THE ATTITUDES OF LEARNERS, EDUCATORS AND PARENTS TOWARDS ENGLISH AS A LANGUAGE OF LEARNING AND TEACHING (LOLT) IN MTHUNZINI CIRCUIT

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by

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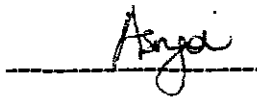
DECLARATION

I declare that 'The attitudes of learners, educators and parents towards English as a language of learning and teaching (LOT) in Mthunzini circuit' is my own work and that all the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.



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ABSTRACT

The main aim for the study was to examine the attitudes of learners, educators and parents on the use of English as a language of learning and teaching and an additional language in selected schools to the north of KwaZulu Natal (Mthunzini Circuit).

To this end questionnaires were used as a research instrument. Questionnaires were administered to the parents, learners and educators. The research instruments were administered to a randomly selected sample of two hundred respondents. Not all the respondents returned the questionnaires.

The findings revealed that learners have a positive attitude towards the use of English as a language of learning and teaching and an additional language in schools. The findings also revealed that educators have a negative attitude towards English as a language of learning and teaching and as an additional language in schools. The findings further revealed that parents had a positive attitude towards the use of English as a language of learning and teaching and an additional language in schools.

On the basis of the findings, the study recommended that the school policy should stipulate that English should be strictly used as a language of learning and teaching with the aim of helping learners because they need English for the purpose of employment in future.

Educators who qualify to teach English must have received appropriate training and qualification in English grammar, literature and general linguistics. On the other hand, the learners' mother tongue should also be developed for identity and communication purposes.

CHAPTER ONE

1.0 ORIENTATION OF THE STUDY

1.1 Introduction

The question of attitudes in learning situations

Language attitudes can be defined as strong positive or negative emotions experienced by people when they are faced with a choice between languages in a variety of situations or are learning a language (Smit, 1996:147). Hence Webb (1996:186) points out that it is of paramount importance that language policy makers and planners take note of a people's language attitudes and preferences so that their policy can reflect the needs of the people, and not the interests of any particular group.

Mawasha (1996:23) argues that Black people in South Africa prefer English as a language of learning and teaching even from the earliest years of primary schooling. English is preferred because it is the language of power and of employment. Research in language attitudes is an attempt to find out how students feel about their own native language and other South African languages, and also to see whether over a period of time, language attitudes and preferences remain relatively fixed or become more flexible. This is as a result of the influence of a variety of factors such as identifying with one's group or becoming exposed to a wide range of opinions on language.

The usage of English as a second language and a language of learning and teaching has always been a burning issue in many institutions of learning. In December 1995, a language plan group was commissioned by the then minister of Culture Science and Technology to advise him about possible measures in achieving the government's language policy

objectives regarding the status of official languages. The language plan group pointed out that there is a widespread concern in South Africa about the performance of Black learners in examination at various levels in education. The group further remarked that this raises further pedagogic questions about the ongoing dominance of English across the education sector in South Africa.

The investigation of this nature was conducted with the purpose of finding out a variety of ways to assist learners to achieve good results in their academic world. It also involves parents to play a major role in the education of their children. A major role would include their views regarding subjects and languages used to present the subject matter.

This study attempts to answer one of the issues raised by Kamwangamalu (1995), who commented that if English is the language most favoured by the masses. The challenge to educators, policy makers and government is not to waste this positive attitude, but to accommodate it in an upgraded *and improved system of English language teaching in our schools.* Kamwangamalu (1995) further pointed out that this should not occur at the expense of first giving children a firm grounding in their home language, but to ensure the development of their primary literacy in both languages. In the same breath children need a firm and thorough grounding in a home language in KwaZulu Natal province such as isiZulu to facilitate the notion of conceptual and cognitive development in the target language, English.

On the other hand, Balfour (1998) argues against the usage of the second language for teaching purposes. Balfour (1998) further states that a second language may at times be detrimental to the conceptual and development of the child's cognition, at times providing obstacles to connecting between thoughts and ideas already developed in the first language.

The significance of the role that attitudes play in language education planning and development has been noted by researchers in Africa and elsewhere Herbert (1992). In Zimbabwe, where chiShona is used as a first language, a study was undertaken where the researchers investigated the people's attitudes towards the usage of chiShona versus English as a medium of instruction. Mparutsa (1987) in an unpublished study of one hundred Harare students noted that although English was seen as a language of success a high proportion of respondents would like to see chiShona used more widely. Similarly Chiwone and Thondhlana (1992) in their interviews with secondary school teachers and students reported that while many students choose to do English at ordinary level, they often felt that they could better express themselves in chiShona yet when it comes to choosing ordinary and advanced levels many students choose English over chiShona, reflecting a wide belief that a certificate in English would help in the job market. It is the same case with isiZulu, which is the mother tongue to our learners. Learners prefer to speak and to be taught in isiZulu whereas at the end of the day, their examination and employment demands the knowledge of English language.

The Inter-Africa Bureau of languages recognises several advantages to using mother tongue as a language of learning and teaching:

i) it develops critical powers;
ii) it fosters effective communication;
iii) it enhances deeper cultural understanding, and
iv) it increases national consciousness.

Chiwone and Thondhlana in Herbet (1992).

In a study conducted in Zimbabwe, Zimbabwe high school teachers observed the following advantages and disadvantages of using chiShona as a mother tongue and a medium of instruction. Among the advantages they state the following:

Advantages:

i) some topics are mostly discussed in chiShona, for example topics on cultural studies;

ii) using chiShona encourages assimilation of English terms into chiShona;

iii) examples can easily be given in context;

iv) rote learning can be avoided because of the students' better understanding of the material, and

v) students become more creative since they have to improvise and find novel ways of expression, invent terms to use in their essays.

Disadvantages:

i) there is no standard academic register for chiShona;

ii) no creativity, students prefer to use the ready made material, and

iii) the exclusive use of chiShona leaves students unfamiliar with the English terminology used in examination questions thus putting them at a disadvantage.

In the study conducted by the Pansalb (1998) at Witwatersrand academic practitioners expressed their concern with the effects of using African languages in their specific disciplines of specialisation. One of them felt that using a local language to teach could be a burden to sociology students and teachers. The argument appears to be that the relatively underdeveloped specialist vocabulary and conceptual base outside English or other European languages in which sociology evolved, could limit the potential for deep learning. The practitioner further argued that African languages are considered inappropriate for instruction. The position is that at the moment there is a lack of sufficiently developed terminology that could make teaching of content subjects effective.

1.2 Statement of the problem

The researcher's observation as a practising educator is that English which is a language of learning and teaching is not used to the fullest extent in the few schools at Mthunzini district. What seems common among learners is the use of mother tongue isiZulu in classroom as well as outside classroom contexts. Some educators use their native language even when they teach content subjects, however, at the end learners are expected to answer the test and examination questions in English. Some educators resort to code-switching in trying to clarify some of the concepts and continue teaching using the vernacular. The other problem is that most learners in some black South African schools are from disadvantaged school backgrounds where there are no libraries and they are not exposed to reading. While English is not used in their homes, most of them are not exposed to television and newspapers which can help to increase their English vocabulary. Such learners are only exposed to English when they are at school. They are thus deficient in English and demonstrate weak grammar in sentence construction and communication in this language.

The researcher's observation again is that these learners also encounter problems with comprehension passages, creative writing and demonstrate a very weak understanding of texts written in English (Maphalala, 1988). Maphalala further argues that during the examination they experience problems in understanding the meaning of the questions. In this regard Maphalala (1988:8) states that learners who are taught foreign languages are forced to make a double effort, to assimilate the meaning of words and through a second effort to capture the meaning expressed by words. As an examiner for grade 12 examination the researcher's observation is that, learners who are taught in English from grade one always do very well even when they are in senior classes.

1.3 Aim of the study

The aim of the study was to find out about the attitudes of learners, educators and parents towards the usage of English as a language of learning and teaching in both rural and urban schools.

The following were the objectives of this study:

1.3.1 To find out about the nature of educators' attitudes towards the usage of English as a language of learning and teaching and an additional language in schools.

1.3.2 To find out about the nature of parents' attitudes towards the usage of English as a language of learning and teaching and an additional language in schools.

1.3.3 To find out about the nature of learners' attitudes towards the usage of English as a language of learning and teaching and an additional language in schools.

1.4 Hypotheses

It is commonly assumed that most learners do not pass at grade twelve because the language of teaching and learning is isiZulu in KwaZulu Natal province and not English, as stipulated, which is also the language in which their answers are written and assessed.

1.4.1 The use of isiZulu as a language of learning and teaching has a negative impact on the overall performance of grade 12 learners.

1.4.2 The home background language which most of the learners use contributes to their high failure rate at grade twelve. This is because of the learners lack of conceptual acquisition in isiZulu and subsequently their cognitive development. Hence there tends to be considerable existence of semilingualism among learners in both isiZulu and in English, the lack of higher learning and education acquisition.

1.5 Research methodology

Three questionnaires were administered to learners, parents and educators. A quantitative approach was used to collect and analyse data.

The target population of this research were eight senior secondary schools in KwaZulu-Natal under Mthunzini circuit. The research study targeted schools in KwaDlangezwa, ESikhawini and Empangeni. The researcher was prompted to undertake such a study by the high failure rate in schools on the assumption that this is as a result of the language of learning and teaching used in schools. Another reason for undertaking this investigation was due to the observation that the pass rate in some schools was at 100%, but when the results were analysed, it was noticed that the pass rate was more quantity than quality. Among learners who pass very few obtain merits and matric exemptions.

1.6 Significance of the study

The findings of this study might shed some light on the following:

i) The National Department of Education might need to review its language policy with regard to instructional languages.

ii) All education stakeholders might be able to identify the causal factors of language failure rate at matric level.

iii) The results of the investigation might bring about changes in policy making.

iv) School Governing Bodies (SGBs) might change the strategy and role they are supposed to play in the choice of the most communicative and effective teaching among learners.

1.7 Definition of key concepts

1.7.1 Parents

The term parent refers to the child's biological father or mother as well as to the child's guardian. This definition has been used in other studies (Madondo, 2002).

1.7.2 Educators

The term educator refers to people who are professionally and didactically trained as far as their respective subjects and their occupation are concerned (van Schalkwyk, 1995:21). In this study, the term educator refers to a teacher.

1.7.3 Learner

The term learner means any person receiving education or obliged to receive education in terms of the South African Schools Act No 84 of 1996 (Republic of South Africa,1996:2).

1.7.4 Language of learning and teaching in a public school refers to an official language.

1.7.5 **Attitude**

The concept 'attitude' is defined as the way in which a person thinks (cognitive component) feels (affective component) and intends to behave behavioral component towards something. It is the summation of the three components that is emphasized for determining the overall attitude and not a particular component (Rajecki, 1982:33).

1.8 Organisation of the study

Chapter 1 deals with the orientation of the study and background is given for this research.

Chapter 2 deals with literature review and the analysis of concepts related to this research. Chapter 2 also deals with the exposition of research surveys conducted by different researchers.

Chapter 3 deals with research methodology and design. A questionnaire to ascertain the attitudes of educators, parents and learners towards English as a language of learning and teaching. A questionnaire was compiled, answered and returned.

Chapter 4 deals with presentation and analysis of data, responses of learners, educators and parents to each statement were analysed.

Chapter 5 deals with the summary of the research, conclusions, recommendations and limitations of the research.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 INTRODUCTION

People hold different attitudes towards languages and such attitudes go a long way in influencing them to behave in a certain manner towards the language itself and people who speak that particular language. There is a growing body of literature demonstrating this (Herbert, 1992:240). These attitudes are cross cultural (Grant and Sleeter, 1996:93). In this investigation attitudes were traced particularly in the field of education, towards the use of English as a second language and a language of learning and teaching in schools.

2.1 An analysis of the concept 'perception'

Damask and Mellet (1982:21) describe perception as "a cognitive act in the cognitive relation between man and world, accomplished through the senses, a sensory act in which the real world is visibly involved." Vrey (1984:28) further describes the senses as the medium through which one makes contact with the perceived object. According to Forgus and Melamed (1976:3) perception refers to the means by which the information a person acquires from the environment is transformed into experiences of objects, events sounds and tastes. Roth and Frisby (1986:81) also state that perception refers to the means by which information acquired from the environment via the sense organs is transformed into experiences of objects, events, sounds, taste and smell.

The definition of perceptions provided in the preceding discussion seems to be limited to the cognitive component of attitude which Triandis (1971:3) describes as 'an idea which is generally some category used by humans in thinking'. However, Cook (1979:2) contends that perception refers to

the way people react and respond to others in thought, feeling and action. This is a broader description of the concept perception. It encompasses almost all components of attitude, the inclusion of thought, feeling and action. This is a broader description of the concept which allows other writers to use it interchangeably with the concept of attitude which also comprises thought (cognitive component) feeling (affective) component and the intended action (behavioural component). In this study, perception is used to denote responses of thought, belief or opinion. The term attitude is frequently used since the researcher believes that it is closely related to perception in meaning.

2.2 An analysis of the concept 'attitude'

The concept 'attitude' is defined as the way in which a person thinks (cognitive component) feels (affective component) and intends to behave (behavioural component) towards something. It is the summation of the three components that is emphasized for determining the overall attitude and not a particular component (Rajecki, 1982:33).

Modifying one's attitude and assumptions is not an easy matter and those held in respect of language are held more tenaciously because many of them have been acquired as a result of growing up in a particular community or as part of acquiring the language itself. They are a very intimate part of people's way of viewing the world. Therefore, arguments must be put forward for a new perspective in such a way that people will not feel that their existing attitudes and assumptions are under attack and therefore need defending, but be encouraged to rethink them in the light of new understanding the language study has to offer (Doughty and Thornton, 1973:19).

