the courses. The learners see a clear link between the home and the school, as the same language and cultural contents were present; the affective and cognitive development of the young learners is accomplished due to the supportive linguistic and cultural competence of the learners. A true lifelong education is effected, as it involves a language which is used daily in the learners' life. As a result, there is ease in the transfer of skills from school to learners' future lives and context.

Another success story is that of the Naro, a Khoesan language, spoken on the western parts of Botswana by approximately 10,000 people. Where Naro began to be used in the preschools and community-based literacy schools, the children's foundation in education was grossly enhanced. In Botswana, primary school education is given strictly through the medium of Setswana, up to Standard 2, from where English is used throughout primary, secondary and tertiary education. However, when Naro is used in the preschool school system, there is increased enthusiasm from teachers, pupils and parents, who become supportive of the learning process, as they consider themselves part of the school. The parents and the community at large participate in enhancing the activities of the school. There is a visible link between the home and the school. The children feel at home and therefore dropouts of students from school become rare. The learners feel at home culturally, linguistically and emotionally, and hence they perform much better in the classroom (Bokamoso Educational Training Centre, 2000).

Conclusion

Language policy options are crucial in the enhancement of socio-economic development. Often, national language policies are imposed from above, usually by political authorities and, in many cases, such national policies are motivated by personal or political agendas. An ideal national language policy should be bottom-up, reached after a thorough and objective research or a community-based survey. Whatever the origin of these options, the people should be the central focus. All people should be on board, given that the strongest part of a chain is its weakest point. An inclusive national language policy is ideal where ethnolinguistic diversity is low, but a hierarchical national language policy is more practical where ethnolinguistic diversity is high. In all these cases, one has to regard the phenomenon of multilingualism as a resource, rather than a curse.

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Development of national language policies in East Africa: the interplay of opportunity, equity and identity

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Introduction

Each of the five countries – Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Burundi and Rwanda – that currently constitute the East African Community has had to take decisions on how the languages used within their borders were to relate to one another in meeting the nation's communication and development needs. Even where there are no specific documents that could be referred to as 'language policy documents', as is the case in many African nations, statements documented in educational reform commission reports, or in government declarations in local, regional and international political forums, give an indication of what the governments' positions on language use are. For example, what is referenced as language policy in Kenya up to the present is inferred from documents on language-in-education decisions that were taken right from the pre-colonial period to the present, and from political pronouncements aimed at achieving either national integration or international presence.

One common characteristic is that many indigenous peoples, associating their disadvantaged social position with their culture, are not excited about the development of their languages. In fact, many abandon their languages and cultures in the hopes of overcoming discrimination, to secure a livelihood and enhance social mobility, or to assimilate to the global marketplace.

In this paper I first present the development of language policies in the five East African countries, then discuss the interplay of opportunity, equity, and identity in the decisions taken, summarise the gains thus far and propose a way forward in policy decisions.

Development of language policy in Kenya

As noted above, the language policy and practice in Kenya derives from decisions made by various education committees and commissions in pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial periods in the country's history. The focus of these commissions was which language was to be used as the medium of instruction in schools. The competition was among the various indigenous languages, Kiswahili and English.

Different decisions have been made at different times in the history of the country. The early Christian missionaries favoured the use of indigenous languages in the African schools, but the Africans saw this as denying them the prestigious education provided to the white population or even in the Asian schools (Muthwii and Kioko, 2002). This began a yearning among the Africans for education conducted in English.

This yearning was further strengthened as the fight for political independence advanced especially after the Second World War, and this explains the strange decisions made in the first decade after independence. In the 1960s the New Primary Approach (NPA) initiative sought to implement English medium from the start of school, and though the error was soon realised, the Gacathi report of 1976 still retained the supremacy of English, even after recognising that the indigenous languages have a role to play at the start of school (Kioko, 2013; Mbaabu, 1996). These decisions defined the language policy and practice in Kenya with English as the official language, Kiswahili the national language, and the indigenous languages as languages of intra-ethnic communications and the language of instruction (LoI) at the start of school in the areas where they are dominant.

As many studies have shown, there is no harmony between the stated policy and the practice. The government makes no efforts to ensure that the Lol at the start of school is the 'language of the catchment area' (the language that the pupil brings to school). Teacher training, syllabus development, teaching material development and implementation supervision are not aligned with this policy. Thus, the majority of private schools and many public primary schools use English as the Lol right from the start of school (Kioko and Muthwii, 2009; Kioko, 2013; Gacheche, 2010).

The 2010 Constitution of Kenya explicitly articulated national language issues and stated the status assigned to each of the three competitors: English retained its status as the official language; Kiswahili was elevated to official language status while still retaining its national language status; and the indigenous languages remained languages of intra-ethnic communication. Though the Constitution is also explicit on linguistic rights, the nation is yet to see the Languages of Kenya Bill and the drafted Languages of Kenya Policy finalised. It will be interesting to see how the indigenous languages will interact with the devolved government in a situation where the majority of the counties have a clear dominant ethnic group.

Development of language policy in Tanzania

Four phases emerge in decisions that have been taken on the interaction of the languages of Tanzania in education and government. The first phase is the early colonial period, during which the initial German colonial administration encouraged the use of Kiswahili for administration and as the language of instruction in the few schools that existed then.

When the British colonial administration took over from the Germans after the First World War, they added English to the scene and this introduced a new phase in language decisions. It became important to define how Kiswahili and English were to share the platform as languages of instructions in the existing schools. The decision was made to use Kiswahili as the Lol in African primary schools from class one to class four; class five was designated a transition class; and English was to be used in the last two years in primary school, secondary and post-secondary education. This policy or practice is what Tanzania inherited at independence and, in the first five years after independence, (1961–66), this subtractive bilingualism policy was maintained.

The third phase is marked by the onset of socialism from 1967. The educational reforms that accompanied the shift to socialism removed English as a Lol in primary schools. Kiswahili became the Lol in all primary schools except international primary schools, and international schools were not allowed to enrol Tanzanian children. This meant that all Tanzanians who passed through primary schools acquired the national language. English remained the Lol in secondary schools and in the university.

The fourth phase is marked by the start of the weakening of socialism and saw the extension of privatisation of education in the 1990s and therefore the legalisation of private schools by the Education Act Number 10 of 1995 (Swilla, 2009). This period also saw the legalisation of the use of English as the Lol in private schools in which the majority of the learners are now Tanzanians. These schools came to be popularly known as 'English medium schools'. Public (government) primary schools, however, continued and still continue to have Kiswahili as the Lol. Graduates of English medium schools and those of the Kiswahili medium primary schools meet in the same English medium secondary schools. Though the textbooks and the examinations in secondary schools are in English, the teaching–learning interactions employ a lot of code-switching between Kiswahili and English not only because the teachers are not fluent enough in English, but also because the majority of learners cannot fully follow English discourse.

This presents double standards when the learners are not allowed to employ the same code-switching in the national examination. This state has generated a spirited academic debate to have Kiswahili as the Lol throughout the education system in Tanzania. The reasoning behind this debate is very logical and very convincing; it makes educational, social, political and economic sense, but as the debate rages, the English medium primary schools continue to grow:

In 1995, there were 5,170 students in private primary schools, 11,910 in 2000, and 64,558 in 2005, representing respectively 0.13 per cent, 0.27 per cent and 0.85 per cent of the total number of students in primary schools in Tanzania. By 2006, that number had risen to 80,196, representing 1.0 per cent of all primary school students in the country. (United Republic of Tanzania, 2007)

Development of language policy in Uganda

Decisions on language use in Uganda have been dominated by the competition between Luganda and Kiswahili on the one hand, and to a lesser extent the competition between Luganda and the other Ugandan indigenous languages.

Though both the Anglican Church Missionary Society and the Catholic White Fathers had at first used Kiswahili as a medium of instruction, they favoured the use of local languages because they associated Kiswahili with Islam, which they viewed as a rival religion. When the British colonial rule was established in what is present-day Uganda, the Church Missionary Society argued strongly for the use of Luganda as the official language of the Protectorate, and in fact refused to teach Kiswahili in their schools. At the same time, some members of the colonial administration and particularly the business community favoured the use of Kiswahili for commercial and wider communication. The arguments of the Christian missionaries carried the day and Luganda was made the obligatory language for all officials from 1912 onwards. Other indigenous languages together with Kiswahili continued to be regarded as 'bonus languages' (Pawliková-Vilhanová, 1996: 165).

The Provincial Commissioners kept trying to make Kiswahili the official language but they eventually gave up and in 1952 a language-use decision not to recognise Kiswahili as one of the indigenous languages of Uganda was taken, which led to its removal from the school curriculum.

At independence, English was recognised as the official language and six Ugandan indigenous languages were specified as media of instruction in lower primary schools. These are Luganda, Runyoro/Rutooro, Runyankore/Rukiga, Lugbara, Luo and Akarimojong/Ateso. Luganda, however, continued to have a privileged position because of the head start its official status had given it in reading material development and teacher training. It continued as a subject in the schools even in regions where it is not the first language.

In August 1973, Idi Amin revisited the language debate and declared Kiswahili the national language of Uganda by decree after engaging the nation in a debate to choose between Luganda and Kiswahili. In this debate, 12 districts voted in favour of Kiswahili against the eight who voted in favour of Luganda. The only impact of this decree was the increase of the use of Kiswahili among the armed forces in Uganda. Though the decree has never been repealed, it has never been implemented in practice either. Perhaps it is this decree that explains the current association of Kiswahili with corruption, violence and dictatorship.

The next landmark on language decisions in Uganda came in 1992 with the Government White Paper (GWP), commonly known as the Kajubi Report. The GWP stipulated that, in rural areas, the 'relevant local languages' would be used as the media of instruction in the first three years of primary education while the fourth year would be a transition year where both English and the local language would constitute the LoI. English would then become the medium of instruction for the remaining three years of primary school and in post-primary school education. In urban areas, English would be the medium of instruction throughout the education system and local languages would be taught as subjects. The report recognised that Kiswahili possesses greater capacity for uniting Ugandans and therefore would be taught as a compulsory subject in both the rural and urban schools from the fourth year of primary school education (GWP, 1992).

