SOME SOCIOLINGUISTIC ASPECTS OF
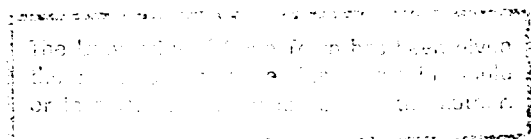
SECOND LANGUAGE TEACHING AND LEARNING OF XHOSA

by

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DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my mother, Winifred Nobantu and to the fond memory of my deceased father, Edward Bomvana, whose efforts and sacrifices are behind everything achieved.

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the sacrifices they made to make the completion of this
thesis possible. This is our thesis.

Needless to say, all the shortcomings in this thesis remain
entirely mine alone.

INTRODUCTION

Motivation

During the period between March 1974 and June 1981, I was involved in the teaching of Xhosa to non-mother-tongue speakers at Rhodes University. This experience brought me face to face with problems for which my training as a teacher of Xhosa had not prepared me as my training had been in the first-language teaching and learning of Xhosa. It also sensitized me to some of the problems and contradictions that characterize the teaching of Xhosa to White learners. The sensitization itself came in the form of a frustration which was two-dimensional.

On the one hand I was frustrated by my inability to succeed fully in motivating the students. On the other, it was frustrating to witness the frustration of the learners with learning language, something which was expressed sometimes verbally and sometimes by dropping out of the course. The biggest disappointment of the learners with the course was that most of what they were taught and expected to know did not relate to what they considered to be their needs. They constantly complained that they were not getting out of their learning what they enrolled in the course for. Learners enrolled in the course because they wanted to acquire communicative competence in the language in order to

be able to interact easily with the speakers or to be able to get jobs where such competence is a prerequisite, e.g. journalism, translation, personnel management, etc. In addition to not being able to reconcile the academic components of the course (grammar, phonology, phonetics, comparative linguistics, etc.) with their needs, the learners had problems with reconciling the language variety taught with the varieties used outside the learning institution in real life communication situations. Those who came knowing some non-standard variety got discouraged when they discovered they had to unlearn almost everything they had known, because the institution expected them to acquire competence in the standard variety and did not recognize any other variety. Those who came not knowing anything found it discouraging to discover that the "pure language" they were taught did not do much to help them communicate easily with the mother-tongue speakers of the language because the speech communities into which they moved after the language classes used a different variety from that which they were taught. For example, it was not uncommon to hear a student complaining: "I was at the rugby match on Saturday and the Black guys next to me were often saying 'irabhi'. What was that word you gave us? They never used it once. And each time a player ran with the ball they shouted 'Pasa, pasa!'".

The other daunting problem for the learners was the lack of real life communication opportunities. This meant that for practising whatever they acquired from the classroom they relied on prefabricated communication situations in the language laboratory or role-playing exercises. Because of the artificiality of these situations, the learners' versatility in the language could not be satisfied. Through the working relations I had with the second language teachers of Xhosa at the local schools and with colleagues at other universities, I came to know that these were universal problems.

From my own point of view, I found it discouraging that successive attempts at devising workable strategies in motivating the learners did not yield the required results. The learners' expectations did not match their willingness to move into the community and interact with the mother-tongue speakers. The factors that militated against the development of this willingness were clearly tied up with the socio-political context within which their learning was taking place. I also found it discouraging that tertiary institutions seemed to be so chained to their language study tradition that they were not in a position to be responsive to the communicative needs of the communities they served. It became clear to me that institutions of learning, both schools and universities, treated language as an unchanging phenomenon which operated independently of

society.   On the other hand, as Funso Akere (1978:409) puts it:

> ... several sociolinguistically oriented studies in language variation in recent years have shown that the picture of a language as a uniform, invariable and unchanging phenomenon has given way to one of considerable heterogeneity within the context of its use.

He goes on to explain why this is so when he quotes Bailey and Robinson as saying:

> ... because the forces of standardization have not yet completely levelled the individuality resulting from genetic make-up and rearing, removed the human impulse to gather in manageably small groups, or erased the cultural differences that distinguish group from group or nation from nation, language must be as various as the groups who use it and the activities they engage in.

As a result of these experiences the following observations were inevitable:

(a) that, because language is a social phenomenon that is as dynamic as the society within which it operates, institutions of learning should keep up with the effects of social dynamics on language, so that their teaching should be able to meet the linguistic communication needs of the learners

(b)   that most of the problems that inhibit effective second language teaching and learning of Xhosa are rooted in the non-linguistic historical and socio-political factors that form the background against which these take place

(c)   that these factors, the personnel situation at the schools, as well as the syllabuses followed, represent a contradiction between the needs of the learners and the objectives of the second language teaching and learning of Xhosa, on the one hand, and, on the other, the means to satisfy these needs and achieve these objectives

The Scope

Apart from attempting to uncover some of the problems that the second-language teacher and learner of Xhosa have to contend with, the aim of this thesis is to draw the attention of the language practitioners and language education policy-makers to the following:

-    Because of the non-linguistic historical and socio-political factors that inhibit access to the target language and its speakers and, therefore, the development of integrative motivation, any programme of second language teaching should include a programme of

reorientating attitudes and perspectives, whether overtly or covertly.

- The growing awareness on the part of White communities of the need to acquire communicative competence in African languages requires that the potential of the current language teaching and learning programmes to satisfy the needs of the people be seriously re-examined

- In the light of the inevitable effect of social dynamics on language, as well as in the light of the needs of the learners, the role of non-standard varieties of language in human interaction can be ignored only at the risk of not achieving the objectives of second language education.

- The South African government authorities need to rededicate themselves to the cause of second language teaching of African languages by taking and implementing decisions aimed at eliminating all those factors that inhibit effective teaching and learning, on both a short-term and long-term basis.

Summary

This thesis is divided into five chapters.

Chapter 1 deals with the theoretical issues involved in the study of language as a social phenomenon. It traces the development of the sub-discipline of sociolinguistics and the contribution of sociologists and anthropologists to the study of the relation between society and language. It is the aim of this chapter to emphasize the need for an empirical study of the effects of social dynamics on language, in order to appreciate the implication of non-linguistic social factors in language teaching and learning.

Chapter 2 outlines the importance of undertaking sociolinguistic surveys of languages before embarking on any second language teaching and learning programmes. This facilitates planning and ensures that the programmes do tie up with, and have the potential to meet, the needs of the learners.

Chapter 3 gives a historical perspective of the teaching and learning of Xhosa in White institutions in South Africa. The aim of this chapter is to show how a country's language education is inextricably bound up with its socio-political history. It is also intended to give a historical background against which the problem of social factors pervading the second language teaching and learning of Xhosa today should be understood.

Chapter 4 is divided into three main sections. The main section (paragraphs 4.2.1 to 4.2.4) gives a breakdown of some social factors that have a significant effect on second language learning in general. The ~~second~~ section (paragraphs 4.3 to 4.3.3) deals with how these factors are implicated in the second language teaching and learning of Xhosa in South Africa. The third section (paragraphs 4.4.1 to 4.4.3) highlights the practical effects of these social factors. This is done by relating the problems confronting those involved in the second language teaching and learning of Xhosa to the social context within which these take place. Information about the nature of these problems was obtained through the kind co-operation of the Cape Educational Department officers who made their records available and through questionnaires completed by teachers in service and by teacher trainees. Discussions with these proved very useful in giving more insight into the problems. Examination question papers (both external and internal) as well as some teaching material were also scrutinized. I also drew on personal experiences as a second language teacher of Xhosa.

Chapter 5 is the conclusion, in which the problems of social factors are summarized. This chapter ends with some suggestions as to what could be done to minimize the negative effects of the social factors on the second language teaching and learning of Xhosa.

General

Although the learning of African languages by non-mother tongue speakers is officially referred to as third language learning, "second language learning" has been preferred. One of the reasons for this preference is that, under normal circumstances, it is customary to have a first language, a second language, and then a foreign language. The other is that all the references used for the purposes of this thesis have either been on second or foreign language teaching and learning.

