

Language and Development : Africa and Beyond

Edited by
Hywel Coleman

Proceedings of the 7th International Language
and Development Conference





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Chapter 1

Introduction : Language and the silent observers of development¹

Hywel Coleman

Background

The Language & Development Conferences have been held biennially since 1993 in different parts of the developing world. The conferences are organised on a non-profit making basis by organisations which have an interest in language, education and development. Their purpose is to provide a forum in which issues relating to language policy and language learning and teaching in development contexts can be discussed. It is hoped that participants will include policy makers, language educators, development professionals and representatives of donor and lending organisations.

Each conference has generated published proceedings. The full list of conferences, with their host organisations and subsequent publications, is shown in Table 1.

Table 1 : Language & Development Conferences, 1993-2005

<p>1st Language & Development Conference, Bangkok, Thailand, 1993 Host : Asian Institute of Technology Theme : 'Issues in Language & Development' • Kenny, B. & Savage, W. (eds). 1997. <i>Language and Development : Teachers in a Changing World</i>. London : Longman.</p>
<p>2nd Language & Development Conference, Bali, Indonesia, 1995 Host : Indonesia Australia Language Foundation Theme : 'Language & Communication in Development : Stakeholders' Perspectives' • Crooks, T. and Crewes, G. (eds). 1995. <i>Language and Development</i>. Denpasar : Indonesia Australia Language Foundation. • Crooks, T. (ed.). 1996. <i>ESP in Southeast Asia</i>. Denpasar : Indonesia Australia Language Foundation.</p>
<p>3rd Language & Development Conference, Langkawi, Malaysia, 1997 Host : National Institute of Public Administration Theme : 'Access, Empowerment, Opportunity' • Abdullah, A., Crocker, T. et al. (eds). 1998. <i>Language in Development : Access, Empowerment, Opportunity</i>. Kuala Lumpur : National Institute of Public Administration (INTAN).</p>
<p>4th Language & Development Conference, Hanoi, Vietnam, 1999 Host : Asian Institute of Technology Theme : 'Partnership & Interaction in Language & Development' • Shaw, J., Lubelska, D. & Noullet, M. (eds). 2000. <i>Partnership and Interaction</i>. Bangkok : Asian Institute of Technology.</p>
<p>5th Language & Development Conference, Phnom Penh, Cambodia, 2001 Host : IDP Education Australia Theme : 'Defining the Role of Language in Development' • LoBianco, J. (ed.). 2002. <i>Voices from Phnom Penh : Development and Language : Global Influences and Local Effects</i>. Melbourne : Language Australia.</p>

<p>6th Language & Development Conference, Tashkent, Uzbekistan, 2003 Co-hosts : Ministry of Higher & Specialised Secondary Education of the Republic of Uzbekistan and British Council Uzbekistan Theme : ‘Linguistic Challenges to National Development & International Cooperation’</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coleman, H., Gulyamova, J. & Thomas, A. (eds). 2005. <i>National Development, Education and Language in Central Asia and Beyond</i>. Tashkent : British Council Uzbekistan. <p>7th Language & Development Conference, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 2005 Co-hosts : Ministry of Education of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia and British Council Ethiopia Theme : ‘Language & Development’</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coleman, H. (ed.). 2007. <i>Language and Development : Africa and Beyond</i>. Addis Ababa : British Council Ethiopia.

The present volume constitutes the edited proceedings of the 7th Language & Development Conference which was held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, from 26 to 28 October 2005. The conference was hosted jointly by the Ministry of Education of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia and by the British Council in Ethiopia.

The 7th Language & Development Conference is one of only two in the series so far not to have taken place in Southeast Asia (the other being its immediate predecessor, the 6th Language & Development Conference of 2003, held in Tashkent, Uzbekistan) and it is the first so far to be held in Africa.

Unlike some of the earlier events in the series, the theme of the Addis Ababa conference was very broad : ‘Language and Development’. Under this umbrella, two sub-themes were identified in the conference call for papers : Language and its role in development and Language teaching in development contexts (www.langdev.org). The conference organisers predicted that a number of ‘focus areas’ under these two headings would be explored, as shown in Table 2.

Table 2 : Predicted focus areas of 7th Language & Development Conference, Addis Ababa, 2005

<p>A) Language and its role in development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The relationship between language and development • Language policy • Local versus international languages and development • Global issues (conflict resolution, good governance, ICT, etc) and their relationship to language and development, • Federalism, language and development, etc <p>B) Language teaching in development contexts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promoting effective language learning in development contexts • Teaching language in a resource-poor environment • Teacher education • Supported open learning of languages in developing countries • Communicative language teaching and cultural differences • Curriculum reform and textbook development

However, as conference preparations progressed, it became apparent that the papers which were being submitted and selected for presentation were tending to fall into four different categories :

- Language and development
- Language and conflict, language and federalism
- Language and identity
- Language and education.

In total 31 papers were presented during the conference; 26 of these were later written up and submitted for possible inclusion in this volume. From this number, fourteen have been selected to provide a representative cross-section of the issues which were explored during the conference. As a consequence of the selection process, the focus of the book has moved to some extent away from the original conference theme. The volume is now organised around three strands :

- Multilingualism and questioning the role of English
- Language in critical and post-conflict contexts
- Language and development projects and their design.

The remainder of this chapter provides a brief description of each chapter within the three strands. Where appropriate, cross-cutting themes and issues are identified.

Multilingualism and questioning the role of English

The first strand, which occupies the first half of the volume, addresses issues relating to multilingualism in society and in education and, incidentally, it questions the role of English. Six of the seven chapters in this strand focus on Africa.

In his opening chapter ‘Language use optimisation as a strategy for national development’ (Chapter 2), Herman M. Batibo surveys the sociolinguistic situation in the 55 nations of sub-Saharan Africa. He finds that indigenous languages are widely used for official purposes in only two of these countries. The majority of African nations are using the former colonial language (for example, English), either exclusively or in combination with an indigenous language. Batibo observes that the people of many African countries ‘are unable to involve themselves fully in [their] country’s affairs’ because they cannot understand or express themselves in their country’s official language. He concludes, therefore, that the indigenous languages are being seriously under-utilised in national affairs and, because of the communication barriers created by these language policies, many communities are experiencing ‘stagnation’ or only very slow transformation. The chapter argues that an ‘optimal language use approach’, based on objective ideological planning rather than logistical convenience, would be a more appropriate strategy. Such an approach would turn African multilingualism into a developmental asset.

The contribution by Hélène Fatima Idris, Karsten Legère and Tove Rosendal in Chapter 3 (‘Language policy in selected African countries : Achievements and constraints’) complements Batibo’s survey by examining current language policy in three African nations : Namibia, Cameroon and Sudan. The authors find some slight indications of positive development : in Namibia, twelve languages other than English are used as media of instruction, at least in the first three years of schooling; in Cameroon, a mother tongue project using 30 local languages and involving over 9,000 pupils has been producing successful results; in Sudan, the 2004 peace treaty has opened the way to recognition of all indigenous languages. But in general the

authors' findings are gloomy. For instance, Namibia's official language (English) is one which is spoken by so few people that it made no appearance as a home language in the 2001 census. In Cameroon, use of the mother tongues in schools is banned. In Sudan, language policy is a highly sensitive political issue. As a consequence of language policy in these three countries, those who most urgently deserve socio-economic advancement are excluded from national consultation processes. In a conclusion which mirrors Batibo's in the preceding chapter, Idris, Legère and Rosendal declare that these people are 'reduced to silent objects of development' – a powerful phrase which has been adapted for the title of this introductory chapter.

In Chapter 3 ('Moving towards bilingual education in Africa'), John Clegg analyses the risks associated with using a second language (particularly English) as the medium of instruction in education systems in Africa. He builds on substantial work which he has published elsewhere, including a contribution to the 6th Language & Development Conference of 2003 (Clegg 2005). In the present chapter he moves the argument forward in two ways. First, he points out that education programmes which are delivered in the learners' second language may indeed be successful, but only when certain conditions are fulfilled – and these are conditions which are generally not available in sub-Saharan Africa. Secondly, he identifies doubts about the value of the brief phase of first language medium education which learners experience in the first year or two of schooling in some African countries. Evidence suggests that this phase of learning through the mother tongue is too brief to offset the disadvantages of later education through English or another European language.

From Clegg's continent-wide discussion we move to the specific context of Ethiopia in Chapter 5 ('The impact of learning with the mother tongue on academic achievement : A case study of Grade 8 students in Ethiopia'). Here, Teshome Nekatibeb examines the impact on student learning of the use of the mother tongue. Seventeen (from a total of more than 80) of Ethiopia's languages are now used as media of instruction. Nekatibeb considers four of these languages and finds that, by Grade 8, children studying Mathematics, Physics, Chemistry and Biology through their mother tongue achieve significantly higher examination scores than do those studying through English. Among other important conclusions, Nekatibeb also finds that learning with the mother tongue is the second strongest variable which explains variation in student achievement. The evidence from the specific context of Ethiopia thus supports the argument put forward by Clegg in the preceding chapter.

Whilst the authors of the four preceding chapters have argued unequivocally for wider use of mother tongues, both in education and in other contexts, Gideon Cohen suggests in Chapter 6 ('Mother tongue and other tongue in primary education : Can equity be achieved with the use of different languages?') that a more measured approach is required. Cohen's point is that – at least in Ethiopia and, by implication, elsewhere – the reality of the situation is such that an insistence on the use of mother tongues in the education system may be counterproductive, however desirable it may be in theory. This is because languages are not all equally resourced and do not all have equal value in society as it is currently constructed. Educating children through the medium of different languages may therefore have the consequence of providing them with differential advantages or disadvantages. Cohen's central question then is whether children in Ethiopia obtain an equal quality of primary education and gain equal access to opportunities in society if they are educated in different languages.

As we have seen, several contributions to the first strand have raised questions about the role of English (and other European languages) in the socio-economic and education systems of a number of countries in Africa. Idris, Legère and Rosendal in Chapter 3, for example, are particularly critical of the dominant role which English plays in Namibia, to such an extent that a large percentage of the population is condemned to play the role of silent witness to the country's development. Fauzia Shamim, discussing 'English as the language *for* development in Pakistan : Issues, challenges and possible solutions' (Chapter 7), highlights how important English has become in contemporary Pakistan as a marker of education and as a key which opens doors to higher education, employment and influence. Yet at the same time the facilities available in Pakistan for learning English (except for the wealthiest and most privileged members of society) are extremely limited and inadequate. Consequently, according to Shamim's analysis, a state of 'language apartheid' exists in her country. A similar situation has been identified in Indonesia (Lamb & Coleman forthcoming) and – as we have seen already – in Namibia. However, Shamim goes beyond simply problematising the role that English plays in Pakistan and, pragmatically, she recommends a multilingual policy in which competence in English and Urdu would be developed side by side.

Language in critical and post-conflict contexts

The second strand consists of just three chapters of which one looks exclusively at a context in Africa. The theme which connects all three contributions is language in critical situations, including natural disasters and human-created disasters such as war and civil conflict.

The strand is introduced by Psyche Kennett's 'Language, disasters and development' (Chapter 8). Drawing on a range of contexts, Kennett begins by questioning the widely held assumption that disasters lead to development (by offering an opportunity for rebuilding). Rather, she argues, development activity is just as likely to increase vulnerability to further disaster. She then focuses on developments in Qatar (where as a side effect of the American invasion of Iraq the school curriculum for English has been revised in an innovative and positive way) and Sri Lanka (where the impact of the tsunami has failed to lead to sustainable communication between the Sinhala and Tamil communities). Provocatively, Kennett highlights 'the fundamental right to be able to communicate in one's own language' when seeking help after a disaster but shows that this basic right is rarely respected. Her conclusion is that aid organisations need to seek an appropriate balance between English and local languages which will empower those who are the targets of their aid. English should become a useful 'intermediary tool' in the aid process, rather than an imperialist imposition. In this way, Kennett's conclusion chimes with the theme of questioning the role of English which emerged from the first strand.

Hassan Dardig's discussion in Chapter 9 focuses on 'The role of English in the post-war development of Sudan'. Dardig traces the history of English in Sudan, from its first arrival at the end of the 19th Century through to the current phase following the signing of the 2004 peace agreement. He also looks briefly to the future. Despite Sudan's turbulent history over the last century and the disaster which is currently being experienced in Darfur, Dardig adopts a remarkably optimistic standpoint.

English, he argues, has the potential to overcome the negative associations which it has carried with it in the past and it can play the role of a neutral medium of communication between elements of society which, historically, have experienced great difficulty in understanding each other.

In Chapter 10 we return to Sri Lanka. Richard Lunt and Amy Hamlyn's discussion of 'Lessons from a training project in war-affected areas of Sri Lanka' describes a teacher development project which was deliberately directed at two areas of the country which have been most severely affected by the disruption of inter-community conflict over two decades. At one level, the chapter is a report of an innovative language and development project, which would qualify it for inclusion in the third strand of this collection. At another level, however, it is significant that this project was designed specifically for a post-conflict situation. The training workshops required members of different communities to come together, and one of the outcomes appears to have been increased understanding – albeit on a small scale – between teachers from these communities.

Efforts to understand the roles of language in critical contexts, including conflict and post-conflict situations, are still in their infancy. The three chapters presented here offer important indicators for future work in this area.

Language and development projects and their design

The third strand concerns itself with development projects in general, with language projects in particular (and especially English language projects) and with the design of those projects. Each of the five chapters in this strand examines an aspect of the role of language in development projects.

The strand is introduced by Robert Chambers' thought provoking contribution 'Words, power and the personal in development' (Chapter 11). Chambers suggests that there are three aspects of development projects which have received insufficient attention so far :

- the language used by development professionals
- power in development projects
- what sort of people development professionals are and how they behave.

Analysing widely used documents Chambers shows how the rhetoric subtly but consistently denies power to those who are intended to benefit from development and gives power to those who are delivering development. In manifold ways, the supposed beneficiaries of development activities are disenfranchised through the language which is used. Again, then, we encounter the phenomenon of disenfranchisement through inappropriate language policies which has already been so well recognised throughout this collection. Chambers concludes with a number of recommendations which aim to raise the awareness of all parties to the development process regarding the language which they use in their interactions with each other.²

Adrian Holliday discusses very similar issues in his chapter 'The dangers of matrix thinking in international curriculum project design' (Chapter 12). Drawing on his most recent book (Holliday 2005), he argues that English language development projects are often permeated by a 'projectised discourse' which carries inherent

dangers with it. Holliday suggests that concepts such as ‘efficiency’, ‘learner centredness’ and ‘participation’ all tend to technicalise the discourse of projects and depersonalise the relationships between the people who are involved in those projects. He concludes by recommending that development professionals adopt critical qualitative research as a means for achieving understanding of the contexts in which they work.

In Chapter 13 we move from the broad perspective adopted by Chambers and Holliday to the context of one specific language development project in Ethiopia. In this chapter, ‘Resistance in ‘English for Academic Purposes’ classrooms at the Ethiopian Civil Service College’, Nigussie Negash describes his attempts to introduce a major innovation in language teaching methodology in his institution and the ways in which his students resisted the innovations. Negash is admirably honest in recording the modes of resistance which his students employed. Some of these were subtle and complex and involved students collaborating to find ways of appearing to undertake group assignments outside class without actually doing so. The irony of this is that students were collaborating effectively even though their collaboration involved not language learning but ‘cheating’. Negash concludes that it is necessary to have a detailed understanding of the social context of the classroom in order to appreciate why students found the teacher’s proposed innovation so threatening.

Ahmed Siraj, Almaz Baraki and Judith Altshul also examine a specific language teaching innovation in Ethiopia in their contribution ‘Ethiopian teachers’ evaluation of a language improvement programme’ (Chapter 14). A programme which was initially designed to improve the English language competence of English teachers was extended to teachers of other subjects. The programme evaluation which Siraj, Baraki and Altshul carried out revealed (perhaps not surprisingly) that the non-English language teachers found some aspects of the programme inappropriate for their needs. Less predictably, however, both the language teachers and their colleagues who taught other subjects identified the methodology of the programme as one of its most important features. Many informants claimed that the ways in which they had studied on the programme would have an influence on their own teaching.

The final chapter, by Kath Copley, Graham Haylor and William Savage, returns to the context on which their contribution to the 2003 Language & Development Conference was based, that is the Support to Regional Aquatic Resources Management (STREAM) initiative in South and Southeast Asia. In their earlier work (Copley, Haylor & Savage 2005), the authors identified a number of lessons which they had learnt regarding communication with stakeholders. In their contribution to the present volume, ‘Telling stories, understanding lives, working toward change’ (Chapter 15), the authors focus on their work in India. They emphasise that work in development demands much more than the achievement of pre-determined and measurable indicators. More important, they claim, is ‘sharing of ourselves, being open to change and to being transformed’. In this way, Copley, Haylor and Savage are confirming Chambers’ concern with the ‘personal’ in development.

Conclusion

Across the varied contexts which are discussed in the fourteen contributions to this volume, a number of common themes emerge :

- It is foolish not to recognise the resource which the multilingual nature of African society (and that in many other parts of the world) offers.
- It is essential to provide the linguistic means to enable the beneficiaries of development to take an active role in the planning, implementation and evaluation of development activities. This is particularly the case in emergencies associated with conflicts and natural disasters.
- The value of the first language as the medium of instruction in basic education cannot be underrated (even if some languages have more or less social prestige than others).
- The role of English in development is sometimes problematic (however uncomfortable that may make us, the language education professionals).
- Attention needs to be given to the possibility of English being taught as part of a multilingual package.
- All who are involved in development activities need to be constantly alert to the possibility that inappropriate power differentials are being created through the discourse of development.
- The ethical, personal and interpersonal aspects of involvement in development demand as much of our attention as does the mechanistic measurement of achievements.
- There will always be unexpected outcomes of development activity, however carefully that activity is planned. These outcomes may be positive (teachers being inspired to modify their teaching behaviours after attending a language course) or they may be negative (students expending much ingenuity and effort to avoid innovative ways of learning).

These are exciting findings and they constitute the skeleton of an extensive research agenda. But one wonders what impact these findings will actually have. As the editor of two collections of papers from Language & Development Conferences, perhaps I can be permitted to offer some thoughts on the function of these conference publications.

It is striking that in fact there is very little cross referencing by contributors to the Language & Development Conferences back to presentations at earlier conferences in the series. This may be for two reasons. The first is that the conferences are peripatetic, wandering the globe from Bangkok to Addis Ababa, from Bali to Tashkent. There are obviously great strengths in having the conferences move from one context to another in the developing world in this way. However, the drawback is that - apart from a very small number of privileged individuals (of whom I am one) - there is almost no continuity of participation from one conference to another. Inevitably, therefore, there is very little inherited wisdom which is passed from one conference to another.

The second reason is that, for the most part, the publications emerging from the Language & Development Conferences are not widely available and have a very limited distribution. It is significant, for example, that the British Library of Development Studies (BLDS) at the University of Sussex records none of the six

volumes preceding the present one in its catalogue. Similarly the online bookseller Amazon recognises only the first of the six publications (Kenny & Savage 1997); the others are apparently unobtainable.

The conclusion seems to be, therefore, that the language and development profession has not yet created the means by which it can develop itself and learn from experience. The fourteen chapters in this volume record a great deal of hard work and they offer many lessons for anyone concerned about language policy and language education in the developing world. Let us hope that this experience and these lessons can be shared widely in the future.

Notes

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² Contributors to earlier Language & Development conferences have made similar proposals. Examples include Coleman 1995, 2002 and Khan and Lubelska 2005.

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Strand 1 : Multilingualism and questioning the role of English

Chapter 2

Language use optimisation as a strategy for national development

Herman M. Batibo

Introduction

When most of the African countries gained their independence between the late 1950s and the early 1960s, they were faced with many challenges in shaping their nationhood and stimulating national development in the direction of becoming modern states. Apart from dismantling the many colonial legacies which they had inherited, they had to satisfy the three important national needs that Fishman (1971) has referred to as unification, authenticity and modernity. The new states needed unity of the many and diverse ethnic groups which constituted semi-autonomous ethno-linguistic entities; identity of their sovereignties as states in their own right; and development to be part of the modern world, in both the socio-economic and technological spheres. The most challenging realities that most of these states had to grapple with were the prevailing multilingual and multiethnic phenomena. Most of them took a short-cut by adopting an exoglossic language policy, in which the ex-colonial language was adopted as official language and, in some cases, served also as national language.¹ Only a handful of countries adopted an endoglossic policy by promoting one or several of the major indigenous languages to play certain national roles. In most African countries, the national linguistic resources remained under-exploited, mainly because of the lack of proper language planning.

This chapter examines the sociolinguistic profile of Africa, with special focus on the under-utilisation of the indigenous languages in national affairs, their exclusion in national participation due to the use of external media and the general stagnation or slow transformation of some communities due to communication barriers. The chapter then demonstrates how an optimal language use approach could be the best strategy in turning African multilingualism into a developmental asset.

Endoglossic and exoglossic policies of language use among African countries

One of the many tasks that the newly independent countries of Africa faced in the early 1960s was the choice of an official language that would not only facilitate communication and therefore support the various developmental efforts, but would also provide much needed unity among the many ethnic groups, numbering, in some cases, over one hundred. Such a national medium was also expected to provide national identity and self-determination for the sovereign state.

The African countries had to choose between an endoglossic and exoglossic policy. An endoglossic policy involves the promotion of one or several indigenous languages as official or national languages, whilst the exoglossic policy involves the adoption of the ex-colonial language, external to the country, as an official or national language. Four categories of country have emerged in terms of choice and implementation of an official language policy (Batibo 2006). But before looking in detail at these four

categories we need to consider the domains in which languages function. The primary domain includes activities which involve family, village and intra-ethnic communication, whereas the secondary domain includes central and local administration, inter-ethnic communication and other public interaction. Within the secondary domain two layers can be recognised : the lower secondary includes all non-technical public communication within a nation; the upper secondary includes technical communication with the outside world such as diplomacy, international communication, science, technology and tertiary education.

Returning to the four categories of country, the first consists of those countries in which all official and national functions are performed by an indigenous language. The ex-colonial language has become a mere foreign language in the country. The only countries in this category are the Arab countries in North Africa which gained their independence many decades ago, namely Egypt and Libya.

The second category comprises those countries in which an indigenous lingua franca has been promoted to serve as both official and national language. In such countries, the indigenous language is used in both primary and secondary domains. However, the ex-colonial language may continue to be the language in some upper secondary domains. The dominant indigenous language assumes most public roles such as government business, local administration, primary and secondary education, judiciary, parliament, social services, trade and commerce, and the media. In fact, such an endoglossic policy is possible only in those countries where historical legacies or political developments have created a favourable linguistic ecosystem. The only countries in this category (outside North Africa) are Tanzania (Kiswahili), Somalia (Somali) and Ethiopia (Amharic). As remarked by Batibo (1997:203) and Mohammed Abdulaziz (personal communication), these three countries all had socialist governments at the time that they initiated rigorous programmes to develop and effectively use their respective languages in promoting nationalistic sentiments and mobilising the masses in national activities. In these countries, the ex-colonial language plays a minimal role, mainly as a second official language. However, there are also Arab countries which use Arabic as the dominant official or national language but which have retained the use of an ex-colonial language for some secondary domains. These include Algeria, Mauritania, Morocco, Sudan² and Tunisia.

The third category consists of those countries in which the ex-colonial language plays a major role, often as the main official language, but an indigenous language (or languages) has been designated as a national language or allocated certain secondary public functions. The role of the dominant indigenous language may range from that of a national or semi-official language, such as in the cases of Kenya (English/Kiswahili) and Botswana (English/Setswana), to a mere symbolic role, such as in the case of countries which have declared all or several of the indigenous languages to be national or even official languages without necessarily effectively using them in any formal domains, apart from lower education and a few other circumstances. This is the case of countries like Namibia, Zambia, Zimbabwe and Central African Republic. In some cases, several languages have been selected to represent the different zones of the country, as in the case of Nigeria (English/Hausa, Yoruba and Igbo) and the Democratic Republic of Congo (French/Lingala, Kikongo, Luba-Katanga and Kiswahili).

The fourth category is that of countries which, due to the complexity of their linguistic ecosystems (Igboanusi & Wolf 2004) or colonial legacies, have decided to make the ex-colonial language both official and national. In many of these countries (for example, Angola, Benin, Eritrea, Gabon, Togo, Nigeria, South Africa and Zambia), there is no nationally dominant language which can assume the lingua franca role. In others, because of the assimilationist nature of colonial rule (as adopted particularly by the French and Portuguese), no indigenous language was given the opportunity to play a national lingua franca role. The countries which have adopted an ex-colonial language as official or national language include Angola, Benin, Côte d'Ivoire, Gabon, Gambia, Guinea Bissau and Equatorial Guinea. In these countries, the ex-colonial languages are used in most of the secondary domains. In some countries, such as the Comoro Islands, Eritrea and Chad, Arabic has been introduced as one of the official languages. One of the reasons why so many countries decided to adopt the ex-colonial languages as the only or main national media, particularly in the official and technical areas, was that the ex-colonial languages were already highly developed and internationally used. Moreover, they were considered to be neutral and therefore would not arouse the resentment of any ethnic group.

The case of South Africa is unique, as it does not fit into any of these categories. Its new language policy has declared eleven languages to be official. However, so far the effective official languages are English (an ex-colonial language) and Afrikaans (the only local official language during the apartheid era). The nine indigenous languages have remained largely symbolic.

Table 1 : Use of ex-colonial or dominant indigenous languages among African countries and territories (Batibo 2006)

Language Category	Description	Number of countries
1 Endoglossic	Exclusive use of an indigenous language as official/national medium	2 (3.6 %)
2 Largely endoglossic	Use of an indigenous language as official/national medium, with limited use of an ex-colonial language	8 (14.6 %)
3 Largely exoglossic	Use of an ex-colonial language as official/national medium, with symbolic/limited use of an indigenous language in secondary domains	27 (49.1%)
4 Exoglossic	Exclusive use of ex-colonial language as official/national medium	18 (32.7%)
Total		55 (100.0%)

As Table 1 shows, most African countries have adopted an exoglossic policy or have accorded only minimal secondary functions to the indigenous languages. The majority of countries in Africa (categories 3 and 4, that is 81.2%), have adopted an exoglossic language policy, in that they rely heavily on an ex-colonial language for their official or national communication. Only a small percentage of countries (categories 1 and 2) use an indigenous language, either exclusively or dominantly, in their national affairs. Such countries are generally considered to be models in the use of local languages in formal domains.

Monolingual and multilingual language promotion policies in Africa

The African countries which adopted a largely endoglossic policy had to choose between two options, namely a monolingual and a multilingual promotion policy. According to the monolingual policy, only one language and culture, usually that of the majority, would be adopted as the national language and culture to the exclusion of the minority languages. In fact, this is the policy used in Europe, where dominant languages like English, French and Spanish were adopted in their respective countries at the expense of minority languages like Alsatian, Basque, Breton, Catalan, Cornish, Irish Gaelic, Lorrainian, Scottish Gaelic, Welsh and others. The advantage of this approach is that it promotes one national medium of communication for the whole country and allows for one cultural identity and a sense of common belonging. But such a policy tends to marginalise the speakers of the other languages who are then forced to operate in a language in which they have no or limited competence.

On the other hand, the multilingual policy advocates the promotion and use of each language and culture in the country. This approach allows the codification and elaboration of each of the languages for use within its own socio-political and cultural confines. The extent to which each language will be used in the public domains would depend on its size, vitality and level of development. This approach, despite its many costs and logistic problems, has the advantage of encouraging the development and use of each of the languages in a country. Moreover, it gives equal chances to all citizens to participate in national affairs, therefore contributing to true democracy.

Most African countries which opted for the endoglossic policy adopted a monolingual approach because of their great need to foster unity and national identity. These countries include Botswana (Setswana), Malawi (Chichewa)³, Tanzania (Kiswahili), Zimbabwe (Chishona), Central African Republic (Sango), Kenya (Kiswahili), Ethiopia (Amharic)⁴ and most of the Arab countries.

On the other hand, only a few African countries have adopted the multilingual approach. Moreover, those which have done so have adopted the policy only partially by :

- a) declaring all languages in the country to be national languages, but using them only in limited domains such as primary education or local administration, as in the case of Namibia;
- b) selecting several languages - usually the major ones - and making them national or official languages; these languages are then given roles ranging from active public use to mere symbolic status, as is the case in South Africa;
- c) promoting the major dominant languages for use in their respective areas in some of the domains like education, local administration and social welfare, as in the Democratic Republic of Congo, Nigeria and Ethiopia (before the introduction of its new language policy).

Language use optimisation approach

When most African countries opted either for an exoglossic language policy or an endoglossic policy with a monolingual approach, the decisions were reached mainly on political or logistical grounds. No objective ideological planning was carried out.

According to Whiteley (1971), ideological planning is central to the success of any language policy. Ideological planning is a process in which the decision-makers have to make an explicit pronouncement about the language policy of the country. The policy should state clearly which language will be used for government business, public administration, education, science, mass media, diplomacy, international relations, legal matters, commerce and trade, social services and so on. The policy decision should be based on thorough and objective research as well as consultation with the people.

However, most African governments declared their policies through political decrees based on logistical convenience rather than the objective realities of the respective countries. In fact, very few African countries have been explicit in their ideological planning. As Bamgbose (1991:111) pointed out, most decisions and policies were characterised by one or more of the following problems : ‘avoidance, vagueness, arbitrariness, fluctuation, and declaration without implementation’. Many countries have chosen to be purely pragmatic when it came to matters of language policy.

Due to the lack of proper language planning and effective policy implementation, many African countries have failed to see developmental value in their languages. In fact, they see the realities of multilingualism as a stumbling block in their desire to fulfil Fishman’s ideals of unity, identity and development.

However, as pointed out by Bamgbose (2000:30), language is a powerful symbol of society, particularly if its potential is fully recognised and exploited. It can be a key contributing force towards nationhood and national development if properly managed. The indigenous languages of Africa can therefore be vehicles of national development if put to proper use. Such languages need to be looked at not as stumbling blocks, but as potential national resources. As with all other resources, they need to be allocated in areas where they can be of optimal utility. Hence the choice of languages and their domains of use needs to be made on strictly economic grounds in much the same way as for any other resource in the nation’s economy (Fishman 1971, 1974; Jernudd & Das Gupta 1971). In this way, each nation should look for optimisation of the use of the national linguistic resource at the least possible cost. But, since language is a resource with a social rather than an economic value, allowance is usually made for social and cultural factors which may affect its use. A nation’s languages should, therefore, be developed and used with the aim of fully involving their speakers, both cognitively and politically, in the advancement of the nation as a whole.

Since it is not possible, in view of limited resources, to promote all the indigenous languages in a country to a national level, the most appropriate option is to rank them in a hierarchy of national importance. The language at each hierarchical level would be accorded certain public roles.

It is possible to identify a five-tier structure in which languages would be placed according to their national importance. (See Table 2.) At the top level we would have the ex-colonial or global language, which would serve as the external window of the country linking it with the outside world in international communication and diplomacy. At the second level, we would have the nationally dominant lingua franca which would serve as both the main official language and the national language. Such a language would assume most of the national domains including education

(particularly secondary and tertiary), central government, science and technology⁵, and the main mass media. The third level is that of the major areally⁶ dominant or provincial languages which would be used for provincial communication, particularly in primary education and localised mass media.

Table 2 : An ideal hierarchy of language roles

Level	Type of language	Domains of use
1	Ex-colonial/global	International communication, diplomacy
2	National	Central government, education, science and technology, parliament, magistrate/high court, main mass media, all national communication
3	Provincial	Provincial/regional administration, primary education, localised mass media, all provincial communication
4	Areal	Local administration, pre-school, localised mass media, village, all areal communication
5	Individual	Intra-ethnic interaction, family communication and cultural expression

At the fourth level, one would find areal languages which would be used in local administration, pre-school education and some localised media. Finally at the fifth level, we have the individual languages whose use would usually be confined to intra-ethnic interaction, family communication and cultural expression.

This optimal language use hierarchy would have the following implications :

- a. The ex-colonial or global language, being a foreign language, would be used only in international relations, allowing the indigenous national lingua franca to play all the other national roles.
- b. The national language would have full charge of all national affairs, including most official and technical communication. This would ensure the transfer and acculturation of technology into the national medium. The promotion of national languages is possible in most African countries, as over 64% of the countries have at least one nationally dominant language.
- c. The various indigenous languages in the country would be optimally utilised as in each case the relevant domains would be appropriately and effectively serviced.
- d. All the major and minor areally dominant languages would be recognised and accorded specific roles.
- e. The very small languages at level 5 would be confined to village and family use. Their speakers would usually not expect any public roles for them, because of the often small number of speakers. Most of the speakers of these languages, however, would be fluent in one of the languages at the higher levels.

Table 3 : Hierarchy of language roles in Zimbabwe (based on Hachipola 1996)

Level	Role	Language
1	Official	English
2	National	Chishona
3	Provincial	Sindebele
4	Education, mass media	Ikalanga, Shangani, Chitonga, Tshivenda
5	Mass media	Chichewa
6	No recognised role	Baswa, Hwesa, Kunda, Namya, Chisena, Sesotho, Tshwa, IsiXhosa

In fact, the country which has tried to establish a hierarchy of language use close to the one proposed in Table 2 is Zimbabwe (Hachipola 1996:4) as shown in Table 3.

Conclusion

The handling of the indigenous languages since the African countries gained their independence in the late 1950s and early 1960s is one of the areas where Africa has had a 'false start' (Dumont 1966). The fact that most African countries adopted an exoglossic language policy or an endoglossic monolingual approach has meant that many indigenous languages are under-developed and under-utilised whilst their speakers are marginalised or excluded from participating in national affairs. Thus, many citizens in some African countries are denied true democracy and equality, either because they lack sufficient proficiency in the ex-colonial language or because they are not mother-tongue speakers of the nationally dominant language. In either case, they are unable to involve themselves fully in the country's affairs and their children may not have equal opportunities in the schooling system. Such a situation has caused resentment in some African countries, where people from the minority groups have demanded that their languages and culture should also be recognised.

Moreover, if the present trend is not checked, the ex-colonial languages will continue to strengthen their positions of prestige at the expense of the indigenous languages. In fact, the use of foreign languages has adversely affected the earlier aspirations to unity, identity and development, since many countries still lack the essential features of nationhood and authenticity.

One needs to acknowledge that all the world's developed countries have reached their present positions on the basis of their own national languages; they have adopted and integrated technology within their own cultural and social values, thus making it possible for the developments to reach all citizens. It is a fact that no developed country has developed on the basis of using a foreign language, since development involves the participation of all citizens in nation-building. It is noteworthy that the fast-developing countries of Asia, such as China, Korea, Taiwan, Malaysia and Thailand, base their development strategies on their indigenous languages as this is the only way to involve the whole population in the development effort and to meaningfully bring technological advancement within the country's cultural framework. In the case of the African countries, it is important that they undertake a thorough review of their language situation and establish policies which are in line with their national linguistic resources and the ultimate national goals.

Finally, a multilingual policy of language use would ensure that all or most languages in a country are described, codified and even used in local literacy activities. Such languages would be actively used and valued within their spheres. The speakers of each language would value and be proud of their language and culture because of the public utility which it provides. This, in turn, would ensure continued intergenerational language transmission.

Notes

¹ An 'official' language serves as a recognised or approved medium of state affairs, including government business, legislature, judiciary, education, science and technology and any other formal and public dealings. On the other hand, a 'national' language plays the role of a symbol of identity and unity (Matthews 1997) as well as a lingua franca among the various groups in a country (Batibo 2005).

² Following the reconciliation between the Sudanese Government and the rebel movements in the south, a new language policy has been put in place in which both Arabic and English are official languages.

³ This was the case during President Kamuzu Banda's regime.

⁴ This was the case before the new language policy was implemented.

⁵ It is important that technology is acculturated and applied through an indigenous language so that it becomes part of the culture of the respective community.

⁶ The terms 'areal' and 'areally dominant' have been adopted from Batibo (2005) to refer to a language whose sphere of influence is limited to a certain locality where several smaller languages are found.

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Chapter 3

Language policy in selected African countries : Achievements and constraints

Hélène Fatima Idris, Karsten Legère and Tove Rosendal¹

Introduction

This chapter presents a summary of evidence as to how the existence of an official language or languages affects the status and actual use of other languages. At the same time, it deals with the role of language in development. Reference is made to three different contexts in Africa :

- a) Namibia, an example of a country with a very small number of speakers of English, even though this is the official language of the country,
- b) Cameroon, which stipulates the use of two non-African official languages, and
- c) Sudan, with its strong emphasis on Arabic as the official and national language.

When opening the Language and Development in Southern Africa Conference (held in Okahandja, Namibia, 11-13 April 2000), the then Namibian Education Minister, John Mutorwa, suggested that the following questions be discussed at the meeting :

- Which language(s)?
- What development?
- Whose development?
- At what economic, political and social cost?

In this context the Minister argued that ‘... English and French ... at first sight may seem to lend themselves to the task of national integration and national unity. Unfortunately, this purpose is only largely achieved among the educated’ (Mutorwa 2001:7). This observation aptly summarises a dilemma in Africa, which has been addressed time and again at conferences, in papers, in policy documents, and so on. The three countries which are the focus of this chapter provide further illustrations of this complex issue.

Namibia

During a visit to Tsumkwe (former Bushmanland) in July 2003, the then Namibian President Sam Nuyoma made various significant remarks about the role of languages in his country. For example, he blamed the former South African administration for its emphasis on Afrikaans. He rejected any role for this language in Namibian schools. Referring to ‘national languages’² or ‘first languages’ (henceforth L1[s]), he made the following points :

- a) L1s must be promoted;
- b) Scientific terms in these languages should be coined ‘... so that English, Namibia’s official language, can be phased out’;
- c) The Nama/Damara (i.e. Khoekhoegowab) and San languages ‘are unique’ and ‘... should be taught widely in the country’.³

In his speech Nuyoma introduced a vision which substantially departs from the current language policy⁴ as stipulated by the Namibian Constitution⁵ and other documents. In this context, the words of the President as the supreme guardian of the Constitution might be considered to have considerable significance. Unfortunately, however, his views as summarised above had no impact on the language policy of the country, since he left office in March 2005.

In a nutshell, Nuyoma dealt with three important language issues that have been at stake since pre-independence years, namely the status and use of

- L1s
- Afrikaans
- English.

English and in particular Afrikaans were the official languages in former South West Africa (Namibia) before independence in 1990. L1s were relegated to the status of being semi-official in the then 'Bantustan'-like regions.⁶

The stipulation that English is the sole official language of Namibia is the core element of the Namibian language policy, although a bashful hint in the Constitution (in Article 19) attempts to accommodate other languages. Nevertheless, so far the latter are *de jure* excluded from official domains (i.e. from the legislative, executive and judiciary); as a consequence, other languages are marginalised and disempowered.⁷ In addition, this decision in favour of English has set the tune for other domains of language use where English is given preference, e.g. formal education after grade 3 and the media.

The population census of 2001 (Republic of Namibia 2003) summarises the linguistic situation in terms of the number and percentage of households where each language is spoken. The most prominent languages are shown in Table 1, with the percentage of households where each language is spoken.

Table 1 : Most frequently spoken languages in Namibia, 2001 (by household)

Language	Households where spoken (%)
Ambo dialects (Oshiwambo)	48
Nama/Damara (Khoekhoegowab)	11
Afrikaans	11
Kavango languages	10
Herero	8

Strangely enough no figures for English can be traced in the 2001 census. In other words, the official language of the Republic of Namibia does not appear in the census statistics which were consulted for this chapter. Accordingly, one has to go back to the 1991 census, when 0.8 per cent of the total population (10,941 persons) were recorded as speaking English as their mother tongue.⁸ Between 1991 and the present day the number of those proficient in English has certainly increased, but it still remains very low despite the intensive promotion of English as the medium of communication nationwide.

At independence, given the low number of English speakers in the country,⁹ the education system was immediately tasked to teach the official language at all levels.

Thus, English was introduced as a subject from grade 1 onwards. A number of schools – mainly in the urban areas - were turned into English-medium schools where learners are instructed in English from grade 1 onwards. However, for the overwhelming majority of schools a L1, German or Afrikaans remained the medium of instruction (MoI) for grades 1-3 of the lower primary phase, whilst English took over this role in grade 4 and higher grades. From primary grade 4 and beyond all languages other than English were reduced to the status of subjects. Accordingly, Namibia belongs to those African countries that practice a subtractive approach to the MoI issue with all of its negative effects.

The status of languages in the Namibian education system (including non-formal education) is summarised in Table 2.