The most recent decision on language was in October 2006 when the Parliament of Uganda passed a bill that made Kiswahili the second official language after English. Kiswahili was also declared a compulsory subject on the school curriculum. This was in line with Chapter two, Article 6 of the Constitution of Uganda:

1. English is the official language of Uganda.
2. Kiswahili is the second official language, to be used, as Parliament may by law provide.
3. Any other language may be used in schools or other educational institutions or for any other purposes as Parliament may provide.

The second statement restricts the use of the second official language to the decisions of Parliament, and this may explain why, seven years after Kiswahili was declared the second official language, it is still not a compulsory subject in all the schools in Uganda. One wonders how the population, none of whom are first-language speakers of Kiswahili, is going to acquire their second official language.

Development of language policy in Burundi

For a long time, two languages competed for the linguistic space in Burundi: French, the official language; and Kirundi, the national language. Socio-political forces have introduced into the scene English and Kiswahili, but the two main competitors still remain French and Kirundi. After political independence in 1962, Burundi adopted a bilingual language policy. The educational reforms of 1973 with the focus on 'Kirundisation and Ruralisation', aimed at expanding instruction in the mother tongue and practical studies. The initial proposal in these reforms was to use Kirundi as the Lol throughout primary school education. French was to be taught as a subject from the third year onward. However, with time the use of Kirundi as the Lol was reduced to the first three classes in primary school, with primary four as a transition class. In 1989, French was introduced as a subject from the first year of primary school and was also used as the Lol in the final two years of primary education. It is French, therefore, which is used for the administration of the national examination that selects students for admission to secondary schools. French is the language of instruction in secondary schools and at university.

Because of the role of French in upper primary school, in the national examination and in post-primary education, much attention is given to strategies for improving skills in French.

English is slowly encroaching, though without any overt language policy. It is taught as a subject in many public or government-owned secondary schools in form 6, and even earlier in some private schools. There are even some private schools that teach English at the primary school level. Burundian students wishing to pursue studies at universities in the other East African countries have to acquire good knowledge of the language to follow lectures in English. This has increased the pressure to learn English privately and many English teaching centres have emerged.

After joining the East African Community, Burundi is likely to be making decisions on how Kiswahili can spread beyond the capital city and Tanzanian border since it is the acclaimed regional language of trade.

Development of language policy in Rwanda

After political independence, Rwanda adopted a language policy similar to that of the other four East African states. From 1966 to 1979, Kinyarwanda was the Lol for primary grade 1 to 3 and then French took over for the remaining levels of education. The education reforms of 1978–79 made Kinyarwanda the Lol for all eight years of the new primary school system.

In the mid-1990s, the Rwandan government instituted a trilingual policy in education. Until grade 4 of primary school every child received instruction in his or her mother tongue. After this, a child's parents selected either a school with French as the language of instruction or one of the newly instituted schools with English as the language of instruction. In the trilingual Rwanda of 1996–2008, advanced primary and secondary students were able to use English or French as their primary language of instruction, and take Kinyarwanda and the other language as subjects. Students entering the university were expected to do academic work equally well in both English and French. This official plan, however, was far from the reality of an educational system struggling to recover from the devastating losses of teachers, materials and buildings.

In 2008, the Rwandan government announced that English would be the sole language of instruction from grade 4 in primary schools. The government argues that this will contribute to growth and reconciliation because English is the leading language of science, commerce and economic development (Samuelson and Freedman, 2010). Some of the reasons given for this enthusiasm for English included the better access to educational opportunities in Anglophone countries.

The influence of opportunity, equity and identity on policy development

Opportunity

Opportunity in this context could refer to provision of conditions favourable for pupils to attain education, for people to access services and participate in governance; in other words, ensure access to these services and privileges. However, after reading the literature on language policy and practice in East Africa, another sense of opportunity emerges: giving citizens the chance or prospect for advancement or success, and it is this sense that I will discuss here. The two senses are closely related, but while the former sense looks back to the populace and focuses on bringing them on board to participate in making and sharing the national cake, the latter looks forward and focuses on making a way to push the populace or some of them to the international scene.

The desire to keep pace with developing economic and cultural themes seems to be a very strong force in the formation of language policies in East Africa. Thus, there are clear cases where language policy and practice development in these countries have been influenced by the desire to make language choice a stepping stone to better life opportunities without setting in motion programmes that will lead the majority of the learners smoothly to the language of education. As Tembe and Norton (2011) observe, for many rural parents, knowledge of English represents progress and justifies the many financial sacrifices they make to send their children to school, but they do not consider the best process of introducing this English to the learners.

With regard to opportunity in Kenya, the pre-independence craving for English was one of the main factors that led to the founding of African Independent Schools in the early 1900s. The Kenyans perceived the colonial policy of providing education to Africans in 'mother tongue' as part of the discrimination to deny them 'opportunity' to advancement. In the same way, the decision to make English the Lol from the start of schools soon after independence, even when nationalist spirit was still very high, can only be explained by the desire to prepare for future opportunities. The move did not make any other sense; there were not enough teachers who could teach in English, there were no adequate learning materials and there was not much English in the environment to support learners' acquisition of the language outside the classroom (Bunyi, 2005).

Even though Kenya reverted to having the 'language of the catchment area' as the Lol in the first three years of school in 1976, the current inconsistency between theory and practice, which presents two different language policies (the overt and the covert) can only be explained by this desire to create more opportunities for learners to acquire English. The government says that the Lol in the first three years is the 'language of the catchment area', but goes ahead to provide a syllabus in English for all subjects (except Kiswahili) in these classes, approves teaching and learning materials in English and does not bother to supervise the implementation of the policy. Teacher training and deployment does not take into account the fact that the teacher will teach using a language other than English in the first three years of school. The fact that the language policy in Kenya has been a mere rhetoric is demonstrated by the current hot debate in the media on the use of mother language to teach early childhood programmes and in classes one to three. The government, through Session Paper number 14 of 2012 ('A Policy Framework for Education and Training on Reforming Education and Training Sectors in Kenya'), re-emphasised the language policy in Kenya; then parents' associations, teachers and even scholars were up in arms about this 'new backwards' policy. This shows how widespread the flouting of the policy has been and how silent the government has been in enforcing it.

Of the five countries, Tanzania stands out as the only one with a 'late exit' model. The decision to make Kiswahili the Lol throughout primary school stands out as shaped by a desire to open primary school to all Tanzanian children. However, as Sa notes, there are some people who even feel that the use of Kiswahili in primary schools was a grave mistake, in that it compromises Tanzania's position in the international academic, scientific and business worlds (Sa, 2007). In this regard, Mazrui (1997) observed that many wealthier Tanzanian parents send their children to private schools, as well as to government and private schools in the neighbouring countries, in order to have their children exposed to English medium education in primary school. This is a reaction to a language-in-education policy that seems to deny them opportunity. As Sa observes:

Competence in English can be regarded as a form of human capital useful to them in seeking employment, where the return on investment in English is a wage premium (or, perhaps, access to higher-paying job categories that require knowledge of English). Immigrants from Kenya, Uganda and Zambia who were exposed to English at a younger age are often more qualified to take high-paying jobs in Tanzania because of their English skills, thereby displacing Tanzanians who would be qualified if only they spoke better English. There seems to be a clear pattern of higher-prestige jobs tending to employ English speakers, although we cannot be sure of the direction of causation. (2007: 10)

However, the retention of English as the Lol in post-primary education in Tanzania, particularly in secondary schools, seems to have been influenced by a desire to provide the graduates of the secondary schools with an 'opportunity out there'. Many linguists and educators have argued ceaselessly that the government has failed by maintaining English as the Lol in secondary schools. They argue that the government should at the very least develop a bilingual policy for secondary schools, if not switch entirely to Kiswahili. This is because it is well documented that students in secondary schools are not prepared for the use of English as Lol. It is estimated that up to 75 per cent of teaching, at least during the early stages of secondary education, is being conducted in Kiswahili rather than English (Rugemalira et al., 1990). The retention of English as the Lol in face of such discontent points to the value the policy makers attach to future opportunities.

In terms of language-in-education policy, Uganda has been quite consistent. The decision to keep English as the Lol for classes beyond lower primary, right from the time of independence, signals the significance Uganda gives to opportunity to communicate with the world beyond her borders. The laxity to implement policy decisions made on Kiswahili, right from the language decree of Idi Amin in 1973 to the Parliamentary bill of 2006, may be interpreted to mean that the East African region doesn't present attractive opportunities to Ugandans.

By adopting a bilingual policy in a nation where all the people share a language, Burundi has consistently tried not to lose the opportunity to connect with the outside world, which the use of French provides. Even after the educational reforms of 1973, which focused on Kirundisation and ruralisation and therefore proposed Kirundi as the Lol throughout primary, things soon went back to what they had been before the reforms. In 1989, French was again introduced as a subject in year 1 and as the Lol in years 5 and 6. Kirundi reverted to being the Lol only in the first three years of school, with year 4 as a transition year.

The encroachment of English and Kiswahili can also be said to be motivated by a desire to access the opportunities these languages open. As Nizonkiza (2006) states, English classes are held in the evening to give workers and all others interested in learning the language an appropriate time to do so conveniently, and there has been a tremendous increase in the number of those enrolling in these centres in the past ten years. Students see in English prospects of connecting with the larger international world of business, commerce, politics and technology.

The adoption of a bilingual policy in Rwanda after 1994 also speaks of a desire to capture the opportunities out there. When the sources of opportunities started shifting, this was reflected in the gradual change in language policy. Initially it was a decision to add English into the educational system and get some schools teaching in English and others in French. Eventually, in 2008, the decision was made to dislodge French as a Lol. This, in addition to sending out political messages, indicated where the Rwandans were seeing their 'opportunities', and changes in language policy clearly signalled this.