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CHAPTER ONE

LANGUAGE AND SOCIETY

> But I would like Tom to be a bit of a scholard, so
> as he might be up to the tricks o' these fellows
> as talk fine and write with a flourish. ... I want
> him to know figures, and write like print, and see
> into things quick, and know what folks mean, and
> how to wrap things up in words as aren t
> actionable.
>
> George Eliot 1980 : 9

1.1 Introduction

I start this chapter by quoting two different utterances made by a character in George Eliot's <u>Mill on the Floss</u>. When Mr Tulliver uttered the above he was, unconsciously though it may have been, making a statement about how language operates in society. This, of course, is putting it in a nutshell. In fact, what Mr Tulliver was saying, was that:

(i)   language can serve as a mirror of social strata;

(ii)   language is of great importance in human relations;

(iii)   language has variations and that some variations enjoy
        higher status than others;

(iv) people can do many things with words.

Also reflected in the above utterances is one of the misconceptions about language which has, fortunately I think, been successfully disproved, namely, that those who are linguistically disadvantaged cannot "see into things quick". Because Mr Tulliver made the utterances in the context of justifying his wish to give his son, Tom, what he called "a good eddication; an eddication as'll be bread to him" (1980:8), it can be said that what he also was saying was that an educational institution should equip the language learner with linguistic skills for living. "Living" here is used not in the sense of being able to land a job which will enable one to make a decent living, but rather in the sense of being able comfortably to interact with the speakers of the language one has learnt irrespective of the variety of communication situations in which one may find oneself.

Put differently, what Mr Tulliver was saying was that he, as a member of society, had observed an inalienable relation between language, society and education. Therefore he was making an utterance which had sociolinguistic undertones.

In the following paragraphs I shall attempt to explore what sociolinguistics is and what relation there is between sociolinguistics and the teaching and learning of language.

The ultimate aim is to give a theoretical background which will help in the understanding and analysis of the practical problems that will be dealt with later.

1.2 On Defining Sociolinguistics

According to Downes (1984 : 15) sociolinguistics

> is that branch of linguistics which studies just those properties of language and languages which require reference to social, including contextual factors in their explanation.

Experience with learning has, however, taught learners in all spheres of life that definitions like the one given by Downes are seldom, if ever, enough to give clarity on any particular subject. Comprehension usually emerges much more easily from more illustrative perspectives than from mere definitions. This is particularly the case in sociolinguistics because it is relatively a new discipline.

There may be a number of ways in which one can gain the perspective which may enable one to understand what sociolinguistics is. One could start off by tracing the various paradigms within which language has been studied and taught over the years, or simply consider the functional value of language in human life, one could choose to trace the emergence of sociolinguistics as a component of linguistics. I have chosen the latter approach, not because

it is the best, but because, for the purposes of this thesis, it appears to be more appropriate. (However, it would seem that whichever approach one chose to make one's point of departure towards a definition of sociolinguistics, one would come to the same conclusion, namely, that the field of linguistics could never be complete without a component that treats language as a social phenomenon.) It appears appropriate for the following reasons:

(a) It has the potential to enable one to understand why sociolinguistics made such a late entry into the linguistic scene.

(b) It confirms the relevance of language for other disciplines such as anthropology and sociology.

(c) It contextualizes the perception of the legitimacy of the claims made earlier in the introduction as well as the issues to be raised later which form the main premise of this thesis.

1.3 The Emergence of Sociolinguistics as a Discipline

1.3.1 The Neglected Question

When it is said that sociolinguistics is a new discipline - and this is said quite frequently in sociolinguistic

literature - it is easy to get the impression that earlier linguistic studies or scholars of linguistics did not consider language a social phenomenon. On the contrary, there is enough evidence to show that linguists have always been aware of this since the Greek period of linguistic studies. However, as will be shown later, linguists never considered this worthy of any serious investigation. Although one cannot say with certainty why this very important aspect of language study was neglected in earlier linguistic studies, one can speculate. In Downes' definition of sociolinguistics given above, the keyword is "variation". If variation in language is the trigger that activates the interest of linguists in sociolinguistics, then one may speculate that variation in the earlier period of language study could not have been a significant issue. Man had not yet brought in as many changes to his physical and psychological environment as he did after the Industrial Revolution. The mobility of speakers was not as it is today. Communities were far more homogeneous than they are today. Language homogeneity was therefore still a reality. Early linguists were aware of dialectal differences in language as well as of the fact that speakers could, and did, use their language variably. However, the linguistic issues that they addressed were thought to be more deserving of their attention than the sociolinguistic ones. Dialects were seen as a potential threat to the preservation of language purity. Those philosophers who took an interest in

language and who were therefore pioneers of linguistic studies, were preoccupied with finding answers to such "serious questions" as the origin of language and the relation between sound and meaning. Those that continued the language study tradition were preoccupied with the notion of the preservation of language purity. This knowledge of the "pure" language, according to Thrax, facilitated:

> the appreciation of literary compositions, which is the noblest part of grammar.

This view of language comes out even more clearly in his definition of grammar as quoted in Robins (1979 : 31):

> Grammar is the practical knowledge of the general usages of poets and prose writers.

Even the language description revolution ushered in by the publication of Ferdinand de Saussure's lectures by his former students did not do enough to activate the interest of linguists in the factors that come into play when speakers of a language use their language. Their concern was solely with the structure of the langue and not with parole. The difference between them and their post-de Saussurean counterparts was simply that of method rather than that of subject, which in both cases was the description of the structure of language as a system. The

distinction between language and speech was merely acknowledged, but speech was not considered to have any place in linguistics. In the introduction to his Sociolinguistic Patterns (1972 : xv), Labov attempts to account for linguists' neglect of variation in language by citing some of the views expressed by structuralists in order to justify this neglect:

> The second ideological barrier explicitly asserted that sound change could not in principle be directly observed. Bloomfield defended the regularity of sound change against the irregular evidence of the present by declaring (1933 : 364) that any fluctuations we might observe would only be cases of dialect borrowing. Next Hockett observed that while sound change was too slow to be observed, structural change was too fast (1958 : 457). The empirical study of linguistic change was thus removed from the programme of twentieth century linguistics. A third restriction was perhaps the most important: free variation could not in principle be constrained. The basic postulate of linguistics (Bloomfield 1933 : 76) declared that some utterances were the same. Conversely, these were in free variation, and whether or not the other occurred at a particular time was taken to be linguistically insignificant ... The internal structure of variation was therefore removed from linguistic studies and, with it, the study of change in progress.

> It was also held that feelings about language were inaccessible and outside of the linguist's scope (Bloch and Trager, 1942). The social evaluation of linguistic variants was therefore excluded from consideration. This is merely one aspect of the more general claim that the linguist should not use not-linguistic data to explain linguistic change.

What is said by Labov here implies that the post-de Saussurean linguists did not only ignore social evaluation

of language change, but also did so consciously. Other sociolinguists such as Fishman and Kroeber have echoed almost the same sentiments expressed by Labov in attempting to explain the neglect of sociolinguistics in earlier linguistic studies.

However, in all fairness to the earlier language scholars, whatever can be said against their neglect of social considerations in the field, it should also be borne in mind that these did not have much relevance .to their language study objectives. Moreover, sociolinguistic surveys and theories can only flourish against the background of what one can call a solid edifice of descriptive linguistic theory. Such theories themselves evolve over a period of time. Sociolinguists, who today seem to relish criticizing the structuralist, the comparativist and the transformationalist, owe much more than they are prepared to admit to these early language scholars who evolved the theoretical foundations on which sociolinguists have built. Even more is owed by sociolinguists to those scholars of other disciplines such as anthropology and sociology, who, for practical reasons related to their disciplines, were the first to recognize the usefulness of language in the study of social sciences.

1.3.2 Social Sciences and Language

A study of the historical development of linguistic studies shows that descriptive linguistics has its roots in philosophy because it was the questions raised by philosophers that launched an avalanche of theories about language. On the other hand, the component of language that deals with language as a social phenomenon has evolved from the interest which anthropologists and sociologists had in language.

