Annual Review of Applied Linguistics (2003) **23**, 225–242. Printed in the USA.
Copyright © 2003 Cambridge University Press 0267-1905/03 $12.00

14. SOCIAL CHANGE AND LANGUAGE SHIFT: SOUTH AFRICA

Nkonko M. Kamwangamalu

Studies of social change and language maintenance and shift have tended to focus on minority immigrant languages (e.g., Fishman, 1991; Gal, 1979; Milroy, 2001; Stoessel, 2002). Very little is known about language shift from a demographically dominant language to a minority but economically dominant one (e.g., Bowerman, 2000; de Klerk, 2000; Kamwangamalu, 2001, 2002a,b, & in press; Reagan, 2001). This chapter contributes to such research by looking at the current language shift from majority African languages such as Sotho, Xhosa, and Zulu to English in South Africa. In particular, it examines to what extent the sociopolitical changes that have taken place in South Africa (i.e., the demise of apartheid and its attendant structures) have impacted everyday linguistic interaction and have contributed to language shift from the indigenous African languages to English, especially in urban Black communities. It argues that a number of factors, among them the economic value and international status of English, the perceived lower status of the indigenous African languages, the legacy of apartheid-based Bantu education, the new multilingual language policy, the linguistic behaviors of language policy makers, etc., interact in complex ways to accelerate language shift in urban Black communities. In conclusion, the chapter explores ways in which the observed language shift can be curbed to prevent what Skutnabb-Kangas (2000) has termed "linguistic genocide," particularly in a country that has a well-documented history of this phenomenon (Lanham, 1978; Prabhakaran, 1998).

> "South Africa has 11 official languages, but many could soon face extinction . . . " (*Sowetan Sunday World,* 5 August 2001) "From the remotest Khoi language of the Kgalakgadi to the pre-eminent Nguni isiZulu tongue in KwaZulu Natal, the African languages all face a common, domineering force—English" (*Daily News*, December 6, 2000), [which] "is spreading like the mynah bird . . ." (*Sunday Times*, August 4, 2002).

Recent research indicates that since South Africa liberated itself from apartheid and became a democracy in 1994, there has been a steady language shift, especially from the indigenous African languages to English in urban Black communities (de Klerk 2000; Kamwangamalu, 2001; Reagan, 2001). This study examines to what extent the change from apartheid to democracy has contributed to language shift in these communities. Studies of social change and language shift have tended to focus on minority immigrant languages (e.g. Fishman, 1991; Gal,

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0267190503000291 Published online by Cambridge University Press

1979; Milroy, 2001; Stoessel, 2002). The present study considers language shift from demographically majority South African languages such as Sotho, Xhosa, and Zulu to a minority but economically dominant language, English. The discussion of this issue will be organized as follows. The first section presents a theoretical background to language shift. The next section examines the social history that lies behind language shift in South Africa. The subsequent section discusses the impact of the demise of apartheid on language use in some of the country's institutions, with a focus on the media, the government and administration, and education. I argue that language practices in these institutions, together with the country's social history and particularly the weight of the history of apartheid mother-tongue education (G. de Klerk, 2002), serve as a catalyst for the current language shift in urban Black communities. The penultimate section looks at some of the domains (Fishman, 1970, p. 17), both macro and micro, in which language shift to English is taking place in these communities, with a focus on education and the family. The last section explores ways in which language shift can be stemmed to prevent linguistic genocide, a term that I am using in the sense of Skutnabb-Kangas (2000) to refer to the looming demise of the indigenous African languages as a result of contact with a more powerful and prestigious language, English.

Theoretical Background to Language Shift

Language shift does not happen overnight. It is a gradual process in which a speech community, for one reason or another, gives up its language and adopts a new one (Fasold, 1984). The process of language shift, as Joshua Fishman puts it, refers particularly to "speech communities whose native languages are threatened because their intergenerational continuity is proceeding negatively, with fewer and fewer users or uses every generation" (1991, p. 1). The starting point of language shift is bilingualism—often accompanied by diglossia—as a stage on the way to monolingualism in a new language (Romaine, 1994). Romaine explains that "typically, a community which was once monolingual becomes bilingual as a result of contact with another (usually socially and economically more powerful) group and becomes transitionally bilingual in the new language until their own language is given up altogether" (1994, p. 50). Romaine's remarks reflect the language situation in urban Black communities in South Africa, where English-African language (e.g., Zulu, Xhosa) bilingualism is increasingly becoming the norm, particularly for the younger generations. In this regard, Fishman warns that, "what begins as the language of social and economic mobility [as English is in the context of South Africa] ends, within three generations or so, as the language of the crib as well, even in democratic and pluralism-permitting contexts" (1989, p. 206).

Decisions regarding language shift or maintenance are made on an individual level and are a result of an interaction between macro-social factors (see below) and highly individual choices, a point that Stoessel (2002) also makes in his investigation of the role of social networks, that is, the "informal social relationships contracted by an individual" (Milroy, 1987, p. 78), in language maintenance and shift. The diagnostics for language shift include, among other things, the intrusion of one language into the domains of the other (Appel & Muysken, 1987), and a feeling

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0267190503000291 Published online by Cambridge University Press

that the language being shifted from is inferior to the one being shifted to (Fasold, 1984).