Equity

When a language policy development is in harmony with equity, it will promote measures of tackling the avoidable factors that fuel inequities so that no individuals or regions are denied the chance to benefit. Though the 'to and fro' moves from mother tongue to English or French, in East African countries may have been motivated by a desire to be fair to all the citizens; in many of the cases the decisions to offer services in the population's mother tongue did not hold long enough to be effective. Even where the policies still retain the people's first language in the first years of school, this is more on paper than in practice. Generally it could be said that considerations of equity have not had much influence on the language policy.

The only clear case in the East African region where 'equity' can be seen in the centre of a language decision is the case of Kiswahili in Tanzanian schools. Though one can argue that for many rural Tanzanian learners Kiswahili is a second language, the majority of Tanzanian primary school children are fluent in Kiswahili. Nyerere argued that colonial education created unequal socio-economic categories among Tanzanians, comprising a small group of educated elite and the majority group of uneducated citizens. The socialist ideology was designed to steer the country towards the construction of an egalitarian society (Nyerere, 1967). The choice of Kiswahili as a national and official language was made as one of the vehicles that would bring about this equality.

Identity

Considerations of identity were at the centre of many of the language decisions made by African countries at independence, during educational reforms and during other regional integration landmarks. The following are some of these:

- a. In all five countries the overt or covert language-in-education policy is to start school with mother tongue.
- b. In 1967 in Tanzania, late 1970s and the early 1980s in Kenya, 1973 in Burundi, in 1978 in Uganda, and in 1977–78 in Rwanda, educational reforms fronted the role of local languages and cultures to 'ruralise, vocationalise and democratise' education.
- c. The Protocol on the Establishment of the East African Kiswahili Commission on 18 April 2007, with a vision 'to be the leading body in the promotion and co-ordination of the development and usage of Kiswahili for regional unity and sustainable socio-economic development in Partner States,' further links language to regional identity (East African Community, 2007).
- d. The change to English in Rwanda and growing interest of the same in Burundi is a response to identification with the regional partnership.

Achievements of the language policy decisions in East Africa

In this section, I explore the gains of the language policies in these five countries with regards to opportunity, equity and identity.

Opportunity

Though language decisions have been aimed at opening up opportunities for East Africans to compete in the educational arena, the success has been minimal and the cost in terms of citizens' struggles and failure very high, as outlined below:

- a. Kiswahili gives a great opportunity to learners in Tanzanian urban areas to undertake education, politics and business with the home language, but this is not the case deep in the rural areas. In many rural Tanzanian areas, Kiswahili is a second language, and thus the child has to make linguistic adjustments on joining school. This does not present a great opportunity for academic success, and the situation worsens when learners join secondary school. As Criper and Dodd in 1984 observed: 'Throughout their secondary school career little or no other subject information is getting across to about 50 per cent of the pupils in our sample. Only about ten per cent of Form IVs are at a level at which one might expect English medium education to begin.' (Criper and Dodd 1984: 14, cited in Rugemalira et al., 1990: 28) The impact of the opportunity availed in primary school is lost in the challenges presented by the transition to English in secondary schools.
- b. Even in Kenya, where English has been used as the Lol consistently for a long time, early literacy studies have shown that the literacy levels of many pupils are far below the minimum expected levels. Studies have shown that literacy levels in early grades in Kenya are very low (Trudell and Piper, 2013). A study by Uwezo found that, '... only three out of ten children in class 3 can read a class 2 story, while slightly more than half of them can read a paragraph ... [and only] four out of 100 children in class 8 cannot read a class 2 story.' (Uwezo Kenya, 2011: 24)
- c. In Rwanda and Burundi, where the population shares a common indigenous language, the decision to favour an 'international' language that is perceived as giving the learners better opportunities 'out there' paradoxically keeps the learners from 'getting out there' because the language choice itself acts as a barrier. In addition, much of the energy spent learning the 'foreign' language means that the development of other important skills is abandoned. For example, the 1973 educational reforms in Burundi focused on 'Kirundisation' and 'ruralisation' but when the focus shifted back to strengthening French, time spent on agriculture reduced and therefore pupils who dropped out of primary schools dropped out without any meaningful skills.

Equity

Apart from the case of Kiswahili in Tanzania, the contribution of the language policies to the achievement of equity can only be said to exist in the documented policy statements. The brief summaries of the situation in Kenya and Tanzania illustrate this:

- a. In Kenya, the policy of starting school in the language of the 'catchment area' allows schools in Kenya to use different Lols depending on the linguistic environment around the school. If this were happening effectively, then all pupils in Kenya would be starting school on level ground. However, teachers and parents prefer to use English as the Lol and yet English is not the 'language of the catchment area' for the majority of the Kenyan pupils and the government has failed to enforce the policy. This explains the high levels of school failure at the end of the eight years of primary school. When equity is not achieved in the training and provision of education, the resulting disparity pervades other spheres of life.
- b. In Tanzania, before both the legalisation of private schools in 1992 and the permission to use English as the Lol in these private schools, as well as the lifting of the ban against English medium schools enrolling Tanzanian pupils, the pupils sailed, swam or sank together in the Kiswahili Lol at primary level and struggled or sank together in the secondary English Lol. There was a level playing field. However, now the one per cent or so of the English medium pupils meet the Kiswahili medium pupils in the same secondary schools. Though I have not come across a study comparing the performance of the two groups in secondary schools, the ground can barely be said to be level.

Identity

Strangely enough, even when decisions have been made to promote foreign or second languages, many people in these countries do not perceive themselves as being linguistically alienated. A study conducted in Uganda sought to establish the opinion of the rural communities towards a policy that required the teaching of mother tongues in schools. The researchers found that:

... the participants were opposed to the implementation of this policy, saying that the teaching of a mother tongue was the responsibility of the parents at home. The schools ought to be concerned with the teaching of an international language such as English, for the future of their children. (Tembe and Norton, 2011: 14)

Reflections: what next for the East African countries?

Reading through the literature on language policies in East Africa, one encounters a number of misconceptions that linguists, educationists and policy makers need to address before effective language policies towards achieving opportunity, equity and identity can be implemented. The key misconceptions are:

- a. That the use of a foreign or second language as the Lol ensures development of good skills in that particular language.
- b. That competence in English or French cannot fully develop if these languages are not used as Lols.
- c. That the indigenous languages have no economic or career value.
- d. That the indicator of learning is the acquisition of skills in a foreign or second language.

The volcanoes of language policy in the five East African countries are still very active at present and many changes are expected. In Kenya, for example, the Ministry of Education Science and Technology has recently re-emphasised the language policy in education and especially the clause on pupils starting school in the language of the 'catchment area'. Though this is facing a lot of opposition in the public through the media, the government is firm in their resolve. If the government accompanies this firmness with supervision of implementation, the country will take major steps towards increasing access to functional literacy.

In Tanzania, the growing desire for the English medium on the one hand, and the constant push to replace English with Kiswahili as the Lol in secondary school and higher education on the other, is likely to lead to some changes in policy. The direction of this change will depend on which group wins. If reason and evidence win, Kiswahili as the Lol will spread to other levels of education. If, on the other hand, the push for the opportunity 'out there' wins, we will witness a spread of English as the Lol to public primary schools, or uncontrolled growth of private primary schools.

For Uganda, given the decision taken to teach local languages in schools, in the next few years the country is likely to grapple with the following:

- a. Putting together the resources to teach the local languages throughout the school system as stated by policy: getting publishers to publish the materials, getting teachers trained, and lobbying for attitude change.
- b. There is the hope that for the declarations about Kiswahili 'well done will accompany well said' this time round.

In Burundi, response to the growing demand for English may lead to policy change. Ideally, this change will be friendlier to learning and teaching, and more gradual than that in Rwanda. The desire to be 'like the other nations around us' may also lead to the growth of Kiswahili a second national language.

Finally, the greatest challenge facing Rwanda currently is the management of the abrupt shift from French to English. For the child in rural Rwanda, English is as strange as French was; just that before 2008 the teacher had better command of the Lol than the learner. Currently they are learning together – the learner during the day, the teacher during the night.

It is hoped that the government will continue to invest in resources, and the examination system can be made to reflect the linguistic variations in these transition years.

Conclusion

Examining the fluid language policy decisions and implementation in the five East African countries poses two key questions to development agencies:

- a. What do we need to do differently to convince parents that a more effective way of reaching the English they want is by getting a 'solid' literacy foundation in mother tongue?
- b. What approaches can we use to reach the education policy makers to separate the measuring of language proficiency from the measuring of educational achievement: where instructions employ code-switching, for exams to allow choice between the two languages?

Education is a great equaliser. If pupils from different socio-economic backgrounds are provided with equal opportunities for education, then the society can move towards equalitarian status. However, the choices that East African countries have made in terms of Lol have in themselves perpetuated inequalities. They give urban children advantage over the rural child. Most of the policy decisions are driven by the opportunities that English and French are perceived to guarantee.

In many of the cases positive pronouncements and good documentation of language policies are not accompanied by well-planned and rigorous implementation, and therefore the expected outcomes are not attained. This leads to the following conclusions:

- a. Linguists and educators have not got their message across to parents, who are key stakeholders in education.
- b. Parents in nearly all the five countries want English. It does not change anything to tell them to stop wanting; they will not stop. If they have money, they will move their children from the public schools, they will hire tutors, they will speak English only at home, and so on.

- c. This, on the other hand, does not mean that they hate their languages. They have studied the social networks, economics and politics locally, regionally and internationally, and decided that English matters!
- d. Parents and guardians therefore need to be convinced that using mother languages as languages of instruction, or even teaching mother languages as subjects in schools, does not in any way interfere with the child's ability to acquire English. In fact, starting with mother languages makes the learning of English smoother and faster.

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The fallacy of multilingual and bilingual policies in African countries

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Introduction

Multilingualism is not a new phenomenon that came with modern-day travel, technology and globalisation. Instances of it are cited as far back as biblical times: *'multitudes who came together and who were bewildered because each one heard them speaking in his own language. And they were amazed and wondered, saying, Are not all these who are speaking Galileans? And how is it that we hear each of us in his own native language?'* (Acts 2: 4–9) It is, however, certain that with the increased travel and use of technology that characterises today's life, multilingualism has become more complex and much more widespread. That notwithstanding, the words 'multilingualism' and 'bilingualism' are bandied about in discussions of the linguistic situation in Africa.