People grow up attaching the highest degree of value to their mother tongue languages. Hence Doughty and Thornton (ibid) state that pupils

are speakers of a language because they have acquired it in the process of growing up as ordinary members of a human community. Doughty and Thornton (1973) further point out that it is this knowledge of a language which they bring with them in the classroom. It becomes the operational knowledge of the language in the sense that it provides each pupil with the capacity to use language for living.

How a learner can develop a new perspective for himself/herself as his/her existing attitudes to language may be a key element in preventing his effective use of language for learning. The climate affecting the use of language within the school or a college is created as much by the prevailing climate in the home and the community and society as a whole. This it is based because on the conditions within the school itself or the education system to which it belongs (Doughty and Thornton, ibid).

1. According to Herbert (1992:240) language attitudes have a profound effect on the life and language of bilinguals.

2. The goal of language attitude studies is to contribute to the understanding of which languages are positively or negatively evaluated, which are learned and used by bilinguals.

3. Consequently the study of attitudes has implications for language planning.

In most institutions of higher learning surveys have been conducted to find out as to how many people prefer the mother tongue as a language of instruction. The problem with findings is that much as students prefer their various African languages, the world outside calls and demands proficiency in English. English is a world lingua franca and a language of the work. *The Mercury* (Jansen, 2005:24) argues that isiZulu at the

University of KwaZulu Natal could take up to ten years before it becomes an instructional language. Chetty (1998) states that the introduction of isiZulu is in keeping with the language policy of the ministerial task team, for the use of indigenous languages as a medium of instruction in higher education. It has, however, to be recognised that English currently remains the language of higher learning and of wider employment in the world.

In *The Mercury* (Jansen, 2005:24) further states that the draft policy advocates bilingualism with special attention to the development of isiZulu as a language of communication and a language of learning and teaching. However, English will be the primary language of instruction for learners. The question which remains unanswered when the indigenous languages are to be introduced, is which course will be offered in the medium of isiZulu. Some academics believe that the introduction of isiZulu will be in line with transformation. The idea in the *Mercury* support the idea arguing that an African Renaissance calls for recognition of African languages but he further cautioned that the balance between IsiZulu and English will have to be struck since English is a global language.

1. Herbert (1992:238) states that the war of liberation puts great emphasis on pride of indigenous cultures and languages.

2. He further states that the use of the indigenous languages was a counter-ideological instrument to be used against colonial ideological hegemony.

3. Yet since independence in South Africa, English has remained the language of power and economic advancement.

4. Therefore it should be used as a language of learning and teaching.

1. In a study about language attitudes of secondary students undertaken in Zimbabwe by Mparutsa, Thondhlana and Crawhall (1987:328), the finding revealed that many students chose English over chiShona which is their indigenous language.

2. This was a reflection of a widely held belief that a certificate in an indigenous language is not likely to help young people in the job market.

3. English is regarded by many to be the language of economic opportunity and advancement.

4. As a result learners should master it in preparation for the world of work.

Curry (1958:76) argues that competence in the usage of mother tongue is necessary for the acquisition of knowledge in a given discipline. Curry (1958) further states that the mother tongue is the medium in which much of our thinking is carried out, improvement in using the corresponding to the mother tongue ensures improvement in thinking. Therefore, the mother tongue is the child's most valuable social instrument.

Mother tongue has a very important role to play as a medium of instruction for most of the school subjects. It can be a powerful instrument for the explanation and formulation of knowledge even for junior pupils. Knowledge expressed in indigenous language is fundamental and therefore more useful, than knowledge expressed in general or in imprecise language. It is also more clearly understood and more perfectly remembered (Curry, Ibid).

In recent years the question of language in education has been a continuing topical one especially in multilingual countries. Even in South Africa different educational stakeholders still differ in their perception on the usage of English as a language of learning and teaching and as an additional language in high schools.

The underlying cause of the language in education in Africa is that the languages of learning and teaching which in most cases is either English, French or Portuguese, are initially foreign to the continent. For this reason the continued use of these languages as a medium of instruction has come to be regarded by some as 'linguistic imperialism' in the literature (Klu 1997). In addition UNESCO (1953:1) states that it is axiomatic that the best medium of teaching a child is his/her mother tongue. Psychologically, it is the system of meaningful signs that in his/her mind works automatically for expression and understanding. Sociologically it is a means of identification among the members of the community to which he belongs. Educationally he/she learns quicker through an indigenous that an unfamiliar linguistic medium. Later on, however, the notion of transfer from the mother tongue into English becomes easier to facilitate.

In South Africa, with a heterogenous population, many languages and cultural differences are observed. However, children who come from English cultural or linguistic backgrounds are often seen as environmentally deprived simply because of their being different from the dominant culture in school (Grant and Sleeter, 1996:93). Squelch (1993:42) points out that that limited English proficiency of learners lies in the childhood heritage of fables, nursery rhymes, proverbs, metaphors, songs and games which form part of the English speaking child's cultural world, and to which reference is often made throughout in the classroom situation. As a result limited English proficient learners in multicultural

schools may develop communication difficulties that are exacerbated when the child is confronted with a foreign culture.

Cultural confusion for the limited English proficiency child may be more severe than is commonly accepted because as Shatz (1992:152) points out, parents communicate to their children the cultural values that underlie language. These values are markedly different from one culture to another. Therefore children should master their indigenous languages before they are introduced to English language.

2.3 Teachers' perception and parents' perception

In the study conducted by Viljoen and Molefe (2001) on language related problems of limited English proficiency, learners, teachers and parents maintain that frustration caused by communication breakdown is common to these children. Frustration is over when learners feel overwhelmed by the demands of the classroom situation. Demands could be too overwhelming on account of the fact that Limited English Proficiency (LEP) learners may encounter English only at school because their parents do not speak English and they have little or no access to books (Krashen, 1997:2). This in turn may lead to feelings of being lost as a result of lack of communication that is not limited to specific times, but seems to be a constant state of Limited English Proficiency (LEP) children. It becomes apparent when teachers give instructions or ask questions, learners may not be able to respond.

Teachers and parents mentioned, furthermore, that the fact that (LEP) learners did not know English made the situation very frightening for them, especially when they had to respond in English they become anxious unless they get help from classmates. This may be attributed to the fact that LEP learners are very self conscious and are afraid of making mistakes appearing foolish when they try to express themselves in

English. The behaviour of these learners is characterised by aggression, which could be looked at in the following ways (Krashen, 1997):

1. These learners tend to be rough to others when they want something because they do not have language to express themselves;

2. Physical violence resulting from frustration is encountered and becomes the LEP learner's way of communication. Teachers remarked that they tend to be rough on others when they want something according to the teachers, since some learners isolate themselves;

3. Parents perceive that these learners turn to cry frequently especially when they have to go to school. They believe that crying is a sign of depression caused by the perceived hostility of the school environment. The children in the study reported that they were feeling sad. A fact that may be indicative of depression as highlighted by Mussen, Conger Kangan and Houston (1990:416) depressed children cry easily and feel lonely and

4. Another aspect of LEP learners behavior only encountered in interviews with parents is that learners memorise their reading lessons this affirms that they have the potential to progress in school (Viljoen and Molefe, 2001).

2.3.1 Learners' experiences

Anger, frustration, fear and sadness were not observed in the playground because these learners were interacting with peers from their own culture. Learners reported that feelings of anger on account of their lack of understanding of the language of instruction led to frustration.

What this study recommended is that teachers teaching the language need to have ample knowledge of the learner's language and socio-cultural and developmental background.

However, typical staff development programmes do not ensure that teachers will develop such skills. Teacher training should include subjects like sociology, history, anthropology and political studies so that as Mwamwenda remarks (1995:306), teachers should be aware of the learner's needs and show empathy as well as tolerance. Furthermore, they should understand that the African child becomes shy, withdrawn and tense when called upon to participate in a classroom discussion (Mwamwenda, 1995:306).

Teachers of LEP must respect these characteristics of the learner while at the same time figuring out how to introduce elements of freedom and positive participation in school. In this regard Cheng (1996:14) points out that to communicate effectively Phillipson and Skutnabb Kangas (1995:500) with regard to linguistic human rights everybody should be allowed to identify with his/her mother tongue and to have this identification respected by others is strongly supported. Even if teachers speak English only in class, they can, according to Nelson (1990:2), still provide a warm and supportive atmosphere where their LEP learners can learn to communicate by speaking, listening, reading and writing. Differences should not be seen as deficiencies and each learner should be viewed as a human being with his or her unique worth talents and contribution.

On the other hand Mpofana (2001) remarks that social factors influence the learning of a second language. Mpofana (2001) further states that social factors are those conditions in the learner's social environment in which the language learning process takes place, that are capable of

promoting or retarding the learner's interest to acquire the target language. It is important to stress that the learner may or may not be conscious of the influence of these factors on the way he/she learns the language.

2.3.2 Colonial education prior to the Union of South Africa

Segregated education and tensions concerning the medium of instruction have from the beginning of the history of schooling characterised the education of African children in South Africa. Both missionary and government institutions ran separate schools for the different race groups (Mpofana, 2001).

2.3.3 Impact of sudden transition to English in Grade 5

A study conducted by the Human Sciences Research Council to investigate the educational language policy was instituted in 1979. The project conducted its research in schools under the Bophuthatswana and Department of Education and Training departments. Its findings were probably true of schools in other homelands and self-governing territories including the context of my own research during the then self-governing territory of KwaZulu. The project had its beginning in a pilot programme whose findings showed that African children had considerable problems in their fifth year of school when they change from mother tongue to English instruction on a superficial level. It seemed difficulties could be attributed to the ineffective language teaching methods. Learners were taught in the way that encouraged rote memorisation as some of the teachers did not have appropriate qualifications for the subjects they taught.

2.3.4 Inability to understand simple English

The project conducted by the Human Science Research Council in 1979 found that the English proficiency of many children ranged from the inability to converse about common place topics to inability to understand

simple sentences including being unable to respond to questions as simple as "what is your name?"

2.3.5 Vocabulary gap

The disparity between the vocabulary taught up to grade four and that used in the textbooks ranged between 55% and 38% of words which had not been taught, Van Rooyen (1990). Another problem identified was that of pupils' low competence in the target language, i.e. English, which forced the teacher to use mother tongue in a typical grade five classroom. The teacher is under pressure to teach in English and yet he or she is fully aware of the low level of competence of his/her class. Although this research was conducted in the year 2000 the situation seems prevalent even on the current situation. To counter this problem some teachers teach in both the mother tongue and English. The concepts are fully grasped in the learner's mother tongue language for conceptual acquisition and cognitive development subsequently.

2.3.6 Large numbers of untrained teachers

Most former homelands and self-governing territories had and still have high proportions of unqualified teachers NEPI Teacher Education (1922:24). In the Nongoma circuit for instance, it is not uncommon to have only two qualified teachers on the teaching staff. These would normally include the principal and his/her deputy. Some of the unqualified teachers have low levels of competence in English. This is also true of many qualified teachers who are themselves products of ineffective system of education. Qualified or not there is still a need for teachers to adjust their register to suit the low comprehension levels of the children, a skill that many of the teachers do not have. Furthermore, some concepts taught in subjects such as Science, Mathematics and Geography do not have equivalents in many of the African languages with the result that neither the children's background nor the mother tongue can be used, to

mediate the teaching of such concept (Nepi Teacher Education 1922:27-28).

2.3.7 Shortage of qualified teachers

Shortage of qualified teachers means that teachers often find themselves teaching subjects that they are not trained to teach and such teachers do not feel confident about their knowledge of and the ability to teach these subjects.

Differences in textbooks used in lower and higher primary schools also contribute to transitional difficulties. In the lower primary phase all that pupils are exposed to, by way of texts, are readers and workbooks that only gives short directive sentences as to how to do given exercises. The readers normally carry folk tales, narratives and short paragraphs about familiar topics so that the narrative is all that children are exposed to. For the teacher the manual is all the help there is in grade five which brings with it not only transition to English but also content subjects and textbooks.

In most cases these are written by subject specialists who have no experience of primary teaching and so no knowledge of the special content and language needs of African children. This further complicates matters. The textbook contains expository text when all the children have thus far been exposed to its narrative texts. Grade five children thus face a formidable situation where they are faced with textbooks that are beyond them linguistically and they contain unfamiliar content that they have to learn in a language they do not understand, their teachers themselves hardly coping are unable to help.

2.4 Reaction of people in language education

People involved in language education, particularly the national education policy investigation (NEPI) provided very useful critical responses to the Department of Education and Training 1991 language policy and its plans for implementation. The National Education Policy Investigation was promoted and sponsored by the National Education Co-ordinating Committee NECC and educational policy units (EPUS) of the University of Witwatersrand and the University of Natal to conduct a research programme in order to produce a sector by sector study of educational policy. The Department of Education and Training (DET's) intention to implement its new Medium of Instruction Policy was legislated while NEPI was right in the middle of its investigation. It was a decision taken by people who were not involved in teaching and learning. Also the implications of the options had not been adequately explained.

2.4.1 Amended Act

In May 1991, the then Minister of Education and Training admitted that the Department of Education and Training policy was leading to serious educational disadvantages. In June parliament passed legislation whereby Section Three (b) of the Education and Training Act of 1979 was amended to facilitate a change in the language policy. The act stated that the language to be used as the language of learning and teaching at a school and the extend and duration of such use shall be determined by the Minister of Education after consultation with parents of pupils enrolled at that school, which consultation shall take place in the manner prescribed by the Department of Education and Training (1992:3).