Table 2 : Status of languages in the Namibian education system¹⁰

Language ^a	Functional literacy	MoI in grades 1-3	Subject up to grade	CNE ^b	University of Namibia
(Otji-)Herero	✓	✓	12	✓	✓
Ju 'hoan(-si)	✓	✓	3	-	-
Khoekhoe(-gowab)	✓	✓	12	✓	✓
(Ru-)Kwangali	✓	✓	12	✓	✓
(Oshi-)Kwanyama	✓	✓	12	✓	✓
(Si-)Lozi	✓	✓	12	✓	✓
(Ru-)Manyo	✓	✓	12	✓	-
(Thi-)Mbukushu	✓	✓	12	✓	-
(Oshi-)Ndonga	✓	✓	12	✓	✓
(Se-)Tswana	✓	✓	10	-	-
Afrikaans	✓	✓	12	✓	✓
German	-	✓	12	✓	✓
English	✓	✓ and beyond	12	✓	✓

a The glossonyms for the L1s as used in Namibia include an affix which is given here in brackets.

b College of National Education (teacher training college)

Table 2 illustrates the far-reaching attention that the Namibian authorities pay to a wide range of their L1s. It can be seen that most of them are taught as subjects up to Grade 12 and teacher training is offered in most of these L1s. Moreover, some of these L1s can be studied at the university. This approach sets an example for other African countries where L1s are excluded from formal education or are inadequately taken into account.

Table 3 : Home language and medium of instruction (selective)¹¹

Language	Home language (total in grades 1-12)	Medium of instruction (total in grades 1-3)
(Oshi-)Kwanyama	121,473	34,401
(Oshi-)Ndonga	77,807	52,216
Khoekhoe(-gowab)	53,342	7,231
(Otji-)Herero	38,770	7,708
Afrikaans	37,588	11,623
(Si-)Lozi	5,983	6,986
English	3,487	35,801

A breakdown of learners who are enrolled in classes with the major L1s, English, and Afrikaans respectively as the medium of instruction is presented in Table 3. This shows the low number of mother tongue English-speaking children in primary and secondary schools (fewer than 3,500). But, when it comes to the medium of instruction in lower primary schools (the founding years), English is the second largest, surpassed only by Ndonga. Many children are sent to English-medium schools by parents who believe in the inaccurate and untenable claim that the earlier English is introduced, the better their children's mastery of the language will be. Their decision - which completely ignores pedagogical principles¹² - is diametrically opposed to reality. In fact, a submersion approach, as practised in some Western countries, could not be expected to achieve similar results in Namibia, since the majority of learners are rarely exposed to English outside school.

It is understandable that parents should want their children to cope well with English, since school leavers must be at a competitive advantage in the job market; well-paid employment is available only for those who are qualified in English or Afrikaans.¹³ Parents, teachers and officials equate education only with competence and proficiency in English. English is associated with modern life, a good job and high social status. This explains the strong desire to master this language. In contrast to this, a negative attitude towards national languages has emerged, as a job-seeker can rarely find employment equipped only with knowledge of an L1. As a consequence, L1s are stigmatised as being 'good for nothing'. Furthermore, investments in L1s are rare, as they do not feature high on the Government agenda. There is a lack of support (both in terms of policy enforcement and funding) for L1s which has been felt for many years and, indeed, is still the case.¹⁴ However, the AfriLa project 'Upgrading African languages', funded by GTZ, has been an important milestone in improving the position of L1s in school.

An evaluation of teachers' and learners' competence in English reveals the failure of the education system to disseminate English effectively throughout the country. This situation was earlier addressed at the 2000 Language & Development in Southern Africa Conference in the following terms :

- a) Education through the medium of English ... is functioning badly,
- b) The potential ineffectiveness of English-medium education affects individual education achievements,
- c) Governments and education authorities do not well understand or acknowledge the potentially limiting effect of using English as MoI (Clegg 2001: 210).

The qualifications of teachers are a particularly critical issue in Namibia; poorly qualified teachers almost certainly contribute to the low competence and proficiency in English achieved by their learners. Some eye-opening comments by Philander (2005) have appeared in *New Era* (a newspaper known for expressing views which are close to those of the Government); discussing the high failure rate of grade 10 learners in the 2004 examinations and the falling standards of education in general, he blames teachers' incompetence '... when teaching through the medium of English' (Philander 2005:4). As a consequence, he argues, 'there is a tendency ... to revert back to indigenous language education due to the many teaching problems experienced through the medium of English' (Philander 2005:4).¹⁵ These comments help us to understand how uncomfortable many teachers feel if they attempt to use

English as MoI (although, not surprisingly, most teachers would not dare to admit their low English competence to others).

Table 4 : Domains of language use¹⁸

DOMAIN	SETTING	L1	L2/ English
Official	National Assembly (parliament)	0	1
	Administration: Central offices	0 ^a	1
	Administration: Regional offices	0 ^a	1
	Administration: Local offices	0 ^a	1
	Law courts: Central	0	1
	Law courts: Lower level	0 ^a	1
	Police station	0 ^a	1
	Defence force barracks	0 ^a	1
Politics	Political parties	0.5	1
Religion	Church	1	1
Education	Literacy: Stage 1-2	1	0
	Literacy: after stage 2	0	1
	Schools: Grades 1-3/MOI	1	1 ^b
	Schools: Grades 4-7/MOI	0	1 ^b
	Schools: Secondary/MOI	0	1 ^b
	Schools: Grades 1-3/subject	1	1 ^b
	Schools: Grades 4-7/subject	1	1 ^b
	Teacher training colleges	0	1 ^c
	University	0	1 ^c
Media And culture	Mass media: Newspapers	0.5 ^d	1
	Mass media: Newspapers on the internet	0.5	1
	Mass media: Radio	1	1
	Mass media: TV	0.5 ^e	1
	Book production: Fiction	1	1
	Book production: Textbooks	1	1
Employment	Grass-roots projects	0.5	1
	Banks, insurance companies, etc.	0 ^a	1
	Social services	0 ^a	1
	Mass organisations, NGOs	0.5	1
	Foreign NGOs	0.5	1
TOTAL		11.5	29

a Afrikaans and/or L1s are used orally.

b In L2 classes there is frequent L1-L2 code switching.

c Except for language classes

d *Swapo News* and *New Era* publish articles in four and five national languages respectively. *The Namibian* has a mainly Ndonga section which is also available in the online edition. *Omukwetu* is published in Ndonga. There are some other journals, published occasionally, which include articles mainly in Ndonga.

e News is broadcast in national languages.

However, even a very limited command of English – which would not be adequate for teaching in school – is sufficient to make a teacher an authority in his/her residential area. The teacher perceives him- or herself to be more educated than others in the

vicinity. This self-perceived authority is also imposed upon learners in the classroom. As a consequence, rote learning and safe talk¹⁶ in English classes are normal practice in many schools where non-English speaking children are enrolled.¹⁷

The situation of English is indeed far from satisfactory. Substantial support for improving the standards of English competence - through in-service language training and workshops for teachers and trainers - has been made available, but these efforts have not had much impact on education.

A summary of the current linguistic situation with regard to language use in Namibia is shown in Table 4. In this summary, a domain in which a particular language is used has tentatively been allocated a numerical weighting. Thus, *1* indicates dominant use of a given language, *0* shows insignificant or zero use of a language, and *0.5* is allocated in situations where a language is used to a certain extent.

Table 4 reveals the overwhelmingly dominant position of English in all formal domains. It is clear from this quantification of the domains in which languages are used in Namibia that English enjoys a much wider distribution than the L1s, since this language is used almost three times more often in formal domains compared with the L1s. Table 4 clearly reflects the implementation of the official language policy, both directly and indirectly. For example, language use in administration, the National Assembly and the judiciary has to comply with Article 3 of the Namibian Constitution. However, while the exclusive use of the official language is strictly observed for written material, oral communication runs counter to this stipulation. In many contexts, several different L1s and, in particular, Afrikaans¹⁹ are frequently spoken by civil servants among themselves as well as to their clients, the Namibian public. Yet, as we have seen, the status of the L1s spoken by the overwhelming majority of the population is weak, as they are *de jure* excluded from all official and some formal domains by the current language dispensation. They are recognised and used only in school.

As far as radio broadcasting is concerned, the Namibian Broadcasting Corporation (NBC) produces L1 radio programmes in the Bushman language Jul'hoan, in the Khoekhoe, Kwanyama/Ndonga, Herero, Lozi, Kavango languages, in Tswana, as well as in Afrikaans, German and, of course, English. The latter enjoys a more ubiquitous role than that of the L1s in that it is on air for 18 hours a day, from 06:00 until 24:00.²⁰ For three years now, television news has also been read in the L1s.

The use of L1s in Namibia will certainly not gain momentum in future. As long as the authoritarian top-down language policy in Namibia is maintained and implemented no substantial use of L1s in formal domains may be expected and these languages will continue to lose ground in public. It is likely that even informal language use will be affected. The L1s, which are already minority languages in functional terms, will probably turn into marginalised languages within one generation, for, judging from the current linguistic reality, the younger generation is increasingly developing a negative attitude towards them. Nevertheless, for the time being at least, for a large portion of the Namibian population, English is still a foreign language.²¹

In terms of development most Namibians can only indirectly be addressed, as their lack of or inadequate competence in the official language makes active participation in the development dialogue impossible. In view of this fact there is a strong grassroots demand that the President, ministers and other government officials should address national issues in L1s, thus modifying the current language policy.

Cameroon

We move now to Cameroon where the situation is more complex than that in Namibia. With a population of 17,340,702 (CIA 2006), Cameroon is linguistically highly fragmented. There is still debate regarding the exact number of languages in the country : for example, Gordon (2005) lists 279 and Echu (2003) records 247, whilst other researchers have different totals. The languages spoken in the country belong to three of the four language phyla of Africa, i.e. the Afro-Asiatic, the Nilo-Saharan and the Niger-Congo phylum.²² There is no language in Cameroon which is spoken throughout the national territory, with the exception of the official language French, although the latter is a minority language in quantitative terms.

Some L1s function as languages of wider communication (LWC). The linguistic atlas of Cameroon (Dieu & Renaud 1983) identifies nine L1s as LWCs that are used at regional or provincial levels, as shown in Table 5.²³ Fulfulde, Ewondo and Pidgin English are widely spread, whereas Arabic, Hausa, Kanuri, Wandala and to some extent even Duala and Basaa are used as LWCs in more restricted contexts.

Table 5: Geographical distribution of languages of wider communication in Cameroon²⁴

	Region			
	North	Centre, South, East	Littoral	West
Languages	Fulfulde Shua Arabic Hausa Kanuri Wandala	Ewondo	Duala Basaa	Pidgin English

The most frequently used LWC is French, which is prominent in all the so-called 'Francophone' provinces²⁵ except the North (where Fulfulde is the lingua franca) and the two English-speaking provinces where Pidgin English is the LWC.

At independence in 1961 Cameroon opted for a bilingual policy in response to its colonial past.²⁶ A 'bilingual' policy meant a focus on the foreign languages, French and English, which were implanted in the country by the former foreign administration. At the same time, the existence of the L1s was simply ignored.

The choice of French-English bilingualism was perhaps considered rational at independence. However, an analysis of the current situation from a socio-economic, educational and ultimately democratic perspective shows that there are serious problems with regard to implementing the official language policy of Cameroon at the grassroots. This has at least been taken into account in the Constitution of Cameroon which stipulates :

The official languages of the Republic of Cameroon shall be English and French, both languages having the same status. The State shall guarantee the promotion of bilingualism throughout the country. It shall endeavour to protect and promote national languages.²⁷

In practice, English and French are used in all official domains (in the legislature, the executive/administration and the judiciary), in education and other formal contexts. Both written and oral communication is conducted primarily in French and English. For example, in the National Assembly, the members of parliament may use either official language, but the proceedings are mostly conducted in French, as most MPs are French speaking. There is, however, a system of simultaneous translation into and out of English.

Civil servants have to use either English or French in their communication with members of the public, even if they know the Cameroonian language spoken by their clients. Citizens not knowing the official languages normally come with an interpreter, a relative or another person to assist. Only at the municipal level is it possible to use and to be addressed in the L1s.

Widespread lack of proficiency in the languages used by the courts creates considerable problems. Only very rarely do defendants in court cases speak English or French. Thus, interpretation often has to take place in the courtroom. It is not unusual for a member of the public observing the court proceedings to take on the interpreting task on an *ad hoc* basis. In such circumstances, the accuracy of the interpreting is questionable and consequently the legal rights of the individual may be at risk. Furthermore, lawyers in Francophone provinces rarely speak English in spite of official bilingualism. As a result, even English speakers may find themselves at the same level of disadvantage as people who have no knowledge of either of the official languages.

In Cameroon French also plays a significant role in the media, in political activities, religious practice and in the tertiary sector.

French is the career language of employment in government and the civil service. French-speaking personnel continue to occupy the highest ranking positions in society. This fact has strongly influenced the attitudes of parents towards the official languages. Echu (2003), quoting Adegbija (2000), says that parents want their children to be introduced to the official languages as early as possible, as proficiency in the two official languages, especially French, is a prerequisite for social or economic development and individual advancement. Inevitably, the rural population are excluded from such opportunities for advancement.

It is a well known fact that, *de facto*, French is more popular than English despite the *de jure* equality of the two languages, as there are no incentives for Francophones to learn English. They can get jobs as civil servants without being bilingual whereas Anglophones have to learn French because of the latter's dominant status (Chumbow 1980:298, 301, Echu 2003:9).

French has gradually become the LWC through widespread learning of the language by Cameroonians in the post-independence period. French is now the supra-ethnic

medium of communication between Anglophones and Francophones, between speakers of Fulfulde and Francophones who do not speak Fulfulde, and among Francophones who do not share a common Cameroonian language (Echu 2003).

The law pledges to provide education in English or French. English is the MoI in the two Western provinces and French in the remaining eight, from first grade through to the end of secondary school. The second official language is introduced as a subject in grade 6. Teachers are obliged to use the MoI in classroom interaction with learners, whilst learners are not allowed to speak to teachers in their L1. Even so, general competence in the two official languages, French and English, remains poor since the average duration of adults' previous participation in schooling in Cameroon is only 3.5 years.²⁸

Before independence, German and American missionaries preferred L1s such as Basaa, Bulu, Duala, Ewondo and Mungaka for evangelisation and teaching. Bamum and Fulfulde were used for propagating Islam.

Since independence, however, the L1s have been restricted to informal domains and they are used mainly at home. Their use in some private schools before 1960, despite the official French assimilation policy, disappeared almost totally after independence.

In school the L1s are banned, even though the Law on Education passed by the National Assembly in April 1998 sets out the guidelines for education in Cameroon. This document states that one of the objectives of education is to 'promote national languages' (République du Cameroun 1998: Part 1, General Provisions, Section 5, Article 4). However, the central section of the Law deals with the organisation of bilingual education through English-speaking and French-speaking sub-systems, thus 'reaffirming the national option for biculturalism' (Chapter 1, Section 15, Article 1).²⁹

The constitution of 1996 and the education legislation of 1998 were not supported by follow-up documents until January 2002, when a decree on the structure of the Ministry of Education was issued. This decree directs the Provincial Education Departments to be responsible for the L1s.

The education system, which provides just a rudimentary knowledge of the official languages, if any, is obviously limiting communication, co-operation and subsequently economic development for the masses. The L1s, which are used by the vast majority of the population, are not taught in government schools. Nor is there any role for these languages in public life. They are confined to the private sphere, disempowered and marginalised. Their low status also affects language development, thus diminishing any chance for them to be introduced into new domains which are important for socio-economic advancement.

The L1s are used to communicate the chores of everyday life. They also represent the nation's cultural heritage. Currently, far-reaching changes in the use of the L1s in informal domains are taking place mainly in urban areas, where according to Bitjaa Kody (2001) these languages are losing ground to the official languages. Thus, the use of Ewondo and Duala as LWC in the central province is decreasing whilst French is expanding. Longitudinal studies of language usage twenty years ago and today have shown that in urban areas competence in LWC as well as L1 is eroding. The

L1s are disappearing from family life within endogamic households in the capital Yaoundé. For example, Francophone adults use French at home in 42% of situations, whereas the young generation (10-17 years old) use French in 70% of situations. In addition 32% of the young generation interviewed in Yaoundé did not know any national language and had only French as their medium of communication. Should this trend persist there will be even fewer L1 speakers in future. This will also negatively affect inter-generational language transmission.

There is now a tendency towards decentralisation of both responsibility and implementation, as some laws (e.g. République du Cameroun 1998) make provincial institutions responsible for designing practical steps with regard to L1s and subsequently monitoring them. Whether or not this strategy will be successful is hard to say. In the eight years since the Education Law came into force, however, no changes seem to have taken place.

L1s have been taught in Cameroon in some private schools for more than 30 years. Since 1981 the L1 initiatives have been incorporated in the Yaoundé university based PROPELCA (Projet de recherche operationelle pour l'enseignement des langues au Cameroun) headed by Maurice Tadadjeu. The objective of PROPELCA is to promote L1s through teaching them at the primary school level. A bilingual curriculum including L1 and the first official language (OL1) is advocated. Following the PROPELCA approach, children learn to read and write in their L1 from grades 1 to 3, with a progressive transition from oral practice and mechanical writing to mathematics and other subjects. The proposed allocation of time for bilingual teaching is shown in Table 6.

Table 6 : Proposed allocation of time for L1 and OL1 in primary school (%)³⁰

Class	L1	OL1
1	75%	25%
2	60%	40%
3	40%	60%
4 – 7	15%	85%

Tadadjeu (1995) advocates a trilingual approach, i.e. to master the mother tongue, both orally and in writing, along with OL1, depending on the province in which the pupil lives, and finally the other official language or a LWC.

The PROPELCA programme now includes 30 languages, involving 35,000 children.³¹ Table 7 shows the L1s used both as MoI and as a subject.

Table 7 : Number of pupils and schools involved in PROPELCA 2000-2001³²

Provinces	Languages	L1 as MoI ^a	L1 as subject
8	30	97 schools 9,329 pupils	203 schools 24,791 pupils

a Reading, writing and numeracy

In a nutshell, the language policy of Cameroon has changed slightly during the last decade towards a more overt and supportive approach regarding the L1s. However, both status and corpus planning are still absent, even if the L1s are included in the new constitution, some laws and decrees. The *de jure* approach favours bilingualism

with recognition of L1s whereas *de facto* a linguistic assimilation with French as the dominant language is promoted. As a result, French is more prominent than English in all formal, in particular official, domains as well as in informal contexts.

Clearly, it is not easy to develop and implement a language policy in a country with almost 300 languages. Nonetheless, the work of PROPELCA shows a possible practical way of implementing a language policy which not only formally acknowledges the existence of L1s but also assigns them their rightful place in society. In particular the country-wide introduction of L1s in education would be a big step forward for development in Cameroon. Any initiative must however be accompanied by appropriate corpus planning.

The two preceding sections have dealt with countries where (a) foreign language(s) as minority languages in quantitative terms are promoted whereas the languages spoken by the masses play a subordinate role in society. The third case study, from Sudan, illustrates a situation where the language of the majority enjoys official support and promotion, although at the expense of L1s including English.

Sudan

Similar to Cameroon, the Republic of Sudan is known for its outstanding ethno-linguistic diversity. Well over a hundred different languages are spoken; amongst these, Arabic is the language with the highest number of MT speakers. Arabic is also the LWC of at least 80% of the Sudanese population (Abu-Bakr & Abu-Manga 1997:3). In this capacity Arabic is the vehicle for professional, economic and social integration and success in Sudanese society. As early as 1949, during British colonial rule, Arabic was given the status of being the country's only official language. This privileged status of Arabic was reconfirmed after Independence in 1956 although, in the South, English was granted special status as the 'principal language'.

The Constitution of the Republic of Sudan 'permits the development of local languages' (Republic of Sudan 1998: Part I, Article 3) and states that 'Sudanese citizens have the right to keep their particular culture, language or religion' (Part II, Article 27). However, the lack of linguistic research and L1 corpus development (for example, orthographic standardisation) has made the implementation of these clauses difficult. Besides that, it seems that the political will to promote L1s is missing. Furthermore, according to the Sudanese Minister of Education (interviewed by Fatima Idris in 2001), the demand among non-Arabic speaking groups for education in L1 was not very strong. However, the survey of 2002-2003 referred to below demonstrates that L1 education, especially among the southern Sudanese, is in fact high on the language policy agenda.

The question of an official role for the other Sudanese languages alongside Arabic in formal domains such as administration and education has been a critical issue for many decades. It has been most acute in southern Sudan, where conflicting views on the status of English, Arabic, and the L1s (here defined as any Sudanese language other than Arabic) have been a factor contributing to the civil war which has been waged since 1956. This war, together with other conflicts and natural disasters such as drought and desertification, has led to massive migrations to urban centres in

northern Sudan. There many migrants (refugees) have learnt Arabic, since it is the predominant LWC in multilingual contexts. Indeed a large percentage of migrants' children born in Khartoum and other northern Sudanese urban centres acquire Arabic as their mother tongue (Miller & Abu-Manga 1992).

The following part of this section gives an account of the Sudanese language policy since the 1970s, its achievements and constraints and the influence of the Sudanese authorities on its implementation.

In the 1970s, the Sudanese government made an attempt to recognise the multi-faceted linguistic heritage of the country by selecting southern L1s as MoI in the first two years of primary school in the South. However, southern Sudanese parents objected to the use of these languages in school by arguing that their children would be disadvantaged if they had to compete with Arabic-speaking students in higher education and in the job market. Another complaint at that time concerned the low quality of Arabic language teaching, which also put the southerners at a disadvantage in competition with the northerners. Moreover, in those years, there were also comments about falling standards of English language teaching (and consequently competence) in schools countrywide (Abu Bakr 1975:16).

In the 1990s Arabic became the sole MoI in all northern and most southern government schools in Sudan. Resolution no. 27 concerning cultural diversity, approved at the 1989 National Dialogue Conference (Abu-Bakr & Abu-Manga 1997:7-8), recommended the use of the L1 in education, but this has not been implemented so far. Similarly, the 1997 law on language planning, which aimed to protect cultural and linguistic diversity, has had no practical impact whatsoever.

During the 1990s the government established a Higher Council for Arabicisation. At universities Arabicisation units were created to conduct linguistic research, or to translate and to publish teaching material for tertiary education (Abu-Bakr & Abu-Manga 1997:8). This Arabicisation policy has given rise to feelings of support and hostility in equal measure. The Arabic activists argue that Arabic is the language of the people and that, given the low level of proficiency in English, only the use of Arabic at the universities offers an acceptable alternative. Another argument used in favour of the Arabicisation units is that they help students from the south to catch up (in Arabic language competence) with their northern counterparts.

On the other hand, critics are of the opinion that the use of Arabic discriminates against those southerners who were educated through the medium of English. They see this as just another way of disadvantaging the people of the south. In addition, academics complain that there are insufficient funds for the purchase of books or other teaching material in Arabic or for translating works into Arabic.

The peace agreement of 2004 between the Sudanese government and the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) and its political wing the Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) states that 'Arabic and English are official languages, and all the indigenous languages are national languages which shall be respected, developed and promoted' (Sudan Tribune 2004:28). The development and promotion of the L1s shall be conducted by :

a) enactment of a founding law and

b) establishment of a council for the development and promotion of L1s.

For the first time since Independence, English is identified here as an official language. Furthermore, for the first time ever, the L1s are recognised as ‘national languages’. If implemented, this peace agreement opens the way for a profound change of language policy in Sudan in future.

A sociolinguistic survey, involving more than 1,400 respondents, was conducted in 2002 in Nyala (among speakers of Darfurian languages) and in 2003 in Khartoum (among speakers of southern Sudanese languages).³³ The survey’s findings showed that the respondents claimed to have positive attitudes towards all three languages (Arabic, English and their original L1) :

- a. The L1 is the symbol of ethnic identity and is used for intra-ethnic communication;
- b. Arabic is the national language and is used for communication between Sudanese who do not share the same L1,
- c. English is important as an international language; it facilitates contact with foreigners.

Respondents claimed to speak Arabic mainly for instrumental and pragmatic reasons, such as in formal domains, at the workplace, in education, and so on. The interviewees identified Arabic as the national language and as a useful and important language. All respondents also claimed that they liked to maintain their L1 for integrative or ideological/symbolic reasons as part of their heritage and as a cultural symbol.

In the long run, pragmatic factors such as economic benefits and education are probably more decisive than ideological reasons for language maintenance or shift. As so many L1 speakers have migrated to Arabic dominated areas, quite a number of these L1s are endangered, since they are being used less and less. As a consequence, the linguistic diversity of Sudan is threatened.

Furthermore, the move towards an increasing (sometimes enforced) use of Arabic in Sudan among speakers of other L1s is supported by the official language policy. It is obvious that the government is promoting Arabic as a means for national integration and social cohesion in this culturally and linguistically diverse country.

The main achievement of the Sudanese language policy is the country-wide use of Arabic. The Sudanese government, supported by various socio-economic developments, has succeeded in making Arabic the national language, in so far as it is the most widely used language in which Sudanese people are really highly competent in all domains. Of particular importance is the use of Arabic as the language of higher education; Sudan is the only country in the Arab world to adopt such a policy, apart from Syria.

However, a major disadvantage of the Sudanese language policy is the failure to allocate any meaningful roles to the L1s. The L1s in northern Sudan, in particular, have been totally neglected. Many Sudanese citizens have no access to L1 medium education. Moreover, the decline in English language competence is another negative effect of the current language policy.³⁴

The debate on language issues in Sudan has been highly politicised and very sensitive since colonial times. Language policy was part of the ideological struggle between, on the one hand, the British colonialists who advocated English and a (limited) use of the L1s, and, on the other hand, the Sudanese nationalists who advocated Arabic as a unifying language for the new nation. After 1956, this legacy contributed to perceptions that the promotion of the L1s and English had connotations of perpetuating British 'divide-and-rule' tactics. In the same way, the widespread use of Arabic is seen by some as an imposition of northern Sudanese cultural and religious values and concepts on other groups of the population. This unfortunate polarisation has severely hampered the search for a solution to the language problems in Sudan. We can but hope that the new peace agreement will contribute to finding a just and practicable way forward.

Conclusion

Initially, four questions were asked. These pertained to language and development with reference to Namibia, but were also of wider importance. From the perspective of Namibia and the two other African countries examined here, these questions can be partly answered within the limited scope of this chapter as follows.

Non-African languages (English and French) play a particular role in Namibia and Cameroon. These languages are *de jure* identified as the media of formal communication especially in official domains that are directly controlled by the State. Whenever development issues are addressed by official institutions, English or French is used. As such, only a small percentage of the population (those who have had a chance to learn the official language or languages) can be reached and directly involved. The vast majority - particularly in the countryside - are excluded from verbal or written participation in any development process or dialogue for lack of proficiency in the official language. This is regrettable, since development is especially urgently required in rural areas.

The situation in Sudan is quite different. The selection of Arabic as the national and official language means that large parts of the Sudanese population can be addressed directly and can participate in a dialogue with government (provided such a dialogue takes place).

In contrast, the L1s in all three countries share a similar low status. Although these languages are spoken by the vast majority of the population in Namibia and Cameroon and by large parts of the rural population in Sudan they are legally excluded from official domains. Only in some formal domains, such as the lower primary phase of education, religion and the media, do these L1s have any public function. In effect, those sectors of the population who are most urgently in need of socio-economic advancement are reduced to silent objects of development who have no say regarding their future.

A more flexible official approach is needed which takes into consideration the rich linguistic heritage of these three countries (and other nations in Africa). Such an approach would have an immensely positive effect on national development, since it

would enable all members of the population, without discrimination, to participate in development processes.

Notes

¹ This chapter is a completely revised version of a paper which was read at the 7th International Language and Development Conference, Addis Ababa, 26-28 October 2005. Karsten Legère is the author of the introductory section and the Namibian case study, Tove Rosendal deals with Cameroon, and Hélène Fatima Idris has written the Sudan section.

² For this and other linguistic terms see Brann (1994).

³ Quotations are from Amupadhi (2003:5).

⁴ For this term and its definition supplemented by short examples see Legère (1996:71-72) or Legère (2002:17).

⁵ Article 3(1) states 'The official language of Namibia shall be English' (Republic of Namibia 1998:3).

⁶ For example, for the second-tier government of Kavango (now the Kavango Region), Proclamation R.115 stipulated : '32. The Kwangali language shall be recognised as an official language of Kavango ... 33. (1) All Votes and Proceedings of the Legislative Council shall be recorded, and all its order papers kept in Kwangali, English and Afrikaans ...' (Republic of South Africa 1973).

⁷ So far national language protagonists have paid little attention to Article 3(3) which states : 'Nothing contained in Sub-Article (1) hereof shall preclude legislation by Parliament which permits the use of a language other than English for legislative, administrative and judicial purposes in regions or areas where such other language or languages are spoken by a substantial component of the population' (Republic of Namibia 1998:3).

⁸ Republic of Namibia (1994).

⁹ Prior to 1990 English was apologetically called the 'language of liberation' whilst Afrikaans was decried as the 'language of oppression'. This dichotomy ignored the fact that Afrikaans was the mother tongue not only of the South African oppressors and their stooges, but also of the coloured people who were certainly not pillars of the Apartheid system in the country.

¹⁰ This is an updated and expanded version of a table published in Legère (1996).

¹¹ These figures are from 2001 (Republic of Namibia 2002), the most recent education statistics available.

¹² As suggested by UNESCO (2003).

¹³ Discussed in Legère (2001).

¹⁴ This was the Namibian partners' opinion expressed throughout the period (from 1994 to 2000) when the author of this section was responsible for an African languages project in Namibia on behalf of the German Foundation for International Development (DSE, now Inwent) in cooperation with the National Institute for Educational Development (NIED).

¹⁵ A panel discussant in the television programme 'Talk of the Nation' which inspired Philander's article blamed foreign advisers who '... particularly overlooked the language factor that still has a profound bearing and influence on teachers, learners and parents' (Philander 2005:4). It is particularly worrying that many secondary students do not understand the subject matter when it is taught in English. For this reason, most teaching in schools takes place in a mixture of languages, with a preponderance of whichever L1 children are familiar with (or Afrikaans), on the one hand, and a relatively small admixture of English, on the other hand.

¹⁶ See Wedin (2004) who describes a similar situation in Tanzania. For a definition of ‘safe talk’ see Chick 1996.

¹⁷ Observed during a language survey in the lower primary education system conducted in 1999/2000. For details see Legère, Trewby & Van Graan (2003).

¹⁸ This is an updated version of a table appearing in Legère (2001).

¹⁹ This phenomenon was vehemently criticised in a letter published in the Ambo/English journal *Otweya* (Braziel 2005).

²⁰ National language programmes start after 07:00 and continue with interruptions until 21:00.

²¹ Described by Cluver (1993) as Namibians being linguistic foreigners in their own country.

²² The term Niger-Kordofanian is the term widely used in linguistic references and other sources in Cameroon referring to the phylum which today is often labelled Niger-Congo.

²³ The autonym *fulfulde* was chosen here referring to the language that is occasionally called *fulani* or *fula* in English publications (the latter actually being ethnonyms).

²⁴ Source: Molina (2001), based on Dieu & Renaud (1983). Essono (2001) writes that Gomálá, Fe’fe’ and Mungaka are also LWCs in the Western part of the country.

²⁵ The country currently has ten administrative regions (provinces). English is the official language in two provinces (North West and South West provinces), and the remaining eight are ‘Francophone’.

²⁶ For the historical background see Chumbow (1980).

²⁷ République du Cameroun (1996:Part 1, Article 1(3)). Note that L1s are referred to as ‘national languages’.

²⁸ Source : NationMaster (www.nationmaster.com/country/cm-cameroon/edu-education), retrieved 27 October 2006

²⁹ African languages are clearly being ignored in this part of the text. If the Cameroonian languages had been kept in mind, then the terms ‘multiculturalism’ or ‘triculturalism’ would have been used.

³⁰ Source: Tadadjeu (1995)

³¹ According to a speech given by Maurice Tadadjeu on the international UNESCO Mother Tongue Day in Yaoundé, 21 February 2004.

³² Source: ANACLAC/NACALCO (2001)

³³ The survey was conducted by the author of this section in order to collect field survey data for her doctoral dissertation about the sociolinguistic situation in Sudan.

³⁴ Although students have to study English for four years at university and pass an English language examination in order to graduate.

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Chapter 4

Moving towards bilingual education in Africa

John Clegg

Introduction

I want to propose that in sub-Saharan Africa we need to stop teaching through European languages alone and introduce bilingual education, that is, learning through two languages throughout schooling.

I'm going to generalise, but there is academic evidence for most of what I will claim. I'll refer to English, but what I say applies to any European language used as a medium of instruction (MoI) in Africa. I'll use L1 as a shorthand for an African language in which the learner feels comfortable and I'll use L2 as a shorthand for English or any other European language used as a MoI.

This chapter makes points which are similar to those which I made in a paper presented to the Sixth Language in Development conference in Tashkent in 2003 (Clegg 2005). However, it adds to the Tashkent paper in two respects. Firstly it points out that education programmes which function in the learners' L2 tend to succeed only under certain circumstances, most of which are not given in sub-Saharan Africa (see the section 'What factors in school achievement can be linked to the language of learning?' below). Secondly, it draws attention to doubts about the value of 'early-exit' L1-medium education; that is to say, the short-term initial experience of learning in L1 which learners conventionally get in many African countries (see the section 'Does L1-medium education in the early years significantly raise school achievement?' below). This phase of schooling, which we often think of as crucially valuable to the African learner, now seems not to be beneficial enough to offset the drawbacks of education in a European language.

These are the questions I want to discuss :

- Can African learners get a satisfactory education in current L2-medium classrooms?
- What factors in school achievement can be linked to the language of learning?
- Do African classrooms fulfil the conditions which education in L2 requires?
- How should teachers teach subjects to learners who are not competent in the L2?
- Can education in L2 damage communities?
- Does L1-medium education in the early years significantly raise school achievement?
- What are the pros and cons of bilingual education?
- Do stakeholders in Africa know enough about the language of learning?
- What action should we take now to introduce bilingual education?

Can African learners get a satisfactory education in current L2-medium classrooms?

You can't learn if you don't understand lessons and you can't teach if you're not confident enough in the language of learning. Currently, in African classrooms :

- learners often have low L2 ability, especially in the language of learning (Brock-Utne & Alidou 2006; Heugh 1995, 1999, 2001, 2006)
- teachers are often not confident in the L2 (Mwinsheikhe 2002)
- learners often do little talking, reading and writing in the L2 (Alidou & Brock-Utne 2006).

There is evidence that levels of L2 ability for learning as well as for teaching are often too low to ensure that learners get an adequate education (Alidou & Brock-Utne 2006). Language is at the heart of school learning. If you can't use it for the purpose of learning, it becomes a barrier to, rather than a channel for education.

In addition, what learners are asked to do with language in many African classrooms is often not cognitively useful. For example :

- classroom discourse is often low in meaning; learners do a lot of repetition and memorisation (Alidou & Brock-Utne 2006)
- lessons are often cognitively unchallenging (Brock-Utne & Alidou 2006; Hornberger & Chick 2001; UNESCO 2005).

Thus learners are often engaging in activities of doubtful pedagogical benefit in a language which they do not know well enough.

What factors in school achievement can be linked to the language of learning?

In Africa :

- the numbers of children out of school are high (Bamgbose 2000)
- matriculation rates are low (UNESCO 2005)
- literacy rates are low (Bamgbose 2000; Williams 1996)
- dropout rates are high (Bamgbose 2000)
- levels of education at university entrance are low (Rollnick & Manyatsi 1997).

Evidence links these factors to education in a European language (Brock-Utne 2002; Harlech-Jones 2001; Williams & Cooke 2002). They do have other obvious causes (e.g. poverty, resourcing, etc) but unfortunately – because authorities do not, by and large, discuss the language medium question (Dutcher 2001) – we tend to overlook the linguistic causes.

Do African classrooms fulfil the conditions which education in L2 requires?

When we look at L2-medium education across the world, there is evidence that it flourishes under certain conditions. L2-medium education helps :

- if you come from an educated background (Brock-Utne 2002; Tollefson 1991). Many African learners don't.
- if you have good foundations in early L1 literacy (Cummins 2000; Thomas & Collier 2002). Many African learners, although they may learn through L1 in the

early years, may not have L1 foundations which are secure enough to enable them to learn successfully through L2 (Heugh 2006).

- if you have adequate exposure to the L2 (Cummins & Swain 1986). Many African learners – especially in rural, but also in urban areas – have low exposure (Trappes-Lomax 1990).
- if you already have a good level of L2 ability when you switch to learning subjects in L2. For many African learners the gap at this switch of medium - between their L2 language ability and the language they need to learn subjects - is very large and can increase (Macdonald 1990).
- if English language teachers teach the language you need to learn subjects (Cummins 2000). Most English teachers – in Africa or elsewhere – don't; they tend to teach grammar and general-purpose English.
- if subject teachers teach subjects using a specialist language-supportive pedagogy (Clegg 2001) which makes subject concepts accessible to learners who are still developing in the L2. (See also the section 'How should teachers teach subjects to learners who are not competent in the L2?' below.) Subject-teachers in Africa – as in other L2-medium contexts – normally don't (Clegg 1996, 2001).
- if textbooks are designed to be used by learners still developing in the L2; that means that they use techniques to make them highly comprehensible, especially visuals, readable texts and language supportive tasks (Peacock 1995). Often, African textbooks are not designed in such a way.
- if teacher-education makes the above issues central to the training of teachers. It normally doesn't; much of teacher-education in Africa is not orientated to training teachers to teach subjects in L2 (Alidou & Brock-Utne 2006; Heugh 2006).
- if resourcing is adequate. In Africa, often it isn't; textbook supply, furniture, class size etc are often poor.

These are crucial facts of life about education in a L2. However, for the most part, education authorities and aid agencies in Africa do not address these issues (see the section 'Do stakeholders in Africa know enough about the language of learning?' below). There is a remarkable absence of information or debate on these matters (Dutcher 2001). Since L2-medium education in Africa, as it is currently practised, does not fulfil most of these criteria for success, theoretical and practical experience would predict that it will not work effectively and it is unsurprising that its results are poor.

How should teachers teach subjects to learners who are not competent in the L2?

When teachers teach a subject in a L2, they need to use a pedagogy which is different from the one they use when working in L1. This pedagogy is designed to help learners understand the subject when their L2 ability is still developing (i.e. sometimes zero, often middling) and to use some L2 to express themselves on the subject. This is a specialist pedagogy (Clegg 2001) which needs to be specifically taught in teacher-education. It requires teachers to :

- talk in a super-comprehensible way (using, for example, signals of organisation, summary, example, explanation, repetition, code-switching into L1, etc)
- use a lot of visuals
- use tasks which explicitly support language development (Burkett et al. 2001)
- develop reading and writing abilities within the subject in the L2

- get learners to talk in groups, often in their L1
- teach learners to use the language of learning
- teach learners strategies for learning in a L2.

By and large, subject teachers in African teacher-education – as is the case in many other L2-medium education contexts across the world – are not trained to use this pedagogy (Clegg 1996).

Can education in L2 damage communities?

If we teach in L2, we run several risks. There is a danger that :

- we limit school achievement; there is a low ceiling on what learners can learn in a language in which they are not competent.
- we delay school achievement; learners working in L2 take several years to develop competence in the language of learning. For example, Cummins (2000) suggests that seven years are needed to develop this competence in North America..
- we reinforce unequal access to the curriculum; children who speak L2 better can get an education; those who speak it less well are held back.
- we reinforce power relations in society (Roy-Campbell 2001); middle class children thrive in education in L2, but children from families with low socio-economic status don't.
- we amplify the effects of poverty; children from poor families experience education in L2 as a greater barrier than children from rich families (Dutcher 2001).
- we break the bond between school and community; parents cannot easily involve themselves in their children's education if it is conducted in a language they may not speak well (Dutcher 2001).
- we downgrade the child's language and culture (Dutcher 2001); a language which is not used for education is an undervalued language.
- we inhibit school improvement initiatives; initiatives have less impact if language places a fundamental brake on school achievement.
- we commit resources where they cannot do much good; a lot of money spent on school improvement is wasted if there is a fundamental, unrecognised linguistic limit on quality.
- we distort data on educational performance. If we assess children in a second language it may not tell us what they know; furthermore, it may not tell us what they might know if they had been educated in their L1.
- we reduce the effectiveness of teacher-education; whatever teacher-educators train teachers to do, it will not be effective if learners don't understand lessons.
- we contribute to limiting the economic performance of a country (Alexander 2001a, 2001b); low school achievement is serious for the economy.

All these risks are real in current L2-medium education in Africa.

Does L1-medium education in the early years significantly raise school achievement?

In most countries in sub-Saharan Africa, children learn through their L1 in the early years and then (usually after three or four years) they switch medium to a European language. It is widely considered that this has the following advantages :

- It provides a connection to their community and culture (Brock-Utne & Alidou 2006).
- It provides cognitive and literacy foundations for education as a whole.
- It is an essential foundation for education in a L2 (Thomas & Collier 2002) (but especially for children with low socio-economic status (SES), for whom it has an important compensatory value).
- It is an essential foundation for second language learning.