Though Africa has many languages that qualify it to be multilingual, it is usually not clear when language scholars talk about 'multilingualism in Africa' whether they are referring to the mere existence and use of thousands of languages in Africa or to an equal representation and use of these languages in certain domains. There are times when the mere existence of several languages in a community or organisation, irrespective of balance, qualifies as multilingualism and times when the existence or representation of languages without balance and equity is viewed as lack of multilingualism. For example, a country that has several languages that are used by a varying number of speakers for a range of uses often passes for being 'multilingual' even though there is an imbalance in the number of speakers and usage of the languages.

However, language policies that promote the use of one or two indigenous languages in the first few years of primary education and a European language in the higher domains, or use of a European language as an official language and one indigenous language as a national language, often come under heavy criticism for lacking a multilingual perspective; that is, being unrepresentative and failing to recognise and use all the languages of the nation in important domains of the country. It seems that countries are seen as 'multilingual' irrespective of a variable number of speakers and uses of languages, but language policies are not multilingual if

they fail to achieve equal representation of the languages. This in itself is a contradiction in terms and it is the root cause of most multilingualism controversies.

Our understanding of multilingualism is quite complex because our support for it is usually based on a number of somewhat allied factors.

First, many people are aware of the social, political, educational and cultural properties of every language and they would like to preserve these properties.

Second, there is a genuine fear that we might lose our languages if we do not protect them by insisting that they be used. Warschauer et al. (2002) argue that 'the same dynamics that gave rise to globalisation and global English also give rise to a backlash against both and that gets expressed in one form through strengthened attachment to local dialects and languages'. (quoted by Dor, 2004: 101)

Third, our support for multilingualism seems like a result of a general lack of consensus on a common language that can be used by the whole community or world. Since we cannot agree on one common language to use in the whole country or world then we have no choice but to use all the languages.

And fourth, our support for multilingualism, which translates as support for our indigenous languages, sometimes seems like a disguise to fight the hegemony of English and other dominant languages.

House (2003: 561) argues that 'Paradoxical as this may seem, the very spread of English as a lingua franca [ELF] may stimulate members of minority languages to insist on their own local language for emotional binding to their own culture, history and tradition, and there is, indeed, a strong counter current to the spread of ELF in that local varieties and cultural practices are often strengthened. One example is the revival of German language folk music, songs in local dialects such as Bavarian to counteract pop music in English only.' Weber (1997) also argues that multilingualism is often supported out of fear that our own languages might lose power as international, regional or national languages.

He suggests that once speakers of some language have seen the influence of their own language being checked out by other languages, they then profess a fear of being dominated while at the same time their own language in turn is driving smaller languages to extinction. Language domination, he argues, is what others do to you, that you cannot do to them but would if you could. The language domination cited by Weber exists in many language relationships: between English and other international languages, between dominant European languages and African lingua francas, and between African lingua francas and African minority languages. Multilingualism is therefore quite complex because it is driven by both emotional and utilitarian forces, which inadvertently generate gradations and hierarchies of multilingualism that we often overlook.

Hierarchies in multilingualism

Most advocates of multilingualism often present an idealised view of multilingualism, whereby it is seen as espousing or embodying a sense of equality and equity between languages and their speakers. It is mostly presented as a unitary force through which all languages of the world could be made to support and even complement each other for the common good and mutual benefit of everybody in the nation or world. I am, however, sceptical. I contend that multilingualism is just a delusion that creates a fallacious system of equal distribution of languages in our minds. This is because multilingualism itself is founded on unequal properties on an uneven ground and it is always influenced by social context, language and speaker status. Languages and their speakers vary immensely in terms of their salience, economic and social powers. These variations naturally give rise to an asymmetrical or hierarchical type of multilingualism in which some languages will be ranked higher than others; some will be local and others international, some will be national or regional while others will just be good enough for home use.

Though most models of multilingualism aim to find balanced and representative multilingual policies, they still end up with asymmetrical and hierarchical multilingual policies that place languages at different levels and in compartments. Unfortunately, these levels and compartments do not favour many African languages, which have the least salience, status and power. The compartments simply trap these languages in specific local or regional domains, which will stifle them to their death. It is not advisable to restrict languages to certain domains, especially low domains. Most models of multilingualism assign only traditional functions to local indigenous languages and in so doing relegate African languages to traditional society and cultural identity. Unfortunately, in this era of heightened national and global competition, despite what linguists say, most Africans no longer find wholesome traditional society, cultural identity and the languages that go with that profitable or luring. But they find economic development, academic advancement and the languages associated with that more attractive. Annamalai argues that the attitudes of speakers of minority languages towards their languages is symbolic rather than substantive in nature:

They want their languages to appear to have legal status and power, but in practice they want to have their personal power enhanced through the dominant language(s).
(2003: 126)

Symbolic and substantive values mentioned above pose serious challenges for speakers of African languages who have to choose between sentimental but not tangible value, and substantive, utilitarian and tangible value. Though sentimental value is quite effective in some domains, it usually falters in the face of substantive value. Albaugh (2007) has observed that nationalist leaders in Africa often appeal to the sentimental value of African languages and gain political rewards for espousing rhetoric that favour African languages because talk about promotion of African languages is quite a popular political stance. However, African bureaucrats, parents and school children often prefer maintenance of a European language such as English, Portuguese or French because it serves as a gatekeeper that filters upward mobility (see Chabata, 2008).

Though Africans have a lot of sentimental value for their languages, sentimental or symbolic value for a language only ensures that the language 'remains symbolic and unused, which helps the language to survive, but not acquire material benefits'. (Annamalai, 2003: 123) Africans are aware of the different values associated with European and African languages. Mohanty (2010) says that the values and implications for the different languages are socially constructed through socialisation, availability of opportunities, materials and family support. Speakers often prefer material progress, and their honour and respect for African languages constantly gets overridden by the need for a better job, academic qualification and access to global partners. For this reason, European languages often overpower African languages. Even in situations where African governments try to change policy so that local languages could be elevated to higher domains, such change is often subverted by local people preferring the colonial language for their children. Mohanty (2010) says that their preference often leads to the opening of private schools on commercial bases and parallel streams of education with local mediums being used in government schools and English medium in richly endowed private schools. Thereafter, only those who cannot afford English medium schools for their children, such as poor minority groups, opt for government schools and their local medium. Even where local languages are offered learners will still opt for a dominant language because they want to succeed economically.

Annamalai argues that:

... the community does not trust the government on its policy claim of being impartial and not catering to special interests. It suspects that the government's claim of national interest is really elite interest ... Such mistrust ... emanates from seeing the actual behaviour of the elite that is contrary to the expectations of the policy (like, for example, opting for English medium education for their own children, as in India) and from seeing grey areas in the policy that the elite use to circumvent the policy (like having expensive English medium schools in the private sector outside the policy purview, as in India). (2003: 127–8)

In situations where a hierarchical multilingualism exists, it is also difficult to expect people to follow the order of the hierarchy, moving consistently from cultural identity to national unity and then global trade and partnerships. Speakers of minority languages often skip the domains of cultural identity and national unity and jump straight to the domain that gives them more and better material rewards.

A hierarchy of multilingualism can be found in many parts of Africa, where English is at the top, a national lingua franca in the middle and minority languages at the bottom. This serves only to smother African languages, especially the ones on the bottom tier. In this era of modernity and economic advancement the domain of traditional society and cultural identity is not attractive to most Africans.

This is evidenced by their shifts from traditional foods, housing, education and governance systems to Western and modern ones.

There is a need to give local languages more and higher domain uses than is currently the case. There is a need to come up with function-based models of multilingualism that can free and empower all languages to adventure into more and new domains and uses. Bagwasi (2009) argues that since the major motivation for many Africans to learn European languages seems to be economic and academic advancement, African governments should come up with language requirements that favour the learning of local languages for professions where people routinely interact with others from different linguistic backgrounds. Such professions include teaching, medicine, banking, agriculture, immigration and foreign services. Once these language requirements are in place individuals will see the material benefits of learning more languages.

In today's economies, people need languages that are multifunctional in order to keep pace with the changing economics. Our approach to multilingualism should involve functional and equitable distribution of languages in the public domain in such a way that some languages do not enjoy more benefits than others.

Globalisation and multilingualism

Globalisation can be perceived in two ways. First, as multiple networks, centrifugal forces and tributaries that are connected by a major network through which different worldviews, languages, goods and services can be shared across the world. In this way globalisation is seen as a great 21st century movement aimed at giving everybody in the world an equal opportunity to access and share information about all kinds of ideas, goods and services for the mutual benefit of everybody in the network. This sense of globalisation accommodates and promotes multilingualism because it offers an opportunity for all the people of the world to interact and bring into contact their different cultural and linguistic backgrounds.

But there is another sense of globalisation, a sense which manifests oneness, international integration and uniting the world into one global village. This sense actually promotes one goal or unit with one form of communication. This sense is quite apparent in many situations around the world lately, whereby the language practices of multilingual organisations, nations and individuals reflect a move away from multilingual policies and identities towards monolingual communication approaches. Bagwasi (2012) argues that increasingly people seem to want one language that can serve them in many functions and many places just the same way that they want one car, attire or bank card that can serve them in many functions and places. This sense of globalisation goes against multilingualism.

It is this dual meaning of globalisation that sometimes creates a fallacy of equity. Equity and balance are difficult to achieve through globalisation because countries and their languages have differing influences and powers that allow some countries and languages to benefit at the expense of others. Globalisation is a powerful factor that is shaping the language behaviour of people around the world. It directly or indirectly influences the language choice of the country, community and individual. It does not formulate country language policies per se, but it offers rewards to those who make language choices that favour it. At the centre of this global exchange of goods and services is the English language. English is viewed by many academics as being the agent of globalisation; it has benefited from the process by using it to expand its horizons and become the global lingua franca.