Studies of language shift in communities around the world indicate that several factors are responsible for language shift, the most important among them being generation, the numerical strength of a group in relation to other minorities and majorities, language status and language attitude, socioeconomic value, education, institutional support, and government policies, to list a few (e.g., Fishman, 1991; Paulston, 1987; Romaine, 1995). These factors do not operate independently of one another but interact in complex ways to cause language shift. Whichever factors are involved, language shift only takes place if the language being shifted to has social prestige and economic advantage, primarily in the form of source of income (Paulston, 1988, p. 5). Paulston remarks further that "ethnic groups within a modern nation-state, given opportunity and incentive, typically shift to the language of the [economically] dominant group" (1994, p. 9). These remarks are born out not only by the present study, as we will see later, but also by studies of language shift in various parts of the world.

For instance, in a study of ethnic mother tongue maintenance and shift among the Maltese migrants in Ontario and British Columbia, Canada, Slavick (2001) found that the strongest factor contributing to the shift from Maltese to English was the negative attitudes many Maltese hold toward the Maltese language because it has no prestige and is not economically viable in the Canadian context. Gal (1979) draws a similar conclusion concerning the shift from Hungarian to German in Oberwart, Austria; and so do Dorian (1981) and Landon (2000) concerning the shift from Gaelic to English in East Surtherland. With respect to the Hungarian case, Gal explains that the need for the Hungarians to integrate into the increasingly dominant Austrian socioeconomic community for work and social advancement contributed to the shift from Hungarian to German. As for the shift from Gaelic to English, Dorian and Landon note that Gaelic speakers have over centuries formed negative attitudes towards Gaelic because of the low status of the language, and this has contributed to the shift to English, which Gaelic parents believe is the way forward for their children. Parental ambitions for the children are also said to have contributed to what Crowley (1996) calls "pragmatic language shift" from Irish to English in Ireland, and to a shift from Tamil to English in Tamil communities in Singapore and Malaysia (Gupta, 1997). I will also argue that in South(ern) Africa the shift from the African languages to English can be described as pragmatic language shift, for it is primarily caused by socioeconomic factors.

There are very few studies on language shift in South(ern) Africa (e.g., de Klerk, 2000; Prabhakaran, 1998; Smeija, 1999). Nevertheless, available research, including that listed above, shows that language shift in this part of the world is also caused by the same factors that lead to language shift in other communities around the world. Again, these factors include socioeconomic pressures, language status, language attitude and institutional support, to name a few. For instance, in a study of code-switchswitching and language shift in Botswana, Smeija (1999) reports that there exists a steady language shift from Setswana and other minority languages to

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0267190503000291 Published online by Cambridge University Press

English, for the language is seen as a powerful economic and educational tool, the language with higher social status and prestige. In a similar study, based on language shift in Grahamstown (South Africa), V. de Klerk also makes the point that "shift [from Xhosa] to English is well under way, and is almost irrevocable" (2000, p. 105); she explains further that the decision to shift to English is made by parents "from the better-educated and wealthier sectors of society, where they have seen the dividends that come from an 'investment' in English" (p. 105). Along these lines, Prabhakaran (1998) describes the shift to English in the Indian communities in South Africa as a conscious choice that Indian parents made for their children. She points out that the parents forced their children to learn English and discouraged them from learning Telugu or any other Indian languages because, first, the social identity associated with English was more desirable than that associated with Indian languages and, second, the government's language policies did not assign the Indian languages any role in the South African society. As a result of contacts with economically more viable languages, in this case Afrikaans and English, the Indian communities are now mostly monolingual in English. As might be expected, preventing the children from speaking ancestral Indian languages created a gap in intergenerational transmission of the Indian languages.

Against this background, language activists in Black communities fear that what happened to the Indian languages, and before them, the Khoisan languages (most of which are extinct), is now happening again, this time to the indigenous African languages. Bearing this in mind, and with English increasingly infiltrating the home domain in urban Black communities, the question arises whether the languages spoken by these communities are also on their way to extinction as a result of contact with English. In order to fully understand the process of language shift currently taking place in urban Black communities, and why and how the change from apartheid to democracy has contributed to the shift to English in these communities, one must understand the social history that lies behind the shift. The next section will be devoted to this social history. This will be followed by a discussion of language practices in the higher domains against the background of South Africa's transition from apartheid to democracy.

Social Change and Language Shift in South Africa: A Background

Cooper defines social change as "the appearance of new social and cultural patterns of behavior among specific groups within a society or within the society as a whole" (1989, p. 164). He notes that social change can be explained from a number of theoretical perspectives. The most relevant perspective for our purpose is what Cooper calls "functionalist theory of social change" (p. 177), which maintains that all parts of a system are interrelated. Changes in one part of the system ripple throughout the system to cause changes in other parts. The social history of South Africa indicates that the country has experienced four major social changes over the past 350 years, with each change impacting on the society as a whole and societal language use. The four social changes include Dutchification from 1652 to 1795, Anglicization from 1795 to 1948, Afrikanerization from 1948 to1994, and

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0267190503000291 Published online by Cambridge University Press

Democratization from 1994 to the present. In what follows I briefly describe each of these social changes.

Dutchification (1652–1795)

Dutchification refers to the official promotion and use of the Dutch language in all higher domains such as administration, education, trade, etc., by the Dutch officials of the Dutch East India Company who were the first Europeans to colonize South Africa. During the century and a half (1652–1795) of the Dutch occupation of the country, only knowledge of Dutch served as a catalyst for access to resources and employment in the civil service. Anyone who wanted to do business with the Dutch authority had to display knowledge of Dutch. The indigenous population of the area, the Khoi and the San, lost their languages entirely (language death) and acquired an interlanguage form of Dutch, so that today the descendents of all these people are Afrikaans- (or Sesotho-, isiXhosa-) speaking. The Dutchification of what was then called the Cape colony came to an end in 1795 when the territory fell under British control. In 1803 the British returned the Cape to Holland but took control of the territory again in 1806 to prevent it from falling into the hands of the French, who had already laid claim to Holland during the Napoleonic wars (1805–1815) (Branford, 1996; Lanham, 1978). With the territory now in their hands, the British authorities intensified the policy of Anglicization they had introduced earlier in the Cape colony during their first occupation of the territory from 1795 to 1803.