Subsequently, in 1992 the right to choose (Medium of Instruction) was given to parents. The following were the language medium options:

1. Straight for the long term language medium. An African language, English or Afrikaans should be chosen as the language of learning and teaching from the beginning of Sub A through to grade twelve.

2. A sudden transfer from the mother tongue to a second medium was the case previously. Then there was a graduated transfer from first language to second language instruction. This staggered transition is happening during the first four years of schooling. In a policy document issued in June 1992, the amended language medium policy the DET discusses the implications of each option identifying one as the best choice and cautioning against another. Although an attempt had been made to abide by democratic principles a great deal still needed to be put right (Mhlanga, 1995).

2.4.2 Reaction of some educationists in language education

Stakeholders involved in education particularly the National Policy Investigation (NEPI) provided very useful critical responses to the DET 1991 language policy and its plans for implementation. NEPI was promoted and sponsored by the National Education Co-ordinating Committee (NECC) and education policy unit EPUS of the University of Witwatersrand and University of Natal to conduct a research programme in order to produce a sector by sector study of educational policy. The DET's intention to implement its new Medium of Instruction was legislated while NEPI was right in the middle of its investigation democratic as the DET had tried to be. It was, nevertheless, felt that it was top down in its approach and prescriptive in the options it offered to parents. Also the implications of the options had not been adequately explained. Not all the

stakeholders were consulted in the initial stages before the policy was drafted (Mhlanga, 1995:45).

2.5 Challenges of teaching English in a multilingual society: A South African experience

The African continent which is considered as the poorest in the world has its fare share of the language in the education problem. In South Africa the language in education problem took a turn for the worse when the National Party government made Afrikaans the medium of instruction in schools for African children. The resultant Soweto uprising of 1976 is well documented in literature. The advent of a new political dispensation in South Africa demanded that the linguistic situation change rather dramatically. Eleven on the languages spoken in the republic are designated as official languages. The English language has, however, come to enjoy a place of pride as an unquestionably accepted medium of instruction in schools especially as well as in higher education.

This is most probably, because as is the case in other parts of the continent (UNESCO, 1953:692), none of the indigenous languages of South Africa are considered to be well developed enough, to serve as a medium of instruction across the spectrum of higher education, which is based on western model. Mphahlele (1986) feels that without English he would not have been able to express certain ideas freely and adequately. The UNESCO (1953:692) Committee also indicated that recent experience in many places suggest that a better way to introduce a second language may be to teach it first as a subject using the mother tongue as a language of learning and teaching. Burnett (1989:56) states that in South Africa the Molteno Project which was established to evaluate and intervene in English teaching in primary schools found that pupils were failing to read in their mother tongue. Thus the author concludes

that mother tongue and English have come to be seen as working acceptably together instead of against each other. A new South Africa needs its own English which is useful, promotes unity and will express solidarity with the rest of Africa and the Commonwealth. It needs to be an English, moreover, that is made accessible to the entire South Africa.

Kamwangamalu (1977:243-250) feels that materials prescribed for English teaching in Multi-cultural South Africa are not suitable because they do not take South Africa's cultural diversity into account. Teacher training institutions do not bother to teach prospective language teachers about the rudiments of the language they are not being trained to teach. He further states that there are many teachers of English language who cannot teach the basic grammar of the language, not because it is a passé pedagogy but because they do not know even the rudiments of it.

Some schools in rural areas in the Mthunzini circuit do not have qualified teachers of English and principals usually take the teaching of English as part of their responsibility. In other cases English language major graduates from tertiary institutions, who have little or no specific training in language teaching methodology or educational are often proclaimed as teachers of English. The assumption is that anybody who has learnt some English can teach the language regardless of whether or not they know anything about teaching and learning a specialized language (Kamwangamalu, 1977).

There is no active reliable and adequate support system in place to help teachers to master the teaching of language. Klu (1997) points out that in Bushbuck Ridge area of the Limpopo Province, many teachers do not know who their subject advisor is. Teachers complain about the timing of courses, workshops or whatever the Department of Education may choose to call them, and how unproductive such gatherings have become

given the logistics. In conclusion, Klu (ibid) states that policy makers are not really in tune with what is actually happening at the grassroots and this results in the lack of progress in the teaching of English:

1. Until serious efforts are made to teach educators the basics of whichever language they are supposed to teach, there can be no improvement in the standard of teaching and learning;

2. Public figures who consistently speak solecism-infested language create huge problems for language teachers because they are seen as role models. The same is true of the print and broadcast media;

3. Textbooks in use are inappropriate and prospective teachers do not fully comprehend the teaching methodologies they are taught, as most of the books used are not specifically written for the South African environment;

4. Not all people in the teaching of English are actually trained to do so;

5. Issues of language, linguistics and pedagogy should be integrated in the portfolio of English language teachers.

Ndamase (2005) also tried to find out whether it is a bona fide solution to teach learners in their mother tongue or to use the lingua franca namely, English in schools. The assumption is that they understand their mother tongue more than any other language and this would enhance their acquisition of knowledge and skills.

Further questions have been asked concerning the philosophy behind the government's policy of mother tongue instruction and where does this leave contemporary thinking of a united global world, when this policy seems to segregate rather than unite people. Educators feel that mother tongue instruction is necessary to promote indigenous knowledge but that educators generally should be multilingual (Ndamase, 2005).

1. In terms of learning areas and learning outcomes for both general education and training and further education and training bands, a learner's home language should be maintained and development and an educator should use the learner's mother tongue for instruction wherever possible.

2. The language policy marginalizes the general language of instruction, namely that English which serves as an international lingua franca is to facilitate effective communication in a global and multilingual environment.

3. This impacts on the higher education sector which trains educators and therefore raises the question of whether academics should also use mother tongue instruction to prepare educators for teaching in schools Ndamase (2005). If, for example, the children are only exposed to isiXhosa at home and in the school they will never be able to practice their communication skills in other languages like English and will therefore only be fluent in isiXhosa (Toni 2005).

2.5.1 Views of some educators on mother tongue instruction

In the study conducted by Ndamase (2005) about the views of education on mother tongue instruction the following were the findings:

In the first statement 85% of educators should be at least bilingual or multilingual and be able to offer instruction in more than one language.

This study also found out that:

- The majority of educators 69% disagreed that educators should only teach in their mother tongue. One may, therefore, postulate that educators generally feel that they should be multilingual and thus be able to teach in more than one language and not only the mother tongue. Further 53% agreed and 47% disagreed that the main language of instruction should be determined by the dominant group's mother tongue. The difference in opinion is not significant enough to warrant a strong generalized hypothesis. This is further supported by the fact that only 61% strongly felt that this should be the case while a significant 24,5% strongly disagreed to this statement bearing in mind that the result of the first two statements determined that educators generally feel that they be able to teach in more than one language. One may, therefore, say that educators feel that this should be the case whether the majority of learners belong to a certain language group thus most educators feel that instruction should generally be multilingual and not only in the mother tongue of the dominant language group.

Ndamase (ibid) also states that the seven commandments based on assumed universal causes of the restriction of exclusive mother tongue instruction, which disadvantaged learners from ill-equipped rural schools who seek a better education in cities, are forced to remain in rural schools. This limitation is due to the mother tongue language policy unless they prefer to be taught in English of Afrikaans. Altogether 59% agreed with the statement while 43% disagreed.

1. The result of Statement 5 propagated by the current Minister of Education, Naledi Pandor, according to recent newspapers such as *Daily Dispatch* 14 July 2005, reveal that 84% of educators disagreed that English instruction undermines the dignity and value of indigenous languages. In comparison only a relatively insignificant 16% agreed that this is the case. Therefore, it can be said that educators are adamant that English instruction does not interfere with the dignity and value of other indigenous languages.

2. To the question of whether mother tongue instruction restricts communication to members of the learner's own culture statement, 73% agreed to this statement while only 23% disagreed, thus the majority of educators feel that mother tongue instruction limits learners to communication with members of their own culture.

3. Seventy nine percent of educators again feel that indigenous knowledge can only be promoted through indigenous mother tongue instruction.

4. Statement 8 even though 76% agree that that may cause lack of proficiency and fluency in additional languages (Statement 9) to the question of whether the language policy brings about reverse apartheid in that it ensures future government jobs for indigenous language groups and causing segregation of language groups.

5. Sixty three agreed to this statement while 37% disagreed.

The results show that it is possible to generalise that though the majority of educators feel that English does not undermine the dignity and value of indigenous languages, they feel that teaching in the mother tongue of learners promotes indigenous languages. It has a disadvantage such as

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The results show that it is possible to generalise that though the majority of educators feel that English does not undermine the dignity and value of indigenous languages, they feel that teaching in the mother tongue of learners promotes indigenous languages. It has a disadvantage such as

lack of fluency in additional languages. This is in terms of international jobs and educational opportunities and segregation of language groups. Despite this conflicting juxtaposition of views, the educators agree that they should be multilingual and not only provide instruction in the mother tongue of learners.

According to Kodaly (1991's) philosophy the child should first be scientifically educated in his/her mother tongue, in order to know its scientific precision, one could say in terms of three demands before being introduced to another language. Applied to the South African language policy of mother tongue this could be further interpreted. Scientists cannot convey findings and descriptions of processes if they are not familiar with subtleties and nuances and the nomenclature of previously marginalized languages such as the indigenous languages.

Kodaly's philosophy and viewpoint further implies that learners will never be able to significantly contribute to the music of their own culture, but instead will promote the music of the international macro culture in which they are educated. One may reason that, that is equally the case as history shows that very few educational books have been in indigenous languages and that there is no research journal published in any South African indigenous language.

To promote indigenous knowledge systems and develop academic scholars and scientists of indigenous cultures, indigenous languages, therefore, need to be promoted hence the Minister of Education; Naledi Pandor in the *Daily Dispatch* of 14 July 2005 asserts that 'you cannot promote indigenous knowledge unless you teach children in their mother tongues'. Ndima (2001) states that the 13 years of South Africa prioritises the normalization of life in a way that would mitigate the differentiation in human dignity, power and skills as so far as the differentiation skewed by

state sponsored policies of the past. Thus the introduction of mother tongue instruction is one way in which the government attempts to reinstate cultural dignity and respect and close the gap between English as a superior language and indigenous languages as inferior. Looking at the survey results educators, therefore, aptly feel that mother tongue instruction promotes indigenous knowledge systems.

In addressing the second question on globalisation and international opportunities, Hofmeyr (2004) points out that the presumed universals of globalization are actually culturally specific. This is especially with regard to European concepts of values that through colonization have been accepted by Africans as universals of globalization are actually culturally specific, especially with regard to European concepts of values that through colonization have been accepted by Africans as universals. Hofmeyr (ibid) maintains that each culture's formulation of common determination is done in the particular culture's language and thus presented in a particular cultural colouring.

The philosophy behind the introduction of mother tongue instruction, therefore, is based on the common democratic values of human dignity, freedom and equality entrenched in the constitution thus giving recognition to differences, while maintaining unity through one educator's paradigm and the National Department of Education.

The views of mother tongue instruction as well as the philosophy behind of current educators the government's current policy of instruction in learners' vernacular are examined. The findings are that mother tongue instruction is necessary to promote indigenous knowledge systems but that educators should be prepared to teach in more than one language including English. The reason for mother tongue instruction was based on the constitution's – Act 108 of 1996 democratic values of human dignity

freedom and equality which gives recognition to all languages of African citizens.

Ndamase (2005) argues that mother tongue instruction is necessary to develop scholars and scientists proficiency in the language of their own culture and develop a scientific nomenclature. To convey such knowledge Ndamase points out that learners have a democratic choice of which language they prefer to be instructed in, and may therefore attend school where this language is offered.

2.5.2 Bilingualism in education

In situations where teachers educate children from their communities the decisions they have to make about education of learners are mostly about socio-pedagogical issues. This also includes the content of the curriculum and the appropriate methodology to be used to communicate the content (Baker, 1993). The situation is very different from teachers whose classes are composed of children from different language backgrounds. The educational and crucial decisions they have to make is one that is fraught with problems, that is the question of which language to teach in and other related cultural issues.

2.5.3 Mother tongue and identity

Pattanayak as cited by Mhlanga (1995) makes a strong argument for the mother tongue as the primary form of identity for human beings. Through the first language the child sees and comes to understand the world around him/her. Mhlanga (1995) further argues that initial concept formation place in L1 as does acclimatisation to his/her environment and that kinship with other children and adults is formed through the first language. A child is socialised into a system of beliefs and practices through the L1 and myths are also transmitted from great grandparents down to parents. The feasts and other cultural activities all anchor the

child to his/her culture and through the first language. The loss of the first language (L1), therefore, has serious implications to the rootedness of the child in the traditions of her speech community (Mhlanga, 1995).

2.6 The L1 and mother tongue used as a medium of instruction

A study was carried out by Srivastania and Khatoon (1980) to determine the effects of using two languages, the first language and the other as a language of learning and teaching on mental ability, creativity and achievement in selected Indian schools. It was found out that what have significant influence on the children were their socio-economic status, the school climate, the methods used by the teachers, the materials used and the media of teaching. The L1 schools compared with English medium schools were found to be invariably inferior in that the conditions of teaching were inferior and the caliber of students was weaker. The investigation was carried further and it was demonstrated that when improved conditions of teaching were provided, L1 medium students did as well as English medium students. It was clear to the researchers that as long as conditions in L1 schools were not right, English medium schools would continue to attract better students and students from families with great achievement drives. Also as long as L1 is not known to help anyone achieve wealth and status in society, L1 instruction will always compare unfavourably with English as a language of learning and teaching.