While globalisation has benefits for English, it has compounded Africa's linguistic problems. On top of Africa's repertoire of languages it has added a superordinate language and thereby created a type of multilingualism that has been described as 'bifocal in nature, existing both at the mass level and the elite level' (Khubchandani, 1983 cited in Annamalai, 2001: 36). The elite level involves English as an additional language, mostly accessible to those who have gone through formal schooling. This is the respected package of multilingualism because in addition to the local languages that a speaker already has in their repertoire, this package has English, which gives speakers better academic and socio-economic opportunities. Mass multilingualism, on the other hand, is for those who have not gone through formal schooling and thus no English; it involves the acquisition of mostly African languages at grassroots level, it is natural and informal bilingualism mostly acquired through contact. This type is considered not financially rewarding and therefore of less value. 'Multilingualism in small languages in many contexts is relatively less useful than monolingualism in English'. (Piller, 2012: 114) Piller further argues that what counts is not the existence and distribution of languages but which languages a speaker is bilingual in.

Annamalai (2003: 115) argues that 'globalisation has forced national boundaries to be transparent and permeable, it has turned national majority languages into global minority languages on the global power dimension'. English as the global language and the language in the highest domain has pushed lower-level languages out of significant public domains. Globalisation has forced national languages to relinquish their top position to English and assume second position where they are experiencing the same kind of problems that the minority indigenous languages in the national context used to experience. The indigenous minority languages have been pushed even further down the hierarchy. Mohanty (2010) argues that when animals of subordinate species are threatened by more powerful predators, they engage in some anti-predatory behaviours to enhance their chances of survival. Such behaviours

usually involve retreating to areas of lesser access and visibility and low resources. Mohanty has observed a similar pattern in the contact of minority and dominant languages in India. Faced with pressure from the major dominant languages, minority languages have withdrawn into domains of lesser socio-economic power and significance. While the minority languages are restricted to less significant domains of home and in-group communication the dominant languages reign in the higher domains of education and formal business.

According to Annamalai:

African languages occupy a low position in the global sphere because at the global level strong economic and political strength is required to resolve competition between the languages ... the global level is the domain of power because the language legislated for use at this level gives material and social reward to its adopters. (2003: 120)

He further argues that the use of African languages at the local level, which is a lower domain of solidarity, cultural and social identification, is mainly by preference of the users and requires no intervention from governments or the outside world. Current multilingualism models allow the use of more languages at the bottom where there is no power in order to make room at the top for more powerful languages.

Dor (2004) believes that the process of globalisation has also made it difficult for African nation states to play their traditional roles of controlling their local language situations. Dor argues that one of the important traditional roles played by nation states was enhancing territorial unification by way of national languages that had well-defined territorial boundaries. Traditional roles allowed nation states to set linguistic standards, work out language-planning policies, control the language curricula in the education system, and use language as a major component in the construction of national identity. But in this era of globalisation, territorial unification has been difficult to achieve for nation states because the ability of a language to control its own virtual space is a direct function of the number of its speakers and their socio-economic status. This is a challenge for African languages whose boundaries have been penetrated by English and which lack economic and political influence to fight it.

In reality many African languages (especially African minority languages) play a very minimal role in globalising the world; that is bringing together the different world views, goods, services and people. They are confined to their local areas and have little to do with the global exchange of ideas, goods and services. They are surviving the globalisation scourge through some sort of 'tolerance multilingualism' (see Skutnabb-Kangas and Phillipson, 1994), which involves indifference to local languages and their exclusion in policy formulation as well as use in major public domains. In this kind of multilingualism, discrimination by language is not allowed explicitly, but financial support for

these languages from the national governments or Western countries is very little. Non-discrimination, however, does not mean the equal representation or use of all languages. The languages are maintained mainly by allowing local government and non-governmental and local organisations to fund their development and use in lower and local domains. Annamalai argues that:

A strong policy of tolerance of multilingualism, while not permitting the use of minority languages in the public domain, may be willing to grant some measures of amelioration to their speakers (like providing interpreters in a court of law, providing crutch-programmes to go through the medium of the dominant language in education) and to provide support to the cultural activities carried out in their languages. (2003: 120)

This situation is very common in many African states where the majority of the population do not speak the European language that serves as the country's official language.

The role of the West in global multilingualism

I believe that our approach to global multilingualism is flawed because it does not involve the participation and solidarity of the West, but rather it places all the burden on African countries to maintain and support linguistic linkages (see Bagwasi, 2012). In this era of globalisation there is a need for interdependence, mutual respect and benefits for each other. Dor (2004) believes that global businesses are looking for ways to penetrate local markets in their own languages. The most obvious problem with international trade is the language barrier. Good relations and good communications in turn rely partly on the parties being familiar with each other's language. He recommends the approach taken by the Roman Catholic Church in its 1965 decree by the second Vatican Council, which says:

Therefore all missionaries – priests, brothers and sisters and lay folk – each according to their own state, should be prepared and trained, lest they be found unequal to the demands of their future work. From the very beginning, their doctrinal training should be planned that it takes in both the universality of the church and the diversity of the world nations ... For anyone who is going to encounter another people should have a great esteem for their patrimony and their language and their customs ... let the missionaries learn the languages to such a degree that they can use them in a fluent and polished manner and so find more easy access to the mind and hearts of men. (Ad Gentes: Sec. 26, cited by Dor, 2004: 104)

Unfortunately this strategy has not been adopted by many Western countries, businesses and multinational corporations wishing to access the minds, hearts and even the pockets of Africans. I argue that Africans have to learn foreign languages so that they can trade with the outside world. They have to learn foreign languages so that they can buy and sell their products to the Western world.

However, the outside world is not forced to learn African languages in order to buy tea, coffee, gold, diamonds and oil from Africa or sell their machinery, medicine or computers to Africans:

If multilingualism is really about collaboration and interdependence and not supremacy and dominance, the linguistic menu of Western countries which have business and social interactions with Africa would also include African languages. Bagwasi (2012: 243)

The dynamics of unequal relations between languages and their speakers need to be understood. In a contact situation between minority and dominant languages, most of the minority speakers tend to learn the language of the dominant group and become bilingual, but members of the dominant group do not have to learn the minority's languages. The minority group is often the one that has to negotiate and make compromises so that it could be accommodated and accepted by the dominant group. The changes often take the form of convergence from less powerful to more powerful or minority to majority. The danger now becomes that once a speaker becomes bilingual in a dominant and non-dominant language they may transit from monolingualism in a non-dominant language to monolingualism in the dominant language.

Raising the value of African languages

In this era of globalisation it is not rewarding to retain African languages at the local level where they are confined to traditional roles. Mohanty believes that the 'exclusion of languages from domains of power, official recognition, legal and statutory use, trade, commerce and education severely restricts the chances of their development and survival' (Mohanty, 2010: 139). African languages need to be assigned more and higher domain functions, not just locally, but internationally. A language that performs several functions inevitably acquires prestige and once it has prestige it can spread further to new functions and speakers. African languages too need to become globalising agents through which the outside world can access Africa and through which Africa can sell its products to the world. Dor (2004) describes the way in which some global businesses dealing with internet and software industries are now selling their products in Africa using African languages. Dor argues that:

... in this new state of affairs, the forces of economic globalisation do not have a vested interest in the global spread of English; the same global economic pressures that are traditionally assumed to push the global expansion of English may actually be working to strengthen a significant set of other languages at the expense of English. They have a short-term interest in penetrating local markets through local languages and a long-term interest in turning these languages into commodified tools of communication at the expense of English. (2004: 98)

Though these languages have become new strategies for the penetration of and competition over local markets, their new use inadvertently benefits the local people and their languages. Dor's (2004) argument suggests that internet-led globalisation gives African languages an opportunity to thrive because the establishment of business websites and search engines opens up opportunities for global communication and exchange of knowledge among speakers of different languages. The internet and social media target speakers of local languages, not English.

Conclusion

I have argued that our conceptualisation of multilingualism is flawed because it promotes hierarchical multilingualism. There is a wide gap between the statuses of languages: European versus African languages as well as dominant versus minority languages, and for that reason global multilingualism is in actual fact what Mohanty (2010: 138) calls 'multilingualism of the unequals' in which languages are ordered in some hierarchy of power and status. Bagwasi argues that:

... the dominance and presence of international languages in the SADC and Africa is in fact a problem about our global perceptions and attitudes towards different languages; it is about political and economic powers being exercised linguistically; and it is about unresolved local, national and international language issues. A solution to the problem has to involve all levels of language dominance: local, national and international. (2012: 243)

I contend that we should strive for multilingual policies that recognise the universality of many languages, that enhance multilingual networking, and not language policies that promote one language for nation building or global trade. For us to achieve a healthy relationship between languages, it is important to strengthen forces at both national and global levels.

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‘Where there is rich linguistic diversity, an attempt can be made to increase the number of languages as languages of education, but the work and commitment required should never be underestimated.

Materials need to be developed.

Teachers need to be trained.

In many cases, orthographies will need to be developed. Above all, the support of the local community is required.’

Professor Andy Kirkpatrick



From policy to practice: the incremental introduction of African languages in all South African schools

Jennifer Joshua, Department of Basic Education, South Africa

Introduction

South Africa is a multilingual and multicultural country whose language policies are arguably the most progressive in the world. Research indicates that language policies of many developed countries have been influenced by language education policy research pioneered in South Africa in the 1990s and early 2000s that contributed to UNESCO mother tongue-based multilingual research and recommendations for education across Africa (Anderson, 2008). This research and associated education policy implications have influenced language education policy decisions and implementation in several South-East Asian countries (Chang, 2009; Vizconde, 2011).

In this paper I outline the legislation supporting multilingualism and the challenges of implementation. I then trace the history of language planning in education in South Africa and discuss the South African government's resolve to ensure that multilingualism is implemented in all schools through the policy on the Incremental Introduction of African Languages.

