

AN INVESTIGATION INTO THE CAUSES OF THE HIGH FAILURE RATE
IN STD. 10 XHOSA IN THE TRANSKEI
SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOLS
BETWEEN 1981 AND 1985.

by

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ABSTRACT.

This study, which followed immediately after a sub-dissertation entitled "An investigation into the problems and pitfalls inherent in the teaching and learning of Xhosa in the Senior Secondary schools of Transkei" and which was part of the researcher's Bachelor of Education academic study programme, was designed to probe deeper into the problems discovered earlier in the study mentioned above, and to further investigate the root causes of the high rate of failure in Xhosa which has become a source of worry to the Transkei Education Department today.

To gather all the data needed during investigation, use of questions and interviews was made. Questionnaires were sent to Std 10 pupils, Std 10 teachers, Std 10 External Examiners and libraries. Files of the Xhosa Subject Committee, the Xhosa Action Committee, the Nguni and Sesotho Language Board and the Transkei Examinations Board were consulted with a view to extracting information that would reveal records pertaining to high failure rate in Xhosa.

After all the data had been analysed, the researcher made some findings and conclusions which were based on the assertions made in Chapter 1. Such findings reflected the qualification of teachers teaching Std 10 Xhosa, their attendance of in-service courses, their teaching skills used in the teaching of composition, letter, language and grammar, literature, and oral examinations. The study further sought to find out if instructional material in the form of audio-visual equipment and other teaching aids were used.

The findings were followed by recommendations which sought to address the problems discovered after the investigation, for the benefit of not only the pupil studying in this class and the teacher whose teaching skills needed attention but also for the entire Transkei Education System which was motivated to consider Xhosa as a priority subject.

PREFACE.

After observing for several years, as a teacher and examiner of Xhosa language, the performance of Std 10 pupils writing Xhosa, the researcher came to the conclusion that there was indeed high failure rate in Xhosa. The period 1981 to 1985 became the focus of his attention because it was the worst in the history of the Transkei Std 10 results in Xhosa. Records of the Transkei Examinations Board reflected that the mean average during that period was only 46% (See Table 1.1).

The poor results also became the source of worry to the Department of Education which took steps to remedy the situation by forming a special Committee known as the Xhosa Action Committee which was given the task of devising ways and means of improving the Std 10 Xhosa results as from 1985. The Department further sent out circulars to all schools in Transkei threatening to take disciplinary measures against Std 10 Xhosa teachers whose candidates had failed to secure less than 50% aggregate in the external examinations.

Most of the researcher's experiences as a teacher were gathered while he was teaching either Xhosa or English at Blythwood in the district of Ngqamakhwe, at Ezizweni near Idutywa, at Msobomvu and Vuli Valley in Butterworth, at Dondashe in Centane, at Ndamase in Ngqeleni, and at Moshesh in Matatiele.

Besides teaching, he was involved in the examination and moderation of Xhosa papers in Stds 7, 8 and 10 over a number of years. It is this background experience that, besides the other factors reflected in the Abstract of this study, motivated the researcher to embark upon this research project with a view to assisting the Department of Education which has already shown its concern about the high failure rate, and those who believe that Xhosa is an easy subject which cannot be failed, to realise that first there is high failure rate and secondly that there are serious causes of this high failure rate in this subject.

It was the intention of the researcher that steps should be taken by teachers, pupils, the Department and the society in general to treat Xhosa in the same level as the other subjects of the High school curriculum and finally to make it a priority subject so that it should enjoy all the facilities enjoyed by other subjects such as English, Geography, History, Physical Science, Mathematics, Biology, Afrikaans and Agricultural Science.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS AND DEDICATION

Success in the collection of data for this research project is attributed to the valuable contribution made by the Standard 9 and 10 Xhosa teachers and pupils of the schools I visited, the then External Examiners of Std 10 Xhosa Language, Prof. D.N. Jafta and Prof. L.M. Mbadi and school and public librarians. Their co-operation in supplying all the information required in the questionnaire and personal interviews made it possible for me to pursue the objectives of this study.

The co-operation of the Transkei Department of Education's Examinations section in releasing the statistical information regarding the results of the Std 10 Xhosa Higher Grade Examinations during the period under investigation, is highly appreciated.

Mention must also be made of the assistance and encouragement I got from the Rector and Staff of the Transkei Teachers' In-Service College, particularly Miss Pepsy Siwundla who sorted out my computer problems and the Publications Section of the Department of Education for making their facilities available to me.

A special word of thanks goes to my Supervisor, Mr. S. M. Matoti for his valuable guidance in this research project. I am also indebted to Prof. H. M. Thipa who also gave a helping hand when this project was first initiated.

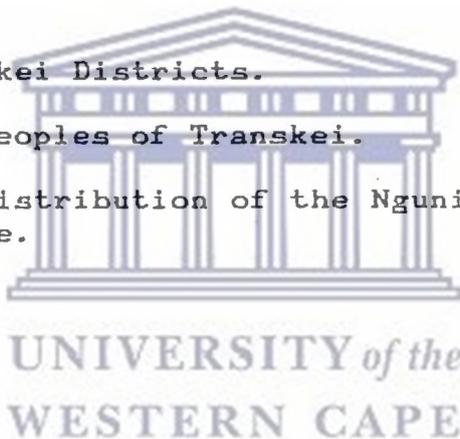
To my wife, Xoli, and the kids for the valuable support they gave me while I was battling with the project with hardly any time to attend to them.

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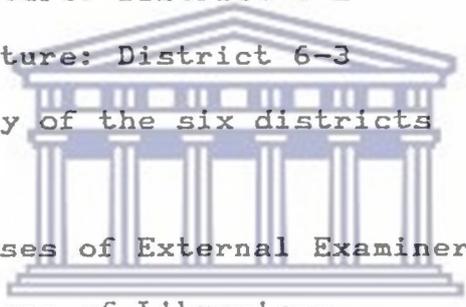
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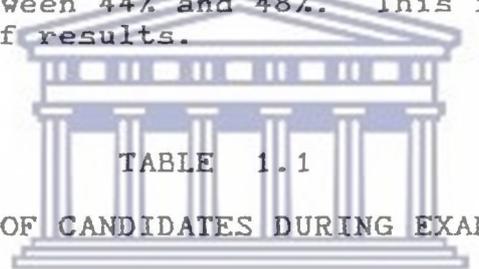
CHAPTER 1.

INTRODUCTION AND PROBLEM SETTING.

1.1 SCOPE OF STUDY

The focus of this study is the high failure rate in Std. Ten Xhosa in Transkei Senior Secondary schools. Xhosa is the First Language of the people of Transkei and, according to the requirements of the Transkei syllabus it is taken on a Higher Grade by all Xhosa speaking pupils. It is also a compulsory subject and a pupil who fails it is disadvantaged in his external examinations. Firstly his aggregate mark drops and this affects his overall performance in the examination. Secondly he is not allowed to fail the subject. If he does so he fails the entire examination.

Over the past years, Transkei has experienced a high failure rate in Xhosa. Most candidates scored far less than 50% and a great number failed to get 40% in the subject and this has been happening for years. This alarming and peturbing situation deteriorated between the years 1981 and 1985 where the average pass rate ranged between 44% and 48%. This is clearly shown in the following table of results.


 TABLE 1.1

PERFORMANCE OF CANDIDATES DURING EXAMINATIONS.

YEAR	NO. OF CANDIDATES	PASSES	%
1981	7340	3523	48
1982	9974	4388	44
1983	9936	4371	44
1984	9352	4301	46
1985	9656	4731	49

Mean : 46%

The period 1981 to 1985 reflected in Table 1.1 became the focus of the researcher's attention because the results during that period were the worst in the history of the Xhosa results in Transkei. The average percent scores remained consistently below 50% whereas earlier they had fluctuated between 44% and 50%.

When one considers that Xhosa is not only the home language, but also a language spoken and studied in a largely indigenous environment in Transkei, taught and examined by native speakers of the language, and generally studied from books written in the native language, one could easily expect that the average child should have no difficulty in securing at least a minimum of 60% in an examination. Even the average class is not expected to be less than 50% in an examination. But the overall results from 1981 to 1985 reflected a consistently low average performance, which became the source of worry to the Department of Education in Transkei.

It took steps to remedy the situation which it largely attributed to the failure of teachers to do effective teaching. It initiated the formation of an Action Committee which was expected to take the necessary steps to improve the performance of Std 10 pupils in Xhosa particularly after the warning given by the Joint Matriculation Board which threatened that as from 1985 any pupil who failed to obtain 50% in Xhosa would fail the examinations.

The Department also issued a circular to all schools expressing its concern as to how standards had deteriorated both in the teaching of Xhosa and performance by the candidates themselves in the subject. The circular claimed that the examination results and reports on supervision had revealed the incompetence and inefficiency of the teacher who taught it as well as the level at which it was taught. The Department firmly resolved that it would take steps against any Xhosa teacher whose candidates did not obtain at least 50% aggregate at the end of 1985 and subsequent years.

After these steps were taken, the researcher felt that it was necessary and important to make a thorough investigation of the causes of this high failure rate. The researcher, at the time of the issuing of such circular and the Departmental injunction, felt that such injunction might result in the curing of the symptoms and not the causes. The steps taken by the Department seemed to assume that the problem was with the teaching only. That therefore is why the researcher felt it was necessary to probe the issue further and deeper.

Such a research would be more useful than the dogmatic approach to the solution of the problem as employed by the Department of Education. It would examine in minute detail all the causes of this high failure rate and subsequently make recommendations towards the improvement of the situation.

If one analyses the results as reflected in Table 1.1, one will notice that instead of improving, the situation deteriorated between the years 1982 and 1983 and from 1984 there was a slight 3% improvement. But still they remained poor as the average percent gained was still below the expected 50%.

The researcher contends that a people that has reached such a stage of educational development as the Xhosa people have so far, with a total population of over a million pupils attending school in Transkei, (1987: Education Departmental Annual Report, page 130) out of an estimated population of about six million Xhosa speakers, should expect a fine performance which is well above 50% from its candidates who are regularly and annually engaged in the writing of Xhosa examinations at senior secondary school level. But such is not the case.

It is quite possible that the many candidates who fail the entire examination at this level do so because they could not get a pass mark in Xhosa or their average in Xhosa was so low that it reduced their aggregate score.

The researcher has deemed it appropriate to concentrate on Standard Ten because this class is the terminal year of the Matric course. Effectively each pupil spends twelve years of continuous and compulsory study of the home language. It is expected that by the time he reaches Std 10, he should have mastered the basics of the language in his study and should have gained so much competence in the use, expression and writing of the language that he should have no difficulty in obtaining at least 60% in the examinations.

The researcher as a Xhosa sub-examiner, examiner, moderator and teacher for twenty five years in the different senior secondary schools throughout Transkei, has been able to assess the Matric candidates' high failure rate which has not been commensurate with the mature nature of the Xhosa language.

He has been concerned at the poor performance of pupils in Std 10 Xhosa examinations throughout Transkei. To him the implication of this poor achievement is that the entire nation will finally lose the grip of its own language and will depend for expression and usage on other languages.

He has investigated the performance of the candidates at this level, the possible causes of poor performance, the material used and the methods of tuition. The qualifications and efficiency of the teaching staff have also been probed into. Recommendations have been made, after this collected information was analysed, for the improvement of the learning and teaching strategies in this subject.

1.2 THE STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM.

The researcher's concern in this study which he considers to be the basic problem is the high rate of failure in Std 10 Xhosa during external examinations. This has been occurring almost every year in Transkei but the situation has been extremely disconcerting during the years 1981 to 1985 where the average percent pass was 46% (See Table 1.1).

This is quite alarming when one considers that Xhosa is a home language learnt from the cradle and spoken largely in an environment which is composed of indigenous Xhosa speakers. This environment encompasses mainly Transkei where Xhosa is spoken throughout by the Mpondos, Gcalekas, Tembus, Mfengus, Phuthis, Ntlangwinis, Qwathis, Xesibes, Hlubis, Bhacas, Mpondomises, and Bomvanas. Even Sothos, who are found in the districts of Matatiele and Mt Fletcher are completely bilingual because of the strong influence of the Xhosa language. Ciskei and most parts of the Western Cape predominantly speak Xhosa.

The reference to the above dialectical units means that everywhere in Transkei and also Ciskei, Xhosa is spoken as a major indigenous language. Every pupil is therefore exposed to it daily.

Because of its vast potential and the fact that it is spoken by the majority of residents in Transkei, the Xhosa language has been made an official language here in Transkei. This began in 1976 when Transkei became independent. This means that it is taught formally throughout Transkei schools from Sub A to Std 10. If a pupil fails Xhosa in any of the external classes such as Stds 7 and 10 (and 8 when it was still regarded as external) he fails the entire examinations. This goes to show the seriousness of the extent to which Xhosa is being regarded in the Education system in Transkei.

The Colleges of Education, the University of Transkei and its Branch offer Xhosa as one of the major courses in their curricula. Since this is a tertiary level, it is not made a compulsory subject as is the case at primary and secondary levels.

Besides these factors, Xhosa is a developed subject with material plenty enough for any pupil in Matric to reinforce his studies with. There are many teachers who are assigned the task of teaching Xhosa practically in every Senior Secondary school in Transkei. There has never been any alarming shortage of Xhosa teachers though they may not all necessarily be sufficiently qualified to teach the language. Yet despite such provisions in the entire education system, there seems to be a chronic problem of high failure rate year after year.

It may happen that both teacher and pupil are not mentally geared towards achieving any remarkable success in the learning and teaching of the subject since it is a mother tongue. Without implying that this is the case in the class under investigation, the researcher feels that it will be necessary also to probe into the question of attitude of both the teacher and the Std 10 pupil. Bongela (1984) in his dissertation for a Bachelor of Education Degree discovered that the majority of pupils even at Std 10 level did not pay serious attention to the study of Xhosa. They did not take it seriously since it was their mother tongue. That then meant that they did not expect to fail it since it was their mother tongue.

When one considers the fact that the five years under study reflect that the average percentage pass has consistently been below 50%, one is inclined to view this high failure rate as a very serious problem because it is bound to affect educational and cultural unity of the entire Xhosa nation. A nation uses its own language mainly as a means of expressing its cultural development. It must be able to produce its own authors, its own literature, its own human potential and many other attributes in order to keep it surviving as a living nation. This potential cannot be realised and fully utilised if the pupils who are the future generation exhibit signs of chronic educational weaknesses such as lack of conscientiousness, dereliction of their studies and above all lack of interest in their language.

One of the underlying problems which is thought to be a contributory factor towards the achievement of poor results, is that teachers who are given the task of teaching and promoting Xhosa in the Senior Secondary schools are underqualified. In order that a person should be qualified in the Xhosa subject, he/she is expected to have studied it in detail up to University level, if possible and not to be allowed to teach it simply because he is the native speaker of the language.

1.3 OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY.

The objective of this study is to investigate the possible causes of the poor performance of the Matriculation candidates who sit for the Xhosa Language Examinations every year. The entire concept of a research project hinges on finding out factors leading to the causes or the discovery of the actual causes of a certain deficiency or failure. In this particular study the objective is to find out overall factors causing Std 10 pupils studying Xhosa to perform badly during external examinations.

1.4 ASSERTIONS.

That there is high failure rate in Transkei schools is a fact which cannot easily be dismissed without proper and valid investigation and finding solutions to it. It has become a problem which cannot be justifiably attributed to one specific factor. It is a chronic issue that involves a multiplicity of factors which the researcher wants to assume are the root causes of bad performance of the majority of pupils writing Std 10 Xhosa every year. These can categorically be tabulated as:

- (i) The negative attitude of pupils towards Xhosa.
- (ii) The underqualification of teachers teaching Xhosa.
- (iii) Lack of proper teaching skills used by teachers.
- (iv) Insufficiency of books on critical appreciation.
- (v) The lack of seriousness by teachers towards Xhosa and the fact that it is sometimes taught by teachers who are altogether not qualified to teach it.
- (vi) The alarming shortage or absence of teaching material.
- (vii) The uncompleted syllabus and the fact it is not being properly handled.

1.5 METHODS OF INVESTIGATION

Using sampling in each category, the researcher interviewed High School teachers teaching Xhosa, the Std 10 pupils, the librarians, and the Std 10 Examiners particularly those who were active during the period under investigation. Records from the Examinations Section of the Department of Education were made use of. The records, minutes, and decisions of bodies such as the Xhosa Subject Committee, the Nguni and Sesotho Language Board, and the Xhosa Action Committee were also consulted to extract information that would help to expose the problem of poor performance in this class.

The responses obtained from the above mentioned units were analysed.

The type of tuition material and methods of teaching used in respect of the Xhosa Subject were checked. As one of the causes of failure was thought to be the lack of teaching skills, this study probed into the teaching techniques used by teachers of the Xhosa Language. Where they were found wanting, the researcher made some recommendations on how to improve them for the benefit of the child.

After the fundamental causes had been identified, a compilation of the findings, the subsequent suggestions and relevant recommendations was made and these would serve as a guide to teachers, Subject Advisors, and Course leaders towards the improvement of the examination results for Std 10 and the achievement of quality in teaching.

1.6 DATA COLLECTION

The following research instruments were used to collect data:

1.6.1 Questionnaires

These were prepared and sent to six districts out of twenty nine. The districts chosen were a representation of a sample of children and teachers from rural and semi-urban schools. Transkei is divided into five regions of about six districts each. These are Eastern, Western, Southern, Northern and Central. The districts chosen were from three Regions, namely the Southern, the Eastern and the Central, the aim being to spread the representation of my samples as widely as possible. Hence a sample of 20 Senior secondary school Xhosa teachers and 322 pupils who managed to answer the questionnaires correctly, was used. These figures represent a combined number of teachers and pupils from the different schools the breakdown of which is found in Tables 4.1 to 4.8.

Other questionnaires were sent to two Xhosa External Examiners.

1.6.2 Document study

Documents from the Examinations Section of the Department of Education, the Xhosa Subject Committee, the Nguni and Sesotho Language Board, the Xhosa Action Committee were consulted and extracts made.

1.6.3 Interviews

Six school librarians, one from the Transkei Teachers' In-Service College and one from the Public Library were interviewed.

1.7 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY.

The importance of this study lies in its contribution towards the improvement of Std 10 Xhosa results which are the main source of worry. It is hoped that the suggestions and recommendations which come at the end of this research project will be studied thoroughly and made use of. Only after they have been implemented will one hope for success.

Besides that its practical value in the entire education system in Transkei, is that it will eliminate the practice of giving Xhosa to any teacher to teach irrespective of whether he has studied it or not. It is hoped that it will open the eyes of the education system to the dire need of using qualified and trained teachers to teach this subject basing this need on the realisation that this is the first language spoken by the entire

nation of the Xhosa speaking peoples of Transkei and South Africa.

The child will benefit beyond doubt as the approach to the teaching of the subject will be more scientific after taking into cognisance the suggested approach to the teaching of literature, language, composition and letter and orals.

It will remedy the present thorny situation in schools where instructional material is not used; where teachers lack teaching skills and where pupils are not exposed to good training methods and proper learning material.

Hopefully it will help to change the attitudes of both the teacher and pupils towards Xhosa by realising its importance as the top subject in the Transkei curriculum and which alone decides the fate of the pupil who writes Matriculation examinations.

The next chapter deals with literature, review.



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CHAPTER 2.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE.

2.1 INTRODUCTION.

The Oxford English Dictionary, 2nd Edition, Vol. 5 defines failure as an act of being unsuccessful in an examination. This clearly means that when candidates are said to have failed the examinations they were writing, they have fallen short in their performance or attainment. The Readers' Digest Great Illustrated Dictionary defines failure as an act where one receives a mark or grade, usually an academic grade, below the acceptable minimum. Such a definition would suit the description of high failure rate as would be applied to the Std 10 Xhosa under investigation. Their constant act of failure to reach an acceptable minimum aggregate of 60% year after year would be tantamount to high failure rate.

Stones (1970 :380) discussing failure, claims that "much learning failure or difficulty is undoubtedly due to faulty attitudes and poor (or even negative) training." This remark by Stones is one of the factors that motivated the researcher to investigate the causes of high failure rate in Std 10 Xhosa. Attitudes which are in particular negative do not only hamper success in learning but may also lead to total failure in examination.

John Holt (1964: 1-2) discussing failure of children during their learning period, mentions three causes of failure such as fear, boredom and confusion. He regards these as paramount ingredients which are almost inseparable and are easily identifiable when children are subjected to learning. He asserts that: "For a great many, failure is avowed and absolute. There is a more important sense in which almost all children fail. Except for a handful who may or may not be good students, they fail to develop more than a tiny part of their tremendous capacity for learning, understanding and creating with which they were born."

As Holt puts it: "They are bored because the things they are given and told to do in school are so trivial, so dull, and make such limited and narrow demands on the wide spectrum of their intelligence, capabilities and talents."

What Holt conceives to be a boring situation which leads to failure in young children during their early learning stages, may also apply to the Std 10 pupils in the class under investigation. Boredom may affect them too in one way or another if the teachers who teach them all the aspects of the Xhosa language at this level do not use up to date methods of tuition which will challenge their styles and study habits.

Holt (p.1) also claims that: "They are confused because most of the torrents of words that pour over them in school make little

or no sense". This may seemingly be true of some practice in a Matric Xhosa class where a teacher prefers to use a teacher talk instead of participatory pedagogy to teach grammar or literature instead of involving his class in some activity where the pupils will participate as a group. In trying to find answers where children fail, Holt maintains that: "It is also possible that our modern ways of teaching, all gentleness, persuasiveness, and human contact, tend to make children get themselves and their work all mixed up"

The "mixed up" result Holt mentions may, in the class under investigation, be equated to a case where pupils at Std 10 level may be exposed to teaching methods and approaches which may tend to confuse them particularly if such methods were never used before. This may tend to confuse them. Confusion is another ingredient of failure.

Failure in most cases goes along with lack of motivation. Pupils may be studying a subject which does not motivate them to study it or inspire them to learn it simply because of the way it is being handled by the teacher. Hamachek (1979: 256) defining motivation writes thus: "Motivation is sometimes called a "go" of personality, an apt description, since the absence of motivation usually reduces most normal people to a state of listless boredom. Although motivation cannot be seen directly, it can be inferred from the behaviour which we ordinarily refer to as "ability".

It goes without saying therefore that pupils at Matric level need some sort of motivation if they are being prepared for success in their examinations and in life generally. When they fail their examination extremely ~~badly~~ each time they write, it can be assumed that they did not get enough motivation from their teachers, their peer groups, their parents and the community in general.

The type of motivation the researcher alludes to is the one that would make Std 10 Xhosa pupils, for example to study their mother tongue not only for the purposes of securing a pass at the examinations, but also for the purposes of taking pride in their language, of regarding their language as a means of livelihood where they would make a teaching career, a writing career, a journalistic career, a political career, out of it. These and many others would enable many pupils to achieve success in life using the skills they have learnt at school concentrating on their own language.

Hamachek (1979 : 266) commenting on success and failure of achievement by children during their learning stages, has this to say: "Success in mastering worthwhile concepts and skills leaves most students feeling more adequate, confident and self enhanced. On the other hand failure can leave students feeling anxious, defensively uninterested, and generally reluctant to establish

realistic goals for themselves. Success enhances learning and failure depresses it."

What Hamachek perceives to be failure of learning which may leave students "defensively uninterested" does also apply to the case under investigation. The problem of high failure rate in schools in Xhosa at Std 10 level, may not necessarily be put squarely and solely on the shoulders of the teachers only. Pupils themselves may contribute towards it by showing lack of interest in either the whole subject or in some of its aspects. This has become an important factor in this research project. Other factors which will assist in exposing the causes of high failure rate in Std 10 Xhosa include the following: the influence of the second language on mother tongue: criticism literature: skills in the learning and teaching of Xhosa language: idiomatic and proverbial study: communication and economic factors: political interference: other African languages.

2.2 INFLUENCE OF THE SECOND LANGUAGE ON MOTHER TONGUE.

One of the aspects of the problem being investigated in this project is that the Xhosa Language spoken and written by the Matric candidates reflects that it has been affected by a second language (Bongela : 1984). This, according to the opinion of the External Examiners who have participated in this particular project, can easily be noticed in the pupils' composition and letters. This subsequently contributes to their poor performance during examinations.

The problem of poor performance in an examination and in general language usage is not only peculiar to Xhosa which is the First Language of the Xhosa National Unit in Transkei but also to other languages as well. One of the problems affecting proficiency in the use of mother tongue is the learning and use of the second language. Brumfit and Roberts (1983:7) explain that:

"The mother tongue normally designates the first language to which people are exposed by their parents and relations and which they learn to speak first, and the second language refers to a language which is not mother tongue of its speakers but which is the mother tongue of the community in which they live."

In the case of Transkei, the second language is English. It became the medium of instruction in Std 2 when Transkei attained self government in 1963. Practically all subjects except Xhosa were learnt through the medium of English. Mawasha (1976: 73) confirms this by stating that one of the decisions made by the Transkei Legislative Assembly after its institution in 1963, was that either English or Afrikaans which were then the official languages in Transkei, was to be used as a medium of instruction from Std 3 upwards. The choice of the language was left to the local committees and, without exception English was chosen throughout.

This has become anomalous in the sense that the learner tends to fail to acquire proficiency in any of the two languages he is required to learn at the same time. Yet for effective learning of both languages, some measure of proficiency is essential. Steinburg et al (1984: 122-123) discussing English as the first language of some of the European countries, argues that:

"Several studies have examined the relationship between language proficiency or family language usage and school achievement. The results point to the clear conclusion that students who enter school without proficiency in English, and whose proficiency does not improve over time, are exceedingly likely to fail in school."

De Avilla and Duncan (1980) as quoted by Steinburg (1984:122) in the Review of the Educational Journal of 1984 claim that:

"English first language proficiency is a significant predictor of performance in language arts among young students. It is also the single best predictor of reading skills."

Moreover these researchers find that differences between ethnic groups in achievement scores are attenuated dramatically when English language proficiency is taken into account.

Continuing with this argument the article states that additional information on relations between language and school performance is provided by Linn (1965) who examined the language performance of children from various language/cultural environments. Three groups of students were studied: Spanish and English (bilingual) Mexican-American children: English only White children: and English only American children whose parents spoke both English and Spanish. In general it was found that children who spoke English when they entered kindergarten regardless of ethnic background excelled over American-Mexican children who spoke English and Spanish before entering kindergarten. This researcher also reported that the language handicap of bilingual children does not diminish as children progress through school.