However, early years education in L1, without continuing L1-medium education in cognitively demanding subjects, is unlikely to raise school achievement overall. Indeed 'early-exit' L1-medium education (e.g. after four years) is now considered by many specialists to be insufficiently effective in terms of academic achievement compared to late-exit models or continuous bilingual education (Dutcher & Tucker 1996; Ramirez et al 1991). Some commentators believe that this is particularly true of African education (Heugh 2006), where six years of L1-medium education are thought to be the minimum needed for L2-medium education to be effective.

Two concepts are useful here. One is CALP (Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency; see Cummins 2000). This is a contested term, but it serves to point up the fact that school makes particular language demands on learners : they need to use a special variety of language for learning purposes. This includes reading school texts, planning and writing academic texts, listening to teachers and taking notes, conducting effective groupwork, using charts and graphs, writing examination responses, etc.

The second useful concept is 'transfer'. CALP can transfer from one language to another (Cummins 1984) : key elements of these skills are not specific to languages. But this happens only under certain conditions. Firstly, the skills must be well enough taught in the L1. Secondly, this teaching must continue for a long enough time for L1 CALP to establish firm foundations (Rubagumya 2003).

In addition, Cummins (2000) claims that effective bilingual education requires teachers to give extra emphasis to CALP in both L1-medium and L2-medium parts of a bilingual education. In other words, learners need to be encouraged to develop CALP in L2. In L2-medium learning, learners cannot do without being shown explicitly how to do use learning skills in the L2. This means that English language teaching – throughout schooling, but especially in the early years before the switch of medium – needs to focus on this variety of language. Very often, early years L2 lessons in African classrooms are not intended to do this; instead, they are intended to teach general-purpose, rather than academic-purpose English.

So the current model of early-onset L2-medium education may not be effective. It may not be long enough and it may not focus sufficiently on academic learning skills either in L1 or L2.

What are the pros and cons of bilingual education?

If we think of what bilingual education in Africa might look like, ideally, we would most likely envisage :

- early years education in L1
- continuing education with the curriculum divided between two languages.

The benefits which are commonly claimed for bilingual education are that it can :

- increase school achievement generally by enabling learners to learn partly in L1 (Alidou & Brock-Utne 2006)
- increase learners' ability to develop CALP skills in both L1 and L2
- increase English-medium achievement; learning skills gained in L1 can transfer better to English-medium education in a bilingual education system than they can in the current model of early-years L1-medium learning followed by L2-medium education (partly because these learning skills have longer to develop in L1 and partly because learners develop them concurrently in both L1 and L2)
- increase the status of African languages (Wolff 2006)
- maintain children's language and culture (Dutcher 2001)
- maintain a link with the community (Dutcher 2001).

On the other hand, the problems which are often quoted in relation to bilingual education in Africa include the following :

- Publishing textbooks will be expensive
- African languages cannot express school concepts
- Parents may not accept it.

There is undoubtedly a cost to bilingual school publishing (Diallo 2006), but it is lower than normally expected and certainly lower than the overall cost to the economy of ineffective L2-medium education (Heugh 2006; Heugh & Siegrühn 1995). Bilingual publishing is also practically less difficult than is often imagined. In fact, early years multilingual publishing is practised in contexts in which many languages are used (e.g. Papua New Guinea; see Siegel 1997).

African languages do indeed need to be developed in order to express academic concepts, but the processes by which such language development is achieved are already well-known (Heugh & Siegrühn 1995; Mwansoko 1990; Wolff 2006). It is mainly political will which is required to put them into practice.

It is also true that many parents may be wary of education in two languages (Wolff 2006). They may feel that bilingual education marginalises English. In fact – as outlined above – the opposite is the case. Current L2-medium education limits school English language use whilst bilingual education promotes it. But this is a paradox; it is not easily understood by government and may be even less accepted by parents. What is needed is a campaign of public information to educate parents about the value of bilingual education. In addition, it is important to pilot bilingual education (see the section 'What action should we take now to introduce bilingual education?' below) so that parents are able to appreciate its value.

Do stakeholders in Africa know enough about the language of learning?

Stakeholders in African education – especially governments and educational development agencies – need to be informed about the pros and cons of the choice of medium of instruction.

They need to know in particular about :

- the value of bilingual education (see the section ‘What are the pros and cons of bilingual education?’ above)
- the conditions of success for education in L2 (see the section ‘Do African classrooms fulfil the conditions which education in L2 requires?’ above)
- the relation between English-medium education and SES (again, see the section ‘Do African classrooms fulfil the conditions which education in L2 requires?’)
- the potential damage to communities of education in L2 (see the section ‘Can education in L2 damage communities?’ above)
- an effective pedagogy in L2-medium education (see the section ‘How should teachers teach subjects to learners who are not competent in the L2?’ above)
- the importance of early years education in L1 (see the section ‘Does L1-medium education in the early years significantly raise school achievement’ above)
- the ineffectiveness of a short period of early years education in L1 (again, see the section ‘Does L1-medium education in the early years significantly raise school achievement’).

In Africa (and indeed elsewhere) governments and other key institutions in the education service tend to be ill-informed about the role of language in learning and about the choice of language medium (Dutcher 2001; Wolff 2006). This lack of knowledge is especially marked :

- amongst governments (Dutcher 2001)
- in teacher education (Heugh 2006)
- amongst parents (Wolff 2006).

Recently, knowledge of these matters has been on the increase:

- amongst development agencies such as UNESCO (see UNESCO 2005, 2006)
- in higher education in Africa – for example at the University of Cape Town (e.g. Beckett 2001)
- amongst relevant NGOs: The Association for the Development of Education in Africa, for example, has contributed powerfully (e.g. Alidou et al 2006)

However, the lack of knowledge about language of learning amongst governments, parents and teacher educators is still a major barrier to increasing school achievement in Africa.

What action should we take now to introduce bilingual education?

We need to plan now for bilingual education in the longer term. This means :

- starting to plan African languages so that they are available as media of school learning
- informing the public about the importance of language choice in education
- educating teachers about language choice in education, about the value of bilingual education and about how to teach subjects in L2

- designing bilingual curricula
- expanding textbook publishing in L1 and establishing in L2-medium publishing the principle of comprehensibility to L2 users.

We need also to show that bilingual education can work. This means starting now to pilot small-scale bilingual education projects (Dutcher 2001). A pilot would involve :

- choosing two or three sample schools
- establishing a consensus within those schools of the nature and intended value of the pilot
- supporting the teachers in those schools in the devising of a bilingual curriculum, the development of L1-medium materials, the assessment of knowledge in two languages, and so on
- monitoring the project over time.

Education in European languages is not working in Africa and we need to recognise it. It is no longer legitimate to avoid the debate on the language of learning. Bilingual education can raise school achievement and we need to move urgently towards it now.

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Chapter 5

The impact of learning with the mother tongue on academic achievement : A case study of Grade 8 students in Ethiopia

Teshome Nekatibeb

Background

Learning with mother tongues other than Amharic is a relatively new phenomenon in Ethiopia. It dates back to the early 1990s when the Transitional Government of Ethiopia (TGE) issued an interim education and language policy. The TGE administered the country on the basis of a transitional charter which recognised the rights of peoples, nations and nationalities to self-determination, their rights to defend and develop their culture and history as well as nurture their languages. In 1992, the TGE introduced new measures concerning primary education in ethno-national languages. Among the languages, the policy stipulated that the Afan Oromo, Walayita, Sidama and Tigrinya languages would be used as media of instruction from the 1991-1992 school year. In addition, Arabic was recommended for use in the region of Benishangul.

In 1994, the TGE issued the Ethiopian Education and Training Policy (ETP). This policy was based on the principle that all nations and nationalities have the right to be educated in their own language and to preserve their culture. The policy also recognises the pedagogical advantage for the child if education is given in the mother tongue. The ETP again confirmed that several languages with the largest numbers of speakers would be used directly as media of instruction in primary education whilst minority languages would be gradually introduced into the school system. Until such a stage is reached, minority groups are using the language of their choice from among those selected on the basis of national and countryside distribution. According to this policy, Amharic was to be taught as the language of countryside communication while English was designated as the medium of instruction for secondary and higher education. Students were expected to choose and learn at least one 'nationality' language and one foreign language for cultural and international relations.

A constitution which resulted in the replacement of the Transitional Government of Ethiopia by a Federal Government was ratified later in 1994. This constitution states, in Article 5, that Amharic shall be the official language of the Federal Government. In Articles 2 and 3, it also states that all Ethiopian languages shall enjoy equal state recognition, and that each member state of the Federation shall determine its own respective official language or languages. Apart from these broad constitutional provisions, the new constitution gives no direction with reference to the language of education. By default, thus, the ETP was accepted as the major guide to policy in education and the use of languages in education.

The use of Amharic as the language of instruction actually goes as far back as Proclamation 149 of 1955, Article 125 of the revised imperial constitution of Ethiopia. According to Hameso (1997), this proclamation declared Amharic to be the only official language of the whole country, although in fact there are as many as 84

languages in the nation (Gordon 2005). The current approach differs from the 1955 proclamation in that it recognises other Ethiopian languages as media of instruction. So far, seventeen languages are being used as media of instruction in primary schools (Haile Selassie 2005) and the possible use of minority languages is being debated in many other regions. Despite these developments, however, very little is known as to the implementation and effectiveness of learning with the mother tongue.

Scope of this study

The Ethiopian Second National Learning Assessment (ESNLA), conducted in 2003-2004, has provided a unique opportunity to explore the impact of learning with the mother tongue on academic success at the two terminal points of primary education. The first of these points is Grade 4, the last year of the first cycle of primary education, and the second is Grade 8, at the end of the second cycle. The ESNLA was funded by USAID and jointly carried out by the National Organisation for Examinations (NOE) and the Academy for Educational Development/Basic Education Strategic Objective II Project (AED/BESO II). Its primary aim was to provide information about students' learning attainment and the factors that determine those attainments in Ethiopian primary education. Learning achievement was measured by standardised tests, and these tests were administered in those regions which were using either the mother tongue or the non-mother tongue (English) as medium of instruction in upper primary education.

The purpose of the study reported here is to use data from the ESNLA to analyse the impact of learning with the mother tongue on the academic achievement of Grade 8 pupils in Ethiopia. It compares the learning attainments of pupils who studied Biology, Chemistry, Physics and Mathematics through the medium of their mother tongues with those who studied the same subjects through the medium of a language which was not their mother tongue. A further purpose of the study is to examine the extent to which learning in the mother tongue enhances the learning of English.

Estimations indicate that there are between three and nine thousand living languages in the world (Mackey 1984). The number of sovereign nations is approximately two hundred. It is clear, therefore, that the world as a whole and most individual nation states are multilingual. Although, as observed earlier, more than 80 languages are spoken in Ethiopia, this study focuses on just four of them: Amharic, Afan Oromo, Tigrinya and Somali. The main reason for selecting these four languages is that they are spoken by an absolute majority of the population.

Why is it necessary to examine these issues? An argument which is sometimes used for not using multiple languages in education in Ethiopia is that to promote several languages would hinder national unity. As noted above, there is also a lack of information concerning the effectiveness of learning with the mother tongue in enhancing student academic achievement. This study is significant, then, because it provides such information to parents and policy makers. In turn, this will assist stakeholders to make appropriate decisions about students' learning through the medium of the mother tongue in primary education.

The mother tongue and mother-tongue education

Following Szepe (1984) and Pattanayak (2003), the term ‘mother tongue’ is used here to refer to the first language that a child acquires. According to Hoius (1976), in practice there are five different patterns of mother tongue use in education :

- the medium of instruction at all levels of education
- used up to a certain level of schooling and then replaced by another language
- used in the teaching of certain subjects while a non-mother tongue is used for other subjects
- taught as a subject but not used as a medium of instruction
- completely excluded from the education system.

In Sub-Saharan Africa, according to Ouane (2003), there are between 1,250 and 2,100 languages. However, school children in this region very rarely have chances to receive their education in the mother tongue. Kuper (2003) reports that in 22 out of 39 African countries primary education still uses one of the colonial languages. Only three countries – Ethiopia, Eritrea and Tanzania - employ the mother tongue for the whole duration of primary education.

A similar situation is found in Latin America, where Spanish is used almost everywhere as the language of education, even in those countries where there is quite a large Indian population. In Peru, for example, Quechua and Aymara have obtained the status of co-official languages alongside Spanish, but their use is subject to quite specific restrictions (Corvalán 1984).

In contrast, in many developed countries, the use of different languages as media of instruction is widely accepted. In the United States, for example, Rotberg (1984) records that the first bilingual education act which urged that the native tongue should be used until children were proficient in English was enacted in 1968. In Spain, although Spanish is the official language of the state, a constitution which encouraged the use of diverse languages for the purpose of instruction was issued in 1978 (Siguan 1984). Switzerland has for many years had trilingualism, with French, German and Italian as official languages.

There are several different arguments for providing primary education in the mother tongue. These are summarised by Kuper (2003) in the following categories :

- pedagogical appropriateness
- cost effectiveness
- children’s right to be taught in their own language
- development of self-identity
- the contribution of learning in the mother tongue to improved relations between political leaders and the population at large.

Laforge (1987) offers a more comprehensive summary of the arguments in favour of using the mother tongue in education. These are summarised in Table 1.

Table 1 : Arguments in favour of mother tongue education (based on Laforge 1987)

Perspective	Rationale
Educational	Use of mother tongue guarantees child's emotional and psychomotor development. It sets free child's expressive potential. It offers opportunity for child to verbalise all his/her experience.
Teaching/didactic	Use of mother tongue enables classroom effort to be concentrated on learning of content. Use of foreign language requires effort to be expended first on learning medium of instruction and only then on learning content.
Psychological	Whatever is first learned through medium of mother tongue must be followed up in same language in order to avoid interference and confusion due to too sudden a break between two different forms of expression.
Social and family	Use of mother tongue at school enables family and community to continue educational effort already undertaken at home. They can play a part in child's education by ensuring traditional values are taken into account at school.
Cultural	Mother tongue is foundation of personality of the individual and the nation. Denying mother tongue is to deny oneself.
Economic	Mother tongue brings education within reach of more children by reducing numbers a) who repeat classes (which is expensive), and b) who fail at school because of having to learn non-mother tongue with difficulty at an early age.

There is ample evidence from both developed and developing countries that learning with the mother tongue is effective. For instance, Hutchison (1998) reviewed various studies from the United States on the achievement of children in bilingual and multilingual conditions. The general conclusions were that learning with the mother tongue is effective for guaranteeing optimal transmission of social and cultural values, enhancing second language acquisition, and developing higher academic proficiency, higher decontextualised knowledge and higher problem solving capacity.

Kuper (2003) describes research on the effects of bilingual education in Peru and Ecuador. In Ecuador, he reports that, in all subjects and practically all classes, bilingual project schools achieved better average results than schools outside the project where the mother tongue was not in use. Similar results were obtained in bilingual schools in Peru.

In Madagascar, Komarek (1997) shows that a year after the introduction of textbooks and teaching manuals for elementary reading and writing classes in the mother tongue, Malagasy, in twenty experimental schools, first year pupils achieved a 15% lead over pupils in twenty non-project schools. Nigeria has also experimented with the use of the mother tongue in primary education. According to Bamgbose (1984), pupils who studied through the medium of Yoruba in a six year primary education project performed well in comparison with pupils in control schools.

Of course, it has to be acknowledged that various factors both external and internal to schools have influences on student achievement in addition to the language of instruction. Among the external factors, the importance of student home background

and personal and community characteristics is widely acknowledged. With reference to student home background, parental socio-economic status (SES), family configuration and parental support are known to correlate with student achievement (see Chen 1996).

Student personal characteristics including gender (Parelius & Parelius 1987), television viewing (Comstock 1994), leisure or voluntary reading, and the amount of time spent on homework are associated with student achievement (Chen 1996).

Community factors that are related to student achievement include geographical location (urban, suburban, rural), community resources, parental and community involvement in schools and community values. In developing countries, demand for child labour and the opportunity costs of attending school also make a significant impact on academic achievement (Stockard & Mayberry 1992; Chen 1996).

Internal school factors also impact on academic achievement. Stockard and Mayberry (1992) discuss these factors under two generic divisions: school and classroom environment and school resources. Under the heading of environment come school climate, academic expectations and excellence, school leadership, orderliness and school coherence, teacher and student morale, and effective teaching. School resources comprise school facilities and per-pupil expenditures, teacher qualifications, classroom size, and school size. Fuller (1986) analyses these factors under the generic concept of school quality. This construct comprises material inputs, teacher quality, teaching practices and classroom organisation, school management and structure.

Methodology

This study is a comparative survey with cross sectional perspectives. It is a survey because it is a nationwide assessment based on studying samples of all Grade 8 students in Ethiopia. It is comparative because it relates the academic achievements of a sample of Grade 8 students who were exposed to different treatments as far as the language of instruction is concerned (mother tongue and non-mother tongue). This study is cross sectional since it captures contemporary events related to the influence of studying through the mother tongue on student academic achievement. The fact that the study focuses on analysing student achievement in Grade 8 makes it also a case study. After indicating the existence of different definitions of case studies, Merriam (1998) notes that a case is a single entity, a unit around which there are boundaries. In this sense, she argues that a case could be a student, a teacher, a principal, a programme, a group such as a class, a school, a community, and so on. Patton (1987) also supports this approach when he says that a case can be a person, an event, a programme, a time period and so on.

Since this study is a part of the Ethiopian Second National Learning Assessment, the overall planning activities that led to its realisation were essentially derived from that large scale assessment. The first step was the creation of an institutional structure to lead the whole project. The second step involved research planning, development and field testing of the Second National Learning Assessment materials and instruments. The third stage involved field work, data analysis and interpretation, and reporting.

The main instruments used for measuring student academic achievement were achievement tests of English, Mathematics, Physics, Biology and Chemistry. Student, teacher and head teacher questionnaires were also designed and administered but are not discussed here. The number of sample schools in each region was determined based on the relative proportion of its school population, with a minimum of 25 schools per region. Within regions, schools were selected at random.

In this way a sample of 407 schools was originally selected from a national total of 12,471. However, the actual number of schools from which data were collected in the field was 213 for Grade 8. Two main reasons contributed to this situation. First, all schools in Ethiopia are not complete primary schools : some have only Grades 1-4 while others have Grades 1-8. Second, data collection had to be abandoned in one of the regions (Gambella) for security reasons.

It was decided to include 40 randomly selected students from each of the 213 schools. Thus the total sample should have been 8,520 students. However, in fact the number of participants was only 8,127; this was because some remote schools had fewer than 40 students in Grade 8. Moreover, incomplete data was obtained from some students, not all participants sat every examination, and not every candidate responded to the other research instruments such as questionnaires. Other factors such as illness, going to the market and student reluctance to sit for examinations contributed to variations in the number of candidates participating in examinations or responding to questionnaires.

Three limitations of the study can be identified. Firstly, only 'objective' or 'multiple choice' tests were used to measure students' competence. However, tests of this type do not measure higher order thinking or the skills which students are intended to acquire in schools. Secondly, as noted above, it was found that not all of the randomly identified schools could not be included in the study, because some schools did not have any Grade 8 classes. Field visits for checking the sample schools should have been conducted. Thirdly, as we have seen, the region of Gambella could not be included in the study due to the security problems that prevailed in the area during the period of data collection. Consequently, results cannot be generalised to this region.

Findings and analysis

From Table 2 it can be seen that students who studied Mathematics, Physics, Biology and Chemistry through the mother tongue scored an average of 42.30% while students who studied through a non-mother tongue scored 36.30%.

Table 2 : Composite student achievements in learning Mathematics, Physics, Biology and Chemistry with mother and non-mother tongues

Medium	N	Mean Score
Mother tongue	3256	42.30
Non-mother tongue	4534	36.23
Mean difference	-	6.06

The mean difference is 6.06% in favour of the students using the mother tongue. A 2-tailed t-test for comparison of means shows that the difference is highly significant at the 0.05 level of significance ($t=24.125$, $df=7788$).

This finding is interesting given the prevailing situation in Ethiopia. In fact, the issue of language in education has been a subject of discussion in many circles. Views vary from totally barring the use of the mother tongue to working with a foreign language or English. Reasons given include cost, inadequacy of indigenous languages to handle modern developments, lack of a written form in the case of some languages, and a shortage of teachers trained in local languages. Our analysis appears to indicate that in fact the mother tongue policy is justified.

From Table 3 it can be seen that students who study through the mother tongue achieve more in Biology, Chemistry, Physics and Mathematics than do students who study through the medium of a non-mother tongue. Given that the situations in the randomly selected schools are very similar, the only variable which distinguishes between these groups is the medium of instruction.

Table 3 : Student achievement in learning with mother tongue and non-mother tongue, by subject

Subject	Medium	N	Mean score
Biology	Mother tongue	4594	45.87
	Non-mother tongue	3279	35.17
	Mean difference	-	10.70
Chemistry	Mother tongue	4606	42.79
	Non-mother tongue	3279	36.37
	Mean difference	-	6.42
Physics	Mother tongue	4614	38.68
	Non-mother tongue	3299	30.72
	Mean difference	-	7.95
Mathematics	Mother tongue	4611	42.62
	Non-mother tongue	3295	38.44
	Mean difference	-	4.18

The results show that those who studied biology through the mother-tongue had an advantage of nearly 11% over those who used a non-mother tongue. In mathematics and physics - where one might expect language to play a lesser role - the students who studied through the mother tongue still scored significantly more. Referring to Hutchison (1998), Kuper (2003) and Komarek (1997), we noted earlier that learning with the mother tongue develops higher cognitive ability. It also enhances the development of academic proficiency and the acquisition of problem solving skills. Findings from Table 3 in fact are consistent with these conclusions even with subjects demanding more modest language skills.

Hutchison (1998) refers to studies in the United States which indicate that studying through the mother tongue facilitates second language acquisition. Similarly, Kuper (2003) reviews various researches which conclude that competence in the first and second language are mutually beneficial, enhancing one another. In Ethiopia, English is a compulsory subject at the primary level. In some regions, pupils are permitted to study other subjects through the medium of English at the upper primary level (Second Cycle Primary Education). In other words, some learn English as a subject;

whilst others learn it as a subject and at the same time use it as the medium of study. A question for investigation, then, is whether learning a foreign language is facilitated more when students use their mother tongue as the medium of learning or when they are using the non-mother tongue.

Table 4 : Student achievement with the non-mother tongue as a subject, and as a subject and medium of instruction

Status of English	N	Mean Score
As subject	4615	42.79
As subject and as medium of instruction	3300	36.37
Mean difference	-	6.42

What Table 4 tells us is that students who studied English simply as a subject gained more than those who studied it as a subject and were taught other subjects with English as the medium of instruction. Thus we can conclude that studying through the mother tongue facilitates learning a foreign language more than studying through the medium of that foreign language while studying that language itself as a subject.

In addition to the language of instruction, other factors that correlate with successful student learning were surveyed in the Ethiopian Second National Learning Assessment. These factors or variables were grouped into six categories for correlation and multiple regression analysis, the purpose being to examine the extent to which each category explains variability in student achievement. Table 5 summarises the results.

Table 5 : Multiple regression analysis of variables and their relationship with composite student academic achievement in Grade 8

Categories of variable	R	R-sq	F
Student's background and behaviour	0.404	0.386	22.42***
Language of instruction	0.611	0.373	125.51***
Teacher	0.570	0.325	16.37***
School structure and curriculum materials	0.453	0.205	8.32***
Instruction/support	0.368	0.136	7.30***
School management	0.366	0.111	5.73***

***Significant at $p < .001$

The maximum total variance explained (shown under the column R Square) by a single model which contains all the variables listed in Table 5 aggregated together is 55.5%. The table also tells us that student background variables as an independent group explain 38.6% of the total variation in learners' achievement. The language of instruction - which essentially concerns learning in the mother tongue - explains 37.3% of variation before other variables are controlled. Teacher characteristics taken alone explain 32.5% of the variation in achievement of schools. Meanwhile, variables in school structure and curriculum materials explain 20.5% of the variation in

learners' achievement before other variables are controlled. School management as a block contributes 11.1% of the variation in achievement before considering other factors. Table 5 thus clearly demonstrates that the language of instruction is the second most important factor that influences the quality of schooling in Ethiopia. This suggests that the country needs to move rapidly to the use of additional local languages as media of instruction in its schools. Given the gap between the number of existing languages and the ones that are used in schools, the wastage in the quality of learning is quite alarming.

Summary

The purpose of this study was to explore the relationship between studying through the medium of the mother tongue and academic achievement in Grade 8 in Ethiopia. The subjects considered were Biology, Physics, Chemistry, Mathematics and English. The main approach of the study was a comparative survey with cross sectional perspectives. Student achievement was measured using achievement tests. Other variables were explored through the use of questionnaires for students, teachers and headteachers.

Findings from the study indicate that the aggregate scores of students who studied Mathematics, Physics, Chemistry and Biology in Grade 8 with their mother tongue were significantly higher than those who studied these subjects in the non-mother tongue. Similarly, when student achievement scores for each subject are considered, it is found out that those who studied with the mother tongue gained significantly more than those who studied the same subjects in the non-mother tongue. The highest mean difference between those studying in the mother and non-mother tongues (10.7 points) was in Biology. This was followed by Physics (difference of 7.95 points), Chemistry (6.42 points) and Mathematics (4.18 points). Another interesting finding is that learning in the mother tongue and the mother tongue itself as a subject facilitate learning a foreign language more than learning in the foreign language and the foreign language itself as a subject. A comparison of the impact of learning with the mother tongue with other factors indicates that the language of instruction is the second strongest variable which explains variation in student achievement.

Conclusions

Like elsewhere in the world, this study has confirmed the pedagogical effectiveness of learning with the mother tongue in Ethiopia. It suggests not only that the policy of providing primary education in the mother tongue is appropriate, but also that it should be maintained. Moreover, as very many of the local languages have not yet been used for instruction; efforts are needed to enable all children to have the same opportunity. Since the study identified that learning with the mother tongue is one of the most decisive factors in student achievement, a proper implementation of the language policy in Ethiopian education is required. This study, therefore, provides clear evidence for adopting a positive approach towards plurality of languages in education.

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Chapter 6

Mother tongue and other tongue in primary education : Can equity be achieved with the use of different languages?

Gideon P.E.Cohen

Introduction

The majority of Ethiopians speak more than one language, even if they are not fluent in every language they speak. Many Ethiopians need to use more than one language in order to pursue their livelihoods and to access economic opportunities and services in the State, since particular occupations are tied to the use of certain languages (Bjeren 1985). Languages in Ethiopia adopt a variety of roles and lead to different opportunities and these vary greatly according to the situations in which individual Ethiopians find themselves, including their areas of origin and their economic and educational status. The language that Ethiopians speak in the home may not be the language used in nearby markets (Cooper 1976a, 1976b) or on transport routes. The language profiles of men are often broadly different from those of women in the same community. In rural areas levels of bilingualism and multilingualism amongst boys and men are much higher than amongst girls and women, as males travel more widely and need to use languages of wider communication (Cohen 2000). This reflects the economic value of languages that lead to opportunities - including trade, transport sector employment and migrant labour - that are inherently linked to gender. The language profile of the Ethiopian population has changed over time as bilingualism, with Amharic as a second language, has become an accepted norm for many non-Amharic mother tongue speakers. Urban populations from all language backgrounds also demonstrate a marked tendency to shift to Amharic, often losing the language spoken by their parents (Cooper 1976d).

In order to access even the most basic primary education, prior to the period of the present Government, it was necessary to learn Amharic and to learn in Amharic (McNab 1989). The Amharic language was the only vehicle for accessing wider economic and educational opportunities in the Ethiopian State. To some extent this is still true as the hegemonic societal position of Amharic remains unassailable, even though, since 1991, other Ethiopian languages have been employed for official purposes, including primary education (Cohen 2000). Some languages are extending the range of their uses, in response to and as a result of the recent development of written forms (Cooper 1976c), but the use of local languages remains restricted and is arguably somewhat artificial or imposed.

The diversity of languages in Ethiopia and their respective societal roles are now framed within a new context of state sponsored language development where several regional, zonal and local languages are employed for official purposes. The use of these newly introduced languages as media of instruction¹ in the primary education system has been the most visible manifestation of the changes in language use. This has stimulated widespread debate about whether it is beneficial for students to learn in their mother tongues. The arguments for and against the introduction of regional and local languages for the purpose of primary education in Ethiopia will be discussed

only briefly below as I have already attempted to describe them in some detail elsewhere (Cohen 2006).

The Ethiopian education system aims to produce equity and provide primary education to an increasing proportion of children in the country. This includes providing education in children's mother tongues, thereby making education more accessible and, therefore, one might assume, more equitable (Gfeller 1999, Pursely 1997). The idea of equity, however, raises several difficult ideological questions. On close examination, although equity seems to be a worthy aim for the education system, it becomes increasingly difficult to define what 'equity' means the more one focuses on it. Promoting the concept of equity is a way of asserting that we would like things to be fair, but in the case of primary education it is difficult to understand what 'fair' is. Above all, as will be argued later in this chapter, equity appears impossible to measure, thus relegating it to an ill-defined aim, without any means of establishing whether it has been, or can be, achieved. The present chapter does not seek to provide answers to these questions, although the assumption that these questions should be addressed is one of the reasons for the development of this topic. Instead the chapter seeks to explore the concept of equity with specific reference to the diversity and use of different languages in the formal primary education system. The central question which the chapter addresses is *Can Ethiopian children obtain an equal quality of primary education and gain access to wider opportunities in the state if they are educated in different languages?*

Federalism and language use in primary education in Ethiopia since 1991

The use of several Ethiopian languages in primary education is a reflection of reforms in the geopolitical structures of the state after 1991 that divided Ethiopia into regional states based upon the broadest formulations of identity, such as 'Amhara' and 'Oromo'. The borders of the regions were established according to language borders recorded in the linguistic literature that attempted a categorisation of Ethiopian peoples according to language and geographical area.² The rights of nationalities within the state to use languages for official purposes are enshrined in article 39 of the 1994 Constitution of Ethiopia (Government of Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia 1994a). The use of regional languages is a strong feature of federalism and an aspect of the representation of Ethiopia's ethno-linguistic groups of people. But the division of the country into regions defined by language is problematic because of the lack of unambiguous linguistic boundaries and the high degree of contact and mixing between the various peoples that inhabit the state. Consequently, the assertion of the rights of Ethiopia's constituent groups to use their languages raises practical concerns about where and how the various languages can or should be used.

The *Education and Training Policy* promotes the use of regional and local languages for two stated reasons (Government of Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia 1994b). The first is the claim that learning in the mother tongue has clear pedagogical advantages for the child, who feels comfortable and reassured by their ability to understand and analyse information in their own language. The second is the claim that the use of local languages in education accords with the rights of nationalities to self-expression that are enshrined in the Constitution of Ethiopia. The Ministry of Education, therefore, presents both pedagogical and ideological justifications for

promoting the use of local languages for primary education. This is, in itself, indicative of the nature of the reform : there is a lack of clarity about which of these two justifications is more important and, indeed, whether they are necessarily mutually reinforcing. This chapter is mainly concerned to examine equity in the primary education system from a pedagogical perspective in an attempt to understand whether it is fair to provide education in several different languages. It is, however, impossible to entirely separate the pedagogical rationale for using mother tongues from the political connotations of the use of regional and local languages.

While the ideological justifications for the policy may be questioned, it is clear that children achieve greater success in education, at least during the first years of primary education, when they learn in their mother tongues (Bamgbose 1976, 1994). The strength of the pedagogical arguments in favour of using mother tongues in primary education has not, however, been adequate to satisfy the critics of the policy in Ethiopia. The use of local languages in primary education has been seen by some as an aspect of an ethnically divisive policy that encourages the perception of differences and the development of regional nationalisms. The supporters of the view argue that using local languages perpetuates - or even creates - ethnic enclaves and encourages the development of narrow formulations of identity. They believe that the use of local languages is inherently politically divisive and compromises the integrity of the state (Cohen 2006:172). But this argument ignores wider political and social realities of the multilingual, multiethnic state in Ethiopia and assumes that language diversity rather than other factors is responsible for creating divisions in society.

Other less emotional and more rationally conceived arguments include that learning in local languages limits students' social mobility and narrows the range of economic opportunities that are open to them (Cohen 2006:175). Some Ethiopian languages are highly developed vehicles for education that promote a full understanding of concepts, facilitate literacy and lead to wider opportunities in the state. Other languages that are inadequately developed for education inevitably relegate children who are educated in them to less-than-equal status within the state, making it impossible for them to compete on equal terms for opportunities with Ethiopians who are educated in well developed languages. The argument that the use of different languages is inherently unfair and unequal - considering the different societal and historical positions and levels of development and standardisation of languages - is the most important for the present chapter as it criticises the use of different languages from a pedagogical perspective and attempts to highlight issues of equity.

A question of equality

The assumption that it is possible to produce equity in the education system while using several languages as media of instruction is based upon the idea that, on some fundamental level, languages are inherently equal, at least in the sense that they can perform identical functions. Indeed, both linguists and philosophers of language often assert that languages are equal.³ It is argued that languages represent complete systems for thought and communication and have the ability to express all of the ideas that exist in the societies where they are used, and are, therefore, equal from a theoretical or ideological perspective. Another view is that - since all human beings or societies have languages - all languages are equal. This view is particularly

attractive because the idea of language equality implies the equality of the groups of people who use languages, since language, ethnicity, nationality and other forms of human identity are inter-related. This view fits in with internationally accepted assertions that human beings are equal. Languages as representatives of people or societies are, therefore, assumed to be inherently equal; it is felt to be unacceptable to assert otherwise.

However, some human beings live with the assumption of a high degree of stability and security whilst others live with constant threats of violence, poverty or famine. The citizens of particular continents and countries have markedly different economic expectations and opportunities. The social climate also varies dramatically from one part of the world to another. People follow different religions that dictate their lifestyles. Within states some ethnic groups have high prestige, whilst others are despised. Particular states are more powerful, economically dominant or politically influential. If people are unequal in these dimensions then it would appear unrealistic to assume that their languages are equal. The status of particular groups of people directly affects the standing of their languages (Hastings 1997). Some languages are spoken over huge geographical areas by large numbers of speakers. These languages of wider communication are also the usual preference for second language acquisition of speakers of smaller languages. Some languages have well developed written literature replete with subtle nuances and cultural references. Other languages are restricted in their range of uses and have not developed written forms. It is only necessary to reflect on the cultural and economic dominance of the English language at the global level in order to demonstrate that languages are not equal in terms of patterns of use and prestige.

The levels of development of languages also vary greatly and there is a difference in the prestige of written languages and those that are restricted to oral uses. A written language is able to develop a written language. Moreover the speakers of a language which has a written form are able to record their history. The use of a written language helps to provide the state with a degree of legitimacy. Languages that have been standardised over centuries are sanctioned by society and the state for official or formal uses including administration, religion, education and the judicial system. Other languages that have no written forms are restricted to unofficial, informal uses such as in the home or markets, and locally or culturally specific functions, although some oral languages do have official uses within the societies where they are spoken. Mother tongue speakers of written languages are more likely to be educated, in a formal sense, and to become literate than those who are mother tongue speakers of oral languages; the former consequently, have an enhanced status.

Official languages lend an aspect of authority to their speakers and give them power in real situations. In many countries the written documents of the State and the legal systems are based upon the use of one language that has been selected as the official national language, although there are examples of success in using multiple languages for official purposes where several languages are already spoken as mother tongues by the population. Examples of this type include Switzerland, India, Singapore, Nigeria and Paraguay. In other countries where there is an established dominant language, including the UK and USA, governments have attempted to introduce the use of languages other than the national language for official purposes. These languages may be the languages of minority groups, such as Welsh in the UK and

Spanish in USA, or of immigrant populations, such as Urdu and Chinese in the UK. In this case languages are employed for specific purposes including the media and the provision of information in state documents. But it remains the case that the speakers of dominant or official national languages are at a distinct advantage. The use of minority languages for official purposes, moreover, while aiming to promote their use and enhance their societal status runs the risk of further underlining their subordinate role if their use appears artificial and ungainly. It may appear that languages are used for official purposes merely in an attempt to cover up underlying patterns of inequality. All of these factors affect the social status and prestige of languages and define the opportunities that are open to people who use them.

The patterns of use of particular languages shape the attitudes towards both the languages and their speakers both among their speakers and other members of society. Given the undeniably high degree of diversity in the uses of languages, it appears impossible to assert that languages are equal.

The diversity of language use in Ethiopia

Amharic is the most prominent language in Ethiopia. It is recognised in the Constitution as the working language of the state, but has not been given the legal status of the official national language in order to avoid underlining its societal pre-eminence. In Ethiopia there is no single official language, rather several languages have official roles, although it is still Amharic which remains most closely associated with the state. Amharic is a mature standardised language with a highly developed historical body of literature. In Ethiopia it was the only language of government administration from the mid-19th century until 1991, and it remains the language of the central government. Linguistically diverse regions such as Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples Region (SNNPR) and Beneshangul Gumuz have decided to use Amharic as the designated language of regional communication even though it is not the language of any of the constituent ethnic groups in those regions. The use of Amharic in the media is highly developed. Most radio stations in Ethiopia broadcast exclusively in Amharic, although recently regional and zonal radio stations broadcasting in local languages have been established in SNNPR, Tigray and other regions. TV broadcasts in Tigrinya and Afaan Oromoo are restricted to an hour-long news programme each day in both languages, otherwise the state TV station broadcasts exclusively in Amharic and English.

Perhaps even more significant than the official uses of the language are the unofficial societal roles of Amharic, which have ensured that it is the preferred second language for speakers of other Ethiopian languages. Amharic has achieved an unassailable position as an accepted national lingua franca, and even Ethiopians who claim not to accept the dominant status of the language readily use it for certain purposes. Amharic is used throughout the country for transport, trade, banking and other essential services. Government workers and other literate people throughout the country rely on Amharic even in circumstances where it is not the officially designated language. There is a pronounced pattern of language shift to Amharic in urban areas. While there are cultural reasons for this shift it is also clear that speakers of Amharic, and those who learn in Amharic, are in a stronger position than others to access state-related and other economic opportunities in Ethiopia.

Speakers of other Semitic languages may benefit from similarities between their languages and Amharic, including the use of the same script and a high percentage of cognates. But some Semitic speakers, particularly Gurages, demonstrate a profound pattern of shifting to Amharic, especially since Amharic is used as the official language of the Gurage Zone and is also the lingua franca between members of the Gurage ethnic group.⁴ Among the other Ethiopian Semitic languages, Tigrinya, although not fully standardised, is developing into a viable literary language and certainly has a future role as an official regional language and language of primary education in Tigray. But the use of Tigrinya is likely to remain restricted to its home region, and may also, therefore, restrict the mobility of people educated in the language.

A substantial proportion of Ethiopians speak languages from the Cushitic language family as mother tongues. The Agew group of languages are spoken in northern Ethiopia, in Amhara and Tigray Regions. Most of the speakers of these languages are shifting to Amharic, except in Agew Awi Zone of Amhara Region where Awgni is used as the medium of instruction for primary education. Lowland East Cushitic is the most populous branch of the Cushitic language family comprising three of Ethiopia's largest language groups - Oromo, Afar and Somali - each of which has its own Regional State. The Highland East Cushitic group is made up of several of Ethiopia's medium sized ethnic groups with populations that range up to three million speakers. These include the Sidama, Hadiya, Kambatta, Gedeo, Alaba, Burji and Mareko, all of whom live in the SNNPR. Although the Cushitic languages are widely spoken they were never written or standardised for official purposes prior to 1991 and were restricted to oral uses, although some study and attempts to transcribe the languages were made by speakers and missionaries.

The Lowland and Highland East Cushitic languages are written in the Latin script, using an orthography called the Qube. The characters, however, represent quite different sounds from their use in English. The Qube writing system was initially developed from the orthography for Somali (as used in Somalia) in order to transcribe Afaan Oromoo, the language of the Oromo people, which is similar in many respects to Somali. Afaan Oromoo is used by a huge population : roughly one third of the population of Ethiopia speak it as a mother tongue. However it is mostly restricted to mother tongue speakers and very few other Ethiopians learn it as a second language. The written form is young and not fully standardised for official uses, but is nevertheless widely used in education. Due to the size of the population who speak it as a mother tongue, it is second to Amharic in terms of importance in the state. The Omotic languages, of which the most widely spoken is Wolayta (others include Kaffa, Sheka, Gamo, Dawro and Gofa) have also been transcribed using the Qube. This decision was made in order to simplify language development processes and it was also assumed that the use of one orthography would assist mutual intelligibility of languages. The Omotic languages are located in the SNNPR, where the Highland East Cushitic languages also use the Qube.