Since the main reason for the inclusion of this section here is to show that it took scholars from other fields to interest linguists in the study of language in society, I shall do no more than just list some of the European and American anthropologists and sociologists whose contributions in the field of linguistic anthropology and sociology of language had a significant impact of the development of sociolinguistics as a component of general linguistics. Their respective biases will not be dealt with, although their motivation generally should emerge from the remarks made. It should also be mentioned here that this is not to imply that scholars from other disciplines did not perceive language as relevant to their respective disciplines. On the contrary, politicians such as Marx and Lenin had very clearly defined views about the significance

of language in the shaping of national policies at governmental level.

Dell Hymes, one of the great figures in linguistic anthropology, traces the involvement of the British anthropologists in language from as far back as the last quarter of the nineteenth century with the appearance of Sir Edward Taylor's Primitive Culture and Anthropology in 1871 and 1881 respectively, in which he included some chapters on language (1964 : 4). But Dell Hymes himself is prepared to concede that Bronislaw Malinowski, the celebrated anthropologist, is the father of linguistic anthropology in the British Isles. Other notable scholars in the British Isles were Gardiner, Firth, Hocart and Haddon.

In France the study of the relationship between language and society was pioneered by anthropologists and sociologists as well as by linguists. The names of the linguists, de Saussure and Meillet, the sociologist, Durkheim and the anthropologist, Maus, are notable. A number of French scholars, amongst whom was Claude Levi-Strauss, continued this tradition.

In America, anthropological work among the Indian tribes motivated scholars' interest in linguistic anthropology. Among these many scholars were Franz Boas, his students, Edward Sapir and A.L. Kroeber and Leonard Bloomfield, who

also regarded himself as Boas' student. Although these scholars had their respective biases, some of which shifted from one emphasis to the other, as their involvement intensified and as a result of the influence of further research findings and ideas from other scholars, the premise of their work was undoubtedly uniform. First, they saw language as a tool that could lead to conclusive findings. Then, because their main concern was the culture of the so-called primitive communities or tribes, they came to recognize language as a culture semiotic. Hence the earlier term: ethno-linguistics. It was through observing language that they could make statements about customs, beliefs, social strata, behaviour patterns, etc. of the "primitive" communities.

However, what is more relevant for the purposes of this section of the work, is that what they all had to say about linguistics betrays their thorough awareness of the linguistic trends of their time. It is perhaps to these allusions to linguistics that sociolinguistics owes its existence. Boas, for instance, stated that:

> ... it was indispensable for each language to be described in terms of its own configuration, instead of on a preconceived abstract scheme, which, in practice, often came to little more than a modification of Latin grammar.
>
> 1964 : 17

In the same vein Malinowski observed that linguists:

> ... may have in future to abandon their comfortable, two-dimensional world of parchment and paper, and either go into the field, or else rely on material documented not only by words, but also by those aspects of human life, activity, and social organisation by which the use of words is determined.
>
> 1964 : 63

What they were saying, in essence, was that linguistics would benefit more if linguists were to cease to treat language merely as a system operating independently of the social man, something which, at the time, distinguished the ethno-linguists from the linguists.

Boas, however, expressed the hope that the time would come for active recognition by linguists of the need for the consideration of social factors in language studies when he said:

> I think that the time is not far distant ... when linguistics and biology will continue the work we are doing now because no one else cares for it.
>
> Hymes 1964 : 12

Boas may not have been correct in saying that "no one else cares" because Alexei Losev (1977 : 109) quotes Marx and Engels in his "The Specific Features of the Language Sign" as saying:

> ... neither thoughts nor language in themselves
> form a realm of their own ... they are
> manifestations of actual life

Though their "care" did not extend beyond their political motives, it is significant that the statement touched on the core of the neglected notion of relations that hold between objective reality and subjective thinking on the one hand and language on the other.

Although it took longer than Boas had hoped, the interest of anthropologists in language did succeed in arousing the interest of scholars from other disciplines. Perhaps for the reasons cited above, it took the linguists longer than it did the sociologists. The latter group themselves, despite the early insights of Durkheim, were initially wary of relating language to the study of social behaviour because they considered language:

> ... as an omnipresent and invariant feature of
> society, thereby failing to see its causal
> influence on social action

> Giglioli 1983 : 11

Fishman (1972 : 8) attributes this indifference also to the nature of the societies within which the sociologists worked when he says this:

> ... is undoubtedly related to the monoglot and urbanised nature of the societies best known to the founding fathers of American and European sociology.

In the case of American sociologists, Fishman goes on to say that it could also be accounted for by the fact that American sociology was initially non-comparative and that the sociologists themselves were overwhelmingly monolingual with the result that:

> ... most macrotopics in sociology of language (i.e. ... multilingualism and ethno-national solidarity, long-term trends in language maintenance and language shift, language standardization and language planning etc.) strike many American sociologists as dealing with matters both foreign and marginal to society as they know it.

However, because of the gradual change in the nature of their work and also that of the societies within which they worked, sociologists began to realize that without taking into account the importance of language in the study of social behaviour, much of their work would be severely hampered. This gradual awareness of the importance of language in social behaviour opened up new avenues for the sociologists with the result that they now began to gain more insight into the hitherto taken-for-granted process of group formation and disintegration, group interaction etc. What is more, this led to their devising more analytical

inquiries into these theoretical problems and even more refined research methodologies were applied.

A more detailed account of the development of the field which the sociologists referred to as the sociology of language is quite peripheral to this work and therefore shall not be taken any further. Let is suffice to say that the strides that it made manifested themselves in the many conferences that were held and in which sociolinguistic topics were addressed, resulting in the vast literature available today on the subject. These culminated, among other things, in a growing number of specialists and the appearance of journals on the sociology of language. In any case such an account would never be easy to give since sociolinguistic studies attracted and brought together scholars from anthropology, sociology and linguistics. This, indeed, was contrary to the hope expressed by Boas in 1904 about sociolinguistics developing into an autonomous field in the hands of linguists only. The interdisciplinary nature of sociolinguistics rendered this impossible. The more insight sociologists and anthropologists gained in language, the more involved in it they became.

It may therefore be necessary at this point to conclude by attempting to draw a distinction between sociolinguistics as an activity of anthropologists and sociologists on the one hand, and of linguists on the other, with a view to dealing

with the development of sociolinguistics in the context of general linguistics.

In a nutshell, anthropologists in their study of language were motivated by a desire to gain more insight into the culture of its speakers while sociologists desired to gain insight into the social behaviour of its speakers. If the data collected were considered to be enough for these purposes, further analysis of these variations and the mechanisms of their development were considered to be outside the scope of anthropology and sociology. A purely linguistic approach would be the one that would not only identify the linguistic variations and theorize on their social significance, but also go further and consider the processes by which these variations appear, as well as answer questions about their phonological structure and finally, formulate empirical theories about them. In other words, anthropologists and sociologists take language into consideration in their study of society while sociolinguists take society into consideration in their study of language. On the other hand earlier linguists studied language in isolation, outside of society, that is.

1.3.3 Sociolinguistics and Linguistics

It is generally accepted in sociolinguistic circles that a clear break between an anthropological and sociological on

the one hand, and a strictly linguistic approach to sociolinguistics came with the appearance of the works of William Labov, especially his studies of Martha's Vineyard and English in New York. These studies provided the impetus for a new approach of social dialectology in America which was destined to have a tremendous impact on sociolinguistic studies the world over. Although Labov is internationally acclaimed as the shaper of the strictly linguistic approach to the study of the social significance of language, he, by his own admission, owed this insight to his teacher at Columbia University, Uriel Weinreich. In a moving tribute to Weinreich, he sum up his indebtedness to him by saying:

> I found that his thinking had anticipated my own
> by many years

> 1972 : xv

Commenting on "Empirical Foundations for a Theory of Language Change", a joint paper by Labov, Marvin Herzog and Uriel Weinreich, W.P. Lehmann and Y. Malkiel (1971 : ix) echo the same sentiment when they remark:

> It is no diminution of the shares of Professors
> Herzog and Labov in this study to state that much
> of the original impetus for their research came
> from Uriel Weinreich.