What occurs above may also be applicable to the state of affairs in Transkei where some form of bilingualism has developed and which has affected Xhosa to a large extent. Arguing on the effects of bilingualism Lambert (1975) as quoted by Swain (1981: 10) says:

"Another important difference between majority and minority students is the potential for loss of the first language. For children who are the members of the dominant linguistic and cultural group, learning a second language leads to loss of the first language. The overwhelming use of the dominant language in school and in the wider community often results in a form of bilingualism where the learning of the second language may reflect some degree of loss or even total loss of the first language and a cultural identity associated with that language."

Considering the comments of the above quoted researchers one can conclude that the use of a second language tends to affect the proficiency in the use and learning of the first language and vice versa. Mashiyi (1983:65) discussing problems encountered in the learning of English as the second language in Transkei schools, supports his argument by stating that:

"From this classification, it has been possible to note that the main errors involve mother tongue interference: verbal forms, especially tense and subject verb concord, spelling and use of prepositions."

Pursuing a similar argument, Kinsella (1973:66) as quoted by Moshebi (1987:7) has pointed out that in the course of learning a second language, learners regularly produce utterances in speech and writing which, judged by the rules of the second language are erroneous or ill-formed. Traditionally the attitude to errors was that they were a sign that the learner had not yet mastered the rules he was taught and they were therefore to be dealt with by repeating the explanations until the errors disappeared.

The same argument raised by the two researchers can be said of Xhosa which seems to be affected in a similar fashion by the influence of English, the second language or Afrikaans the third language.

Although the choice of English in Transkei was a political protest against the compulsory use of vernacular in the education system as was the wish of the ruling Afrikaner conservative politicians, it was on the other hand a revelation of little

regard for and the lack of confidence in the use of Xhosa as a medium used in the entire education system. The tendency to prefer use of English to mother tongue dates back to the age of the missionaries and colonial rule. Mawasha (1976:58) explains this clearly in the following terms:

"When education for Blacks was initiated in 1799, the pioneer teachers were in the main Christian missionaries who were predominantly English speaking. They brought to bear their language and culture on the curriculum for Black schools. So strong was the influence of English in the schools that even grammar of African Languages in some Universities, including Black Universities, is still conducted mainly through the medium of English."

In the present learning situation in Transkei, there is still a tendency exhibited by both teachers and pupils to pay more attention to a foreign language and other subjects of the curriculum to the exclusion of and subsequent detriment to Xhosa. It is primarily this attitude to place more emphasis on English because of its tremendous influence, that possibly becomes a contributory factor towards the high failure rate in Xhosa at Matric level.

2.3 CRITICISM LITERATURE

The present Transkei Xhosa syllabi applicable to the terminal classes at both Junior and Senior Secondary schools, demand a critical and analytical approach to the study of literature as against emphasis only on content. This has necessitated the training of teachers for this task and the provision of book material.

Examination questions reflect that examiners have now shifted from the content type of questioning and they demand exclusive knowledge and ability to appraise a book of literature. This the pupil can obviously not do without material for guidance.

Jolobe (1971) confirms this by stating that in this field of criticism, there is still a gap. "By this I mean works of critics who will assess and weigh exposing both the strength and weakness of a book objectively. This is a line of literature which thrives on facts which one can find only by diligence in pursuing the writings on which one expresses opinion. It is important for guidance of serious readers and scholars of all races."

Though there seems to be some concern about a gap caused by scarcity of criticism literature, yet a start has already been made to fill that gap. Certain students doing Honours have in

their research programmes analysed a few books. Among these can be mentioned G.M. Ntozini on the comparison of Jordan's and W.K. Tamsanqa's works, "Ingqumbo yeminyanya" and "Ukuba Ndandazile". T.T. Nkamba on the "Unstageability of some of the Xhosa Plays": K.S. Bongela on the "Importance of symbolism in Tamsanqa's works and K. Siwundla on Bongela's works. For Masters, Z.S. Qangule has based his research programme on the works of Jordan laying emphasis on "Ingqumbo yeminyanya". For his PH.D. Qangule analysed Mqhayi. G.T. Sirayi made a study of some of Jolobe's poetry" for his Masters. For the same level, D.N. Jafta tackled a "Survey of Xhosa Drama". Garvey Nkonki also dealt with the "Traditional prose literature of the Ngqikas" at Masters's level. These are just a few examples.

There are also some authors who have attempted to present a critical survey of Xhosa literature to prepare the pupils for examinations. Among these can be mentioned G.S. Budaza on "Ivuso lamandla" a critical analysis of selected Xhosa novels, books of poetry and drama. S.C. Satyo: "Uphengululo lwesiXhosa", a guide on the composition and letter writing and on critical appreciation of literature. D.N. Jafta and others: "Isisele" also a guide on certain aspects of literature. Bongela and Makubalo "Amazinga/"Imvaba" a series giving guide to literary criticism on letter and composition, prose and poetry. Jafta has released "Ubuholo besihobe" which deals with aspects of poetry at Senior level.

Despite these efforts to meet the requirements of the current Xhosa syllabuses in Transkei, the performance of pupils at Std 10 level still leaves much to be desired. Since the underqualification of the Xhosa teachers is one of the aspects of the problem under investigation, it is possible that some teachers are not able to deal efficiently with the section on critical appreciation. Hence most pupils fail in the examinations because of lack of proper guidance.

2.4 SKILLS IN THE LEARNING AND TEACHING OF XHOSA LANGUAGE.

Presumably one of the direct causes of failure of pupils to assimilate information and monitor it in preparation for examinations at the end of the year, is lack of adequate and proper skills. These skills are particularly important for learning Xhosa language as a whole. Like any other language, Xhosa is complicated and unique and its study needs serious attention.

Langacker (1977) says that language permeates our thoughts, mediates our relations with others and even creeps into our dreams. Most human knowledge and culture is stored and transmitted in language which is also so ubiquitous that we take it for granted. This is, indeed, true of Xhosa. Langacker

emphasises that without language, society as we know it would be impossible. Despite its undeniable importance in human affairs, language is poorly understood. It is a radical mistake to assume that the nature of language is self-evident or that we know all about a language just because we speak it.

These foregoing remarks by Langacker dovetail perfectly into the Xhosa language problem under investigation. Bongela (184) discovered that most pupils learning Xhosa language did not apply scientific methods during their study of the language and all its aspects. Hence they fail not only to grasp its concepts but also to answer the questions set during examinations.

Martie Olivier (1968) suggests that pupils should be made to realise that they study in their own interest and to their own advantage. Insight and material studied is necessary - not a mere production of words. Thus knowledge will be worthwhile and that is the ultimate aim of studying. To achieve this, self assertion and dedication are essential for which self motivation is required. No teaching method can bring about self motivation. Well prepared and well presented lectures, together with class discussions could, however, bring more illumination than stereotyped boring lectures. Pupils will understand the subject better and will consequently be motivated to study with more insight.

Cohen (1968) confirming this states that any introduction of technical aids in the classroom may be regarded as involved, so that films, film strips, television and cassettes may be associated with the concept of educational technology. He cites his objectives as the introduction of a totally individualised method which would permit students to learn at their own rate, and the freeing of the teacher from the drudgery of purely mechanised and repetitive tasks. The type of teaching which can be undertaken by a machine must be pre-planned and systematic, these being both the characteristics of programmed learning.

2.5 IDIOMATIC AND PROVERBIAL STUDY.

Parts of the questions generally set in a language paper in Std 10 involve idioms and proverbs. As a result of this the Transkei syllabi have prescribed that idioms and proverbs be taught at all levels ranging from Primary to Senior Secondary level.

Proverbs and idioms are also common of Xhosa and generally occur in the oral and written literature of the language. They are always seen as striking descriptions by which the person who uses them is typified as a master of his language. Amongst the receivers of such sayings a feeling of respect for the expressive powers of the language is created and an esteem of proudness for the person who uses such typical and remarkable ways of expression, is secured. Another outstanding feature is the way in

which physical elements in the environment are used as the output for certain stimuli such as feelings and emotions.

Nyembezi (1974:1) writing on the origin of proverbs claims that proverbs are very old utterances. Some of the proverbs found in Zulu are common to many Bantu Languages. They seem to suggest that they were in existence before the Black people divided into various groups and followed various ways. The proverbs in use are however not confined to the old expressions because we may clearly discern some proverbs which must have come into the language in fairly recent times.

Because the traditional Xhosa speaker lived, in his traditional set up, within the precincts of nature, he spoke a very rich and inspiring language which was punctuated with idiomatic and proverbial expressions. These proverbs were built from various aspects of nature namely animals, birds, reptiles, weather conditions, and domestic set up. Without them a Xhosa man always felt wanting in his language and expression.

An attempt has been made to record some of the idioms and proverbs in order to enable the present generation whose language has been drastically affected by the influence of other languages to be in a position to study these idioms and proverbs with thorough understanding without merely memorising them. The idea is that they should understand their concepts and functional use. An outstanding example is a book called "Izaci namaqhalo" by E.M. Mesatywa.

At Matric level a deeper understanding of the idioms and proverbial expressions is essential so that when candidates are asked to give an intelligible interpretation and application of them during examinations they should not flounder particularly that questions tend to probe more on their understanding of them than on remembering them. When pupils fail to score marks on the questions on idioms, it is possible that they are not properly geared for the nature of questions that often come out during examinations. This may be one of the causes of failure rate.

2.6 COMMUNICATION AND ECONOMIC FACTORS

The majority of businesses, industries, commercial concerns and labour institutions in South Africa, the National States and the TVBC States are still being largely owned by Whites. Because of this, Blacks are forced to pay more attention to the use of foreign languages for the purpose of seeking and maintaining employment opportunities. This has subsequently mellowed down attitudes towards the learning and use of mother tongue.

Marquard (1969) made this assertion: "With the mobility of African labour it is probable that about half of African population is able to understand either English or both English

and Afrikaans at a very simple level. It is evident that the use of English is increasing and there are strong economic reasons for learning English and Afrikaans. The Bantu Languages are those of a tribal peasant culture, flexible and rich in homely idiom and vocabulary. But if Africans are to learn the industrial and scientific and commercial arts of the European it seems probable that they will, for some considerable time to come, do so through the medium of English or Afrikaans."

In large urban areas, the miscegenation and mixing of racial groups, has necessitated the use of English or Afrikaans for the purposes of communication. Those speakers who are not proficient in the use of English or Afrikaans or both resort to the use of a hybridised form of English or Afrikaans mixed with bits of Black Languages. This is known as "Tsotsi Taal"

In South Africa, mine workers who are of different ethnic and colour groups, and who have limited knowledge of languages spoken by each group resort for communication purposes to another form of hybridised language known as "Fanakalo". The resultant factor is pollution of Xhosa. There is always a growing tendency among the learning population and educated Xhosa people of today to regard the speaking of English (or Afrikaans) as a symbol of sophistication. Gugushe (215) confirms this in the following words:

"But in larger densely populated urban centres the mixing of languages is so pronounced that it is not unusual for young people in particular to use words and expressions from another language deliberately when conversing among themselves. Mixing of languages including English and Afrikaans serves as a symbol of sophistication."

By and large, the present Xhosa society seems to have lost the grip of its own indigenous language and its traditional life style also seems to have undergone a massive change because of the impact of Western style education and culture as personified by the White man and his influence.

Considering that the situation alluded to in this paragraph is an on-going process, it is unlikely that the speakers of the Xhosa language who are exposed to the mixture of languages can ever speak their own language perfectly without the influence of one or other of the languages which they are forced to speak in an environment laden with economic factors. Even in most rural societies it is not easy these days to come across societies whose language is not altogether affected by other languages as labour migration in South Africa has become the order of the day. This then justifies the feeling of the researcher that the factors explained above can be classified as the possible causes

of high failure rate at Std 10 level.

2.7 POLITICAL INTERFERENCE

The high failure rate in most subjects taught in Transkei including Xhosa may in one way be attributed to the current system of education presently followed in Transkei. It is a by-product of Bantu Education which, after its inception, was enforced on all political homelands in South Africa. Because of its enforcement it evoked widespread opposition from the Black population which regarded it as an inferior type of Education particularly when its architect, Hendriek Verwoerd blatantly announced that it was meant to keep the Blacks in perpetual servitude.

"Native education should be formulated so as not to show the Natives the green pastures of the White society where they are not allowed to graze.....
When I have control over 'Native Education, I will reform it so that Natives will be taught from childhood that equality with Europeans is not for them."

Betela (1982)

When Verwoerd became the Minister of Bantu Education, he emphasised his intention to reduce the quality of Black education for his ambitious system of oppression by pronouncing that:

"There is no place for the Bantu in the European community above the level of certain forms of labour. I just want to remind the Honourable Members of Parliament that if the Native in South Africa is being taught to expect that he will lead his adult life under the policy of equal rights, he is making a big mistake. The Native must not be subject to a school system which draws him away from his own community and misleads him by showing him the green pastures of European society in which he is not allowed to graze"

Betela (1982)

The above extracts serve to illustrate the negative spirit under which Bantu Education was introduced and promulgated. It had a damaging effect on the entire education of Blacks including those of Transkei. The Xhosa language amongst many other subjects of the curricula for Blacks, was also affected tremendously.

One would have perhaps thought that this Bantu Education system had brought excellent opportunity for further development, intensification and enrichment of the Xhosa language since it focussed its intention on mother tongue as a medium of instruction. Instead this had an adverse effect. La Guma as quoted by Betela (1982: 52-59) stated that nothing had caused more unhappiness to Africans in the field of education than the enforced introduction of the entire education system in the home language. According to him the basic objection was simply one way of isolating Africans from the main stream of South African life. It was another way of imposing a return to tribal and backward pattern.

Xhosa was therefore given an educational stigma because of this political interference. It was despised instead of being esteemed as it had become apparent that it would be used as a vehicle for enforcing an unwanted education system adopted through the auspices of a Nationalist Government policy.

The present generation whose performance in examination is now being investigated, is a living generation descended from a people whose wishes and future hopes were thwarted by the obnoxious education system which was designed to oppress them.

It is therefore justified to believe that this political interference in the education of the Blacks, can also be labelled as an indirect cause of the high failure rate in Xhosa at Std 10 level as pupils tend to fail to take Xhosa seriously.

2.8 OTHER AFRICAN LANGUAGES

As political interference in the education of Blacks, together with economic factors in a Southern African situation have been cited in this chapter as some of the possible causes of high failure rate in Std 10, this research project also seeks to find out whether or not only the Xhosa speaking group has been grossly and solely affected by these factors. Samples taken from the Sesotho and Zulu examination results during the corresponding period show clearly that this high failure rate at Matric level is not peculiar to Xhosa only but also to other language groups.

The following illustration has been extracted from the Transkei Department of Education's "In-Service Education - Second Five Year Plan - 1990 -1995" page 29.

SUBJECT	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985	MEAN
SOTHO	55	56	55	51	51	53,6%
ZULU	40	42	35	49	48	42,8%
XHOSA	48	44	44	46	49	46 %

If one looks at Table 1.1 of this research project and compares the Xhosa results during the same period with those of the Zulu and Sesotho as reflected above, one will notice that the mean score for Sesotho is 53,6% and it is slightly higher than that for Xhosa but still less than the expected mean of 60%. The mean score for Zulu is 42,8% and is even lower than that for Xhosa which is 46%.

By and large it is justifiable to presume that the direct causes for this catastrophe in the Sesotho and Zulu examination results are the same as those for Xhosa since all these groups have been and are still operating under the same Third World conditions.



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CHAPTER 3.

DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS : TEACHERS' RESPONSES.

Questions were sent to teachers in six districts which were selected from three out of five Regions in Transkei. In analysing data, responses to each set of selected questions were scrutinised. Those that required tabulation were presented in the form of tables just as were those that required ranking. The respondents' replies to the questions on the questionnaire (Appendix A) were as follows:

3.1 ACADEMIC QUALIFICATIONS.

Information about the qualifications of teachers was extracted from the responses to questions 1 (a) to (i). Table 3.1.1 reflects the responses to these questions.

TABLE : 3.1.1

ACADEMIC QUALIFICATIONS

CLASS	DIST.1	DIST.2	DIST.3	DIST.4	DIST.5	DIST.6	TOTAL	%
STD 10	1	-	1	-	-	3	5	25%
B.A.11	-	-	-	2	1	1	4	20%
B.A.	-	1	-	-	4	5	10	50%
B.A. HONS	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	5%
	1	1	1	2	6	9	20	100%

In this Table only 25% of the teachers interviewed have Std 10 as their highest academic qualifications.

TABLE 3.1.2
PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATIONS.

CLASS .	DIST.1	DIST.2	DIST.3	DIST.4	DIST.5	DIST.6	TOTAL	%
H.P.T.C	1	-	-	-	4	-	5	25%
H.D.E.	-	1	-	2	1	-	5	20%
S.T.D.	-	-	1	-	-	1	2	10%
J.S.T.C.	-	-	-	-	-	6	6	30%
A.P.C.	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	5%
U.E.D.	-	-	-	-	-	2	2	10%
	1	1	1	2	6	9	20	100%

The professional qualifications shown above reflect that only 20% of the teachers interviewed hold Higher Diploma in Education and 10% have University Education Diploma. These, according to the researcher, are the only relevant qualifications suitable for teaching Std 10.

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TABLE 3.1.3

STANDARD PASSED IN XHOSA.

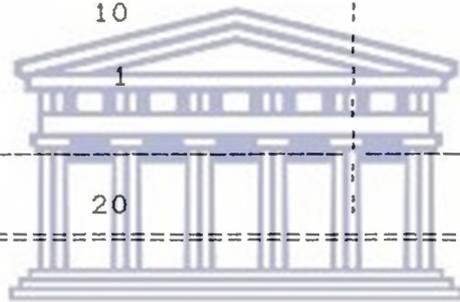
CLASS .	DIST 1	DIST.2	DIST.3	DIST.4	DIST.5	DIST 6	TOTAL	%
STD 10	1	-	1	-	-	3	5	25%
B.A.11	-	-	-	2	1	1	4	20%
B.A.111	-	1	-	-	4	5	10	50%
B.A. HONS.	-	-	1	-	-	-	1	5%
	1	1	1	3	5	9	20	100%

TABLE 3.1.4

COMPREHENSIVE SUMMARY FOR BOTH PROFESSIONAL AND ACADEMIC
QUALIFICATIONS.

(a) Academic qualifications in Xhosa

CLASS	NO. OF TEACHERS	PERCENTAGE
STD 10	5	25%
B.A. 11	4	20%
B.A. 111	10	50%
B.A. HONS.	1	5%
TOTAL	20	100%



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(b) Professional qualifications in Xhosa

CLASS	NO. OF TEACHERS	PERCENTAGE
H.P.T.C.	5	25%
J.S.T.C.	6	30%
S.T.D.	2	10%
H.D.E.	4	20%
A.P.C.	1	5%
U.E.D.	2	10%
TOTAL	20	100%

In Chapter 1 the researcher asserts that the teaching of Xhosa by underqualified and unqualified teachers was contributory to the high failure rate in Xhosa.

Tables 3.1.1, 3.1.2, 3.1.3, have been summarised in Table 3.1.4. Their contents have been analysed. What follows is the analysis of the summary Table 3.1.4.

Table 3.1.4 reflects that 25% of the teachers have Std 10 as their highest academic qualifications but are made to teach Xhosa in Std 10. This is in itself an anomaly in the Transkei Education System where a terminal class in High school education is being handled by teachers with such low qualifications, not far above the pupils they are teaching.

Graduate teachers who have majored in Xhosa form 55% of the teachers in this study. This is not good enough in a country with such a big population of pupils taking Xhosa as a compulsory subject. However, there is evidence to the effect that teachers are engaged in University studies to improve their academic qualifications and these form about 20%. But the crux of the matter is that they are not yet fully qualified.

If Xhosa is given due attention, the matter needs to be considered seriously by the Department and Principals of schools. In Std 10, Xhosa should be taught by University graduates only.

Teachers who were trained to teach in the primary school formed 25% only while those trained to teach in the Junior secondary, 30%. Altogether they formed 55%. They were made to teach Xhosa in Std 10. This again shows another anomaly where teachers who are trained to teach from Sub A to Std 7 are expected to be able to handle properly the work in Std 10 with all the expertise needed in this class. Only 45% of teachers qualified to teach at Matric level.

This percentage is too low considering that the work at Std 10 level is geared towards University entrance and must be handled by highly qualified teaching personnel. It is no surprise therefore to see so much failure rate in this class.

The statistical information shown in Table 3.1.4 above seems to prove that the assertion the researcher made is correct. Seeing that the focus of this research is high failure rate in Std 10, one would expect that teachers who are made to teach this class are all graduates with Xhosa as a major and that their professional qualifications are at least University Education Diplomas and Higher Diplomas in Education.

3.2 TEACHERS' RESPONSES WITH REGARD TO IN-SERVICE COURSES

Information on teachers' professional skills was extracted from responses to question 3 of the questionnaire.

In his assertion the researcher cited as one of the causes of high failure rate, lack of proper teaching skills. Teachers are expected to learn these either while they are still doing preservice courses or while they are practising as teachers.

It has become the policy of the Department of Education to provide some in-service courses for all its teachers with a view to upgrading them on the methods of teaching. These methods are largely based on their approach to the subject they are teaching; how they should teach it; what type of skills they should adopt in order to make it easy for the pupils to absorb the information. The use of different forms of teaching aids are also discussed in these courses.

Transkei being divided into twenty nine districts, has adopted a system of dicentralising the operation of in-service courses. Each district forms Subject Associations whose task is to organise teachers to come together on certain days and to discuss their subjects. The Subject Advisor appoints in each district a Course Leader whose duty is to conduct courses. He is given the prerogative to invite other specialists to assist him.

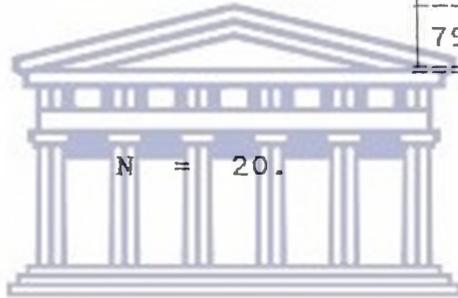
Besides these district associations, the Government has built a central college known as Transkei Teachers' in Service College which operates on a daily basis. In-Service courses are conducted by qualified lecturers whose task is specifically to upgrade teachers in the field of teaching. Unfortunately Xhosa at the time of the research was not included in this central in-service programme because of limitations of space. However, arrangements were made to cater for it in places other than this college. This arrangement was, now and then, done under the auspices of the Subject Advisor who made use of the services of the External Examiners.

In the questionnaires sent to the teachers information was sought on their attendance of these courses and on whether or not they found them valuable. The researcher was also interested in whether the Subject Associations were regular in their meetings as against the daily operations of the centrally situated In-Service College. The daily operations encompass other subjects as well.

3.3 ATTENDANCE OF IN-SERVICE COURSES.

TABLE 3.3.1.

ITEM	NARRATION	POSITIVE	NEGATIVE	TOTAL
1	Ever attended Xhosa In-Service courses?	12	8	20
2	Whether courses were arranged locally.	6	14	20
3	Whether conducted by course leaders.	8	12	20
4	Whether organised by the Department	12	8	20
5	Participation in the discussions.	10	10	20
6	Whether they were valuable.	12	8	20
7	Whether they improved teaching.	11	9	20
8	Operation of Xhosa Subject Associations.	8	12	20
		79	81	160



Each item in Table 3.2.1 serves to gauge the response of teachers in determining the part they played towards in-service courses which were organised centrally and locally.

3.3.1 WHETHER TEACHERS ATTENDED IN-SERVICE COURSES

12 teachers out of 20 indicated that they attended in-service courses while 8 did not.

From the response of the teachers to this question, it is evident that only about 60% of the entire teaching population has actually made some effort to attend in-service courses. The normal practice in a situation like this is that once the Department has announced courses, it is the responsibility of the teachers themselves to attend them. It is clear therefore that

not all Xhosa teachers are exposed to new innovations which are discussed in some of these in-service courses. This, to the researcher, is one of the contributory factors responsible for high failure rate.

3.3.2 WHETHER COURSES ARE ARRANGED LOCALLY

Only 6 teachers confirmed that courses were arranged locally. The rest said they were not.

The onus of organising in-service courses on a local basis is left to the Course Leaders who arrange their own programme and their own time table. It is apparent from the response of the interviewed teachers that this scheme is not operating satisfactorily in most areas. About 70% of the teachers have denied the existence of any local arrangement of in-service courses designed for that purpose.

Failure to organise and attend courses is quite significant for the researcher's study for its implication is that if teachers themselves do not take the initiative to organise local in-service courses, the chances are that they will gain nothing or very little if they merely hope to attend the central courses only. The normal practice is that the centrally organised courses take place once or twice a year while the local courses are designed in such a way that they may take place once a month or so.

3.3.3 WHETHER THESE COURSES WERE CONDUCTED BY COURSE LEADERS.

Only 8 teachers responded positively to this question. 12 in their responses said there was no involvement of Course leaders

Usually teachers who are nominated to be Course Leaders are those the Subject Advisor with the concurrence of the majority of Xhosa teachers in that particular district, presumes to be more knowledgeable than the rest of the teachers. Besides that he is presumed to have leadership qualities, special teaching skills and a certain measure of industriousness. It is expected, in view of the qualities above that such a Course Leader should be in a position to organise meetings and conduct courses regularly. It would appear that the operating Course Leaders in most areas in Transkei do not take much initiative as is shown by the 60% response of the teachers. There is no indication to the fact that people other than the Course Leaders are conducting the in-service courses. As far as this study is concerned one is justified in concluding that the Subject Associations are not functioning properly. As a result of this teachers are left with no guidance and this may lead to high failure rate.

3.3.4 WHETHER COURSES ARE ORGANISED BY THE DEPARTMENT.

12 teachers confirmed that some courses were organised by the Department while 8 did not seem to know this arrangement.

There is 60% positive response from the teachers that the Department of Education, through the Subject Advisor organises its own in-service courses. It would appear that these Departmental courses are basically the ones the teachers seem to attend and benefit from. It would be gratifying if all the teachers or their representatives were able to get this kind of exposure. But this is not the case. About 40% of the teachers responded by saying that the Department organised no such courses. One may come to the conclusion that they are either out in the peripheral areas or that the communication system between the Department and some schools is poor. This effectively means that a great number of teachers is not being upgraded. This can be contributory to the high failure rate under scrutiny.

3.3.5 PARTICIPATION IN THE DISCUSSIONS.

Half of the teachers did not confirm that teachers participated in the discussions during courses while the other half confirmed that they did.