The Highland East Cushitic and Omotic languages have relatively small populations, however, and their use as media of instruction in primary education is often argued to be a limiting factor that restricts the mobility of their speakers, causing them to be able to access opportunities only within their own zones (Cohen 2006:175). In addition, these areas have the highest population density in Ethiopia. Consequently

they have very high migration flows to areas outside the SNNPR that necessitate the use of Amharic for migrants (Cohen 2003). Within the SNNPR some people have presented a counter argument that the shared use of the Qube facilitates mutual intelligibility between these languages, by enabling people from the various ethnic groups in the region to become literate in each other's languages. But a question remains about whether this is in itself important or valuable, or merely represents a further level of restriction, albeit a less localised one. In order to access wider opportunities in the Ethiopian State it is still necessary for people from SNNPR to learn Amharic and English. This point is underlined by the fact that the regional government in Awassa, capital of SNNPR, uses Amharic for regional administrative purposes. So even within the region itself the highest opportunities explicitly depend on literacy in Amharic. This would appear to compromise the quality and value of education for people receiving primary education in local languages and secondary education in English.

A further consideration is whether primary education in languages transcribed in the Qube adversely affects students' abilities to learn Amharic and English. Learning in the Qube means that students have to learn an additional script in order to become literate in Amharic. Learning Amharic as one subject in primary school limits students' exposure to the language and compromises their ability to achieve fluency in the language. The relationships between the written forms of the local languages and English are even more problematic. The two markedly different uses of the Latin script, for Qube and English, often confuse students and inhibit their abilities to transfer easily between the two languages. As students learn the Qube first, this affects their ability to master English (Cohen 2000:192-195). Students, who learn in their mother tongues and first learn to read and write using the Qube may, therefore, be at a disadvantage in terms of learning, and using languages of wider communication. Students at Addis Ababa University who were first educated in the Qube find switching to English more difficult than those educated in Amharic as they make repeated mistakes when trying to spell and pronounce English words. This difficulty arises from the different uses of the Roman script for the Qube and the English language. This appears to compromise the goal of providing an equitable quality of education to students and of providing students with equal access to higher education, where English is the medium of instruction.

Border regions in Ethiopia have two reactions to language development. Somali Region has adopted Somali language for education and government administration. This is not surprising given that the language has already been developed and is used by other states (Somalia and Somaliland) and has, therefore, an existing body of literature in the language. Neighbouring Afar Region, on the other hand, has selected Amharic as the medium of instruction for primary education and government administration, perhaps in an attempt to secure closer integration with the state and to obtain the benefits that this will bring. Similarly, Beneshangul Gumuz, which is a very diverse region in terms of ethnicity and language, employs Amharic as the official language of administration. Again this may be a means of asserting a closer identification with the Ethiopian State, as this phenomenon has also been observed in peripheral areas in the SNNPR (Cohen 2005). On the other hand Gambella Region, also in Western Ethiopia, has asserted its individual regional character by promoting the use of the local Anyuak language. Regions with lower literacy rates, such as Afar and Beneshangul Gumuz may adopt Amharic in order to attract literate individuals

from other areas of the country, as they may not have adequate local people who are literate in either Amharic or in the local languages to staff the administration and education systems. In these peripheral areas, the politicisation of languages is marked. The choice of particular languages for official purposes makes a strong statement about the region and the identity of its inhabitants. Considering the various criteria upon which decisions to use, or not to use, languages in education are made, is it possible to think that equity in primary education can be achieved for all of the peoples in the state, even if enrolment rates increase in all of Ethiopia's regions?

Competing for roles – an unequal playing field

In Ethiopia language development has been conceptualised in terms of either local language development or the continued domination of Amharic, as if languages are inherently in competition with one another. An alternative ideological stance would have been to see the use of several languages as complementary rather than antagonistic. The idea of language competition is in itself problematic. Human beings are not restricted to using only one language. Languages do not inhabit limited, defined spaces. Rather they overlap and work together in a fluid manner, they cross international borders and defy the attempts of states to standardise and control their use. Languages have official and unofficial patterns of use, regional and urban dialects, slangs and creoles. Languages borrow from each other happily incorporating and modifying elements of other languages within their own structures. In the absence of language policies sanctioned by the state, languages develop and assume particular societal roles based upon their practical or perceived benefits. In Ethiopia, state-sponsored language development has attempted to determine that the roles which languages play should be based upon criteria other than their existing patterns of use, or their practical benefits. In other words, the state has attempted to construct an ideal scenario for language use which might not be realistically achievable. As a result, several mother tongues have been introduced as media of instruction in primary education. Amharic is taught as a subject in primary and secondary education in non-Amharic speaking areas. English is taught as a subject in primary education and then becomes the medium of instruction for secondary and tertiary education. The idea that equity can be achieved by using all mother tongues equally in primary education, rather than by understanding how each language can best be used, requires the questionable assumptions that the state is able to control the use of languages and that all languages can be used in the same way.

Learning in one language may facilitate the study of another language. Second languages are often learned through the vehicles of mother tongues, including in Europe where second languages are learned in formal education settings. In other circumstances students learn second languages through total immersion when second languages are employed as the exclusive medium of instruction in formal primary education. This was previously the case in Ethiopia, where non-Amharic speaking students learned Amharic and learned in Amharic from their first day in school. This practice, however, led to high drop-out rates during grade one in non-Amharic speaking areas, which were attributed by many teachers, and the present author, to be largely due to alienation experienced by students resulting primarily from the use of a language other than students' mother tongue. In order to address this situation Ethiopian regional and local languages were introduced for use in primary education.

But they were introduced in great haste before they were sufficiently standardised for the purpose of education. Preparations including adequate training of teachers to use local languages in the classroom and the development of textbooks were inadequate, and the purpose of the reform was not made explicit to local communities. In practice, therefore, using local languages for primary education in Ethiopia is unlikely to produce an equal quality of education for students since some languages are better developed as vehicles for education than others, if only because they are more standardised as a result of existing patterns of use.

Although it is clear that children should have their first learning experiences in their mother tongues in order to increase their confidence in educational situations (Bamgbose 1991), it should also be recognised that one of the important roles for mother tongues in primary education is as vehicles for teaching languages of wider communication (Eastman 1983). In Ethiopia, moreover, local languages should not necessarily be the only languages used as media of instruction in primary education, while Amharic and English are taught only as single subjects. Some subjects in primary education may be more effective when taught in Amharic or English from the beginning, whereas others are best suited to the use of local languages. In order to teach some subjects in local languages there has to be an artificial process of creating new words. Both teachers and students may feel that these neologisms are contrived and do not make sense; teachers and learners may therefore feel uncomfortable with their use. This problem was particularly marked when local Ethiopian languages were being developed for use in teaching science subjects.

If languages of wider communication are taught only as single subjects in primary education, rather than adopted for broad use as media of instruction for subjects, then it is unlikely that students will be able to use them confidently when they become the media of instruction in secondary and tertiary education. So it would be better to balance the use of local languages and languages of wider communication as media of instruction in primary education, dividing subjects between the languages in an appropriate manner. It would also satisfy the pedagogical rationale for the use of local languages if they were used as the principal media of instruction for the first cycle of primary education (grades 1-4) but only given as subjects in the second cycle (grades 5-8) when languages of wider communication should be utilised as the media of instruction. In that case students would gain both the benefits of using their mother tongues in education and achieving fluency and competence in languages of wider communication.

In the present circumstances children who receive primary education in Amharic are at a distinct advantage in the state because Amharic is the *de facto* societal lingua franca and the official working language of Ethiopia. Achieving second language fluency in Amharic is necessary for students continuing in education, and the wider societal importance of Amharic, moreover, in accessing economic opportunities is not well understood within the context of attempts to produce equity. Above all, the potential positive impact of strengthening one national language for communication has not been recognised. In Ethiopia using one common language might also contribute towards the goal of producing equity. This is not to say that Amharic should be the only language of primary education; rather, it has an important role to play and it produces distinct advantages for students who learn in the language, even if it is not their mother tongue. It should also be recognised that teachers are generally

more confident and competent in using Amharic than other languages, at times even including their own mother tongues; teachers' enhanced capacities in Amharic also pass on educational benefits to their students.

English also provides significant advantages and opportunities to Ethiopian children, but in general the standard of competence in English is low among both teachers and students, even though this is the designated language of secondary and tertiary education (Honig 1996). In state-sponsored primary and secondary education inaccurate use of English is passed from teacher to student, and even those students who are successful in education and reach tertiary levels of education have little confidence in the language for written or oral purposes. It is often observed that teachers in the Ethiopian education system are most confident when using Amharic, compared to either the recently developed local languages or English. Thus there appears to be a mismatch between the roles which languages are expected to play and the competences of teachers and learners in those languages. Again, this does not imply that the use of English in the Ethiopian education system should be reduced or even abolished altogether. English still has an important role to play, but its role should be complementary to Amharic and its use should not be seen as replacing, or as preferable to, Amharic. It would be easier to think about achieving equity if the patterns of use of local languages, Amharic and English in the Ethiopian education system were more integrated and students were able to gain appropriate competences in each of the languages rather than becoming literate in only one language. If Amharic was placed firmly at the core of the education system it is likely that greater equity would be the outcome.

There remain, moreover, two fundamental challenges. The first is how to measure equity, and the second is how to understand the respective impacts of the use of different languages as media of instruction in primary education. Without answers to these questions, the discussion of equity remains abstract and undefined. Development workers might argue that it is possible to measure equity between the use of different languages through examining enrolment rates and other standard indicators used to assess performance in education and then applying these to areas where different languages are used. This might prove to be a way of comparing how well different languages perform as languages of education. Attainment can be measured through graduation, drop-out and repetition rates in the primary education system and the rate of promotion to secondary and tertiary education. However, these factors are not related to the use of a specific language and so cannot be employed to answer the core question. The closer examination of these ways of measuring equity invites a host of further questions about the viability of such indicators to tell us anything at all, given other intervening variables which include varying teacher competences, lack of uniformity in applying standard evaluation criteria, the diversity of languages used as media of instruction, and the varying degrees of standardisation of these languages. Given these, and other, variables it is impossible to argue that students graduating in one region compared to those in another region, or even those graduating in two neighbouring schools, have necessarily achieved the same degree of competence in a particular subject.

This question, however, requires conclusive research that should be conducted at both the level of Ethiopia's regions and also in national institutions such as Addis Ababa University and the Civil Service College. There is a profound need for more research

to be conducted into language issues in general and the implementation and use of local languages in primary education in particular in Ethiopia. For the purposes of the present chapter the arguments are presented in order to question whether the goal of achieving equity is viable, given the current patterns of language use and the trend to use only one language in a given area as the medium of instruction for primary education.

A question of choice

Groups of people in Ethiopia, albeit elites of one kind or another, have already exercised choice in their selection of languages for primary education. This is done according to their rights as stated in the Constitution and the Education and Training Policy. The Education and Training Policy states that 'Nations and Nationalities can either learn in their own languages or can choose from among those selected on the basis of national and countrywide distribution' (Government of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia 1994b : Article 3.5.2). There are inequalities in peoples' ability to make such choices. Indeed there is a question as to whether the implementation of language reforms in education in Ethiopia is an imposition or a genuine manifestation of people's own aspirations (Hoben 1995). Some urban populations have been successful in rejecting the use of regional languages in favour of using Amharic as a medium of instruction for primary education. This tendency has been most pronounced in Oromiya where many of the larger urban centres in Ethiopia are located. The capital towns of geopolitical zones in SNNPR have also decided to provide primary education in Amharic and local languages, often in different schools, thus giving a choice of media of instruction to the residents. Zones and special *wereda*⁵ in SNNPR - including Bench Maji and South Omo Zones and Alaba Special *Wereda* - selected Amharic as the medium of instruction in an attempt to secure greater regional and national integration for their inhabitants. In Amhara Region, Oromiya Zone chose to use Afaan Oromoo as the medium of instruction, whilst Agew Awi Zone selected Awgni as its medium. These developments demonstrate a high degree of pragmatism and enlightenment regarding language development on the part of regional authorities in Ethiopia that should be recognised and applauded, and provide a basis for increasing flexibility in the application of language policies and the use of local languages in education.

In the urban regions (Addis Ababa, Dire Dawa and Harar), several languages are available as media of instruction for primary education. In Harar and Dire Dawa primary education is provided in Adare, Somali, Afaan Oromoo, Arabic, Amharic and English. In Addis Ababa the choice is between Amharic and a range of foreign languages of which English is the most prevalent. In these areas the choices parents make about what language to have their children educated in reflects their perceptions of identity and opportunity. The choice of a language for primary education is a choice about identity, it says something about who we are, and it is also a choice about who we want our children to be and the opportunities that we hope will be open to them. This varies for different people depending on where they live, their existing circumstances and the range of opportunities that they consider are realistically available to their children. However, it is clear that the ability and the right to choose has been afforded to at least some parents in Ethiopia. Consequently, the possibility

of exercising choice must also be understood to be an important aspect of equity – an aspect which has often been ignored until now.

Conclusion : Is equity a valuable concept to apply to primary education?

The idea of generating equity is compromised by the use of different languages for two main reasons. Firstly, the different levels of development of languages affect their use as languages of education and affect the quality of education that schools are able to provide. Secondly, different patterns of use mean that languages do not give access to equal opportunities either in the education system or in terms of wider economic and social opportunities in the state. Given these two factors it appears difficult to achieve equity in a primary education system that employs so many different languages. There may, however, be a way of reconceptualising equity and rethinking the relationships between languages that could give the concept renewed vigour and relevance.

In Ethiopia, while there is clearly a need to engage in the development of regional and local languages in order to increase equity this should not be done or conceptualised as being at the expense of further development and strengthening of languages of wider communication within the education system, including both Amharic and English. But the role of local languages in primary education should be appropriate to their actual patterns of use in society and to their existing range of functions, and the implementation of language policies should be flexible enough to react to changing situations as well as aiming to stimulate or enforce particular conditions. In education one of the most important roles of using local languages should be to teach languages of wider communication. There is a need to strengthen the use of Amharic and to place it at the core of the education system. At the practical level it is important to recognise that in Ethiopia most teachers have more highly developed abilities in Amharic than in other languages. So it is important to maximise teacher effectiveness by giving Amharic an enlarged role. It is also important to improve the quality of English language teaching within the education system in order to produce equity for students in primary education in Ethiopia. If the relationships between languages could be more integrated and decisions about language less a case of choosing between languages as vehicles for education and rather choices about which languages are better suited to particular purposes, then this would assist greatly towards achieving an equitable primary education for students. It would be more realistic to aim at equity with the use of more than one language in education than by making rigid choices between languages.

Finally, there is also a profound need to reconceptualise equity within the context of the education system. Achieving equity in education should not be seen narrowly in terms of enrolment and access to primary education, or attainment, but in a broader context as preparation for life. The education system needs to capitalise on the range of opportunities that are open to students through education, rather than measuring success in terms of processing students through the system, with the limited goal of entry into secondary and tertiary education. Mother tongue primary education is, in any case, an inefficient means of securing access to continuing education, since secondary and tertiary education are based upon the use of languages of wider communication. Rather, the great value of using mother tongues is in non-formal

education. In order to maximise the efficacy of language development, education in local languages should be seen within the wider frame of national development. Languages should be developed for appropriate uses in facilitating training in agriculture and other rural occupations, which are likely to continue to provide the basis for the livelihoods of the great majority of Ethiopia's people for the foreseeable future.

Notes

¹ A medium of instruction is the language in which subjects are taught in the education system.

² Particularly the language maps in Bender et al. (1976).

³ For a summary of the arguments and references to the work of others see Hobsbawm (1996).

⁴ The Gurage ethnic group is linguistically diverse, containing more than ten distinct languages.

⁵ The *wereda* is a geopolitical unit, roughly equivalent to a county in the UK. There are more than 500 *wereda* in the Ethiopian State.

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Chapter 7

English as the language *for* development in Pakistan : Issues, challenges and possible solutions

Fauzia Shamim

Introduction

English as the language *for* development has dominated the political and official discourse in Pakistan as in other developing countries for a long time now. More recently, the discourse of 'Education for All' and the increase in the use of English in the global market have added a universalistic dimension to the teaching-learning of English in Pakistan, thus making it a complex policy issue particularly for resource distribution and achieving quality in English language education. 'English is the passport to success and upward social mobility' and 'English is the key to national progress' are some common clichés that are interspersed in the formal discourse of official planning and policy meetings; more importantly, these clichés reflect the perception of many people - both rich and poor - in discussing future life chances for their children.

To begin with, it is important to clarify what is meant by 'development' and what are the espoused relationships between language and development.

Education and development

Chabbot and Ramirez (2004) emphasise the central role of international development organisations and conferences in rationalising a discourse that strongly links development and education for national and individual development goals. A major goal of education is poverty alleviation. However, recent studies emphasise the social, political and cultural aspects of development in addition to economic gains from development. Interestingly, the issue of language gets little space in this emerging discourse about education and development.

The declaration of Education for All, signed by more than 150 nations, including Pakistan, reaffirmed the close link between education and development at the individual, national and global levels. A pertinent question asked by Brock-Utne is: 'Education for all - in whose language?' Brock-Utne argues, rightly in my view, that, 'The concept "education for all" becomes a completely empty concept if the linguistic environment of the basic learners is not taken into account' (2000:141).

English as the language of global communication is often considered by donor agencies as the *de facto* language for development in developing countries. Often a lot of aid money is spent on improving the English proficiency of people and communities in the recipient nation-states before or alongside other development work. An example is the ten-year English Language Teaching Support programme for Tanzanian secondary school teachers, funded by the British Council through the former Overseas Development Administration (now the Department for International Development) (Arthur 2001).

Language and development

Different kinds of relationship exist between language and development. Appleby et al. (2002:327-328) identify at least four kinds :

- language *in* development, where English is viewed as playing an essential role in the socioeconomic development of the country
- language *as* development, with English being taught ‘as an end in itself’
- language *for* development, where ‘English is used as a tool for other domains of development’
- language *of* development, ‘the discourses that construct the ways in which development happens’¹.

In Pakistan, English is viewed mainly as the language *for* development at both the individual and national levels. Indeed, the race for individual prosperity and economic development at the national level seem to have overtaken issues of class, identity and fear of cultural invasion from an erstwhile ‘colonial’ language.

The purpose of this chapter is to critically analyse the need and current provision for the teaching-learning of English for individual and national development in Pakistan. First, I will look briefly at the factors that have led to the current insatiable desire for English in Pakistan. Second, the findings of a nation-wide study of the current situation regarding the teaching-learning of English in public sector universities in Pakistan (Shamim & Tribble 2005) will be reported so as to initiate discussion on the adequacy or otherwise of provision for the teaching-learning of English in Pakistan. Marsh’s (2005) framework of ‘drivers’ and ‘enablers’ will be used for this purpose. Third, I will briefly examine the issues and challenges in the teaching-learning of English, such as the possible consequences of current language policy on the literacy level of children in English and other languages (including Urdu, the national language of Pakistan). Finally, policy implications will be drawn for developing well informed and, therefore, more realistic language-in-education policies in Pakistan. As the demand for English and the educational provision in several other developing contexts are similar to those in Pakistan, it is hoped that the study findings and the resultant policy recommendations will be of benefit to language-in-development workers in these contexts.

Drivers : Need for English in Pakistan

In Pakistan there has been a lack of systematic analysis and/or debate and dialogue about the need for English. With the national literacy level being quite low at only 54% (Government of Pakistan 2004b), folklore about when children learn foreign languages best and dreams of a bright future with English for their children often influence the average person’s thinking and expressed desire for the teaching-learning of English from early grades. This section will critically review the major drivers for this felt need for English in an attempt to distil the main arguments for the need of English in Pakistan.

Political gains

Pakistan is a multilingual and multicultural society. The linguistic map of Pakistan is quite complex with many languages; each of the four provinces has one or more dominant languages and a number of minority languages. The emblematic status of English, due to its historical association with the elite and proto-elite (Haque 1983; Rehman 1998, 2002), has helped in making it a prestigious language. English is *the* language of power in comparison with Urdu, the national language, and other regional languages of Pakistan. Each new government soon after it assumes power announces its policy of teaching English to the masses as a way of achieving its democratic ideals of equality of opportunity. As this decision is politically motivated, it comes as no surprise that implementation efforts fall short of the supposedly democratic intent of the policy. This official rhetoric of providing 'equal' opportunities for learning of English as a potential tool to level differences amongst the social classes, without a study of current provision and teachers' ability to teach English effectively, does not match the overall 'two stream' education policy in Pakistan. (We will consider the 'two stream' policy in detail later in this chapter.) Thus the teaching of English stays as a live issue on the agenda of every successive government.

Economic gains

Jalal (2004:24) argues :

When we subscribe to the experts' view that the economic future of Pakistan is linked with the expansion of information technology, it means that we are recognising the need for making the comprehension and use of English as widespread as possible. This is now an urgent public requirement, and the government takes it as its duty to fulfil this requirement.

This view has resulted in the English for All policy, where once again the government has instructed all public sector schools to start teaching English from class I without working out the feasibility of this policy decision or the steps and resources required for its successful implementation. In contrast, the Higher Education Commission's English Language Teaching (ELT) Reform Project aims to improve the teaching-learning of English in higher education institutions in Pakistan. Through improvement in the teaching-learning of English, the project aims to revolutionise 'the socio-economic indicators of Pakistan' and 'contribute considerably to supplement the efforts of government to improve the standard of higher education and scientific learning'. More specifically, improving the teaching and learning of English 'will help the graduates of public sector universities and institutions of higher learning to compete for good jobs in Pakistan' (www.hec.gov.pk).

Advancement in learning English is unequivocally linked to technological development, particularly in the field of information and communication technology (ICT). However, the main argument revolves around learning English for long-term economic gains. The official viewpoint resonates with the current discourse of promoting education for poverty alleviation, a discourse initiated by development agencies and also embodied in the millennium development goals. The majority of people in Pakistan also subscribe to the view that English is the tool for individual and national economic prosperity. These beliefs are in sharp contrast with the arguments

put forward for using the mother tongue for economic development, particularly in rural communities in developing countries (e.g. Bruthiaux 2002; UNESCO 2005).

Two streams of education

In Pakistan, there are two distinct systems of education identified mainly in terms of medium of instruction, i.e. English-medium and Urdu-medium. The English-medium schools are privately owned and cater to the upper class as well as some sections of the middle class. In contrast, the Urdu-medium schools are mainly public sector schools catering to the lower income groups and they offer free education in addition to other incentives such as free textbooks (at least at the primary level). Private schools offer 'quality' education to elite children in highly resourced classrooms through the medium of English. The outcomes for these children, who also have acquisition-rich home environments, are higher levels of proficiency in English compared to those children studying in poorly resourced classrooms who have little or no exposure to English outside the 30-35 minute English class every day in school.

Thus the two kinds of school systems, public and private, are distinguishable by their quality of standards and learner achievement, particularly in terms of the extent of their ability to use English for oral and written communication. With the level of proficiency in English being a major indicator of social class, quality of educational standards and learning outcomes, it is not surprising that for many people there is a fuzzy boundary between being educated and knowing English (see also Ramanathan 2005). Therefore, the general aspiration of most parents is to provide English-medium education for their children to improve their future life chances.

(In response to this popular demand for English, recently the number of so-called 'English medium' schools has mushroomed, even in the rural areas of Pakistan. Parents prefer to send their children to these private schools, which do not offer high quality education, in the hope that their children will learn English. Literacy in English and the ability to interact confidently in the language are perceived to have more value than, for example, learning basic concepts in Mathematics and Science.)

The huge promise of English as a 'world language' for economic and personal development seems to be a major driving force for the younger generation's desire to learn English in Pakistan. Literacy in English is considered a pre-requisite, similar to ICT skills, for participating in the current trend of globalisation and becoming part of the global village. For example, Rehman (1999), in his survey of student attitudes towards English in different school types in Pakistan, found that the desire to learn English occurred amongst students from all school types including the *deeni madrassah* (religious schools) which represent the most conservative element of Pakistani society. Similarly, Mansoor's case study of language planning in higher education in Pakistan (2005) provided further evidence of an overwhelming 'need' for learning English amongst Pakistani students in tertiary education.

It should be noted that the existing proficiency level in English of school and university graduates does not match this popular demand for English in Pakistan. This raises an important question : Is the current provision for the teaching-learning of English adequate to meet this growing demand for English in education in Pakistan.

(We need to remember that higher education in Pakistan, particularly in public sector institutions, is considered to be a right for everyone, not a privilege for the selected few.) This issue is explored in the following section.

Enablers : A study of the current provision for the teaching-learning of English in higher education in Pakistan

As we saw above, there exists in Pakistan an insatiable desire to learn English for individual and national development. How can the goal of English for All be achieved? To what extent is the current provision for the teaching-learning of English sufficient for the masses to learn English (which is often their third or fourth language)? In this section, I will report the findings of a research study commissioned by the National Committee on English and funded by the Higher Education Commission as part of its ELT reform project (Shamim & Tribble 2005). The study was conducted in collaboration with the British Council and the Aga Khan University Institute for Educational Development, Karachi, Pakistan. The author was the lead researcher for this study.

The objectives of the study were twofold:

- a) to review and evaluate the English language teaching capacity of a national sample of general and professional universities; and
- b) to make recommendations for the reorganisation of English language teaching departments in public sector institutions of higher education in Pakistan.

A two-stage research design was used. In the first stage, a survey of the current provision for the teaching-learning of English was conducted in a nation-wide sample of public sector universities. In the second stage, case studies were conducted of three selected institutions to understand, in depth, how the current organisation of English language teaching impacts on a) the allocation and utilisation of resources for teaching English, and b) teaching, learning and assessment practices for English in these institutions. This chapter reports only the results of the nation-wide survey.

The sample for the survey comprised 21 public sector universities located in various regions of Pakistan. Overall, 3,552 learners in these universities responded to a questionnaire that was administered to them on a cohort basis in English classes that were selected using pre-defined criteria. A total of 84 teachers also responded to the teachers' version of the same questionnaire. The aim was to get both student and teacher perspectives on various aspects of the teaching-learning of English in the sample institutions. In addition, the Head of Department in each university was interviewed using a structured interview schedule. The data from the general universities was analysed separately from that of the professional universities, for comparative purposes.

Major findings of the study are discussed in the following paragraphs.

Socio-economic profile

The socio-economic profile of teachers and learners in both the general and the professional universities is largely similar. The majority of teachers do not have formal qualifications or training in English language teaching. Few teachers engage in ongoing professional development activities or dialogue with the wider ELT community through membership of teachers' organisations or by presenting papers at ELT conferences at home and abroad. Fewer than one quarter of the teachers in the sample had one or more publications in the field.

English language programmes

English language courses are offered mainly at the undergraduate level but there are also some courses in post-graduate programmes in certain departments such as Business and Management Sciences. In the general universities, the undergraduate English programmes are normally managed by the Department of English in each institution. However, visiting teachers are hired to teach English, since the core business of the English departments is perceived to be the teaching of English literature to English majors. There is usually a prescribed syllabus for teaching English at the undergraduate level. In the professional universities and in the postgraduate departments offering English language programmes in the general universities, where there are no core English teaching lecturers, the English language programme is managed by the department concerned or by the department or faculty of Social Sciences, if there is one. In such cases, teachers design the curriculum for the English courses themselves. The assessment practices in all cases focus on assessing content knowledge such as 'major barriers to communication', or 'characteristics of a good paragraph' instead of language skills.

Educational resources

In terms of physical provision, the findings of the study indicate that the majority of learners study English sitting in rows in large classes. The normal duration of the English programme is 48 hours or one semester during the first year of their study programme. Very little use is made of educational technology, even where it is available in the institution. Students are given few opportunities to develop academic literacy since teaching and learning focus mainly on getting good grades in the content-based examination. Additionally, there are few expectations that learners will use English in the classroom. Similarly, there is only a low level of feedback, both oral and written, on assigned written work. Thus opportunities for learning English to the high levels of proficiency required both for higher education and professional work are quite limited. It is not surprising, then, that there is a general sense of dissatisfaction with the current level of English proficiency of the graduates of public sector universities.

Teachers' and learners' assessment of the current programmes

Surprisingly, we found that the majority of learners rated their current English language courses highly in terms of meeting their future needs. Similarly, more than 50% of teachers agreed or strongly agreed that the current English language courses would help students in meeting future needs. This apparently optimistic picture could be the result of two things : a) teachers' and learners' limited experience of alternative pedagogies and assessment practices, and b) a focus on gaining high grades in English as short-term goals for success in their respective educational programmes.

Unequal inputs, unequal outputs

A comparison of learners' socio-economic status with their English language scores in the most recent public examination revealed that learners in the higher income bracket (upper third of the population) consistently outperformed learners in the lower-income bracket (lower two-thirds of the population).

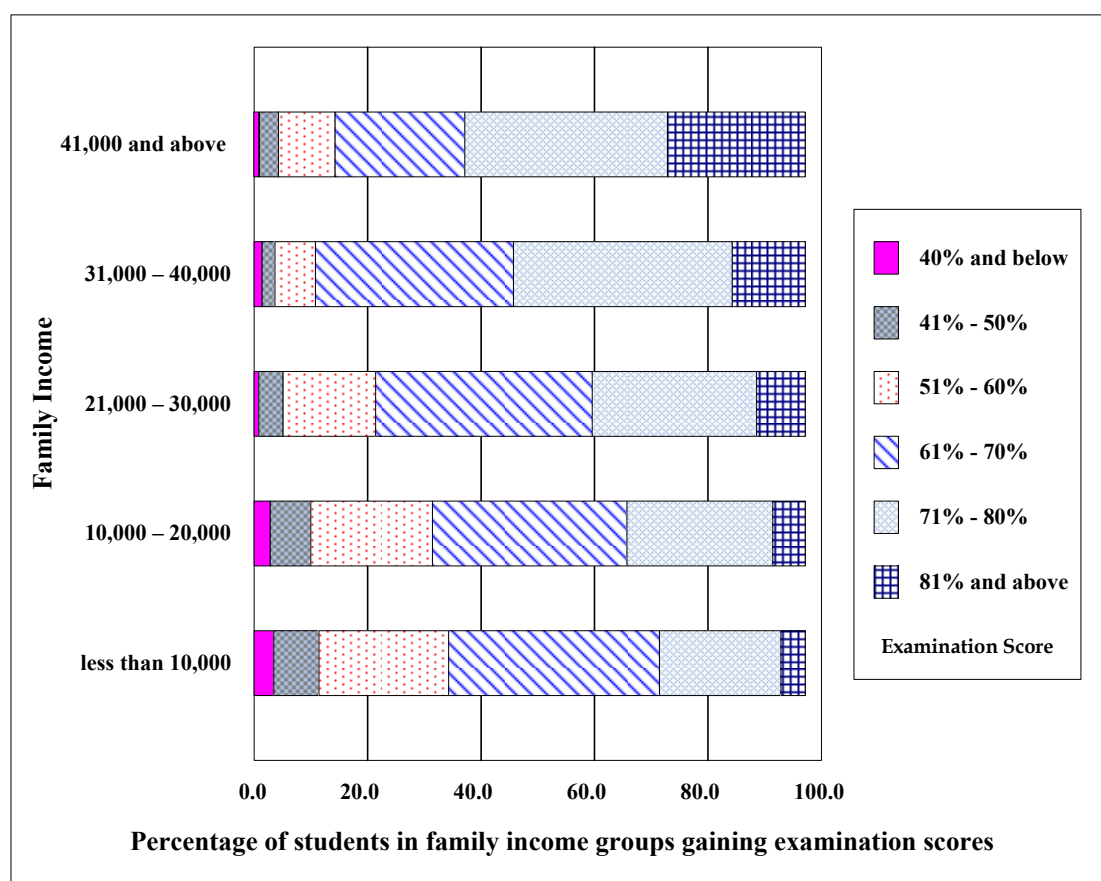


Figure 1: Students' family income (in Pakistani rupees) and proficiency in English (most recent public examination scores), adapted from Shamim & Tribble 2005

The positive correlation of high family income with students' higher levels of proficiency in English, as seen in Figure 1, may be attributed to their earlier education in private English-medium schools compared to students in the lower-income bracket. (The two-streams of education in Pakistan have already been discussed in an earlier section.) Similarly, in students' self-assessment of their current language skills, as

used in the academic domain, the upper group was about twice as heavily represented in the categories of 'good' and 'excellent' compared to the lower third of the population. Hence, there seems to be a positive relationship between students' socio-economic status and their proficiency in English, probably due to the difference in opportunities available outside the classroom in the home and community for learning and using English. This indicates the urgent need for developing relevant and high quality English language programmes for learners in public sector universities to enable them to compete with their more fortunate counterparts.

It was concluded that the need to provide enhanced teaching-learning facilities in public sector universities cannot be over-emphasised particularly in terms of the huge demand for English in the employment market (Mansoor et al. 2005) and the relatively low levels of proficiency of graduates from public sector higher education institutions in Pakistan.

In public sector schools, English is mainly taught using the grammar-translation method through Urdu and/or the local language in crowded and under-resourced classrooms (Shamim & Allen 2000). In private schools, while English is 'officially' the medium of instruction, bilingual discourse is commonly used in the classroom. (See also Cleghorn & Rollnick (2002) for similar findings from African classrooms.) However, as the use of one or more shared home languages is not legitimised, the teachers do not admit to using them in the classroom.

Issues and challenges

Three main issues can be identified : the quality of education, the tension between local and global needs, and the 'language apartheid' which Pakistan is experiencing.

Quality & standards of achievement

English medium education is widely assumed to be synonymous with high quality education. Is it, therefore, surprising that parents prefer an English medium education for their children? This can be seen in the proliferation of private English-medium schools even in the remote areas of Pakistan (Harlech-Jones et al. 2005).

Both the National Education Policy (1998) and the more recent national report on development of education (Government of Pakistan 2004a) are silent on the issue of language-in-education. Government notifications are issued from time to time instructing public sector schools to start teaching English from grade I. This decision, as mentioned earlier, is taken by all elected governments soon after they come into power as a political gesture rather than as an expression of their political will to provide opportunities for gaining widespread literacy in English. The decision is taken without a feasibility study (which should consist of at least a survey of the current proficiency of teachers and learners and the provision for the teaching-learning of English at different levels). Additionally, the decision to teach English is not informed by the current state of research in this area.

Unsurprisingly, there is an ever widening gap between the 'unwritten' language policy and practice of the teaching-learning of English in Pakistan. This has led to a

situation whereby the majority of school and university graduates from public sector institutions enter the job market with only limited literacy skills in English.

Tension between local and global needs

Language is a marker of identity and a tool for representing local values and culture. On the one hand, the right to study one's own language is now considered a basic human right (cf. Segota 2001). On the other hand, there is an urgent felt need, particularly amongst the younger generation, to identify with the global world culture. Universities in Pakistan are also faced with the challenge of achieving internationally recognised academic excellence and status, mainly through the medium of English, and serving the needs of the local population. The patterns of language use in society point to the use of Urdu as the lingua franca in Pakistan. Urdu is used by most people in rural contexts mainly in addition to their local language. Similarly, while English is used for official written documentation and communication, Urdu is mainly used for oral interaction in government offices. In the cities, only a small part of the population, the educated elite, use English (or English and an indigenous language) for their everyday communication. The challenge is to maintain an appropriate balance in the choice of language-in-education amongst individual, societal, and national development needs.

A state of language apartheid

In Pakistan, familiarity with and use of English are indicators of social class and educational and family background. For example, the terms 'Urdu-medium' and 'English-medium' in Pakistan are heavily loaded with economic and socio-cultural connotations. Hence their use denotes more than just the medium of instruction through which a person has studied in school or in an institution of higher education. In fact, a person with an 'English-medium' education is considered superior in all dimensions compared to someone with an Urdu-medium educational background. Thus we seem to be moving towards a state of language apartheid.

The challenges faced by language planners, policy makers and practitioners in Pakistan are many. These include :

- Achieving quality in education for all, irrespective of the medium of education;
- Balancing language needs and provision for the teaching-learning of English and other languages for local, national and global use; and,
- Combating linguistically defined social stratification.

We must remember that Pakistan is not alone in facing these challenges. These and similar challenges abound in the majority of African countries and many other countries in Asia (see, for example, Vavrus 2002, Brock-Utne et al. 2003 and Mansoor et al. 2004). In the next section, I will take a brief look at how some nations of the world have tried to address these challenges.

Multilingualism : Towards a possible solution

A current trend identifiable in policy documents in many countries seems to be that of multilingualism. Multilingualism is espoused as the preferred approach to language

policy-making for recognising and celebrating linguistic diversity and for intercultural communication. For example, in India the need for the three-language formula of state, national and international language has once again been reiterated by the National Focus Group on Indian languages (NCERT 2005). Similarly, there is a growing awareness, amongst the more recently established central Asian states such as Kyrgyzstan, of the need for multilingual education for increased interethnic understanding (Korth & Schulter n.d.). This is in sharp contrast to the policy of having just one national language as a marker of unity and nationhood, prevalent amongst nations in South Asia and Africa during the early years of their independence.

UNESCO's recent position paper titled 'Education in a multilingual world' (2003) urges a change in attitudes towards multilingualism as it is a reality in many nations of the world. At the same time, the paper highlights the complexities involved in imparting education through multiple languages :

Education in many countries of the world takes place in multilingual contexts. [In these countries] multilingualism is more a way of life than a problem to be solved. The challenge is for education systems to adapt to these complex realities and provide a quality education which takes into consideration learners' needs, whilst balancing these at the same time with social, cultural and political demands. (UNESCO 2003:12)

Interestingly, even in Europe, during the last two decades, efforts to facilitate trade, travel and interaction amongst the nations within the European Community have led to the development of policy guidelines favouring plurilingualism (differentiated from multilingualism mainly in terms of its broader view of the purposes of learning more than one language). The aim of language education, according to this view, is no longer to :

achieve mastery of one, two or even three languages, each taken in isolation, with the 'ideal native-speaker' model. Instead the aim is to develop a linguistic repertory in which all linguistic abilities have a place. This implies, of course, that the languages offered in educational institutions should be diversified and students given the opportunity to develop a 'plurilingual competence. (Council of Europe 2001:5).

However, we would do well to remember that English is the language of instruction in only three European states : the United Kingdom, Ireland and Malta (UNESCO 2007). And even in these countries the indigenous languages of Welsh, Gaelic, Irish and Maltese are also used as languages of instruction.

Policy implications

This analysis of drivers and enablers for the teaching-learning of English in Pakistan, on the one hand, highlights current perceptions about the role and status of English in individual and national development in developing countries. On the other, it gives rise to two important questions for consideration by language planners and policy makers :

1. Is English here to stay? If yes, how can we, in developing country contexts, strategically plan for managing English for All with limited resources?
2. In order to achieve our goal of Education for All whose language should be selected and for whose development?

The first question is a simple one addressing the pragmatics of the current situation as it exists in many developing countries of the world. That is to say, the need for English is far beyond the current resources available for the teaching and learning of the language. If we agree, through debate and discussion at local and national levels, that literacy in English is vital for individual and national development, then it must have high priority on the list of educational reforms for any government.

In fact, a growing trend is to go beyond the basic question of whether to teach or not to teach English. The preferred question now seems to be whether all subjects should be taught through the medium of English. This is reflected in a 2005 debate sponsored by *The Guardian*, a leading UK newspaper, and Macmillan Education, a major UK and international publishing house.²

Content and Language Integrated Learning (Clil) and the use of English have moved from experimental research to the centre of global education. As pressure grows on governments and education planners to raise English language levels, the promise of teaching the language while teaching other subjects is hard to resist. However, at the same time we need to consider whether Clil is a Trojan horse which will drive English 'ever deeper into the heart of national education systems', as one of the participants in the *Guardian*-Macmillan debate wondered.

At the beginning of this chapter we noted that Brock-Utne, a leading advocate of education through indigenous languages in African countries, asks 'Education for all – in whose language?' She also asks (in the title of a chapter in Brock-Utne 2000) 'Whose language and for whose development?'. In this way, she challenges the view that English should be used as a medium of instruction particularly in early years. Accordingly, she raises issues of learning and intellectual dependency through the use of English in education in Africa and other developing countries. Several educators from Africa, as in the 7th Language and Development Conference, have voiced their concerns about using English as the medium of instruction. In particular, they urge us to consider carefully the effects on personal and national development of using the former colonial languages in education :

As long as African countries continue to educate the continent's future leaders primarily through foreign languages, they will remain dependent. Education for liberation and self reliance must begin with the use of languages that do not impede the acquisition of knowledge. This is a challenge for the 21st century. (Roy-Campbell 1998 cited in Brock-Utne 2000:173)

Similarly, Fanfunwa (1990 cited in Brock-Utne 2000:153), questioning the use of an imposed foreign language for communication instead of a 'familiar' language, postulates a relationship between underdevelopment and the use of a foreign language as the official language of a given country. Though there is no research evidence to

substantiate his claim, the relationship between language and development is certainly worthy of attention from linguists and researchers in the field.