The Srivestana-Khatoon study in Pattannayak in Spolsky (1986) was a very important one because it demonstrated that if the right conditions obtain, education through the L1 can hold its own. Pattanayak (1986) argues that this study shows an edge for the L1 rather than the other languages as medium of instruction. For a number of reasons he sees the study as an essential one that deserves corpus planning in all developing countries for the following reasons:

1. It offers equal opportunities to the majority of people in any country thus enabling them to participate in national reconstruction and development;

2. It brings education within the reach of a greater number of people, in that way giving access to personal development in greater numbers;

3. It enables the interaction of science with society, freeing knowledge from being the pleasure of a few educated people;

4. It demystifies the contents of the media, so that the information is not centralized in the hands of small sector of society;

5. It enables more people to be involved in the politics of the country;

6. It promotes cognitive and creativity in children as though processes are not impeded by a language foreign to them and

7. It closes the gap between the educated and the uneducated a situation that is the cause of much resentment.

The situation described in the Srivastan Khatoon study is similar to the great majority of schools in African communities in South Africa. The inferior status endured by the African languages has yet to be changed. The high failure rate in grade five that comes as a result of the change over English Medium of Instruction (EMI) is seen by many parents as a reason to start utterances in English in order for the children to have exposure to English (Mhlanga, 1995). English is in any case known as the language of education, employment and the language of courts of law and

thus perceived as the one valuable language. However, it is necessary to open up the language debate and implement policy that will enable African languages to gain sufficient status for people to have a reason to learn in them up to tertiary level.

In the meantime, children in South Africa and elsewhere are under pressure to become bilingual and trilingual since their own languages have limited official status. Not only are they under external pressure, but there is a strong internal family pressure to become bilingual. The parents usually want their children to learn the majority language well especially to ensure that they have better education, educational and economic prospects than they themselves had Skutnabb-Kangas (1981:79). In addition although parents are keen to have their children competent in their home language, they are acutely aware of the consequences to be suffered if their children fail to become bilingual.

Skutnabb-Kangas (ibid) also sees the following as the consequences of failure for learners who fail to become bilingual with English as one of their subjects. Most educational opportunities are closed to children who do not master the second language, which is English in the South African context:

1. Such children cannot compete in the labour market with young people from the 'majority' group;

2. They cannot share in the life of the larger community and their chances of influencing it are severely limited;

3. The children later find it impossible to improve their situation and that of their group to demand the rights of their group, as such

demands have to be made in the 'majority' language they do not command and

4. The reverse is as problematic where the children become dominant in the 'major' language and come to look down on their own language. Such children lose contact with their parents, their origin and their culture. Alienation, rootlessness and identity crisis become very real even though the young people in question may appear to function well (Skutnabb-Kangas, ibid).

Gaganakis (1992) has researched the above aspect locally and her findings confirmed the last point of the problem of identity crisis. Her subjects were pupils in some of the schools in the greater Johannesburg area. Her findings showed that many of her respondents considered themselves to be a class above their counterparts in township school statements like "they are just not our equals". "They are inferior to us". A better education and the ability to speak fluent English were regarded as clear makers of their elite status. Their use of English as a means of effecting social distance from township peers and this quite often entailed in their refusal to speak to them in the vernacular.

Mhlanga (1995) in his study on parental preferences regarding the study on the medium of instruction, conducted interviews which attempted to establish what language was being used as a medium of instruction in the lower primary schools, that the children attended.

The study sought to find out:

1. Whether learners were happy with the language used. In the case of parents who did not know what language was being used, what

language they thought should be used, it was to find out what instructional language ought to be used;

2. Why parents favoured a particular language;

3. Whether the school should continue to use any language chosen as a medium of instruction throughout schooling;

4. Why a certain language should be retained or not retained as a medium of instruction throughout their children's schooling lives and

5. Which of the Department of Education and Training's three media of instruction options they would take if they were offered the choice. What status the other language would enjoy.

The findings of the study revealed the following:

2.6.1 Preferred media of instruction

Even the illiterate parents in Mhlanga study felt that English should be the language of learning and teaching. The reason was that children had long mastered isiZulu, the only language that should be taught to them should be English. The other two illiterate parents felt that learning English language would improve the children's opportunities of finding good jobs when they finish schooling.

2.6.2 IsiZulu as a language of learning and teaching

The study further revealed that 15 parents (29.1%) were happy with isiZulu being used as the language of learning and teaching. These gave variations of two basic standpoints. Learning isiZulu helps cushion the new and alienating environment called school. One parent actually

described it as a learning to learn a strange language, something that even she at her age would hate to do. This particular parent went on to say as it is now knowledge is beaten into children, and asked how much worse that would be if children had to cope with a new language as well.

Being of Zulu origin it is proper that children be first taught in their mother language. If they are taught in any other language, they might forget who they are and begin to sound like English or Afrikaans boys and girls, and yet no one could say they have heard little White girls and boys speaking isiZulu, instead of their own language. Sixty four percent were not happy with isiZulu as a language of learning and teaching; a number of different reasons were given. By the time children start school they are fluent speakers of IsiZulu so they are ready to learn in new language, learning in English should therefore, not be a problem.

2.6.3 English as a language of learning and teaching

Thirty three and a third percent felt if children are taught in English right from the start they are assured of good jobs. English is the White man's language. The language he speaks to people who work for him, there is no need to learn isiZulu. IsiZulu should be kept alive in children's lives but English is more important for employment. Seven (13.7%) of the parents answered that English should be the medium of instruction throughout interestingly, three of these in response to question 7 chose gradual transition, arguing that both languages are equally important. The rest answered whatever language they opted for above should not be used exclusively. They felt that Afrikaans should also be used.

Seventeen point six percent of parents thought children should start school in English and later be taught in isiZulu as a subject. Three point nine percent of parents favoured English for different reasons; one of them being that English is needed for unity in the country. Seventeen point six

percent thought children should start school in English and later be taught in isiZulu as a subject.

2.6.4 The use of English and IsiZulu

Three point nine percent felt that both languages should be learned, English as a language of learning and teaching and isiZulu as a subject. Thirteen point seven percent thought both languages should be used up to standard two or five then English only thereafter. Five point nine percent felt it would be best to start school in isiZulu and English be used only at some later stage not clearly defined just generally when children are more matured in terms of school life. Three point nine percent felt that some subjects that would be decided by stakeholders should be learned in IsiZulu and others in English. Five point nine percent strongly felt that it should be necessary to teach isiZulu only as a subject as by that level children would have learned to write it. These felt that once the foundation for the mother tongue has been laid, it would not be detrimental to teach in English.

Two percent felt that the pupil himself/herself should be free to decide on his or her medium of instruction beyond standard two. All the parents who wished to see their children starting school in isiZulu is 24% wanted them to switch on to English as a language of learning and teaching at standard three or six level, but to retain isiZulu as a subject. For these parents an important consideration was the fact that all books used in the senior primary standard three – five are written in English. One of these recalled that when she was in standard four – five all instruction was in isiZulu and all textbooks were in isiZulu, but as the situation is different today it would not make sense to be taught in isiZulu beyond standard three. This particular parent was in senior primary school during the 1960's.

Ten of the parents which is (15%) felt that it is proper for a school child to know both languages isiZulu as his or her own mother tongue and English for integration into the world, there was also concern about children's inability to obtain competence in English and the feeling was that only limited number of years should be spent learning isiZulu and the bulk of time be spent learning English.

For one grandmother it would be tragic if her grandchild dropped isiZulu early in their schooling lives as the chances of them forgetting isiZulu and then not only being able to communicate with her would be increased. She quoted a rich neighbour whose grandchildren attend school in far away towns and now sounds like little white people.

Mhlanga's study was undertaken during the reign of the Department of Education which was commonly known as DET on the question of which of the department options parents favoured. Thirty preferred the straight for English option that parents favoured, and 21 preferred the sudden transition a rough 60:40 ratio.

The findings of this study are confusingly varied and apparently contradictory. Mparutsa et al. (1992), however, offer a useful way of approaching contradiction in language attitudes since they argue that contradictions point to larger ideological or cultural contradictions. Most indigenous language speakers find themselves in the position of preferring their first language for communicative purposes, yet functioning in an educational, social and economic system, where English is the language that is commonly used.

2.7 Employment

That English is the language of employment was considered by all respondents to be a crucial matter, much as learning in isiZulu would have

made schooling easy learning in it beyond standard two would be a hindrance because observed it would not give the children access to education and therefore to their development (Mhlanga, 1995).

2.7.1 The language of higher education

In Mhlanga (1995) the parents who pointed out that English was the language of local high schools saw it as futile for their children to spend many primary school years learning in isiZulu. They saw it more sensible to spend maximum time on the language of higher education including tertiary. Presumably those that were of the children's poor performance in their first year of senior primary school would argue all the more that all the available time should be spent on the L2, the fact that pedagogy valued good grounding in and proper maintenance of the L1 is not known for those parents. If explained to them they would probably be highly suspicious of explanations that have been in the past associated with apartheid policies. Until indigenous languages are developed fully and are seen as viable to tertiary education and employment such parents will always second rate their own languages.

2.7.2 IsiZulu as a subject

IsiZulu as a language of learning and teaching for a few years and then only as a subject was a popular view. However, there is criticism generally leveled against the teaching of African languages in this country. The charge is that discourse, for instance, is not well taught in the mother tongue so that when the time comes for the pupils to learn in second language, (L2) there is no transfer of the skill.

The respondents in the study conducted by Mhlanga (1995) was that all of the respondents felt positive about their languages. Some were aware of the benefits of teaching in the mother tongue. They all felt, however, that it was important that their children should be competent in English, the

language of the economy. This is in line with Hoffman's (1991) argument that one could even argue that the most important factor influencing language choice of ethnic groups is economic, specifically one of access to jobs (Eastman, 1992:99). Teachers should not doubt that knowledge of their subject will be sound and true only when it is expressed and recalled in English, which is claimed to be a more precise language. Gurrey (1960:7) further remarked that there are still many schools where the mother tongue is held cheap and where it is not allowed to play its part at the focal point in education.

On the other hand, De Klerk and Gough (2002:37) suggest that there exists a little indication that learners identify with the language other than perceiving it as an instrument to obtain academic and economic success. Practising educators in their daily teaching observe that learners in most cases resist using English which is an additional language and a language of learning and teaching in South Africa. Some still hold the belief that as Zulus they should always communicate in isiZulu. There is in fact some evidence which suggests that the feeling of ethnic identity plays a role in second language acquisition. Van den Berg and King (1992) demonstrated that perceptions among French speaking university students, learning English posed a threat to ethnic identity where it was associated with poor self rating of English skills. It seems highly likely that the association between language and ethnic identity would materially influence individual reactions to the language learning situation in schools, depending upon the nature of the context. If individuals were to perceive second language acquisition as a positive achievement which broadened their horizon, the educational context and the language learning experience would be expected to be reinforcing. On the other hand, second language acquisition was perceived as a negative experience because the educational context and acquisition of the second language would thus be non-reinforcing or even aversive.

Rudwick (2004) conducted a study with Umlazi Zulu youth speakers at the University of Natal. They were generally divided in terms of their attitudes towards English. There seems to exist a wide consensus regarding the importance and specific functions of the mother tongue, isiZulu among them. The youngsters explicitly drew a direct link between their mother tongue and their home culture and expressed strong pride with regards to this ethnolinguistic identity.

The researcher was in this case interested in what young isiZulu speakers associated their language with their Zulu culture and tradition as well as to what extent isiZulu represented the cornerstone of the cultural identity of the Umlazi isiZulu speaking youth. The youth saw this as a fundamental issue of serious concern to them. The second objective was to analyse what role the English language played in the life experience of the respondents.

The findings were that many learners have a wish to speak English, but *most believed that isiZulu was the cornerstone of* 'Zulu-ness'. The interview data suggest that the adoption of a language other than isiZulu as a medium of communication at home was seen as a betrayal by many. One learner referred to isiZulu speakers who speak English at home as people who are 'growing' a culture of other countries. They attached a sense of belonging to their speaking of isiZulu. The same learners were aware that learning isiZulu was not enough for economic empowerment in South Africa. This idea is in line with Dyers (2004:20) when she states that in her research findings about language attitudes some learners felt that English was the most important language in their education. They suggested that English was more important in the job market and was essential for communicating with foreigners.

Dyers (2004:29) indicated that the participants are not willing to sacrifice their mother tongue for the English language because isiZulu is so strongly associated with Zulu culture, the home and a sense of belonging. Despite the fact that most learners struggle to become proficient in English, many deny that they feel disadvantaged because of the importance and pride associated with mother tongue, isiZulu. Much as they attach importance to English they still hold isiZulu in high esteem. The few learners that feel at a disadvantage based their reasoning on the fact that English was more the language of upward mobility than their mother tongue. English speakers as well as second language speakers who are conversant in it will therefore automatically achieve highly in life.

Most learners indicated that they do not like English but they know they needed it for work. Therefore they learned it for future prospects. A large number of students claim not to understand examination questions due to the fact that they are in English (Dyers, 2004). The attitude in one class was significantly more negative than those of other classes. This was due to a prior experience to the extent that they were mistakenly given a biology paper which was meant to be written by Afrikaans mother tongue speakers. The biology questions were in Afrikaans not in the other language. They discovered that they are required to write in English which is to them a second language whereas the Afrikaners write in their mother tongue. Zulu learners questioned this and felt that South Africa is still colonised. Learners further argued that they would receive much better marks if they were given a chance to write biology examination in isiZulu.