The response of the teachers to the courses is usually judged through the discussions which arise during the workshops and seminars. When all the teachers take part in the discussions this is a sign that they follow the basics of the course but if they do not do so, this is an indication that they are either not showing keen interest in the particular aspect under discussion or that they do not seem to benefit from the entire course.

The response of the teachers to the questionnaire is that only about 50% of the teachers often take part in the discussions throughout the course, a very unhealthy situation indeed. One is tempted to ask why they bother to attend these courses at all if only half of them will contribute in the discussions. However there could be varying reasons for that. Under the circumstances the researcher may be inclined to feel that it is not surprising to find pupils performing badly in their examinations because not all of their teachers make use of the in-service courses.

3.3.6 VALUE ATTACHED TO IN-SERVICE COURSES.

12 teachers said the courses were valuable to them while 8 said they were not.

The majority of teachers who have attended the in-service courses organised by either the districts or by Department of Education

itself, has found them to be useful and of an educational value towards the teaching of Xhosa at Std 10 level. Since about 60% of the teachers have attended Departmentally arranged in-service courses, it may be assumed that they are referring to them. This leaves the researcher with a comfortable feeling that the Department of Education is taking pains to improve the Std 10 Xhosa results. The 40% which has responded in the negative may be presumed to be the lot that does not attend at all.

3.3.7. WHETHER THEY IMPROVE TEACHING.

11 teachers confirmed that courses improved teaching and 9 denied that they did.

Almost 55% of the teachers who have actually attended the in-service courses have not only found them useful but that they also found their approach to the teaching of Xhosa much improved as a result of these courses. It may again be assumed that those who do not seem to have attained any improvement are the ones who have not made any attempt to attend these courses.

3.3.8. REGULAR OPERATION OF SUBJECT ASSOCIATIONS.

Only 8 teachers confirmed that the Subject Associations were operating. 12 responded negatively.

As indicated earlier, the Xhosa Subject Associations were created in 1980 at the instance of the Department of Education. They were formed out of a group of teachers from different but neighbouring schools within one district. They were designed to assist teachers by also conducting in-service courses on a local basis in conjunction with Departmentally elected Course Leaders. Xhosa Subject Associations are answerable to the Xhosa Subject Committee which operates centrally.

The composition of these Associations is supposed to be formed out of teachers who show enthusiasm towards the Xhosa Subject and its development. Until proved otherwise, when the names are submitted to Head Office for approval there is always an assumption from the point of view of the Department that the nominated teachers mean to be devoted to their work. But reading from the reaction of teachers to item 3.3.8, it will be noted that 60% of the teachers have denied that the Xhosa Subject Associations are operating regularly. The implication is that they hardly ever meet or if they do they do so occasionally. Obviously they cannot be effective as functioning bodies. That partly accounts for the poor standard of teaching and poor results.

3.3.9 SUMMARY.

D.C. Jones writing on in-service training, says: "In a world of accelerating change, in-service training has become a commonplace in all professional fields. The pace of discovery and development in modern society is such that an individual needs to be trained at increasingly frequent intervals if he is to remain abreast of latest developments in the field of work, and if he is to remain effective and productive." Makusetyenzwe October 1987" pp 67.

When one considers the validity and veracity of the statement that a person needs to be retrained at increasingly frequent intervals, one feels strongly that the in-service of Xhosa teachers in particular in Transkei is not quite adequate no matter whether a central or peripheral approach is adopted. Seminars that have been held centrally so far are conducted once a year. In this way no justice can be done to all the aspects of the Xhosa syllabus. Meanwhile our teachers can be judged within a principle of half a loaf is better than no bread.

3.4 TEACHERS' COMMENTS AND SUGGESTIONS ON THE RUNNING OF IN-SERVICE COURSES IN GENERAL.

A portion of the questionnaire required the teachers to make their own comments on how they thought courses could be run. The idea was to allow them to express themselves freely on the subject without streamlining their thinking and reaction. Their reactions will be dealt with in two portions namely: comments and suggestions.

3.4.1 COMMENTS BY TEACHERS.

Comments made by the teachers were in response to question 3 (i). Out of a total of twenty teachers who answered the questionnaire, seventeen expressed their comments and these were synthesised in the following paragraphs. It must be stressed that such comments and suggestions have nothing to do with the researcher. In other words they are purely the opinions of the teachers interviewed.

(a) According to the teachers the central courses must be organised at the beginning of the first semester and not during the second and the third. These should be regular and should at least come twice a year. The objective of these courses should be to benefit all classes including Std. 9. They seem to be more effective when they are conducted by External Examiners because the Examiners tend to reveal what they expect from a candidate during evaluation. The peripheral courses are sometimes run

haphazardly. Course conductors attempt to cover a year's syllabus in two days. There are usually no deep discussions.

(b) Courses are decidedly very helpful particularly with regard to functional approach. They improve the teaching skills of a teacher. They are useful particularly with regard to the teaching of Literature. Those intended to guide teachers on the teaching of Phonetics in grammar should be more regular.

(c) The Course Leaders in peripheral areas should pay regular visits at district levels in order to attend to smaller groups. There are always short comings with regard to the teaching of poetry in general and it is very important to have qualified people to in-service teachers on this aspect. A course or a seminar should take at least a week. The grammar section is very difficult for both teachers and pupils. Subject Advisors should do something about that. Teachers should be given ample chance to discuss problems during workshops.

(d) A few teachers wrote that they never attended any of these courses because they were either very busy or that they never heard of them or that they heard of them very late. One teacher wrote that only one course was conducted for Std 10 in 1987 and there was one for Std 9 teachers. One of the teachers said that the course he had attended was of no value to them. They simply gained nothing. He did not specify whether this was a central or peripheral course.

3.4.2 SUGGESTIONS BY THE TEACHERS.

In this portion of the questionnaire only ten teachers out of twenty responded. The following are their suggestions put together.

(a) Teachers should have a thorough background knowledge of critical appreciation. According to the researcher, this suggestion appeared rather vague. It was not clear whether by teachers the writer had meant teachers who were assigned to conduct courses or he referred to the teachers in general implying therefore that as a matter of necessity all teachers who teach Xhosa must have a knowledge of critical appreciation.

(b) They further suggested that guidance on critical appreciation is necessary where the teacher has no background knowledge and this should be dealt with thoroughly during courses. Teachers must be trained on how to teach poetry efficiently and effectively. This needs urgent attention. It is important for teachers to show enthusiasm and to inspire pupils when teaching literature.

(c) The writers went on to express that teachers are expected to inspire children to read even beyond prescribed books and pupils must be taught to be creative. They need to be equipped with techniques and skills of the language at Junior level. General knowledge seems to present difficulty to both pupil and teacher. There should be common schemes for Std 9. Regular debates, prose and poetry recitation should be encouraged.

(d) School magazines should be encouraged so as to allow students opportunity to write articles on essays, poetry and short plays. There should be a choice of prescribed poems to be taught so as to enable teachers and students to do critical appreciation intensively.

COMMENTS BY THE RESEARCHER

The above comments and suggestions reflect that the teachers themselves are aware of the shortcomings which are apparent in the field of teaching Xhosa at Senior Secondary schools. It should be the task of the Department of Education to consider these suggestions when organising in-service courses and when planning strategies for the improvement of the entire education system in Transkei.



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SECTION B.

3.5 THE TEACHING OF COMPOSITION AND LETTER.

The investigation regarding the teaching of composition and letter was made through the questionnaire on Section B Group A, (questions 1 and 2) of this research project. On a wider spectrum it sought to find out traces of weakness the teacher discovered in the pupils' written work. Of particular significance to the researcher was the pupils' performance which reflected that their composition work was of poor quality and that it was full of grammatical mistakes; that in their language there were traces of the influence of other foreign languages which affected the pupils' performance; that the pupils' command of their mother tongue left much to be desired; that the same weaknesses found in the composition were also found in the letter; that pupils showed laxity towards their mother tongue.

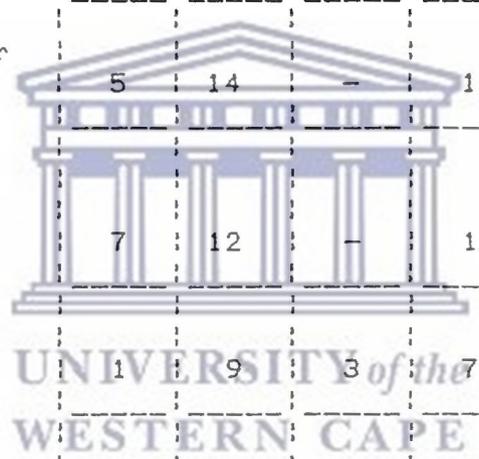
It was also the researcher's feeling that in this aspect of the language it was easy to detect whether teachers themselves offered intensive tuition or that the pupils' performance reflected lack of seriousness by them. The whole idea of investigating these teaching activities in this area was to ascertain if these weaknesses were not so voluminous as to affect their examination results. Along with this investigation of weaknesses was the examination of their negative attitude towards Xhosa as a subject, something which the researcher suspected was largely contributory to their poor performance at examinations.

The following tally, Table 3.5.1 reflects the reaction of the teachers to the statements which were designed to probe into the performance of pupils when writing composition and letter. In this Table there is provision for the positive as well as the negative reaction with emphasis on both sides. Teachers who were not quite sure how to react were all grouped with those who reacted negatively. All items on this Table have been analysed.

TABLE 3.5.1

A VIEW OF THE NATURE OF THE COMPOSITION AND LETTER.

ITEM	S-A	A	N-S	D-A	S/D-A	TOTAL
1. Quality of language poor.	8	5	3	4	-	20
2. Abundance of grammatical and language errors.	9	10	-	-	1	20
3. Written language influenced by other foreign languages.	5	14	-	1	-	20
4. Pupils unable to command their mother tongue proficiently.	7	12	-	1	-	20
5. Pupils fail to master different types of letters.	1	9	3	7	-	20
6. Pupils tend to assume that Xhosa is easy.	13	7	-	-	-	20
	43	57	6	13	1	120



N = 20

3.6 TEACHERS' RESPONSES WITH REGARD TO THE TEACHING OF COMPOSITION AND LETTER.

Persuant to the reaction of teachers to the section of the questionnaire on the teaching of composition and letter as reflected in Table 3.5.1, the following is the breakdown and analysis of the responses with a view to discovering any pitfalls that may be discernible in the pupils' work.

3.6.1 WHETHER QUALITY OF PUPILS' WRITTEN WORK POOR.

S - A	A	N - S	D - A	S/D - A	TOTAL
8	5	3	4	-	20

Out of a sample of twenty teachers, thirteen who formed 65% strongly agreed that the majority of the Std 10 pupils' language was poor and was generally below the standard expected of pupils of their level. Only four disagreed while three remained neutral. This, to the researcher is a shocking revelation. Pupils whose mother tongue is Xhosa should be in a position to master it by the time they reach Std 10 particularly if they studied it from Sub A level.

3.6.2 WHETHER THERE IS ABUNDANCE OF GRAMMATICAL AND LANGUAGE ERRORS

S - A	A	N - S	D - A	S/D - A	TOTAL
9	10	-	-	1	20

A well expressed free, correct, sound and good language expressed both in written and spoken forms is usually determined by the absence of grammatical and language errors, and normally, native speakers of that language do not experience much difficulty in their language. Yet nineteen out of twenty teachers unanimously agreed that the pupils' compositions and letters were often flooded with grammatical errors and that was a practical reflection of the poverty of their written language.

3.6.3 WHETHER THERE IS INFLUENCE OF FOREIGN LANGUAGES ON XHOSA

S - A	A	N - S	D - A	S/D - A	TOTAL
5	14	-	1	-	20

Nineteen out of twenty teachers, which reflects a 95% of the majority of the teachers interviewed, confirmed the presence of the influence of non-indigenous languages like Afrikaans, English

and also other indigenous Black languages like Sesotho, Zulu, Fanakalo, on all Xhosa written and currently spoken. Foreign languages tend to dilute the strength and purity of indigenous languages spoken by Black nations, one of which is Xhosa. This influence is clearly discernible in written as well as language spoken by pupils and adults. Consequently, performance at examinations is grossly affected and this results in high failure.

3.6.4 WHETHER PUPILS UNABLE TO USE THEIR MOTHER TONGUE PROFICIENTLY.

S - A	A	N - S	D - A	S/D - A	TOTAL
7	12	-	1	-	20

Out of twenty teachers nineteen showed a positive response to this question. There was a 95% consensus among the teachers interviewed that most Std 10 pupils experienced difficulty in the proper command of their mother tongue when speaking and writing. This was confirmed in 3.6.3 when it was mentioned that foreign languages have a direct influence. But in addition to that there seems to be a vast difference in the manner of speaking and expression between the indigenous speaker whose language is not unadulterated by the intrusion of foreign languages and the semi-modern school pupil who seems to have drifted away from the traditional mode of life which provides a climate for an original, smooth, free, deep and flowing expression on the manner of speaking a mother tongue. If one listens to any modern pupil speaking, one will immediately notice that he mixes Xhosa words with English or Afrikaans words in one sentence.

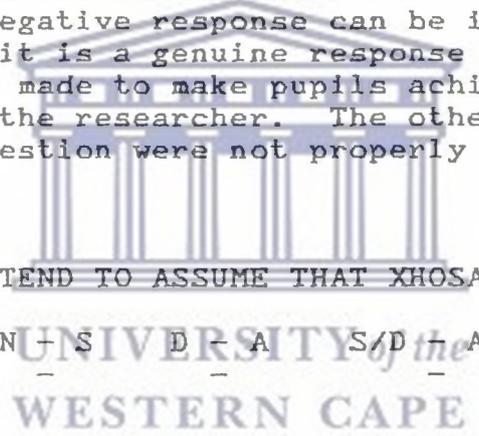
In addition to these foreign languages there will be some vocabulary of some hybridised African language which is conventionally known as tsotsi taal or fanakalo. This intrusion deprives the listener a chance of listening to pure expression of the Xhosa language. This has become so common these days that not only pupils speak in this way but also adults and teachers who seem to be comfortable when expressing themselves in mixed languages. There are many other discrepancies one can detect such as difference in style, figurative usage, choice of words and expressions, and use of colloquialism. This weakness can be easily noticeable in their written work.

This dichotomy consequently marks a vast difference in the manner of expression and normal command of the Xhosa language between the educationally advanced and the illiterate or semi-literate. As a result of this examiners and teachers find it very difficult to get a well written and solid composition or essay much less untainted expression of ideas in some literature paper.

3.6.5 WHETHER PUPILS FAIL TO MASTER DIFFERENT TYPES OF LETTERS.

S - A	A	N - S	D - A	S/D - A	TOTAL
1	9	3	7	-	20

There is a tendency for the Std 10 pupils to fail to master the different types of letters such as formal, non-formal, business and official. The requirements and specifications of each category of letters are often applied in the wrong type of letters. For example there are pupils in the same class who will not know that a business letter has a strict business approach and that no amount of padding, gullibility, and waffling is tolerated. A similar approach is expected of an official letter wherein only official matters should be discussed. Some scholars however, tend to confuse addresses required in a business letter with those of an informal letter. The appropriate language to be used, the politeness required and the aptness and accuracy in the choice of words, all these are often lacking. It becomes clear that the mastery of style, accuracy, and precision in all forms of letters are issues still far from being conquered even at this level. The research reveals that about 50% of the teachers interviewed agree with the researcher's contention and that 35% disagree. The 35% negative response can be interpreted in two ways. One is that if it is a genuine response it indicates that some attempt is being made to make pupils achieve perfection of the model desired by the researcher. The other one is that the implications of the question were not properly understood by some of the respondents.



3.6.6 WHETHER PUPILS TEND TO ASSUME THAT XHOSA IS VERY EASY.

S - A	A	N - S	D - A	S/D - A	TOTAL
13	7	-	-	-	20

All the teachers unanimously agreed that the Std 10 pupils' attitude to Xhosa is not serious at all. They do not regard it as a subject worth a serious study like all the other subjects in their curricula, such as Geography, History, Mathematics and English. Their attitude to these is serious as they know they will fail but because Xhosa is a mother tongue, they take it for granted. With this type of attitude, it is unlikely that they will ever get a decent pass in an examination.

In this regard, the researcher's contention is that unless every pupil pays serious attention to Xhosa as a subject, there are very few chances that he will do well in an examination.

3.7 TEACHING STRATEGIES.

In the past it was believed by professional practitioners that it was not necessary when teaching a language to use teaching aids or adopt strategies designed to approach the teaching of a language in general from a practical angle. Instead all aspects of the language were taught theoretically without involving any instructional material. Teachers in most cases resorted to adopting rote learning tactics to enforce learning.

But with the new approach to the theories of learning and new strategies which are purported to accommodate the use of instructional material, it has now become necessary for practitioners to use teaching equipment in all aspects of the language such as composition, letter, grammar and literature.

The following table reflects samples of teaching aids such as pictures, newspapers and magazines, tape recorder, radio, video recorder, which can be easily available and made use of in schools throughout the country for effective teaching of Xhosa.

The main purpose of this part of the questionnaire is to test if the present Xhosa language teachers are actually using the teaching aids mentioned above in the third paragraph or in Table 3.7.1 and how often they use these teaching aids during their lessons.

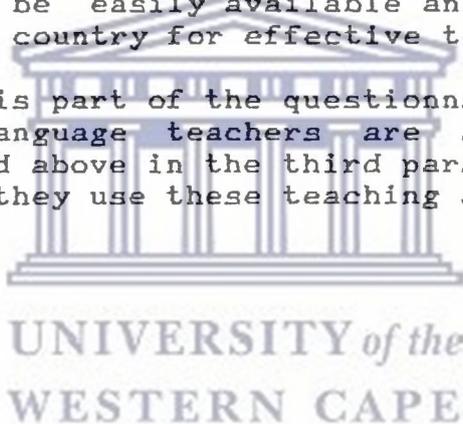


TABLE 3.7.1

TEACHING AIDS.

TEACHING AIDS	ONCE	EVERY LESSON	OCCAS- IONALLY	SELDOM	NEVER	TOTAL
1. Pictures	2	-	6	5	7	20
2. Newspapers and Magazines.	-	2	6	6	6	20
3. Tape recorder	-	-	1	1	18	20
4. Radio	1	-	2	3	14	20
5. Video Recorder	-	-	-	1	19	20
6. Overhead Projector	-	-	-	2	18	20
7. Group discussions	-	4	10	-	6	20
	4	6	25	18	87	140

N = 20

3.8 ANALYSIS OF TEACHERS' RESPONSES.

3.8.1 HOW OFTEN PICTURES ARE USED WHEN TEACHING ANY OF THE ASPECTS OF XHOSA LANGUAGE.

ONCE	EVERY LESSON	OCCASIONALLY	SELDOM	NEVER	TOTAL
2	-	6	5	7	20

Pictures are generally used as illustrations when teaching composition, letters, language comprehension, language aspects, and a great deal of literature aspects, such as poetry, drama, prose. Pictures often replace actual specimens when they are not available. For example a daffodil or a lily in poetry or comprehension can be illustrated by a picture where daffodils are unobtainable in a specific area or environment. Yet the analysis of the above responses reveals that 35% of the teachers have never used pictures altogether when teaching a language. About 25% seldom use them while 30% use them occasionally. This appears to be a highly depressing situation when one looks at the expected pupil output in an examination.

3.8.2 USE OF NEWSPAPER CUTTINGS, ARTICLES AND XHOSA MAGAZINES.

ONCE	EVERY LESSON	OCCASIONALLY	SELDOM	NEVER	TOTAL
1	2	6	6	5	20

Newspapers and magazine cuttings which cover material for composition letter, comprehension exercises, and aspects of literature such as prose, drama and poetry, have been regarded by various educationists on language teaching, to be suitable teaching aids. These cuttings are hung against the wall or are filed in a special file and used as illustrations. Sometimes they are mounted in albums and are regarded as resource materials for future lessons. They facilitate teaching especially when used on overhead projectors during lessons. Some may be photocopied and used as specimens when teachers conduct lessons on any aspect of the language. The response from the teachers reflects that only 10% use cuttings every lesson. Some 30% use them occasionally while 30% seldom use them. Those that have never used them form 25%. Yet the collection of such cuttings can be done by the pupils themselves if they are in the hands of a capable teacher. with a foresight.

3.8.3 USE OF TAPE RECORDER.

ONCE	EVERY LESSON	OCCASIONALLY	SELDOM	NEVER	TOTAL
-	-	1	1	18	20

Tape recorders are teaching devices often used to collect information from public lectures, talks, debates, seminars and symposiums. During educational tours they are used to gather relative information. Researchers also use them to gather every detailed piece of information. They are used in language classes where compositions, letters, language comprehension exercises, orals, and literature are involved. Some teachers use them for speech training. Advanced schools use tape recorders for language classes to tape radio and television lessons which can be played back. Since they are easy and cheaper to obtain, it is expected that all schools should have them and that languages should make use of them every time. But the response above reflects that about 90% of the teachers have never used them.

3.8.4 USE OF RADIO

ONCE	EVERY LESSON	OCCASIONALLY	SELDOM	NEVER	TOTAL
1	-	2	3	14	20

The South African Broadcasting Corporation has a weekly programme of about 45 minutes devoted to school radio lessons for classes ranging from Primary to Senior Secondary level. These lessons are varied. Xhosa is also well provided for and lectures on literary appreciation involving prescribed books particularly for external classes are well selected. The time for such lessons is usually 10.am. These programmes have been running for quite some time. Radio Transkei has also got its own school programmes. Use of radio is a distant teaching technique. It would appear that about 70% of the teachers in Transkei are not yet awakened to the need for the use of such a valuable teaching aid as the above responses show.

3.8.5 USE OF VIDEO RECORDER

ONCE	EVERY LESSON	OCCASIONALLY	SELDOM	NEVER	TOTAL
-	-	-	1	19	20

The video recorder is a recently introduced innovation in the third world countries but it can use both electricity and a 12 volt battery. The majority of rural schools in Transkei have no electricity. Only urban areas have electricity. The researcher made his investigation in both urban and rural schools. Most schools have not yet purchased video equipment, although some teachers do own video recorders privately. Television programmes which, if taped could be an asset in school education, particularly T.V. 2

programmes where Xhosa features. About 95% of the teachers have indicated that they have never attempted to use video recorders for their lessons, which could vary from composition, oral, comprehension, and literature, in particular drama where prescribed books are involved. The Department of Education and Training has a store of video tapes for all subjects and these could be ordered when need arises.

3.8.6 USE OF OVERHEAD PROJECTOR

ONCE	EVERY LESSON	OCCASIONALLY	SELDOM	NEVER	TOTAL
-	-	-	2	18	20

The overhead projector is another modern teaching device which facilitates teaching in the classroom. This is not a substitute for a chalkboard but it is used as facilitator for learning. A teacher can highlight his points using transparencies. It operates by means of electricity but advancement in manufacturing techniques has paved way for a battery operated equipment. This means that all those schools which have financial means to buy them can use them. Overhead projectors can be very useful for the teaching of composition language, letter and literature. Transparencies can be used as flash cards. Extracts from texts can be used during lessons and the transparencies can also be filed for future lessons. Teachers who attend courses and seminars can always learn the technique of using overhead projectors. Judging by the response of the teachers interviewed, 90% of the them have never used these for Xhosa lessons.

3.8.7 USE OF GROUP DISCUSSIONS

ONCE	EVERY LESSON	OCCASIONALLY	SELDOM	NEVER	TOTAL
-	4	10	-	6	20

Only 20% of the teachers use this simple, easy and common teaching technique every lesson. About 50% apply it occasionally and 30% have never had any group discussion in their language lessons. The overall impression one has is that most teachers use a teacher oriented approach practically all the time and pupils are not given opportunity to express themselves freely. This is against the normal teaching norms. No wonder pupils sail throughout the year to the examination desks without having sufficiently grasped the knowledge they had set out to obtain.

By and large the overall response to this section of the investigation leaves the researcher in no doubt as to the veracity of his assertion that some of the causes of the high failure rate in Std 10 are the alarming shortage of teaching material and the lack of proper teaching skills by teachers.

The lack of teaching equipment is a sign that most teachers also take Xhosa very lightly simply because it is a mother tongue. Their failure to use teaching aids may be caused by either ignorance on the use of these or lack of seriousness towards Xhosa. Consequently what seems to be happening in the classroom is a humdrum of boring lessons given by the teacher with the pupil only assuming a listening position. That probably accounts for the apathy shown by the pupils towards their language and for their poor performance in the examinations.



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3.9 LANGUAGE AND GRAMMAR.

The study of grammar at Matric level involves a variety of smaller aspects such as syntax, semantics, morphology, phonology, and phonetics. There is also another aspect which a child is expected to study and learn and this is general knowledge or general language and this encompasses a study of idioms, proverbs, traditional feasts, social occasions, traditional religion, traditional ceremonies, use of words, and many other things which an indigenous child is expected to know.

Because the aspects enumerated above are categorised under traditional literature or folklore, there are at the moment very few books written on them by authors who have made some initial start. Concerning linguistics, a few books have been written on Xhosa grammar.

The main objective of this section of the questionnaire is not only to test if the pupils study grammar and general information thoroughly, but also to test the attitude of the teachers themselves towards the teaching of grammar and phonetics and whether they are able to assess the qualitative nature of the books they are using. Failure to fulfil this requirement could affect the learning and performance of the pupils at examinations.

The following table (Table 3.9.1) reflects tallies which indicate the reaction of teachers not only to the problems encountered in the teaching of grammar itself but also to the attitudes adopted by the pupils themselves towards the learning of grammar. It is a response to the questions in Group B of Appendix A.

TABLE 3.9.1

GROUP B: LANGUAGE AND GRAMMAR

ITEM	S-A	A	N-S	D-A	S/D-A	TOTAL
1. Language teachers not comfortable because of limitations.	4	9	2	4	1	20
2. Section on Phonetics poses a problem and could be removed.	4	7	3	6	-	20
3. Pupils are indifferent and negative towards grammar	3	12	1	4	-	20
4. Teachers lack enthusiasm towards teaching of grammar.	2	3	3	10	2	20
5. Xhosa grammar tends to be too formal	2	6	2	9	1	20
6. Very few books on general knowledge	9	6	2	2	1	20
	24	43	13	35	5	120

N = 20

3.10 ANALYSIS OF TEACHERS' RESPONSES WITH REGARD TO THE TEACHING OF LANGUAGE AND GRAMMAR.

The Department of Education has often felt uneasy about the way language is being handled by most Xhosa language teachers at all secondary levels. The performance of pupils at terminal classes has always left a question mark in the minds of the Department as to whether it is the lack of teaching skills on the part of the teacher, the insufficient knowledge of the language section by the teachers themselves or the indifferent attitude of both the teachers and pupils towards grammar and language. This section seeks to investigate, in a specified manner, possible factors militating against proper tuition and excellent performance by the giver and the receiver respectively, using Std 10 teachers and pupils as samples.