A careful consideration of these two questions tells us that it is neither politically correct nor possible for education systems dependent on large amounts of money from international donor agencies in developing countries such as Pakistan to reverse the current trend of promoting literacy in English, similar to literacy in ICT skills, for development. As long as English remains the dominant language of power, a gatekeeper to higher level jobs and a 'window to the world of opportunities' at home and abroad, all the research evidence in the world will not convince parents of the usefulness of imparting education to their children in the mother tongue. A more pragmatic approach to addressing the growing state of language apartheid between English-medium and Urdu-medium education in Pakistan would be to develop bilingual programmes for achieving proficiency in both English and Urdu. A second step should be to strive for a balance between felt needs and available provision for the teaching-learning of English based on research evidence. Finally, debate and dialogue should be initiated with the involvement of linguists, policy-makers, practitioners and the public media on language rights and the relationship between language and development, with the aim of working towards a practicable language policy for individual and national development.

Conclusion

I would like to conclude with two questions that I hope will be taken up for discussion elsewhere.

1. Do we, in developing country contexts, really have the right to choose our own language for development? If not, how can people in developing country contexts be enabled to choose one or more languages for individual, societal and national development?
2. How can coherence be achieved between language policy and its implementation in developing countries?

The first question seeks to initiate a debate on linguistic rights in developing countries and indicates the need for empowerment in determining the choice of language for development. Linguistic rights, or more specific to this discussion, the right to the choice of language for education is meaningless and turns into a symbolic act if there is lack of coherence between the language policy and its implementation plan, as is illustrated by Taylor (2002) through his review of language-in-education programmes in Estonia and Africa. The second question, therefore, aims to remind us - language planners, policy makers, linguists and practitioners - of our responsibility to take up the challenge of drafting viable language policies *and* workable implementation plans for language-in-education programmes that aim to promote individual, societal and national development.

Notes

¹ See Pennycook (1999) for a similar discussion of language in relation to development.

² For details, see www.guardian.co.uk/guardianweekly/story/0.12674.1395532.00.html.

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Strand 2 : Language in critical and post-conflict contexts

Chapter 8

Language, disasters and development

Psyche Kennett

Introduction

The Palestinian *intifada*, the war in Afghanistan, Nine Eleven and the invasion of Iraq are all disasters (albeit of human making) that have contributed to the rise of Arab satellite TV and, in particular, the station Al Jazeera, thus bringing modern standard Arabic as a real, spoken language on a daily basis to fifty million viewers from Qatar to Western Sahara. For the first time, current events and an emerging Arab identity are the property of everyone, not just the privilege of an educated few.

No-one could have predicted the tsunami on 26 December 2004, the Indian Ocean's own Ground Zero, which killed over 300,000 people from Indonesia to the east coast of Africa and made millions more homeless. Language plays a key role in this disaster too, in the management – or rather mismanagement – of the recovery process. It is unlikely, in Sri Lanka at least, that something as positive as Al Jazeera will emerge. From a traditional post-Hiroshima stance, disasters lead to development, a chance to rebuild and upgrade. More recent research and experience shows that development is just as likely to increase vulnerability to further disaster as to decrease it.

Within this matrix I would like to explore to what extent *language* issues increase or decrease vulnerability to disaster, at the same time emphasising the importance of staying within the positive realm. The issues which I will present are those related to the introduction of the new Arabic and English curriculum standards for the State of Qatar as a direct result of the conflict in Iraq, and the role of English as the medium of the recovery process in Sri Lanka as a direct result of the tsunami.

Background

On Sunday 26 December, as the waters of the second wave to hit Sri Lanka surged around them, an Irishman and a Frenchman crouched on the roof of one of the few structures left standing on that particular stretch of beach, praying that the foundations would hold. Neither spoke. Refrigerators, plastic chairs, branches and all manner of debris swirled around them, and then suddenly, a German. They hauled him out, fortunately unhurt. Still no-one spoke. Finally the German said, 'I knew this would happen. At the beginning of the year my business went bust. Then my wife left me. Now this.'

I do not wish to make light of the fact that nearly 300,000 people lost their lives and millions more their homes and livelihoods on that fateful morning when the Indian Ocean tsunami struck. But that rooftop exchange encapsulates what has happened in the post-tsunami recovery process in northeast Sri Lanka : people seemingly united by language, English language, yet divided by their own personal perspectives. Three

hundred new non-governmental organisations flocked to the island; their representatives were visitors in a foreign land, making reality their foreigner's reality to send home to the people who had paid for it. In the process they lost sight of who their beneficiaries were, driven by the need to spend the money and satisfy the general public who had donated it, rather than the Sri Lankan coastal communities it was intended for.

By 27 December 2004, tsunami-affected communities had stopped asking for mosquito coils and cooking pots, sanitary towels and bed sheets, and started asking for information. Primarily they needed information on the disposal of dead bodies and on preventing the spread of cholera. I went to the World Health Organisation (WHO) website and downloaded pages and pages on both topics. There was no simple, translatable, one sheet, photocopiable page to be had. Yet surely the disposal of dead bodies and the prevention of the spread of cholera were common to all sudden disasters that kill and displace large numbers of people? It took several hours to encapsulate the information in simple, understandable text and several more to get friends to put it into Sinhala, but by the next day it was copied and distributed to all the communities I had links with in the south. People's relief to read that they couldn't catch diseases from the dead bodies, nor should they burn them, was palpable. It gave them the breathing space they needed to focus on the living. Why was it that WHO were unable to do this work themselves? What was the government thinking when they broadcast the same information on television? Everyone's television sets were at the bottom of the sea.

In the weeks that followed the tsunami, a Korean medical team turned up in Hambantota in the south west and an Italian medical team in Kinniya, in the north east. Neither team had ever worked in Sri Lanka before, nor could they speak English, let alone Sinhala for Hambantota or Tamil for Kinniya. Outside one camp, where a Swiss construction company was helping build temporary shelters, the company's name board spelled out in large black letters, 'Hovel Construction'.

Language on the surface, and all types of communication underlying it, play an essential, if undervalued role, in disasters and development. Many of the ideas expressed here on information exchange, the role of the media, the use of English, and the reduction of vulnerability in affected communities may not be new. However, the sudden onset of disaster - and the hothouse environment it breeds in response - require a re-examination of approaches and ways of working and a need to think more in terms of sustainable development from the inside rather than immediate relief from the outside.

Disasters in the media

From Katrina to Rita to Wilma, from the Indian Ocean tsunami to the earthquake in Kashmir, natural disasters and the ensuing humanitarian relief efforts dominated the headlines in 2004-2005. Natural disasters make good news stories. The sheer scale of the Indian Ocean tsunami, its sudden onset, the fact that the death toll kept growing and growing, the western links with tourists and tourist destinations, the high visibility, the novelty, the watery horror of the sea rising up in the way that it did, the Christmas holiday timing, and the relatively simple relationship between cause and

result, made it and sustained it as breaking news for longer than any other story in 2005. In three weeks US\$5 billion had been pledged and a second tsunami of international humanitarian organisations had been unleashed on Banda Aceh and Sri Lanka. Very few of these organisations had ever worked in Asia before.

News is driven by commercial television ratings. Newsrooms are part of a larger television network and, in this environment, impartiality and ethical in-depth reporting give way to sensational stories and 'infotainment'. When this trend is led by CNN and BBC World the process happens in English and the focus tends to be on former colonial countries where English is already spoken. In the same way, money from the Arabic world went to Pakistan in the aftermath of the Kashmir earthquake via the Arabic satellite channels.

Infotainment limits humanitarian appeals. The tsunami story was very different from Darfur, or what was happening in the Democratic Republic of Congo where more than ten times the number of people have died.¹ Complex, chronic, conflict-related disasters like these do not make good news, and so the money flows to the seemingly more straightforward destinations in South and South East Asia.

Now, in the aftermath of the tsunami, relief is transforming into rehabilitation and development, and longer term complexities - the fall out of too much relief - are making post-tsunami recovery in the conflict-affected North East Province of Sri Lanka equally unnewsworthy. Unlike Aceh, where the process has expedited the signing of peace accords, Sri Lanka's ceasefire has been weakened and community differences accentuated. The stalled post-tsunami operational management strategy (PTOMS), which was signed by the central government and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) and which should have strengthened the peace process, is now in litigation. Sinhalese Buddhist MPs, activists and monks, promoting an extreme nationalist Buddhist agenda, will ensure it stays stalled. How did this happen?

Post-tsunami complexities in Sri Lanka

In December 2004, the Sri Lankan government was virtually bankrupt. International aid money, untied to the normal good governance agenda, wiped Sri Lanka's debt, and effectively paid for the central government's war in its own North East Province, a war against its own people. The Sri Lankan rupee was bolstered and the economy looked bright. The huge influx of money followed by high profile visits to non-LTTE areas by Kofi Annan, George Bush Sr., Bill Clinton and the US Navy, gave the President and her nationalist Sinhalese Buddhist coalition government unmerited validation and support.

Buddhist hate speeches in the press against civil society peace builders working in the conflict-affected, tsunami-affected areas deflected attention from the government's failures in the tsunami recovery process. The government's centrally controlled, anti-poor resettlement process involved the creation of a controversial coastal buffer zone where no-one was allowed to build.² In the name of ecology and future disaster preparedness, the government was clearing the coastline of unsightly fishing villages, resettling people inland without access to the beach or their livelihoods. This was interpreted by many as paving the way for large scale tourist development. Further,

there was the question of unfair tsunami aid disbursement. Wealthier or more assisted Sinhalese communities in the southwest have rebuilt while many communities in the north east remain in inappropriate temporary shelters constructed mainly of corrugated metal without a shade tree or the possibility of land settlement in sight. Civil rights to property, tenure and non-discrimination have been eroded in the process.

Associated with this is the government's insistence on centralising the aid flow, and making international organisations, knowingly or unknowingly, support the central line agencies rather than the devolved local authorities. This process has worked effectively to recentralise the North East province and make the likelihood of devolution as a first step towards the signing of a peace agreement even more remote. The stalling of the PTOMS is part of this recentralisation.

The 300 new international non-governmental organisations (NGOs) which rushed to Sri Lanka within the first month of the disaster brought with them more funds (and therefore more power) than the more experienced, more conflict-sensitive bi-lateral organisations which had been working in the northeast of Sri Lanka for the past decade. This sudden influx of mainly inexperienced people with too much money, under huge pressure to please their respective publics, produced hothouse conditions for growing 'worst practice'. There has been ugly competition between international organisations to win the 'best' humanitarian prizes – housing resettlement contracts and the provision of fishing boats. The result has been too many boats and houses in easily accessible areas, too few for remote communities. Over-fishing is now becoming a problem and there is consequent disruption of local communities. Where once four men shared a boat, now all four have their own. Where once a house cost just over a thousand dollars to construct, now more than double that amount is expected.

Unethical practices, gross inexperience and disregard for basic 'do no harm' principles (Anderson 1999) have led to inflation in local rents, salaries, and building materials. Unethical poaching of best staff from local government and community-based organisations by international organisations has weakened already understaffed local authorities. Very little of the recovery work has been channelled through these authorities even though they are responsible for coordinating the recovery process at community level. Aid to tsunami-affected communities has created a huge disparity between tsunami-displaced people and war-displaced people, but most international NGO budgets are fixed and extravagant. They can be spent only on housing for the tsunami-affected, but this housing tends to be very lavish compared to what the conflict-affected communities have received from longer term development projects. In many cases, however, these budgets do not take account of the wider context; construction goes ahead without proper attention to town planning or provision for roads, sewage, or solid waste disposal. Lack of standardisation of house design accentuates community competition and jealousy along the coast.

Most importantly, local efforts in terms of relief, rehabilitation and peace building have been drowned in the tsunami of international aid. Competition amongst international organisations is one thing. But disempowering local communities and local authorities by taking away from them the opportunity for local ownership in the

peace and rehabilitation process is in direct contradiction to the precepts of humanitarian aid.

Disasters and development

Disasters can lead to development. In the case of Aceh, peace accords were signed on 15 August 2005 as a direct result of the tsunami. In the case of Qatar, the news agency Al Jazeera, set up in 1996, has grown steadily in popularity due to the conflict in the Middle East, since it provides informed news and views across the Arab world in an unprecedented way.³ Also in Qatar, as a direct result of the Iraq war, the Qatar national curriculum embraced a secular approach to the teaching of Arabic; a first in any Gulf State.

In Figure 1, Aceh and Qatar currently sit in the lower right hand quadrant ('Disasters increase development opportunities'). Movement from the bottom left hand quadrant ('Disasters reduce development opportunities') to the top right hand quadrant ('Development reduces vulnerability') is possible; this can be illustrated by the examples of Thailand and India where the governments refused international aid after the tsunami. The recovery programmes in those nations were thus well coordinated and had well-focussed outcomes.

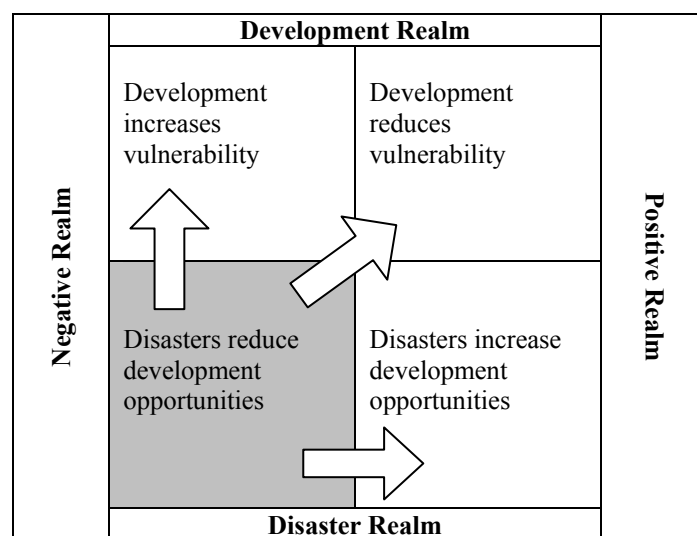


Figure 1 : The development-disaster matrix

The North East Province of Sri Lanka, however, currently sits in the lower left hand quadrant ('Disasters reduce development opportunities'). Sri Lanka suffered from a case of 'too many cooks' contributing to the relief and recovery process and the North East Province has become a war zone. If there is the political will to achieve and maintain a ceasefire, Sri Lanka could reposition itself in the bottom right hand quadrant ('Disasters increase development opportunities'). But if uncoordinated national and international relief efforts continue to weaken the ceasefire, then repositioning will be in the top left hand quadrant ('Development increases vulnerability').

In short, there are courses of action which can be taken after a disaster has taken place that can either propel the affected community forward or set it back even further. In the face of disaster, it is important for aid to stay within the positive realm, to work in ways that ensure reduction of vulnerability and an increase of development opportunities. This must be done by working much more from within, through local people, in their own language, with their own agenda. At the same time, communities need a more focussed rationale for the role of language⁴, the dissemination of information in the recovery process, and a better understanding of the benefits which advocacy and interventions from outside can bring.

Education reform in Qatar

The American bombing of Al Jazeera's offices in Kabul and Baghdad did not stop them broadcasting, and the news group has gone on to become a media phenomenon. Arab unity has become a reality through Arabic language and Arab reporting.

Another repercussion of disaster which involved language and development was Qatar's decision to rewrite its national school curriculum and secularise the teaching of Arabic. Having hosted the Americans during the Iraq war, Qatar was given assistance from the American rightwing think-tank, Rand, to develop a curriculum standards approach for schools which would incorporate English as a first language from kindergarten (nursery school) and secularise the teaching of Arabic. As the project progressed, Qatar's Supreme Education Council marginalised Rand as a partner but followed the advice of Rand's implementing partner, CfBT, to adapt the standards from English as a first language to English as a second language.

At the same time, the English standards for literacy and critical thinking in the curriculum were followed through in the Arabic standards. This meant a whole new way of teaching and learning Arabic, so that first language education could be used as a tool for critical thinking and for information transfer rather than – as had traditionally been the case – for the appreciation of literature or religion. Until the new curriculum standards were introduced, the Arabic language was taught in Qatar through texts from the Koran. Without the existence of graded texts in modern standard Arabic, the usual literacy standards for recognising different text types (narrative, factual recount, discursive and persuasive texts) or for introducing core vocabulary according to frequency, phonics and spelling rules, for example, could not be applied. This development for Arabic was a first. Curriculum standards had previously been introduced in Egyptian schools but left Arabic and religious studies untouched. In Oman, meanwhile, curriculum standards were introduced as a separate document, unrelated to the existing textbooks or examinations, which remained unchanged.

Qatar's quiet revolution was achieved by setting standards for Arabic without stipulating the texts in which they were to be exemplified, thus opening the door for curriculum developers to choose whichever texts they wanted. With an overt stipulation that critical thinking was to be encouraged, the Arabic standards, by their very nature, exclude the use of the Koran. As it would be highly unusual for primary and secondary school students to exercise critical thinking skills on the Koran – not only because of tradition but also because of the level and register of the language

used in religious texts – secular texts were needed instead. Parents were happy with this approach and were reassured by the fact that religious education had as many periods a week as Arabic in the school timetable. It was a win-win language and development situation.

Polarisation of recipients and donors in post-tsunami Sri Lanka

The examples drawn from Sri Lanka and Qatar are quite different, both in terms of the types of disasters that occurred and the positive and negative developments to which they gave rise.

In Sri Lanka, media reporting, information flow and the over-supply of relief resources to affected areas have polarised donors and recipients. According to Walter (2005), an over-reliance on hi-tech information solutions is insufficient; these must also be supplemented by locally appropriate low-tech information delivery methods. International hi-tech solutions to disaster include aerial views, early warning systems, internet research, management information systems, and the English media. But unless the data generated by these systems are communicated in comprehensible and appropriate ways (for example, through neighbourhood support systems) then the information is collected in vain.

Further, international organisations come in with preconceptions, with the needs of donors and the public they represent foremost on their agendas. They embody a desire for results and stories for viewers, and in this way they overlook the real needs of the beneficiaries on the ground. They are outsiders and their reporting distances the communities which they seek to ‘help’, rather than bringing them closer. They continue to view disaster-affected people as victims. They work, essentially, in an undemocratic way, often going for the quick fix and missing less obvious potential beneficiaries, participants in more complex situations. Competition with other donors erodes their respect for host communities’ needs and views. Donors are consumers of information but do not see it as their responsibility to give back information. They are givers of aid but do not see it as their responsibility to take on local ways of working. In this way the international organisations accumulate power for themselves. They work to increase their own dignity and kudos, and to provide feel-good stories for their publics back home.

Local, low-tech solutions to disaster include insider views and in-depth understanding of contexts and processes. These can be generated only through communication with local people, that is, people who are part of the affected community, not simply nationals from the capital who speak the local language. Working from the inside, such an approach turns people from victims to citizens with rights to determine decisions that affect them. It is essentially a democratic process. This approach empowers communities rather than international organisations, and prevents erosion of dignity. It builds coordination around local authorities and internal mechanisms rather than the parallel structures of central government or the rehabilitation projects themselves. It gives back ownership to communities and makes them responsible for their own recovery. In so doing it begins to eliminate the underlying causes of vulnerability in the first place, helping communities not only to recover from the present disaster but also to become less vulnerable to future ones. The insider

approach builds good governance by strengthening local authorities. It ensures civil rights to property tenure and non-discrimination through negotiated resettlement plans. It works towards economic recovery by linking resettlement to income generation opportunities that suit the under-represented and more vulnerable members of the affected community.

Local approaches to disaster recovery	International approaches to disaster recovery
<p style="text-align: center;">Insiders</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Local languages</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Detailed understanding of context, process, participation, reality</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Demand based</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Low-tech information systems</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Listening</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Giving information</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Democratic</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Process-based, leading to long term reduction of vulnerability</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Citizens with rights and dignity</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Reducing vulnerability to future disasters</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Power for the community</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Outsiders</p> <p style="text-align: center;">English</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Pre-conceptions and perceived rather than actual needs</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Supply based</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Hi-tech information systems</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Telling</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Taking information</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Undemocratic</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Quick-fix results, leading to increased vulnerability</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Helpless victims without dignity</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Increasing dependency and vulnerability to future disasters</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Power for the organisation</p>

Figure 2 : Local versus international approaches to disaster recovery

If international agencies are to work with local communities effectively in the aftermath of disasters, they need to adopt stronger policies on language, information exchange, rights based approaches and mainstreaming good practice. Despite the lack of time and the pressure to respond swiftly with its immediate focus on hardware and infrastructure, relief agencies need to work more as development agencies. Figure 2 indicates how agencies need to blend approaches and resources in order to combine the bigger picture with local needs.

In this way, international and local organisations can work together to provide relief first, followed by rehabilitation and then development on a demand-driven basis rather than a supply-driven one. With such an approach, relief lays a stronger foundation for development and development becomes more sustainable.

English for intermediaries not imperialists

Providing relief in English in Sri Lanka, where English is indeed a link language between warring communities, is better than turning up in Hambantota and speaking Korean or turning up in Kinniya and speaking Italian. However, to conduct a real needs analysis, to listen to each community's different needs, to provide psycho-social care, to make the relief process rights-based and democratic, and to provide advocacy, international organisations need to have a clearly thought-out language policy where local language plays a much stronger role.

This issue is not new to the Language and Development debate. It involves a wider understanding of the role of language in development, a need to know when best to function in the mother tongue and when best to use English. For English language

practitioners, we need to know why we are teaching and promoting the learning of English. We need to go beyond the popularist and simplistic argument ('because parents and governments want it'); this implies having a clear understanding as to which processes are better conducted in the mother tongue and which need to be conducted in a second (European) language. None of this is rocket science, but without making language policy amongst international organisations explicit, there is unwitting compliance with the hegemony of the World Bank, the Asian Development Bank, USAID (United States Agency for International Development) and Washington. English language use should be clearly demarcated as a tool for intermediaries not as a tool for new imperialism.

English has its place in the recovery process. It helps development actors coordinate information and intervention. It gives local people a voice in the international aid forum which will impact on their community. At present, for example, local government officials sit on the housing committees for the 432 post-tsunami resettlements in Sri Lanka. Very few of these officials are confident in English and so they never open their mouths in committee meetings. From the confines of their self-imposed silence they watch the Colombo NGOs, the international organisations, and the Sinhala-speaking central government housing agencies make decisions in English – the common language – for the communities which they are supposed to represent.

Even without the representation of the internationals, English is the language of senior management in Sri Lanka's public service. For the provincial government to interact successfully with the central government and negotiate the fair distribution of aid, unhampered by ethnic division, they must do so in English.

English as a tool also helps the public to audit international inputs. It helps public servants coordinate, monitor and evaluate international inputs and forces international organisations to become transparent. At community level it helps beneficiaries audit their own public servants as effective coordinators and intermediaries. As such, English makes good governance a two-way process.

For organisations such as the LTTE, who, in the event of peace, will move into provincial government, English is essential for them to achieve a credible shift from terrorist organisation to mechanism of good governance. At the moment the LTTE are beginning to question the limitations of their own Tamil-only language policy. When they do write in English, to get their message across to the international community, their writing is shrill and full of proselytising rhetoric. Rather than persuade, they antagonise. Their English discourse needs to reflect a new, more mainstream role, repositioning themselves as democratically elected local authorities, not revolutionaries with a mission. Without the right language to cover such a transition, the LTTE will not move successfully into government.

Conclusion

Just as there is a move afoot to make relief organisations include the 'right to information' as part of their support package, so it is time to consider recipient communities' 'right to language' in times of relief and rehabilitation. Language plays a strong role in disasters and development. In most cases this role is unexpected or

un-thought-through. For example, the United States continues to shoot itself in the foot by relying on English in Iraq and failing to have an articulate Arabic-speaking spokesperson to represent its policies on Al Jazeera and the like.

In the development context, international organisations need to rationalise and balance their use of English and local languages in order to include and empower the people they have come to assist. Disasters provide extreme conditions under which it is possible to re-examine approaches. Inputs and activities are force-fed in an emergency; weaknesses in approach quickly come to the fore. It is time to mainstream good practice, including insisting on the use of local languages for emergency situation needs analyses and turning aid into a demand driven process.

It is also time for aid and development agencies to engage in a measured and well thought through policy for English, and to overtly state it as such. In this way English becomes an effective intermediary tool for development, not an imperialist plot nor the default option of incompetents.

Notes

¹ According to Chris McGreal, writing in the *Guardian* newspaper on 15 November 2006, the estimated loss of life in the civil war in the Democratic Republic of Congo in the preceding ten years was four million.

² The buffer zone policy was very widely perceived to be anti-poor and led to widespread protests. The regulation was withdrawn in 2006.

³ Previously, the only international Arab-medium television service was provided by Saudi Arabia. This was pro-American and very rightwing. Al Jazeera, in contrast, upholds the precepts of good journalism while presenting a more liberal, two-sided view of the Arab world. Its reporting includes interviews with controversial political figures and shows images of the destruction caused by the American war.

⁴ This would mean, for example, insisting on the local language being used for emergency healthcare services from the outset, and a policy of inclusion and participation through the use of the local language or interpreters at all times for rehabilitation and community development work thereafter. Although the fundamental right to be able to communicate in one's own language in order to seek help after a disaster seems unquestionable, surprisingly little attention is given by aid agencies to this issue.

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Chapter 9

The role of English in the post-war development of Sudan

Mohamed Hassan Dardig

Introduction

The end of war in South Sudan after 45 years of bloodshed and disintegration has coincided with an age of enormous and unprecedented expansion in scientific, technical and economic activity on a regional and global scale. The relentless progress of scientific, technological and economic forces is generating a strong demand for language to play new roles in communication and development. For various reasons, the task has largely fallen to English.

Sudan is one of the richest countries in Africa in terms of its cultural and linguistic diversity : it is estimated to have 134 living languages (Gordon 2005). Of these, Arabic is the official language and the most widely spoken with about 80% of the population communicating in it (Abu-Bakr & Abu-Manga 1997). In some parts of the country, such as the South and the West, Arabic is used as a lingua franca for economic, political, religious, cultural and social reasons. Hence, Arabic is both an official and a national language.

In such a linguistically diverse country, languages play a crucial role in cultural and social identity. Although Arabic is the dominant language, the local languages have their own unique ethnic, cultural and social characteristics. Speakers of these languages feel proud of belonging to their ethnic groups (Hurreiz & Bell 1975). The Constitution (Republic of Sudan 1998: Part I, Article 3) and the more recent Comprehensive Peace Agreement or CPA (Sudan Tribune 2004) allow the development of local mother languages. The law permits the local Sudanese languages to be used as media of instruction in the first and second grades in primary schools in those regions where they are spoken.

Efforts have been made to maintain and celebrate linguistic diversity in Sudan. But questions which deserve investigation include the following. How well has policy concerning local languages been implemented? To what extent does Arabic influence the local languages? Are they well preserved as ethnic and tribal languages?

In the present chapter, however, our concern is with English. In the context of this linguistic diversity, what is the role of English in the development of Sudan? Why is English needed at all? Why should English not Arabic play a developmental role? What is the official policy concerning English? What is the popular attitude towards English? Is it positive or negative? These questions are asked in order to stimulate debate and discussion.

English in the colonial period

English was first brought to Sudan at the time of Anglo-Egyptian colonisation (1898-1956). The Christian Missions that settled in South Sudan helped spread English from the 1920s onwards. The Closed Areas Ordinance in the South of Sudan gave special privileges to the Missions between 1922 and 1948 and strengthened the role of English in that region. For this reason English was - and indeed still is - spoken better there than in the North. As a result of British colonialism, English became the medium of instruction not only in the South but also in the North at all educational levels. The demand for English expanded particularly after the opening of the Gordon Memorial College as a higher education institute in the 1930s (Beshir 1969).

Thus English became the medium for education as well as a vehicle for finding employment in the civil service. Locals who did not speak English had difficulty in being recruited into the civil service.

English since independence

English thrived and can be said to have reached a peak shortly after Independence in 1956. In 1958 General Ibrahim Abboud carried out the country's first military coup. He issued a series of resolutions, one of which decreed the opening of the Closed Areas in the South. He introduced Arabic as part of the curriculum in the South for the first time, although English continued to be the medium of instruction throughout the country. In summary, General Abboud made Arabic the national language but he maintained English as the medium of instruction. This situation continued until General Abboud was deposed in 1964 and throughout the following years.

The situation changed again in 1969, when Brigadier Gaafer Numeiry came to power following a coup. During Numeiry's regime, which lasted for sixteen years, the policy towards English fluctuated between positive and negative, in line with frequent reforms of the cabinet. Nevertheless, Numeiry retained English as the medium of instruction in the secondary and higher education institutes even though that decision was fiercely criticised by the Popular Islamic Movement that demanded that Arabic should be used instead. On the other hand, Numeiry insisted that Arabic should be used as the medium of instruction at the primary and intermediate levels in the South. This, then, was the first time that Arabic was used as a medium of instruction in Sudan since before British colonisation began in 1898.

Although Arabic was the official language, English continued to enjoy special status, particularly in the South and among the Northern elites. However, at the beginning of the 1970s, there were complaints about the decreasing standard of English in schools in both the South and the North (Hurreiz & Bell 1975). At the same time, Southerners were demanding access to Arabic because of the career opportunities which it offered them and because, without it, they were unable to pursue their education in the North (which is the economic and political centre of the country). There were complaints from Southerners about the standard of Arabic teaching in the region; they felt that their poor competence in the language compared with the Northerners would hamper them and put them in an unequal position (Beshir 1968).

Another shift occurred when the Islamic Federation joined the new cabinet in 1975, during Numeiry's regime. They managed to introduce Arabic as the medium of instruction in secondary schools even in the South. This decision was received with anger in the South because it was felt that this would put people at a disadvantage when competing with Northerners, especially in the National Certificate and the entrance examination for higher education institutes (Hurreiz & Bell 1975). Despite the protests, Arabic was established as the language of instruction at primary, intermediate and secondary levels throughout the country.

This language policy played a crucial role in the ongoing disputes which affected the country. Every government since Independence failed to find a compromise between the South and the North so that as time went on things became more and more complicated and unmanageable. We also need to bear in mind that the British colonial policy towards Arabic and the problems which the Sudanese inherited from the colonial era negatively affected popular attitudes towards English. There was a widespread tendency to prefer Arabic as a national and cultural language and as the language of Islam. Furthermore, some politicians and educators claimed that English was a symbol of colonialism and should therefore be avoided (Miller & Abu-Manga 1992).

When the Revolutionary Command Council for National Salvation took over in 1989, following yet another military coup, the revolutionary educational concept of Arabisation was introduced. This meant that Arabic was to be used at all levels of education, even within the higher education institutes. The Islamic Military Revolution aimed not only to introduce Arabic as a national, cultural and religious language but also to create a negative attitude towards English (Useem 1998). Of course, the civil war in the South, international sanctions led by the USA and the global capital system were further elements which helped the Islamic government in their efforts to change popular feelings towards English. The government tried hard to stop the war in the South. They also succeeded in mobilising a huge number of young people under the revolutionary Islamic term of Jihad. For almost eleven years, the mass media, cultural events and the educational curriculum were directed against America. Political oratory reached a peak, and public mobilisation for Jihad was the priority. The government also changed the education system from three levels to two : the elementary level with eight grades and the secondary level with three grades. English was introduced as a subject in the 5th grade of elementary school.

Peace agreement of 2004

At the beginning of the millennium, the Islamic government began to show signs of flexibility. This led to the start of peace negotiations and, eventually, the Interim Peace Agreement between the North and the South was reached in 2004. The Islamic government and the Sudanese People's Liberation Movement headed by Dr John Garang signed the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) which conceded for the first time that English was an official language. Once again, English became the medium of instruction in the higher education institutes (Sudan Tribune 2004). With the CPA, English is thriving again. It has an essential and effective role to play in the post-war era of development of Sudan.

During the interim peace of 2004-2005, Dr John Garang's speeches in English inspired the population, whatever the context in which he spoke. The Sudanese people admired his oratory, even though his speeches were in English, because they could understand his themes and believed in what he was proclaiming : a New Sudan of unity and solidarity, and a New Generation of Peace between the North and the South. Dr John Garang's speeches helped to revive the use of English after a long period of absence.

Another issue that has assisted in the revival of English is Darfur. The chaotic situation and the tribal disputes in that region have attracted the attention of international organisations. Many foreign workers have arrived to offer relief in the miserable situation in the western area of Sudan. Darfur has become the focus of attention of the world's mass media. Many non-governmental organisations have hired local employees. As a result, many Sudanese graduates have enrolled in intensive English courses to improve their language skills.

At the same time, throughout the country, vacancies with national and international oil companies, other firms and organisations are now being advertised in English, even when the advertisements are published in the local Arabic-medium newspapers. The demand for English is greater than ever before. The general public attitude towards English now is that it is the language of development and technology, not the language of colonisation and segregation.

Prospects for the future

The current situation in Sudan is still complex. The tribal conflicts in the West as well as political disputes in the East and the six year interim peace period between the North and the South all contribute to this complexity. Predictions and speculations abound. Investment opportunities are vigorously sought after, because of the multiple natural and human resources which are available.¹ Recent oil exploration in Sudan also indicates that there are reserves which, if properly exploited, could lead to major improvement in living conditions.

What the people of Sudan need and what they have been waiting for since Independence fifty years ago is a real economic take off. The original dream at Independence has faded. Ordinary Sudanese are simply concentrating on the struggle to survive. The periodic conflicts, natural disasters and political disputes have disrupted the nation and its kind and generous people. What people need now is a complete change in every aspect of life that will lead to a more positive future. English can contribute to this because of its neutrality and its economic impact.

Note

¹ The Food and Agriculture Organisation has said that Sudan has the potential to become one of the major 'bread baskets' of the world, producing on a large scale the food which other countries need.

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Chapter 10

Lessons from a training project in war-affected areas of Sri Lanka

Richard Lunt and Amy Hamlyn

Context

English is widely considered to be an ethnically neutral language in Sri Lanka, a country still not recovered from civil war, although its status is sometimes associated negatively with the colonial past. The nationalist policy of *Swabasha* ('own language') introduced in 1956 made Sinhala the only recognised language, with dire consequences for the Tamils in education and employment. The Burghers, a mixed group of Sri Lankan, Dutch and Portuguese origin also suffered under this policy.

Tamil and Sinhala are now both recognised as national languages, with English an 'official' language. Today, English is the language of business, travel and employment opportunity, and increasingly of higher education, and the general consensus seems to be that the neglect of English in the recent past led to the advancement of a few and the disadvantage of many.

School education in Sri Lanka comes under the Ministry of Education. There are central bodies in Colombo under the Ministry with special responsibilities. The English department of the National Institute of Education (NIE) is responsible for syllabus content, textbook production, assessment and teacher training, both pre-service, and in-service.

The country is divided into eight provinces. Each province has a department of education. The provinces are divided into districts (e.g. Jaffna, Trincomalee) and each district is further divided into zones, for example Jaffna has five zones and Trincomalee has three. Each zone has a 'Lighthouse School', a centre of excellence, (being increased to two per zone) and further support is provided by the network of 30 Regional English Support Centres (RESCs), which come directly under the NIE. In-Service Advisors (ISAs), who work at the departmental level in each zone with the Additional Directors of Education for English (ADEs), provide the quality control mechanism.

English language teaching (ELT) in Sri Lanka is undertaken both by cadre teachers, who have attended teacher training college, and contract teachers, who have not. Overall, there is a shortage of teachers, with the inevitable consequent doubling up of teaching roles. Recent moves to spread English medium teaching have highlighted the shortage of teachers able to teach in and through English.

The project

The Training for ELT Communities Project (TELT Communities Project, TELT for short) took place in the Districts of Jaffna and Trincomalee in the North and East of Sri Lanka respectively.

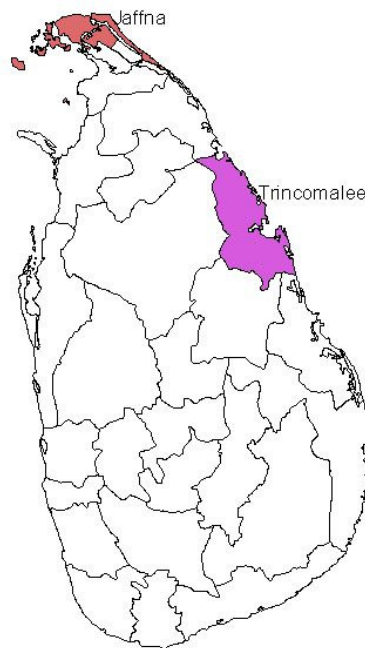


Figure 1 : Map of Sri Lanka

Both cities were severely affected by the 20-year civil war. Jaffna in particular has frequently been fought over between the government and Tamil Tiger (LTTE) forces, and was effectively cut off from normal life in the outside world for years. Trincomalee was periodically cut off, but accessible for much of the time, and so was more able to participate in the usual activities of normal life, such as teacher training.

With the end of active hostilities in December 2001 and the signing of a ceasefire the following February, Jaffna became accessible again, through scheduled flights and then the reopening of the road from the capital, Colombo. In April 2002 a group of trainers from the Sri Lanka English Language Teachers Association (SLELTA) - including the authors with Mariam Zarmalwal and Gerald Yorwerth of the British Council, and three Sri Lankan professionals, Nirmali Hettiarachchi, Ranjan Ratnapala and Chandra Chitrananda flew to Jaffna to deliver two days of teacher training. We were met with overwhelming enthusiasm, and numerous requests for more, and more long-term, training programmes. When Amy Hamlyn and Mariam Zarmalwal had the opportunity to visit Jaffna again, this time on a two-week teacher training course for two leading schools, they took the opportunity to explore these requests further.

They had discussions with a range of potential stakeholders – teachers, principals, zonal and district education authorities, and the staff of the Jaffna RESC. Realising that input and support from the Provincial government were essential, Amy and Mariam visited Trincomalee during their holidays armed with introductions from the district and zonal players in Jaffna. Both input and support were immediately forthcoming, for a teacher training and trainer training project, and Amy and Mariam set about designing this. At this stage they had yet to speak to the central government. The project went through several revisions, each checked with the stakeholders in Jaffna and Trincomalee, before reaching the form in which it was eventually implemented. It was at this stage that it was presented to officials at the Ministry and the National Institute of Education. The officials were supportive, thought that it

might fit into a larger World Bank project (which in the end was not implemented), but did not at this stage become champions. This was probably due to the smallness of the project's scale, in terms of modest aims, geographic limitations (and the Ministry in Colombo must be more aware of this than in most countries, due to the ethnic situation) and finance. The project was also presented to the Asian Development Bank, the World Bank, the UK Department for International Development and, successfully, to the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). The latter had a programme under its Office of Transition Initiatives which supports small projects such as that which is described here. Through this programme we were granted a total of \$117,000, plus a small extension after the evaluation of the project. USAID were interested in the proposal because this was a way of supporting activity in Jaffna without dealing with the LTTE (an organisation which is proscribed in the USA and other countries), and of assisting community building in Trincomalee by bringing together respected community members from the Sinhala, Tamil and Moslem populations.

The activities of the project are summarised in Figure 2.

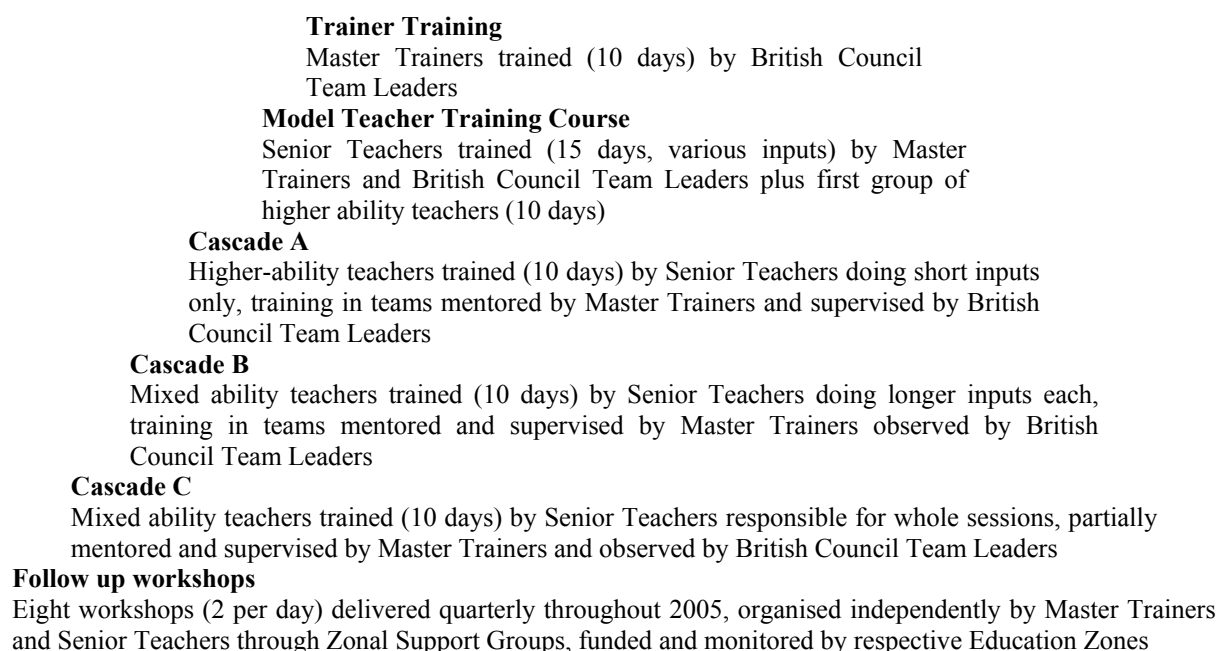


Figure 2 : Cascade model of training

The four 'Master Trainers' in each district, who were to become the trainer trainers at the apex of the cascade, started by being trained in mentoring, supervision, administration of training and classroom observation and feedback. They were next joined by the twenty 'Senior Teachers' in each district, the teacher trainers. Ten of the fifteen days input at this stage were concerned with the delivery of the teacher training course by the Master Trainers to the Senior Teachers and other experienced teachers. The Senior Teachers then delivered the teacher training course in three 'cascades'. It was the same group of Senior Teachers who delivered each cascade, taking on progressively more delivery time within a workshop. (Readers familiar with courses leading to the Cambridge Certificate in English Language Teaching to Adults or CELTA, where trainee teachers at first teach five minutes each, and are each teaching 45 minute slots by the end of the course, will recognise this pattern.)