Anglicization (1795–1803, 1806–1948)

The policy of Anglicization "sought to replace Dutch by English in all spheres of public life" (Davenport, 1991, p. 40). Anglicization required knowledge of English for access to whatever resources were available in the colony. The policy of Anglicization lasted, in theory, until 1910, when the Union of South Africa was formed, which not only brought together the Whites of Dutch descent (commonly known as the Afrikaners) and their British counterparts but also concomitantly gave English and Dutch equal status as the co-official languages of the Union. In practice, however, the British never accepted parity between Dutch and English, especially in education. The British government policy, for both political and economic reasons, had laid down that English was a prerequisite for state aid in education (Hartshorne, 1995). Also, according to a British official, "the principle of the equality of the two languages [Dutch and English] had consistently been rejected by us [the British] from the first" (quoted in Headlam, 1931, p. 514). The policy of Anglicization ended effectively in 1948 when the Afrikaners came into power and swiftly replaced it (Anglicization) with Afrikanerization.

Afrikanerization (1948–1994)

The change from Anglicization to Afrikanerization saw the Afrikaans language, an offspring of Dutch, increase its power dramatically and take center stage in the administration of the state: "All government-controlled institutions, the state administration, the radio and television, the education sector, the defense force

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0267190503000291 Published online by Cambridge University Press

and semi-state institutions gradually [became] almost wholly Afrikaans. The [white] Afrikaans-population was in total control" (Webb & Kriel, 2000, p. 22). Knowledge of Afrikaans became a requirement for entry into the civil service, much as that of Dutch and English had been in the eras of Dutchification and Anglicization, respectively. The state invested heavily both politically and financially in the development of Afrikaans and often praised the language as a gift from God. In this regard, Webb and Kriel quote former state president P.W. Botha's addresses to parliament and celebratory ceremonies marking the achievements of Afrikaans: "We pay homage to the cultural leaders of the past, but we also stand humbly before the Creator of all languages and all nations [volkere], grateful for this miraculous gift [i.e., Afrikaans] to our soul" (Webb & Kriel, 2000, p. 42).

In an effort to further 'Afrikanerize' the South African society, in 1953 the apartheid government adopted a controversial language policy commonly known as the Bantu Education Act. Briefly, the policy sought (a) to promote Afrikaans and reduce the influence of English in Black schools; (b) to impose in these schools the use of both Afrikaans and English on an equal basis as media of instruction; and (c) to extend mother tongue education in African languages from grade 4 to grade 8 (see Kamwangamalu, 1997. (For more extensive discussion of other motives of the Bantu Education Act, see Kamwangamalu, 2001, pp. 390–395). In line with this policy of Bantu Education, Black children had to receive education through three languages, Afrikaans, English, and the mother tongue; while for their White, Colored (people of mixed race), and Indian counterparts, education was dispensed exclusively in Afrikaans or in English, depending on whether one was Afrikaans- or English-speaking. The Black pupils resisted mother tongue education, as promoted by the Bantu Education Act, because they recognized it for what it was: one of the strategies used by the apartheid government to deny the Blacks access to higher education and thus restrict their social and economic mobility (Kamwangamalu, 1997). The Black pupils saw education in their own mother tongue, and this is a very important point, as a dead-end, a barrier to more advanced learning, a lure to self-destruction and a trap designed by the apartheid government to ensure that the Black pupils did not acquire sufficient command of the high status languages, English and Afrikaans, for it would enable them to compete with their white counterparts for well-paying jobs and prestigious career options (Alexander, 1997).

These negative attitudes towards the indigenous African languages prevail to this day and have cast a shadow over the new government's attempts to promote the African languages as the medium of instruction. The Black pupils' resistance to the Bantu Education Act, and the apartheid government's determination to impose it, led to the bloody Soweto uprisings of 16 June 1976, in which several pupils lost their lives. The aftermath of the Soweto uprisings saw Afrikaans emerge, in the minds of Black South Africans, as the language of oppression, and English as the language of advancement and of liberation against apartheid. As for the indigenous African languages, they became identified as inferior and unsuitable for use in the educational system. In other words, the Soweto uprisings reinforced Black people's hatred towards Afrikaans; boosted the status of an already powerful language, English, over both Afrikaans and African languages in Black schools and in Black

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0267190503000291 Published online by Cambridge University Press

communities at large; and led the Black South Africans to equate education in their own languages with inferior education.

Language Democratization (1994–)

The last and most recent major social change in the South African society came about in 1994 when apartheid ended and a democratic South Africa was born. Recall that in line with the functionalist theory of social change, changes in one part of the system, in this case the South African society, ripple throughout the system to cause changes in other parts. As far as language is concerned, the change from apartheid to democracy brought about official recognition that South Africa is a multilingual rather than the bilingual country it had been assumed to be in the apartheid era. This recognition has translated into a new, multilingual language policy, hence language democratization. The new language policy gives official recognition to eleven languages including English and Afrikaans and nine indigenous African languages: Ndebele, Pedi, Sotho, Swati, Tsonga, Tswana, Xhosa, Zulu, and Venda. The key objective of the new language policy has been, understandably, to redress the imbalances of the past by promoting the use of previously marginalized languages, that is the indigenous African languages, in higher domains such as the media, education, the government and administration, etc. In 1997, the Minister of Education announced a language-in-education policy whose objectives were listed as follows (Department of Education, Government Gazette no. 18546, December 19, 1997):

(a) to promote additive multilingualism, that is, to maintain home language(s) while providing access to and the effective acquisition of additional language(s);

(b) to promote and develop all the official languages;

(c) to counter disadvantages resulting from different kinds of mismatches between home languages and languages of learning and teaching; and

(d) to develop programs for the redress of previously disadvantaged languages.