3.10.1 WHETHER LACK OF THOROUGH UNDERSTANDING OF CERTAIN SECTIONS OF THE LANGUAGE BRINGS SHORTCOMINGS TO LANGUAGE TEACHING.

S - A	A	N - S	D - A	S/D - A	TOTAL
4	9	2	4	1	20

About 60% of the teachers have confirmed that they are handling grammar section without the full confidence expected of them because there are areas such as morphology, phonology, and linguistics which they themselves have not mastered. This is bound to affect their teaching and pupil performance to a considerable degree. If this state of affairs can be allowed to continue without remedy, it is unlikely that there will be some improvement in the Std 10 results in the foreseeable future.

3.10.2 WHETHER THE SECTION ON PHONETICS POSES A PROBLEM AND COULD BE REMOVED IF POSSIBLE.

S - A	A	N - S	D - A	S/D - A	TOTAL
4	7	3	6	-	20

This section is taught only at Matric level. In the other languages such as English for example, it is taught at University. It is worth 10 marks in an examination. The Nguni and Sesotho Language Board once piloted a motion that it be omitted in the language curriculum for fearing that it might intimidate both teacher and pupil psychologically, but the Department of Education then did not see eye to eye with the Board on this issue. The teachers' view as reflected by the 55% positive response is that it is not a necessary aspect and could do no harm to the child if it is altogether removed. This was the view of the Nguni and Sesotho Language Board where they argued

that a Xhosa child does not need to learn phonetics in order to pronounce words in his mother tongue. He could learn phonetics when he is dealing with linguistics as a section of his study at University. However, 30% of the teachers seem not to experience difficulty and do not mind if this section is retained.

3.10.3 WHETHER PUPILS TEND TO BE NEGATIVE AND INDIFFERENT TOWARDS GRAMMAR.

S - A	A	N - S	D - A	S/D - A	TOTAL
3	12	1	4	-	20

About 75% of the teachers have indicated that the majority of students show a general apathy towards grammar particularly at Senior level. Whether this is caused by improper tuition, crooked teaching methods at lower levels, or that the students themselves do not see the need for learning grammatical structures of the language which is their mother tongue, is a matter for further investigation. From the researcher's point, it has been established that they do indeed show some indifference towards grammar and this in itself is a strong mitigating factor for failure. The 20% negative response could be interpreted as an indication that there are few schools which have managed to attract their students into the free and voluntary learning of grammar to the extent that students have begun to like it.

3.10.4 WHETHER TEACHERS LACK ENTHUSIASM TOWARDS TEACHING OF GRAMMAR.

S - A	A	N - S	D - A	S/D - A	TOTAL
2	3	3	10	2	20

As the results show, 60% of the teachers deny that they lack enthusiasm towards the teaching of grammar and only 25% have the courage to admit. There could be two interpretations to this response. If the 60% deny that they are indifferent to the teaching of grammar, that could simply be a case of self aggrandisement. If it is a genuine one, then one is inclined to believe that this interest in the teaching of grammar is a selfish one as it is not designed to be spilled over to the pupils. (See 3.10.3)

3.10.5 WHETHER XHOSA GRAMMAR TENDS TO BE TOO FORMAL

S - A	A	N - S	D - A	S/D - A	TOTAL
2	6	2	9	-	20

Having observed the modern language teaching approach, it is found to be functional rather than formal. Most modern English text books for example, have been designed for the functional approach in English language teaching. Very few Xhosa language text books have attempted to adopt the functional approach in its perspective. The majority of them e.g Pahl's ISIXHOSA for Matric, Satyo's IGRAMA NONCWADI, Moropa et al's UMDILIYA WESIXHOSA, to quote a few are still based largely on the formal approach. These books have been and are still prescribed for use at Matric level. When we look at the 50% response of the teachers who have denied that Xhosa grammar taught at school is too formal, we begin to wonder as to whether this question together with its implications was well understood by the majority of teachers being investigated. The researcher does have a feeling that they did not make out the difference between these two approaches and without stopping to think what the question implied they went on to commit themselves. However the researcher regards the 40% positive response as significant in this research.

3.10.6 WHETHER THERE ARE VERY FEW BOOKS ON GENERAL KNOWLEDGE

S - A	A	N - S	D - A	S/D - A	TOTAL
9	6	2	2	1	20

Most text books on Xhosa language normally cover areas on syntax, morphology, phonology, phonetics, comprehension, composition, letter writing, critical appraisal on literature but very few cover areas on general knowledge. General knowledge is an area where, a pupil whose native language is Xhosa is expected to know a wide variety of cultural and social activities, idioms, proverbs, anecdotes, social practices, and general vocabulary. In the past examiners used to test pupils on this unwritten general knowledge and candidates were expected to know the answers by virtue of being indigenous speakers. This was found to present difficulty to some candidates who are born in urban environments where association with their cultural background is minimal. A few years ago, some authors began to think about this problem and provided small sections in their total language books. This does not seem to have solved the problem because such books are still very few and they do not cover all that needs to be tested in an examination. That this is indeed a problem which can also cause failure in an examination is confirmed by the 75% positive response of the teachers as the figures above reflect.

3.11: GROUP C: LITERATURE

Literature is an aspect of the language which involves drama, poetry, novel, short stories and essays. Both pupils and teachers are generally well-disposed towards the teaching and learning of literature because of the story element which prevails particularly in the novels, short stories and drama and not so much in poetry. In the past very little attention was paid to the theory of critical appreciation which is in demand in the current syllabus today. This questionnaire which is found in Group C of Appendix A seeks to test the calibre of the literature teacher in this class.

TABLE 3.11.1

TESTING SKILLS ON THE TEACHING OF LITERATURE

ITEM	S-A	A	N-S	D-A	S/D-A	TOTAL
1. Students tend to show immense interest in literature content.	13	7	-	-	-	20
2. They show reduced interest in poetry.	8	9	1	-	2	20
3. Critical appreciation often presents difficulty.	10	8	1	1	-	20
4. Teachers need guidance in critical appreciation	7	10	1	2	-	20
5. Need for employment of highly qualified teachers.	13	3	3	-	1	20
6. Teaching aids are a prerequisite to teaching of literature.	4	7	6	3	-	20
	55	44	12	6	3	120

N = 20

3.12 ANALYSIS OF TEACHERS' RESPONSES WITH REGARD TO THE TEACHING OF LITERATURE.

In the past the knowledge of content in literature at both Junior and Senior levels, was the basic requirement in an external examination. With the change of syllabus, over the past years and also recently, more emphasis was placed on the elementary training of pupils in literary criticism when studying literature. This gave rise to the inevitable need for the production of suitable book material to meet the demands of this requirement and also a production of a trained and suitably qualified teaching manpower.

The training of practising teachers was provided by the Department of Education through the conduction of in-service courses mentioned earlier in this research. The subsequent poor examination performance even in literature threw doubt into the minds of the Department as to whether the efforts to prepare the pupils for this challenge would ever be rewarded. This section seeks to investigate the pupils' attitudes in particular towards the area on literary criticism as viewed from the point of view of their teachers. Also the teachers' skills, qualifications and efficiency in the handling of literature are also the subject of the researcher's investigation.

2.12.1 WHETHER STUDENTS TEND TO SHOW IMMENSE INTEREST IN LITERATURE IN GENERAL.

S - A	A	N - S	D - A	S/D - A	TOTAL
13	7	-	-	-	20

This is an area which does not seem to present much difficulty in Xhosa language learning. It is an accessible area largely because pupils like the story element in literature. This story element is predominant in drama, prose and to some extent poetry content. This is where they feel relaxed and that is where the interest abounds. This is confirmed by the overwhelming positive response of the teachers as illustrated above. Interest is a component of learning.

3.12.2 WHETHER STUDENTS SHOW REDUCED INTEREST IN POETRY IN GENERAL.

S - A	A	N - S	D - A	S/D - A	TOTAL
8	9	1	-	2	20

The learning of content in poetry usually presents no problem particularly in aspects such as the narrative. This goes as far as content only. Other types such as lyric, descriptive, sonnet, ode, elegy, argumentative do not usually instil interest because

of lack of story element. It stands to reason that if the pupils were not compelled to study poetry, they would never touch it. They read it because they have to. About 85% of the teachers endorse this assertion. Without interest in any language aspect it is unlikely that pupils can perform well in an examination.

3.12.3 WHETHER LITERARY APPRECIATION PRESENTS DIFFICULTY.

S	-	A	A	N	-	A	D	-	A	S/D	-	A	TOTAL
10			8	1			1			-			20

The knowledge of critical appreciation in poetry is a skill which is acquired at University and through experience in the field of teaching and writing. Most teachers who are involved in the teaching of Xhosa have no University background. One of the causes of this is that most schools use their graduates for the teaching of other subjects which they consider to be more important than Xhosa. Consequently in some schools Xhosa is handled at Std 10 level by teachers who have themselves academically gone as far as Std 10. Naturally such teachers can never be competent in the teaching of literature in its proper perspective. Some of the graduates who are given Xhosa to teach may not necessarily have the skill of handling critical appreciation. It is inevitable that this aspect, in view of the circumstances reflected above, will always present difficulty to the teacher. About 90% of the teachers confirm that they do find difficulty in handling literary appreciation.

3.12.4 WHETHER TEACHERS NEED GUIDANCE IN CRITICAL APPRECIATION

S	-	A	A	N	-	S	D	-	A	S/D	-	A	TOTAL
7			10	1			2						20

Besides the reseacher's observation, this need has already been expressed by the teachers themselves as one of the requirements in the in-service courses they have attended. Here it is further confirmed by the response of the teachers interviewed. Some 85% of them have reacted positively to the question.

3.12.5 WHETHER THERE IS A NEED FOR EMPLOYMENT OF HIGHLY QUALIFIED TEACHING PERSONNEL.

S	-	A	A	N	-	S	D	-	A	S/D	-	A	TOTAL
13			3	3			-					1	20

This need emanates from the practice by the majority of school principals, of giving Xhosa to ill-qualified teachers simply

because it is their mother tongue. This point has been canvassed elsewhere in this project and it is based on one of the researcher's assertions. It therefore needs no further motivation. Teachers themselves, because of the intricate nature of the work they have to deal with when teaching Xhosa, see the authenticity of such a need for the good of the child. About 80% of the teachers have positively responded.

3.12.6 WHETHER TEACHING AIDS ARE A PREREQUISITE TO THE TEACHING OF LITERATURE

S	-	A	A	N	-	S	D	-	A	S/D	-	A	TOTAL
		4	7	6		3						-	20

All along there has been a tendency for the majority of teachers to teach literature in a very outdated, teacher-centred fashion concentrating mainly on the content. With the change of syllabus and learning circumstances, it became imperative, with the coming in of evolution in pedagogy, to teach pupils literature through the help and use of teaching aids such as maps, charts, pictures, radio's, video recorders, projectors, and any other equipment required for the teaching of literature. The idea of this question was to find out if teachers presently engaged in Xhosa language teaching are still clinging to the outdated approach or have started joining forces with the modern pragmatic system of teaching literature. The above responses present an interesting reflection. About 55% of the teachers have seen the need for using teaching aids. About 30% are not sure while 15% do not believe in them, thus making a total of 45% who do not use teaching aids altogether. This 45% grouped together forms a contingent of teachers who make no effort to improve their teaching strategies. What kind of candidate is being prepared for examination? What kind of material is being shaped for adulthood? These are the questions that will remain ringing in the mind of the researcher as long as there are teachers who are not yet awakened to the dire need for improving their teaching strategies.

3.13 GROUP D : TEACHING OF ORALS

The oral aspect of the Xhosa language is a very significant one in the learning and teaching processes. Orals are meant to prepare a child for an important role in his life and society. Political, legal, professional, radio, television and preaching careers, to name a few, owe their success to the way a child has been prepared for public speaking.

At school, he is trained in such things as debates, quizzes, drama, and oral presentation of tasks and assignments. There is a remarkable tendency for teachers to pay very little attention to the oral aspect of the language and where attention is formally paid, it is superficially treated. This questionnaire found in Group D of Appendix A aims at testing if oral teaching involves recitation, prose reading and discussion only as is generally the case in most schools.

TABLE 3.13.1.

HANDLING OF THE ORAL ASPECT.

ITEM	POSITIVE	NEGATIVE	TOTAL
1. Participation of pupils in oral discussion of literature.	13	7	20
2. Participation of pupils in grammar discussions.	10	10	20
3. Arrangement of periods specifically for oral work.	15	5	20
4. Regular debates every week.	8	12	20
5. Use of teaching aids for oral lessons.	6	14	20
6. Tours and excursions are part of oral lessons	3	17	20
7. Awarding of orals - the best form of evaluation	14	6	20
	69	71	140

3.14 ANALYSIS OF TEACHERS' RESPONSES WITH REGARD TO THE HANDLING OF ORALS.

Because a language is meant not only to be written but also to be spoken to give self expression to feelings, sentiments and spiritual satisfaction, orals are regarded by educationists as an integral part of language study. They are not a separate entity but they are regarded as an aspect of the language. Contrary to what most teachers think, orals are part of literature, language, composition and letter. They can be treated alone in the form of prose and poetry recitation, conversation, debate, argument, dialogue, speech making, seminars, symposium and so on. The idea is to make pupils talk in order to express themselves. It has been learnt through observation that the majority of teachers pay very little attention to orals. Because they have a special examination towards the end of the year, they are inclined to prepare the kids only for that examination and will award marks sometimes at random just to fill up the forms. These marks are usually not accumulated throughout the year but will be given when the oral examinations are around the corner. This section, therefore seeks to find out if the teacher realises the significance of orals in the teaching of all the aspects of language such as literature, language, debates, tours, discussions and so on.

3.14.1 WHETHER PUPILS PARTICIPATE IN ORAL DISCUSSIONS OF LITERATURE

Out of 20 teachers 13 expressed that pupils took part in oral discussion while 7 indicated that they did not.

About 65% of the teachers have indicated that in their literature discussions pupils are involved. It is not easy to know whether all the pupils are in a position to express themselves or it is just a section of them. Of course what is important in this question is whether they participate at all. The remaining 35% are not involved. One can come to the conclusion that those teachers who do not involve their pupils in oral discussion are using the undesirable teacher oriented approach where the children are not allowed to participate.

3.14.2 WHETHER PUPILS PARTICIPATE IN GRAMMAR DISCUSSIONS.

Half of the teachers had their pupils participating in grammar discussions while the other half did not.

The response to this question shows a balance between positive and negative. It will not be used as a decisive factor in determining the situation being investigated because what is significant to the researcher is a clear response which is either negative or positive.

3.14.3 WHETHER PERIODS ARE ARRANGED SPECIFICALLY FOR ORAL WORK

15 teachers unanimously agreed that periods for orals were arranged specifically while 5 expressed that they were not.

About 75% of the teachers and their schools have realised the need for allocating periods for oral work where debates on general subjects, drama acting, group discussions, quizzes, speeches can be arranged to give pupils opportunity to express their views and sentiments on various matters.

3.14.4 WHETHER THERE WERE DEBATES EVERY WEEK.

Only 8 out of 20 teachers confirmed that there were debates every week. The rest indicated that this did not take place.

Despite the fact that periods are specifically allotted to oral work, it does not seem that they are profitably used for regular debates on various issues as is reflected by the 60% negative response. These are probably used for other subjects which are "more important" than Xhosa.

3.14.5 WHETHER TEACHING AIDS WERE USED DURING ORAL LESSONS.

Only 6 out of 20 teachers indicated that teaching aids were used. 14 replied in the negative.

The 70% negative response of teachers indicates that the majority of teachers in most schools in Transkei are not prone to the habit of using teaching aids for orals. Yet teaching aids like charts, pictures, specimens can never be effectively used if no oral work is involved. They can be used to spark off some debate, argument, dialogue and means of teaching vocabulary. On the other hand they can be used to enrich teaching skills.

3.14.6 WHETHER THERE WERE TOURS AND EXCURSIONS.

14 teachers expressed that there were excursions taken as part of oral lessons and only 6 responded negatively.

Some of the traditional activities which are characteristic of an indigenous society, are largely done in a rural situation in the form of traditional dances, initiation ceremonies, weddings, sports, traditional parties, and rituals. It becomes imperative for a language teacher to organise tours and excursions for his class to any of these. The educational value of these tours is that apart from their informative nature they offer abundant opportunity for discussion between students. They are also a prelude to the writing of composition, essays, and articles for journals and magazines. About 85% of the teachers do not appear to make use of these tours for this purpose, and this becomes pathetic when one considers the extent to which the children are being deprived of ample learning opportunities.

3.14.7 WHETHER AWARDING OF MARKS WAS CONSIDERED THE BEST FORM OF EVALUATION.

14 teachers confirmed that marks were regarded as the best form of evaluation while 6 replied in the negative.

The above response has clearly demonstrated that the majority of teachers believe that the mere awarding of marks for examinations conducted for orals only, and during the oral examination period, is the only form of evaluation. The implication of this response is that teachers do not seem to have other modern up to date methods of evaluation besides awarding marks during the oral examination period which is some time in September of every year.

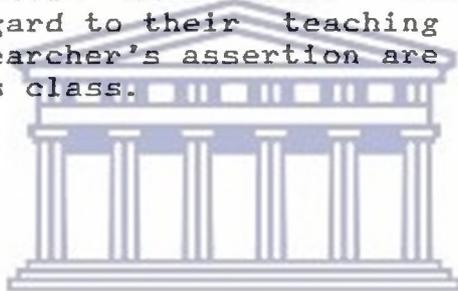
This is normally a date set by the Department of Education for the testing of pupils by the Education Inspectors and the submission of marks to the Examination Section for inclusion into the final end of the year External examination marks. Yet the Departmental stipulation is that oral marks should be built up throughout the year as the pupils progress with their language studies. Research has proved that teachers depend on the awarding of marks as the only criterion for assessing the competence of the pupils. Yet the oral competence of scholars could be assessed by means of speech competition, debates, praise singing, dramatisation of plays, poetry and stories and the performance of the participants could be evaluated by a team of judges who could award prizes. This would have far reaching results towards the proper education of the pupils for some of them could later become dramatists, actors, public debaters, praise singers and writers of poetry. Whilst we agree that marks can be used as a form of evaluation but they are decidedly not the only form of evaluation as the 70% positive reaction of the teachers seems to imply. High marks do not necessarily reflect high standards.

3.14.8 SUMMARY

As the entire chapter was devoted to the teachers' activities inside the classroom, discussions which have taken place in this chapter have been aimed at examining the role played by teachers in promoting or retarding the learning of the pupils so that the exact causes of failure during the final examinations can be detected.

It has been discovered that most teachers are not qualified to teach Std 10 and that even those who are qualified do lack confidence in themselves as shown by their inability to teach certain sections of the syllabus. Although measures are being taken to update their knowledge, yet their teaching practice is not being reinforced with up to date instructional material which has been proved to be the best learning device.

After these revelations the researcher finds it difficult to put the blame squarely on the pupils for their bad performance when the teachers themselves have shown some short comings particularly with regard to their teaching strategies, which according to the researcher's assertion are the cause of high rate of failure in this class.



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CHAPTER 4: SECTION C.

4. DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS : PUPILS' RESPONSES.

The data in this chapter was gathered from eight schools spread out over six districts and the total number of pupils who filled the questionnaire correctly was 322. Tables 4.1 to 4.9 show the responses of the pupils to the questions on how composition and letter are taught. Such questions are found in Appendix B Section B.

TABLE 4.1

GROUP A: COMPOSITION AND LETTER.

DISTRICT 1 : SCHOOL 1

ITEM	POSITIVE	NEGATIVE	TOTAL
1. Whether teacher discusses letter with pupils before allowing them to write.	8	47	55
2. Whether teacher explains objectives of teaching essay and letter.	20	35	55
3. Use of teaching aids during discussion of letter and composition.	1	54	55
4. Whether teacher gives pupils list of words, phrases and expressions for vocabulary building.	4	51	55
5. Whether magazines, newspapers, real specimens are used for reference.	2	53	55
6. Division of pupils into groups to discuss topics in composition/letter.	6	49	55
7. Whether teacher refers pupils to literature/language books for specimens.	10	45	55
8. Debate on Xhosa customs, proverbs, traditions?	35	20	55
	86	354	440

N = 55

TABLE 4.2
COMPOSITION AND LETTER.
DISTRICT 2: SCHOOL 1.

ITEM	POSITIVE:	NEGATIVE:	TOTAL
1. Whether teacher discusses letter with pupils before allowing them to write.	1	19	20
2. Whether teacher explains objectives of teaching essay and letter.	6	19	20
3. Use of teaching aids during discussion of letter and composition.	-	20	20
4. Whether teacher gives pupils list of words, phrases and expressions for vocabulary building.	1	19	20
5. Whether magazines, newspapers, real specimens are used for reference.	2	18	20
6. Division of pupils into groups to discuss topics in composition/letter	2	18	20
7. Whether teacher refers pupils to literature/language books for specimens.	5	15	20
8. Debate on Xhosa customs, proverbs, traditions?	3	17	20
	20	140	160

N = 20

TABLE 4.3.

COMPOSITION AND LETTER.

DISTRICT 3 : SCHOOL 1

ITEM	POSITIVE:NEGATIVE :TOTAL		
1. Whether teacher discusses letter with pupils before allowing them to write	11	40	51
2. Whether teacher explains objectives of teaching essay and letter.	34	17	51
3. Use of teaching aids during discussion of letter and composition.	-	51	51
4. Whether teacher gives pupils list of words, phrases and expressions for vocabulary building.	1	50	51
5. Whether magazines, newspapers real specimens are used for reference.	2	49	51
6. Division of pupils into groups to discuss topics in composition/letter	38	13	51
7. Whether teacher refers pupils to literature/language books for specimens.	22	29	51
8. Debate on Xhosa customs, proverbs and traditions?	17	34	51
	125	283	408

N = 51

TABLE 4.4
COMPOSITION AND LETTER
DISTRICT A: SCHOOL 1

ITEM	POSITIVE:	NEGATIVE:	TOTAL
1. Whether teacher discusses letter with pupils before allowing them to write.	3	14	17
2. Whether teacher explains objectives of teaching essay and letter.	9	8	17
3. Use of teaching aids during the discussion of letter and composition.	1	16	17
4. Whether teacher gives pupils list of words, phrases and expressions for vocabulary building.	1	16	17
5. Whether magazines, newspapers, real specimens are used for reference.	-	17	17
6. Division of pupils into groups to discuss topic in composition/letter.	9	8	17
7. Whether teacher refers pupils to literature/language books for specimens.	14	3	17
8. Debate on Xhosa customs, proverbs traditions, idioms?	11	6	17
	48	88	136

N = 17

TABLE 4.5
COMPOSITION AND LETTER
DISTRICT 5 : SCHOOL 1

ITEM	POSITIVE:NEGATIVE:TOTAL		
1. Whether teacher discusses letter with pupils before allowing them to write	9	45	54
2. Whether teacher explains objectives of teaching essay and letter.	19	35	54
3. Use of teaching aids during discussion of letter and composition.	1	53	54
4. Whether teacher gives pupils list of words phrases and expressions for vocabulary building.	1	53	54
5. Whether magazines, newspapers, real specimens are used for reference.	-	54	54
6. Division of pupils into groups to discuss composition and letter.	25	29	54
7. Whether teachers refer pupils to literature/language books for specimens.	18	36	54
8. Debate on Xhosa customs, proverbs, idioms, traditions?	13	41	54
	86	346	436

N = 54

TABLE 4.6
COMPOSITION AND LETTER
DISTRICT 6 : SCHOOL 1

ITEM	POSITIVE:	NEGATIVE:	TOTAL
1. Whether teacher discusses letter with pupils before allowing them to write.	11	5	16
2. Whether teacher explains objectives of teaching essay and letter.	9	7	16
3. Use of teaching aids during discussion of letter and composition.	1	15	16
4. Whether teacher gives pupils list of words, phrases, and expressions for vocabulary building.	8	8	16
5. Whether magazines, newspapers, real specimens are used for reference	13	3	16
6. Division of pupils into groups to discuss topic in composition/letter.	10	6	16
7. Whether teacher refers pupils to literature or language books for specimens.	8	8	16
8. Debate on Xhosa customs, proverbs, idioms, traditions?	1	15	16
	61	67	128

N = 16

TABLE 4.7
COMPOSITION AND LETTER.
DISTRICT 6 : SCHOOL 2.

ITEM	POSITIVE:	NEGATIVE:	TOTAL.
1. Whether teacher discusses letter with pupils before allowing them to write.	18	22	40
2. Whether teacher explains objectives of teaching essay and letter.	29	11	40
3. Use of teaching aids during discussions of letter and composition	4	36	40
4. Whether teacher gives pupils list of words, phrases, and expressions for vocabulary building.	10	30	40
5. Whether magazines, newspapers, real specimens are used for reference.	2	38	40
6. Division of pupils into groups to discuss topic in composition/letter	11	29	40
7. Whether teacher refers pupils to literature/language books for specimens.	26	14	40
8. Debate on Xhosa customs, traditions, proverbs, idioms?	24	16	40
	124	196	320

N = 40

TABLE 4.8
COMPOSITION AND LETTER
DISTRICT 6 : SCHOOL 3

ITEM	POSITIVE:	NEGATIVE:	TOTAL
1. Whether teacher discusses letter with pupils before allowing them to write.	28	41	69
2. Whether teacher explains objectives of teaching essay and letter.	33	36	69
3. Use of teaching aids during discussion of letter and composition.	1	68	69
4. Whether teacher gives pupils list of words, phrases and expressions for vocabulary building.	6	63	69
5. Whether magazines, newspapers real specimens are used for reference.	3	66	69
6. Division of pupils into groups to discuss topic in composition/letter	3	66	69
7. Whether teacher refers pupils to literature/language books for specimens.	34	35	69
8. Debate on Xhosa customs. proverbs idioms, traditions?	19	50	69
	127	425	552

N = 69

TABLE 4.9

SUMMARY OF THE SIX DISTRICTS.