Throughout each cascade they had training observation, feedback and support from their Master Trainer. This is very different from the cascade system of A delivering to B who delivers to C in a sort of Chinese whispers.

Incorporated into the teacher training course was observed teaching practice, with volunteer students after school hours, in which each Master Trainer would work with a group of five Senior Teachers, mentoring them as they developed their skills in classroom observation and giving feedback. By the end, each Master Trainer had received sixty days of trainer training and experience, and each Senior Teacher fifty days of teacher training and observation practice. In Jaffna there were 228 teachers and in Trincomalee 163 teachers (80% of the two districts' secondary English teachers of all contract types) who underwent the intensive ten day course.

Evaluation

The cascade model has come in for criticism in the past since, typically, the quality of the teaching or training decreases with each further delivery of the material. However, the TELT model of cascading differed from usual practice. Although there were new participants for each delivery, the trainers continued to be the same set of Senior Teachers. The Senior Teachers were encouraged to self-evaluate and were monitored closely by their mentors, the Master Trainers. The Master Trainers were in turn mentored by the Team Leaders. This allowed the quality of training to improve with each cascade, with the result that the Senior Teachers were eventually training with a higher competency than the training which they had originally received themselves. The close working relationships within the mentor groups facilitated by each Master Trainer enabled frank, constructive feedback to be exchanged. The Master Trainers had the opportunity to develop their credibility as trainer mentors whilst the Senior Teachers gained confidence and satisfaction from their training experience. The capacity development of two key elements in sustainable teacher education - a motivated pool of practising teacher trainers, and a group of experienced trainer mentors - constituted two major successes of this adaptation of the cascade model. However, this required a heavy commitment on the part of the Senior Teachers, who while training for TELT were obviously unable to teach at school. Although most school principals were supportive of the Senior Teachers' professional development there were a few who (understandably enough) felt frustrated at staff absences.

An external evaluation of TELT was carried out in 2005 by Psyche Kennett. The report on this evaluation identified the procedure for selection of Master Trainers and Senior Teachers as an example of best practice. The selection process began with the local authorities recommending a pool of candidates. Team Leaders then selected the best candidates from this pool by using a proficiency test, a written assignment (a workshop plan for potential Master Trainers, a lesson plan for Senior Teachers) and an interview. This procedure was localised, transparent, and as a result led to dissatisfaction being expressed by only one person from among all the candidates considered in the two districts.

We have spoken about the success of the project. We would like to support this claim by quoting the impacts listed in the evaluation report (Kennett 2005:5) and by supplementing these with additional information.

1) Substantial numbers of trainers and teachers were trained by the project in methodology for English language teaching.

As already noted, the project reached 80% of practitioners in the areas where it was working.

2) There was a strong sense of empowerment and professional achievement amongst project participants at the trainer-trainer, teacher trainer, and teacher levels.

One key aspect is that the training encouraged the use of a methodology and techniques which can be implemented with nothing more than blackboard and chalk. It looked at how to manage pair and group work in classrooms without a wall to separate one classroom from another, and with fixed rows of desks. Another important aspect is that the Master Trainers and Senior Teachers are now earning more as trainers within the system. The local department of education has recognised their skills as trainers and recruits them to deliver departmental training. Furthermore, all those involved in the project have increased their earning potential – a significant fact of life - through giving private lessons.

3) Provincial and zonal departments of education have promised to support continued TELT interventions in the future.

The north-eastern provincial authority budgeted funds for 2005 for the TELT teacher trainers to carry out follow up workshops under the TELT banner. In addition, immediately after the project, some trainers were deployed in delivering NIE produced workshops for the language/methodology upgrade of teachers in Jaffna. The provincial authority also plans to use the trainers for training and mentoring the contract teachers to be upgraded to full time English teachers. We should emphasise that the trainer trainers and teacher trainers were never taken out of the system, and so were in a position to immediately implement further interventions, whether these originated from TELT or from the government.

4) A professional community has been created across linguistic, ethnic and geographical divisions, speaking and teaching English to promote the same.

This outcome is best illustrated by quotations from participants themselves. For example, a teacher from Jaffna said :

I've chance of speaking only in English for ten days and I've got some English speaking friends.

It is worth mentioning that 94% of participants felt that there had been an improvement in their oral skills as a result of the course, and 84% felt that their written skills had improved. In addition, 84% of school principals said that their teachers were now 'very confident' in using English. Another participant from Jaffna added :

This was the first opportunity was available for us to meet almost many teachers from the whole of Jaffna district and share our ideas and discuss our problems after many long years.

Comments from Trincomalee in this respect are even more striking :

I have never moved with such numbers of Muslims and Tamils.

and

This TELT Project will help to regain peace to Sri Lanka to a certain extent.

5) A practical framework is in place for the supervision, planning, teaching, and training of English.

Mentoring of teachers and classroom observations followed by constructive feedback have been adopted as a formal procedure in at least one zone per district. Similar procedures have been adopted informally in other zones. This has gone a considerable way to resolving tensions between the support offered by RESCs and the work of the ISAs which, previously, had often been perceived as being closer to policing than advising. An improved understanding between these two wings is very much to the good of the service.

6) Human resource development at classroom, school, and training centre levels has been re-emphasised.

Let us turn to quotations again, first from a Master Trainer in Jaffna :

I have developed great confidence in me, that I can deliver any workshop on any given topic systematically and effectively.

A similar comment was made by a Senior Teacher in Trincomalee :

As a Subject Co-ordinator of English I'm confident to conduct a classroom observation and give constructive, appropriate feedback to the other teachers of English.

7) There has been an impressive number of staff promotions across the board as a result of attending TELT, strengthening existing systems and roles at zone and school level.

One Master Trainer has been appointed as Advisor to the Provincial Department of Education, two Senior Teachers have been promoted to Lighthouse Schools, one Senior Teacher has become an ISA, one Senior Teacher has become a Teacher Centre¹ Manager, two Senior Teachers have been promoted to better schools, and one Master Trainer has become Teacher in Charge in the Jaffna RESC.

8) Zonal Support Groups, school based mentoring skills and a programme of in-service workshops have been initiated to support teachers in schools and to sustain change.

These initiatives have been modified and have been taken up by a Lighthouse School in Jaffna, which is currently planning a 'Teacher Support Three Day Conference'.

We would like to record two further positive impacts of the project, in addition to the eight identified by Kennett (2005).

9) Experience has been gained in setting up and running large scale teacher training workshops.

The workshops were for the most part carried out in the districts rather than in Colombo. The experience which was gained has proved useful in the planning of further training inputs, such as the Lighthouse Schools' activity based programme for English, and the roll-out of large province-wide training programmes such as Activity Based Oral English training for primary school teachers.

10) There has been positive cross-over of the communicative language teaching methodology.

Being introduced to communicative language teaching ideas has benefited those who teach other subjects such as mathematics and science through the medium of English. Teachers also commented that the methodology could be applied to teaching Sinhala and Tamil, each a foreign language to the other community.

Discussion

We now turn to the interests of different stakeholders. Here we can speak with most confidence about the interests of the British Council. The Council is concerned to engage with and facilitate the development of professionals, often through their networks. In its Charter the promotion of the English language is a key plank. What could possibly be more central to the British Council's activities, then, than providing assistance to the development of English training communities?

Although in many countries part of the grant which the British Council receives from the British government may be used for purposes related to English language teaching, the British Council is fundamentally not a donor agency. It is, rather, an implementation agency. The Council was therefore delighted that, through this project, it was able to reach far beyond its teaching centres in Colombo and Kandy; this is something that would not have been possible without partnering a donor agency.

While USAID was not uninterested in the ELT focus, and the ultimate effect of project activity on children's education, they were more interested in the post-conflict aspects of the project. These were particularly manifest in Trincomalee, where through TELT the three ethnic communities came together in a professional context, as noted above. Jaffna, on the other hand, is no longer ethnically mixed. However, it is certainly a traumatised society, and the opportunity was there for a project that could reach all five zones of the district and bring teachers and trainers together for training for the first time after many years of geographical separation by the conflict. USAID were also interested in Anuradhapura and Polonnaruwa, border districts

where distrust of the peace process is at its highest. Thus TELT was (and is) much more than just an ELT project.

The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) is now taking over the baton from USAID. It is hoped that UNICEF will be able to fund TELT in at least seven further districts. Not surprisingly, UNICEF's main concern is with the ultimate benefit which the project has for children. Moreover, TELT's methodology fits in well with specific elements of UNICEF's international vision of a 'Child Friendly School' as 'an environment that is effective for learning' and which :

- 'Promotes good quality teaching and learning processes. This includes individualised instruction appropriate to each child and active, cooperative and democratic learning methods.
- Provides structured content and good quality materials and resources.
- Enhances a teacher's capacity, morale, commitment, status and income - and their own recognition of child rights.
- Promotes quality learning outcomes by defining and helping children learn what they need to know and teaching them how to learn.' (UNICEF 2007)

These elements are being incorporated into future roll-outs of the project.

Although the first implementation of TELT had strong support from the provincial authority, awareness of the project was low in the Ministry of Education in Colombo. That situation has since changed, and the Ministry of Education now values TELT primarily as a means for building up the skills of trainer trainers. The Ministry has worked with UNICEF to prioritise those districts where English O Level examination results are lowest, with consequent impact on access to further education and/or employment. The Ministry has accepted that it is not possible to produce a country-wide network of trainer trainers in a short time; it appears to be happy with the gradual implementation which TELT is providing.

The provincial and district education authorities, as noted, are already employing personnel from the original TELT project to carry out further training. This work is paid at a higher than usual daily rate, so the trainers themselves have benefited financially as well as professionally. School principals believe that the provision of ELT in their schools has improved. But what about the children? Two children were overheard talking about teaching practice classes, and one commented (in Tamil) :

If they taught us like this all the time, we might be able to speak English.

Meanwhile, a participant on the Trincomalee Model Teacher Training course wrote :

The children said they were enjoying the classes and even more children then asked to join the TP (teaching practice) class.

As the project team worked closely with the departmental level authorities (Zonal Additional Directors of Education for English), they could see the real improvement of teachers and trainers and realised the benefits of such training for themselves. For the project extension, the project personnel asked if they could participate in the materials writing training and IT training which was being offered to the Master Trainers and Senior Teachers. This request was of course granted.

Lessons learnt

In the preceding evaluation and discussion sections we have identified a number of positive impacts and evidence of success of the TELT Project. But what lessons to be learnt are there?

The first is that a bottom up approach to project design is of considerable value. The whole concept of TELT began with requests from teachers and was heavily influenced by the lower levels of the local administration. This approach benefited the project in two main ways. Firstly, it ensured that the project was relevant to the actual needs of English education at the district level, as we will illustrate later. Secondly, it meant that the project was small scale and localised enough to work entirely within the existing government system. It was not necessary to establish a parallel project bureaucracy; specially created project systems frequently create tensions with existing systems and then collapse after the lifetime of the project.

Another lesson to be learnt concerns the existence of a nearby British Council English teaching centre. In the case of Sri Lanka, the Council's English teaching centre is large, employing some sixty teachers. Some of these teachers are highly qualified; others possess considerable teacher training experience and local knowledge. All have a strong desire to achieve impact. The availability of these people made it possible to provide support to a relatively inexpensive (and Land Cruiser-free), locally responsive project possible. The project was thus funded by USAID and implemented by the British Council. Sometimes, light infantry is more effective than battalions.

A lesson was also learnt about the over-ambitiousness of the original aims concerning teaching methodology. The plan at first had been that teachers would move from teacher-centred low accuracy lessons to a student-centred high fluency model. Experience taught us that in fact it would have been more realistic to aim for an intermediate stage of student-centred high accuracy, since achieving high fluency turned out to be unrealistic.

Other lessons included the following :

- school principals should be briefed about the project in their native language rather than English
- a workshop on designing workshop materials should be included in the project
- estimates of travelling time should be realistic
- estimates of workloads for the Project Co-ordinators and Team Leaders should be realistic.

All of these issues have been attended to and we are confident that the project will continue to develop.

We would like to conclude by suggesting four areas worthy of consideration in the context of ELT in development.

1) Stand-alone projects are out of fashion with many donors, who prefer direct budget support or who put their funds into baskets with other donors to carry out specific tasks. The first method of course allows a government to set its own priorities and implement them as it sees fit. However, whilst the Ministry of Finance

may be happy to receive the cheque, officials in the Ministry of Education (or Health, etc) may experience difficulty in gaining access to the funds. Basket funding, meanwhile, works well as a means of channelling funds to a specific large task, such as school building. While any large project funded through either of these mechanisms may include a human resource development strand, we believe that small projects such as TELT can represent extremely good value for money. As Kennett states :

Small but highly professional projects, such as TELT, are efficient, easy to manage and great value for money. In education, where the goal is capacity building and human resource development, small often works best. (2005:47)

The risks of balkanisation and inefficient duplication, often associated with small scale projects, can be avoided by working closely with the authorities inside existing systems.

2) Those who design large projects have many strands to consider, and may not be fully conversant with local conditions and needs. However thorough a baseline study is, it cannot provide the same insights as are gained when working closely with stakeholders and finding out their needs over a period of time. It is the latter which has informed TELT. Indeed one of the most important factors in ensuring the sustainability of TELT was the sense of ownership experienced by the zonal education departments (among others), engendered by the fact that they were carefully consulted and involved in project design. (Another crucial factor contributing to sustainability was the fact that the scale of the project allowed it to operate entirely within existing systems.)

3) Related to this, note the inclusion of the term 'communities' in the project title : 'TELT Communities'. One of the keys to the success of this project was that it included all administrative branches of the education system as well as the teachers and trainers. There was consultation and involvement at every level. Thus managerial approval and support, essential for putting theory into practice, were obtained alongside the approval of the key beneficiaries, essential for realising the project aims.

4) ELT itself is out of fashion with many donors, although many governments and societies see it as a priority. While we should never underrate the importance of English language teaching, we must also keep in mind the priorities and aims of donors, and look for fits with these. The post-conflict community building aspect of TELT is a good example of this.

Giving teachers and trainers a chance to take an objective look at their own teaching methodology, their own classroom situation, the textbooks they use, and the teaching support they receive, opened the way for reform from within the system. Pressure coming from teachers and from those at local government level, pressure to look at textbooks, assessment, recruitment and so on, pressure based on chalkface realities : all of these are signs of a healthy system staffed by dedicated professionals. We hope that this small project will go beyond the human resource development achieved, and help initiate some of these changes.

Note

¹ Teacher Centres are training and resource centres for teachers in each zone.

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Strand 3 : Language and development projects and their design

Chapter 11

Words, power and the personal in development¹

Robert Chambers

Introduction

Change in our world and in development appears to be accelerating in many dimensions. Some of these changes are obvious and receive much attention, most notably information technology and communications. At the same time, other key areas of change have been relatively neglected in development practice and discourse. Three which have been little on the agenda of concern but which are now more and more recognised for their significance are :

- words – the words and languages used by development professionals
- power and the relationships associated with power
- the personal – what sort of people we, as development professionals, are and how we behave.

Words, power and relationships, the personal

Words, power and relationships, and the personal are interconnected in many ways (Figure 1).

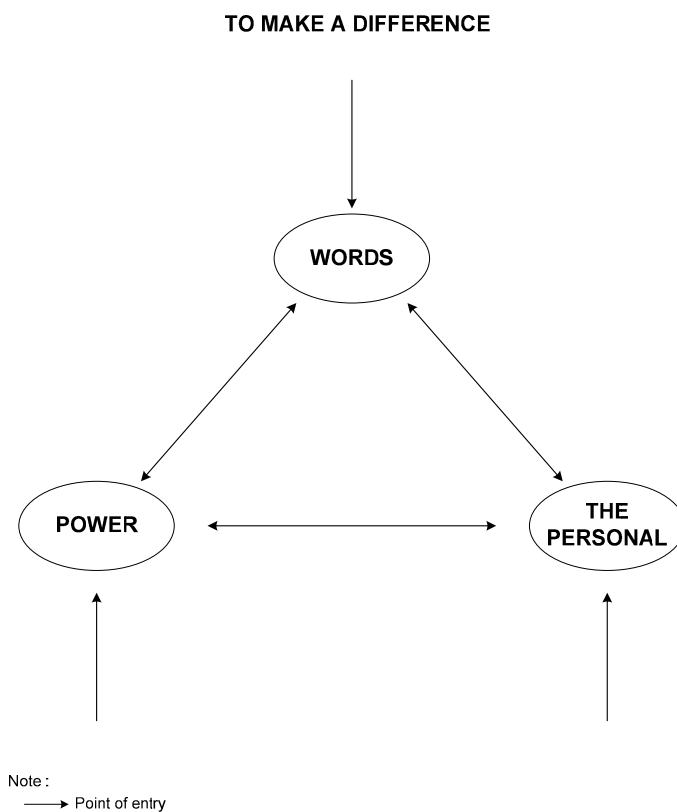


Figure 1 : Language and development

In *The Web of Being* (1996) Capra wrote:

The uniqueness of being human lies in our ability to continually weave the linguistic network in which we are embedded. To be human is to exist in language. In language we coordinate our behaviour, and together in language we bring forth our world.

Relating language, power and the personal thus raises questions as to whose language and whose words count. In whose language do we - or are we - compelled or induced to exist? In whose language do we - or are we - compelled or induced to coordinate our behaviour? And in whose language do we together bring forth our world?

The words and phrases used in development are instruments of power and reflect relationships. In subtle and not so subtle ways, languages can reflect power relations and realities. For example, social relations can be embedded in a language. A clear illustration can be found in English where the words for animals – ox, cow, sheep, ewe, ram, pig, sow – are those of the conquered Anglo-Saxon serfs who herded the animals, whereas the words for meat - beef, veal, mutton, pork – are those of the conquering Normans who ate them. And today, invasive and dominating languages which become lingua francas - like English, French, Russian, Spanish, Portuguese, Mandarin, Hindi and Arabic - marginalise and disempower those who do not command them well.

An example : a poor man in Northern Ghana with whom a colleague stayed on an immersion programme was frustrated that he had not been taught English. His own language, Pasali, was spoken by only 30,000 people. He had been arrested in Kumasi for urinating against a wall. He could read, but he did not understand the notice of prohibition against urinating because it was in English.

Another example : in the past, the staff of the international NGO ActionAid estimated that they spent a quarter of the year writing and polishing and correcting reports written in English. They felt, perhaps correctly, that they would be judged on the quality of their written English.

Differential command of languages can lead to mutual disrespect, with perceptions of arrogance on one side and stupidity on the other. Many of us will have experienced this on both sides. I know that I have been insensitive in speaking too fast or using difficult words with people for whom English is their second, third or fourth language. I am also ashamed to confess having declined to supervise a Japanese student in the first year of a two year course because his limited grasp of English misled me into underestimating him; in his second year, I took him on, and he wrote the best thesis of any student I have ever had.

New words, expressions and acronyms, and the realities or processes they represent, are continually being introduced into development. They act as instruments of power. Many of us will have experienced a sense of marginalisation when a new one comes along. This was my experience with *civil society*. At first I did not dare to use the term because I was afraid someone would ask me what it included and did not include. I did not know, and I still do not know, but I no longer fear being asked : it is

so widely used that now I could simply throw the question back to the person asking it.

Many of these words, expressions and acronyms travel and spread round the world through word of mouth, emails, websites and writings which are based in or originate from Washington DC, most prominently the World Bank. The verse 'Words of Power' remarks on some, all concerned with power relations, which are now widely used. by the Bank and by development professionals more generally.

Words of Power

We are the Talking Bank that names
Words for Development Bingo games
Masters of illusion we
Rule through our vocabulary

One proviso you must meet
You sit in the *driver's seat*
(But you must never ever feel
To find whose hands are on the wheel)

Ever to maintain our power
We frame meanings by the hour
Opposites for you and us
Yours are minus, ours are plus

Participation's all the rage
Use the word at every stage
You must please participate
In our planning for your State

Partnership we all agree
Reflects the way we want to be
Fraternally as bigger brothers
We're more partner than you others

Lending and loans we never name
Grants and loans we treat the same
Merging distinctions is professional
Donor funding is *concessional*

Mutual *transparency's* a must
To gain the benefits of trust
In practice it's a one-way fake
We see through you while we're opaque

Self doubt's strictly for the birds
When power weakens, change the words
We have confidence in our trick
Listening's our new rhetoric

Accountability we require
Of the lower to the higher
For us as uppers it's a plus
It means that you account to us

We're now the Listening Bank that cares
Wrenched with anguish, drenched in tears
As we harken more and more
To the Voices of the Poor

Ownership we now bestow
To countries under us who owe
The terms of ownership we set -
Debtors are owners of their debt

On our Empire the sun won't set
We are the Lords of Poverty yet

There are now so many of these words (see Table 1) that bingo² can be played with them in meetings or during seminars and lectures.

Table 1 : Selection of words widely used in development in past ten years

empowerment	globalisation	social capital	harmonisation	mainstream
participation	liberalisation	sustainable livelihood	delivery	rights-based
partnership	security	civil society	logframe	chronic poverty
accountability	capacity building	fragile state	effective	voice
ownership	pro-poor growth	state capability	stakeholder	corruption
transparency	budget support	social protection	citizen	results-based
driving seat	climate change	human rights	multi-dimensional	vulnerability

The list in Table 1 could perhaps be supplemented with a list of acronyms, such as the following :

CDD : Community Driven Development
 PRSP : Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
 PSIA : Poverty and Social Impact Analysis
 MDG : Millennium Development Goal
 RBM : Results-Based Management

Awareness of the frequency with which these terms and acronyms are used or over-used should encourage us to identify other terms and concepts which are important but still under-used. Such terms include ‘power’ and ‘relationships’.

Sometimes these frequently employed terms are simply dismissed as buzz words, as words of merely transitory importance. However, to do this may lead us to miss much of their significance for they both represent and can bring about shifts in orientation and thinking.

Six terms which have become particularly prominent in recent years are ‘participation’, ‘partnership’, ‘empowerment’, ‘ownership’, ‘accountability’ and ‘transparency’. All refer to power and relationships³, and all are used with hypocrisy : there is a gap between how the word is used and what it implies, and then what is done in practice.

Four ways stand out in which words are used as part of a power play in development :

1. *To legitimise actions* – as with these six power and relationship words. In the ***Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness*** (OECD 2005), the most commonly used development noun is ‘partner’ which (together with ‘partnership’) appears 96 times. The term ‘donor’ is close behind with 70 appearances and ‘aid’ appears with 61 occurrences. (This is discussed in more detail below.) Another example is the phrase ‘community-driven development’, which sounds good but which in practice often takes the form of top-down centre-outwards infrastructure programmes which are driven not by communities at all but by pressures to disburse, needing to spend funds before the end of the financial year (World Bank OED 2005). It is a commonplace that such target-driven development inhibits self-help, induces dependence and reduces ownership and sustainability.
2. *To maintain dominance*. People feel disempowered when new words, phrases or acronyms come in, and they neither know what these terms mean nor do they want to show their ignorance by asking; these terms often come as part of the baggage of new required conditions (in the jargon, ‘conditionalities’) or procedures which impose new burdens. An example is what has been described as ‘assessment overload’, the reports required from borrowing countries by the World Bank, of which in 2002 there could be as many as sixteen (Wilks & Lefrançois 2002:13).
3. *To camouflage and conceal realities*. A stark example is the last chapter of the ***World Development Report 2000-2001*** (World Bank 2000), concerning aid⁴. The World Bank is a lender and puts countries in debt. But the word ‘lender’ appears nowhere in the chapter, and ‘loan’ is used only in the context of rescheduling debt, and then only four times. Instead the terms ‘donor’ and ‘donors’ are used over one hundred times⁵, while loans are camouflaged through the phrases ‘donor funds’, ‘aid money’, ‘resource flows’, ‘concessional funds’, ‘concessional financing’ and

‘concessional assistance’. More recently, the conditionalities of aid - earlier ‘structural adjustment’ - have been relabelled ‘policy and programme lending’.

4. *To sanitise, stereotype or stigmatise.* CNN stopped calling Gilo, an illegal Israeli settlement on Palestinian land, a ‘Jewish settlement’ and instead used the comfortable, cosy, friendly term ‘Jewish neighbourhood’. Supplies of arms to Palestine are ‘arms smuggling’ but to Israel they are ‘defence supplies’. Another set of examples is the spectrum from ‘freedom fighter’ and ‘martyr’ through ‘belligerent’, ‘guerrilla’ and ‘insurgent’ to ‘terrorist’ and ‘murderer’; these terms are used in contemporary conflicts by each side to describe the other, blind to the irony of symmetry.

There are many other examples of such pejorative or positive labelling in development⁶, as Table 2 illustrates.

Table 2 : Pejorative and positive terms in development contexts

Pejorative term	Positive term
slash-and-burn	fallow farming
squatter	settler
encroacher	pioneer
poacher	commercial hunter
smuggling	cross border trade
illegal immigrant	refugee

Types and pathways of power

Four types of power can be distinguished (Veneklasen with Miller 2002:45) :

- power *over*, meaning the power of someone who is ‘upper’ over someone who is ‘lower’
- power *to*, meaning effective choice, the capability to decide on actions and implement them
- power *with*, meaning collective power
- power *within*, meaning self-confidence.

Despite common usage in which power is gained or lost, power is not like a commodity of which it is good to have more and bad to have less. Reality is more nuanced and complex. It is here that power and the personal dimension interrelate. More often than commonly recognised, power *over* can be used to transform power in ways which are not zero sum, with losers, but win-win, in which all gain. For power *over* also brings power to empower. See Figure 2.

When used in this way, there can be many gains for the ‘uppers’ (those who are dominant or superior in a context) : they can experience less stress, enjoy better relationships, and find pleasure in seeing what the ‘lowers’ (those who are subordinate or inferior in a context) are capable of. They can also experience greater efficiency and effectiveness⁷. The ‘uppers’ also have power, especially as parents and teachers do, through speaking, teaching and communicating, to name, frame and mould mindsets. Who does this naming, framing and moulding, how, and in what circumstances, and who is empowered or disempowered, are areas for further

exploration and analysis. Most commonly it originates from uppers – the World Bank, aid agencies, intellectuals of various hues – and expresses and forms their mindsets and shapes their actions and those of others. And this may empower or disempower the lowers, depending on purpose, context and process.

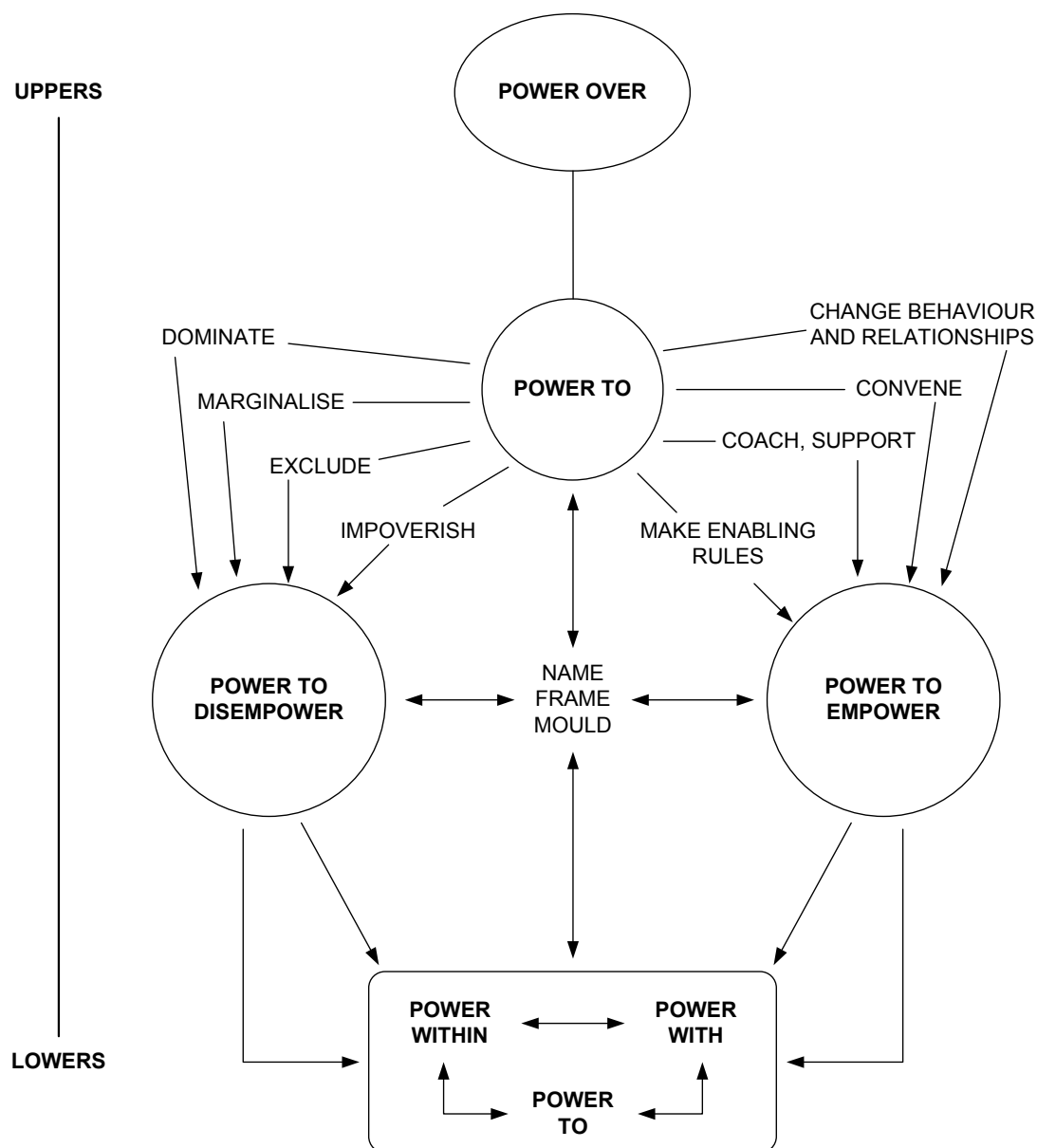


Figure 2 : Types and pathways of power

In all this, the effects of the adoption and legitimising of words are not trivial. ‘Globalisation’ and ‘liberalisation’, when used or assumed as motherhood words, can be used to justify a cluster of often questionable policies. Conversely, the adoption and legitimising of good governance, and the repeated naming of corruption, have brought into the open issues that were previously hidden and that have needed to be confronted. The power to name and frame, and to mould and orient mindsets, itself has to be named, recognised and consciously used for good purposes.

Words used in development can be embedded through repetition, as we noted earlier. The *Paris Declaration* (OECD 2005) is a striking illustration. Though a short

document, the density of key words is striking. For that document, a sentence can be composed of frequently used nouns and verbs as follows :

To monitor indicators of effective performance from aid, donors and partners need the capacity to manage the mutual harmonisation of programmes to assess, measure, and report on results⁸

Paradigmatically, this is a mechanistic world with organisations rather than people where aid effectiveness is to be achieved through top-down standardised bureaucratic norms, with measurements and upwards reporting of results

A shadow sentence can be made up of words that do not appear in the *Paris Declaration* :

To **negotiate** and **evolve agreements** that **optimise outcomes** for **poor, vulnerable** and **marginalised people** requires **compromises** and **trade-offs** based on **personal conviction, interactions** and **relationships** that **nurture trust**, and **reflective appreciation of power** and **conflicts**.

Paradigmatically, this is a world that names and recognises the realities and significance of power, trust, negotiation and relationships in aid (see for example Eyben 2006), and above all of poor people. Many words, like those in the shadow sentence, are candidates for future use.

An agenda?

There will be many ideas about an agenda for analysis and action. Here are six ideas presented rhetorically as questions.

1. *Enhance and celebrate linguistic richness and diversity?*

The Inuit are said to have at least 63 words or expressions to describe conditions of snow (de Boinod 2005:166-167). At a recent party, an Indian and a Nepali identified eighteen Hindi words or expressions for different forms of non-violent protest. Somali words for different degrees of thirst are said to be numerous. We need to celebrate the richness of perception and discrimination of such diversities. A brilliant example was the front page of the London-based newspaper *The Independent* on 26 July 2006 headed '26 pupils. 26 languages. One lesson for Britain' which showed 26 pupils from the same primary school⁹, and all their 26 different native tongues.

We also need to respect people's priorities for learning English, which increasingly is the language of power, of access, of the market, of employment.

English as the inexorably dominant global lingua franca has adopted many words from other languages. Many concepts in other languages, like 'ubuntu'¹⁰, have much to offer but have not yet been adopted to a significant degree. It is a question whether we should make more effort to enable very young children, at the stage when they can easily learn languages, to be brought up bilingually or multilingually. Should we,

development professionals and uppers generally, enhance and celebrate linguistic richness and diversity?

2. *Narrow gaps?*

Much can be done to narrow the hypocrisy gaps between words and actions. This can apply especially to the words associated with power, like the six frequently used words which we discussed above. In international aid, this applies most starkly to 'partnership', a word used repeatedly to describe manifestly unequal relationships (Eyben 2006). Should narrowing such gaps - by challenging those with power to define what the words should mean in terms of their relationships with their 'partners' - be at the core of a campaign to improve aid?

3. *Non-verbal and visual communications?*

Should we use video, theatre and other forms of communication, given their potential for enabling weakness to speak truth to power, and for power to learn? Participatory video has shown a big potential here, with local people, literate or non-literate, displaying remarkable capabilities to express themselves through taking videos (Lunch & Lunch 2006). Theatre, puppetry and mime also enable people who are subordinate to speak truth to power (Abah 2004, McCarthy with Galvao 2004). Should we, development professionals, do much more to encourage such creative forms of communication through drawings, diagrams, theatre and video, especially where they can empower and give voice to those who are weak and marginalised?

4. *Define terms?*

Jargon can be useful technical and professional language for some, and unintelligible gibberish to others. Often it empowers some and disempowers others. Should we insist on glossaries of terms in papers and reports as a matter of course and of good professional practice? How many terms have I used in this paper which I should have either omitted or explained?

5. *Introduce and use words proactively?*

Expressions like 'social capital' (especially in the World Bank) and 'sustainable livelihoods' (especially in DFID, the UK Department for International Development) have served internal political purposes in power relations, enabling a degree of levelling with dominant economics and economists, and providing an acceptable common ground which is not owned by any one discipline.¹¹ When invited to name positive words expressing concepts, values and actions that they would like to be become common in development discourse, participants in workshops have often proposed and given high scores to the following :

critical	empathy	ethics	honesty
humility	justice	listen	love
peace	reflect	redistribution	respect

6. *Address the personal dimension?*

Changes in attitudes, behaviours and mindsets are so obviously fundamental to good change that they tend to be overlooked. See Figure 3.

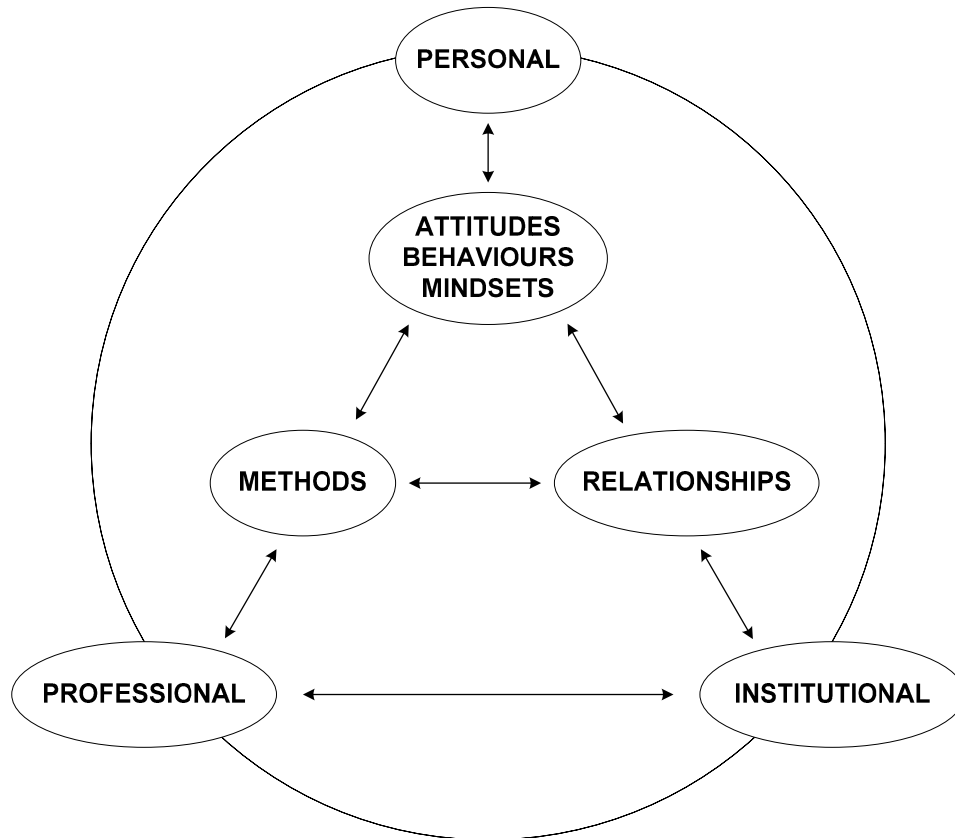


Figure 3 : Dimensions of change

What happens and does not happen in development practice so manifestly depends on development actors and what they do and how they do it and what they do not do, what they say and how they say it and what they do not say, and on their behaviours, attitudes, mindsets and relationships, that it is nothing short of bizarre that these personal aspects have received so little attention. Should they, not least in the domains of language and development, now be placed centre stage? And are the words which we use and the uses which we make of our personal power a place to start?

To ask these questions is embarrassing for I do not do what I say. However, you will recognise that I cannot help having been born English, and will know that for the English hypocrisy is an art form. So, if you are generous and understanding, you will appreciate that I am only practising and affirming my national, or perhaps more accurately tribal, culture, in ending with Gandhi's challenge to us all :

We must become the change we wish to see in the world.

Notes

¹ This is an expanded and revised paper based on notes of and diagrams from a talk given at the 7th International Language and Development Conference, Addis Ababa, October 2005. I have introduced a little material which has appeared since that Conference.

² In bingo, also known as housey-housey and tombola, players have sheets with columns of numbers which they tick as they are called out. The first person with a completed column shouts 'bingo'. With these development words the cry could be 'development'.

³ For recent sources on power and relationships, see Eyben 2006 and Eyben, Harris and Pettit 2006.

⁴ For a fuller analysis of the cosmetic and dissembling use of language in the World Development Report see Chambers 2001.

⁵ The World Bank is mainly a moneylender but calls itself a donor. It is a nice irony that anyone in the World Bank who described a moneylender in a developing country as a donor might be met with incomprehension.

⁶ For the power of labelling in development practice see Eyben and Moncrieffe 2006.

⁷ For a fuller treatment of gains to 'uppers' from empowering 'lowers' see Chambers 2006.

⁸ The frequency with which each of these key words appears in the *Paris Declaration* is shown in brackets : 'To monitor (18) indicators (30) of effective (38) performance (17) from aid (61), donors (70) and partners (96) need the capacity (20) to manage (17) the mutual (12) harmonisation (21) of programmes (22) to assess (16), measure (11) and report (11) on results (20).'

⁹ The school was Uphall Primary School in Ilford, UK.

¹⁰ 'Ubuntu' (Nguni language of South Africa) = humanity, mutual interdependence, 'I am because you are'.

¹¹ For a summary of the institutional and power-related functions of the terms 'social capital' in the World Bank and 'sustainable livelihoods' more generally, see Chambers (2005:200-201) which also gives sources.