Legislation and policy within a democratic South Africa

In this section, I discuss language provisions such as the National Education Policy Act (1996) (NEPA), the South African Schools Act (1996) (SASA), the Language-in-Education Policy (1997) (LiEP) (1997) and the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (grades R–12) as enabling frameworks for the implementation of linguistic human rights.

The post-apartheid South African Constitution (Act 108 of 1996)¹ embraces language as a basic human right and multilingualism as a national resource. The Constitution has elevated the nine major African languages spoken in South Africa (isiNdebele, isiXhosa, isiZulu, SePedi, Sesotho,

Setswana, SiSwati, Xitsonga and Tshivenda) to an official status alongside English and Afrikaans.

The Constitution states that all official languages must enjoy parity of esteem and be treated equitably (clause 6.4) and that everyone has the right to receive education in the official language or languages of their choice in public educational institutions where education in that language is reasonably practicable (clause 29[2]). The Constitution is based on the Bill of Rights, which lays the foundation for the development of democratic values and, as such, forms the basis for language legislation and a policy framework to be derived (Braam, 2004).

Section 9 of the Bill of Rights, in Chapter Two of the Constitution, promotes the equality of all South African citizens. Neither the state nor any individual may 'unfairly discriminate directly or indirectly' against anyone on the basis of 'race, gender, sex, pregnancy, marital status, ethnic or social origin, colour, sexual orientation, age, disability, conscience, belief, culture, language and birth'. Section 30 states that everyone has the right to use the language and to participate in the cultural life of their choice provided that they do not violate the rights of others. Section 31 recognises and advocates 'Persons belonging to a cultural, religious or linguistic community may not be denied the right, with other members of that community, to enjoy their culture, practise their religion and use their language.' Section 32 gives everyone the right to access information held by the state in the official language of choice (cited in Hornberger, 1998: 443–4).

The official language policy is entrenched in the Constitution, clearly recognising and elevating the 11 designated languages in education, in homes and public environments. Designating a language as 'official' or declaring it a 'language of record' affords it status desirable as a subject and medium of instruction² as opposed to

1 See Constitution of the Republic South Africa (1996) Languages. Chapter 2. Available from www.polity.org.za/govdocs/constitution/saconst20html

languages not designated (NEPI, 1992). The lack of practical guidance on how to implement the 11 official languages as the media of instruction is resulting in English and, to a lesser extent, Afrikaans, maintaining their status in this regard.

The National Education Policy Act (Act 27 of 1996a)³ authorises the national Minister of Education to determine national education policy in accordance with certain principles and in consultation with relevant established bodies. The directive principles related to language are:

- The right of every learner to be instructed in the language of his or her choice where this is reasonably practicable (clause 4 [v]).
- The right of every person to use the language and participate in the cultural life of his or her choice within an education institution (clause 4 [viii]).

The South African Schools Act (Act 84 of 1996b)⁴ states that the governing body of a school should determine the language policy of a school and programmes for the redress of previously disadvantaged languages subject to the National Education Policy Act, the Constitution and any applicable provincial law. The policy shifts away from apartheid-era language-related prescriptions, and hence, for the first time, African languages may be used as the language of teaching and learning (LoTL). As a result, English and Afrikaans no longer have the most favoured status in the language policy. It is clearly the intention

of the policy to promote education that uses learners' home languages for learning, while at the same time providing access to other languages taught as subjects.

The Language-in-Education Policy (LiEP), the first post-apartheid language policy for the South African public schools, was adopted in 1997 in terms of Section 3(4)(m) of the National Education Policy Act (Act 27 of 1996a), which authorises the national Minister of Education to determine language in education and in terms of Section 6(1) of the South African Schools Act (Act 84 of 1996b), and which also authorises the national Minister of Education to determine norms and standards for language policy in public schools. The LiEP should be seen as part of an ongoing process by which policy for education is being developed as part of a national plan (DoE, 1997). One of its aims, together with the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement is to pursue a language policy supportive of conceptual growth among learners by establishing 'additive multilingualism as an approach to language in education'. (DoE, 1997: 2) The policy aims to promote the use of learners' home language and at the same time to provide access to other languages, thus establishing the legal basis for the promotion of the linguistic rights of all South Africans. The implementation of this policy at school level is where its efficacy is most likely to be demonstrated.

2 The medium of instruction (Moi) is currently referred to as the language of learning and teaching (LoLT).

3 National Education Policy Act (Act 27 of 1996) (NEPA) in *Policy Handbook for Educators* (Education Labour Relations Council, 2003). Edited by Chris Brunton and Associates.

4 The South African Schools Act (Act 84 of 1996) (SASA) in *Policy Handbook for Educators* (Education Labour Relations Council, 2003). Edited by Chris Brunton and Associates. SASA aims to redress past injustices in educational provision and provide an education of progressively high quality for all learners. SASA thus lays a strong foundation for the development of all our people's talents and capabilities, advances the democratic transformation of society, combats racism and sexism and all other forms of unfair discrimination and intolerance, contributes to the eradication of poverty and the economic wellbeing of society, protects and advances our diverse cultures and languages, upholds the rights of all learners, parents and educators and promotes their responsibility for the organisation, governance and funding of schools throughout the Republic of South Africa.

Apartheid language policy historical overview

Since the early 19th century language has played a key role in educational and political debates in South Africa. The language planning for schools of the 20th century was spread across a number of government structures and characterised by racial and ethnic divisions typical of the National Party's ideological commitments.

Language-in-education in the apartheid era

During the apartheid era (1948–94) LiEPs for South Africa were developed by the white minority, and even though the policies directly affected the black majority they had no say in their formulation. The Bantu Education Act of 1953, which advocated mother tongues as mediums of instruction in black primary schools, followed by the sudden transfer to English or Afrikaans at higher levels seriously obstructed the academic development of African pupils. The 1976 Soweto Uprising, which began with black learners protesting against the use of Afrikaans as a medium of instruction at secondary school level resulted in school language policies and the medium of instruction becoming highly contentious issues. In some ways the Soweto Uprising marked the beginning of the end of the apartheid experiment of social engineering (Alexander, 2003).

The language medium and mother tongue issue

Reflecting on the dominant language ideology in education that gave every child the right to be educated in their mother tongue, Reagan (1984) proposed the development of Afrikaner nationalism and 'educational thought', which focuses on the positive social, psychological and cognitive effects of bilingualism. While the intended outcome of the language policy was for all students in South Africa to gain fluency in the country's two official languages (English and Afrikaans), this outcome was to be reached essentially through separate educational experiences (Hartshorne, 1992). Linguistic separation in schools in South Africa was thus used as a way of protecting cultural and linguistic hegemony of the ruling elite and was justified in order to maintain Afrikaner identity and preserve the intrinsic qualities of African culture.

Bilingual policy debate

Sookrajh (1999) opposes the theoretical assumptions dominating the South African language debate in education with regard to the effectiveness of bilingual education in promoting academic achievement. These assumptions are essentially hypotheses concerning the causes of disadvantaged learners' academic failure and each is associated with a particular form of educational intervention designed to reverse this failure. In transitional bilingual education, it is argued that students cannot learn in a language they do not understand. Language planning in

education occurred in a context of educational separation on ethnolinguistic lines to the point of dividing the education system into English and Afrikaans mediums respectively.

Post-apartheid implementation opportunities and challenges

Language shift and languages of teaching and learning

Plüddemann et al. (2004) provided an overview of the problems facing teachers in classrooms post-1994, which they attributed to the sudden influx of African language-speaking learners into schools that had previously been closed to them, but which did not yet have redeployed and appropriately qualified African language speaking teachers. Their research revealed that teachers in the English and Afrikaans medium schools expressed frustration due to an inability to communicate effectively with the majority of their learners, thus reducing interactions between teachers and learners.

School language policy development and implementation

Despite the introduction of the LiEP, most public schools remain largely unaware of, or unreceptive to, the LiEP and its advocacy of additive bilingualism. Plüddemann et al. (2004) assert that diverse language policies and practices of schools have resulted in an education system that still lacks co-ordination and direction. Language practices at school level are largely determined by contextual factors such as resourcing, demographic shifts, parental preferences and the language competence of teachers. Though educationally sound, the lack of articulation between the curriculum and the LiEP is apparent, as teachers who received training for the curriculum are often unaware of the LiEP. Given the uneven implementation of the LiEP in schools and the criticism of insufficient support for an enabling environment for multilingualism to thrive, the Department of Basic Education has taken a bold step to introduce the policy of the Incremental Introduction of African Languages.

The Incremental Introduction of African Languages (IIAL)

Multilingualism and learning outcomes

Global research findings provide evidence that the most efficient path to competency in an additional language, such as English, is through careful consolidation of language competence in the language used in the home, complemented by careful and incremental addition of the additional language (Fallon and Rublik, 2012; Williams, 2011). Research on achievement of learning outcomes has further shown that children learn best and perform better if the

language of learning, teaching and assessment is the same as their home language (Agbedo et al., 2012). Furthermore, the longer the child learns in the home language, the better it is for the transfer to learning through an additional language (Rosekrans et al., 2012).

There is evidence of poor learning outcomes across all language backgrounds in the data released by the Annual National Assessment (ANA), Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS), Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS) and the Southern and Eastern Africa Consortium for Monitoring Educational Quality (SACMEQ). There are many reasons for these low levels of attainment, but one that is compelling is the mismatch between the language competence of learners and the language of teaching and learning at school; the aspiration for English medium instruction has resulted in the under-utilisation of learners' primary languages. Researchers continue to show that learners' and teachers' best-known languages should be used as learning resources alongside English (Walter and Dekker, 2011; Agbedo et al., 2012, Chambless, 2012). This implies an alignment between the language(s) teachers are expected to use for teaching and assessment at school, and the language(s) in which they undergo their training.

The implementation of IIAL

The Incremental Introduction of African Languages (IIAL) in all public schools from grades 1 to 12 gives practical expression to the intentions of the LiEP. The IIAL aims to:

- Strengthen the use of African languages at home language level and first additional language levels.
- Improve proficiency in and utilisation of the previously marginalised languages.
- Increase access to languages by all learners, beyond English and Afrikaans.
- Promote social cohesion.
- Expand opportunities for the development of African languages to help preserve heritage and cultures.