ITEM	POSITIVE	NEGATIVE	TOTAL
1. Whether teacher discusses letter with pupils before allowing them to write.	89	233	322
2. Whether teacher explains objectives of teaching essay and letter.	159	163	322
3. Use of teaching aids during discussion of letter and composition.	9	313	322
4. Whether teacher gives pupils list of words, phrases and expressions for vocabulary building.	32	290	322
5. Whether magazines, newspapers, real specimens are used for reference.	24	298	322
6. Division of pupils into groups to discuss topic in composition/letter.	104	218	322
7. Whether teacher refers pupils to literature/language books for specimens or models.	137	185	322
8. Debate on Xhosa customs, proverbs, idioms, traditions?	123	199	322
	677	1899	2576

N = 322

4.10 ANALYSIS OF THE RESPONSES OF THE INTERVIEWED SCHOLARS TO QUESTIONNAIRE ON COMPOSITION AND LETTER.

Summary Table 4.9 shows the following:

4.10.1 WHETHER TEACHER DISCUSSES LETTER WITH PUPILS BEFORE ALLOWING THEM TO WRITE IT.

Out of the total of 322 pupils who were interviewed only 89 responded positively. 233 of them responded in the negative.

The majority of the pupils forming 72% of the total number of pupils interviewed in six districts, indicated that there is no formal discussion of a letter before an assignment is given on it. Normally, prewriting discussions are a prerequisite for any aspect in a language. In these discussions it is expected that the teacher will explain the different styles of letter writing, the various approaches to different topics to be discussed. Pupils are expected to participate in the discussions by detecting styles, language and tone in the samples which the teacher is supposed to provide as specimens. Some dramatisation of the contents of some of the letters could be made. Students could be divided into small groups and each group could write letters to one another. The replies could form a subject of discussion. In this way technical and grammatical errors would be eliminated before the actual writing exercises or assignments are given.

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4.10.2 WHETHER TEACHER EXPLAINS THE OBJECTIVES OF TEACHING COMPOSITION AND LETTER.

159 of the pupils interviewed agreed that objectives were explained while 169 of them responded negatively.

There is almost a balanced reaction to this question. Half of the pupils have responded in the positive while the other half in the negative. This response will not be taken as a decisive factor in this research. But it is comforting to learn that some work is at least being done to explain some objectives in the teaching of composition and letter. These objectives form the basis of learning.

4.10.3 USE OF TEACHING AIDS DURING DISCUSSION OF LETTER AND COMPOSITION.

313 pupils interviewed expressed that no teaching aids were used while only 9 agreed that they were used.

By an almost overwhelming majority of 97% the pupils have denied that their teachers use any teaching aids during the discussion of letter and compositions. Compare the teachers' responses regarding aids to those of the pupils. The responses are identical. This clearly indicates that by and large, teaching aids are not being regarded as an effective method of teaching for good results.

4.10.4 WHETHER TEACHER GIVES PUPILS LIST OF WORDS, PHRASES AND EXPRESSIONS FOR VOCABULARY BUILDING.

Only 32 out of 322 pupils interviewed responded that they got the list of words while 290 said they did not.

When preparing to teach a composition one of the basic requirements is to build up pupils' vocabulary by collecting a list of difficult, relevant and suitable words, appropriate phrases and traditional Xhosa expressions in order to enable the pupils to have a sense of creativity when attempting to write. The words and phrases are first discussed orally and thereafter the pupils record them and use them for their compositions. They may be taught to collect these themselves and to store them for future use. This is one way of enriching their compositions and style of writing. These words may be built up using books, magazines, newspapers, conversation, dialogue, research techniques, tapes and so on. This is meant to be part of their training. The response to this question has been a negative one. About 90% of the pupils claim that this is not being practised by their teachers. The implication is that their compositions are left barren, jaded and bony.

4.10.5 WHETHER MAGAZINES, NEWSPAPERS, REAL SPECIMENS ARE USED FOR REFERENCE PURPOSES.

On the use of magazines and newspapers only 24 out of 322 confirmed that these were used while 298 gave a negative response.

One of the techniques of motivating pupils to write a sound, compact, inspiring and thought-provoking piece of essay writing is to make use of specimens taken from relevant passages, extracts from suitable books, Xhosa newspapers, magazines, and real essay models from books specifically written for tuition purposes. Pupils themselves could be taught to look for these,

mount them and use them as reference when they actually engage themselves in assignments, composition and letter. It would appear that this is not happening in most schools as 90% of the respondents above have indicated.

4.10.6 DIVISION OF PUPILS INTO GROUPS TO DISCUSS TOPICS IN COMPOSITION AND LETTER.

It appeared that 104 pupils knew about group discussions during the teaching of composition and letter. 218 of them expressed that they were never involved in any of them.

The modern trend in the teaching of a language is to adopt a pupil-oriented independent approach with less emphasis on lecture method. This enables the children to express themselves orally. In this way ideas from the pupils can be very helpful in the building up of less stereotyped compositions and letters. About 60% of the respondents have never been divided into groups during the preparation stages of a composition or letter.

4.10.7 WHETHER TEACHER REFERS PUPILS TO LITERATURE OR LANGUAGE BOOKS FOR REFERENCE.

The practice of referring the Xhosa class to some literature or language passages seems to be known by 137 pupils while 185 out of 322 do not seem to know anything about this.

The researcher's intention here is to test if the teacher advises his pupils to reach out for certain passages in literature or language books when working out an assignment. The responses reveal that about 43% of the pupils have responded in the positive while 57% indicated that their teachers have never referred them to any books. This technique serves as a design for helping pupils develop their skills of research, that is ability to use books to look for supplementary information during essay writing.

4.10.8 DEBATE ON XHOSA CUSTOMS, PROVERBS, IDIOMS, TRADITIONS?

123 of the pupils interviewed agree that debates on traditional practices involving folklore were conducted while 199 out of 322 had indicated that there were no such debates.

Customs, traditions, proverbs, idioms, and other indigenous practices could be dealt with as an exclusive area since they form the basic ingredient of Xhosa culture. The majority of these are

unwritten but it is expected that indigenous speakers of Xhosa language know about them. Since they are not all written, pupils are taught to be resourceful by being allowed to conduct their own research into some of these. They are required to debate on these in order to test their knowledge of matters of tradition. About 38% of the pupils claim that their teachers have started on this scheme while 62% have responded in the negative.

4.10.9 SUMMARY

On the strength of the responses thus discussed the conclusion is inescapable that the approach to the teaching of composition and letter is poor. It does not appear that any scientific methods of teaching composition and letter are used such as discussion of the subject before writing, explaining the objectives of writing composition and letter, using relevant teaching aids such as magazines and newspaper cuttings, building up vocabulary out of selected words, referring pupils to specified passages, and using dramatisation as a form of teaching.

This discovery confirms the researcher's assertion that one of the causes of high rate of failure in Std 10 is the teachers' lack of suitable skills of teaching composition and letter. assertion that one of the causes of high rate of failure in Std 10 is lack of suitable teaching skills used by the teachers in teaching composition and letter.

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GROUP B.

LANGUAGE AND GRAMMAR

During his teaching experience, the researcher had noticed that students had developed a very negative attitude towards grammar and as a result failed it easily because it contained sections which they did not like. The teachers themselves seemed to adopt a very lukewarm attitude towards it. One of the problems the students encountered was that part of the language was unwritten. Those were some of the impediments which seemed to militate against the love of grammar and language.

These observations motivated the researcher to conduct this present investigation and search for causes of the failure rate in Xhosa. In this particular section on grammar and language his questions delved into the question of pupils' attitudes, the structure of the grammar syllabus, the efficiency of the teachers handling it, the allocation of the teaching periods for grammar and the inspiration the students got from the teachers.

The detailed analysis of grammatical aspects in some of the books that are being used at school together with the inclusion of phonetics in the syllabus, are some of the aspects that were investigated.

Tables 4.11 to 4.19 reflect the responses of pupils sampled from six districts to questions on the teaching of grammar. These questions are found in Appendix B, Section C of the questionnaire.

TABLE 4.11

LANGUAGE AND GRAMMAR.

DISTRICT 1 : SCHOOL 1

ITEM	S- A	A	N- A	D-A	S/D-A	TOTAL
1. Most pupils dislike grammar.	13	7	9	18	8	55
2. Detailed approach to grammar causes difficulty.	21	19	4	7	4	55
3. Phonetics cause more difficulty.	12	23	9	8	3	55
4. Lack of books on general knowledge causes difficulty.	17	25	6	5	2	55
5. Grammar sometimes taught by uninspiring teachers.	22	26	3	3	1	55
6. Grammar periods fewer than those for literature.	20	14	6	15	-	55
7. Pupils lazy to study grammar because it is too formal.	30	20	3	2	-	55
	135	134	40	58	18	385

N = 55

TABLE 4.12

LANGUAGE AND GRAMMAR.

DISTRICT 2 : SCHOOL 1.

ITEM	S-A	A	N-S	D.A	S/D-A	TOTAL
1. Most pupils dislike grammar	11	8	1	-	-	20
2. Detailed approach to grammar causes difficulty.	15	5	-	-	-	20
3. Phonetics cause more difficulty.	19	1	-	-	-	20
4. Lack of books on general knowledge causes difficulty.	10	8	-	2	-	20
5. Grammar is sometimes taught by uninspiring teachers.	11	7	2	-	-	20
6. Grammar periods fewer than those for literature.	5	4	-	10	1	20
7. Pupils are lazy to study grammar because it is too formal.	9	7	8	1	-	20
	80	40	6	13	1	140

N = 20

TABLE 4.13

LANGUAGE AND GRAMMAR.

DISTRICT 3 : SCHOOL 1.

ITEM	S-A	A	N-S	D-A	S/D-A	TOTAL
1. Most pupils dislike grammar.	8	15	11	7	10	51
2. Detailed approach to grammar causes difficulty.	23	24	-	3	1	51
3. Phonetics cause more difficulty.	33	16	-	-	-	51
4. Lack of books on general knowledge causes difficulty.	23	24	2	2	-	51
5. Grammar is sometimes taught by uninspiring teachers.	23	24	1	2	1	51
6. Grammar periods are fewer than those for literature.	7	22	7	14	1	51
7. Pupils are lazy to study grammar for it is too formal.	17	25	5	1	3	51
	134	150	26	31	16	357

N = 51.

TABLE 4.14

LANGUAGE AND GRAMMAR.

DISTRICT 4 : SCHOOL 1.

ITEM	S-A	A	N-A	D-A	S/D-A	TOTAL
1. Most pupils dislike grammar.	3	5	-	5	4	17
2. Detailed approach to grammar causes difficulty.	8	5	-	2	2	17
3. Phonetics cause more difficulty.	8	4	-	3	2	17
4. Lack of books on general knowledge creates difficulty.	7	2	3	4	1	17
5. Grammar is sometimes taught by uninspiring teachers.	-	8	1	3	5	17
6. Grammar periods are fewer than those for literature.	-	5	3	6	3	17
7. Pupils are lazy to study grammar because it is formal.	6	7	-	3	1	17
	32	36	7	26	18	119

N = 17

TABLE 4.15

LANGUAGE AND GRAMMAR.

DISTRICT 5 : SCHOOL 1.

ITEM	S-A	A	N-S	D-A	S/D-A	TOTAL
1. Most pupils dislike grammar.	17	16	6	5	10	54
2. Detailed approach to grammar causes difficulty.	30	23	-	-	3	54
3. Phonetics cause more difficulty.	40	11	-	-	3	54
4. Lack of books on general knowledge creates more difficulty.	25	20	2	3	4	54
5. Grammar is sometimes taught by uninspiring teachers.	21	28	4	-	1	54
6. Grammar periods are fewer than those for literature.	12	21	5	15	1	54
7. Pupils are lazy to study grammar because it is too formal.	24	20	3	1	6	54
	169	139	20	25	25	378

N = 54

TABLE 4.16

LANGUAGE AND GRAMMAR.

DISTRICT 6 : SCHOOL 1.

ITEM	S-A	A	N-S	D-A	S/D-A	TOTAL
1. Most pupils dislike grammar.	5	5	-	2	4	16
2. Detailed approach to grammar causes some difficulty.	9	5	2	-	-	16
3. Phonetics cause more difficulty.	12	4	-	-	-	16
4. Lack of books on general knowledge causes difficulty	7	9	-	-	-	16
5. Grammar is sometimes taught by uninspiring teachers.	1	4	8	1	2	16
6. Grammar periods are fewer than those for literature.	1	10	1	3	1	16
7. Pupils are lazy to study grammar for it is too formal.	7	8	-	1	-	16
	42	45	11	7	7	112

N = 40

TABLE 4.17

LANGUAGE AND GRAMMAR.

DISTRICT 6 : SCHOOL 2.

ITEM	S-A	A	N-S	D-A	S/D-A	TOTAL
1. Most pupils dislike grammar.	4	13	-	13	10	40
2. Detailed approach to grammar causes some difficulty.	20	10	-	7	3	40
3. Phonetics cause difficulty.	16	14	2	5	3	40
4. Lack of books on general knowledge causes more difficulty.	20	15	-	3	2	40
5. Grammar is sometimes taught by uninspiring teachers.	5	15	6	11	3	40
6. Grammar periods are fewer than those for literature.	4	8	9	15	4	40
7. Pupils are lazy to study grammar because it is too formal.	10	18	4	4	4	40
	79	93	21	58	29	280

N = 40

TABLE 4.18

LANGUAGE AND GRAMMAR.

DISTRICT 6 : SCHOOL 3.

ITEM	S-A	A	N-S	D-A	S/D-A	TOTAL
1. Most pupils dislike grammar.	19	33	4	8	5	69
2. Detailed approach to grammar causes some difficulty.	31	27	3	7	1	69
3. Phonetics cause more difficulty.	42	17	4	4	2	69
4. Lack of books on general knowledge causes difficulty.	24	32	6	7	-	69
5. Grammar is sometimes taught by uninspiring teachers.	13	32	7	7	10	69
6. Grammar periods are fewer than those for literature.	9	15	10	27	8	69
7. Pupils are lazy to study grammar because it is too formal.	30	33	1	3	2	69
	168	189	35	63	28	483

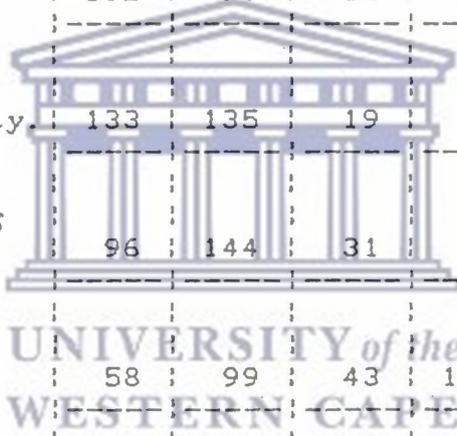
N = 69

TABLE 4.19

LANGUAGE AND GRAMMAR.

SUMMARY OF THE SIX DISTRICTS COMBINED.

ITEM	S-A	A	N-S	D-A	S/D-A	TOTAL
1. Most pupils dislike grammar.	78	103	32	58	51	322
2. Detailed approach to grammar causes some difficulty.	157	118	9	27	11	322
3. Phonetics cause more difficulty.	182	90	15	22	13	322
4. Lack of books on general knowledge causes more difficulty.	133	135	19	26	9	322
5. Grammar is sometimes taught by uninspiring teachers.	96	144	31	27	24	322
6. Grammar periods are fewer than those for literature.	58	99	43	105	17	322
7. Pupils are too lazy to study grammar because it's too formal	133	138	19	16	16	322
	837	827	168	281	141	2254



N = 322

4.20 RESPONSES OF PUPILS TO QUESTIONNAIRE ON LANGUAGE AND GRAMMAR.

SUMMARY OF THE SIX DISTRICTS.

4.20.1 WHETHER MOST STUDENTS TEND TO DISLIKE GRAMMAR.

S - A	A	N - S	D - A	S/D - A	TOTAL
78	103	32	58	51	322

In the past grammar was treated as a separate entity and was formal. Most language books were written by authors who themselves had studied formal grammar. Because of the inflexible and formal approach in the learning and teaching of it, grammar tended to be a source of concern to both teacher and pupil. Students disliked it most because it was taught like a content subject and was not made to have any bearing on life. The examinations also approached it formally. The researcher's observations confirmed that the functional approach had not yet fully displaced the formal approach hence this indifferent attitude by the pupil. The responses of pupils as seen through the above figures indicate that the majority of the pupils at Senior Secondary level dislike grammar. About 56% have responded positively and 34% have responded in the negative. It is logical therefore to expect that if pupils have a dislike for a section of the syllabus they are likely to dodge it, pay no attention to it and finally ignore it. The resultant factor is failure at the examination.

4.20.2 WHETHER DETAILED APPROACH TO GRAMMAR CAUSES DIFFICULTY DURING LEARNING.

S - A	A	N - S	D - A	S/D - A	TOTAL
157	118	9	27	11	322

Current grammar books such as ISIXHOSA by W.H. Pahl and a few others which are currently used at Senior level are fairly detailed. This meticulous attention on detail by authors of grammar books, always resulted in boredom among the scholars instead of motivating them to learn. This is especially so because it is formal. The researcher's aim in including this question in the questionnaire was to test if most schools were experiencing the same problem. About 80% of the pupils have indicated that this was indeed the case and the statistics above have shown that there were very few pupils who did not feel handicapped by this kind of approach in grammar. Indeed if our pupils are exposed to this kind of literary torment they are bound to experience problems in their education.

That there is a shortage of material is not their fault. Such shortage of material in the researcher's view leads to a high failure rate as well.

4.20.3 WHETHER PRESENCE OF PHONETICS CREATES MORE DIFFICULTY DURING LEARNING.

S - A	A	N - S	D - A	S/D - A	TOTAL
182	90	15	22	13	322

The teaching of phonetics to Xhosa pupils at Matric level has been a subject of controversy in the Transkei Department of Education over the past years. This has been especially so with regard to the Nguni and Sesotho Language Board and the Xhosa Language Committee which have argued that the learning of phonetics is not necessary in Xhosa which is the First Language of the Xhosa speaking people of Transkei. But because this has been the requirement of the Joint Matriculation Board syllabus this item on phonetics had to be taught. A 55% response of the teachers on the same issue of phonetics reflected that some teachers feel that phonetics do not pose a problem but compared to the response of the pupils on the same issue, 85% of the student population seem to experience difficulty in learning phonetics and probably fail to get a decent mark on them. This could probably be caused by the fact that the learning of phonetics does not seem to evoke interest in them and they may not have any significant meaning in the study of the language.

4.20.4 WHETHER LACK OF BOOKS ON GENERAL KNOWLEDGE CAUSES DIFFICULTY DURING LEARNING.

S - A	A	N - S	D - A	S/D - A	TOTAL
133	135	19	26	9	322

One of the researcher's assumptions is that the alarming shortage or absence of teaching material contributes to high rate of failure in this class. General knowledge is knowledge which a Xhosa child is expected to have by virtue of his cultural background. Examiners set such questions on general knowledge at both Junior and Senior levels during external examinations and most candidates fail to score good marks in these questions. It has become necessary to compile this general information. A few books have come out but they are too few to be able to satisfy the needs in this aspect. Of significance to the scholar is that general knowledge is wide and needs quite a variety of books to deal with various subjects of the Xhosa culture. Not many children therefore can depend on their cultural background for knowledge particularly because the Xhosa culture has been too hybridised by industrialisation and the invasion of the so

called western culture. The interviewed pupils have, by an overwhelming majority of 83%, indicated that they are being greatly handicapped by the dearth of such books on general knowledge.

4.20.5 WHETHER GRAMMAR IS SOMETIMES TAUGHT BY UNINSPIRING TEACHERS.

S - A	A	N - S	D - A	S/D - A	TOTAL
84	144	31	27	24	322

One cannot quite know to what extent a teacher can be inspiring to the pupils. But it is a known fact that teachers' approaches to the subject will always differ. However, a knowledgeable teacher, experienced teacher, enthusiastic and tactful teacher will give some inspiration to his pupils. There has been some indication elsewhere in this research project that some teachers have very limited knowledge of grammar and language, and are consequently not well disposed towards it. Such a teacher is bound to lack confidence when he is presenting his lessons. It is that lack of confidence which kills the child's interest and fails to inspire him. If such teachers are allowed to continue in this strain, it is unlikely that the students can make a noteworthy progress in the study of the language and will tend to be apathetic. Looking at the responses above, it is regrettable to note that 71% of the pupils do confirm that some Xhosa grammar teachers fail to inspire them. Only about 10% think otherwise.

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4.20.6 WHETHER GRAMMAR PERIODS ARE FEWER THAN THOSE ASSIGNED FOR LITERATURE.

S - A	A	N - S	D - A	S/D - A	TOTAL
58	99	43	105	17	322

There has been some revelation that teachers tend to devote more time to literature than to grammar (Bongela : 1984). This is usually noticeable in the school time table. Literature periods are usually more and there is also a tendency to ignore grammar at times. This question aims at investigating whether first of all the alleged practice is true and secondly whether it is a general practice in Transkei schools. The results show that it is true but according to the responses it is only 49% of the pupils who have responded positively. About 39 % have indicated that this is not the case. About 12% are not sure about this arrangement. The implication of this diversity is that not all schools adopt the same practice. The question of allocating periods to the various aspects of the language are often left to the subject teacher.

If for example he is given a minimum of five periods a week, he is supposed to divide them according to literature, language, composition and letter. If he does not favour grammar and language he may be inclined to devote three to literature, only one to language and perhaps one to composition or letter.

4.20.7 WHETHER PUPILS ARE TOO LAZY TO STUDY GRAMMAR BECAUSE IT IS TOO FORMAL.

S - A	A	N - S	D - A	S/D - A	TOTAL
133	138	19	16	16	322

The approach to the teaching of formal grammar has already been highlighted in 4.20.1 and its adverse effects on the pupils' interest have been mentioned. In addition, according to Bongela (1984) formal grammar has a tendency of demotivating the pupils particularly if it is handled as a separate entity and not merged into all the aspects of the language such as literature, language, composition and letter. In clearer terms, a functional approach to grammar is likely to encourage pupils, imbue them with interest and make them love it.

On the other hand, educationists such as the members of the Xhosa Language Board, have often expressed that formal grammar has a tendency to encourage rote learning and may prepare candidates only for examinations. Thereafter pupils tend to forget about it. That should account for the fact that there are very few scholars who pursue the path of linguistics at post graduate level.

In this research about 80% of the pupils confirm that the formal approach to the teaching of grammar has had a very negative effect on their studies. This may therefore be one of the causes of high failure rate in this class.

GROUP C : THE STUDY OF LITERATURE.

With regard to literature the questionnaire which contains literature questions in Appenix B, Section D, tested pupils on whether they found it easier to learn literature than grammar. This probe was intended to either confirm or dispute the fact that pupils were more interested in literature than they were in grammar. Other questions tested whether pupils generally found critical appreciating a problem. This would in particular refer to poetry and, to a lesser extent, drama.

The academic background of the pupils became the focus of attention in this part of the questionnaire. In searching for the causes of failure at this terminal level the researcher wondered if the poor performance was not caused by lack of background teaching at Junior secondary level where the pupils are supposed to be introduced to the basic training in critical appreciation so that by the time they come to the Matric level they should be thoroughly knowledgeable.

Sometimes one can blame the pupils for their poor performance in the external examination, yet one of the direct causes of poor performance may be lack of books specifically written on critical appreciation of Xhosa literature and also prepared notes by the teachers. This seems to confirm the researcher's assertion that there is also an alarming shortage or absence of teaching material.

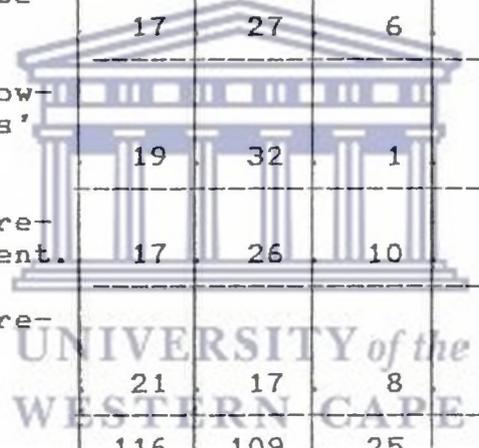
Such material would guide the pupils properly and it would not only help the pupils to pass at the end of the year, but would also train the minds of the pupils for adulthood.

TABLE 4.21

LITERATURE.

DITRICT 1 : SCHOOL 1.

ITEM	S-A .	A .	N-S .	D-A .	S/D-A	TOTAL
1. Literature is easier to study as compared to grammar.	42	7	-	2	4	55
2. Critical appreciation in some aspects of literature is difficult.	17	27	6	3	2	55
3. Lack of background knowledge hampers students' progress.	19	32	1	3	-	55
4. Books on critical appreciation are insufficient.	17	26	10	2	-	55
5. Notes on critical appreciation on prescribed books are essential.	21	17	8	9	-	55
	116	109	25	19	6	275



N = 55

TABLE 4.22

LITERATURE.

DISTRICT 2 : SCHOOL 1

ITEM	S-A	A	N-S	D-A	S/D-A	TOTAL
1. Literature is easier to study as compared to grammar.	14	5	-	-	1	20
2. Critical appreciation in some aspects of literature is difficult	14	3	1	2	-	20
3. Lack of background knowledge hampers students' progress.	11	9	-	-	-	20
4. Books on critical appreciation are insufficient.	5	7	7	1	-	20
5. Notes on critical appreciation based on prescribed books are essential.	15	7	-	-	-	20
	59	29	8	3	1	100

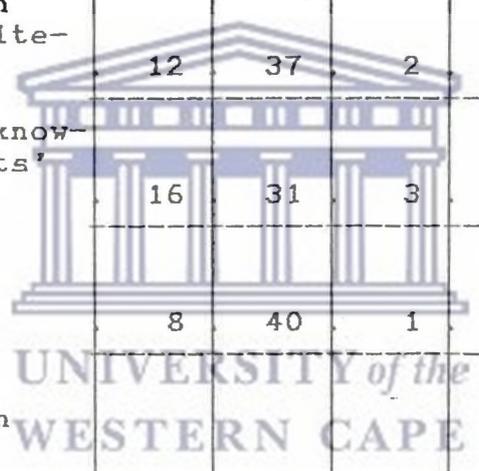
N = 20

TABLE 4.23

LITERATURE.

DISTRICT 3 : SCHOOL 1.

ITEM	S-A	A	N-S	D-A	S/D-A	TOTAL
1. Literature is easier to study as compared to grammar.	43	7	1	-	-	51
2. Critical appreciation in some aspects of literature is difficult.	12	37	2	-	-	51
3. Lack of background knowledge hampers students' progress.	16	31	3	1	-	51
4. Books on critical appreciation are insufficient	8	40	1	2	-	51
5. Notes on critical appreciation based on prescribed books are essential.	32	18	1	-	-	51
	111	133	8	3	-	255



N = 51

TABLE 4.24

LITERATURE.