These sentiments can perhaps be verified without having to go into Uriel Weinreich's work per se, but by merely

mentioning that he supervised Labov's studies on both Martha's Vineyard and New York City English and that it was at his insistence that "Empirical Foundations for a Theory of Language Change" was written. (He died two days after completing the final revision of this paper.) The task which Weinreich set linguists is captured in the following which summarizes the crux of this paper:

> The key to rational conception of language change
> - indeed of language itself - is the possibility
> of describing orderly differentiation in a
> language serving a community.
>
> in Lehmann and Malkiel 1971 : 101

1.3.4 Labov and Sociolinguistics

I shall now very briefly comment on Labov's approach to linguistic variation. I do this for two reasons. First, Labov, as is already clear from the above, set the trends for the later sociolinguistic surveys. Second, later in this thesis I intend to consider the applicability of his approach to the teaching of Xhosa as a second language with a view to showing why I think his approach cannot, without a certain degree of modification, be used as a model.

The starting point in Labov's studies is that a language is not to be described as if it is a homogeneous object. Therefore any theory of language description which treats language as such an object is bound to be unnecessarily

idealistic and counterfactual because language is "... an object possessing orderly heterogeneity." (Ibid.) It is for this reason that he felt that Chomsky's view of grammar has turned out to be more Utopian than it appeared originally. Nevertheless, one finds it difficult to agree with him when he states that:

> ... the generative model for the description of language as a homogeneous object is itself unrealistic and represents a backward step from structural theories capable of accommodating the facts of orderly heterogeneity.
>
> in Lehmann and Malkiel 1971 : 100

The merits and demerits of the Chomskian paradigm are outside the scope of this work, but the above seems to be too harsh a judgement on Chomsky's theory of grammar.

In his attempts to devise an empirical theory of language, Labov started off by identifying the social groups that represented the different speech communities among the language speakers in New York. Unlike his predecessors who relied on a handful of informants, Labov used a great number of informants. His selection of these was based on scientifically designed random sampling which ensured that everybody had a chance to be selected for interview even though not everybody could be interviewed (Trudgill 1980: 39). Labov's main objective was to show that variations in speech could not be explained away by merely referring to

them as free variations, as had hitherto been done by earlier linguists. Variations, he maintained, had to be viewed in the background of speech communities as a whole. Were this to be done it would be discovered that variation:

> ... was not random but determined by extra-linguistic factors in a quite predictable way.

> Trudgill 1980 : 40

Having done the sampling of the speakers, Labov would then select those lexical items which displayed frequent and more observable diversification. Because his main concern was diversification at sound level rather than at lexical level, his choice would be of those lexical items in which diversification manifested itself in articulation differentiation, in terms of the presence or absence of a particular mode of articulation in a given social speech group. In this way he would be able not only to quantify the variations, but also to predict in which social group or social speech context a particular mode of articulation could or could not be expected to be found. This would, in turn, form the basis for accounting for the occurrence or non-occurrence of the mode of articulation. The combination of context and social affiliation itself allowed for investigation of the reasons why a member of a particular speech community would switch from one manner of use to the other. Examples of this would be his studies of the social

stratification of the New York r and the variations in the articulation of some diphthongs.

With more and more involvement in sociolinguistic research and debates, and with the appearance of more and more convergent sociolinguistic research findings, Labov revisited his theory of language change, confirmed it or modified it or interlocked it with others. These have resulted in the appearance, inter alia, of "Building on Empirical Foundations" in Lehmann and Malkiel 1982. This work is therefore both an extension and an evaluation of the original theory propounded in WLH's (Weinreich, Labov and Herzog) earlier paper and a summary of current views on the sociolinguistic study of language.

According to Labov, it would seem, there are two fundamental principles involved in the exercise of laying foundations for language change theory. First, the notion of normal heterogeneity must replace the notion of language homogeneity. Any normal speech community is a heterogeneous one and therefore a wide range of variants, styles and dialects in language use are to be expected. When this is accepted, it then becomes easy to see a relation or correlation between these variations and the differences among the speakers and speech situations. The second principle is the question of the target of linguistic description. The object of linguistic description should be

the grammar of the system of communication used in social interaction and should therefore use techniques that are adequate to deal with the heterogeneous character of the system. He says:

> There is a growing realisation that the basis of intersubjective knowledge in linguistics must be found in speech -language as it is used in everyday life by members of the social order, that vehicle of communication in which they argue with their wives, joke with their friends and deceive their enemies.
>
> Labov 1972 : xiii

Labov, in practice, is definitely in agreement with Downes' definition of sociolinguistics although he states that he accepts the term with some degree of reluctance and feels that it is a bit of a misnomer since language is a social phenomenon anyway. There are two points which, according to him, are of major importance in devising a theory of language change, i.e. language diversity. It is important first of all to establish what language change essentially is. Language can be said to have changed only when members of a speech community:

> ... agree to accept a new token as part of the arbitrary system for transferring information, either by using the new token or understanding it ...
>
> 1972 : 46

Thus, when an individual's speech displays individual coinages, errors or residues from child speech, this will not amount to language change as such;, until such time as the elements have been widely propagated, accepted and understood. A theory of language change would have as one of its tasks explaining how it is that the heterogeneous character of a language never hinders intelligibility. This, in order for it to be a relatively easy exercise, would have to include the investigation of the antecedent conditions that are, or have been, the determining factors in the initiating rate of propagation, the direction – as well as the termination – of the variations. This is the point of failure in earlier studies in language change – the constant unwillingness to move outside the system of communication itself in search of the forces that are responsible for its change. This negative attitude was based on the argument that language change was dysfunctional.

The second important point to be taken into account before a theory of linguistic diversity is developed is the breakdown of the problems that are attendant upon it. Labov lists a number of these. I shall mention here only those that I consider to be very crucial for second-language learning and teaching. These are:

(a)   The Constraints Problem

This factor involves seeking answers to the question of the factors, if any, that determine possible or impossible changes and the direction of change. An investigation of these factors would make it possible to explain which changes can or cannot occur in language. Identifying the direction would facilitate grammatical description as, for instance, in the case of grammatical or phonological rule generalization whereby speakers may be observed to tend to extend one rule to other areas with the purpose of simplifying.

(b)   The Embedding Problem

The solution of this problem would lead to the identification of the relations that hold between language change and environment. Thus one could identify such concepts as the initiators of change, their status in the community, the role of the various social groups as well as where new speakers such as immigrants fit in in the study of linguistic diversity.

(c)   The Evaluation Problem

This problem deals with the assessment of the speakers' attitude towards a given change itself. Some of the

attitudes may be covert and others may be so overt that speakers actually talk about them. The covert ones may not always be easily accessible to the researcher, but may be uncovered through very carefully worked out research methods. Put differently, this problem has to do with ascertaining the status of the variation in the opinion of the speakers.

The significance of these problems for the purposes of this thesis is that, even though they were raised in the context of studying sound change, they apply generally to any level of language variations. Of the above, (b)and (c) are especially crucial to language teaching and learning; not only for the teacher and learner, but also for the language syllabus designer.

From the identification of the problems the next phase should be the identification of the various antecedent conditions that allow for the emergence of the variations. The identification of these antecedent conditions which are extra-linguistic does not, however, suggest that in their absence language would hardly ever be diversified. On the contrary, research findings have shown that, as a result of certain factors, some of which relate to the speakers themselves as humans, and some of which relate to the sound elements of the language, there is no human language which can be totally immune to being diversified. In a chapter

entitled "Doing what comes naturally", Aitchison (1981) deals with these factors extensively. These are peripheral to the purposes of this work, though a language teacher or learner may benefit from being aware of them.

1.4 Antecedent Conditions of Language Change

1.4.1 The Centrality of Language in Human Existence

Although ancient philosophers never succeeded in answering questions about the origin of language, there is no doubt that language is as old as mankind. Man is born into a language milieu and during every moment of his life he goes through linguistic experience. For this reason, therefore, man's very existence is welded into language. Language is at the centre of human existence.