The policy has not worked for all the languages; only English has benefited more than any other language from the policy. There is sufficient evidence from current language practices in the higher status domains (e.g., education, media, government, and administration) that the policy has failed to achieve one of its key objectives, namely, to promote the use of the indigenous African languages in these domains. In the subsequent section I shall argue that the almost exclusive use of English in the higher domains by policymakers, coupled with the legacy of Bantu education, has contributed to the current language shift from the indigenous African languages to English, particularly in urban Black communities.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0267190503000291 Published online by Cambridge University Press

Language Democratization and Language Practices in Higher Domains

In this section I comment on language practices in the higher domains, with a focus on the education system, the legislature, and the media. Let me begin with education. As already observed, the thrust of the new language policy has been to promote the status of the indigenous African languages by, among other things, using them as the medium of teaching and learning. However, not much progress has been made yet in attempts to implement the policy. Rather, the status quo prevails. English and Afrikaans remain the chief media of learning in English-medium and Afrikaans-medium schools, respectively, much as they were in the apartheid era. English is also being used increasingly as a medium of instruction at Afrikaans-medium schools and universities to accommodate Black students' demand for English-medium education, for most of these students do not speak Afrikaans. If anything has changed at all in terms of the language practices in education, it is that English has gained far more territory and political clout than Afrikaans. A recent national survey on language use, conducted by the Pan-South African Language Board (PANSALB), indicates that 80% of tuition at schools and universities throughout the country is conducted through the medium of English (PANSALB, 2001, p. 9). The power of English is felt not only in education but also in other higher domains, such as the legislature and the media.

In its investigation into language practices in public institutions, the Language Plan Task Group (LANGTAG) found that:

> . . . some cabinet ministers and directors-general refuse to respond to documents unless they are in English; at the provincial level, correspondence between Provincial Governments and the Central Government is conducted mainly in English; at local Government level, City and Town Council meetings are held monolingually in English because some councilors refuse to let other councilors speak in any other language. (LANGTAG, 1996, p. 47)

Gunning (1997) concurs that most provincial legislatures use English. He remarks that ". . . politicians seem to prefer English over other languages, practical circumstances dictate its use, it [English] is used to avoid confusion, and it is the main language of documentation" (Gunning, 1997, p. 7). Pandor (1995) makes similar remarks in regard to language practices in the country's Parliament. She observes that in 1994, 87% of the speeches made in Parliament were in English, less than 5 per cent were in Afrikaans, and the remaining 8% were in the nine official African languages—that is, less than 1 per cent in each of the languages. And this is despite the fact that about 80% of the members of Parliament are Africans, the majority of whom are fluent in at least two of the official African languages in addition to English and Afrikaans. A recent report by Hibbert (2001) indicates that the percentage of speeches made in English in Parliament has actually increased from 87% in 1994 to over 95% in 2001. Thus, in Parliament fewer and fewer speeches are being made in Afrikaans, let alone in the indigenous African languages. These statistics are telling. They show that in spite of the constitutional principle of language equity—"all official languages must enjoy parity of esteem and must be

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0267190503000291 Published online by Cambridge University Press

treated equitably" (South African Constitution, 1996, section 6 (2)—the indigenous African languages continue to be marginalized and excluded from the domain of government, much as they were in the apartheid era.

Language practices in the media are no different from language practices in education and the legislature. Recent research (e.g., Kamwangamalu, 2000, 2001) indicates that English is by far more prevalent than any other official languages in the media, much as it is in other higher domains. This is evident from Kamwangamalu's (2001) survey of language use on South African television. Briefly, the South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC) has three TV channels, SABC1, SABC2, and SABC3. The survey shows that for the period April–June 2001, for instance, all the three TV channels combined had a total of 4664.52 hours of airtime to share including 1356 hours for SABC 1, 1727.02 hours for SABC 2, and 1580.5 hours for SABC 3, as shown in Table 1.

Table 1
Monthly air time distribution on SABC: *TV Talk* , April–June 2001

Channels	SABC 1: 1356 hrs	SABC 2: 1727.02 hrs	SABC 3: 1580.5 hrs	Total air time: 4664.52 hrs
Languages	Hours	Hours	Hours	Hours
IsiNdebele	0	5.52	0	5.52
SiSwati	0	0	0	0
Xitsonga	0	0	0	0
Tshivenda	0	0	0	0
Sepedi	0	32.00	0	32.00
Setswana	0	27.00	0	27.00
IsiXhosa	34.00	0	0	34.00
IsiZulu	53.00	0	0	53.00
Sesotho	0	74.00	0	74.00
Afrikaans	0	483.50	0	484.00
English	1269.00	1104.50	1580.50	3954.00

Source: Kamwangamalu (2001, p. 404)

Of the overall airtime for the three channels combined, English alone takes up to 3954.5 hours (85%); followed by Afrikaans with 484 hours (10%), and the African languages with a combined air time of 226.02 hours (5%), or 25 hours (0.5%) per language. Now, the question is, what role do African languages play in the country's institutions surveyed here? The answer is simple, that in spite of the change from apartheid to democracy, the indigenous African languages remain marginalized, much as they were in the apartheid era; and they continue to be seen, even by their own speakers, as inferior languages, unsuitable for use in higher domains such as those surveyed here. Thus it is not surprising that Black parents are encouraging their children to shun the indigenous African languages, and that this

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0267190503000291 Published online by Cambridge University Press

has resulted in a gradual language shift to English, which, the parents believe, holds the future for their children. The following section looks at some of the domains in which language shift is currently taking place in urban Black communities, with a focus on education and the family.