DISTRICT 4 : SCHOOL 1

ITEM	S-A	A	N-S	D-A	S/D-A	TOTAL
1. Literature is easier to study as compared to grammar.	8	7	-	1	1	17
2. Critical appreciation in some aspects of literature is difficult.	6	1	2	5	3	17
3. Lack of background knowledge hampers students' progress.	7	7	-	2	1	17
4. Books on critical appreciation are insufficient.	3	3	7	2	2	17
5. Notes on critical appreciation based on prescribed books are essential	5	7	-	2	3	17
	29	25	9	12	10	85

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N = 17

TABLE 4.25

LITERATURE.

DISTRICT 5 : SCHOOL 1

ITEM	S-A	A	N-S	D-A	S/D-A	TOTAL
1. Literature is easier to study as compared to grammar.	48	4	-	-	1	54
2. Critical appreciation in some aspects of literature is difficult.	25	23	2	2	2	54
3. Lack of background knowledge hampers students' progress.	30	19	2	3	-	54
4. Books on critical appreciation are insufficient.	26	27	-	1	-	54
5. Notes on critical appreciation based on prescribed books are essential.	36	17	-	1	-	54
	166	90	4	7	3	270

N = 54.

TABLE 4.26

LITERATURE

DISTRICT 6 : SCHOOL 1

ITEM	S-A	A	N-S	D-A	S/D-A	TOTAL
1. Literature is easier to study as compared to grammar.	10	6	-	-	-	16
2. Critical appreciation in some aspects of literature is difficult.	2	3	5	3	3	16
3. Lack of background knowledge hampers students' progress.	8	7	-	1	-	16
4. Books on critical appreciation are insufficient.	4	8	3	1	-	16
5. Notes on critical appreciation in respect of rescribed books are essential	10	4	1	1	-	16
	34	28	9	6	3	80

N = 16

TABLE 4.27

LITERATURE

DISTRICT 6 : SCHOOL 2.

ITEM	S-A	A	N-S	D-A	S/D-A	TOTAL
1. literature is easier to study as compared to grammar.	34	6	-	-	-	40
2. Critical appreciation in some aspects of literature is difficult.	8	17	-	7	1	40
3. Lack of background knowledge hampers students' progress.	13	17	7	7	1	40
4. Books on critical appreciation are insufficient.	14	13	8	3	2	40
5. Notes on critical appreciation in respect of prescribed books are essential	21	8	3	7	1	40
	90	61	20	22	7	200

N = 40

TABLE 4.28

LITERATURE.

DISTRICT 6 : SCHOOL 3.

ITEM	S-A	A	N-S	D-A	S/D-A	TOTAL
1. Literature is easier to study as compared to grammar.	57	12	-	-	-	69
2. Critical appreciation in some aspects of literature is difficult	14	33	3	12	7	69
3. Lack of background knowledge hampers students' progress.	23	38	1	5	2	69
4. Books on critical appreciation are insufficient.	21	30	11	2	5	69
5. Notes on critical appreciation based on prescribed books are essential.	38	27	2	4	-	69
	151	140	17	23	14	345

N = 69

TABLE 4.29.

LITERATURE.

SUMMARY OF THE SIX DISTRICTS.

ITEM	S-A	A	N-S	D-A	S/D-A	TOTAL
1. Literature is easier to study as compared to grammar.	257	54	1	3	7	322
2. Critical appreciation in some aspects of literature is difficult.	98	144	28	34	18	322
3. Lack of background knowledge hampers students' progress.	150	135	8	19	10	322
4. Notes on critical appreciation in respect of prescribed books are essential.	98	154	47	14	9	322
5. Notes on critical appreciation in respect of prescribed books are essential.	176	103	15	24	4	322
	779	590	99	94	48	1610

N = 322

4.30 THE RESPONSES OF PUPILS TO THE STUDY OF LITERATURE.

This seeks to test the pupils' feelings regarding problems of studying literature as approached from their own point of view. The milieu of investigation is not altogether different from that of the teachers but the responses of the pupils will be used to detect if the pupils agree with the researcher's views regarding basic causes as being responsible for poor performance at examinations.

4.30.1 WHETHER LITERATURE IS EASIER TO STUDY AS COMPARED TO GRAMMAR.

S - A	A	N - S	D - A	S/D - A	TOTAL
254	57	1	3	7	322

With an overwhelming majority of 96% response, it has been established that pupils find literature more interesting and easier to study than grammar. Since the questionnaire did not specify as to what sections are of great interest to them, it can be assumed that the content areas in drama, short stories, and novels make them feel more relaxed than is the case with grammar where there seems to be no interesting sections. This should give thought to language teachers as to what methods can be adopted in order to inculcate a similar interest in grammar.

4.30.2 WHETHER CRITICAL APPRECIATION IN SOME ASPECTS OF LITERATURE IS DIFFICULT.

S - A	A	N - S	D - A	S/D - A	TOTAL
98	144	26	34	18	322

Even though pupils tend to enjoy literature as compared to grammar, they still find difficulty in applying a critical approach to the content. This difficulty is caused by the fact that teachers themselves are not competent in teaching pupils an independent approach to the learning of literature by arming them with tools of literary criticism. The pupils' incompetence is justified by the teachers' acceptance of their shortcomings. Compare the 90% positive response of the teachers with the 72% positive response of the pupils. There is no doubt, judging by the admission on both parties, that it is still a long way before pupils master the proper study of literature. This affects their results during external examinations.

4.30.3 WHETHER LACK OF BACKGROUND KNOWLEDGE HAMPERS PUPILS' PROGRESS.

S - A	A	N - S	D - A	S/D - A	TOTAL
150	135	8	19	10	322

Std 10 pupils cannot be expected to show efficiency in their performance if they actually lack background knowledge of critical appreciation. This they are supposed to have been taught at Junior secondary level in Std 5 in the case of Transkei so that by the time they reach Std 10 they are proficient enough to tackle it. This is one of the possible causes of poor performance at this level. The researcher regards it as an obligation on the part of the teachers to start grooming pupils from the lower levels if they expect them to excel at the terminal classes. The 95% positive response of the interviewed pupils confirms that indeed lack of background knowledge does hamper pupils' progress.

4.30.4 WHETHER BOOKS ON CRITICAL APPRECIATION ARE INSUFFICIENT.

S - A	A	N - S	D - A	S/D - A	TOTAL
98	154	47	14	9	322

So far there are very few books written specifically to deal with critical appreciation to assist teachers and pupils in the teaching and learning of critical appreciation in literature. These books are supposed to cover classes ranging from at least Std 8 to 10. These are AMAZINGA by Bongela and Makubalo: UBUQHOLE BESIHOBE by D.N. Jafta: UPHENGULULO LWESIXHOSA by S.C. Satyo: ISISELE by L.M Mbadi et al: and IVUSO LAMANDLA by G.S. Budaza. This supply is insufficient for such a large population of Xhosa speaking pupils.

Out of the books mentioned above only three can, at least, be suitable for use in Std 10 and these are UPHENGULULO, ISISELE, AND UBUQHOLE BESIHOBE. About 78% of the pupils interviewed do confirm that there are indeed very few books in this area. Besides this it does not appear that there is any material on critical appreciation prepared every time there is a cycle of prescribed books in order that pupils and teachers can be assisted while preparing for the final examinations. By and large that supports the researcher's assertion that one of the causes of high failure rate is the insufficiency of books on critical appreciation.

4.30.5 WHETHER NOTES ON CRITICAL APPRECIATION IN RESPECT OF PRESCRIBED BOOKS ARE ESSENTIAL.

S - A	A	N - S	D - A	S/D - A	TOTAL
176	103	15	24	4	322

The purpose of this question is to test if teachers normally provide pupils with notes prepared by the teachers themselves as a form of a guide on critical appreciation. About 87% of the students have indicated that they would prefer to have notes compiled for them since most do not seem to be mature enough to tackle critical analysis on their own. This is an indication that these notes are not being made by teachers on a regular basis in the absence of study guides and books. One would assume that teachers themselves are not competent enough to make them, judging by their responses earlier in this research. The undeniable and indisputable fact is that study guides are a necessity.

By and large, in this literature section 85% of the total student responses are inclined to be positive and this indicates that pupils are generally not in a position to perform well in the examinations because they have problems.

4.30.6 SUMMARY

On the whole the pupils' responses to questionnaire on the aspects of the language such as Composition and Letter, Language and Grammar and Literature seem to suggest shortcomings in the teaching of these aspects.

(a) Composition and letter.

Table 4.9, a summary of the response of pupils from the combined districts, reflects that the majority of students are agreed that composition and letter are generally not properly taught. One would expect that when topics are set, some intensive discussions are made by the teacher and his pupils and by the pupils themselves in groups: that vocabulary building gets priority: that teaching aids such as newspapers, magazines and other reference material should be made use of during the teaching of composition: that, in order to enrich the pupils' language, the study of idioms, proverbs, customs and traditions should form part of oral work in preparation for the writing of composition.

(b) Language and grammar.

The contents of Table 4.19, a summary of the pupils' responses to questions on Language and Grammar, reveal that the majority of the pupils interviewed agree that there are inadequacies in the learning of grammar at this level. This shows that a great deal of improvement on the language material being used and the quality of the teacher who handles the language at this level, is necessary.

(c) Literature.

The responses of the pupils in this section do not differ significantly from those of the first two aspects as shown in Table 4.29. Most of the pupils interviewed in the questionnaire on the whole agree that literature is easier to study as compared to grammar: that critical appreciation poses a problem in their study though they find the story element quite enjoyable. Other factors which pupils consider to be limitations in the study of literature are the shortage of books and unavailability of notes on critical appreciation. If such notes are available somewhere they are not published and supplied in such numbers as to feed the hungry population of all pupils studying Xhosa. Above these there seems to be lack of training in the art of critical analysis right from the Junior secondary level.

On the whole, it is quite justifiable for the researcher to conclude that the approach to the teaching of Xhosa at the moment leaves much to be desired and that pupils seem to have cause for performing badly during examinations.

The next chapter deals with Examiners and extra-curricular bodies.

CHAPTER 5.

EXTERNAL EXAMINERS AND EXTRA CURRICULAR BODIES.

INTRODUCTION.

This chapter encompasses output not only from external examiners but also from such extra curricular bodies as the libraries, the Examinations Board, the Xhosa Subject Committee, the Xhosa Action Committee, the Nguni and Sesotho Language Board. These have contributed in this research project by revealing pupils' performance at examinations during the years under investigation; the attitudes of libraries towards the Xhosa Language, the concern shown by the Department of Education over the alarming rate of failure in Xhosa; and the parts played by the Xhosa Subject Committee and the Nguni and Sesotho Language Board in an attempt to solve the problem of failure of the Xhosa Subject in our schools.

Questionnaires were sent to the External Examiners for Xhosa and to libraries in Transkei. Data collected was analysed in the same way as the data collected from teachers and pupils. The only remarkable difference was of a numerical nature. There were only two out of four External Examiners who responded to the questionnaire. Ten librarians were interviewed.

Minutes of the Xhosa Action Committee and the Xhosa Subject Committee together with the Nguni and Sesotho Language Board were used as source references in an attempt to extract information which might help in substantiating the researcher's feeling that the rate of failure of Xhosa at Std 10 level has been a cause for the Department of Education's concern as was indicated in Chapter 1.

The concern of the Department of Education is further justified by the analysis of Std 10 Symbols (Table 5.3.1) which reflected the true position pertaining to the Matriculation Results in Xhosa during the period 1981 to 1986. In this analysis the Standard Distribution formula was used from Symbol A to H. Of particular significance to the researcher were symbols A to E. Anything beyond E was regarded as hopeless. Under normal circumstances and considering that Xhosa is a mother tongue, one would expect that candidates would attain reasonable scores in the C and D brackets but very high scores in the A and B brackets.

The weakest lot would be expected to congest in the D bracket. But what happened? They stretched as far as G symbol. See the

following illustration extracted from Table 5.3.1. which is a statistical exposition of the results during the years 1981 to 1986. This statistical chart was produced by the Department of Education's Examinations Section which worked under the auspices of the Transkei Examinations Board.

EXTRACT FROM THE 1981 TO 1986 XHOSA RESULTS.

A - (80 - 100)	E - (40 - 49)
0,24	28,5
B - (70 - 79)	F - (33,5 - 39)
3,75	6,1
C - (60 - 69)	FF - (30 - 33)
20,59	1,0
D - (50 - 59)	G - (20 - 29)
39,42	0,4

Having worked this out for a period covering at least six years without any noticeable improvement in the results, it is understandable that the Department also showed so much concern and started to form or to invigorate the following bodies namely, the Xhosa Subject Committee, the Xhosa Action Committee, the Nguni and Sesotho Language Board, with the purpose of motivating teachers to change their teaching tactics in order to minimise the high rate of failure in Xhosa and to raise the standard of tuition.

5.1 EXTERNAL EXAMINERS.

TABLE 5.1.1

(i) RESPONSE OF EXTERNAL EXAMINERS.

ITEM	S-A	A	N-S	D-A	S/D-A	TOTAL
1. Most candidates have exhibited limited knowledge of content.	-	1	-	1	-	2
2. Candidates fail to present knowledge in a systematic way.	1	1	-	-	-	2
3. Candidates express knowledge in a faulty grammatical language.	1	1	-	-	-	2
4. Candidates lack deeper understanding of the aspects of Xhosa language.	-	1	-	1	-	2
5. Foreign languages have influenced candidates' spoken and written language.	1	1	-	-	-	2
6. Low output has necessitated adjustment in marks.	-	-	1	1	-	2
7. Teachers do not seem to be properly qualified in Xhosa.	1	-	1	-	-	2
8. Sometimes failure is caused by uncompleted syllabus or it is not properly handled.	1	1	-	-	-	2
	5	6	2	3	-	16

N = 2

(a) COMMENTS OF THE EXTERNAL EXAMINERS ON FACTORS THAT CONTRIBUTE TO POOR PERFORMANCE OF STD 10 CANDIDATES DURING EXAMINATIONS.

In the questionnaire sent to two External Examiners a space was provided for comments by the examiners on what they considered as being responsible for candidates' poor performance. The comments can be summarised as follows.

The candidates seemed to lack the understanding of the basic concepts of the language in both the Grammar and Literature papers. The poor presentation of the lessons by the teachers has resulted in memorisation by pupils. A prominent feature of the system seems to be lack of sufficient exercises due to big numbers of candidates who enrol for Matriculation every year. The teaching of Composition and Letter is a shambles because of lack of discussion of oral material. There also seems to be lack of meaningful teaching and motivation of pupils by giving them a chance for creative work and to teach them to observe and collect oral material in order to link what they learn at school with everyday experience. Another negative aspect is the divorcing of grammar from language as a medium of communication.

(b) COMMENTS ON EXAMINERS' RESPONSES.

Amongst the points raised by the Examiners in their general comments, is the fact that "the teaching of a composition and letter is a shambles because of lack of discussion of oral material". This comment confirms the researcher's assertion that one of the causes of high failure rate is the lack of proper teaching skills used by teachers. The lack of these skills is, according to the researcher reflected in the output or performance of the pupils during examinations. The composition and letter given as an example are some of the many aspects of the language which are failed by the candidates because of lack of proper teaching skills used by the teachers in educating the pupils and preparing them for examinations.

(ii) ANALYSIS OF THE RESPONSES OF THE EXTERNAL EXAMINERS.

1. WHETHER THE MAJORITY OF TEACHERS HAVE EXHIBITED LIMITED KNOWLEDGE OF CONTENT.

S - A	A	N - S	D - A	S/D - A	TOTAL
-	1	-	1	-	2

In the above response it is not easy to make a balanced judgement since one examiner has responded positively and the other negatively. To the researcher this has become a peculiar response. It is not clear which examiner is responsible for which section of the subject. It is highly probable that where the knowledge of content is good it is in the area where candidates are proficient and that is literature or composition and letter. But where they do not do well, this may possibly be in grammar. Because these two responses balance, this response will be ignored for the purposes of this research.

2. WHETHER CANDIDATES FAIL TO PRESENT THEIR KNOWLEDGE IN A SYSTEMATIC WAY.

S - A	A	N - S	D - A	S/D - A	TOTAL
1	1	-	-	-	2

Both examiners agree that their candidates fail to present their knowledge in a systematic way. Generally presentation of work in an examination is a sign that the candidates have been thoroughly prepared and that attention has been paid to the way in which facts should be organised and properly presented for the consumption of the examiner. There are even rules set out for candidates to follow when writing examination papers and candidates are usually warned that they will be penalised if facts are jumbled, disorganised, unsystematic, confused and presented in an unintelligible manner.

3. WHETHER CANDIDATES EXPRESS THEIR KNOWLEDGE IN A FAULTY GRAMMATICAL LANGUAGE.

S - A	A	N - S	D - A	S/D - A	TOTAL
1	1	-	-	-	2

Again here there is unanimous agreement on the issue with one examiner laying emphasis. The implication is that at this level, the candidates reach a final examination stage still being unable to spell properly, to divide words correctly, to punctuate correctly, and to use suitable language and expressions, be it in composition, letter, grammar, and literature. Surely if this is

the case, it means that these pupils do not get thorough grounding in the fundamentals of the language at Primary and Junior Secondary levels. It is unacceptable that pupils writing mother tongue at Matric level can still be accused of such weaknesses to the extent that these could easily jeopardise their chances of clean success at the examinations. This malady is apparent year after year.

4. WHETHER CANDIDATES EXHIBIT LACK OF DEEPER UNDERSTANDING OF ASPECTS OF XHOSA LANGUAGE.

S - A	A	N - S	D - A	S/D - A	TOTAL
-	1	-	1	-	2

The two examiners differ in this aspect of the questionnaire. Again here it is likely that the examiner who has responded negatively is dealing with an area which is not too complex for his candidates. As has already been indicated earlier in this project, aspects of the language differ in context, for example letter and literature. Deeper understanding of literature is a necessity which cannot be overlooked if a child is to be prepared for adulthood and maturity and yet another aspect like a letter can be taught without demanding that much understanding which is expected of literature. On the other hand, the treatment of compositions needs deeper understanding. However, it is not intended to consider any of the responses since they tend to balance each other.

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5. WHETHER FOREIGN LANGUAGES HAVE INFLUENCED CANDIDATES IN WRITTEN AND SPOKEN LANGUAGE

S - A	A	N - S	D - A	S/D - A	TOTAL
1	1	-	-	-	2

It is clear from the positive response of both examiners that the negative influence of foreign languages such as English, Afrikaans and other Black languages is discernible in both written and spoken language, and that it is not a problem in the spoken language only but it also affects examinations. This point has been canvassed in Chapter 1 of this research project.

6. WHETHER LOW OUTPUT HAS NECESSITATED ADJUSTMENT IN MARKS.

S - A	A	N - S	D - A	S/D - A	TOTAL
-	-	1	1	-	2

One of the two examiners was not sure of the requirements of the question while the other one disagreed. This leaves the researcher with only one respondent. This response will therefore not be considered for the purposes of this research. But there is no harm in stating that it is a general practice in the Transkei Education system and perhaps in other education systems as well, that when the candidates have performed extremely badly, marks are adjusted sometimes by the examiners themselves or by the Education Department.

7. WHETHER TEACHERS ARE PROPERLY QUALIFIED TO TEACH XHOSA.

S - A	A	N - S	D - A	S/D - A	TOTAL
1	-	1	-	-	2

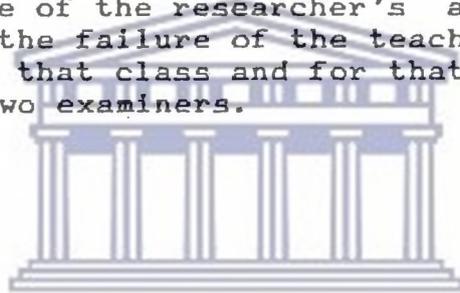
An examiner can deduce from the performance of the candidates he is examining whether or not teachers are properly qualified to teach the subject. Under normal circumstances no examiner could be expected to know each and every teacher's qualification. Here one of the examiners strongly agrees while the other one is not sure. Again here this depends on the paper the examiner is dealing with. For example a relatively easier paper will always be passed by the pupils even if the average pass is not so high. The examiner in this case may not spot that the teachers teaching his paper are not properly qualified, whereas a more difficult paper can always determine if the teachers are properly qualified. Hence the quality of the work presented by the candidates. However, because there is only one direct response, it will not be considered for the purposes of this research.

8. WHETHER FAILURE IS SOMETIMES CAUSED BY UNCOMPLETED SYLLABUS OR IF COMPLETED, NOT PROPERLY HANDLED.

S - A	A	N - S	D - A	S/D - A	TOTAL
1	1	-	-	-	2

Teachers who are not early starters and who do not plan their work properly, find themselves in a quandary at the end of the year. The syllabus is left uncovered. Examiners set on work which has not been taught and this brings disaster to the candidates. Sometimes an inexperienced teacher tackles less difficult areas first and leaves the most difficult ones for a period just before the final examination takes place. This tacklessness tends to create examination phobia and fright in the minds of the candidates. The schemes of work are meant to be drawn up timeously and adhered to strictly in order to allow for a gradual assimilation of work by the pupils and a healthy state of readiness for the examination. The mere fact that both examiners unanimously responded so clearly and positively, is an indication that the majority of teachers are guilty of this omission and we are left in no doubt as to why the failure rate is so high.

Again according to one of the researcher's assertions failure rate is also caused by the failure of the teachers to complete the syllabus prescribed for that class and for that period. This has been confirmed by the two examiners.



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5.2 LIBRARIES.

INTRODUCTION

in his assertion that the alarming shortage or absence of teaching material was one of the causes of high failure rate in Xhosa, the teaching material the researcher was referring to also included the use of libraries.

Libraries form part of any education system particularly where language is involved. They are mainly used as a source of reference by pupils, teachers and the general public. There are many categories of libraries. There are public libraries which are usually placed at a strategic point in town for the general public to have access to. There are school or college or University libraries meant for the consumption of students, teachers and lecturers. There are private libraries usually kept by individuals in offices, studies, or home rooms.

Although the researcher cannot guarantee that high school students all have access to private libraries, yet it is an accepted fact that almost all towns in Transkei have public libraries and that all high schools are supposed to have libraries. Provision is made in the allocation of funds in every school for the provision of library books. When the Department of Works and Energy builds blocks of classroom, in every Education Departmental plan for the Senior Secondary schools there is provision for libraries.

Where school libraries are available, it is normally the prerogative of the Principal together with the librarian in charge to provide their libraries with all the material necessary for private reading and reference. The researcher, having gone right round the country working in many schools or visiting libraries on his research activities, has noticed that those places that have libraries have a tendency of providing very little Xhosa material. At first glance one will be struck by the great preponderance of English and other material over Xhosa. The researcher has always suspected that this, in most cases is by design. Librarians tend to supply their libraries with more English material than Xhosa.

Sometimes there is nothing on Xhosa altogether. If there is, it will almost be negligible. In the past the excuse was that there were very few Xhosa books but lately that excuse has fallen off. The objective of the researcher in this particular section of his research was to investigate if any provision was being made for Xhosa material in the school and public libraries and whether the pupils were making use of them as a form of learning the Xhosa language in its global perspective. Questionnaires were sent to ten libraries and the nature of the questions asked is reflected in Table 5.2.1. Respondents were either to agree or disagree with the statements made in the questionnaire.

TABLE 5.2.1

(i) RESPONSES OF LIBRARIES.

ITEM	S-A	A	N-S	D-S	S/D-	TOTAL
1. Provision for various languages.	3	6	-	1	-	10
2. Far more English books on display than Xhosa books.	4	5	-	1	-	10
3. Xhosa books form 2% of the English books on display.	6	4	-	-	-	10
4. There is not much variety of the Xhosa books displayed.	6	3	1	-	-	10
5. Population of readers and borrowers concentrate on English	5	1	2	2	-	10
6. No demand for Xhosa material from learning population.	3	4	-	2	1	10
7. Students hardly pay attention to Xhosa books.	3	1	3	3	-	10
8. Few schools have libraries built together with school buildings	5	3	2	-	-	10
9. Limited supply of Xhosa library books for reference is very critical	7	2	1	-	-	10
	42	29	9	9	1	90

N = 10

(ii) ANALYSIS OF THE RESPONSES OF LIBRARIES.

INTRODUCTION

One of the important aspects in the study of a language is the use of libraries for reading and reference purposes. This instrument seeks to investigate a number of things pertaining to the use of libraries not only by the Matric students but also by the entire population of students studying Xhosa as a first language. The main idea is to find out if school libraries and public libraries consider supplying reading books and reference material not only for English and Afrikaans but also for Xhosa readers. This being established, it is also the intention of the researcher to compare the quantities supplied. Here the aim is to test readership.

Furthermore, it is the intention of the researcher to investigate the demand of Xhosa reading and reference material in these libraries. The extent of the demand can be regarded as a sign that there is or there is no interest shown towards Xhosa. Another aspect to investigate is whether there are practically any libraries existing in the schools visited. This information will help to test whether the policy of building school libraries has been implemented in Transkei. In the past the general practice has been that many schools were without libraries and even those that had them, did not have enough books and worse still there was very limited reading and reference material for Xhosa. Research instruments were sent to eight school libraries, one public library and one library attached to a Teacher Training College.

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1. WHETHER PROVISION FOR VARIOUS LANGUAGES IS MADE.

S - A	A	N - S	D - A	S/D - A	TOTAL
3	6	-	1	-	10

The purpose of this question is to test if all the various libraries follow a similar pattern in filling their shelves. If similar, whether they all consider providing material taken from Black languages. About 90% of the libraries have reacted positively and only one does not follow the pattern of the others.

2. WHETHER THERE ARE MORE ENGLISH BOOKS ON DISPLAY THAN XHOSA BOOKS.

S - A	A	N - S	D - A	S/D - A	TOTAL
4	5	-	1	-	10

The researcher has, through his own observation, noticed that practically in all the libraries he visited, there has always been a massive supply of English books on display and pathetically very few on Xhosa. His impression has been that this was a mere omission. But when 90% of the librarians interviewed confirmed this, it became clear to him that this is a deliberate arrangement simply because Xhosa is not being regarded as important for the reading public and has always been relegated to the background. Yet the existing Xhosa books are so many that even though they cannot match the quantity of English ones, yet they can be a sizeable number, big enough to show that Xhosa is being considered important. It is this attitude that seems to prevail where Xhosa is involved. When libraries take very little or no interest in Xhosa it is inevitable that readers particularly pupils will also do the same and most unfortunately with disastrous consequences for them.