The IIAL will be implemented incrementally from grade 1 in 2015 and in subsequent years until grade 12 in 2026. This will mean that all learners in all public schools will have to learn an African language. Effectively this means that all learners in all public schools will be offered three languages, of which one should be an African language. Currently, the National Curriculum Statement requires learners to be offered two official languages, one of which must be the language of learning and teaching.

The National Curriculum Statement provides for three language levels:

- **Home language level** – the language first acquired by children through immersion at home.
- **First additional language level** – a language learned in addition to one's home language.
- **Second additional language level** – a language learned primarily for interpersonal and social purposes.

For IIAL, one of the three languages must be offered at home language level while the two other languages will be at first additional language level. For many learners, the offering of three languages is already a feature of schools in some provinces. The multilingual nature of the South African population is reflected in the fact that many children come to school already able to speak two or more languages. The model of selecting language(s) will differ from one province to the other, as no 'one size fits all' applies.

Teachers and time are critical resources

The offering of a third language necessitates an increase in instructional time and an extension of the school day. The instructional time for grades 1 and 2 will increase by two hours per week. In grade 3 it will increase by three hours per week. The instructional time for learners from grades 4–12 will increase by five hours per week. The extension of time allocation will have no implications on the conditions of service for teachers. According to their existing conditions of service, teachers are required to work for seven hours per day, so the extension only affects learners and not teachers. However, the teachers are likely to incur additional load due to the increased assessment requirements implicit in this policy. Thus, the success of the implementation of the IIAL is primarily reliant on teacher availability. It is widely accepted that teachers teach well when they have a good command of the teaching language; hence teachers recruited for IIAL must be proficient in the language they teach and have expertise to teach in the early grades.

The IIAL pilot

The full implementation of the IIAL is being preceded by a pilot project in a minimum of ten schools per province. The pilot project is targeting the introduction of the previously marginalised African languages in schools where an African language is presently not offered. The pilot in grade 1 commenced on 1 February 2014 and will end on 31 October 2014.

The results of the pilot in November 2014 and public comment on the draft IIAL policy (in February 2015) will assist the Department to:

- Revisit what multilingualism means for education.
- Identify the implications for implementation.
- Find practical ways to manage the complexities of language development in schools and classrooms.
- Provide support and training for teachers to develop the skills and confidence to work productively with the language(s).
- Teach languages using appropriate methodologies and pedagogy that will foster a love for reading and language learning.

Conclusion

The Department of Basic Education is committed to ensuring that it moves its policy agenda from theory to practice. Despite the challenges with the implementation of the LiEP, government has resolved to act decisively to ensure that being multilingual is the defining characteristic of being South African through the implementation of the IIAL policy. IIAL gives expression to the LiEP and attempts to ensure that all learners will exit the system having learned at least one African language, thus promoting multilingualism and fostering social cohesion. The primary outcome of all key decisions will be to ensure that learners in the school system have optimal opportunities to develop their language skills so that these will be of optimal use in education and in their economic and socio-political lives once they leave school.

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Lingua francas as languages of education: implications for other languages

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Introduction

In this paper I shall first describe how lingua francas that have been adopted as national languages are used as languages of education and their relationship with English, typically the first 'foreign' language taught in schools. I shall draw my examples from four Asian settings: China, where Putonghua Mandarin is the national lingua franca; Hong Kong, where Cantonese is the lingua franca; the Philippines, where Filipino is the national lingua franca; and Indonesia, where Bahasa Indonesia is the national lingua franca. I shall compare the situation in these four settings, focusing on how the national lingua francas operate with other languages, including English, as languages of education. I shall argue that, generally speaking, there is a shift taking place in Asia (and possibly Africa too), which is seeing a decline in people who are multilingual in local languages and a corresponding increase in those who are bilingual in the national lingua franca and English. As the discussion of the four settings will demonstrate, however, the situation is complex and there may be a move back towards promoting local languages as languages of education in some cases. While this chapter takes its examples from Asia, it may be that similar examples could easily be found across the world, not least in the multilingual nations of Africa.

China

China has been extremely successful in making Putonghua Mandarin the national lingua franca and it is easy to overlook the existence of other Chinese languages. In addition to Mandarin, there are six major dialects, namely: Shanghainese (or Wu to give the language group its official name); Cantonese (or Yue); Min, which includes Min Nan Hua (Southern Min, of which Hokkien is a variety). The Xiang, Hakka and Gan languages make up the major groupings. Many of these languages have tens of millions of speakers, and each comprises several sub-dialects. Despite the large numbers of speakers, The National Language Law of China proscribes the use of any of these Chinese languages other than the national language, Putonghua, as a language of

education. This means, for example, that, by law, Cantonese cannot be taught in the schools of Guangdong Province, its traditional home base. The only languages, other than 'foreign' languages such as English, which can be officially taught in the government school system are the languages of certain national minorities, such as Mongolian and Zhuang. This attempt at providing a trilingual education in the relevant mother tongue, Putonghua and English has met with limited success. For example, Feng and Adamson (2014) report that it is only where the minority language has economic value that the programme has been successful.

A good example is the success of the Korean programme in the north-east of China where the two countries border each other. Knowledge of Korean has obvious economic advantages as a trade language. A direct consequence of the National Language Law is that fewer Chinese are learning their mother tongue. As Coleman has pointed out: 'A very effective way of killing a language is to deny it any place in the education system'. (2010: 17) A second direct consequence of the policy is that more Chinese now learn English than they do Chinese languages other than Putonghua. Officially, English is introduced as a subject in the third year of primary school. Unofficially, however, many parents with the means send their children to English medium kindergartens and, despite the law, the number of schools offering some content courses in English is increasing, especially in wealthy urban areas.

This combination of official policy to promote English alongside parent desire has seen an exponential increase in the number of Chinese learners of English. Indeed, it has been estimated that some 400 million Chinese are learners or users of English (Bolton and Graddol, 2012). There are thus more Chinese learners of English than there are native speakers of it. The increasing use of English as a medium of instruction in Chinese institutions of higher education (Kirkpatrick, 2014) is a further motivation for Chinese to learn English. If this trend continues, then it is likely that the number of Chinese who are bilingual in Putonghua and English will outnumber Chinese who are bi- or multilingual in Chinese languages and/or the languages of China.

Hong Kong

As part of the arrangement of Hong Kong being classified a Special Administrative Region (SAR) of China, it has control over most internal policy, including education. The Chinese National Language Law therefore does not apply to Hong Kong and this has allowed Hong Kong to make Cantonese the main medium of instruction in government primary and secondary schools, although, as will be illustrated below, the government has recently allowed the use of more English medium instruction (EMI) in secondary schools.

Crucially, however, the eight government-funded universities are allowed to set their own language policy. Six of the eight have decided to be English medium institutions. Only the Chinese University of Hong Kong (CUHK) has a bilingual policy, with Chinese as the main medium of instruction. The desire for CUHK to internationalise and move up the university ranking tables has, however, led to recent increases in the use of EMI, to the extent that students took the university to court, arguing that this increase in EMI ran counter to the university's charter. The court finally ruled in the university's favour, stating that the university had the right to set its own medium of instruction policy (Li, 2013). Only the Hong Kong Institute of Education (HKIEd) has a trilingual policy, the aim of which is to see graduates who are functionally trilingual in Cantonese, Putonghua and English, and biliterate in English and Chinese. HKIEd is thus the only government-funded university that actually has a language policy which supports the government's own trilingual-biliterate policy. The others have language policies that are directly inimical.

This underlines how important it is for language education policies to be coherent and to articulate across all levels and grades. As it is, the universities' EMI policies mean that parents, naturally enough, want their children to study in English at secondary schools. It is this parental pressure that has forced the government to 'fine-tune' the language policy. After the handover of Hong Kong to China in 1997, the new government insisted that only secondary schools which met certain strict criteria to do with students' ability and student and teacher English language proficiency would be allowed to be English medium (EMI) schools. All others would have to be Chinese medium (CMI).

As a result, about 25 per cent of secondary schools became EMI; the remainder were CMI schools. Following constant and increasing parental pressure, however, the government caved in and passed the fine-tuning bill (Education Bureau 2009), which allows Chinese medium schools to teach more content classes in English. Predictably this has led to a significant reduction in classes taught in Chinese (a decline of more than 30 per cent for mathematics and science, for example) and a corresponding increase in classes taught in English

(Kan et al., 2011). This washback effect for more English, caused by the universities' EMI policies, is also being felt in primary schools, where there is also increasing pressure for Putonghua to become the medium of instruction, especially, but not exclusively, for Chinese itself (Wang and Kirkpatrick, 2013). This pressure stems from a variety of causes including the prestige of Putonghua as the national language, its increasing role as an international lingua franca, the increase of Putonghua-speaking migrants from China, and the high economic value of Putonghua as a language of trade, commerce and business.

So, while the Hong Kong government remains officially committed to ensuring its citizens are trilingual and biliterate, the two lingua francas, English and Putonghua, are putting pressure on Cantonese, whose role as a medium of instruction has been severely reduced in secondary schools and is coming under increasing pressure in primary schools. It will be interesting to see how long the L1 of the great majority of the population will be retained as the medium of instruction in primary schools in the face of this pressure from the two powerful lingua francas.

Philippines

The Philippines is a linguistically and culturally diverse country, with some 170 languages. About 90 per cent of the population speak one of the eight regional lingua francas (Dekker and Young, 2005). Despite, or perhaps because of, this linguistic diversity, the Philippines has, until recently, implemented a bilingual education policy (BEP), which stipulated the use of English as the medium of instruction for science and mathematics and Filipino for other subjects.