> Hence it reflects every phase and aspect of their life, represents all the known realities of life; in fact, it determines in considerable part what we are aware of, what we believe, how we pattern our thought and how we act.
>
> Hertzler 1965 : 20

Downes (1984 : 37) describes language as an:

> ... institutionalized entity deeply identified with the life of a society, and intricately involved in both its political and historical development and its structure.

Because of this relation that exists between language and society, language should be seen as a multi-dimensional dynamic process since multi-dimensional dynamism is a feature of society. It is also for this reason that the factors responsible for language dynamics can be explained in terms of the dynamics of society. However, in doing this, it has to be borne in mind that society itself represents the sum total of its individual members who all exist in both a physical and a spatio-temporal environment which exert a variety of perceived and unperceived pressures on them. The result of these pressures is that human life becomes a succession of tentative adjustments and adaptations to the world in which man exists. Man may not necessarily be aware all the time of the adjustments and adaptations that he is making. But there is no doubt, regularity and systematicity in these efforts. In all this the instrument used is language and therefore the regularity and systematicity of these adjustments and adaptations manifest themselves in the regularity and systematicity of variations in language. If one were to look at the multiplicity of uses in which man has to put language in this whole exercise, one would understand how inevitable it is that language should be subjected to all kinds of diversity.

1.4.2 Population Dispersal

Although it is clear from what has been said about the inevitability of language variation, it is possible to imagine a period in the history of each individual language when language variation could not have been at a level at which it could warrant any attention from or pose any problem for language analysts or teachers. This must of course, be a period which borders on the hypothetical since language analysis and teaching are themselves responses to a changed or changing social environment. It must also be a period during which man's movement from one locality to another, both as an individual and as a member of a larger group, must have been very slow in comparison to what it is today. All evidence in man's history points to the fact that man has always been on the move, either in search of a better life or as a result of wars. The imfecane is an example which had tremendous implications for Xhosa. The movement of the Fingo into the land of the Xhosa was of great significance for variation in Xhosa.

However, mechanization of industry resulted in a change in people's social, economic and political lives. One of these results was an increase in population dispersal. In the case of the Black man in South Africa the major effect of this changed socio-economic situation was that his life depended on moving from one physical environment to another

in search of work or education. In all cases this meant movement to the industrial or urban labour centres or education institutions. The points to which he moves from his place of origin turn out to be points of convergence where people with different speech habits meet. He therefore gets exposed to a variety of speech norms and is himself a carrier, carrying his old speech habits into the new environment and then taking the newly acquired ones back home. A converse situation which also has some bearing on increased population dispersal is one in which permanent residents of the industrial areas - the so-called city-dwellers - move out to the rural areas, either to go and settle or in an effort to re-establish contact with their roots or simply in search of a quieter life.

In addition to the appearance of variations, the other effect is that this new situation in which man is thrown develops in him new awareness about his language which shape up certain attitudes towards language. These are dealt with elsewhere in this section.

1.4.3 Socio-cultural Change

Another factor, closely related to population dispersal, which has a bearing on language diversification is socio-cultural change. Language is tied up with the culture of its speakers. Thus once some pressures are imposed on a

people's culture necessitating some adjustments and adaptations, language becomes as variable as the culture of its speakers because, in order for it to be capable of fulfilling its social obligations, it has to be pliable. The forces that exert pressure on a culture of a people are themselves too numerous to enumerate. However, they could be summed up by mentioning the fact that people have to respond to new elements, new communal experiences, new awarenesses, interests and needs - especially insofar as these relate to technological and social achievement. (Hertzler 1965 : 142)

In African languages the effects of socio-cultural change on language are more manifest at the level of the lexicon and code-switching than at the syntactic, morphophonological and tonological levels. At these latter levels though there are some observable variations (especially at the tonological level), these, in most cases, do not hinder access to meaning that much; they do not pose many problems for communication and therefore are not a great obstacle in second-language teaching and learning, as we shall see later on. There is an interesting example of this in S.E.K. Mqhayi's UMqhayi waseNtabozuko where he tells a story of a little boy who picked up a tone variation in the speech of a Black policeman (he turned out to be a Fingo) who had visited the village to investigate a crime. The little boy, after he had left, would now and again imitate a sentence

from his utterances which contained a mispronounced word,
until this attracted the attention of the old people who
would often call the little boy and ask him to repeat what
was said by the policeman. They would then laughingly
remark: "Men, you see how these Fingoes are spoiling our
language." The sentence was "Madoda, funan' indoda, musan'
ukonhwaba" in which the alveolar nasal of the last word was
articulated with breathy voice. This never hindered access
to the meaning of the sentence or the word, though. Some of
these effects are manifest in the idiom of the language and
this poses problems in the standardization of language.

Again in African societies the concept of socio-cultural
change has to be interpreted in two ways. Firstly, it has
to be seen as a reference to those changes within one
particular culture which are necessitated by the need to
adjust to a changed socio-economic environment which has
changed not in the face of coexistence with other cultures,
but rather as a result of the natural dynamics of society.
Secondly, it has to be seen as a reference also to those
changes within a culture that have resulted from coexistence
with other cultures, especially those that are stronger. A
culture would be said to be stronger than another if it is
of people who possess more political, military, economic and
technological power. People possessing such power are in a
better position to dictate terms and set the standards, and
in this they are assisted by the benefits that are

associated with proficiency in their language. Those who do not have this power have no choice, but helplessly to adjust and adapt to the covert and overt dictates of those who have it. The language of the stronger group is either pidginized, creolized or diverges into other new dialects such as the non-standard Negro English (NNE) or Black English Vernacular (BEV). Another example nearer home, according to Jordan (1974 : 4(2)) is what happened to Dutch in the Cape as a result of the influence of the slaves from Malaysia. The presence of the slaves. resulted in the pidginization of Dutch and, according to Jordan, Afrikaans bears a very close resemblance to this pidgin Dutch.

On the other hand, the language of the weaker group has to develop some mechanisms of coping with this situation. These are some of these mechanisms:

(i) Borrowing

Use is made of loan-words which are borrowed from the other language or languages with whose speakers they coexist to express new concepts. These are fitted into the phonological system of the borrowing language.

e.g.
<u>English</u>		<u>Xhosa</u>
gravel		igrabile

<u>Afrikaans</u>		
tafel	–	itafile

Ideally, borrowing should not result in language diversification, but in reality it does because borrowing of words is not confined to the expression of new concepts for which there are no terms. Use is made of loan-words even in the case of concepts for which there are terms.

e.g.
Afrikaans	Xhosa 1	Xhosa 2
spyker	isikhonkwane	isipekire
skulpad	ufudo	isikolpati

English	Xhosa 1	Xhosa 2
gate	isango	igeyithi
garden	isitiya	igadi

(ii) Coining of new terms

The other way of dealing with the problem of labels for new concepts is the use of old terms for new concepts. There are various ways in which this is done. It may be through broadening the old meaning to include the new concept as in:

isibonda   "headman (old meaning),   mayor (new meaning)"

It could be through narrowing the meaning by restricting it to the new concept only, because the old one has become obsolete in:

ukugonya   "protect against evil spirits or bad luck by washing in medicated water or making incisions (old meaning) to immunise as at clinics and hospitals (new meaning)"

Some old terms may be compounded to bring out new meanings.
as in:

uSibakhulu   "Secretary-General (from _usiba_ "pen" and
-_khulu_ "big")"

'The above should, however, not be taken to suggest that the
language of a culturally stronger group is immune to
influences by the language of a culturally weaker group of
speakers.' On the contrary, coexisting languages, as
Jordan's example has shown, are bound to influence one
another, irrespective of the strength of the culture of
their respective speakers. The difference is only in the
extent of the influences. There may be other reasons for
this, but the more obvious one is the fact that speakers of
a language, irrespective of the strength of their cultures,
inevitably have to respond to certain needs that are imposed
by their interaction with the speakers of the culturally
weaker groups. In any case, speakers of different languages
usually show a tendency to make mutually accommodating
efforts in communication, in the same way as adults will use
children's language when speaking to children. This
accounts for the practice whereby a speaker will use his
language "incorrectly" to a learning non-mother-tongue
speaker to achieve intelligibility. And, who knows, these
can be so frequently used that they spread and add to the
repertoire of non-standard social dialects, because these

can very easily be ignored since they may not necessarily
hinder or reduce access to meaning.