3. WHETHER XHOSA BOOKS FORM ABOUT 2% OF THE ENGLISH BOOKS ON DISPLAY.

S - A	A	N - S	D - A	S/D - A	TOTAL
6	4	-	-	-	10

The fact that all libraries interviewed agree entirely about the incomparable supply of Xhosa is a clear indication that practically all libraries focus on English and pay very little attention on Xhosa simply because most of their readers demand English books.

4. WHETHER THERE IS VERY LITTLE VARIETY ON XHOSA BOOKS DISPLAYED.

S - A	A	N - S	D - A	S/D - A	TOTAL
6	3	1	-	-	10

The 90% positive response of librarians to this question is an indication that there is practically no attempt to sort out the little supply of Xhosa books on the shelves. They do not make sure that they have so much percentage of novels, drama, poetry, short stories and language in order to cater for readers who would show interest in these. That is probably the reason why Xhosa shelves fail to attract readers. What is surprising is that the majority of libraries interviewed and visited are school libraries.

5. WHETHER POPULATION OF BORROWERS CONCENTRATE ON ENGLISH.

S - A	A	N - S	D - A	S/D - A	TOTAL
5	1	2	2	-	10

Six of the libraries have responded positively while two have responded in the negative. If the two that have answered in the negative have given genuine response, at least this will be a welcome response for the researcher because this could be regarded as an indication that attitudes are now beginning to change for the good of Xhosa. However, the crux of the matter is that the majority of readers do not pay attention to Xhosa when library time comes.

6. WHETHER THERE IS DEMAND FOR XHOSA MATERIAL FROM THE LEARNING POPULATION.

S - A	A	N - S	D - A	S/D - A	TOTAL
3	4	-	2	1	10

Although the response on this question seems to overlap that of Item 7 yet it is even a much more clearer indication that about 70% of the libraries experience a situation where even those few Xhosa books on the shelves are hardly ever touched by pupils who happen to visit these libraries. This is a very significant response as far as this research project is concerned because our main interest is to see if pupils themselves are properly motivated to read and refer to Xhosa material when they get to the libraries. If they are not, there can be no doubt that their performance and their output in their Xhosa studies will always be low.

7. WHETHER STUDENTS PAY ANY ATTENTION TO XHOSA BOOKS:

S - A	A	N - S	D - A	S/D - A	TOTAL
3	1	3	3	-	10

About 30% of the libraries have not been observing their clients properly. That is why they are not sure of which answers to give. About 30% of them denied that students pay no attention to Xhosa books but 40% of them are positive they don't. Although this is not a unanimous agreement, yet 40% is still a majority and quite a considerable percentage in determining attitudes adopted by scholars themselves towards their own mother tongue. It is therefore easy to come to the conclusion that to most scholars Xhosa is just a subject to be dealt with in class only, concentrating mainly on those areas which will come out in the examination.

8. WHETHER SCHOOLS HAVE LIBRARIES ATTACHED TO THE BUILDINGS.

S - A	A	N - S	D - A	S/D - A	TOTAL
5	3	2	-	-	10

When the Department of Education in Transkei was still falling under the Department of Education and Training in South Africa, it experienced a situation where the majority of school buildings were no more than a collection of rondavels converted into classrooms without any direct provision for libraries. Schools that were later formally built, did not have provision for libraries. Concentration was merely on classrooms and store rooms including bookrooms for books meant to be sold to pupils. Later when Transkei built its own schools, it did see the need for building libraries attached to classroom blocks. But this was the luxury for the Senior secondary schools only. Junior secondary and Primary schools were without any library provision altogether. The Senior secondary schools with library provision are quite few as compared to the large population of Transkei schools.

This question seeks to find out if it is true that there are still schools without library facilities. The researcher's feeling is that if schools themselves do not have library provision and facilities, then how do we expect pupils to do well in their studies without the necessary reading facilities? According to the responses above, the analysis shows that 50% strongly agree, and 30% agree meaning that about 80% are positive that the majority of schools have no library provision. There is no negative reaction altogether. This is obviously a situation which will have to be rectified soon if we expect our children to learn meaningfully.

9. THE LIMITED SUPPLY OF XHOSA REFERENCE MATERIAL IS VERY CRITICAL.

S - A	A	N - S	D - A	S/D - A	TOTAL
7	2	1	-	-	10

Again about 90% with a 70% strong emphasis, confirm without any shadow of doubt that there is a critical shortage of reference material on Xhosa books. This would normally cover reference material on authors, literary appraisal of existing literature material, books dealing with the traditional and historical development of the Xhosa language, records of magazines and newspaper cuttings from old and current newspapers, pictures of notable figures in the traditional and modern Xhosa society with particular emphasis on authors of Literature and Language, traditional chiefs who have played a leading role in the

development of Black education and culture. This reference material should also include records of the development of written language, lexicography, and linguistics. If this material were available in all libraries, particularly school libraries, there is no doubt that this would assist pupils towards a deeper and more meaningful study of the Xhosa language.

By and large, the gloomy picture painted by the responses of the sample of libraries interviewed, leaves the researcher with a despondent feeling that the performance of Std 10 pupils shall continue to get poorer and poorer as long as facilities for the improvement of the language are not yet available or are not up to the expected standard.



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5.3 THE TRANSKEI EXAMINATIONS BOARD.

INTRODUCTION .

Before the advent of Transkei Independence in 1976, all Matric examinations were conducted by the Joint Matriculation Board of South Africa. This included Xhosa.

All papers were set and examined in Pretoria under the supervision of this Board which had its own examiners. Later Transkei formed its own examining Board which was known as the Transkei Examinations Board. Both the Joint Matriculation Board and the Transkei Board worked together in the sense that the Transkei Board set papers and marked them but certificates were issued by the Joint Matriculation Board which operated until the end of 1991. Thereafter it was replaced by the South African Certification Council.

The functions of the Transkei Examinations Board were to evaluate the candidates' performance by setting examination papers at the end of each year. The results were recorded and a detailed exposition of the nature of the performance of the candidates was made for all subjects in the form of statistical analysis similar to the one in Table 5.3.1.

The researcher's interest lay specifically in the Xhosa subject which was the focus of his attention. Of special significance in this research project was the fact that the chart reflected percentages which were built out of raw scores and this assisted greatly in exposing the high failure rate of Xhosa at Std 10 level during the years under investigation.

5.4 THE XHOSA SUBJECT COMMITTEE.

This is a body created by the Transkei Department of Education at the instance of the then Transkei Teachers' Association which is now defunct. It functions concurrently with the other Subject Committees. Its special task is to look into the affairs of Xhosa as a Subject and it must meet twice a year on a national level. It gets a feed back from Xhosa Subject Associations which operate on a district and regional levels. Teaching strategies, implementation of the syllabus, drawing up of common schemes, setting of common papers, handling of the Xhosa Subject at classroom level, review of the syllabus, evaluation of the old books, review of examination papers and results, all these are the responsibility of this committee. It probes into the performance of the candidates every year and will recommend ways of improving results by giving guide to teachers.

In order to highlight the functional relevance of this committee into this research project, it will be necessary to get an extract from one of the meetings it held where some concern was shown regarding the poor performance of the Std 10 pupils during examinations. Of more significance were the resolutions made by the Committee to curb the incidence of failure.

(a) EXTRACT FROM THE MINUTES OF THE XHOSA SUBJECT COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 2 AUGUST 1985 IN UMTATA.

(i) OBSERVATION:

After observing low teacher output and low pupil performance during the past years ranging from 1981 to 1984, the Xhosa Subject Committee decided to adopt the following attitude in an attempt to improve the failure situation at schools.

(a) A strong support was given to the Department of Education in its stipulation of a 50% aggregate pass onwards for Xhosa as reflected in the Departmental Circular No 28/2 of 1985. For the purpose of clarity the researcher proposes to quote the circular ad verbatim as follows.

1985 AND SUBSEQUENT FINAL EXAMINATIONS

"The Department has observed with great concern how standards have deteriorated both in the teaching of Xhosa and performance

by the candidates themselves in the subject. The examination results and reports on supervision have also revealed the incompetence and inefficiency of the teacher who teaches Xhosa probably because Xhosa is taught by any teacher as long as he is a Xhosa speaking teacher irrespective of his attitude, aptitude and ability in the teaching of the Subject, as well as the level at which it is taught. The Department will take steps against any Xhosa teacher whose candidates do not each obtain at least 50% aggregate at the end of 1985 and subsequent years."

(b) It was reflected that teachers though sometimes qualified, did not exert themselves.

(c) Some teachers were not capable of teaching Xhosa literature and grammar.

(ii) RESOLUTIONS.

In order to circumvent the incidence of failure at Senior level, the Committee made the following resolutions.

(a) That there must be workshops for every grade and these cover both language and literature.

(b) That those for Senior Secondary schools should be more often. The need to increase the number of workshops for Senior Secondary schools was expressed.

(c) Two workshops each year were suggested. The first workshop should be more intensive and the other one should be a feed back.

(d) The University of Transkei Language Unit in Education should be involved.

(e) Teachers should be guided by the syllabus especially that a new syllabus is being introduced in 1987.

(f) Programmes for workshops should be sent at the end of the year to the Department of Education for use the following year.

(iii) COMMENTS BY THE RESEARCHER.

The Xhosa Subject Committee being an offspring of the Department of Education has mimicked it by putting the blame largely on the door steps of a teacher of the Xhosa subject whom it blames for the poor performance of the Std 10 pupils. It accuses the teacher of lack of seriousness, incompetence and inefficiency in the teaching of the subject thus resulting in the high failure rate.

The feeling of the Xhosa Subject Committee (and the Department) coincides with that of the researcher who, in his assertion has expressed that the high failure rate is also caused by lack of seriousness by teachers teaching Xhosa and the fact that it is sometimes given to teachers who do not quite qualify to teach it but are given by virtue of being Xhosa speakers.



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5.5 THE XHOSA ACTION COMMITTEE

Besides the Xhosa Subject Committee, the Transkei Department of Education formed a special Committee in February 1985 with a view to implementing the requirements of the Xhosa syllabus as propounded by the Joint Matriculation Board which worked in collaboration with the Transkei Examinations Board.

This committee which was known earlier as the Xhosa Syllabus Implementation Committee but later changed into Xhosa Action Committee, was specially formed at the injunction of the then Director General of the Department of Education. This was after the University Board had expressed that Matric students, in order to qualify for University entrance would have to obtain an aggregate of 50% as from 1989.

The underlying thought behind the formation of the above committee was that if Xhosa was improved this could boost the overall aggregate of the candidates writing Matriculation examinations under the new conditions. The Xhosa Action Committee had among its members a Xhosa Subject Advisor whose task it would be to motivate and arrange the conducting of regular Xhosa courses throughout Transkei on Stds 7, 8 and 10 levels in order to get the teachers in touch with the actual requirements of the syllabus and to test their teaching skills and knowledge of Xhosa in all its four perspectives such as oral, essay and letter, language and literature.

(i) EXTRACT FROM THE MEETING HELD ON 15 FEBRUARY 1985 AT UMTATA.

In outlining the objectives of the Action Committee, it was stated that:

- (a) It was the Director General's wish that the Committee assist the teachers in implementing the Xhosa syllabus. In doing so it would concentrate on Std 7-10.
- (b) The Committee was not a substitute for the main Xhosa Subject Committee but was designed to work hand in hand with it.
- (c) Since the failure rate for Xhosa was very high, it was assumed that teachers needed help.

(ii) EXTRACT FROM THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 17 JUNE 1985
IN UMTATA.

These minutes reflected that the Xhosa Action Committee had already conducted a few in-service courses and members of the committee had made observations regarding their activities. These observations reflected the reaction of teachers to the courses conducted. In this programme, a few extracts will be quoted to demonstrate that the fear of the Xhosa Action committee that the Xhosa failure rate was high and that the teachers needed help was justified. According to the minutes one of the members who had actually conducted a course for the Std 10 teachers at the University of Transkei In-service Centre, some time earlier had observed that:

"Teachers were very keen to be helped in all aspects of the Xhosa language. In grammar, it was obvious that the majority of the teachers were lost when the questions on the copulative were asked. The majority of teachers were totally blank on critical appreciation of set books."

Consequently it was suggested in the meeting that teachers be assisted in certain Xhosa poems. Hence the Committee decided that notes on Literature from one of the External Examiners should be requested.

It was further decided that copies of the Std 10 previous examinations papers be made available and transmitted to the Regional Inspectors who in turn would provide each school with copies and memoranda. A resolution was made that since both teachers and pupils were experiencing difficulty in literature, study guides should be prepared to assist them.

(a) GENERAL COMMENTS BY MEMBERS OF THE ACTION COMMITTEE WITH REGARD TO THE EFFECT OF IN-SERVICE COURSES HELD.

A survey by members of the Action Committee of the in-service courses held at the following places:

University of Transkei In-Service Centre, (March 1985), Flagstaff, (April 1985), Bizana, Libode, Engcobo, and Umtata Technical College, (July 1985) for all levels revealed that:

(i) The In-Service courses proved to be helpful and worthwhile, this being shown by the keen interest of the teachers.

(ii) The impression gained by the course conductors was that the majority of teachers, being examinations oriented, neglected the syllabus when teaching literature and concentrated only on content.

(iii) Guidance in oral work and oral examinations gave the teachers all the needed help especially that some teachers appeared to have had no training at all.

(iv) Formal grammar had been sadly neglected by the majority of teachers.

(v) Elementary critical appreciation of set books was proved to be of tremendous assistance to the teachers who seemed to be totally blank on critical appreciation of set books.

(b) RECOMMENDATIONS BY THE COURSE CONDUCTORS.

Persuant to the above mentioned in-service courses, the course conductors had, after each course, made some recommendations to the Xhosa Action Committee and these harped on the need for:

(i) Regular conduction of in-service courses with the co-operation of Circuit Offices, Regional Offices, and capable teachers.

(ii) The Xhosa Subject Associations to be more active and to be involved with the solution of teachers' problems.

(iii) The Heads of Departments at schools to play their roles effectively.

(c) COMMENTS BY THE RESEARCHER

One of the comments by the members of the Action Committee that : "The impression gained by the course conductors was that the majority of teachers, being examinations oriented, neglected the syllabus when teaching literature and concentrated only on content" seems to agree with the researcher's assertion that teachers tend to lack a proper system of handling the prescribed syllabus. It is either that it is not fully covered or that some parts of it are not done properly. Failure to stick to these requirements often leads to failure of the candidates in the examinations. This failure comes as a result of the inability of the candidates to answer questions which have been set strictly according to the requirements of the prescribed syllabus.

5.6. NGUNI AND SESOTHO LANGUAGE BOARD.

This body was formed by Transkei Department of Education in 1978 after the dissolution of the Xhosa Language Committee which was operating as a unifying body for all the Xhosa speaking people in South Africa, Ciskei and Transkei before the advent of Transkei Independence. The original name was THE XHOSA AND SOUTHERN SOTHO LANGUAGES BOARD but it was later changed to NGUNI AND SESOTHO LANGUAGE BOARD. The following are some of its duties

- (a) To make final decision with regard to orthographical matters.
- (b) Final decisions with regard to terminology and technical language.
- (c) Final decisions with regard to language teaching.
- (d) Final decisions with regard to place names.
- (e) Determination of literary standards.
- (f) Selecting and upgrading of books for use in Primary, Secondary schools and Teacher Training Colleges, and of general literature.
- (g) Recommendations of prescribed books in Xhosa, Zulu and Sesotho for all Departmental Examinations.
- (i) EXTRACT FROM THE MEETING OF THE NGUNI AND SESOTHO LANGUAGE BOARD MEETING HELD IN UMATATA ON 25 APRIL 1986.

SUBJECT MATTER.

CONCERN AT THE POOR PERFORMANCE OF CANDIDATES AND TEACHERS OVER THE PAST YEARS.

The Board discussed the use of notes in an attempt to assist the teachers in the Junior and Senior Secondary schools. Members expressed concern at the dropping standards in the final examinations at Senior level. They felt that notes could be compiled to facilitate teaching of literature. However notes should not be taken as text especially by those teachers falling within the category of underqualified teachers. More opinions were expressed regarding the need for workshops and seminars, distant teaching strategies and many other devices to improve the

teaching of Xhosa at schools, in all aspects such as grammar, orals, literature, composition and letter. The Board also felt that Phonetics at Std 10 level were a burden on the students. This affected them psychologically. Since, according to the Board, this section was introduced in 1973 there has been no improvement in the results.

(ii) CONCLUSION:

After going through the functions and objectives of the various curricular bodies as reflected in this chapter one can conclude that they have, in their sphere of operation, assisted in disclosing the fact that there is a high failure rate in Std 10 Xhosa and that it has assumed such proportions that it cannot be ignored anymore. These curricular bodies having diagnosed what they consider to be causes and have taken steps to cure the situation. This last remark refers in particular to the Action Committee, the Xhosa Subject Committee and the Nguni and Sesotho Language Board.

The next chapter deals with recommendations.



CHAPTER 6.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In this chapter a summary of the findings is given and is followed by recommendations made by the researcher after investigating the causes of high failure rate in Xhosa. His recommendations address the problems that have been discovered. Most of the findings were based on the revelations made by pupils and teachers with regard to their shortcomings in the teaching and learning of composition, letter, language and grammar, literature, and oral examinations.

Recommendations will also be made on the proper functioning of libraries and some of the Departmental structures which also showed some concern at the high rate of Xhosa failure at Std 10 level. Lastly, need for the extension of existing facilities and the creation of new ones, will be brought to the attention of the Department of Education, not only for the general improvement of the standard of education in Transkei but also for making Xhosa a priority subject in the education system of the country.

6.1 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS.

(i) TEACHERS' QUALIFICATIONS.

The survey of teachers who are engaged in the teaching of Xhosa at Senior Secondary level revealed that Xhosa is sometimes allocated to teachers who are either unqualified or ill qualified to teach. It also showed that as high as 25% of the teachers had Std 10 academic qualifications while only 55% of them were University graduates. There was also evidence that about 20% were still engaged in University studies.

Teachers who were allowed to teach in the Senior level although they were trained to teach in the Primary school formed 25%. About 30% were trained to teach in the Junior Secondary school. The survey also showed that only 45% of the teachers interviewed were qualified to teach at Matric level.

(ii) IN-SERVICE COURSES.

Although the Department of Education has created machinery for the attendance of locally organised in-service courses, it has been revealed by the interviewed teachers that these local courses were haphazardly arranged and that there were few teachers who attended them. They also expressed that about 60% of the teachers attended the Departmentally arranged central courses. It was discovered again that the central courses were held once or twice a year only and these were under the supervision of the Subject Advisor instead of the

Transkei Teachers' in-service College programme.

(iii) SUBJECT ASSOCIATIONS

Evidence gathered from teachers during investigation was that the Subject Associations were not functioning properly and enthusiastically.

(iv) TEACHING AND LEARNING SKILLS.

(a) Composition

According to teachers the composition work of the pupils was of poor quality: grammatical errors were always abundant, the pupils' command of the language was poor: there was influence of foreign languages, pupils showed laxity towards Xhosa, there was a remarkable lack of use of teaching aids by teachers and group discussions by pupils.

(b) Letter

Pupils were not trained to see the importance and relevance of letters in their adult life. Pupils were given very few exercises on the different forms of letters. The majority of pupils revealed that the letter was not properly taught: that there were no intensive discussion pertaining to the context of each form of letter: that there was no use of teaching aids and reference material: that the language of the pupils, was, according to the teachers, full of grammatical mistakes.

(c) Language and grammar.

The attitude of both teachers and pupils to grammar was either negative or lukewarm. Students did not like it and teachers were uncomfortable about it. No teaching aids were used in teaching it. Grammar books currently used were too formal and this demotivated both teacher and pupil. Some parts of the language were not written down and this handicapped the scholars.

(d) Literature.

The survey of this section showed that the majority of pupils and teachers showed reduced interest in poetry. Critical appreciation presented enormous difficulty to both pupils and teachers. Teachers who were not qualified to teach experienced difficulty. The majority of teachers failed to use teaching aids during lessons. There were no notes on critical appreciation based on

the prescribed books. There was shortage of books on critical analysis.

(e) Oral Examinations

Some teachers failed to involve their pupils in the oral discussion of literature, language, composition and letter. There were hardly any debating societies. There was no use of teaching aids for orals. Most teachers did not make use of tours and educational excursions for oral examination purposes. Oral participation by pupils was minimal.

(v) DEPARTMENTAL

(a) Libraries

The survey revealed that there were very few schools which had equipped school libraries attached to them. In all the libraries investigated, there was a limited supply of Xhosa material and such supply was critical.

(b) The Xhosa Subject Committee.

This, being a very important Departmental structure, did not appear to be active enough to perform its duties and to curb the incidence of failure. It merely blamed the teachers for poor results.

(c) The Xhosa Action Committee

It worked well at the beginning and conducted courses but later faded and is now almost defunct.

(d) Nguni and Sesotho Language Board.

It performed its duties well for a number of years but now it is no more functioning and is almost defunct.

(vi) OTHER FINDINGS:

(a) Syllabus

The syllabus being used in Transkei has been imported from South Africa and was supposed to be adapted to suit Transkei conditions. The machinery for adapting the syllabus is supposed to be the Subject Committee. It was discovered that the Xhosa Subject Committee often failed to look into the question of syllabus adaptation, compilation of notes on prescribed books, seeing to the effective teaching of Xhosa and to see to it that all the syllabus was covered by teachers before end of the year examinations.

(b) Audio-visual teaching equipment.

Some questions on the questionnaire were designed to elicit information on the use of audio - visual teaching equipment which can be used for effective teaching. These are things like overhead projector, video machine, and televised video tapes. Since these can be used where electricity is available, it was discovered that most rural schools in the peripheral areas had no electricity.

GENERAL CONCLUSIONS

All the problems which were discovered, namely poor teacher qualifications, poor teaching methods, poorly organised in-service training, poorly organised library support services which were responsible for the poor performance of the Std 10 pupils doing Xhosa, all illustrate that this state of affairs will continue until a positive scheme is designed to ameliorate the problem. The following recommendations, if put into practice, could overhaul the whole machinery of learning and teaching Xhosa at High School level.

6.2 RECOMMENDATIONS.

(i) QUALIFICATION OF TEACHERS.

Good results in Xhosa can be achieved only if all the teachers allocated to teach Std 10 Xhosa are fully qualified. Full qualifications start from the acquisition of, at least a University degree, with Xhosa as a major, to professional education for teaching in a Matriculation class. Experience and capability in the teaching of the subject may also be a recommendation in the event where there are not enough graduates to man the existing posts. It is further recommended that teachers be motivated to specialise in the study of Xhosa at post graduate level by being offered scholarships and bursaries to further their studies and to embark upon some research programmes aimed at improving the teaching and learning of Xhosa at all

levels.

(ii) IN-SERVICE COURSES.

In view of the researcher's discovery that the attendance of in-service courses does not take place as expected it is recommended that the Department devise means of enforcing the attendance of in-service courses on a local basis by involving the Principals, Xhosa Subject Inspectors and Circuit Inspectors in the arrangements. The viability of the courses themselves can be assured by employing certain teachers as course conductors and place these at strategic points to run the in-service courses in their specific regions. The programme and time table for the central courses must be designed and implemented in conjunction with the Transkei Teachers' In-Service College where a Xhosa Subject Lecturer is permanently placed to see to all the Xhosa Subject affairs.

(iii) XHOSA SUBJECT ASSOCIATIONS.

The idea of having Xhosa Subject Associations is a good one. All that remains is that they must function properly, regularly, and enthusiastically. It is recommended that the Curriculum and In-service Section under which they fall should devise ways and means of ensuring that they work effectively. One of the Planners in the Curriculum Section could be given the task of reorganising them into working groups assisted by the Subject Advisor for Xhosa. There should also be subject study groups to discuss common problems affecting the teaching of Xhosa and these should be formed by local teachers.

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(iv) TEACHING AND LEARNING SKILLS

(a) Composition

In all aspects of the composition namely narrative, dialogue, argumentative, it is recommended that a guided composition approach be used, for in it there is gradual usage of vocabulary and other grammatical structures. Sentences are built in progressive form until they reach mature stage. Guided composition also encourages intense pupil participation in an oral form, exchange of ideas, sorting out of spelling, word division, poor language problems before pupils write down composition assignments. The spotting out of errors and the correction thereof are usually the joint responsibility of both the teacher and pupils. Models can be procured from selected books of literature, newspapers and magazines. Development of love for composition writing can be encouraged by holding class

seminars, literary competitions and quiz programmes where small prizes can be offered for best performance. Given it all, future authors can be made out of this section.

For promoting originality and independent thinking, teaching aids such as pictures, charts, maps, taped radio conversations, speeches should be used to give the pupils opportunity to discuss and discriminate.

It is also recommended that written and oral specimens of cultural activities together with activities such as traditional meal preparation, indigenous dances, camping activities, sheep farming, poultry running, initiation ceremonies and many other activities, be collected every year and filed in a safe place. These could either be in the form of tapes, photographs, cuttings or write ups. These can be made use of when new compositions are being discussed and written. They are valuable as a source of knowledge and vocabulary.

(b) Letter

One of the basic weaknesses in letter writing is lack of sufficient exercises to train the pupils in the art of writing a letter in preparation for his adult life. Letters are still the most popular, cheaper and easy form of communication between people. That is why it is so important for a teacher to give his pupils as many exercises as possible. It is recommended that such exercises should provide for examples where pupils write to each other for personal errands and to the teachers for official ones: to the magistrates to inquire after things such as death certificates, books of life, travel documents, old age pension funds for relatives; estate acquisition procedures, and complaints pertaining to civic matters: to Post Masters inquiring after lost articles, unconsidered application letters, applications for work, queries related to television licences, telephone boxes, post delay, applications for telephones.

The teacher should make it a point that these letters are promptly replied by the group selected to work in the assigned areas. This implies that the teacher has to see to it that his students are divided into groups.

To prepare pupils for a mature life in their own communities, letters discussing participation in local and national politics must be encouraged but with circumspection. These should go along with letters from people to Municipalities, Country Clubs, Sports' Clubs, shopkeepers, State Departments, Church Associations, Social Clubs, Industrial and commercial concerns. Pupils should be encouraged to reply to these letters.

Besides compiling their own letters, pupils should be encouraged

to get specimens of suitable newspaper letters, newsletters and public letters, and to file these in their letter files for future reference.