Some learners in South Africa still hold the belief that English is an `exile' language, in other words, it is meant for people who were banned from the country (Dyers, 2004). English to them is fundamentally linked to job opportunities, social mobility, success and power and not to the mother

tongue and cultural identity which they would want to maintain. To them English was only for formal communication and isiZulu for informal communication. In this school during break time teachers communicate with learners in isiZulu. Macro level communication takes place in English depending on the particular code-switching.

Dlamini (2001) observes that most Black students are not proficient in English when they get to university and they have to work harder than White students because they have to grapple with the language of instruction as well as with the concepts that are taught. According to the CHE (2001), this might be one of the reasons for the poor performance of many speakers of African languages at universities. Lucket (1995:73), Langtang (1996) and Heugh (1993) stress the need for language in education policy to take into account the attitudes of students and their parents, Unger (1978) asserts that knowledge of language attitudes can, when responsibly applied, serve a very useful function, particularly when policy decisions are made.

The call for research into language attitudes in education has encouraged a number of studies in South Africa at all levels of the education system. Web (1996) claims that most African parents prefer English as a medium of instruction for their children in primary schools especially for instrumental reasons. Delvit and De Klerk (2001) in their study of attitudes of isiXhosa-speaking students at the University of Fort Hare towards the use of isiXhosa as a language of learning and teaching have the following findings to make:

Xhosa students felt that using their mother tongue especially in tutorials would help them, but it would again create tension and make speakers of other languages feel uncomfortable. Using English as a lingua franca was seen as the only politically 'correct' option. Xhosa parents, on the other

hand, favoured the maintenance of the home language throughout education or alongside the second language, English.

Heugh (2001:12) while agreeing that little has changed in classroom practice, since the end of apartheid, notes that parents appear to demand increased access to English rather than the substitution of the mother tongue with English as a medium of instruction. However, Smit (1996) found positive attitudes among Black students towards the use of mother tongue languages *isiXhosa and Afrikaans alongside English as a* language of learning and teaching.

2.8 Results of the survey by Delvit and De Klerk (2001)

English plays a major role in the South African society and it is the main language of international and intranational communication. It works as an 'access key' to upward mobility (Webb and Kembo-Sure, 2000). The communicative and participatory functions of English were explicitly recognized by at least half of the subjects of the survey. Fort Hare isiXhosa speaking students in fact emphasized the importance of English in communicating with non-isiXhosa speakers at all levels, on campus, nationwide and internationally. The participatory function of English was intertwined with its communicative value. English was considered an important lingua franca and as such it was recognized as an important pre-requisite for securing employment.

In the study by Delvit and De Klerk (2001) a small portion of the respondents, 7% expressed negative attitude towards English as a language of oppression and division. According to the NCHE (1996) such negative attitudes could be a consequence of the hegemony of English in Education. In the Delvit and De Klerk study, 50% of the students claimed to be proud of their isiXhosa accent in English as along as it did not hamper communication. English was not considered to be linked to any

particular culture but students appeared to value the resources English gives access to. The respondents acknowledged the dominant role of English in education in South Africa and most of them subscribed to the belief that English-medium schooling was of a better quality. This is confirmed by the fact that according to 88% of the respondents in Delvit and De Klerk study felt that English should be introduced as a medium of instruction in pre-school or lower primary schools.

What Phillipson (1992) calls the immaterial resource that English gives access to knowledge know-how and practical skills, were considered to be strong argument, in favour of an English-medium policy in education, particularly in academic fields such as Economics and Science in which the dominance of English and the importance of international research is more evident.

In the same study that was conducted by Delvit and De Klerk (2001:24) other factors in favour of English were the following:

1. most textbooks are in English;
2. the teaching staff have been trained in English;
3. possible additional costs for using IsiXhosa as a language of teaching and learning;
4. some students within the campus were not isiXhosa speakers;
5. mother tongue instruction will always impede the development of English proficiency and
6. if students are taught in isiXhosa they will not become proficient in English and their knowledge would be useless in an English-dominated workplace.

The interviews, for the study by Delvit and De Klerk (2001), on the other hand, suggested that the use of isiXhosa was considered more

appropriate to informal domains such as family and peer group communication. Inspite of this evidence it was suggested that isiXhosa played a very important role in the academic context in supplementing explanations in English, both in lectures and tutorials.

IsiXhosa was seen as more appropriate for teaching some subjects than for others. The Faculties of Arts and Social Sciences seemed to be those in which students felt that the use of isiXhosa as a medium of instruction should be implemented first. The reasons given in the interviews were that their graduates would probably have more contact with isiXhosa speaking communities. IsiXhosa terminology could to be easily developed for them. Students of Science and Economics opposed the usage of isiXhosa for teaching and learning. Science students had a problem of the shortage of isiXhosa speaking lecturers. For them the usage of isiXhosa would have a consequence such as a drop in international status of the university, and future difficulty in finding a job or continuing one's studies abroad. This was expressed by approximately one third of the respondents.

Students in particular emphasised the role for communication with speakers of other languages, both nationally and internationally because of its communicative power. English was considered a 'must have' in order to find a good job. It was identified as a key to upward mobility. Students were, therefore, afraid of not achieving sufficient English proficiency and this seems to have influenced their attitudes towards the use of their mother tongue as a language of learning and teaching.

A second very important issue was the presence of non-isiXhosa speaking students at Fort Hare. At Fort Hare there was a widespread concern that using isiXhosa as a Language of Learning and Teaching (LOLT) would create tensions with speakers of other African languages. In this sense it

seems that English was not considered neutral, per se, but rather equally distant for all speakers of African languages although equity among languages is a sound principle. Students who can benefit from mother tongue education up to university level are speakers of English or Afrikaans (Heugh, 2000). English is referred to as the language of the 'real world' by people in South Africa.

2.8.1 Attitudes and identity among some South African school children

In a study undertaken by Dyers (2004) at Wesbank Senior Secondary School in Cape Town some learners ranging from fourteen to fifteen years were interviewed in order to establish whether language attitudes could be linked to socio-cultural identity and behaviour, especially sub-cultural behaviour. Smit (1996:12) cited in Bekker (2003:64) contends that the two main structural criteria of any society are social identity and power. The research was concerned with identity negotiation through language and attempted to find links between language attitudes.

Where the research was undertaken there was no single established community but rather a collection of diverse groups migrating from different areas. Interviews were conducted in mother tongue for the interviewees to fully understand and be able to respond freely. Only a small percentage of learners used English for the purpose, other than at school or when shopping. The study established that:

1. There was very low level of proficiency in English among the majority;

2. Figures for English include 19% bilingual English – Afrikaans speaking and Coloured learners;

3. A more significant percentage of the same group of Coloured learners reported using a mixture of English and Afrikaans in the same domains only 1% admitted using only Afrikaans at home and in church and

4. At the end 62% of the learners expressed the view that all language, three of them were important.

The following arguments were advanced in favour of which language to adopt:

1. English is a world language and therefore important for international communication especially in the world of business;

2. English is an official language and serves as a bridge between the different language groups in South Africa and necessary for employment;

3. From the survey it came out that Afrikaans was very important in the Western Cape and for historical reasons;

4. Some ideas stated were that Afrikaans was good for employment, filling in of application forms and also very easy to learn;

5. It came out that isiXhosa is important as a mother tongue, a link to the ancestors, a national language, a home language that is important to speak with the family and the older generation and the one that is spoken by the South African president;

6. The importance of English was seen at world level;

7. The importance of Afrikaans was seen at a regional level and

8. IsiXhosa's importance was seen at home level.

However, a sizeable number (31%) of learners in the English class felt that English was far more important than the other two languages. These learners were fairly dismissive of Afrikaans or isiXhosa. They felt that English was the most important language in their education. It was more important that the other two in the job market and was essential for communicating with foreigners. Several learners felt that Afrikaans was not used much except in rural areas.

English appeared to be of growing importance of all the isiXhosa learners most indicated largely instrumental motivations for learning English less importance was attributed to Afrikaans. It appeared from the survey that some parents wanted their children to be taught in the medium of their mother tongue, because they had some fears of acculturation. Their idea is in line with Lucket (1995) who proposed that as individuals acquire second language they begin to identify with the other language community and experience feelings of alienation. On the other hand, Brustal (1974) points out that success in learning the other language will promote favourable attitudes towards the language and all factors such as other language community associated with it.

2.9 Conclusion

This literature review serves to highlight a variety of attitudes parents, learners and other education stakeholders hold on mother tongue languages and English when it is to be used as a language of learning and teaching. This study has tried to look at the different investigations that were undertaken by different researchers with different native languages.

Most studies revealed that English was held in high esteem for upward mobility.

In addition this chapter reflects a broad scope of the different views that parents have and teachers on the role of mother tongue and English as the language of education in higher classes. What is perhaps important to note is the pragmatic nature of English as a global language. But at the same time mother tongue as the bedrock of one's identity and cultural orientation, cannot be neglected. Indigenous languages equally need to be developed and used as communicative languages in society.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND DESIGN

3.0 RESEARCH DESIGN

3.1 Introduction

In chapter two the literature relevant to the present study was discussed. This chapter reflects an outline and discussion of the research design. The discussion of the research design and methodology based on the aims of this study was introduced in chapter one.

3.2 Research methodology

Methodological principles demand that the most appropriate method and instruments should always be selected when one is conducting a research (Gardner, 1978:69). In the field of research there are various research methods like experimental, historical, descriptive and the survey. The survey method is probably the best known used to sample public opinion. Scientific discipline research in economics, anthropology, psychology and public health make use of surveys to collect information relevant to the interest and problems in their fields (Borg and Gall 1983:404). In this investigation a survey research methodology was used to gather the opinions of teachers, learners and parents about the usage of English as a medium of instruction and as an additional language in schools to the north of KwaZulu/Natal.

Survey research is more concerned with treating and preventing social problems than with formulating theories and laws. Surveys may be used

to find out what is wrong and if necessary to arouse public opinion with a view to reaching a solution (Gardner 1978:15).

3.3 Research instruments

Questionnaires were used as data collecting instrument. A questionnaire as defined by Forcese and Richer (1973:160) is a form of securing answers to questions. They further explain that they are forms which the respondent fills in by himself/herself.

A survey method uses questionnaires as data collecting instruments. Questionnaires elicit good data and save time and they have the ability to reach a number of respondents (Forcese and Richer, 1973:85). Surveys may be cheap if existing records are used (Borg and Gall 1983:404). In this study three sets of questionnaires were constructed, one for each group. The reason is that different information was elicited from each group. However, the questionnaire has its own advantages and disadvantages.

3.3.1 Advantages of the questionnaire

According to Mahlangu (1987:96) the questionnaire is one of the most common methods of gathering data. It is also time-saving and conducive to reliable results. The researcher used the written questionnaire as a research instrument taking into consideration certain advantages as outlined by Cohen and Manion (1989:111). They are as follows:

- Affordability is the primary advantage of a written questionnaire because it is the least expensive means of data gathering.

- Written questionnaires preclude possible interviewer bias. The way the interviewer asks questions and even in the interviewers general appearance or interaction may influence the respondents answers. Such biases can be completely eliminated with a written questionnaire.

- A questionnaire permits anonymity. If it is arranged such that responses are given anonymously, the researcher's chances of receiving responses which genuinely represent a person's beliefs, feelings, opinions or perceptions would increase.

- Questionnaires permit respondents a sufficient amount of time to consider answers before responding.

- Questionnaires can be distributed to many people simultaneously, that is a large sample of the population can be reached.

- They provide greater uniformity across measurement situations than interviews. Each person responds to exactly the same questions because standard instructions are given to the respondents.

- Generally the data provided by the questionnaires can be more easily analyzed and interpreted than data obtained from verbal responses.

- Using a questionnaire solves the problem of non-contact "when the researcher calls". When the target population to be covered is widely and thinly spread, the mail questionnaire is the only possible solution.

- Through the use of the questionnaire approach the problems related to interviews may be avoided. Interview errors may seriously undermine the reliability and validity of the results.

- A respondent may answer questions of a personal or embarrassing nature more willingly and frankly on a questionnaire than in a face to face situation with an interviewer who may be a complete stranger. In some cases it may happen that respondents report less than expected and make more critical comments in a mail questionnaire.

- Questions requiring considered answers rather than immediate answers could enable the respondents to consult documents in case of the mail questionnaire approach.

- Respondents can complete questionnaires in their own time and in a more relaxed atmosphere.

- Questionnaire design is relatively easy if guidelines are followed.

- The administering of questionnaires, the coding analysis and interpretation of data can be done without any special training.

- Data obtained from questionnaires can also be compared and inferences can be made.

- Questionnaires can elicit information which cannot be obtained from other sources. This renders empirical research possible in different educational disciplines.

3.3.2 **Disadvantages of the questionnaire**

Although the questionnaire has advantages, it also has disadvantages. According to Van den Aardweg and Van den Aardweg (1988:190); Kidder and Judd (1986:223) and Mahlangu (1987:84-85) disadvantages of the questionnaire, inter alia, include the following:

- Questionnaires do not provide the flexibility of interviews. In an interview an idea or comment can be explored. It is possible to gauge how people interpret questions if questions asked are interpreted differently by respondents the validity of the information obtained is jeopardized;

- People are generally better to express their views verbally than in writing;

- Questions can or will be answered only when they are sufficiently easy and straightforward to be understood with the given instructions and definitions;

- The mail questionnaire does not make provision for obtaining the views of more than one person at a time it requires uninfluenced views of one person only;

- Answers to mail questions must be seen as final. Re-checking of responses cannot be done. There is no chance of investigating beyond the given answer for a clarification of ambiguous answers. If respondents are unwilling to answer certain questions, nothing can be done to it because the mail questionnaire is essentially inflexible;

- In a mail questionnaire the respondent could examine all the questions at the same time before answering them and the answers to different questions could not be treated as "independent" and

- Researchers are unable to control the context of question answering, and specifically in the presence of other people. Respondents may ask friends or family members to examine the questionnaire or comment on their answers, causing bias if the respondent's own private opinions are desired and written questionnaires do not allow the researcher to correct misunderstandings or answer questions that the respondents may have. Respondents might answer questions incorrectly or not at all due to confusion or misinterpretation.