Language Practices and Language Shift

In this section, I argue that socioeconomic pressures, together with the low status of the indigenous African languages, the legacy of Bantu Education, and language practices in the higher domains as described in the previous section, cause language shift to English. The shift occurs on a large scale in education and on a small scale in the family. With regard to education, as a result of the demise of apartheid, and with it school segregation, the country has witnessed an influx of Black students from the township schools to formerly white or Indian schools in their quest to be educated only through the medium of English. Recent newspaper reports bear testimony to this state of affairs. One report, titled "Township pupils go elsewhere," says that "schools in townships north of the city of Durban . . . have experienced dwindling student enrollments in recent years [due] to the lack of qualified teachers and the absence of adequate facilities" (*Daily News*, 22 August 2002, p. 2). As a result, the report adds, the majority of advantaged schools in former White and Indian areas have witnessed an increased enrollment of African pupils. Another report, titled "Students shun African languages" (*Sunday Times*, 4 March 2001), indicates that enrollment in African languages at universities around the country has been declining by half each year since 1996. According to UNISA (the University of South Africa), the only institution that offers courses in all official African languages, the number of undergraduate students registered for these courses has dropped from 25,000 in 1997 to 3,000 in 2001. The number of postgraduate students has also decreased, from 511 to 53 in the same period (1997–2001). Other tertiary institutions have confirmed an annual decline of 50%.

With regard to the family, studies by de Klerk (2000) and Bowerman (2000) show that English is increasingly becoming the language of the home, a domain that was traditionally the preserve of the indigenous African languages. De Klerk's interviews with Xhosa-speaking parents reveal that when speaking to their children, the parents made a special effort to use English more. The following extracts from the interviews confirm the prevalent use of English in the family:

> "There is a tradition between me and my children that if they catch one another speaking Xhosa, they use two clicks to remind the other to speak English."

> "We use Xhosa most of the time but since M (the child) was told at school that she must try to speak English at home, so we are trying our level best to speak English with her."

> "We had to help him very much, so we stopped speaking Xhosa to him, 75 percent of the time was English."

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0267190503000291 Published online by Cambridge University Press

> "They hardly speak Xhosa … all the time they like English. I don't encourage them to speak Xhosa, not at all." (de Klerk, 2000, pp. 92–94)

In a study of language use in the Western Cape Province, Bowerman (2000) also concludes that English has become the language of the home, particularly for the younger generations. The study shows that the respondents use an African language rather than English in their interactions with older family members, irrespective of the latter's degree of proficiency in English. However, they use English regularly for interactions with family members around the same age as themselves; and this number, the study concludes, ". . . increases significantly (to more than a third of the [31] respondents) when it comes to communicating with family members of younger generations" (Bowerman, 2000, p. 138). A similar questionnaire survey, conducted by Kamwangamalu (2002b) in two secondary schools in Durban, reveals that the pupils use both English and Zulu in the family, suggesting that language shift is indeed in progress, since bilingualism is a major precursor of language shift (Lieberson, 1980; Romaine, 1994). While English is welcomed with open arms into the traditional domain of Zulu, that is, the family, Zulu is not welcomed at all in higher domains such as education, for this is perceived as the preserve of English. Attempts to promote Zulu and other official indigenous languages in education raise much suspicion, and are seen as a disguise and a painful reminder of apartheid-driven Bantu Education, whose key goal was to deny the Black child access to English. As a matter of fact, when I asked the pupils the question, "If you married and had children, which of the languages you have listed in x would you prefer to be used as the medium of instruction at your children's school?," they (the pupils) overwhelmingly chose English over any of all the languages they listed. Of the one hundred subjects surveyed, 73 pupils (73%) said they would send their children to an English-medium school; 23 pupils (23%) opted for a Zulu-English medium school; while only 4 pupils (4%) claimed they would send their children to a Zulu-medium school. With respect to English, the choice seems to be dictated obviously by the socio-economic value of the language. The following comments, all from Kamwangamalu, 2002b, confirm this:

> "Because nowadays English is the most important language in the whole world, so they [the children] must improve in it in order to get a job."

> "You can't do anything without English."

> "English is an international language. It is important for them [the children] to know English to be able to succeed in life. They must know the medium of instruction."

With respect to 'Zulu-English,' the key comment is that by studying in both Zulu and English, "the children would be able to communicate with their own people and other nations as well." The pupils who chose both Zulu and English as a medium of instruction appear to have a divided loyalty between the two languages.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0267190503000291 Published online by Cambridge University Press

On the one hand, they need English because of its instrumental value both locally and internationally. On the other hand, however, they would not want to abandon their language (Zulu) for the sake of English, as the following comments illustrate:

> "[the children need] Zulu because they have to know their heritage and where they come from; [they need] English so that they can communicate with the rest of the world."
>
> "As much as I would like my children to know and understand English to fit into our corporate world, I would also like them to know their roots, their ancestral language."
>
> "I want my children to be well educated and multi-linguistic [sic!] but I would also like it if they did not forget their roots and be able to write and speak Zulu."