(c) Language and grammar

After discovering the shortfalls in the teaching and learning of grammar and general language, the researcher wishes to recommend that, for better performance and meaningful learning, emphasis on non-formal approach to the learning of grammar should be given priority. The aspects of grammar such as phonology, morphology, syntax and phonetics should be taught as a basis, that is to say they should form a foundation for language study of grammatical structure. In the process of teaching them they should be approached from a non-formal angle in order to make grammar a living section of the language. A functional usage of words, and parts of speech should be adopted.

Authors of grammar books should be motivated to adopt a functional approach to grammar so that pupils studying language and grammar should not find difficulty during their studies.

Aspects of grammar such as nouns, verbs, qualificatives, copulatives, locatives should not only be taught from grammar textbooks mainly but should also be approached from passages extracted from literature books, newspapers, magazines, and commercials. Pupils should be able to identify these on any piece of writing.

For easy assimilation of material, it is recommended that teaching aids be made to assume priority. For example where a qualificative is taught, pictures of animals varying in size and colour could be shown and discussed. More interest could be inculcated by asking pupils to collect as many teaching aids as possible and these could be used to spark off some discussions of the various aspects of grammar.

Pupils must be encouraged to form Grammar or Language clubs which will be assigned special periods a week to discuss ways and means of promoting language image among themselves. Quiz exercises to test pupils' knowledge on various aspects of the language should be introduced.

(d) Literature

During the discussion by the teacher and his pupils of aspects such as drama, poetry and prose, significant literary aspects such as the theme, character analysis, literary devices used, imagery, style, tone, intention, sensory, intellectual, feeling and figurative devices should be highlighted. Pupils should be

made to realise that their study of literature is not complete without due emphasis on all or some of these aspects. After each literature lesson, assignments and exercises should be worked out by students in groups.

Pupils should be taught to collect teaching aids relevant to the area of literature being handled. Teachers should also use teaching aids such as pictures, charts, specimens during literature discussions.

Study guides if available should be used to simplify complicated sections such as poetry and drama. If these are not available teachers should compile notes.

Just like in language and grammar literary societies could also be formed to enthuse the students in the promotion and love of literature.

(e) Oral Examinations

For those schools which had taken very little interest in promoting oral work, quiz contests, educational excursions, speech making, dramatisation of certain passages and scenes drawn out of literature books, dialogue, shopping scenes, mock marriage scenes particularly those showing matrimonial rites, mock court trials, mock initiation ceremonies such as ntonjane, mbeleko, and many others, it is recommended that their pupils should be engaged in most of these activities about twice a week. Teachers could be in a position to assess their performance.

(v) DEPARTMENTAL

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(a) Libraries

Since libraries form an important part of our education system, it is recommended that their presence be taken seriously by the schools, the Principals and the Department. They should not only be physically present but they should also be equipped with books for reading. Where they are not available, the Department should see to it that they are provided. Librarians who are given the task of looking after these libraries must see to it that there are enough Xhosa books and that all the aspects of the Xhosa language are catered for.

(b) The Xhosa Subject Committee

It is recommended that the Department of Education being a supreme body should devise ways and means of making the Xhosa Subject Committee assume full responsibility. It should get a

regular feedback from the Xhosa Subject Associations who should report on all the activities and professional problems encountered by teachers. It should also consider seriously all recommendations (if any) made by the Subject Associations. The Subject Associations should also get a feed back from the Xhosa Subject Advisor so that matters of policy can be referred to the Department through the Subject Committee. Since it is a Departmental body it should keep the Department informed of matters pertaining to the syllabus, classroom situation, and examination results. The Secretary for such a Committee should be employed by the Department of Education to monitor all the deliberations and recommendations of the Xhosa Subject Committee.

(c) The Xhosa Action Committee

This Committee, though at the time of this research, is almost defunct, should be resuscitated and put on the course again to continue with the good work it was doing at its inception.

(d) Nguni and Sesotho Language Board

Though this Board had been doing good work when it was still functioning, it became inactive after the creation of the Xhosa Language Board which incorporated Ciskei, Transkei and South Africa. It was further relegated to the background by the Department of Education itself after it had issued instruction that some of its functions be taken over by the Xhosa Subject Committee. These functions included prescription of books for use in schools. Be that as it may, it is recommended that this Board be resuscitated to probe further into the affairs of Xhosa such as designing ways and means of improving results at the terminal classes.

(iv) OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS

(a) Xhosa to be a priority subject.

Besides the fact that Xhosa is a failing subject in the examinations, it is also a Subject that generally has no good results despite the fact that it is a language spoken by millions of Xhosa speaking and non-Xhosa speaking peoples in Southern Africa. It should be made a priority subject. This could also help instil a spirit of patriotism and nationalism in the Xhosa National Unit in the same way as this spirit exists in the other National groups because of their languages. It should fall in line

with the other priority subjects in the Transkei curricula such as Geography, English, Physical Science, Afrikaans, History, Biology and Agricultural Science. It should be catered for in the Transkei Teachers' In-Service programme.

(b) Curriculum Development Unit

The answer to the adaptation of the adopted syllabuses lies with the creation of a Curriculum Development Unit in Transkei. Recommendations for the establishment of such a Curriculum Development Unit were made by the Curriculum Section of the Department of Education a few years ago. It is hoped that these recommendations will one day yield positive results. When it is in actual operation, Xhosa experts from widely experienced teachers and Subject Inspectors or Subject Advisors would be expected to compile syllabi after adapting them; compile distant teaching techniques for those schools established in inaccessible areas, micro-teaching designs and conventional methods of teaching. They would transmit these to the field officers who in the case of Transkei are Subject Inspectors for testing in schools. Once the testing has been completed, such a material could now be used in schools. The main purpose of such a unit would be to guarantee suitability of material to be used in schools. In this way there would be no question of any stuff outside the prescribed Transkei syllabus being taught in schools. It is recommended that the establishment of a Curriculum Development Unit be approved and processed.

(c) Electrification of all schools

The majority of schools in Transkei are without electricity. Hence it is not possible to use audio-visual equipment. To circumvent this, it is recommended that the Government of Transkei either subsidise all schools per capita or that it procures loans from such financial institutions as the Development Bank of Southern Africa. When the funds are available, a parastatal body like the Transkei Electricity Supply Commission be commissioned to electrify all schools from Junior Primary to Senior Secondary level. Once electricity is made available, it could be easy to make use of electrically operated equipment such as video, television, overhead projectors, computers and many others.

APPENDIX A.

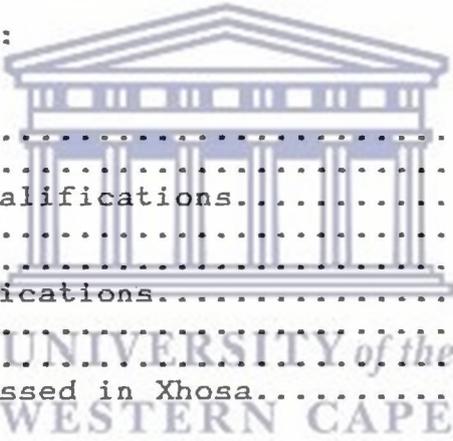
INSTRUMENT NO. 1.

RESEARCH QUESTIONNAIRE TO BE COMPLETED BY TEACHERS OF XHOSA LANGUAGE IN TRANSKEI SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOLS.

DIRECTIONS: Please complete the following questionnaire. Do not write your own name on the questionnaire. Use a pen or pencil to mark your answers. Make an X where applicable, or give answers in writing where required.

SECTION A.

1. PERSONAL PARTICULARS:

- 
- (a) Age.....
 - (b) Sex.....
 - (c) Highest academic qualifications.....
 - (d) Where obtained?.....
 - (e) When obtained?
 - (f) Professional qualifications.....
 - (g) Where obtained?.....
 - (h) When obtained?
 - (i) Highest standard passed in Xhosa.....

2. TEACHING EXPERIENCE:

- (a) Name of school.....
- (b) District.....
- (c) Teaching experience.....
- (d) How many years have you been teaching Xhosa in Std 9 and 10?

3. IN-SERVICE COURSES ATTENDED:

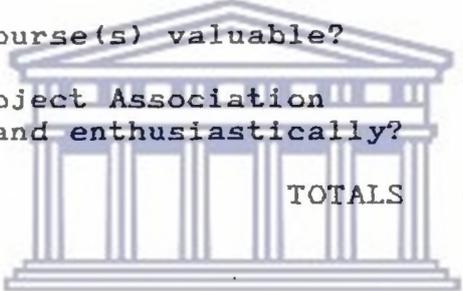
QUESTIONS	YES	NO
(a) Have you ever attended in-service courses for Xhosa ever since you started teaching?		
(b) Were the courses arranged locally?		
(c) Were they conducted by course leaders?		
(d) Were there some held in Umtata and organised by the Department of Education?		
(e) Did you take part in the discussions?		
(f) Did you find the course(s) valuable?		
(g) Does your Xhosa Subject Association operate regularly and enthusiastically?		
TOTALS =		

COMMENTS: Please reflect very briefly your personal feelings about the in-service courses. If you did attend any, say what you think of them. If not, explain briefly why you did not. Your personal opinion is very valuable in this project.

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3. IN-SERVICE COURSES ATTENDED:

QUESTIONS	YES	NO
(a) Have you ever attended in-service courses for Xhosa eversince you started teaching?		
(b) Were the courses arranged locally?		
(c) Were they conducted by course leaders?		
(d) Were there some held in Umtata and organised by the Department of Education?		
(e) Did you take part in the discussions?		
(f) Did you find the course(s) valuable?		
(g) Does your Xhosa Subject Association operate regularly and enthusiastically?		
TOTALS =		



COMMENTS: Please reflect very briefly your personal feelings about the in-service courses. If you did attend any, say what you think of them. If not, explain briefly why you did not. Your personal opinion is very valuable in this project.

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SECTION B.

GROUP A: COMPOSITION AND LETTER.

Mark with an X where applicable.

1. TEACHING ACTIVITIES:

STATEMENTS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NOT SURE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
1. The quality of language written by pupils poor.					
2. There's abundance of grammatical errors in their composition					
3. Their written language is influenced by foreign language.					
4. Pupils unable to command their mother tongue efficiently.					
5. Pupils fail to master different types of letters.					
6. Pupils do not exert themselves: they assume Xhosa is easy.					
TOTALS =					



GROUP B: LANGUAGE AND GRAMMAR:

Mark with an X where applicable

ITEM	STRONGLY AGREE.	AGREE	NOT SURE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
1. Language teachers are uncomfortable because of certain limitations on certain sections of grammar.					
2. Phonetics present difficulty to teachers and pupils					
3. Pupils are indifferent and negative towards grammar.					
4. Teachers lack enthusiasm towards grammar					
5. Xhosa grammar tends to be too formal and too detailed.					
6. There are very few books on general knowledge.					
TOTALS =					



GROUP C: LITERATURE:

ITEM	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NOT SURE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
1. Students tend to show great interest in literature content.					
2. Students tend to show reduced interest in poetry.					
3. Critical appreciation often presents difficulty to pupils					
4. There is need for guidance on critical appreciation.					
5. There is a need for employment of highly qualified and skilled teachers for literature.					
6. Teaching aids are a prerequisite to the teaching of literature.					
TOTALS =					



GROUP D: ORAL EXAMINATION.

Mark with an X where applicable.

QUESTIONS	YES	NO
1. When discussing lessons on literature do all your pupils participate?		
2. When discussing lessons on grammar and language do all your pupils participate in the discussion?		
3. Do you arrange periods specifically allotted to do oral work?		
4. Do you organise debates regularly every week?		
5. Do you find it necessary to use teaching aids when conducting oral lessons?		
6. Do you regularly organise tours or excursions as part of your oral lessons?		
7. Is awarding of marks for orals the best form of evaluation?		
TOTALS =		

APPENDIX B.

INSTRUMENT NO. 2.

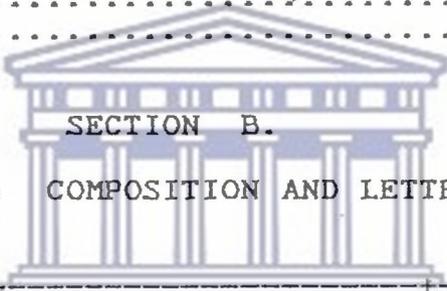
RESEARCH QUESTIONNAIRE TO BE COMPLETED BY STD 10 PUPILS STUDYING XHOSA LANGUAGE AT SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN TRANSKEI.

DIRECTION: Please complete the following questionnaire. Do not write your name on the questionnaire. Make an X where applicable or give answers in writing where required.

SECTION A.

1. PERSONAL PARTICULARS:

- (a) Class:.....
- (b) Name of school:.....
- (c) District:
- (d) Age:.....
- (e) Sex:.....



SECTION B.

GROUP A: COMPOSITION AND LETTER.

QUESTIONS	YES	NO
1. Before writing composition or letter does your teacher discuss the topic with you?		
2. Does your teacher explain the objectives of teaching the letter or composition?		
3. Are teaching aids used by your teacher during discussion of composition/letter?		
4. Are you first given a list of words and phrases before you start writing?		
5. Are newspapers, magazines and real letters ever used for reference?		
6. Are you often divided into groups during discussion of composition and letter?		
7. Does your teacher refer you to literature or language books for specimens?		

YES	NO

8. Do you ever debate on Xhosa customs, traditions, proverbs and idioms?

TOTALS =

SECTION C

GROUP B: LANGUAGE AND GRAMMAR.

STATEMENTS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NOT SURE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
1. Most students tend to dislike grammar					
2. The detailed approach to grammar causes difficulty.					
3. Phonetics tend to cause some difficulty.					
4. Lack of books on general knowledge causes difficulty.					
5. Grammar is sometimes taught by uninspiring teachers.					
6. Grammar periods are fewer than those for literature.					
7. Students are lazy to study grammar because it is formal					
TOTALS =					



SECTION D.

GROUP C: LITERATURE.

Mark with an X where applicable.

STATEMENTS:	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NOT SURE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
1. Literature is easier to study as compared to grammar.					
2. Critical appreciation in some aspects of literature is difficult to study.					
3. Lack of background knowledge hampers pupils' progress					
4. Books on critical appreciation are insufficient					
5. Notes on critical appreciation on prescribed books are very essential.					
TOTALS					



TEACHING METHODS:

State how often you have used the following aids or techniques when teaching composition and letter.

ITEMS	ONCE	EVERY LESSON	OCCAS-IONALLY	SELDOM	NEVER
1. Pictures					
2. Newspapers and magazines.					
3. Tape recorder					
4. Radio					
5. Video					
6. Overhead projector					
7. Group discussions					
TOTALS					



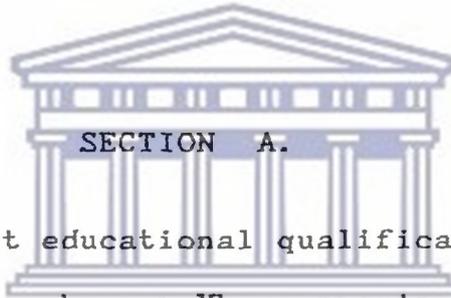
APPENDIX C.

INSTRUMENT NO. 3.

EXTERNAL EXAMINERS.

RESEARCH QUESTIONNAIRE TO BE COMPLETED BY EXTERNAL EXAMINERS OF
XHOSA IN TRANSKEI SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOLS.

OBJECT: To investigate the possible causes of high rate of
failure of Std 10 pupils who sat for the external examinations in
Xhosa between the years 1981 to 1985 .



SECTION A.

1. What is your highest educational qualification?
2. For how long have you been a Xhosa examiner?.....
3. Name the section in which you have been an
examiner.....
4. Class.....

SECTION B.

Mark with an X where applicable.

STATEMENTS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NOT SURE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
1. Most candidates have exhibited limited knowledge of content.					
2. Candidates fail to present knowledge in a systematic way.					
3. Candidates express knowledge in a faulty grammatical language.					
4. Candidates lack deeper understanding of the aspects of Xhosa language					
5. Foreign languages have influenced candidates' language.					
6. Low output has necessitated adjustment in marks.					
7. Teachers do not seem to be properly qualified in Xhosa.					
8. Sometimes failure is caused by uncompleted syllabus.					
TOTALS =					



SECTION C.

Have you any other comments? Please write in the space provided below.

EXAMINERS' COMMENTS.

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APPENDIX D.

INSTRUMENT NO. 4.

LIBRARIES.

RESEARCH QUESTIONNAIRE TO BE COMPLETED BY LIBRARIANS IN PUBLIC LIBRARIES AND THOSE ATTACHED TO EDUCATIONAL CENTRES.

SECTION A.

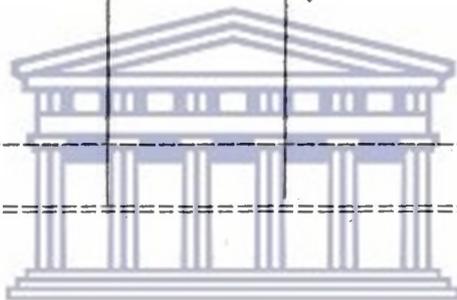
- (a) Name of Library.....
- (b) Educational institution to which it is attached.....
- (c) Town/City.....
- (d) Country.....
- (e) Status of librarian
- (f) Qualifications.....

SECTION B.

Mark with an X where applicable.

STATEMENTS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NOT SURE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
1.Provision for various languages					
2.Far more English books on display than Xhosa books					
3.Xhosa books form 2% of English books on display.					
4.Not much variety of the Xhosa books displayed					
5.Population of readers and borrowers concentrate on English					
6.No demand for Xhosa material from learning population.					

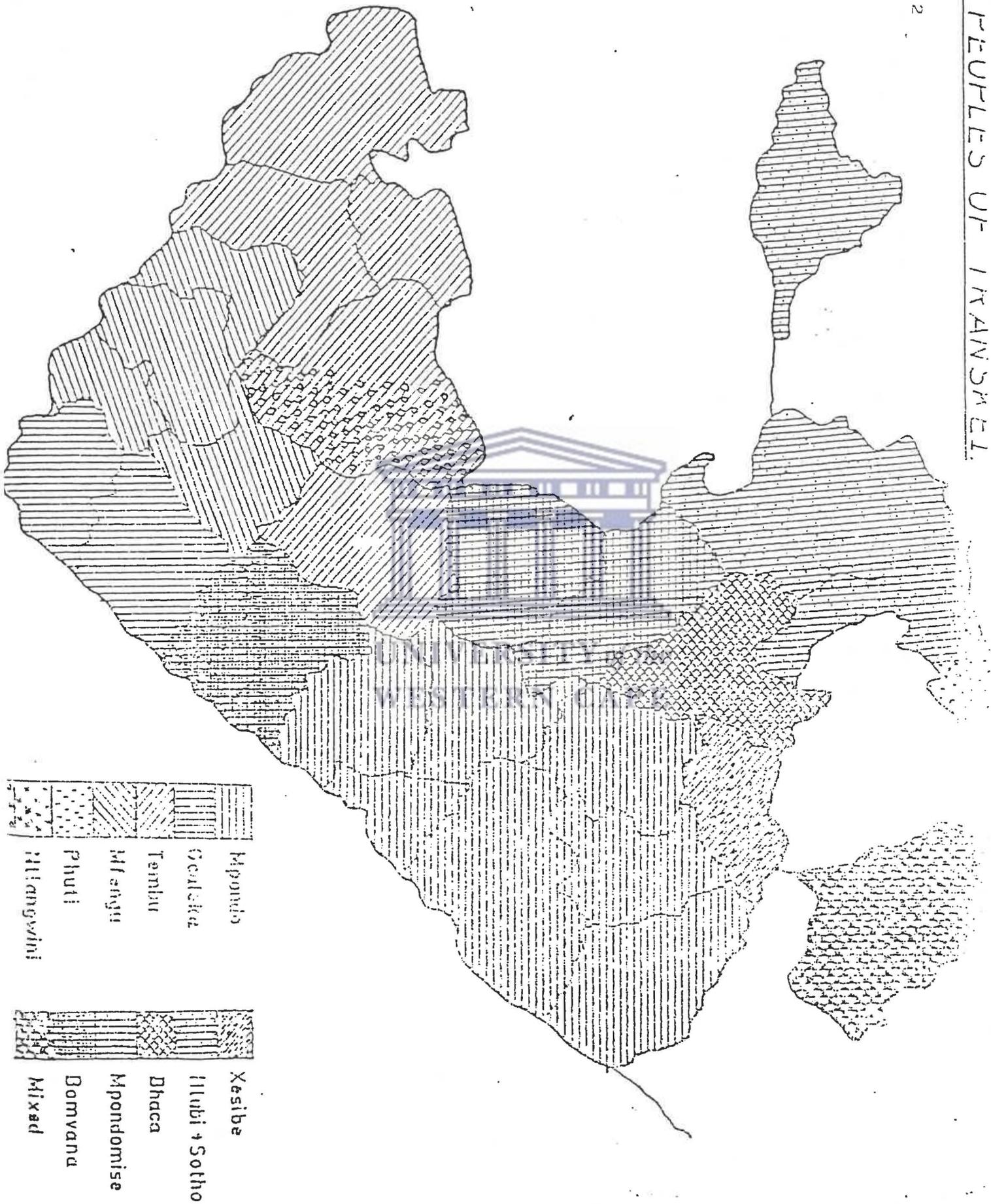
STATEMENTS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NOT SURE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
7. Pupils hardly pay attention to Xhosa books					
8. Few schools have libraries built together with school buildings.					
9. Limited supply of Xhosa library books for reference is very critical					
TOTALS =					

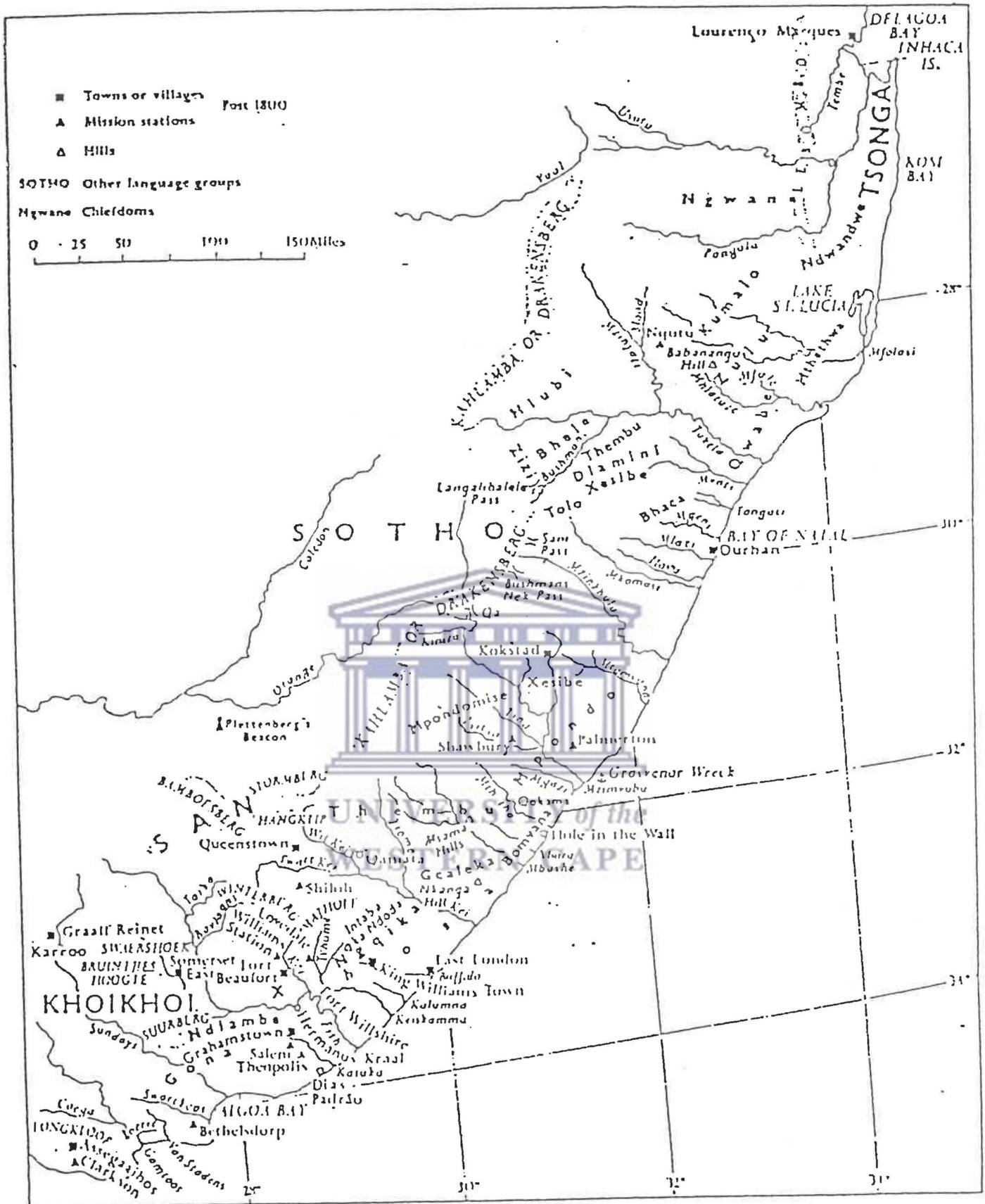


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THE PEOPLES OF TRANSVAAL.

Map 2





MAP 3 Distribution of Nguni c. 1800. After M. Pimstone

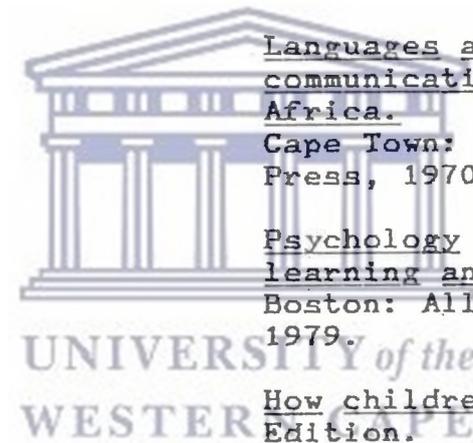
(Extracted from "The Oxford History of South Africa"

Edited by:

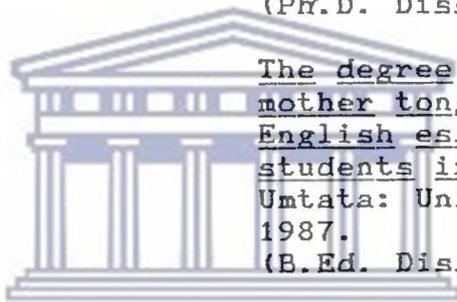
Monica Wilson and Leonard Thompson
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