In this investigation most of the noted disadvantages were avoided by first clarifying the correct method of answering and with learners they were actually supervised by the educators when they were answering the questionnaires. Closed questionnaires were used for easy analysis and interpretation of data.

3.3.3 Characteristics of the questionnaire

Mahlangu (1987:84) and van den Arweg (1988:190) maintain that the following can be considered as characteristics of a good questionnaire:

- it seeks only that information which cannot be obtained from other sources;

- it should be attractive in appearance, neatly arranged and clearly duplicated or printed;

- it has to deal with a significant topic, one which the respondents will recognize as important enough to warrant spending his or her time on. The significant should be clearly and carefully stated on the questionnaire and on the accompanying letters;

- it must be as short as possible, but long enough to get the essential data. Long questionnaires frequently find their way into the waste paper basket;

- directions for a good questionnaire are clear and complete and important terms are clearly defined;

- each question deals with a single concept and should be worded as simple and straightforwardly as possible;

- different categories should provide an opportunity for easy accurate and unambiguous responses;

- objectively formulated questions with no leading suggestions should render the desired responses. Leading questions are just as inappropriate in a questionnaire as they are in a court of law;

- questions should be presented in a proper psychological order, proceeding from general to more sensitive responses. An orderly grouping helps the respondents to organise their own thinking so that their answers are logical and objective. It is preferable to present questions that create a favourable attitude before proceeding to those that are more intimate or delicate in nature. Annoying and or embarrassing questions should be avoided at all costs and

- the data obtained from questionnaires are easy to tabulate and interpret.

These characteristics were considered when constructing the questionnaires for this study.

3.3.4 Construction of the questionnaire

When the researcher is involved in designing a questionnaire, he or she does not do it in isolation. The researcher should consult and seek advice from the specialists and colleagues at all times during construction of the questionnaire (Van den Aarweg and van den Aarweg, 1998:198).

Questions used in the questionnaire should be tested on a smaller sample of people to eliminate errors. A question may appear correct to the researcher when written down but can be interpreted differently when posed to another person. The researcher should not hesitate to change questions but remain in keeping with the original idea in mind. This, therefore, emphasises the point that a lot of time and effort should be put to drafting a questionnaire. A researcher must, therefore, ensure that adequate time is budgeted for in the construction of the questionnaire (Kiddes and Judal, 1986:243-245). The researcher took the above mentioned requirements into consideration during the designing of the questionnaire for this investigation.

One of the important aims in the construction of the questionnaire for this investigation was to present the questions as simply and straightforward as possible. The researcher also designed the questionnaire in such a way that it eliminated ambiguity, vagueness, bias technical language and prejudice.

Before the questionnaires were distributed to all respondents in the main study the researcher conducted a pilot study at her school: Qhakaza High School and also to the parents of the few learners. A pilot study is preliminary or `trial run' investigation, using similar questions and similar few subjects as in the survey (Dane, 1990:42). The purpose was to identify flaws in the questionnaires (Kidder & Judd, 1986:211). After it had proved to be intelligible to all the respondents the researcher then took it and adopted it for the research study.

In order to obtain information needed for the purpose of this study, the questionnaires were divided into two sections, namely, Section A and Section B. Section A deals with personal information while Section B focuses on learners', educators' and parents' attitudes towards English as a language for learning and teaching. Rating scale with four response categories, namely, strongly agree (SA), agree (A), disagree (D) and strongly disagree (SD) were used.

3.3.5 Validity and reliability of a questionnaire

Validity and reliability are the two concepts of critical importance in understanding issues of measurement in a scientific research. According to Cooper (1989:15) many questionnaires lack validity and reliability. Questionnaires have a very limited purpose. In fact they are often one-time data gathering devices with a very short life span, administered to a limited population. The researcher can have means by his/her questionnaire can be both valid and reliable. The most important guideline is that basic to the validity of a questionnaire is asking the right questions phrased in the least ambiguous way.

Kidder and Judd (1989:53) maintain that although reliability and validity are two different characteristics of measurement, they overlap. They are

two ends of a continuum but it is difficult to distinguish them at the middle point. Validity and reliability are especially important in educational research because most of the measurements attempted in this area are obtained indirectly. Researchers can never guarantee that an educational measuring instrument measures precisely and dependably what it is intended to measure (Van den Aardweg, 1988:198). It is important to assess validity and reliability of the instruments one is using in research. Researchers need to have a general knowledge of what validity and reliability are and how one goes about validating a research instrument and establishing its reliability.

For the purpose of assessing validity in this study expertise was sought and used to assess whether the items used in the questionnaires measure what it is intended to measure. Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient was calculated in order to measure the reliability of the three questionnaires.

3.4 Planning for the analysis of data

Abhilak (1994:216) suggests that the analysis of data involves both descriptive and inferential statistics. In this study the analysis of data involved only descriptive statistics because there are no hypotheses to be tested. The following discussion focuses on descriptive statistics and the procedures followed in analysing data using this method.

The term descriptive statistics (also called summary statistics) refers to statistical methods used to describe data which have been collected on a research sample (Borg and Gall, 1983:356). Descriptively, the data are summarised and reduced to a few statistics for the actual sample (Abhilak, 1994:216). Descriptive statistics serve as a tool for organisation, tabulation, depicting and describing, summarisation and reduction of comprehensible form of an otherwise unwieldy mass of data (Sibaya,

1993:165). Therefore, it does not involve testing of hypotheses for making generalisations about the population parameters. In this study descriptive statistics is used for summarisation and reduction of the data which have been collected on the research sample.

Analysis of the respondents in the sample according to their personal particulars (section A of the questionnaire) is done first. Descriptive analysis of the sample data for the various statements (section B of the questionnaire) is then done, using respondent counting and percentages.

Orlich (1978:132) states that the preliminary step in analysing data is usually counting the responses for every item or respondent counting, using either hand tabulations or electronic data processing. Electronic data processing is used in this study. Respondent counting involves counting the number of respondents who marked strongly agree (SA), agree (A), disagree (D) and strongly disagree (SD) categories in each statement. Respondent counting provides a summary of the tabulated frequency for which each category is marked, therefore, frequency data can be converted to percentages, indicating the number of respondents who marked a particular category in relation to the total number of respondents (Orlich, 1978:136). In order to avoid bias and giving misleading information, the number of respondents who marked a particular category is always given with the reported percentages in brackets (parenthesis).

3.5 **Research population**

A population may be a group of people, houses or records legislators. The specific nature of a population depends on the research problem (Frankfort-Nachmias and Nachmias, 1992:171. There are eight senior

secondary schools which fall under Mtunzini Circuit in Empangeni district. Among these only four were used for the investigation.

According to Borg and Gall (1983:238) a population is a larger group which we wish to learn about. In this investigation the population consisted of Senior Secondary School teachers, parents and learners of different schools in the north of KwaZulu Natal.

Secondary / high schools were selected because they are expected to follow the department of Education's language-in-education policy. With these learners English language mastery is a pre-requisite for mastering the subject matter in all subjects. The target areas of this research were the selected schools in Empangeni region. The research targeted schools around KwaDlangezwa, Esikhawini and Empangeni. The aim of the study was to find out about the attitudes of learners, educators and parents about the usage of English as a language of teaching and learning in Black schools.

3.6 Sampling of subjects for the study

A simple random sample was used for selecting the sample of four schools for this study in order for all schools to have an equal and independent chance of being selected. The usual definition of a simple random sample is that it is a procedure in which all the individuals in the defined population have an equal and independent chance of being selected as a member of the sample (Borg and Gall, 1983:244). Som (1973:20) maintains that in a simple random sampling the probability that the universe unit members of the defined population is selected at any given draw is the same as that at the first draw. The technique that is used, other than the table of random numbers, is where a slip of paper with the name or identification of each individual in the population is

placed in the container, mixing the slips thoroughly and then drawing the required number of names or numbers (Borg and Gall, 1988:246).

Sibaya (1993:67) states that to ensure that each slip pulled out has the same probability, it must be returned to the bowl before the next draw. Burroughs (1971:58) warns that if one puts the number back into the hat after selection, the number of the population as well as the sampling fraction changes, that is, the selection of each individual changes slightly the probability for the next case selected. Sibaya (1993:67) also maintains that if the number that was previously picked comes up again, it should be ignored, thus the process is called sampling with replacement (Som 1973:20; Williams 1978:106 and Sibaya 1993:67). This procedure was used to draw a sample of learners, educators and parents.

3.7 Planning for the administration of the research instruments

Permission to conduct a research was obtained from the regional office and the district office. Once it was granted, questionnaires were distributed by the researcher to the learners and educators of the selected schools. Learners were given questionnaires for parents to complete at home. A covering letter was attached to the questionnaires introducing the researcher's aims of the study and its significance. The researcher felt that one week was enough for the respondents to fill in the questionnaires.

3.8 Conclusion

The methods and procedures pertaining to sampling, research instruments, data collection and data analysis have been discussed. Chapter four will then detail the analysis and interpretation of data. The findings of the study will also be discussed.

CHAPTER FOUR

4.0 PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA

4.1 Introduction

In chapter three, a detailed account of research design and methodology was given. Chapter four reflects the analysis and interpretation of data. The findings of the study are also discussed in this chapter.

4.2 Administration of the research instrument

The SPSS computer programme was used for analyzing data. Cronbach's co-efficient alpha was used to determine the internal-consistency reliability estimates for the items (Section B) of the three questionnaires. The internal-consistency reliability estimates for learners', educators' and parents' questionnaires are 0.46, 0.20 and 0.73 respectively.

Table 4.1: Distribution of learners in the study (N = 58)

Criteria	**Levels**		
Sex	Male		Female
	21		37
Age: in years	15	16	17+
	6	9	43
Grade	10	11	12
	6	30	22

Table 4.1 illustrates the distribution of learners according to sex, age and grade. Out of 60 questionnaires that were distributed, 58 were returned, which is a 97% response rate.

Table 4.2: Distribution of educators in the study (N = 33)

Criteria	**Levels**				
Sex			Male		Female
			21		18
Age: in years	-20	21-25	26-30	31-35	36+
	0	3	7	11	12
Marital status	Married	Single	Divorced		Separated
	9	23	1		0
Rank	Temporary Educator	Post level 1 educator	Head of Department	Deputy Principal	Principal
	9	16	5	3	0
Qualification	M + 1	M + 2	M + 3	M + 4	M+5 & above
	0	0	9	16	8

Table 4.2 illustrates the distribution of educators according to gender, age, marital status, rank and qualification. Out of 60 questionnaires that were distributed, 33 were returned, which is a 55% response rate.

Table 4.3: Distribution of parents in the study (N = 36)

Criteria	Levels			
Sex		Male		Female
		26		10
Age: in years	25-30	31-35	36-40	45+
	1	8	10	17
Educational level	Not educated at all	Primary level	Secondary level	Tertiary level
	2	7	16	11

Table 4.3 illustrates the distribution of parents according to gender, age and educational level. Out of 60 questionnaires that were distributed, 36 were returned, which is a 60% response rate.

4.3 Results of the study

In the analysis of data, responses of the learners, educators and parents to each statement are analysed.

Table 4.4: Distribution of learners to each statement

Statement number	Response category			
	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
+1	32 (55.2%)	23 (39.7%)	3 (5.2%)	0 (0%)
-2	6 (10.3%)	29 (50%)	16 (27.6%)	7 (12.1%)
-3	5 (8.6%)	5 (8.6%)	23 (39.7%)	25 (43.1%)
+4	19 (32.8%)	32 (55.2%)	6 (10.3%)	1 (1.7%)
-5	11 (19.0%)	24 (41.4%)	19 (32.8%)	4 (6.9%)
+6	11 (19.0%)	30 (51.7%)	15 (25.9%)	2 (3.4%)
-7	6 (10.3%)	17 (29.3%)	22 (37.9%)	13 (22.4%)
+8	10 (17.2%)	20 (34.5%)	26 (44.8%)	2 (3.4%)
+9	7 (12.1%)	25 (43.1%)	21 (36.2%)	5 (8.6%)
-10	5 (8.6%)	14 (24.2%)	16 (27.6%)	23 (39.7%)
-11	7 (12.1%)	14 (24.1%)	27 (46.6%)	10 (17.2%)
-12	4 (6.9%)	7 (12.1%)	19 (32.8%)	28 (48.3%)
-13	13 (22.4%)	10 (17.2%)	17 (29.3%)	18 (31.0%)

* Percentages are in parentheses

\+ Positively worded statements

\- Negatively worded statements

Table 4.4 reveals the following information pertaining to learners' responses to each statement:

Statement 1: I enjoy being taught in the medium of English

A relatively high number of learners, thirty two (55.2%), strongly agreed that they enjoyed being taught in the medium of English and twenty three

(39.7%) of them agreed. Only three (5.2%) who disagreed and no one (0%) strongly disagreed with the statement.

Statement 2: In most cases I need clarification in my native language and not always in English

Six (10.3%) learners strongly agreed and a relatively high number of them, agreed that in most cases they need clarification in their native language and not in English. About sixteen (27.6%) disagreed and seven (12.1%) strongly disagreed.