These comments suggest that, for the pupils, only English qualifies as the language of learning, one without which one 'can do nothing,' 'cannot get a job,' 'cannot succeed in life.' Zulu is not associated with any of these attributes. On the contrary, the purpose of learning Zulu is to keep the language and the culture it embodies alive, so that 'the children did not forget their roots.' These points, together with those made by de Klerk (2000) and Bowerman (2000), shed light onto why English is intruding in the family domain, which Fasold (1984) describes as the last bastion of a subordinate language in competition with a dominant official language of wider currency. Languages, say Fishman, Cooper, and Conrad, are rarely acquired for their own sake (1977, p. 115). They are acquired as keys to other things that are desired in life. In the context of South Africa, these 'other things' include the desire to be able to have access to employment, which now generally requires knowledge of English, as was the case in the era of Anglicization; and the desire to move up the social ladder and identify with the power elite (St. Clair, 1982), whose language practices involve an extensive use of English, the current language of rule, power and prestige, a language with no sell-by date attached to it (Pakir, 1998) and one in which, as Lynn (1995, p. 55) puts it, the elite reproduces itself. Therefore, for most Black people in South Africa, English has become the sole open sesame by means of which they and their children in particular can achieve unlimited vertical social mobility. As for the African languages, their own speakers shun them because they carry the status of inferior languages, a stigma with which they were associated in the apartheid era as a result of the Bantu Education Act. As Alexander (1997) notes aptly, Black South Africans shun their own indigenous languages because the languages are not validated in the marketplace, that is, they are not accorded a status such that knowing them is of material or social benefit to the speaker outside the relevant community itself.

The legacy of apartheid Bantu education weighs heavily on and has rendered the indigenous African languages instrumentally valueless. Despite all intents and purposes, the new language policy has not, save on paper, corrected this legacy. Instead, the policy appears to have successfully created a climate that favors what

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0267190503000291 Published online by Cambridge University Press

Del Valle (2000, p. 109) calls "balanced multilingualism"—that is, in the present context, the seeming peaceful coexistence of the country's 11 official languages. In reality, however, the policy appears to have "a false front" (Schiffman, 1996, p. 6), for it publicly states that the country's eleven official languages are equal, whereas the reality shows otherwise, that English is spreading like the mynah bird, and that the domains in which the other official languages are used are shrinking rapidly. In defense of English, I submit that the language cannot be blamed for language shift in Black communities. It is the people who, for one reason or another, nurture language maintenance or language shift. No language in the world can impose itself, let alone be imposed onto the people, as the 1976 Soweto uprisings against Afrikaans remind us. The obvious consequence of the spread of English into the family domain, let alone its almost exclusive use in virtually all the higher domains, is the process of language shift that is currently under way in urban Black communities. The absence of serious language modernization and the failure of the new language policy cast serious doubts on the hopes, generated by the change from apartheid to democracy, of raising the indigenous African languages to genuine equality with English and Afrikaans. On the contrary, speakers of African languages are willing to pay high personal costs, including 'trading in' their own languages, to acquire English. Whether this trend towards unilingualism in English and its consequent linguistic genocide can be stopped remains to be seen. In the conclusion to this paper I argue that the micro-economic handwriting is all too clearly written on the wall (Laitin, 1997) for the speakers of African languages to maintain intergenerational transmission of these languages. In order to stop language shift from the indigenous African languages to English, the African languages must also be given a real cachet in the broader social, political and economic context, as is the case for English and Afrikaans.

Conclusion

The change from apartheid to democracy in South Africa has triggered language shift from the indigenous African languages to English particularly in urban Black communities. I have argued that the key catalyst for the shift is the socioeconomic value of English, the knowledge of which the majority of Black people in South Africa believe is the only key to upward social mobility both for themselves as well as for their children. But can the trend towards unilingualism in English and the consequent demise of the indigenous languages be stopped? Fishman (1990) has insisted that the maintenance of a minority language, or a language in general for that matter, and the possibility of reversing a language shift trend must be based on the creation of two conditions: (a) the strict compartmentalization of the dominant and subordinate languages; and (b) the preservation of the patterns of intergenerational transmission of the minority language. Both conditions appear to have already been violated with respect to language use in urban Black communities. First, English is increasingly intruding in the family domain, which has been the preserve of the indigenous language. Second, as a result of this intrusion, the patterns of intergenerational transmission of the indigenous languages are threatened, especially as Black parents in urban communities are deliberately encouraging their children not to speak an African

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0267190503000291 Published online by Cambridge University Press

language within the family. People no longer study language for sentimental reasons. Language policymakers can no longer pretend that Black parents will develop positive attitudes towards their own languages and accept them as the medium of education unless such an education facilitates access to upward social and economic mobility. The alternative to this is continued language shift to English and ultimate demise for the indigenous African languages along with the cultures and the indigenous knowledge they embody.

ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY

Bowerman, S. A. (2000). *Linguistic imperialism in South Africa: The 'unassailable' position of English*. Unpublished M.A. thesis. Department of Linguistics and Southern African Languages. University of Cape Town.

This very interesting study provides an in-depth background to language contact and conflict in South Africa and addresses issues in language policy and planning, such as the new language policy and efforts being made to implement it, and the dominance of English and its impact on Afrikaans and on the indigenous Afrikaans languages. It compares attempts at policy implementation in South Africa and abroad (e.g., Swahili in Kenya and Irish in Ireland), provides a case study of the linguistic behaviors L2 English speakers employed in an English L1 environment, and concludes by offering policy alternatives for South Africa. The study also contains a long list of useful references and government websites on language policy.

de Klerk, G. (2002). Mother-tongue education in South Africa: The weight of history. *International Journal of the Sociology of Language, 154*, 29–46.