1.4.4 Social Stratification

The usual notion used by most sociolinguists to refer to
groups that represent social strata is "social class". I
have deliberately avoided the use of this phrase mainly
because the hierarchic ordering of the society whose members
are speakers of the language under discussion in this
thesis, namely Xhosa, cannot be described in terms of social
class. "Social sectors" will here be used to denote any
group of people bound together by common interests,
awarenesses, beliefs, norms and behaviour patterns and who
therefore represent a clearly discernible level in the
social hierarchy.

M.A.K. Halliday (1978 : 113), in dealing with the relation
between language and social structure, mentioned three ways
in which social structure is implicated in a sociolinguistic
theory:

(i)   It defines and gives significance to the various types
        of social context in which meanings are exchanged.

(2)   ... it determines and regulates the meanings and
        meaning styles that are associated with given social

contexts, including those contexts that are critical in the processes of cultural transmission.

(3) ... the social structure enters in through the effects of social hierarchy, in the form of caste or class. This is obviously the background to social dialects, which are both a direct manifestation of social hierarchy and also a symbolic expression of it ...

Implicit in all these three points is the fact that the stratification of society is of great linguistic significance. The societal strata are complementary since they are not mutually exclusive, and are therefore capable of influencing one another. However, in many ways they are discernible as they are clearly different even though the differences themselves vary from society to society. They manifest themselves in a variety of aspects of life. For instance, in a society where stratification takes the form of a social class system, there may be differences in income, wealth, places of residence, patterns of home life, etc. In a society of this nature members of a particular class will tend to interact with one another and less with members of another class. In the process they will develop common speech behaviour patterns which are different from those of the members of the other class, but which may not always be closer to the standard dialect.

In Xhosa society - indeed in any African society in South Africa - which is not stratified in the form of class, the implications of social stratification for language are more complex. Social interaction defies all social differentiation as a result of a number of reasons, the most important of which are: a relatively stronger attachment to traditional customs, lack of choice of residential areas, common political, economic and educational deprivation and a growing awareness of the need for national solidarity in the face of the reality of socio-political domination. Thus in Xhosa society, while there is social differentiation, for instance, according to sex, age, voluntary associations, urban and rural abode, and, to a lesser extent, ethnicity, there is because of the above factors, more mutual linguistic influence among the social groups. This type of situation also leads to members of the society changing social group membership as the circumstances demand.

Women develop their own dialect, as do men, boys and girls. However, these may belong to other voluntary associations or occupational groups which may cut across sex, age and ethnic boundaries, such as worker groups, religious groups, sports clubs, youth clubs, etc., which, in turn, have their own language values. These are referred to as registers. As one individual changes membership from group to group, he carries with him his speech habits and at the same time picks up new ones. The diagram below shows how Downes

represents this schematically. But Downes' diagram does not represent even half the situations in which a speaker usually finds himself. The implications of all this intergroup mingling for language variation are multi-dimensional. Typically the social stratification yields linguistic variation. However as Hertzler (1965 : 367) observes:

> The type and amount of linguistic stratification depends, for its sharpness and persistence, upon the rigidity of social stratification system.

Because of the reduced rigidity of the social stratification system of African societies it becomes less easy, but not impossible, to identify a particular norm of speech with any particular group exclusively. The frequency of use of a particular norm by the various social groups makes it more difficult for non-mother-tongue speakers to distinguish between a suitable and an unsuitable context for the

adoption of a particular mode of speech. The frequency of diglossia tends to be very high.

Even with the emergence recently of semi-exclusive prestigious townships for Blacks in South Africa, it seems it will take some time before this situation changes. In any case, as Hertzler (1965) observes:

> Even a cursory examination of the speech habits of individuals shows that the special languages are not mutually exclusive as far as any particular individual is concerned.

Given all the above, and given the individual speaker's ability to switch from one code to another, the question to ask is: What are the factors that determine the use of any of these variations? Answers to this question and which I attempt to give below reveal further antecedent conditions that allow for language variation.

1.4.5 Context

The various language registers mentioned in paragraph 2.4.4, as we have seen, are accessible to all members of society. Therefore in their totality they form the community's verbal repertoire. A number of social factors can be involved in determining the choice of variety from this vast verbal repertoire. One of these is context. Halliday (1978 : 125)

refers to the register chosen as the text and describes text as:

> ... the product of infinitely many simultaneous and successive choices in meaning, and is realised as lexicogrammatical structure or word.

He goes on:

> The environment of the text is the context of situation, which is an instance of social context, or situation type.

<div align="right">Ibid.</div>

The context is thus a semiotic construct which is structured in terms of field, tenor and mode. Field is the text-generating activity. In other words, what Halliday calls "field" is what, in simple terms, can be called the subject matter. Tenor is the role relationships of the participants. This, in simple terms, is what can be referred to as the social distance between the interlocutors. Mode is the rhetorical mode that the participants adopt in verbal interaction. This is a reference to the style used which is appropriate both for the field and tenor. In addition to this it should be remembered that environment takes time and space into account. Thus the environment of the text is a spatio-temporal one.

1.4.6 Identity and Solidarity

From paragraph 2.4.4 above, it is clear that each individual in any society exists in a network of social groups and that the social group to which an individual belongs is a norm-enforcing factor upon him. The effect of this normative pressure on the individual crystallizes when the individual begins to feel a sense of commitment to the linguistic norms of his group. The linguistic norms of his group now become for him a symbol of belonging.

> A strong sense of group identity and solidarity generates cultural focusing, and this results in both the clarity of the linguistic norms of the group (as opposed to other groups) and a pressure to conform as an expression of individual identity.
>
> Downes 1984 : 177

All this is a response to the general expectation within a group that all the group members have to abide by the norms of the group. This situation is, in fact, a microcosm of the general situation within the larger community. There is much evidence in history to show that there is a very close link between language and nationalism. There are few countries, if any at all, that can be said to be monolingual. In multilingual societies speakers of a particular language will always use their language as a rallying symbol of identity and solidarity. One has only to consider the rise of Afrikaner nationalism, here in South

Africa, to see what a significant role language plays in inculcating a sense of solidarity and identity within a people. However, the intensity of this sense of identity and solidarity is dependent upon the external forces that threaten the speakers as a group. Thus, attachment to the language can either be a resistance tool, or a unifying factor, or, simply a conservation measure.

Identity and solidarity within a group expressed through language operate in the same fashion. A group of migrant workers from the rural areas may want to resist the social norms of their new urban environment and tacitly agree to do this by adhering at all times to their rural linguistic behaviour patterns. Members of a religious group may take so much pride in their group membership that they identify themselves as such by constant use of a language with religious overtones when speaking to one another. Consider the following conversation:

A: Khaniphil' ekhaya.
    How are you all at home?

B: Hayi mazalwana torho, emandlen' eNkosi siphilile,
    asikaboniswa.   Nakwezi   ziphithi-phithi   uSomandla
    usasisindisile. Niboniswe ntoni ke nina?
    O no, dear brother in Christ, through the Grace of the
    Lord we are well; we have not had any problems. Even
    in these upheavals the Almighty has saved us. What
    about you all?

B: Hay' inene nakuthi, sicaka seNkosi, akubanga kho lubi
    lwanto. Sibulela nj' iimfefe zoMdali, kuba nakule
    mimoyan' ingendawo ikhoyo sibona kude kwalapha esasithe
    khu-u phantsi kwephiko lakhe.

O no, truly, dear servant of the Lord, we also have not
had any problem. We are thankful to the Creator for
His blessings, for, despite the current atmosphere of
evil happenings, He has, up to now, been shielding us
under His wings.