Statement 3: I wish all the subjects were taught in the medium of my mother tongue

Five (8.6%) learners strongly agreed that they wished that all subjects were taught in the medium of their mother tongue and five (8.6%) of them agreed. Twenty three (39.7%) of learners who disagreed and twenty five (43.1%) strongly disagreed.

Statement 4: If I have a question I am always free to ask in English in class

Nineteen (32.8%) learners strongly agreed that if they have a question they always felt free to ask in English in class and a relatively high number of them, thirty two (55.2%) agreed. Only six (10.3%) who disagreed and one (1.7%) strongly disagreed.

Statement 5: If I have a question I usually feel free to ask in my mother tongue, isiZulu

Eleven (19.0%) learners strongly agreed and twenty four (41.4%) agreed that if they have a question they usually feel free to ask in their mother tongue, isiZulu. Nineteen (32.8%) disagreed and only four (6.9%) strongly disagreed with the statement.

Statement 6: English language is never a barrier to me in understanding the content of all subjects

Eleven (19.0%) learners strongly agreed and a relatively high number, thirty (51.7%) of them agreed that language is never a barrier to them in understanding contents of all subjects. Fifteen (25.9%) disagreed and two (3.4%) strongly disagreed.

Statement 7: English language is the main barrier in my understanding of content subjects

Six (10.3%) learners strongly agreed that English language is the main barrier in their understanding of content subjects and seventeen (29.3%) agreed. Twenty two (37.9%) disagreed and thirteen (22.4%) strongly disagreed.

Statement 8: In tests and examinations I always understand the requirements of all questions in English

Ten (7.2%) learners strongly agreed that in test and exams they always understand the requirements of the question and twenty (34.5%) agreed. A relatively high number, twenty six (44.8%), disagreed and only two (3.4%) of them strongly disagreed with the statement.

Statement 9: My scoring of marks is never disturbed by language

Seven (12.1%) learners strongly agreed with the statement and a relatively high number, twenty five (43.1%) agreed. Twenty one (36.2%) disagreed and only five (8.6%) strongly disagreed with the statement.

Statement 10: It is always totally against my will to speak English at school

Five (8.6%) learners strongly agreed that it is always totally against their will to speak English at school and fourteen (24.1%) agreed with the statement. Sixteen (27.6%) disagreed and a relatively high number of them, twenty three (39.7%) strongly disagreed.

Statement 11: I always have difficulty in responding to questions asked in the medium of English

Seven learners (12.1%) strongly agreed with the statement and fourteen (24.1%) agreed. A relatively high number of them, twenty seven (46.6%) disagreed and ten (17.2%) strongly disagreed.

Statement 12: I prefer to be taught in my home language until I complete primary education

A relatively small number of learners, four (6.9%) strongly agreed with the statement and seven (12.1%) agreed. Nineteen (32.8%) disagreed and a relatively high number of them twenty eight (48.3%) strongly disagreed with the statement.

Statement 13: English only should be used at secondary level as a medium of instruction

Thirteen (22.4%) learners strongly agreed with the statement and ten (17.2%) agreed. Seventeen (29.3%) disagreed and eighteen (31.0%) strongly disagreed.

Table 4.5: Distribution of educators to each statement

Statement number	Response category			
	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
+1	14 (42.4%)	18 (54.5%)	1 (3.0%)	0 (0%)
+2	6 (18.2%)	13 (39.4%)	13 (39.4%)	1 (3%)
+3	5 (15.2%)	10 (30.3%)	14 (42.4%)	4 (12.1%)
+4	3 (9.1%)	9 (27.3%)	11 (33.3%)	10 (30.3%)
-5	2 (6.1%)	13 (39.4%)	10 (30.3%)	8 (24.2%)
-6	11 (33.3%)	18 (54.5%)	3 (9.1%)	1 (3.0%)
-7	13 (39.4%)	15 (45.5%)	4 (12.1%)	1 (3.0%)
-8	9 (27.3%)	17 (51.5%)	5 (15.2%)	2 (6.1%)
+9	9 (27.3%)	20 (60.6%)	3 (9.1%)	1 (3.0%)
+10	5 (15.2%)	6 (18.2%)	16 (48.5%)	6 (18.2%)
-11	5 (15.2%)	15 (45.5%)	12 (36.4%)	1 (3.0%)

* Percentages are in parentheses

\+ Positively worded statements

\- Negatively worded statements

Table 4.5 revealed the following information pertaining to educators' responses to each statement:

Statement 1: I enjoy teaching in English

Fourteen (42.4%) educators strongly agreed that they enjoy teaching in English and a relatively high number of them, eighteen (54.5%) agreed with the statement. Only one (3.0%) disagreed and none of them (0%) strongly disagreed.

Statement 2: I always find it easy to teach learners in English

Six (18.2%) educators agreed that they always find it easy to teach learners in English and thirteen (39.4%) of them agreed. Thirteen (39.4%) disagreed and only one (3%) of them strongly disagreed.

Statement 3: There is always an interaction between myself and my learners when I teach in the medium of English

Five (15.2%) educators strongly agreed that there is always an interaction between them and learners and ten (30.3%) of them agreed with the statement. Fourteen (42.41%) disagreed and only four (11.1%) strongly disagreed.

Statement 4: In a classroom learners always ask follow up questions in English

Three (9.1%) educators strongly agreed that learners always ask follow up questions in English and eleven (30.6%) of them agreed. Thirteen (36.1%) educators disagreed and eleven (30.6%) of them strongly disagreed.

Statement 5: I sometimes feel discouraged to teach learners in English

Two (6.1%) educators strongly agreed that they sometimes feel discouraged to teach learners in English and thirteen (39.4%) of them agreed. Ten (30.3%) disagreed with the statement and only eight (24.2%) strongly disagreed.

Statement 6: I sometimes feel compelled to code-switch in my teaching to learners' native language

Eleven (33.3%) educators strongly agreed that they sometimes feel compelled to code-switch in their teaching to learners' native language and a relatively high number of them, eighteen (54.5%) strongly agreed with the statement. Three (9.1%) disagreed with the statement and only one (3.0%) of them strongly disagreed.

Statement 7: Learners always ask clarity seeking questions in tests and examinations since English is the medium of instruction

Thirteen (39.4%) educators strongly agreed that learners always ask clarity seeking questions and fifteen (45.5%) of them agreed. Four (12.1%) disagreed and only one (3.0%) strongly disagreed.

Statement 8: Code-switching is always a resort when I ask questions for revision

Nine (27.3%) of educators strongly agreed that code-switching is always a resort when questions for revision are asked and a relatively high number of them seventeen (51.5%) agreed. Five (15.2%) disagreed and only two (6.1%) strongly disagreed.

Statement 9: I always look forward to setting tests in English to test my learners' understanding of the instructional language

Nine (27.3%) educators strongly agreed that they always look forward to test their learners' understanding of the instructional language and a relatively high number of them, twenty (60.6%) agreed. Three (9.1%) of them disagreed and only one (3.0%) strongly disagreed.

Statement 10: To mark my learners' scripts is always a pleasure

Five (15.2%) educators strongly agreed and six (18.2%) agreed that to mark their learners' scripts is always a pleasure. Sixteen (48.5%) of them disagreed and only six (18.2%) strongly disagreed.

Statement 11: My learners always have a problem in writing projects in English

Five (15.2%) educators strongly agreed that their learners always have a problem in writing projects in English and fifteen (45.5%) agreed. Twelve (36.4%) of them disagreed and only one (3.0%) strongly disagreed.

Table 4.6: Distribution of parents to each statement

Statement number	Response category			
	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
+1	15 (41.7%)	21 (58.3%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
-2	0 (0%)	10 (27.8%)	14 (38.9%)	12 (11.33%)
-3	3 (8.3%)	7 (19.4%)	22 (61.1%)	4 (11.1%)
-4	1 (2.8%)	11 (30.6%)	13 (36.1%)	11 (30.6%)
-5	8 (22.2%)	24 (66.7%)	2 (5.6%)	2 (5.6%)
+6	8 (22.2%)	18 (50.0%)	8 (22.2%)	2 (5.6%)
-7	3 (8.3%)	10 (27.8%)	15 (41.7%)	8 (22.2%)
-8	2 (5.6%)	5 (13.9%)	8 (22.2%)	21 (58.3%)
-9	4 (11.1%)	10 (27.8%)	9 (25.0%)	13 (36.1%)
+10	5 (15.2%)	6 (18.2%)	16 (48.5%)	6 (18.2%)
-11	5 (15.2%)	15 (45.5%)	12 (36.4%)	1 (3.0%)

* Percentages are in parentheses

\+ Positively worded statements

\- Negatively worded statements

Table 4.6 reveals the following information pertaining to parents' responses to each statement.

Statement 1: My child is able to perform at his/her best because English language is used for teaching and learning

Fifteen (41.7%) parents strongly agreed with this statement and a relatively high number of them, twenty one (58.3%) agreed. None of the parents (0%) disagreed or strongly disagreed with this statement.

Statement 2: Teaching in the medium of English contributes to a high failure rate in schools

None of the parents (0%), strongly agreed that teaching in the medium of English contributes to a high failure rate in schools and only ten (27.8%) agreed with this statement. A relatively high number of parents, fourteen (38.9%) disagreed and twelve (33.3%) strongly disagreed with this statement.

Statement 3: The mother tongue is the best language for learners to understand lessons taught in class

Three (8.3%) parents strongly agreed that mother tongue language is the best for learners to understand in class and seven (19.4%) agreed. A relatively high number, twenty two (61.1%) of them disagreed and four (11.1%) strongly disagreed.

Statement 4: *Learners should be taught in their mother tongue* language at primary level

One (2.8%) parent strongly agreed that learners should be taught in their mother tongue language at primary level and eleven (30.6%) agreed. Thirteen (36.1%) parents disagree and eleven (30.6%) strongly disagreed.

Statement 5: For English test and examination some terms need to be clarified for the learners to understand the questions

Eight (22.8%) parents strongly agreed that for English test and examinations some terms need to be clarified for learners and relatively high number of them, twenty four (66.7%) agree. Only two (5.6%) disagreed and another two (5.6%) strongly disagreed.

Statement 6: I always encourage my child to speak English even at home

Eight (22.2%) parents strongly agreed that they always encourage their children to speak English even at home and a relatively high number of them, eighteen (50.0%) agreed. Eight 8 (22.2%) disagreed and only two (5.6%) strongly disagreed with the statement.

Statement 7: My child can perform better in the exam if she is taught and examined in her indigenous language

Three (8.3%) parents strongly agreed that their children can perform better in exams if they are taught and examined in their indigenous language, and about ten (27.8%) of them agreed. Fifteen (41.7%) disagreed with the statement and eight (22.2%) strongly disagreed.

Statement 8: isiZulu should be the medium of instruction throughout my child's education

Two (5.6%) parents strongly agreed with the statement and five (13.9%) of them agreed. Eight (22.2%) disagreed and a relatively high number of them, twenty one (58.3%) strongly disagreed.

Statement 9: isiZulu should be a medium of instruction so that my child can maintain linguistic and cultural identity as a Zulu

Four (11.1%) parents strongly agreed with the statement and ten (27.8%) agreed. Nine (25.0%) disagreed and thirteen (36.1%) strongly disagreed.

4.4 Discussion of the findings

The findings reveal that learners have a positive attitude towards the usage of English as a language of learning and teaching and as an additional language in schools. Table 4.4 illustrates that out of thirteen statements, learners are positive (the majority strongly agree/agree to positively worded statements, and disagree/strongly disagree to negatively worded statements, to eleventh statements (statements 1, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12 and 13) and negative (the majority disagree/strongly disagree to positively worded statements, and agree/strongly agree to negatively worded statements) only to two statements (statements 2 and 5). This shows that learners want to learn through English as a medium of instruction and an additional language in schools. The reason for learners' positive attitude may be that they know that they will need English to communicate in the world of work.

The findings also reveal that educators have a negative attitude towards English as a language of learning and teaching and as an additional language in schools. Table 4.5 shows that out of eleven statements, educators are positive to only four (statements 1, 2, 5 and 9) and negative to seven statements (statements 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 10 and 11). This shows that educators do not want to use English as a language of learning and teaching and as an additional language in schools. One of the reasons may be that educators experience problems from the learners who are not able to express themselves in English. Another reason may be that educators themselves have a problem of expressing themselves in English.

The findings further reveal that parents have a positive attitude towards the usage of English as a language of learning and teaching and as an additional language in schools. Table 4.6 indicates that out of nine

statements, parents are positive to eight (statements 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8 and 9) and negative to only one statement (statement 5). Their response to this statement shows that parents do not want terms to be clarified for the learners to understand the questions for English test and examinations. Parents' positive attitude towards the usage of English as a language of learning and teaching indicates that they are aware that their children will need English in order to be employed.

In the study conducted with a community of Wesbank a five year old township near Cape Town (Dyers, 2004) points out that in Wesbank secondary school there are many children from the other Black townships in Cape Town and all of them are placed in the English first language stream, even though they have extremely limited command of the English language. This is often with the strong support of the parents, who believe that English holds the key to the future success of their children. The above findings reported with parents' attitude towards English as a language of learning and teaching are similar in this study which was conducted at Qhakaza high school in KwaZulu Natal. Parents strongly agreed that their children be taught only through the medium of English after grade 5, when they would have acquired sufficient conceptual and cognitive development to facilitate a smooth transfer into English, the medium of instruction in higher education.

De Klerk (2004:5) interprets this as parents who see English as vital for their children's future and she further states that we are witnessing a drift to English-medium schools among the elite. Some even forbid the use of the mother tongue at home, they see no future in their own languages possibly for employment prospects for their children.