In this thought-provoking article, the author discusses the history of language struggle in South Africa, with a focus on the role and interests of various political groupings as well as sociolinguists in shaping the country's language policies. She argues convincingly that the legacy of apartheid mother-tongue education weighs heavily on attempts to implement multilingual policies. Consequently, the author warns, South Africa may have to submit to the hegemony of English. Alternatively, and because the country will never escape from the legacy of apartheid education, nor be able to implement a dynamic functional multilingualism, it will stay tethered to essentialist notions of language, ethnicity, and culture. Which way the pendulum will swing remains to be seen.

de Klerk, V. (2000). Language shift in Grahamstown: A case study of selected Xhosa speakers. *International Journal of the Sociology of Language, 146*, 87–110.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0267190503000291 Published online by Cambridge University Press

This is one of the few studies that have attempted to document language shift in post-apartheid South Africa. It reports on a multifaceted quantitative and qualitative survey on language shift from Xhosa to English in Grahamstown, a city in the Eastern Cape Province. The study shows that the shift occurs both on a practical and on a socio-psychological level, particularly among the more privileged and wealthier members of the Xhosa-speaking community. Also, it shows that there is considerable internal conflict in the minds of both the parents and children undergoing the shift as to the future role of the Xhosa language and culture in their lives.

Kamwangamalu, N. M. (2001). The language planning situation in South Africa. *Current Issues in Language Planning*, *2*(4) 361–445.

This stimulating monograph is perhaps the latest addition to an increasing body of literature on language policy and planning in South Africa. It examines, both diachronically and synchronically, the following issues against the background of the country's transition from apartheid to democracy: language policy and planning, language maintenance and shift, and language spread and use. Other issues covered include language and religion, literacy, language assessment in South African education, language education in the outcomes-based, post-apartheid, curriculum 2005, and maintenance prospects for the country's 11 official languages. There is also a profile of the country's linguistic heritage, and an extensive list of references on language policy.

Kamwangamalu, N. M. (Ed.). (2002a). *English in South Africa* [Special issue]. *World Englishes 21*, 1.

This volume includes an excellent collection of 13 papers on the life of the English language in the now officially multilingual nation of South Africa, which until recently recognized only two official languages, English and Afrikaans. It covers three sets of issues. The first set includes issues in multilingualism, with a focus on the use and dominance of English in a wide range of domains, e.g., the workplace, prison, and school in a country that advocates additive multilingualism. The second set includes the construction of social, cultural, and gendered identities, and linguistic and social stereotyping through the medium of English. The last set concentrates on micro and macrolinguistic aspects of Black South African English, with a focus on the perception and application of the norm, stress placement, and variation in the vowel system of this variety of South African English.

Prabhakaran, V. (1998). Multilingualism and language shift in South Africa: The case of Telugu, an Indian language. *Multilingua, 17*(2–3), 297–319.

The author examines critically the causes of the intergenerational language shift in a South African Indian community, the Andhras, who speak Telugu as home language. She meticulously demonstrates how the

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0267190503000291 Published online by Cambridge University Press

Andhras shifted from monolingualism in Telugu to bilingualism in Telugu and English; from Telugu-English bilingualism to multilingualism in Telugu, English, Hindi, Tamil, and Zulu; and from multilingualism in these languages to monolingualism in English. The causes listed for this dramatic language shift include the low status of Telugu and Telugu speakers' attitude towards their language; pressures from other, relatively major languages, e.g. Hindi, Tamil, English, and Zulu, with which Telugu came into contact on the South African soil; and socioeconomic pressures to survive in a country where English and Afrikaans were, and broadly still are, the only languages of access to employment.

OTHER REFERENCES

Alexander, N. (1997). Language policy and planning in the new South Africa. *African Sociological Review, 1,* 82–98.

Appel, R., & Muysken P. (1987). *Language contact and bilingualism*. London: Edward Arnold.

Branford, W. (1996). English in South African society: A preliminary overview. In V. de Klerk (Ed.), *English around the world: Focus on South Africa* (pp. 35–51). Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

Cooper, R. L. (1989). *Language planning and social change*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Crowley, A. (1996). *Language in history: Theories and texts*. London: Longman.

Davenport, T. R. H. (1991). *South Africa—A modern history* (4th edition). London: McMillan.

Del Valle, J. (2000). Monoglossic policies for a heteroglossic culture: Misinterpreted multilingualism in modern Galicia. *Language and Communication, 20*, 105–132.

Department of Education, South Africa. (1997, December 19). Government gazette no. 18546.

Dorian, N. (1981). *Language death: The lifecycle of a Scottish Gaelic dialect*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.

Fasold, R. (1984). *The sociolinguistics of society*. Oxford: Blackwell.

Fishman, J. A. (1970). *Sociolinguistics: A brief introduction*. Rowley, MA: Newbury House.

Fishman, J. A. (1989). *Language and ethnicity in minority perspective*. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.

Fishman, J. A. (1990). What is reversing language (RLS) and how can it succeed? *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development, 11*, 91–99.

Fishman, J. A. (1991). R*eversing language shift: Theoretical and empirical assistance to threatened languages*. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.

Fishman, J. A., Cooper, R. L., & Conrad, A. W. (1977). *The spread of English: The sociology of English as an additional language*. Rowley, MA: Newbury House.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0267190503000291 Published online by Cambridge University Press

Gal, S. (1979). *Language shift. Social determinants of linguistic change in bilingual Austria*. New York: Academic Press.