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Chapter 12

The dangers of matrix thinking in international curriculum project design

Adrian Holliday

Introduction

In this paper I look critically at what might be called stakeholder-centredness. Despite the desire to be inclusive and collaborative in the consideration of stakeholders in project planning, the result may be the opposite. With the ascendancy, in the late 1980s, of a particularly powerful technicalised professional discourse concerning how projects should be run, which became known as projectisation, the efficiency of curriculum ventures may have become dependent on writing stakeholders into the project plan rather than making the plan sensitive to the stakeholders. This state of affairs may be difficult to manage because all parties become implicated in a form of 'matrix thinking' which pervades the entire lives of projects. Furthermore, although it is not the intention of any of the involved parties, matrix thinking, projectisation and stakeholder-centredness can involve a deep 'us'-'them' ethos in which the project seeks to 'correct' the cultures of so-called stakeholders by 'involving' them in a pre-specified project culture. In this sense, the project becomes a microcosm of a well-thinking West trying to reform the behaviour of the world.

This paper is written within the context of a broader study of cultural chauvinism, or culturism, in international English language education, and the attendant ideology of native-speakerism in which the 'non-native speaker' Other is constructed as culturally problematic. In that study I describe how the common discourse of learner-centredness, as promoted in the English speaking West, has become controlling and culturally corrective in its prescriptions of how students ought to behave in the classroom (Holliday 2005).

Stakeholder-centredness and matrix thinking

Curriculum projects which involve funding from foreign agencies present a similar set of circumstances in the way in which they are constructed by curriculum planners. I wish to argue that there is a dominant discourse which embodies the following thinking: 'Let's take special care to include local stakeholders in a special way because they are culturally different'. Implied in 'culturally different' is the notion that '*they* are culturally problematic', which in turn implies that '*they* are culturally deficient'. I base this view on the way in which 'local' stakeholders are referred to in a range of articles in language in development, where the Self of the curriculum planner is characterised unproblematically as 'expatriates', 'native speakers' and 'experts' who are always proficient in the technology, can manage, research, plan, evaluate, organise, train, and have the power. In contrast, the foreign Other of the stakeholders is always 'local', 'insiders' and 'non-native speakers', who 'don't know the technology', are 'easily dominated' and 'need to be trained', treated sensitively, understood, involved, given 'ownership', and 'empowered'. Their cultural difference is constructed as

'hierarchical', 'collectivist', 'uncritical' and 'undemocratic' (Holliday 2005:19, citing Pennycook 1999). Two factors place these descriptions of stakeholders within the domain of a constructed *generalised Other* rather than within the domain of actual characteristics which differentiate particular national groups. First is the startling regularity with which the same descriptions recur regardless of national groups. Second, these descriptions are the negative of what a Western Self imagines itself to be. Pennycook (1998:10-16) traces this myth of the 'resourceful', 'inventive', 'organised' Self to the archetypal narrative of Robinson Crusoe who liberates Man Friday from the 'savage, 'native', and indeed 'cannibal' Other of his fellows. Evidence of the problematic status of these constructions is seen in Kubota's (2001:17-20) description of how the same characteristics are used to describe under-achieving schoolchildren in the US.

Hence, a notion of 'stakeholder-centredness', despite the intention to be inclusive and democratic, is a planning-led, rather than stakeholder-led, desire to control curriculum behaviour. The particular type of control takes the form of what I will term matrix thinking, in which, since the advent of projectisation in the late 1980s (Harrison & Munro 1997:132), the 'integration of participants' (Rea-Dickins & Germaine 1998:5-9), sometimes in the form of 'counterpart training', is incorporated into a framework along with 'timelines', 'outcomes', 'indicators of achievement' and so on. Because in many ways the matrix becomes a fictional construction. Its power is such that, as with the English-speaking-Western discourse of 'learner-centredness', we find ethnocentric definitions of 'autonomy', 'esteem', 'decision making' and 'participation', which I shall show examples of below.

I would therefore like to suggest that the term 'stakeholder' has itself become tainted within this dominant discourse, and that curriculum planners need to work with *people* in ways which resonate with their realities. Because *people* can so easily become outsiders to this projectised discourse, planners need to find ways to appreciate and understand the counter discourses to which such people are reduced.

In Holliday (2005) I draw on evidence from autobiographical accounts of my own professional development, the personal accounts of colleagues who have been involved in curriculum projects as recipients, and qualitative data from studies of curriculum projects. This data often takes the form of reconstructions, which, I argue elsewhere, can be very effective in getting at counter discourses which are not always immediately evident (Holliday 2004). Use of excavations of my own professional history is indicative of the fact that I feel as implicated as anyone else in the damaging aspects of this dominant discourse. My intention is not to accuse, but to draw attention. In this paper there is only room for a few extracts of data which represent only a small part of a larger thick description. I shall present the data either as examples of the dominant project discourse or as the counter cultures which find themselves in opposition to it.

Dominant discourse: imagining deficiency

My first extract of data from the dominant discourse is from a report I wrote while working on the Damascus University ESP project in the early 1980s. Here I describe my frustrations while collecting information to inform project decisions :

The informants were excessively difficult to get hold of; they often did not have the information required, other than in the form of personal opinions, anecdotes and perhaps fabrications to conceal their ignorance; they frequently disagreed with each other, leading the researcher to continuously seek other 'more reliable and in-touch' informants; and they often did not really grasp the purpose of the research (if they did, they were more interested in providing their own theories on how the ESP problem should be solved than providing information). (Cooke & Holliday 1982:6, cited in Holliday 2005:118)

The informants, who included 'faculty deans, heads of departments, subject lecturers, English language teachers' as well as students (Cooke & Holliday 1982:6), are seen here as a constraint to the efficiency of the project. The description is unnecessarily negative. It gives the impression of a deficit local culture, where people are '*excessively* difficult to get hold of', where 'personal opinions' and 'anecdotes' are linked with 'fabrications', concealment, unreliability, and disagreement in the sense of lack of resolve, and, finally, where people lack the mental ability to 'grasp' something as 'straightforward' as the intentions of the project. At this time I had not yet worked in a British university where this sort of response to an intrusive investigator would also be normal, as it would in many walks of life in many cultural settings. In one sense this extract can be read as an account of the shortcomings of an 'orthodox', positivistically 'scientific' approach to investigation when applied to people who are getting on with other things.

Counter culture : Only technical involvement

The second extract is a Serbian teacher's account of being a recipient of a British curriculum project in Eastern Europe. She initially experienced a degree of awe at the technology implicit in the discourse while at the same time refusing to be taken in by the matrix :

My first encounter with the words 'stakeholder', 'counterpart', 'project input and output', 'knock-on effect', etc., was when I was involved in a British ... project as a 'local counterpart'. Before the project began I was sent by my Department to the ... [aid agency] to a meeting about project design. I remember looking at the forms to be filled in and trying to understand them. I was amazed at the level of detail to be specified and the amount of thinking ahead that had to be done in terms of the outcomes and effects. It all seemed extremely professional to me. (Email interview)

She then expresses scepticism at how far the forms, documentation and plans could relate to the reality of her department :

But I was surprised at the implication in these documents that somehow the project should have a more far-fetching and long-lasting effect on a larger scale than I saw it could really have. I remember thinking 'that must be the way things are done in the West and that's why things there are so efficient.' At the same time, I felt incapable of contributing much because the world presented in those documents was very different from the one in my Department.

There is a sense here that she felt she was being overwhelmed by a force which somehow had interests above and beyond her own and in which she had no place or ability to contribute. She then analyses the role she imagines the British planners had seen for her :

Looking back, I now understand that the idea was to involve the ‘stakeholders’ from the beginning of the process of project planning. A good intention, I agree. But my involvement as a stakeholder was only technical. I had no tools that would enable me to contribute in that kind of process. And the contours of the process had already been determined.

Her feeling that the ‘contours’ of the project had ‘already been determined’, despite the good intentions of the planners, gives the impression that ‘involvement’ of the participants was only secondary to the processes of the matrix :

I think this is part of a wider process of bureaucratisation of all processes including educational ones, in the name of greater efficiency. But when there is a project involving an agency aiming to be very efficient and an institution in a country where efficiency understood in that sense is not high on the priority list, then it becomes extremely difficult for people who actually work on the project to collaborate even if they share a common goal. (Email interview, cited in Holliday 2005:129)

Whereas the matrix has a singular idea of ‘efficiency’, there may be other concepts of efficiency that it does not recognise. All in all we can see that she has a deeper understanding of what is going on than the project planners appear to have. Whereas they are caught up in the internal processes of the matrix, she is able to stand outside and see the matrix as an ethnocentric discourse.

Counter culture : Disrupting the existing order

Another example of a counter culture is described in Grimshaw’s qualitative study of a textbook project in China which he had himself been involved in as a planner and later returned to for a more critical look. As with the example above, we see the recipients seeing through the dominant discourse and indeed manipulating it. However, at the same time, we see the project irresponsibly and perhaps unwarily disturbing indigenous structures :

It is difficult to determine whether the younger Chinese members of the project team sincerely believed in or even truly understood the principles of ‘Communicative Language Teaching’. Nevertheless, these young lecturers were able to manipulate the discourse of CLT in order to obtain power and influence within the School of International Studies. ... In this way the project weakened established power-knowledge relationships within the institution and enabled the project team to side-step some of the usual protocols of the host institution. (Grimshaw 2002:291-2, cited in Holliday 2005:125)

It may often be the intention of projects to see such disruption as an agent of change; but this account from Dr Ansari concerning a project he was involved in shows how

important professional integrities can be damaged. He was a university lecturer who was employed by the funding agency as a textbook writer in a project located in another university¹. However, he became angry when he found himself in a line management situation, imposed by the project, in which he became junior to another university colleague he considered his equal :

Ansari said that this was divisive and a clear example of the funding agency trying to 'invade' the university with its own hierarchy. He had only agreed to work with the project on the basis of collaborating with colleagues from other universities whom he had always considered his 'equals'. Furthermore, his institution wasn't getting paid; and he had to leave all his teaching behind, to pile up for his return. His university was not prepared to employ someone else to take his classes until they got paid by the project. (Project notes, cited in Holliday 2005:124)

He also never got his travel expenses.

Insiders become outsiders to the dominant discourse

In the same project as Dr Ansari, Dr Rustam was the university academic who was employed by the funding agency to run the project locally. However, she soon found herself an outsider to the matrix thinking imposed by the agency. Rustam had already instituted a qualitative evaluation scheme involving lecturers as researchers :

Rustam described her evaluation scheme as an ongoing *process study* which was 'inclusive', 'democratic' and invited all parties to make contributions at every point, in which the design of the textbooks would be 'jointly negotiated', and which involved 20 'lecturer-researchers' in carrying out qualitative observations of their own classes and those of colleagues. (Project notes, cited in Holliday 2005:120)

However, Gabby, the external evaluator, found this home-grown scheme problematic because it did not conform to the quantitatively accountable models favoured by matrix thinking :

Gabby had grave reservations and felt that Dr Rustam's scheme 'lacked clarity and precision', was 'not sufficiently thought through' and made no provision for a 'systematic assessment' of the existing curriculum. She recommended that the lecturer-researchers should be trained to carry out a quantitative *baseline study* which should include systematic classroom research. She requested information about 'the composition and responsibilities' of the lecturer-researchers, how far they had been 'exposed to the necessary skills', and evidence that they 'understood' what the evaluation entailed. With regard to the new textbook, she also wanted to know the 'criteria for text selection and text evaluation', the 'explicit objectives of the textbook', and whether or not the lecturer-researchers were aware of them, and whether a representative sample of the texts and tasks were [sic] being 'trialled with representative types of classrooms and students'. She also insisted that the 'data should be analysed, documented and shown to all stakeholders'. (Holliday 2005:121)

Rustam's counter culture response was that Gabby's approach to evaluation was inappropriate for the university milieu. Counter to Gabby's concern that the lecturer-researchers were not sufficiently trained, in a seminar organised by Rustam to report the qualitative evaluation findings, there was clear evidence of considerable research expertise :

Some of the lecturer-researchers made very formal presentations by reading out from ethnographic observation notes they had made during their own classes or while watching colleagues trialling draft units of the new textbook. These were quite meticulous, observant descriptions of both teacher and student behaviour and methodology. (Holliday 2005:122)

Dr Rustam's outsider position with respect to the matrix was further evidenced in her conflict with the funding agency about what she considered to be 'incomprehensible' project documentation. The response from funding agency personnel was that the University people were too 'lazy' and 'stuck in their antiquated hierarchies and ivory towers' to be bothered to read the documents. Rustam wanted face-to-face meetings; they said that they did not have time. (Holliday 2005:127)

Solutions

Preventing the matrices of projects from alienating so-called 'stakeholders' is bound to be a complex affair. Improvement is unlikely to result from tweaking the planning process, as matrix thinking is deeply embedded in the desire to plan efficiently. What is needed is a raising of awareness of the dangers and a side-step into a new way of thinking. Elsewhere I call this a 'Position 2' – a new alternative to the default, standard position (Holliday 2005:11).

In Position 1, which, as I suggested at the beginning of this paper, is culturist, and, where English language is concerned, native-speakerist, planners attempt to solve the 'problem' of the Other culture which does not fit by strengthening the matrix and finding better ways to incorporate people into the matrix. Position 2 would be very different. It would involve finding better ways of understanding, the appreciation of the counter cultures which have previously been forced underground by matrix thinking. On the basis of the sorts of data which I have found particularly valuable in revealing the issues discussed in this paper, I would suggest critical qualitative research as a means for increasing this understanding. A good example of this is Wu's (1992) study of the way in which curriculum change in a Chinese university is really carried via the informal conversations of teachers in their homes, away from the formal site of the curriculum, and Ge's (2004) study of how teachers in her department in another Chinese university are not at all as described in the standard Western stereotype.

Of course, what is significant about Wu and Ge is that they are not themselves project planners, but have been the recipients of the matrix. Considering their critical contribution, we might also think what the recipients of projects might do to preserve and present their positions more forcefully. If they subscribe to matrix thinking they might be trying harder to understand the matrix so that they can join it – which would in the long term result in a loss of the professional identity they brought to the situation. The more critical stance might be what Jacob (1996) refers to as 'intermediate actions

of resistance'. These would comprise 'marking territories', 'reconciling with the past', 'speaking against the grain', 'moving to centre stage from the periphery', 'holding back technology' and 'breaking silences'. How this can be done is exemplified in the actions of Rustam and her colleagues above.

They mark territories by establishing an evaluation scheme which is meaningful to local colleagues and establishing significant events such as seminars in which local colleagues present the ideas of the scheme. They reconcile with the past by making sure the scheme is rooted in and continues to grow from existing cultures. They speak against the grain by speaking out against the way in which funding agency personnel, such as Gabby, represent the matrix, and by establishing anti-matrix ideas in reports and seminar presentations. These institutional actions also enable them to move to centre stage from the periphery. They hold back technology by resisting the timelines, documents, and hierarchies of the matrix and by resisting Gabby's imported evaluation scheme. They break silences by speaking out in all these areas. (Holliday 2005:170).

A divided place

In conclusion, the above discussion needs to be set within the context of the world unfortunately being a divided place where a Western Self, despite sometimes the very best of intentions, cannot help but try to correct the cultures of an imagined Other. In the dominant discourses of change, an apparent inclusivity sometimes takes the form of a matrix of cultural control. There is no question that there is competent resistance to the matrices of the English speaking West. However, at a deeper level, why is it that teachers, trainers and curriculum developers across the world appear to subscribe to notions of autonomy, critical thinking, participation and communication which are set up by the matrix and deny their intelligence?

Note

¹ The true identity of this project and all the people involved have been anonymised.

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Chapter 13

Resistance in ‘English for Academic Purposes’ classrooms at the Ethiopian Civil Service College

Nigussie Negash

Introduction

This chapter is based on classroom research carried out at the Ethiopian Civil Service College (ECSC) between 2001 and 2003. It offers an explanation of resistance to innovation grounded in sociocultural analysis of the teaching-learning process. This sociocultural stance emerges from the influence of ‘poststructuralist perspectives on language and a radical schooling view of language teaching as a political act’ (Canagarajah 2001:208). This perception has led to a critical position regarding the ‘neutral’ or ‘universal’ view of English language teaching (ELT) and methodology transfer. Educational practice (including innovation) is not, in fact, a neutral action and individuals are not just helpless subjects of the culture or institution to which they belong. Some studies (summarised in Table 1) have already explored the influence of social context on imported ELT content and methodology.

Table 1: Summary of studies on resistance

Research	Setting	Findings
Chick 1996	South Africa	Resistance to communicative language teaching; culture of collusion to maintain teacher volubility and student taciturnity in classroom interaction
Canagarajah 2001	Sri Lanka	Resistance to culture-specific contents and dialogue in imported ELT materials
Shamim 1996	Pakistan	Resistance to active involvement in negotiation and collaboration influenced by wider societal culture
Tewelde 2000	Eritrea	Teachers’ responses to communicative language teaching grounded in political, economic and sociocultural and institutional factors

From different angles, these studies provide evidence that forces inside and outside the classroom operate against new ELT teaching-learning practices. My chapter builds on these findings. It gives an account of the responses of students of English for Academic Purposes (EAP) to adult learning principles and how classroom and institutional cultures influence the teaching-learning process.

Classroom/institutional cultures and resistance to innovation

Breen (2001) in his seminal article provides a detailed theoretical analysis of classroom culture. The present chapter tries to illuminate with data some of the characteristics of the classroom community which Breen describes.

One important feature of the classroom is that it is *interactive*. In the classroom, things get done mostly through verbal and non-verbal interaction. Depending on the tacit teaching and learning model underlying it, classroom interaction can be located

‘on a continuum from ritualised, predictable, phatic communication to dynamic, unpredictable, diversely interpreted communication’ (Breen 2001:129). Whatever form it takes, the nature of interaction is overtly or covertly accepted by the participants. It allows the learners to appropriate knowledge and skills. Conversely, the same mutual interaction can lead to inhibition and marginalisation of learner participation in classroom discourse. For instance, a traditional teacher-fronted classroom is characterised by what Wenger (1998:203) calls ‘perpetual separation of knowledge production and knowledge adoption.’ This leads to another characteristic which Breen (2001:131) calls *asymmetry* in interaction. Linell and Luckmann (1991:4) broadly define asymmetry as ‘various sorts of inequivalencies in dialogue processes.’ In education, this can be seen as an imbalance in the ownership of, and access to knowledge naturally found in institutional discourse. Classroom asymmetry arises from institutional roles and duties allocated to students and teachers. As Holliday (1994:26) observes :

In more static situations, people's roles in organisations or society are relatively fixed and secure. Individuals base their identity on where they are placed within a hierarchy or social structure, and the culture surrounding their role supports this identity.

My intuition is that power relationships in the ECSC are typical of those that give rise to social hierarchies in classrooms. The prevalence of IRF exchanges in classroom discourse (Linell & Luckmann 1991) arises from institutional goals that determine roles and identities in discourse (Drew & Heritage 1992).

Another characteristic of the classroom is its tendency to be *conservative and normative*. Wright (1992:77-78) points out that classroom discourse is characterised by norms and procedures that have become ‘grooved’ through repeated use for many generations. These are like habits which every competent member of the classroom performs unconsciously. The discursal routines provide participants with ‘contextualisation cues’ (Gumperz 1992), something familiar to build on in negotiating meaning in the immediate context of interaction. These norms also govern the ‘academic’ and ‘social’ purposes of the classroom (Wright 1992). These norms, mutually negotiated and implicitly held, evaluate and sanction the teachers’ and students’ participation and contributions. It is this very nature of practice that also constrains the individual’s freedom to negotiate. According to Breen (2001) the source of resistance to change in the classroom emanates from this conservative and normative characteristic.

A genuine culture is one in which its members seek security and relative harmony in a self-satisfactory milieu. As such, things take time to develop. Anything that the group perceives as change will also take time to be absorbed or it will be resisted (Breen 2001:132).

My suspicion is that having participated in classroom/institutional practices for so many years, ECSC adult students come to the classroom community with well-formed identities as learners. If the practices of formal education in the primary and secondary schools are replicated in ECSC, it will not take the adult students long to settle down. They can very easily socialise each other to the present task of the ‘community of practice’ (Wenger 1998). They also invest time in finding out what

the goals of the new institution are. These past practices may contribute to students' 'cultural expectations' (Cortazzi 1990) or assumptions about teaching-learning and the teacher-student role relationship (Wright 1992). Past practice influences investment in present learning and can lead to resistance to new classroom practice. I feel that if students meet new practices, such as solving problems in group work in the classroom, ECSC students are likely to have to learn these new practices or they may even resist them.

Implications for teaching and research

The above analysis suggests that it is practical to exploit the natural features of classroom discourse referred to as 'IRF exchanges' (Mercer 2001:245) where 'I' stands for initiation, 'R' for response and 'F' for feedback. IRF has variations on a cline from recitation to dialogue (see Figure 1).

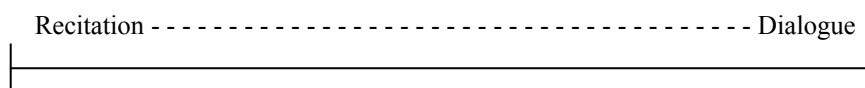


Figure 1: The IRF continuum

Depending on the extent of support which learners need, a sensitive teacher can move between more support and guidance to less guidance or learner independence. Hence, there are varieties of IRF formats between recitation and dialogue that the teacher and students can explore. Introducing adult learning procedures offers us the opportunity to move the IRF pattern towards a more collaborative symmetrical dialogue (van Lier 2001). Attaining this demands that the teacher should engage in inquiry based teaching. In this chapter, I am presenting such an attempt in EAP classrooms at the Ethiopian Civil Service College.

As an alternative to conventional action research (Elliot 1991), I have taken an exploratory approach (Allwright 1997, 1999) to introduce new adult learning procedures within the complex classroom and institutional practices of ECSC. The idea of exploratory teaching has evolved from the teacher research movement (Edge & Richards 1993), which seeks to encourage teachers to include inquiry in their teaching routines. My approach to classroom research as an educator is not purely for the sake of academic research. I began with a strong personal commitment to learn about the ECSC culture of teaching and learning, in which my own practice is situated, and to help my students improve their own learning practices.

From 2001 to 2003, I tried out various teaching-learning procedures based on andragogy, the art and science of helping adults learn (Brookfield 1986, Knowles 1990). I present here two exploratory teaching projects on collaborative learning with Law Faculty students (see Figure 2). The question I set out to answer in these projects was what the effect on students' perceptions and practice of active/collaborative learning procedures in an EAP classroom would be.

Though the EAP materials were prescribed institutionally, it was not easy for me to rely on them completely for content and teaching-learning procedures. I felt that implementing the textbook tasks simply like a classroom technician would not allow me to respond to the students' perception of their own needs. Thus, I modified the

recommended task procedures and negotiated with the students new procedures such as self-reflection, negotiation, and collaboration to facilitate learning.

<p>Project 1 : Collaborative learning in English for Law class, January-April 2002</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Change of setting and finding a research issue • Initial group writing task (first encounter with students' practice) • Group summary writing and reflection on process • Peer evaluation of individual writing and reflection • End of term evaluation 	←	<p>Ways of finding out (part of content and procedure)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Group discussion in class and office 2) Informal talks (group and individual) 3) Written reflections on activities and process 4) Observation
↓		
<p>Project 2 : Collaborative writing in Sophomore English class, May-August 2002</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluation of last term activities (first session) • Establishing classroom rules (a proposed learning contract given to students to sign) • Peer evaluation of individual essay (focus on outline and draft) • Group project 	←	

Figure 2: Summary of research activities

I generated data from normal teaching and learning activities. Also I adopted a thematic analysis of classroom incidents and critical moments from students' oral or written reflections and interviews. My presentation of findings here does not follow the chronology in which the research unfolded in the field.

Findings and discussion

The students' responses to the new teaching-learning procedures were mixed : some were positive and others were negative. For lack of space, my chapter focuses on understanding the latter, i.e. the roots of resistance to the kind of collaborative learning which I was trying to introduce.

New practice disturbing normality

The ECSC students' responses to the new teaching-learning procedures revealed the influence of previous practice (Cortazzi 1990) on present teaching-learning activities. The working relationship which the students had established with their previous teacher worked as a negative precedent for the collaborative learning I was following. As one of the students (Las) observed I disturbed their normal life :

Las : In the beginning we were irritated with your pressurising us to get into groups and do this or that. We felt we were bullied, comparing you with the other teacher, like students normally do this. To speak honestly, now we have understood how important it is and we wish that we began this kind of activity earlier. Meaning our dispute in groups has showed us some results. To tell you the truth, last term, we used to get the assignments done by other students. Some of us would ask seniors or English language majors. Our lack of personal effort created a problem in writing in the exam and we complained so much about the exam being difficult. Our results in the exam and the exams did not match. So now students are beginning to be interested in learning English seriously ... (Intv/Feb 02)

An important concern for the students at first was that, in comparison with their previous teacher, I was very demanding of them. I was a newcomer to this established community of classroom practice. This corroborates one of the findings of Budd and Wright (1992:223-224) : from their collaborative research into the implementation of active learning, the authors note that a teacher may attain some degree of normality with his or her students, which is then disturbed when another teacher comes in. Although some of my students did eventually recognise the value of group writing, there were others who wanted me to maintain the practice of their previous teachers.

I felt in the circumstances that it would be irresponsible for me to underestimate the students and approach my teaching duty leniently. I therefore had a moral obligation to mobilise classroom practice so as to enhance learning or to challenge students to seek alternatives and to take action.

Induction by previous students and specialist subject lecturers

Through informal apprenticeship, previous students inducted new ECSC students into the established student culture. This informal induction worked against my new practice, both as a precedent and as a future obstacle. As one of the students (Lmh) indicated, they had discovered what was worth fighting for in the college and therefore they prioritised their actions accordingly:

Lmh : You work very hard, but we are not serious. Senior students told us not to bother about English that much, because whether we study or not we cannot change our result. By observing each other in class and our performance we know who will get A's and B's. But C is for everybody. We know about you, our teachers, from our friends ... (Intv/Jan 02)

It seems that ECSC students were already very well acquainted with status differences between the various curriculum subjects. They also understood the differences between the assessment practices of different departments and lecturers. The students had already realised what was worth investing in while they were in the ECSC and in English language classrooms. Among the competing academic discourses in the ECSC, the EAP course and its new methodology were marginalised. The majority of subject lecturers relied on a transmission style of teaching; this seemed to influence the students interpretation of the innovative approach of collaborative learning as an 'alternative' mode of learning. As the following comment by one of the lecturers

(LsnL) indicates, lecturers did not seem to trust group discussion leading to individual thinking :

LsnL : I actually have a problem with group work or discussion. It creates dependency culture. You can see it in their answer to exam questions. There is no difference. It's boring to read the same thing from forty-five students' paper. (Intv/Aug 02)

Like LsnL, the majority of subject lecturers rarely used group discussion in class. In fact, it was the students who appeared to initiate the use of group discussions in their informal study groups. Any form of group work which the subject lecturers asked students to carry out was to be undertaken as an assignment outside class. These activities rarely required students to give presentations in regular lecture sessions. The lecturers revealed that, even when they conducted a student presentation, it would be one individual student who dominated the task.

Because of resistance from the dominant regime of practice, my ideas and principles of collaborative learning struggled to gain currency. Here is what one of my students (Lbd) reflected:

Lbd : You tell us to do the projects in group. The students know it doesn't work. Because of the way the other lecturers assess group assignments. They don't mark critically. Usually they take very short time to read what we have spent so many days and hours. In addition, the marks are given collectively for those who worked hard those who did not. Usually we kill time disputing issues and when we try to accommodate the other people's ideas the grades become very low. Even those who could score A's if they worked on their own could be given C grades because of the students they are grouped with. This makes us dislike these group projects, although we know your aim. (Intv/Jul 02)

Lbd's comment reveals that what I tried to implement in my own classroom was overwhelmed by the dominant regime of practice in the institution. We can see from the views expressed by the teachers and students that resistance to group work can be attributed to a persistent institutional view that learning is exclusively individual and has to be competitive. Contrary to the mind-centred psychological theory, cultures in a certain educational context seem to influence why and how the students learn (Sullivan 2000). Although some English teachers were trying to use group discussion as an alternative mode of teaching, many of the subject lecturers were not encouraging it. They felt that students copied each others' ideas and that this militated against the development of the individual thinking that is demanded by real life and the workplace. However, if used properly, collaborative learning does not inhibit the development of individual critical thinking.

The social hierarchy of the classroom

This study also reveals power relationships in the classroom. It corroborates Breen's (2001:131) observation that classroom culture exhibits an asymmetrical relationship between the teacher and students as well as among the students. The classroom group's insistence on maintaining the existing social hierarchy gets in the way of

collaborative learning. For instance, some students who were in favour of group writing, such as Lar, Lch and Lbf below, complained about the strong greed of students for high grades which inhibited group writing :

Just as I left the class today three students (Lar, Lch and Lbf) followed me and told me that what I was doing was the right thing. However, they said that they had already discussed and it was only those students who had been to Colleges who didn't want to exercise because they had been to College before and felt they had enough knowledge and skill in English to need anybody's help. They therefore asked me to continue the group activities because it would help them to develop their capabilities. (FN/Feb 02)

The above comment reveals that the students appeared to define their identity and status in terms of their performance or the grades which they received. They construed the classroom group as being composed of some students who were more knowledgeable and some students who were less knowledgeable. The group activities were seen as assisting the latter. Implicitly, the established educational culture divided teaching and learning into what Wenger (1998) calls 'production and adoption.'

Although mutual engagement can be a vehicle for sharing the ownership of meaning, it can also be a vehicle for denying negotiability and can thus result in non-participation. If production and adoption become consistently separable, the distinction between them becomes an issue of marginality. Members whose contributions are never adopted develop an identity of non-participation that progressively marginalises them. Their experience becomes irrelevant because it cannot be asserted and recognised as a form of competence (Wenger 1998:203).

This dichotomous view of their being 'haves' and 'have nots' led to collective work being perceived as giving undeserved reward to weak group members. As a result, the high performers made minimal effort in group writing tasks compared with the individual writing tasks. As one of the high achievers (Lbr) indicated, their performance on individual writing tasks was higher than on the group writing tasks :

Lbr : My results in group writing are lower than my individual performance.
N : How come? Are we not talking about cumulative effect of each member's effort here? I mean I expect every member to put in maximum effort.
Lbr : That's the problem. I don't give maximum devotion. I mean why should I sacrifice myself for the others? Somebody has to get what he deserves. (Intv/Feb 02)

Lbr also observed that the idealistic view of education which a student may bring when first arriving at the institution is likely to change once they have adapted to the competitive culture which they encounter there :

Lbr : When I first came here I was thinking about studying for the knowledge. But after mid-term of the first year I learnt that students are only interested in the grade. I was cheated. So the next time I changed ... Grade is important. If you are not a high achiever even nobody greets you. If you have the grade

everybody is around you. Students study about other people's results.
(Intv/Feb 02)

Students resisted group work because it conflicted with the individual interests that arose from the institutional/classroom culture. Their exposure to the competitive and individualistic academic culture militated against group learning and development. The upshot was that while the high achievers fought to maintain their place in the social hierarchy, others would struggle to join this elite group or would gradually come to accept their place as low performers.

Similar to Withers' (2000) findings in classrooms in Zimbabwe, the few students in the ECSC classroom who felt they did not have any problem with English favoured individual writing. The high achievers saw themselves as being exploited by their classmates. The capable students conspired to maintain the status quo by making minimal contributions to the group task but giving everything to the individual task, thus maintaining their status at the expense of their own and others' learning. According to Breen (2001:132), innovation is resisted because practice is normally conservative. People resist change because it disturbs the security that routines give them or it clashes with individual interests within the social relationship. In a context that is not devoted to learning, it is the institutional practice itself that members learn, not the subject content (Wenger 1998).

Contrary to the individualist stance on agency held by conventional cognitive and adult learning theories (Knowles 1990), the findings of this study indicate the strength of the sociocultural agency. ECSC students' responses seem similar to the kind of resistance which Shamim (1996) encountered in trying to use a new teaching approach that required students' active engagement. However, unlike Shamim's group, my students began positively but then the dominant institutional culture or practice obstructed the emergence of a new learning culture that valued students' investment in learning English. Since it takes a long time for a culture of learning to change, the outcome of my two projects does not necessarily indicate that ECSC students or people in any context will not learn new practices.

Students sabotaging innovation for 'safe practice'

ECSC students' response to innovation also reflected what I term 'safe practice'. On the analogy of 'safe talk' (Chick 1996), safe practice refers to the phenomenon of students colluding to avoid the challenges of learning and new practice. Students' resistance was not always directly expressed. For instance, when I gave them a group project (Project 2 in Figure 2), they sabotaged my attempt to change the established practice. To maximise every group member's learning, I demanded that they implement the principles and procedures of collaboration. I asked them to organise themselves into groups, allocate tasks and roles for each member and submit their work plan. My observation and post-course discussions (formal and informal interviews) indicated that after a two term project on collaborative learning, students still maintained their own survivalist practice that I had observed in their first group writing assignment, because this was 'safer' for them. Their priority was not to learn per se, but to avoid the risk of engaging in a new practice. They resorted to the practice that suited completing the task without fuss and getting the results they

wanted at the same time. As I recorded in my diary, the first thing that the students refused to do was to make their practice transparent to me :

Sometimes, students inform me the time they would discuss and I turn up to find nobody there. Some told me that students could not meet or they discussed in their dormitories at night. One group left saying they had finished. Then I asked the other group (Lan, Lag, Lds, Lx) if I could join them, they told me that they were not ready for my visit, and with that unwillingness I had to leave them alone. Only two groups submitted their project outline and task allocation to each of their members. Secondly, all the groups seemed to avoid my observation on different pretexts and I could not record the group interactions that happened here to say how collaborative and learning-oriented the project was, apart from the accounts I obtained from the students after the course. (FN/Aug 02)

The students' reasons for engaging in such a practice were the same as those which we have discussed earlier : their concerns with time constraint and with survival by working for grades. My conversation with one of the members of the Law group (Lds) confirms this :

Lds : We got together and shared parts to write on according to the outline we submitted to you. That was what you asked us to do, I think. For the strong members, parts that were more difficult were given and the easier parts to the weaker members. We combined what we wrote, got it typed.

N : How successful was this in terms of collaborative learning principles we talked about in class?

Lds : Since usually papers are given when exams approach, we had shortage of time. Also the weaker students had to be helped by the better group to improve the quality of the paper. So the degree of participation was not the same. (Intv/Mar 03)

Like Lds, other students disclosed that due to a shortage of time they just slightly reshaped papers which they had already submitted for another course, instead of writing an original paper for the English course. Students complained that doing the kind of collaborative project I required was difficult, especially when they were under pressure from assignments for the other subjects and preparing for examinations in five courses in three months. Also, since the weaker members took a long time to read and write, one or two of the stronger members in the group wrote the paper. The following comment by Lbl reveals how expediency was given priority over learning :

Lbl : To save time we copied the paper for the other course and gave you. The papers were Legal Skills paper reshuffled. Also each student has his own commitment outside the College. So people say just do it, we know you can write better than us. Although some contributed not all participate in writing. Major organisation done by strong student. (Intv/Apr 03)

As their concern was just the product, they copied the previous work they had submitted to another teacher. In this way, the EAP classroom community's practice did not allow for an equitable contribution from all members. This limited the majority to marginal participation in practising the target language. In classroom and

institutional cultures that encouraged mere display of existing knowledge as a prerequisite for gaining good grades, the majority who had not mastered the target language lacked confidence to take risks and to openly experiment with the language. ECSC students' 'product approach' to education was contrary to the enabling aim of pedagogy.

Contrary to our agreement in class that they would evaluate each other, the students frankly told me that they decided to give each other high marks. This made me suspicious and led me to enquire further about their claims. This was how one of the students put the reason for their insistence on old practice :

N : But in your evaluation you are each member equal mark and very high mark.

Lds : Lah and I did the evaluation of the group members. Then we got together and told the others to give equal marks to all members, because I don't want to my friend's result to be affected by my evaluation of his performance. Anyways we thought that our performance would be discriminated by the final examination we were to take later. (Intv/Mar 03)

On many occasions, the high achievers complained about being exploited by their weaker partners, who reaped the rewards without making any contribution. Furthermore, the teacher was usually blamed for making life difficult for them by asking them to work with weak students. However, when they were given the opportunity as insiders to show what each member had contributed, they shied away from doing this. They protected each other against the teacher :

Lah : Most of the time you want to understand everything they want to reserve for themselves. For example, when we do group work you want to be present here. We want some of the err to keep some of the methods secret. The reason is we use some short (laughs) the way we do it always. You see the problem is you want us to participate. But we wanted to take the work of others because they were not much of help. They agree to our plan. (Intv/Apr 03)

The students established group solidarity against my collaborative learning agenda, as it threatened the way they typically did group assignments. I demanded equity of participation and learning opportunity from the activity for all members. This conflicted with their agenda of efficient completion of the paper for good marks. With all members' obvious consent, the ones who were known in the class to have been scoring good results took the responsibility and the others were left out of the process. They adopted a pragmatic approach, with their own agenda overriding my demands for collaborative learning. Since this project came at the end of a term, before the final assessment and grading, students waited until their grades had been announced before they told me frankly what they thought about my teaching approach. They wanted to be sure that I would not find out about their hidden practice before their grades had been finalised. Due to this mistrust, being two-faced seems to be part of classroom life. Pretending is a means for the students to secure their grades, which in turn secures access to resources and power in society. The students acknowledge that the degree or diploma certificate offers passage to high office in the government. As one Law student (Lam) reflected, a number of good letter grades

promises an important government post. He said that attending degree courses is a way of 'reducing the number of bosses in the workplace' (FN/Jul 02). This means that students come to the ECSC with the agenda of getting a diploma in order to advance to a post in the civil service.

This is further evidence that classroom practice has a public and a private face or inner and outer circles to which the teacher can have access only through informal means or a good rapport with some of the members. Indeed, we have a glimpse of the teacher's authority being challenged directly and indirectly (even though in other circumstances students insist on being told what to do). Even in traditional educational practice, the community of practice confers authority on teachers authority and at the same time limits what they can do. This is because the community in which teachers participate gives them roles and identities. Individuals assume their established identity in the community by taking up these roles and carrying out their tasks accordingly. If they do not conform, they are not trusted and their ideas lose currency. If teachers use their authority in a way that threatens the existence of the community, then their authority can be taken away or subverted.

Conclusion

This study provides evidence that the true nature of practice is revealed in its response to new practice. As reported in different sections of this chapter, ECSC students' resistance to collaborative learning procedures was grounded in classroom and institutional practices. ECSC students resisted group writing because it was against the established social hierarchy of the classroom and the individualistic and competitive institutional culture. Moreover, they valued performance more than learning, because grades are sources of social status in this context. The ECSC students' responses to new practice also characterised what I have termed safe practice. They develop safe practice as a result of straddling various competing communities of practice. Depending on how these communities relate to each other, students value and prioritise their identification and investment in gaining competence in each of them. They make a cost benefit analysis in terms of the social goals and academic goals of the classroom community or beyond. English language learning is marginalised in this social configuration. Hence, contrary to the conventional view in the literature on adult learning, that adults seek to be self-directing or collaborating, students' goals emanate from membership in classroom and other cultures.

Another lesson I have drawn from these projects is that what an individual teacher, as an agent of change, can do in the classroom is limited. A bottom-up approach has to be supported by the institution and professional communities. There is a need for continuity and consistency in the learning environment for the new teaching-learning procedures to find space. The findings also indicate that it could be more appropriate to expose students to new practices when they first arrive in an institution, at the transition phase. It seems that students need more time and exposure to new ideas in order to understand and abandon their unproductive practices.

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Chapter 14

Ethiopian teachers' evaluation of a language improvement programme

Ahmed Siraj Gofa, Almaz Baraki and Judith Altshul

Background to the English Language Improvement Programme

The Ministry of Education (MoE) of Ethiopia launched the English Language Improvement Programme (ELIP) in 2002, with funding from international donors, with the objective of raising the English language ability of both English language teachers and teachers of other subjects through the medium of English. The ultimate aims were to enable all teachers :

- a) to do their jobs effectively (particularly English medium teachers) by communicating effectively with their students
- b) to have access to knowledge and information available in English, to make use of modern information and communication technology opportunities and to interact with their peers through this international language which is also an important medium of instruction.

From the outset, the Ministry of Education made it clear that the principal beneficiaries of the programme were to be the teachers themselves, not the students. However, teachers had not requested this training; it was imposed upon them by the government.

The training materials were designed to focus on the interests and professional concerns of teachers (particularly teachers of English). These issues were discussed using group work and pair work. The methodology was therefore learner-centred and quite unlike the approach with which participants were familiar (listening to lectures). As the programme progressed, the participants found that this methodology itself offered a useful model of language teaching and learning. The focus of the programme thus broadened in a subtle way from being purely one of language development to include teaching methodology as well.

International Key English Language Training Advisers (IKELTAs) came from UK universities to train Ethiopian Key English Language Training Advisers (KELTAs). The KELTAs, in turn, trained Key English Language Trainers (KELTs). These KELTs are now, in their turn, training English Language Trainees (ELTs).