A: Hayi, makube njalo, mntwan' eNkosi!
      Let it be, child fo the Lord

In listening to the above, a non-native speaker of Xhosa who
has been drilled in certain fixed forms of phatic
communication would most probably find it difficult to
understand what was going on here, or, if he managed to
guess from certain words occurring in the utterances, this
deviation from what his communication skills teacher taught
him would have nothing more to tell him. Yet, more than
just telling each other about their own and their families'
state of health, our two speakers are also confirming with
each other their common religious group belonging. It is a
way of saying: "We two are Christians and we are proud of it
and it accounts for our still being alive in spite of the
current waves of danger. Let's stick together and thanks be
to God."

> Social solidarity is almost synonymous with
> linguistic solidarity. Language serves more
> effectively than any other social element to hold
> individuals together in social relationships.
> Identity of language almost automatically creates
> a definite bond of understanding and sympathy
> among people.
>
> Hertzler 1965 : 65

Sociolinguists who have made quantitative analyses of linguistic variations have found that even in these small social groups, consistency in the use of group linguistic norms has an association with sex, area and age. Lesley Milroy (1980 : 109), in his study of the speech of Ballymacarrett discovered that the men in this community were subject to more normative pressure than the women. The reason for this, he argues, is that employment opportunities for men were more stable and localized than those of the women because they worked in the local shipyards, while the women had to move out of the area in search of employment opportunities. Thus the men were more closely-knit than the women whose speech consequently was more vulnerable to middle-class influence.

Another feature of identity and solidarity is their mutability. This results in variation diffusion from group to group. As we have seen earlier, group membership is not mutually exclusive. Consequently, as Milroy (1980 : 132) observes:

> ... the individual creates his system of verbal behaviour so as to resemble those common to the group or groups with which he wishes from time to time to be identified.

An example of this would be the linguistic behaviour of Xhosa migrant workers who normally display more loyalty to their rural dialects during the period of their labour

contracts in the South African urban labour centres, and remain passive participants in the urban dialects. (They are passive participants because they understand the speech of the city-dwellers but do not use it.) However, when they return to their rural villages of origin, they use the urban dialect. This linguistic behaviour is in line with their other behaviour which they adopt intentionally when they are back home to show that they are different from the other villagers who have not been away to the labour centres. Even though this may yield negative responses from certain sectors of the villagers, especially the older folks, if carried to the extremes, it is more likely to boost their image in the eyes of those who see them as carriers of more "civilized" social standards.

1.4.7 Language Attitudes

Another factor which contributes to the emergence of variations and which is closely linked to identity and solidarity, is attitude to language. However, an individual may have an attitude towards language which is not conditioned by any desire to identify with a particular social group. But this should not be construed as suggesting that it is possible for a speaker to have an attitude towards a language which is not a response to some external factor.

If one were to imagine a language community which was totally homogeneous and therefore whose language was totally free from any influences that precipitate variation, it is highly unlikely that one would conceive of members of such a community as having any perceptible attitudes towards language. The developing and shaping of attitudes towards language is more possible where a language has variations which are held together by diglossic relationships. Linguistic varieties occupy different points on the status spectrum. Some are considered "purer" than others; some are considered to be more prestigious than others. An individual's speech may tend to move towards what he regards as purer or more prestigious, or more fashionable, depending on his perception of himself. The varieties may mean different things to different speakers. Some may have a nostalgic or sentimental attachment to what they regard as a disappearing variety, while others may have a contemptuous feeling towards the same variety. One has only to read the Letters-to-the-Editor columns of the newspapers to see the evidence of the attitudes towards language, or listen to some of the phone-in radio programmes such as Chuckle-'n-Chat Show on Radio 5.

The effect of language attitude is emergence and persistence of variations in language since individual speakers have a variety of value judgements.

1.4.8 Language and Geography

In the light of the current rate of population dispersal one cannot write or talk of the notion of geography in the context of language without feeling that this is at the point of ceasing to be an issue in sociolinguistic studies. This is so because the movement of people from one geographical area to another is at such a pace that it becomes difficult to state that the geographical placing of speakers puts them on a different linguistic plane to that of others. Despite this situation, however, it is still possible to account for linguistic differentiation in terms of different geographical settings of the speakers. Therefore it is still possible to talk of urban Xhosa, rural Xhosa, Eastern Cape English, Overberg Afrikaans, etc. because of the differences in tone, accent, vocabulary etc.

1.5 Conclusion

From all the above, it should be clear that sociolinguistics is not concerned only with language variation. Although linguists who have interest in the study of language as a social phenomenon would naturally focus their attention mainly on language variation and the factors that are responsible for its development, the study of linguistic variation is but one aspect of the larger domain of the study of language in society. Within this larger domain

would be such studies as language and nationalism; bilingualism and multilingualism; language standardization and language policy. By its very nature, this domain would be a point of interest convergence for scholars from various disciplines such as sociology, anthropology, psychology, philosophy, history, politics etc. Practitioners in descriptive linguistics would naturally be interested in that area of language in which descriptive linguistics was implicated most - that is, variation.

How then, are language teaching and learning implicated in sociolinguistics? The deviations from the standard dialect which is the target in language teaching and learning, manifest themselves in very many ways at virtually all levels of language description. They thus pose an enormous threat to the success of language teaching and learning in general, and second language teaching and learning in particular. Moreover, as has been remarked above, sociolinguistics is not concerned only with language variation. It involves, as Downes's definition quoted on page 3 of this chapter shows, the relation between language and society, i.e. the study of language in its social context.

Today the emphasis in second language teaching has shifted a great deal from the description of the structure of the language to communicative competence. Consequently, second

language practitioners are experiencing a growing awareness of the importance of the role that social context plays in language education. This awareness represents the intersection of sociolinguistics and applied linguistics, since applied linguists have to make use of insights gained from sociolinguistic studies.

CHAPTER TWO

SOCIOLINGUISTIC SURVEYS AND LANGUAGE EDUCATION

2.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter I have outlined, even though very briefly, some of the major features that are responsible for language variation. In this chapter I shall look at the educational value of sociolinguistic surveys of individual languages and the sociolinguistic profile of Xhosa. Firstly, it is to give a background to some of the learners' and teachers' problems, the sources of which are to be found outside the language itself. Secondly, it is to show how the sociolinguistic profile of an individual language could be of help in its teaching and learning, especially insofar as these pertain to the second language.

2.2 Sociolinguistic Surveys and Education

From what has been said in the previous chapter about defining sociolinguistics, it is clear that sociolinguistics is a field of study which involves the interaction of language and society. What is also clear from the previous chapter is that linguists took a considerable time to take any interest in sociolinguistic research and that those scholars who pioneered sociolinguistic studies did so

because of these studies' functional importance for their non-linguistic fields of study, while linguists themselves were still immersed in theoretical linguistic debates. However, because of this interaction of language and society, and as linguists became more involved in sociolinguistic debates, it was inevitable that their increasing understanding of sociolinguistic issues would gradually lead them to discovering the importance of the applicability of the issues arising from these debates and research findings to the wider domain of language in society.

Starting from their awareness and acceptance of the variability of language and the importance thereof for the phonological and grammatical description of non-standard dialects, to that of factors contributing to the process of language change and its mechanisms, one of the areas into which sociolinguistics moved was that of the relevance of sociolinguistic research findings for language teaching and learning. As these are educational activities, this means that there was an increasing awareness of the usefulness of sociolinguistic research findings in education generally. Education, as has been pointed out above, is but one area of society which, it was found, could benefit from sociolinguistic research. There are other areas such as language policy planning, bilingualism and multi-lingualism, all of which are:

... governmental or quasi-governmental activities
particularly in multilingual situations, designed
to influence or solve linguistic problems.

Trudgill 1984 : 3

Although these also have some bearing on education, the main
focus of this section will be on the applicability of
sociolinguistic survey findings to the teaching and learning
of language in general and a second language in particular.
These government or quasi-government activities are engaged
in to give a sociolinguistic typology necessary for the
describing of what Stewart (1968) refers to as national
multilingualism. According to him, these activities,
although they usually vary greatly in detail, are usually
oriented towards:

1. The eventual elimination, by education or
   decree, of all but one language, which is to
   remain as the national language.