Gunning, E. (1997). Engels voer botoon in provinsies, skuif ander tale uit. [English dominates in provinces, edges out other languages.] *Rapport*, 6 April 1997.

Gupta, A. F. (1997). When mother-tongue education is not preferred. *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development, 18*, 496–506.

Hartshorne, K. (1995). Language policy in African education: A background to the future. In R. Mesthrie (Ed.), *Language and social history: Studies in South African sociolinguistics* (pp. 306–318). Cape Town: David Philip.

Headlam, C. (1931). *The Milner Papers*. London: Cassell.

Hibbert, L. (2001). *Changing language practices in parliament in South Africa.* Paper presented at the 8th International Association for World Englishes (IAWE) Conference. University of Potchefstroom, South Africa.

Kamwangamalu, N. M. (1997). Multilingualism and education policy in post-apartheid South Africa. *Language Problems and Language Planning, 21*, 234–253.

Kamwangamalu, N. M. (2000). A new language policy, old language practices: Status planning for African languages in a multilingual South Africa. *South African Journal of African Languages, 20*(1) 50–60.

Kamwangamalu, N. M. (2002b). Language, social identity, and language shift. Unpublished manuscript, Department of Linguistics. University of Natal, Durban.

Kamwangamalu, N. M. (in press). Globalization of English, and language shift and maintenance in South Africa. *International Journal of the Sociology of Language, 164*.

Laitin, D. D. (1997). The cultural identities of a European state. *Politics and Society, 25*, 277–302.

Landon, J. (2000, September). *Language policy development in primary education in Scotland*. Paper presented at the ELET conference. University of Natal, Durban.

Lanham, L. W. (1978). An outline history of the languages of Southern Africa. In L.W. Lanham & K. P. Prinsloo (Eds.), *Language and communication studies in South Africa: Current issues and directions in research and inquiry* (pp. 13–28). Cape Town: Oxford University Press.

Language Plan Task Group (LANGTAG). (1996). *Toward a National Language Plan for South Africa: Final Report of the Language Plan Task Group*. Pretoria: Department of Arts, Culture, Science and Technology (DACST).

Lieberson, S. (1980). Procedures for improving sociolinguistic surveys of language maintenance and language shift. *International Journal of the Sociology of Language, 25*, 11–27.

Lynn, T. (1995). The language situation in Lesotho today. In V. Webb (Ed.), *Language in South Africa: An input into language planning for a post-apartheid South Africa* (pp. 43–60). Pretoria: The LiCCA Research and Development Program.

Milroy, L. (1987). *Language and social networks* (2nd ed.). Oxford: Blackwell.

Milroy, L. (2001). Bridging the micro-macro gap: Social change, social networks and bilingual repertoires. In J. Klatter-Folmer & P. van Avermaet (Eds.),

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0267190503000291 Published online by Cambridge University Press

Theories on maintenance and loss of minority languages: Towards a more integrated framework (pp. 39–64). Munster: Waxmann.

Pakir, A. (1998). Connecting with English in the context of internationalization. *TESOL Quarterly, 33*, 103–114.

Pandor, N. (1995). Constitutional multilingualism: Problems, possibilities, practicalities. *Proceedings of the 15th Annual Conference of the Southern African Applied Linguistics Association (SAALA)* (pp. 57–74). University of Stellenbosch, South Africa.

Pan South African Language Board (PANSALB). (2001). *Language use and language interaction in South Africa: A national sociolinguistic survey*. Summary Report. Cape Town: Author.

Paulston, C. B. (1987). Catalan and Occitan: Camparative test cases for a theory of language maintenance and shift. *International Journal of the Sociology of Language, 63*, 31–62.

Paulston, C. B. (Ed.). (1988). *International handbook of bilingualism and bilingual education.* New York: Greenwood Press.

Paulston, C. B. (1994). *Linguistic minorities in multilingual settings: Implications for language policies*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

Reagan, T. (2001). The promotion of linguistic diversity in multilingual settings: Policy and reality in post-apartheid South Africa. *Language Problems and Language Planning, 25*, 51–72.

Romaine, S. (1994). *Language in society: An introduction to sociolinguistics*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Romaine, S. (1995). *Bilingualism*. Oxford: Blackwell.

St. Clair, R. N. (1982). From social history to language attitudes. In E. B. Ryan & H. Giles (Eds.), *Attitudes towards language variation: Social and applied contexts* (pp. 164–174). London: Edward Arnold.

Schiffman, H. F. (1996). *Linguistic culture and language policy*. London: Routledge.

Skutnabb-Kangas, T. (2000). *Linguistic genocide in education or worldwide diversity and human rights*? Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Slavik, H. (2001). Language maintenance and language shift among Maltese migrants in Ontario and British Columbia. *International Journal of the Sociology of Language, 152*, 131–152**.**

Smeija, B. (1999). Codeswitching and language shift in Botswana: Indicators for language change and language death? A progress report. *Review of Applied Linguistics, 123–124*, 125–160.

Stoessel, S. (2002). Investigating the role of social networks in language maintenance and shift. *International Journal of the Sociology of Language*, *153*, 93–131.

Students shun African languages. (2001, March 4). Johannesburg *Sunday Times*, p. 2.

Township pupils go elsewhere. (2002, August 22). Durban *Daily News*, p. 2.

Webb, V., & Kriel, M. (2000). Afrikaans and Afrikaner nationalism. *International Journal of the Sociology of Language, 144,* 19–51.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0267190503000291 Published online by Cambridge University Press