The teachers who were trained as KELTAs were required to be highly proficient in English. Ideally, they were also to hold an MA or a PhD in TEFL or a related field, or a certificate of post-graduate or post-experience training from various colleges, teacher training institutes and high schools.

The KELTs, meanwhile, were selected by the Regional Education Bureau (REB) in each region. They were required to be BA holders who had been teaching English in high schools for at least 5 years.

The ELTs included three categories of teacher :

- English teachers trained to certificate level (i.e. with one year of training after grade 10) who teach in first cycle primary schools – grades 1-4.
- English teachers trained to diploma level (i.e. with three years of training after grade 10), who teach in second cycle primary schools - grades 5-8 - or in secondary schools.¹
- teachers trained to diploma level who are teaching subjects other than English in grades 5-8.²

Although indigenous languages are mainly used as the media of instruction in grades 5-8, teachers in these two categories need to improve their English in order to develop themselves and to benefit from reading English print materials and listening to radio or TV broadcasts in English and using the internet.

All the KELTAs, KELTs and ELTs are practitioners and, at the same time, are trainees in the programme.

In order to deal with the large numbers of trainees, training was carried out according to the cascade model. (See Figure 1.) In the first cohort, there were 6 IKELTAs to train 56 KELTAs. These people trained 783 KELTs who in turn trained 12,040 ELTs. By 2005 there were almost 200 KELTAs, approximately 1,300 KELTs and around 60,000 ELTs.

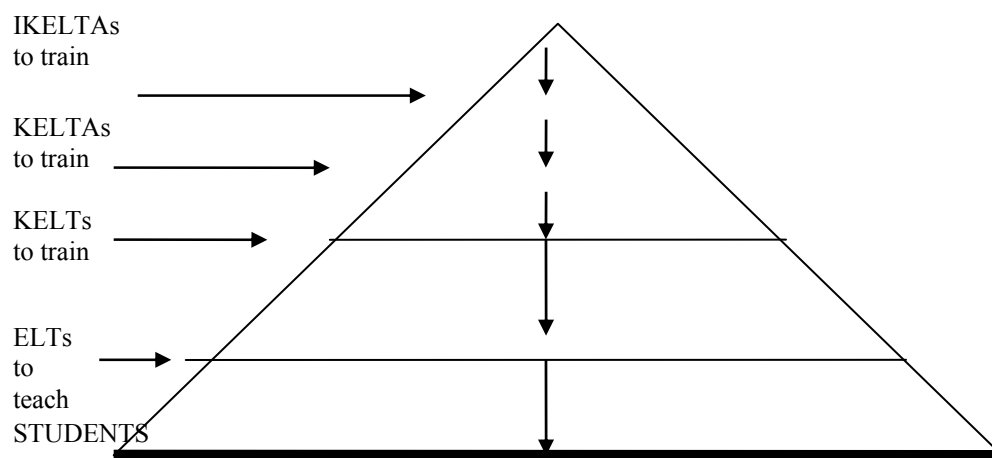


Figure 1 : Cascade model

Eventually, it is planned that all 89,874 first cycle primary school teachers, 53,447 second cycle primary school teachers, 11,767 first cycle secondary school teachers and 3,301 second cycle secondary school teachers – from both government and non-government schools – will be trained (Ministry of Education 2005).

Some of the key players in the project are :

- Federal Ministry of Education, Ethiopia
- British Council
- Pat McLaughlin, lead consultant
- College of St Mark and St John, Plymouth, which provided the IKELTAs and which jointly prepared the training materials
- Leeds Metropolitan University, which jointly prepared the training materials

- Regional Education Bureaux (REBs)
- ELIP Committee.

ELIP is a 200-hour training programme in three consecutive phases. See Table 1 for details.

Table 1 : Phases, materials and duration

Phase	Training materials	Duration
1 Face-to-face	Booklet I + Cassette 1	60 hours (5 hours per day for 12 days)
2 Distance	Booklet II + Cassette 2	80 hours (50 hours individual practice + 30 hours face-to-face)
3 Face-to-face	Booklet III + Cassette 3	60 hours (5 hours per day for 12 days)

The teachers were required to take part in the training during their summer holiday and winter semester break. There was no direct financial benefit for them and there was no increase in their professional status within the education system as a result of participating in the training.

Evaluation of the programme

An evaluation of ELIP was first carried out during the pilot stage; the results were apparently generally encouraging. A limited study of the impact of ELIP training on teachers of grades 1-4 in Addis Ababa was then undertaken by Baraki and Altshul in 2005; this remains unpublished. Meanwhile, Siraj looked at the attitudes towards ELIP training of teachers of grades 5-8 in Jimma Zone of Oromiya Region (Siraj 2005). The present chapter is based primarily on the Jimma survey, with some additional material from the Addis Ababa research.

The teachers who participated in the training came from different parts of the country, had different degrees of experience and qualifications and possessed different expectations and attitudes. The present study, therefore, explores teachers' reactions towards the training programme in general, the training materials and the training approach. Respondents were also asked to evaluate the practicality and usefulness of the training from their perspective.

The principal research instrument was a questionnaire with 36 items. This was completed by a sample of 70 informants, of whom 30 were teachers of English and 40 were teachers of other subjects drawn from among the 120 programme participants in Jimma. These 70 questionnaire respondents thus had to represent the whole population of 12,040 participants in the first training cohort. In addition, fifteen informants from Jimma and Addis Ababa were interviewed.

Questionnaire findings

The questionnaire generated information regarding participants' views of the objectives of the ELIP training, the impact of the training, the materials and

methodology used in the training, the trainers, the timing and duration of the training, issues relating to the administration of the programme and miscellaneous matters.

Participants' views of the objectives of ELIP training are summarised in Table 2. Clear majorities of both English ELTs and other subject ELTs felt that the programme objectives were clear (Proposition 2.1) and that they were achievable (Proposition 2.2). However, whilst the English ELTs were unanimous or almost unanimous in this regard, only approximately two thirds of the other subject ELTs shared this opinion.

Table 2 : Participants' views of objectives of ELIP training

Proposition	% of English ELTs agreeing + strongly agreeing (N = 30)	% of other subject ELTs agreeing + strongly agreeing (N = 40)
2.1) Purpose and objectives of ELIP training [are] clear	100	70
2.2) I feel objectives and goals are achievable through this training	90	65

Participants' views of the impact of training are summarised in Table 3. Majorities of the English ELTs and the other subject ELTs felt that their participation in the programme had had a positive impact on their ability to learn independently (Proposition 3.1), on their competence in English (Proposition 3.2) and on their teaching skills (Proposition 3.3).

Table 3 : Participants' views of impact of training

Proposition	% of English ELTs agreeing + strongly agreeing (N = 30)	% of other subject ELTs agreeing + strongly agreeing (N = 40)
3.1) ELIP training encourages independent learning [by] trainees	100	75
3.2) I feel that my English improved because of course	97	63
3.3) Skills I acquired will help me teach better	97	78
3.4) Programme is appropriate for helping improve my English	60	73
3.5) I feel that my English didn't improve because of course	0	13

However, there are marked differences between the opinions of the English ELTs and those of their colleagues who teach other subjects. Unanimously, or nearly so, the English ELTs felt that their language and teaching skills had improved as had their ability to learn independently. On the other hand, fewer than two thirds of the other subject ELTs noticed improvement in their English language competence, three quarters felt that they had become more independent learners and under four fifths believed that their teaching ability had benefited.

Only three fifths of English teachers believed that the programme was appropriate for them to improve their English (Proposition 3.4). Taken together with the response to Proposition 3.2, the implication appears to be that participants recognised an

improvement in their English but that they did not entirely attribute this improvement to the way in which the programme was designed and delivered. More of the non-English teachers, on the other hand, rated the programme highly (73%) whilst only 63% felt that their English had improved; this suggests that the non-English specialists tended to admire the programme even if they did not benefit from it.

On the other hand, all, or almost all, respondents rejected the idea that their English had not improved because of the course (Proposition 3.5). It is not easy to understand how this response can be reconciled with the differences between responses to Propositions 3.2 and 3.4 which we have noted.

Table 4 : Participants' views of training materials and methodology

Proposition	% of English ELTs agreeing + strongly agreeing (N = 30)	% of other subject ELTs agreeing + strongly agreeing (N = 40)
4.1) Activities encourage cooperation and discussion during training	97	85
4.2) Instructions to activities are clear	96	80
4.3) Tasks encourage critical thinking during training	93	93
4.4) Tasks involve both trainers and trainees	93	73
4.5) Organisation and sequence of teaching material is appropriate	83	63
4.6) Content[s] of texts given are relevant to [my] language learning needs	83	43
4.7) Materials (texts) are relevant to [my] English language needs	80	48
4.8) Approach to teaching in training is relevant to classroom teaching	77	73
4.9) Tasks in materials are unmanageable	23	30

Table 4 summarises participants' views of the materials and methodology employed in the programme. Majorities of the English ELTs agreed that the materials encouraged cooperation and critical thinking, that rubrics were clear, and that trainers and trainees were involved in activities. The English ELTs also felt that teaching materials were appropriately sequenced, and that the materials and their contents were suited to their language learning needs. A majority of the English ELTs reported that the approach to teaching which was adopted during the training was appropriate to their own classroom contexts. Finally, a majority of the English ELTs rejected the proposition that the training tasks were unmanageable.

The teachers of other subjects did not always share their English teaching colleagues' perceptions, though, as a comparison of the second and third columns in Table 4 shows. For example, there were differences of between 32 and 40 points between the English teachers and the other teachers regarding the perceived relevance of the texts used during the programme (Propositions 4.7 and 4.6 respectively). There were also marked divergences of opinion of 20 percentage points between the English and non-

English teachers regarding the involvement of trainers and trainees and the sequencing of teaching materials (Propositions 4.4 and 4.5).

Regarding their trainers, the English teachers and their non-English teaching colleagues were rather more similar in their opinions, as can be seen from Table 5. Most respondents, whatever subject they taught, agreed that the trainers' approach was interesting, and that their trainers were flexible and interested in participants' problems (Propositions 5.1, 5.2 and 5.3). In each of these aspects, though, the English teachers were rather more inclined to hold these opinions than were the non-English teachers.

Table 5 : Participants' views of trainers

Proposition	% of English ELTs agreeing + strongly agreeing (N = 30)	% of other subject ELTs agreeing + strongly agreeing (N = 40)
5.1) Approach used by trainers is interesting	97	80
5.2) Trainers are flexible	90	75
5.3) Trainers are interested in understanding what [my] problems are	80	70
5.4) Trainers' methodology can be used in my teaching	70	68
5.5) Trainers always clarify instructions	67	68
5.6) Trainers give equal emphasis to all language skills	47	43
5.7) Trainers' skills and methods of teaching are poor	7	8

In other respects, the two categories of teacher held almost identical views of their trainers (Propositions 5.4-5.7).

Table 6 : Participants' views of timing and duration of ELIP training

Proposition	% of English ELTs agreeing + strongly agreeing (N = 30)	% of other subject ELTs agreeing + strongly agreeing (N = 40)
6.1) Programme has been conducted at right time of year	80	10
6.2) Duration of each session is not sufficient	63	53
6.3) Course is long enough to develop four language skills	30	28
6.4) Time given for each unit is enough	23	55
6.5) Time [duration] of training programme is sufficient	20	38
6.6) Time given to each session is proportional with teaching material to be covered	13	45

Table 6 summarises respondents' views of the timing and duration of the training. The English teachers and their non-English teaching colleagues agreed only that the duration of the course was not sufficient to enable them to develop the four language skills (Proposition 6.3). There were also some similarities in the opinions expressed by the two categories of teacher regarding the duration of sessions (too short, Proposition 6.2) and the overall duration of the training (too short, Proposition 6.5).

In other respects, however, there were major differences of opinion between the two groups. Most notably, four out of every five English teachers felt that the programme had been held at an appropriate time of the year, whilst nine out of ten teachers of other subjects felt that the opposite was the case (Proposition 6.1).

Participants' views of a number of administrative matters relating to the programme are summarised in Table 7. Participants tended to agree – whether they were teachers of English or of other subjects – that the training venue was appropriate (Proposition 7.1), that the number of participants in one class was appropriate (Proposition 7.2) and that there were enough copies of teaching materials (Proposition 7.4). These figures suggest that participants were largely happy with administrative arrangements.

With regard to one administrative matter, however, there was a strongly held sense of dissatisfaction. Teachers in Ethiopia normally receive a daily incentive payment for attending workshops and training programmes. When training takes place outside their immediate locality they also receive a travel allowance. For the ELIP programme the daily allowance varied from region to region, from 6.5 birr to 70 birr.³

Table 7 : Participants' views of administration of ELIP training

Proposition	% of English ELTs agreeing + strongly agreeing (N = 30)	% of other subject ELTs agreeing + strongly agreeing (N = 40)
7.1) Place where ELIP has been conducted encourages learning	60	60
7.2) Class size of training is a serious problem	23	20
7.3) There is sufficient incentive for ELIP	17	13
7.4) Lack of teaching materials is a serious problem	17	30

It is clear, however, that only very small numbers of both the English teaching and non-English teaching participants were able to accept the proposition (7.3) that this incentive was adequate.⁴

Finally, in Table 8, we can see the respondents' views on a couple of miscellaneous matters. It is interesting to note that there was considerable disagreement between the English teachers and the non-English teachers with regard to the suitability of the way in which their learning had been evaluated (Proposition 8.1). More than three in every five of the English teachers felt that the evaluation procedure had been appropriate, whilst fewer than two in every five of the non-English teachers held this opinion.

Table 8 : Miscellaneous

Proposition	% of English ELTs agreeing + strongly agreeing (N= 30)	% of other subject ELTs agreeing + strongly agreeing (N = 40)
8.1) Evaluation procedures of training use appropriate instruments	63	38
8.2) Trainees' resistance is a serious problem	23	23

Last of all, approximately a quarter of both categories of teacher reported that there had been a problem of resistance to the programme from some trainees (Proposition 8.2).

From Tables 1 to 8 it is clear that in some respects the English ELTs shared some perceptions of the ELIP training with their non-English teaching colleagues but that with regard to other issues the views of the two groups differed. These similarities and differences can be summarised as follows.

Almost all the participants (both English teachers and teachers of other subjects) :

- rejected the idea that their English had not improved because of the course (Proposition 3.4), even though other responses regarding the positive impact of the programme were rather mixed
- rejected the suggestion that the trainers used poor teaching methods (Proposition 5.7)
- believed that the programme encouraged cooperation between participants while they were studying (Proposition 4.1)
- agreed that the learning tasks which had been used encouraged critical thinking (Proposition 4.3).

Approximately three quarters to four fifths of participants (in both categories) :

- agreed that the training approach had relevance to teaching in their own classrooms (Proposition 4.8)
- felt that they could adopt the trainers' methods in their own teaching (Proposition 5.4)
- rejected the suggestion that the learning tasks had been difficult to manage (Proposition 4.9)
- did not believe that the course had lasted long enough (Proposition 6.3)
- did not feel that there had been too many participants in one class (Proposition 7.2)
- could not accept that the financial incentive which they had been paid was adequate (Proposition 7.3)
- did not see that trainee resistance had been a major problem (Proposition 8.2).

Around half to two thirds of participants (in both categories) :

- agreed that trainers always provided clear instructions (Proposition 5.5)
- agreed that trainers gave equal emphasis to each of the four language skills (Proposition 5.6)
- felt that the length of each training session was too short (Proposition 6.2)
- were happy with the training venue (Proposition 7.1).

On the other hand, there were marked differences between the perceptions of the teachers of English and those of the teachers of other subjects in a number of areas. Those matters where differences were of at least 30 percentage points are as follows.

More English teachers than teachers of other subjects :

- felt that the objectives of the training had been clear (Proposition 2.1)
- believed that their English had improved because of the course (Proposition 3.2; but note the comment on responses to Proposition 3.4 above)
- felt that the content of teaching texts had been relevant for their learning needs (Proposition 4.6)
- felt that the teaching texts themselves had been relevant (Proposition 4.7)
- believed that the programme had been held at a suitable time of year (Proposition 6.1).

Meanwhile, more of the teachers of other subjects than English teachers :

- had the opinion that the time allocation for each unit was sufficient (Proposition 6.4)
- perceived that the time allocated for each session was appropriate, considering the material which was to be taught (Proposition 6.6).

In other matters, the responses of teachers from the two sub-groups were rather more mixed.

Interview findings

Interviews were conducted with the intention of complementing the questionnaire data. Fifteen ELTs were interviewed, of whom nine were more experienced teachers aged from 47 to 53. The remaining six interviewees were much younger, aged between 24 and 25. The interviewees were drawn from both Jimma and Addis Ababa.

The first question was aimed at finding out what the overall attitude of the ELTs to the ELIP training was. The older ELTs commented that it was a 'precious gift' from the Ministry of Education, as they had not had any other training since graduating from their respective teacher training institutes many years before. One ELT who had been teaching for 35 years put it this way :

Although I learned English from grades one to twelve, I haven't had the chance to use it since then. Most of us have only taught the alphabet and some two- or three-letter words. It has been a great joy for me to find out how much I knew. It has activated me. Now I can express what I know using English with full confidence.

The younger ELTs appreciated the opportunity to speak freely and to share experiences with other teachers. One commented :

Although I graduated two years back, my experience at school was hampered [hampered?] by my teachers and my lack of confidence. When I started teaching, I was afraid to stand in front of my students and teach, especially

English. But now, as I have had the chance to express myself in front of others, I can teach confidently.

Overall attitudes appeared to be very positive, regardless of age group or length of teaching experience.

The second question focused on the participants' attitude towards the training materials. Their responses to this question were also generally positive. They felt that the materials encouraged independent learning and gave equal emphasis to all four language skills. Most of the interviewees preferred the speaking sections, however. The majority liked the books which had been used in face-to-face sessions, but they expressed reservations about the distance, self-study mode, materials. The reason for this was that they had been given inadequate orientation as to how to go about self-study. They all said that since their experience was of teacher-fronted classes, it was difficult for them to study individually.

The third question tried to gauge the participants' overall attitudes towards their trainers. They unanimously agreed that their trainers encouraged them, showed patience, gave corrections in a positive way, set a good example of applying the communicative methodology to classroom teaching, were very friendly and gave everybody a chance to participate and share their experiences. The informants agreed that their trainers were flexible and interested in understanding the trainees problems. One ELT, who had been teaching for thirty years, commented :

I never participated in class when I was a student, for I was afraid of my teacher's pointing out my error and discouraging me for my wrong answers. But now, because my trainer never points out errors, directly pointing out to the one who made it, but makes us realise the error and helps us to correct it through practice, I participate; I am no more afraid of making mistakes.

The fourth question asked about the methodology which had been used in the training programme. All interviewees agreed that this methodology could be applied in their own classrooms to teach all subjects, not only English. Many reported that their students had now got used to working in groups; these students are now sharing their experiences with each other both in class work and in homework. In many classes, the number of students ranges from 60 to 67, so it is difficult to arrange for them to work in small groups. However, the teachers are still trying to apply the methodology which they first experienced during the ELIP training, as the following comments show :

After training in ELIP, I have confidence, so I give chances to my students to speak freely, work in groups and have competitions in rows.

I have changed my methodology. There is free discussion; I allow my students to speak freely, I don't correct each and every error. I don't dominate. I allow time for the students to group themselves.

The fifth question asked interviewees how far they could apply the knowledge gained from the ELIP programme to their own classrooms. The ELTs agreed that this knowledge could be applied, to a large extent. One of them commented :

I have encouraged and given chances to my students to use English. My students prepare short dramas and games in English and show them at the flag ceremony weekly. They learn consonants and vowels through songs. They like to work in groups. They work individually, group themselves and come up with uniform answers. This is what I learned from the ELIP and taught them to do.

Finally, informants were given the opportunity to raise any other issues which they considered to be important. All the ELTs commented on the duration of the training, as the following comments illustrate :

The time is not enough. How can you know English in 200 hours?

The time is not enough for people who have been deprived of practice.

Some informants also commented on sustainability of the programme :

It shouldn't stop. It must continue to Diploma stage.

At first, there had been some resistance to the training programme, probably because teachers had had to give up their holidays (a time which they normally use to earn additional income) and because participation gave rise to no increase in professional standing or in income. However, it appears that teachers later began to identify benefits in the training, as the interviews demonstrate.

Conclusions

We have seen that, initially, teachers were somewhat resistant to the ELIP training scheme. The programme was not established in response to an expressed wish among teachers but was imposed upon them. Despite this resistance, many teachers gradually came to appreciate the value of the programme, not only as a language learning resource but also as a source of methodological ideas. Teachers of English were especially appreciative.

Nevertheless, some issues still require attention if the programme is to develop further.

- The objectives of the ELIP training should be clarified, not only to the teachers participating in the programme but also to other educational institutions and interested parties throughout the country.
- There is a widespread feeling that the training programme is too short.
- The question of sustainability or continuity of language training deserves consideration. If learners come to the end of the course how can they maintain the level of language competence which they have achieved? The Regional Education Bureaux have overall responsibility for staff training and they will eventually have to consider whether to include English language training in their schemes for teachers, perhaps through the Continuous Professional Development programme.

- Supplementary materials (in particular, listening materials and reference materials) should be provided so as to help learners continue their studies. Also, learners require greater guidance on the use of distance learning or self-study procedures. As part of its long-term strategy to sustain ELIP, the Ministry of Education has committed itself to setting up English Language Resource Centres across the country. Preparations are currently underway in several regions to put these centres in place; they should be designed to provide the additional support which learners require.
- The timing of future training should take into account participants' needs.
- Some teachers of subjects other than English require English for the specific purpose of teaching their subject.
- The question of financial incentives for trainees requires a solution.
- Encouragement and support from the REBs and the Zonal Education Offices are appreciated. However, links between these offices and the *wereda*⁵ level are rather loose.
- Some members of the original cohort of KELTAs have left their regions to take up jobs elsewhere; a few have used the KELTA training as a springboard for further study at Master's level. To fill the gap, a second cohort of KELTAs was trained in 2004-2005, bringing the total number to just under 200. However, there may be a need to organise trainer training programmes on a regular basis at the national and regional levels in order to maintain the supply of KELTAs.
- Attention must be paid to the needs of the large number of new teachers entering the workforce. As the Ministry of Education achieves greater school enrolment, so more and more teachers will be required. It is already planned that ELIP will move into the teacher education institutions to improve the English language and methodology of teacher trainers there and hence to create a more competent workforce of college and university graduates. However, it will take some time for this benefit to filter down into the schools.
- Further research into the impact and effectiveness of the training and the feasibility of extending the programme should be conducted.
- Stakeholders should act upon any recommendations that are made following internal and external monitoring and evaluation of the programme, including impact studies.

Notes

¹ First cycle primary education consists of grades 1-4 whilst second cycle primary is grades 5-8. First cycle secondary education is grades 9-10; this leads on to vocational training. Second cycle secondary includes grades 11-12; it is also known as 'preparatory' and leads to higher education.

² Some ELTs fell into other categories but space does not permit us to consider them in detail here.

³ At exchange rates applicable in March 2007, these are between £0.38 and £4.00 per day or between US\$0.70 and US\$7.90 per day.

⁴ It may be worth adding that the limited interview data which is available suggests that this opinion had softened somewhat by the end of the programme. Although participants still felt that the incentive was inadequate they were beginning to feel that the programme had been so beneficial in terms of increased skills and confidence that this was not after all such a major issue for them. In fact some interviewees even indicated that with hindsight they would have been willing to pay for the training themselves.

⁵ The *wereda* is a geopolitical unit, roughly equivalent to a county in the UK. There are more than 500 *wereda* in Ethiopia.

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Chapter 15

Telling stories, understanding lives, working toward change¹

Kath Copley, Graham Haylor and William Savage

Introduction

Stories are helping us learn more about the livelihoods of the fishers and farmers with whom we work in eastern India. We are engaged with these communities in processes and activities aimed at improving their lives and promoting changes in government policy and service delivery in aquaculture and fisheries. Stories are told in several languages by women and men who fish and farm, about their lives, their livelihoods and significant changes they have experienced. We also record stories as narrated to us by colleague-informants. The written and spoken word, photographs, drawings and films – all are used to document the stories of people's lives, sometimes prompted by questions as simple as 'What do people talk about in the village?' Through the power of language, stories can be an entry point into livelihoods programming, monitoring and evaluation, conflict transformation and ultimately a way of giving life to a rights-based approach to development.

'Just ask us'

In October 2004, two of us (Graham and William) were in a workshop in eastern India that was part of designing a monitoring and evaluation system which includes the use of Significant Change Stories collected from fishers and farmers. As the facilitator, one of us (William) posed a question to our fishing and farming community colleagues about a process that we could develop together to collect, filter, analyse and document stories of significant change in their lives and livelihoods as a result of the work we had been doing together for several years. Their response was, 'We don't need a process, just ask us and we'll tell you.'

We were reminded once again of how easy it is to get caught up in the design of processes and frameworks and structures, when what we really need to be doing is simply to take the time to listen to people's stories. For those of us who work toward improvement in the lives and livelihoods of individuals and communities – what some people might call development – we sometimes forget that the true knowledge about people and their objectives comes from them, and all we have to do is ask and listen.

This chapter is about stories and how we are using storytelling to help us learn more about the lives and livelihoods of people with whom we work, not only in eastern India – from where our examples will come – but also in other countries where STREAM (see below) works, and in the case of two of us (Kath and William), with other organisations we work with as consultants. The chapter is also about how telling and listening to stories enables us to begin understanding other people's perspectives, their realities, their truths, as we learn to combine these with our own perspectives, realities and truths, so that we make possible complete descriptions of the experiences we share and the situations we find ourselves in together.

Lives, livelihoods, policies and services

STREAM (Support to Regional Aquatic Resources Management) is an initiative of the inter-governmental organisation called NACA, or the Network of Aquaculture Centres in Asia-Pacific, based in Bangkok, Thailand, and supported by its member governments. STREAM's 'rural development through aquaculture and fisheries' activities happen through its four themes of livelihoods, institutions, policy development and communications. We work with local government and non-governmental colleagues in twelve of NACA's sixteen member countries, implementing projects ranging from capacity development for carrying out livelihoods analysis with fishing communities, institutional development with government departments, non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and federations of Self-Help Groups, engaging in processes leading to policy change, and sharing what we learn through a variety of communications media.

Getting back to that workshop in eastern India in October 2004, we had been working with these colleagues from tribal communities in three Indian states for several years toward implementing improved government and non-governmental service provision in aquaculture and fisheries. This followed as a result of a previous project where together we had documented people's experiences of government service provision, set up a process for eliciting recommendations for policy changes, and eventually presented these as a story to central and state policy-makers for their consideration. Several of the recommendations actually resulted in changed policy, for example, lengthening of lease periods on community ponds so that groups could make them productive, and the establishment of One-stop Aqua Shops in villages so that potential fish farmers would not have to travel to numerous locations for financial and material support and information. It was the purpose of the second project to try out some of the changes to service provision with the same communities who had been part of the original documentation and recommendation process.

The story that was told to the policy-makers began through fieldwork carried out in six villages across the three eastern Indian states of Jharkhand, Orissa and West Bengal. Working in Hindi, Oriya and Bangla with local colleagues, we transformed the spoken stories of fishers and farmers – women and men – into a series of case studies representing a variety of experiences of service provision. These took the form of film documentaries, storyboards with photographs, and written text. All of this material was turned over to a local tribal playwright who crafted a street-play that expressed the lives and livelihoods of the fishing communities, their experience of trying to make a living in their traditional ways, the difficulties of doing that in the present economic, social and political context, and the recommendations they made for changes to policy and service provision that might offer an opportunity for them to improve their circumstances.

During a Policy Review Workshop, the audience of policy-makers and representatives of other stakeholders viewed the films, received the written reports and watched the performance of the street-play. That workshop ended with people talking about the sorts of commitments they could make to effect changes to policy and service provision, which led in turn to the second project. As the screenwriter Robert McKee (2003:52) says :

... to persuade people – [we need to unite] an idea with an emotion. The best way to do that is by telling a compelling story. In a story, you not only weave a lot of information into the telling but you also arouse your listener's emotions and energy.

Stories – telling and listening

We have come to believe that the importance of stories rests less on their being told than on their being listened to. When we listen to other people's stories, we are demonstrating that we value what they have to say. When we act on what people are telling us, we are showing that we believe they know what is best for themselves. This requires us, however, to re-imagine how we view ourselves in our relationships with the people with whom we work : 'If talking openly means being willing to expose to others what is inside of us, then listening openly means being willing to expose ourselves to something new from others' (Kahane 2004:73).

Carl Rogers, the psychotherapist and educator, suggested a test for the quality of our listening and understanding :

The next time you get into an argument with your spouse, friend, or a small group of friends, stop the discussion for a moment and suggest this rule : 'Before each person speaks up, he or she must first restate the ideas and feelings of the previous speaker accurately and to that speaker's satisfaction.' (Rogers & Roethlisberger 1991:98)

We have listened to and documented a variety of story types. People have told us about the successes and failures they have had, changes that have happened, past events, whether a particular aquaculture technology works or not. Stories are being used to understand how people live, the significant changes that take place in their lives, the impact that conflict has on individuals and communities, and how to enable people to realise their right to be heard.

Livelihoods programming

STREAM does a lot of work in capacity development for people who carry out livelihoods studies with communities, as components of research studies, or policy change processes, or to design and implement activities to improve people's livelihoods. By using PLA² tools, livelihoods teams gain an understanding of communities' lives in terms of the resources they see themselves as having, what they are vulnerable to, processes and institutions that influence their lives, their livelihoods strategies and the outcomes they desire for themselves. Even though this learning primarily takes place through PLA tools, what is really happening – or possibly happening – is that people in communities are telling the stories of their lives.

Telling and listening to stories opens a door to the potential for building relationships and trust, which is fundamental to the kind of work we do. Are stories just a fun way to work, only ends in themselves? Or are we talking about something more here : creating connections, understanding and community among people who have different

political, ideological, social and financial realities, but who could work together to make vulnerable people's lives better? Let's be bold and passionate. We are talking about social justice here, aren't we? We know from experience that telling and listening to stories is a way to begin creating socially just change in a world that badly needs that. As Margaret Wheatley writes :

I believe we can change the world if we start listening to one another again. Simple, honest, human conversation. Not mediation, negotiation, problem-solving, debate, or public meetings. Simple, truthful conversation where we each have a chance to speak, we each feel heard, and we each listen well. (2002:3)

... when we begin listening to each other, and when we talk about things that matter to us, the world begins to change. (2002:9)

... There is no power greater than a community discovering what it cares about. (2002:145)

By spending time with people, by valuing their lives and stories, we are able to document with them their perspectives of the realities of their lives, as in the following excerpts from a story written by one of our Indian colleagues, Dr Satyendra Tripathi, told to him by Ms Thanda Mahato, of Jabarrah Village in West Bengal, India:

We discussed the changes in her livelihood. During our last visit she had a bank deposit of Rs40,000 but now she was left with only Rs5,000 owing to various expenses which she had to incur during this period.

She was herself involved in selling fish as in the past, purchasing it from Purulia or Lalpur markets and then selling it from door-to-door in villages around Jabarrah, which fetches her anything from Rs30 to Rs100 per day. However, this work is limited to winter months only as fish preserved in ice fetches a low price and gets spoiled by noon if ice is not used. She sometimes suffers a loss too.

Her husband, Mr Kalipada Mahato, goes for harvesting fish but has to hire a net that costs him Rs200 which he pays after selling the catch (30% of the fish caught) himself or through his wife, Thanda.

She has recently constructed a house on the land that belongs to her husband, spending Rs70,000 for which she had to get the bricks for Rs21,000, pay labour charges for five persons and two masons with food and also contribute two labourers from the family. A neem tree that she had was cut to be used for beams and other purposes.

An unexpected problem faced by her was the premature birth of her grandson who weighed only 1.9 kg. She had to run to Purulia and keep her daughter-in-law in the hospital and spend Rs12,000 in just one month. To meet these expenses, she sold 14 goats at Rs500 each, about 1,400 kg of rice which she had collected in lieu of the wages for grazing the village cattle for one year,

200 pairs of cowdung cakes for Rs1,000, and birds for Rs300, besides using another Rs1,000 received from the salaries of her two sons.

Of her four sons and one daughter, the eldest son and her daughter have been married. Her daughter has been widowed and has a school-going boy, who now stays with her. A total of 11 relatives stay in her house. Her youngest son and her grandson (daughter's son) go to school. She borrowed Rs1,500 from a school teacher to put the two boys in school.

Thanda works hard from daybreak to dusk and has been such a great support to her family! It was her planning and savings that helped her save the life of her grandson and build a house for them all.

Monitoring and evaluation

STREAM has been developing a monitoring and evaluation system through which we intend to capture two types of change : those that are expected and can be accounted for through indicators that are objectively verifiable, and those which we do not anticipate, and which are difficult to account for with pre-determined indicators. We have been using Significant Change Stories to understand both types of change, and in particular the unanticipated ones. This is based on an approach to monitoring and evaluation originally developed by Rick Davies (1998) and his colleagues in an NGO in Bangladesh, which they call Most Significant Change. When asking people to tell Significant Change Stories, we ask a question like 'What has changed in your livelihood as a result of this work that we have done together?'

In a later workshop in the eastern India project, participants wrote significant change stories in Bangla and then read them out. We asked questions about the particulars of the stories, especially those which related to how people perceived the changes which they had expressed. It became apparent as we listened to the stories that the storytellers were also speaking as if in response to a question like 'What do people in the village talk about?' and that this might also be a useful way of asking about changes in people's lives and livelihoods. The following story by Mr Kuddus Ansary, of Kaipara Village in West Bengal, is an example of a significant change story. It is called 'Will and Self-confidence Show the Way of Victory.'

My house is in a remote village but I dream to make my village recognised among the other five villages where I live. Before knowing others, I try to know myself. By looking in the mirror frame of pictures of Swami Vivekananda [a disciple of Ram Krishna] and Bidya Sagar [a social revolutionary engaged in educational reform], I try to judge myself from the inside.

Three years back I did not have this thinking, but now I think of how to improve my locality with my livelihood. Three years back when I used to visit different villages to help to make groups, I remember that women could not come out of their houses. Political leaders were difficult to approach; it was difficult to make them understand what, where and how development was needed.

I remember that in an open meeting one of the political leaders not only criticised my work with Self-Help Groups but also instructed the *Panchayat* [local government] head not to sign any of my applications. At that time I wondered whether there was anything wrong with my work; am I cheating people? But still I have continued my work with will and self-confidence. Now I am surprised to see that the same political leader is giving speeches on group formation. Favourable conditions are coming and every organisation (GOs [government organisations] and NGOs [non-government organisations]) is talking about group formation.

One of the disadvantages of groups formed by government projects is their instability. No one is responsible for keeping records and information. Once the government money gets exhausted everyone leaves the group, and vulnerable people are not able to know about the development process.

Demands of people are growing now. They are no longer talking about hunger and food but about electricity and paved roads. We also want that and also the sustainability of each and every activity. Though government organisations are talking about different job opportunities, we are not sure about their applicability and effectiveness.

In the last year, through our efforts, we have established a One-stop Aqua Shop (OAS). We will see in a few years if this is working. People who are helping us are a long way off but still we know they can help. We are not having many funds but still we are thinking how we can help communications. STREAM has supported us by providing information, organising exposure visits, and loaning a fishing net and *hundies* [fish transport containers].

Through the work of the last year we have realised that we can do something better for ourselves. We know that government will not help us much but the Federation of Self-Help Groups we have established will help us in our development. We do not have structural support but we are having will power, and we can do it. We will win.

Conflict transformation

Stories are also essential to efforts at transforming situations of conflict into opportunities for reconciliation. When we are able to hear about the impact of conflict on other people's lives, and can tell them of how our own lives have been affected by conflict, we begin to understand that ultimately there will be no winners, that we are all losing. But changing the nature of the conflict discourse to discussions of impact – rather than debates about who is right and who is wrong – is not easy. There must be an agreement and commitment on all sides that this is the direction we want to take the discussion. As Kahane (2004:2) writes :

Our talking and listening often fails to solve complex problems because of the way that most of us talk and listen most of the time. Our most common way of talking is telling : asserting *the* truth about the way things are and must be, not allowing that there might be other truths and possibilities. And our most

common way of listening is not listening : listening only to our own talking, not to others. This way of talking and listening works fine for solving simple problems piece by piece, applying solutions that have worked in the past. But a complex problem can only be solved peacefully if the people who are part of the problem work together creatively to understand their situation and to improve it.

The Norwegian conflict mediation pioneer Johan Galtung (Achakulwisut 2003) pushes the purpose of conflict transformation even further :

We are not so interested in the beginning or making people understand each other. We are much more interested in making a creative jump, bringing them to a new point and making it better.

Kahane again (2004:125) puts it this way :

We did not put our ideas together. We put our purposes together. And we agreed, and then we decided.

And when we put our purposes together we can sometimes be transformed. As the Vietnamese Buddhist monk Thich Nhat Hanh (1995:8) says :

In a true dialogue, both sides are willing to change. ... We have to believe that by engaging in dialogue with the other person, we have the possibility of making a change within ourselves, that we can become deeper. ... We have to allow what is good, beautiful, and meaningful in the other's tradition to transform us.

Finally, from Kahane (2004:102) once more, a reminder that, by mindful sharing of ourselves, we can discover our own and each other's commitments and roles within a common purpose :

... stories enabled the participants to understand their individual and group roles as part of the problem and what they needed to do to be part of the solution. These understandings can occur through any kind of open conversation, but they often occur through personal storytelling. When people choose to tell a personal story in such a group, they are revealing something of themselves. They are sharing what matters to them about this problem. Furthermore, because (in Carl Rogers' paradoxical phrase) 'what is most personal is most universal,' these stories also illuminate the source of the group's shared commitment.

Approaching development through people's rights : Power through language

A typical understanding of a rights-based approach to development is that it addresses the underlying causes of poverty and social injustice, rather than the symptoms of it. We can learn about people's own perceptions of injustices, of the realisation or denial of their rights, and whether people consider themselves empowered over their own circumstances, by listening to their stories, and by finding ways to contribute to what

people say they need, rather than what we think they need. As Uvin (2004:179) puts it, 'A rights-based approach to development means listening to and respectfully working with marginalised groups ...'

How should we be working as development practitioners? As listeners to stories? As people who are in positions to mediate between the realities of people's lives and opportunities that may exist to improve them? In India, comfortable local conversations in villages were the beginning of a journey of stories that led to policy-makers (and policy change) in Delhi. According to Uvin (2004:183), we need to :

... give much more priority to promoting local dialogues, to stimulating local knowledge generation and research, to finding ways of making people's voices heard by those in power – both out of respect for the dignity of people and because they are the ones who have to live with the consequences of being wrong. As a matter of fact, this may well be one of the things in which external aid agencies have a comparative advantage : to create spaces for discussion, for innovative knowledge, for thinking – and listening. Their external nature allows them to be less implicated than locals and thus to take a leadership role in the emergence of new knowledge.

In the tangle of the international development world, where we use management tools and somewhat latterly rediscovered monitoring, evaluation and learning, we often aim to anticipate outcomes, and define their indicators in advance. These actions are a comfort to those who, with some justification, seek assurances about impact from their spending. Yet sharing of ourselves, being open to change and to being transformed is not the stuff of fixed schedules and predictable outcomes. It is rather more personal, unpredictable, individual and challenging - it's the source of stories. As Kahane (2004:77) reminds us, we must constantly roll back the barriers and take on the hard part :

We peace people have always listened to the oppressed and disenfranchised ... One of the new steps I think we should take is to listen to those we consider 'the enemy' with the same openness, non-judgment, and compassion we listen to those with whom our sympathies lie. Everyone has a partial truth, and we must listen, discern, and acknowledge this partial truth in everyone – particularly those with whom we disagree.

And, again from Kahane, our essential roles are to provide the stage, the page and our selves :

... the job of the facilitator is to help the participants speak up, listen up, and bring all of their personal resources to the work at hand. Our job is not to direct or control the participants ... even though we [remain] neutral with respect to the substance of the participants' work, our process [is] not neutral : it embodie[s] values of openness, inclusion, and collaboration. (2004:127)

... Our job as facilitators and leaders is simply to help create a clean, safe space. Then the healing will occur. (2004:89)

'Just ask us ...'

Notes

¹ This chapter is a revised version of a paper which was originally presented at both the 7th Language and Development Conference and the 2nd International Conference on Culture and Development (Bangkok, 2005). It has also been published under the same title as Copley, Haylor and Savage (2006) in the *Proceedings* of the Bangkok conference and appears here with the permission of the editor of that volume.

² Chambers (2005:xxi) defines PLA, or Participatory Learning and Action, as a 'term designed to be more inclusive of participatory methodologies than implied by the term PRA [Participatory Rural Appraisal] on its own.'

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The 7th International Language and Development Conference which took place in Addis Ababa in October 2005 was the first of the series to take place on the African continent.

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