The study conducted by Mhlanga (1995) as reflected in chapter 1 to 2 of this research is in line with the findings by Dyers (2004) in that English is a world language and therefore important for international communication, especially in the world of business. He further highlights that English is necessary for employment.

The findings reveal that learners have a positive attitude towards the usage of English. This is in line with those reported in a study conducted among secondary school learners at Wesbank (Dyers, 2004). 31% of learners in the English L1 classes felt that English was far more important than isiXhosa and Afrikaans. It was more important than the other two in the job market, and was essential for communicating with the foreigners.

On the other hand, in the study conducted at the University of Stellenbosch in a language survey, Van der Walt (2004) highlighted that the global status of English as the gateway to job markets and international communication is the most obvious reason for students wanting to learn the language. Van der Walt (2004) further argued that his use of Stellenbosch University data is meant to illustrate a more general phenomenon when students or learners are instrumentally motivated towards a language such as English. He also states that English language should be used as the language of teaching and learning in higher education globally. This argument is not only common in South Africa but is used throughout the world to justify the 'simple' and economically viable solution of using English as a language of teaching and learning (Van der Walt, 2004:303).

Again in the very same study conducted with the Stellenbosch students on attitudes towards educational language planning in the context of English as an international language. Students displayed a positive attitude to English, the reason for that as stated by Van der Walt is that young people

who are planning a future and working towards that future at university live in a world where the status of English and its usefulness as a door to employment and worldwide communication is unquestioned.

The above findings attest those reported with learners' attitude towards English as a medium of instruction in this study conducted with high school learners north of KwaZulu-Natal. In this study learners strongly agreed that they need to be taught in English for future prospects.

Van der Walt (2004), nevertheless, maintains that second language users of English do need support in their home languages. When they deal with material that they perceive to be complex, they may prefer the home language because their working memory capacity is bigger which increases processing speed and efficiency.

The above findings are contrary to those reported in the study by de Klerk and Gough (2002:37) where learners seemed to identify with the language other than perceiving it as an instrument to obtain academic and economic success. In the findings by de Klerk and Gough (2002:37) some learners still hold the belief that isiZulu as their native language gives them a feeling of ethnic identity of belonging to a particular cultural group and therefore it should be used for communication always, which means inside and outside the classroom.

On the whole, in this research the findings revealed that learners have a positive attitude in English 55.2% strongly agreed that they enjoy to be taught in English. Webb (1992) as cited by Dyers (2004) concurs with the findings as he points out that learners hold strong covert positive attitudes towards English because of their awareness of its powerful position in South Africa.

4.5 Conclusion

In this chapter, the data were presented, analysed and interpreted. The findings of the study were also discussed. They revealed that learners and parents were positive while educators were negative about using English as a language of learning and teaching. The next chapter (chapter 5) details the summary of the whole study, conclusions and recommendations.

CHAPTER 5

5.0 SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Summary

This chapter summarises the findings, formulates the conclusions and suggests recommendations based on the findings of the study. The study was designed to investigate the attitudes of parents, teachers, learners and educators towards the usage of English as a language of learning and teaching in schools.

The researcher's observation as a practising educator was that English, which is a language learning and teaching, is not used to the fullest extent. What seems common among both educators and learners was the usage of mother tongue isiZulu in classrooms as well as outside classroom context.

5.2 The aim of the study

The study's aim was to find out about the attitudes of learners, parents and educators towards the usage of English as a language of learning and teaching.

The following were the objectives of the study:

(i) To determine whether the parents' attitude is negative or positive towards the usage of English as a language of learning and teaching in schools;

(ii) To determine whether the learners' attitude is negative or positive towards the usage of English as a language of learning and *teaching in schools and*

(iii) To determine whether the teachers' attitude is negative or positive towards the usage of English as a language of learning and teaching in schools.

5.3 Hypotheses postulated

The following hypotheses were postulated:

(i) English is not used as a medium of instruction instead, the native languages in this case isiZulu is largely/widely used.

(ii) Parents hold a positive attitude towards English language.

(iii) Learners do not do well at school because IsiZulu is used as a language of learning and teaching and not English as stipulated and that matric examination is written in English which is not the learners mother tongue.

(iv) Educators hold a negative attitude towards English because they do not use it as they are supposed to.

5.4 *Methodology*

Questionnaires were used as a research instrument. They were distributed to the learners, educators and parents.

For data analysis descriptive statistics were used.

5.5 Conclusions

The results of the investigation led to the following conclusions:

(i) Learners have a positive attitude towards the usage of English as a language of learning and teaching in schools.

(ii) The findings also revealed that educators have a negative attitude towards English as a language of learning and teaching and as an additional language in schools.

(iii) The findings further revealed that parents have a positive attitude towards the usage of English as a language of learning and teaching and as an additional language in schools, given the role of the language as a global language and particularly of power for better employment prospects for learners.

5.6 Recommendations

It is hoped that the following recommendations may help improve and solve the problem of the medium of instruction in schools.

(i) It should be stipulated in each and every school policy that English should be used as a language of learning and teaching in schools with the aim of helping learners because they need English for purposes of getting employment in future.

(ii) Educators confirmed that they sometimes feel discouraged to teach learners in English. The reason behind this is that learners do not have the command of the language and they seldom use English inside and outside school premises. Therefore the

recommendation here is that educators and parents should always encourage learners to read materials written in English like newspapers and magazines. They should also be encouraged to visit libraries.

(iii) Parents should encourage their children to speak English even at home. This would help them a great deal because examinations, even at matric level, are largely set in English. The problem highlighted above discourages educators to teach in the medium of English because of the communication breakdown between them and the learners.

Sometimes the educators feel compelled to code-switch in their teaching. This is in order that learners attain concepts fully and also for their cognitive development. The belief is that once learners attain this then learning or instruction would smoothly be carried out through the medium of English.

(iv) In this regard it is recommend that learners be involved in debates and speech contests that are conducted in the medium of English. This would help them to increase their vocabulary in English, and they would develop fluency and confidence in the language. Schools should make it compulsory for the learners to address both educators and their school mates in English, while at the same time developing the mother tongue for identity and communication purposes.

(v) English spelling dictation should form part of the learners' syllabus. This will help learners to increase their English vocabulary whilst at the same time they gain correct pronounciation and spelling.

(vi) While code-switching by both educators and learners is allowed, it needs to be mentioned that this, in learning/teaching contexts need only be done for particular purposes, such as in learners seeking clarity in content disciplines.

(vii) Learners should always be encouraged to visit libraries. This could be a school library or a public library, where they could have the opportunity to choose readers. After reading they need to write reports on what they have read. It is hoped that in the long run this would develop and sharpen their linguistic skills in English.

(viii) Educators should give learners projects which should be thoroughly marked and feedback be given to them. In their marking educators should mark language errors as well, not only content and sense.

(ix) Educators who qualify to teach English must have received a relevant training and qualification in English grammar, literature and general linguistics. If the above condition is taken care of, learners would receive proper knowledge which would help them develop confidence, and they will be competent in the world.

The use of English by and large, would improve learners interpersonal and integrative communication, while at the same time developing their language skills within English as the language of higher education.

5.7 Limitations of the study and avenues for future research

The following are limitations of this study but the researcher also made directions for future studies. It is evident that more research is needed.

(i) The sample of this study was drawn from educators, parents and learners of KwaZulu-Natal, Mthunzini circuit. In particular this was only carried out in KwaZulu-Natal. Therefore it is not a representative of the entire population of educators in this country. However, it could be argued that what obtains in this circuit could also be applicable elsewhere in the region as possibly elsewhere in the country. Further studies need to be conducted in the other provinces.

(ii) The sample of this study was drawn from secondary school educators, learners and their parents only. There is a need for a study at primary school level.

(iii) The sample of this consisted of 127 respondents. More research, with a bigger sample, preferably a nationwide study, would be appreciated so that the results can be generalized nationally with great confidence.

In spite of the limitations mentioned above, this study has achieved its objective of getting to understand educators, learners and parental attitudes towards the usage of English as a language of learning and teaching in schools. It has also provided recommendations for researchers who are interested in the same field of study.

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APPENDIX A

LEARNERS' QUESTIONNAIRE

SECTION A

PERSONAL INFORMATION

Make a cross [X] in the box, against the box that best describes your personal particulars

Gender

Male	
Female	

Age

15 years	
16 years	
17 and above	

Grade

Grade 10	
Grade 11	
Grade 12	

SECTION B

Below are the statements that could relate to your attitudes toward the usage of English as an additional language and as a medium of instruction in schools. Please make a cross [X] through the letter that best describes your position.

MEANING OF LETTERS

SA = Strongly agree
A = Agree
D = Disagree
SD = Strongly disagree

1. I enjoy being taught in the medium of English

SA	A	D	SD

2. In most cases I need clarification in my native language and not always in English

SA	A	D	SD

3. I wish all subjects were taught in the medium of my mother tongue

SA	A	D	SD

4. If I have a question I am always free to ask in English in class

SA	A	D	SD

5. If I have a question I usually feel freer to ask in my mother tongue, i.e. isiZulu

SA	A	D	SD

6. English language is never a barrier to me in understanding content subjects

SA	A	D	SD

7. English language is the main barrier in my understanding of content subjects

SA	A	D	SD

8. In tests and examinations I always understand the requirements of all questions in English

SA	A	D	SD

9. My scoring of marks is never disturbed by language

SA	A	D	SD

10. It is always totally against my will to speak/converse in English at school

SA	A	D	SD

11. I always have difficulty in responding to questions asked in the medium of English

SA	A	D	SD

12. I prefer to be taught in my home language until I finish primary education

SA	A	D	SD

13. English only should be used at secondary level as a medium of instruction

SA	A	D	SD

APPENDIX B

EDUCATORS' QUESTIONNAIRE

SECTION A: PERSONAL INFORMATION

Make a cross [X] in the box against the item that describes your personal particulars

1. Age in years

20 and below	
21 – 25	
26 – 30	
31 – 35	
36 and above	

2. Gender

Male	
Female	

3. Marital status

Married	
Single	
Divorced	
Separated	

4. Rank

Temporary educator	
PL 1 educator	
Head of Department	
Deputy principal	
Principal	

5. Qualification

Matric and below

M +1	
M +2	
M +3	
M +4	
M +5 and above	

SECTION B

Below are statements concerning your attitudes toward usage of English as an additional language, and as a medium of instruction in schools. Please draw a cross [x] through the letter that best describes your position. The meaning of letters is as follows:

SA	=	Strongly agree
A	=	Agree
D	=	Disagree
SD	=	Strongly disagree

1. I enjoy teaching in English

SA	A	D	SD

2. I always find it easy to teach learners in English

SA	A	D	SD

3. There is always an interaction between myself and my learners

SA	A	D	SD

4. In a classroom situation learners always ask follow up questions in English

SA	A	D	SD

5. I sometimes feel discouraged to teach learners in English

SA	A	D	SD

6. I sometimes feel compelled to codeswitch in my teaching to learners' native language

SA	A	D	SD

7. Learners always ask clarity seeking questions in tests and examinations since English is a medium of instruction

SA	A	D	SD

8. Codeswitching is always a resort when I ask questions for revision

SA	A	D	SD

9. I always look forward to setting the tests in English to test my learners their understanding of the instructional language

SA	A	D	SD

10. To mark my learners scripts is always a pleasure

SA	A	D	SD

11. My learners always have a problem in writing projects in English

SA	A	D	SD

APPENDIX C

PARENTS' QUESTIONNAIRE

SECTION A

PERSONAL INFORMATION

Make a cross [X] in the box that best describes your personal particulars

1. Age in years

25 – 30	
31 – 35	
36 – 40	
45 and above	

2. Gender

Female	
Male	

3. Educational level

Not educated at all	
Primary level	
Secondary level	
Tertiary level	

Below are statements concerning your attitude on the usage of English as a medium of instruction and an additional language in schools.

Please make a cross [x] through the letter that best describes your position.

The meaning of letters is as follows:

SA - Strongly agree
A - Agree
D - Disagree
SD - Strongly disagree

SECTION B

1. My child is able to perform at his/her level best because English language is used for teaching and learning

S A	A	D	S D

2. Teaching in the medium of English contributes to a high failure rate in schools

S A	A	D	S D

3. The mother tongue language is the best for learners to understand lessons taught in class

S A	A	D	S D

4. Learners should be taught in their mother tongue language at primary level

S A	A	D	S D

5. For English test and examination some terms need to be clarified for the learners to understand the questions

S A	A	D	S D

6. I always encourage my child to speak English even at home

S A	A	D	S D

7. My child can perform better in the exam if she is taught and examined in her indigenous language.

S A	A	D	S D

8. IsiZulu should be the medium of instruction throughout my child's education

SA	A	D	SD

9. This is because I would like my child to maintain linguistic and cultural identity as a Zulu

SA	A	D	SD

APPENDIX D

P O Box 20
KwaDlangezwa
3886

2007-04-14

The District Director: KZN
Mtunzini District
Private Bag X20104
Empangeni
3880

Dear Sir/Madam

APPLICATION FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

Kindly receive my application for permission to conduct research on the 'Attitudes of educators, parents and learners on the use of English as a medium of instruction and an additional language in schools'. I intend conducting this research in schools falling under Ongoye circuit for a Masters degree in Linguistics which I am studying for through the University of Zululand.

I sincerely believe that this research will not only provide us with insightful information regarding the above mentioned topic, but will also aid in minimising if not eradicating language problems our schools are currently experiencing. To this end I am committed to honouring and adhering to the conditions that may accompany an undertaking of this nature.

I would appreciate it if my application could be kindly considered.

Yours faithfully

S A NGIDI

PERSAL NO: 61092410