The BEP policy took effect from primary one. The prescription of these two lingua francas, Filipino and English, as languages of education has been in force in some form since 1974 and has been the cause of massive educational failure, as evidenced by large dropout rates by the fifth year of primary school, especially in regions beyond the capital, Manila. One reason for this is that Filipino, although now being more accepted as the national language, is actually heavily based on Tagalog, the language spoken by about five million people in and around Manila. Filipino was thus a 'foreign' language to the great majority of Filipinos. A second reason for the dropout rates was that, with the exception of the privileged middle classes, English was also a foreign language. As Bautista tellingly observed, success for Filipino children required them 'to be born in metro Manila; be a native speaker of Tagalog; and study in an excellent private school'. (1996: 225).

The BEP meant that children from outside Manila who spoke local languages other than Tagalog/Filipino would go to school and be required to learn in not one, but two

languages with which they were unfamiliar. Although there were frequent attempts over many years to incorporate vernacular languages into the primary curriculum, these met with little success (Dekker and Young, 2005) until, in 2009, the Department of Education issued an order 'Institutionalising Mother Tongue-based Education'.⁵ This order, which involved the use of more than two languages for literacy and instruction, was supposed to have been immediately implemented, but, of course, this was impossible. Teachers need training in how to teach in the relevant language and materials in the relevant language need developing. In some cases, an orthography for the language needs to be created and this takes commitment and time (see Dekker and Young, 2005 for the development of an orthography for Lilubugan). The 2009 order has been given further impetus by the signing of the *Enhanced Basic Education Act* in May 2013. The act states, 'For kindergarten and the first three years of elementary education, instruction, teaching materials and assessment shall be in the regional or native language of the learners'.⁶

As mentioned above, some 170 languages are spoken in the Philippines and the new act actually allows for the use of 19 of these, comprising local lingua francas that have orthographies (Martin, 2013). It is too early to be able to judge whether this move into multilingual education will be a success, but it will have to overcome many difficulties. A major proponent of the new policy is concerned that the vernaculars are only to be used until primary 3 rather than until primary 6, and that teachers are receiving grossly inadequate training (Nolasco, 2012). There are also reports that regions are nominating Tagalog/Filipino as the language of education, even though other local lingua francas are in use in those regions. However, the Philippines provides a relatively rare example of where multilingual education using local languages is being trialled. The fact that Filipino has become more accepted as the national language and the huge demand for English, a demand driven by the fact that many Filipinos earn their livings as overseas workers where English is a vital skill and by the fact that the universities are all EMI, suggest that, coupled with the other obstacles mentioned above, it may well prove difficult to implement multilingual education successfully on a wide scale. The lingua francas, Filipino and English, look set to remain the major languages of education.

Indonesia

Indonesia is even more linguistically and culturally diverse than the Philippines, with more than 700 languages reported (Lewis, 2009). In the face of this extraordinary diversity, the government has rigorously promoted the use

of Bahasa Indonesia (BI) as the national lingua franca. In this it has been extremely successful. At the time of Indonesia's independence from the Dutch in 1947, BI was spoken by only three per cent of the population. Now the majority of the population report being proficient in BI with an increasing percentage listing it as a mother tongue (Montolalu and Suryadinata, 2007). It is worth noting the reasons why a minority language was chosen to be the national language. First, it was thought that making Javanese, the language with the most speakers in Indonesia, would have further privileged the privileged. Javanese, with its linguistic complexities reflecting the intricate hierarchies fundamental to Javanese culture, was also considered to be undemocratic at a time when the new nation sought to promote democracy. Malay (as BI was then known), with its relative lack of hierarchical markings was considered a better fit. It was also considered to be an easier language than Javanese to learn (Ostler, 2005). That Malay was also spoken by a small minority in Indonesia was a further advantage, as its choice would not privilege an already powerful group. Its role as a lingua franca across South-East Asia proved an attraction, as did its crucial role as the 'language of unity against the Dutch'. (Bernard, 2003: 272).

As part of the push to promote BI as the national language, which also saw it enshrined as the medium of instruction through the education system from primary through to tertiary, few of the other literally hundreds of Indonesian languages were made languages of education. This was relaxed in 1987, when five major languages (Javanese, Sundanese, Batak, Balinese and Buginese) were allowed to be used as languages of instruction in the early years of primary school. These languages, if they are taught at all, are, in practice, more usually taught as a subject within the 'local content' component of the curriculum. Local content subjects are only taught for a couple of hours a week, and are not examined (Hawanti, 2013).

Indonesia is the only country in East and South-East Asia that does not have English as a compulsory subject in primary school (Kirkpatrick, 2010), although, until earlier this year, it was a compulsory subject at secondary level. Strangely, English in primary school is often taught in the same way as local languages; that is to say, as part of the local content component of the curriculum.

Increasing demand for more English medium education was met with laws passed in 2003 and 2005, which called for the establishment of international-standard schools (ISS), a major aim of which was to improve the Indonesian human resource pool (Sultan, 2014). The 2003 law called for all local governments to set up at least one international-standard school at all levels of education, at primary, lower secondary and senior secondary. These schools were

⁵ <http://mothertongue-based.blogspot.com.au>

⁶ www.gov.ph/2013/05/15/republic-act-no-10533/

supposed to meet 'international standards' of education and were required to use a foreign language (almost always English in practice) as the medium of instruction for mathematics and science subjects. This use of English was supposed to start from primary 4, but in reality, often started from primary 1.

The ISS attracted controversy and opposition from a wide range of quarters. People saw them as inequitable – the schools could charge fees and therefore only the wealthy could afford to send their children to them. In 2011 a number of groups and NGOs, in opposition to these schools, including Indonesia Corruption Watch and the Education Coalition, challenged the constitutional right of these schools to exist. Their challenge was upheld, and in 2013 the Indonesian Constitutional Court ruled that the schools be dissolved. In some ways, this might have provided a merciful release. As Sultan (2014) reports, these schools suffered from being set up without adequate human and material resources. Few teachers had the language proficiency to teach maths and science through English. Few students had the English proficiency to learn cognitively demanding subjects such as mathematics and science through English. The teachers had little or no specialist training. Materials were inadequate and many riddled with poor English. The adoption of English as the medium of instruction and its potential effects upon local languages also occasioned opposition:

With the emerging and mushrooming demand for English, schools then drop the local language in order to give more time to the English teaching. As a result, in the long run, children and the younger generation can no longer speak the local language. This is culturally and linguistically pitiful. (Hadisantosa, 2010: 31)

The same year that saw the ISS ruled unconstitutional also saw the introduction of a new radical curriculum.⁷ It has proved extremely controversial as, for example, science and mathematics have been dropped as discrete subjects, but are to be taught as part of religion and ethics. English, which had been a compulsory subject at secondary level, has been dropped. The new curriculum is currently being trialled and it is not yet possible to know to what extent the changes will be fully implemented in the future and whether demand will result in the re-instatement of English. What does seem clear is that BI will retain its position as the medium of education across all levels of education and that there will be little place for any of the other languages of Indonesia.

Conclusion

I have briefly summarised the situation concerning the use of lingua francas as languages of education across four separate settings in East and South-East Asia. While

this shows how powerful the lingua francas (Putonghua, Filipino, and Bahasa Indonesia) are, it also shows how much linguistic diversity exists both within and across each setting. This Asian complexity mirrors that illustrated by Chumbow (2013) for Africa, where he notes that Lesotho and Swaziland have but two languages, Rwanda and Burundi three, Tanzania 120, Cameroon 286 and Nigeria more than 450. The number of languages clearly adds immensely to the complexity of language education. Where there are three 'obvious' languages of education (such as is the case in Hong Kong with Cantonese, Putonghua and English) the question is how the languages can complement each other as languages of education. Even here, however, the political prestige and power of the lingua francas can see the almost universally agreed pedagogical benefit of using the mother tongue as the medium of instruction, especially in the primary school years, overlooked. As the case in Hong Kong amply demonstrates, the lack of a coherent language policy will also undermine the best intentions (see also Heugh, 2010). Where there is rich linguistic diversity, an attempt can be made to increase the number of languages as languages of education, but the work and commitment required should never be underestimated. Materials need to be developed. Teachers need to be trained. In many cases, orthographies will need to be developed. Above all, the support of the local community is required. As Mtenje has pointed out for the African context:

We must clearly explain multilingual education and its partnership with the former colonial languages, for instance English, to avoid creating the wrong impression that the multilingual education policy is a replacement for these languages, which are often seen by many as languages of socio-economic mobility in most African countries. (2013, 100)

At present, the parents and other stakeholders remain to be convinced.

Faced with this linguistic diversity and complexity, far from encouraging multilingual education, governments often rule that only certain languages can be used as languages of education. This is the case in China and Indonesia and, until recently, was the case in the Philippines. Such a choice will inevitably result in the national language, itself almost always a lingua franca, and an international lingua franca (English in the cases illustrated above) taking over as the languages of education. Despite cases where countries have taken the multilingual road, such as South Africa and the Philippines, the majority of countries choose the lingua franca route. I have elsewhere argued (for example, Kirkpatrick, 2010, 2013) that one way of promoting multilingual education and English as a language of education is to delay EMI until the secondary school and ensure that the primary school focuses on the teaching of

⁷ <http://globalvoicesonline.org/2013/08/18/more-religion-less-science-in-indonesia-school-reform/> (accessed 2/1/2014)

local languages. There is, however, little evidence of this happening, with English typically being introduced earlier and earlier into the primary curriculum, often at the expense of local languages. The wisdom of the call, made by John Knagg during the conference, that English medium instruction should be 'later not earlier, staged not sudden, additive not subtractive, only when the child is ready, only when the teacher is capable', is not yet recognised by policy makers and key stakeholders. National and international lingua francas remain entrenched as languages of education.

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10th INTERNATIONAL
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The British Council hosted the tenth International Language and Development Conference in Cape Town in October 2013. The conference coincided with reviews by development professionals and policy makers worldwide of progress towards the eight 2015 UN Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). It was an opportunity to focus on a range of language-related issues common – but not unique to – developing countries across the African continent. This collection is drawn from papers and presentations across the four main strands of discussion: language policy; language, literacy and education; language in socio-economic development; language, culture, identity and inclusion. The writers look at African languages, varieties of English and other languages from policy level to practical application in the classroom, and in the home and wider community.

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