2. The recognition and preservation of important
   languages within the national territory,
   supplemented by the adoption of one or more
   languages to serve for official purposes and
   for communication across language boundaries
   within the variation.

1968: 532

For the purposes of this thesis I shall illustrate the
distinction between these activities and the sociolinguistic
surveys envisaged in this chapter by drawing a line between
a sociolinguistic survey, which aims at providing a

sociolinguistic profile of a country, and that aimed at providing a sociolinguistic profile of an individual language. However, these complement each other in very significant ways. A successful sociolinguistic survey of a country is one that includes all the dialects of the individual languages as well as their respective distributions, and this information is as crucial to language policy planning as it is to language teaching. The mutual influence of the languages of a country on one another cannot be ignored in the drawing up of a sociolinguistic profile of a country in the same way as the influence of other languages on a language cannot be ignored in its teaching and learning. They also complement each other in that, insofar as they both have a bearing on education, a country's sociolinguistic profile helps in determining which language or languages have to be taught at the country's schools and where in the country these should be taught, while an individual language's sociolinguistic profile helps in determining which factors have to be taken into account in the teaching of that particular language. In simple terms, it can therefore be said that a sociolinguistic survey of a country determines the "what" of language teaching while a sociolinguistic survey of a language determines the "how" of the teaching of that language.

Although this chapter's main focus is on the relevance of
sociolinguistic surveys for second language teaching and
learning, perhaps all that may be necessary to say here with
regard to sociolinguistic profiles of countries is that
their usefulness has been borne out by the huge sums of
money and man hours that have been put into sociolinguistic
surveys in the post-colonial countries which, after
independence, found themselves with the problem of the
multilingual nature of their societies.

With the current increase in interest in the teaching and
acquisition of communicative competence in second and
foreign languages and cross-cultural communication,
resulting from an increasing cross-cultural interaction,
sociolinguistic surveys are becoming more and more important
for education. It is perhaps for this reason that socio-
linguists are beginning to talk of applied sociolinguistics.

In this brief treatment of the importance of sociolinguistic
surveys of languages for their teaching and learning, I have
chosen to confine myself to three areas only even though
there may be a longer break-down of relevant areas as should
be clear from the following paragraphs. The three areas I
have chosen are: language varieties, language attitudes and
language learners' communication needs. While these are
treated in general terms, more emphasis will be laid on
their relevance for second language teaching and learning.

2.2.1   <u>Language Varieties</u>

One major breakthrough that has resulted from the advent and
development of sociolinguistics as a field of study has
been, as has already been remarked, the acceptance of the
fact that language homogeneity is a myth. This has led to
the collapse of Chomsky's ideal of universal grammars. In
Chapter Two (paragraph 2.4) I discussed some of the
antecedent factors that precipitate language change, thereby
causing the emergence of language variation. Among these was
the notion of social stratification. Much of what was said
in that paragraph is relevant for this one. It will not be
repeated here. Here we will merely attempt to highlight the
significance of social stratification in language surveys
with the aim of giving a background to some of the issues
that will be discussed in the next two sub-paragraphs. In
doing this, reference will be made to some of the parallels
that can be found between the study of dialects and the
study of varieties and which are pertinent in applied
sociolinguistics.

Darwin's theory of evolution aroused such wide interest
among scholars that those working in the field of language
study felt that what was true of biological sciences could
also be true of human languages. This interest ushered in a
new era of language study, namely the era of historical-
comparative linguistics. This field was concerned with the
investigation of genetic relations. Details about the

development of this field of language study are peripheral to our purposes here. The underlying postulation which was at the heart of these studies was that the various nations of the world were the end-product of the evolutionary process which was initiated by disintegration in language and customs. A number of sources were used in collecting evidence to support this postulation, such as:

> ... manuscript remains of extinct languages or literary texts, inscriptions or documents exemplifying earlier stages of modern literary languages.
>
> Gumperz 1972: 2

Using the neo-grammarians' theory of sound change, other scholars constructed proto-languages such as Carl Meinhof's Ur-Bantu (Proto-Bantu). The works of dialectologists became useful not only for the field of linguistics but also for the fields of administration and education in the case of colonial powers. Their importance can be measured by the vast number of areas in which they have been applied and the fact that historical linguistics is still one of the major components in the linguistic studies at universities today. Naturally the scholars in early dialectological studies concentrated their attention on similarities between languages within the respective families to which they belonged and considered the dialects of individual languages as the final stage of the language evolution process. The unfortunate aspect of this is that dialectologists regarded

the concept of evolution as a phenomenon which could not be applied to society and therefore to language beyond the dialect. It represents evolution as a phenomenon which must grind to a halt at some point. However, there may be possible explanations for this stance. They may not have seen any need for going beyond the dialect because the language groups (nations) and the language sub-groups (speakers of their respective dialects) were very clearly distinguishable. Therefore it was not the differences but the similarities that they needed to focus their attention on in order to justify their hypothesis. The alleged residual nature of these similarities and their relative paucity made them a more attractive and exciting area of research in an atmosphere dominated by Darwin's theory of evolution.

I shall refer to the various language groups as *language communities* and the reason for this is explained below. While the scholars were deeply involved in these dialectological studies another process had already begun to take place and was continuing to do so as a result of some behavioural and other factors related to the dynamics and structuring of society.

As the disintegration of the proto-societies and their proto-languages had resulted in the emergence of different societies with different languages, the societies developed

into various strata which were characterized, inter alia, by differences in speech behaviour. The elements of each social stratum were drawn to one another by a variety of ties, all of which found expression in similarity of speech behaviour. I shall call these strata *speech communities* and their elements *members of a speech community*. What then is a speech community and what is the significance of a speech community in a language survey?

2.2.1.1   The Speech Community

There seems to be no unanimity among sociolinguists as to what a speech community is. It seems too that attempts to define a speech community are determined to a very large extent both by the orientation of the person defining it and by the context of the definition. In some definitions speech community is treated as synonymous with language community. For Hertzler, for instance, people that speak the same language constitute a language family irrespective of geographical distribution, although in the same vein he writes:

> Thus the 'English' speech community includes England, the United States, English Canada, New Zealand, Australia and much of South Africa.
>
> 1965: 34

These speech or language communities, he says, each have "regional (geographical) sublanguages, known as dialects" and that there are "special languages among different functional groups ..." (Ibid)

Hertzler's view is shared by Bloomfield and Chomsky. Bloomfield regarded a speech community as:

> ... a group of people who use the same system of speech signals.
>
> 1961 : 29

Chomsky (1965 : 3) refers to a "completely homogeneous speech community" whose speakers know its language perfectly. These views render "speech community" a redundant concept.

Gumperz defined a speech community from within a socially defined universe. In his definition, a speech community is:

> Any human aggregate characterized by means of a shared body of verbal signs and set off from similar aggregates by significant differences in language usage.
>
> 1972: 219

Although Gumperz's definition includes also "modern nations divisible into small regions", it represents a remarkable shift from the earlier ones cited above since in it are

included "even occupational associations"and "neighbourhood gangs".

A complete break with these definitions came with Labov whose definition dismissed the notion of similarity of forms used and emphasized the notion of the similarity of norms as central in the definition of a speech community. His thesis was:

> The speech community is not defined by any marked agreement in the use of language elements, so much as by participation in a set of shared norms; these norms may be observed in overt types of evaluative behaviour, and by uniformity of abstract patterns of variation which are invariant in respect to particular levels of usage.
>
> 1972: 120

I have already mentioned the other factors that bind a speech community together in addition to the norms (see paragraph 2.4.4). R.T. Bell goes even further by adding another prerequisite feature which he considers crucial in the definition of a speech community, namely attitude, when he suggests that it should be seen as:

> ... a group of individuals who believe themselves to belong to such a community.
>
> 1976 : 217

For the purposes of this thesis the last three definitions shall be adopted, especially that of Labov, and this

accounts for the distinction I make between a language community and a speech community. I may note, however, that Labov's definition has been very severely criticized by Suzanne Romaine, who is convinced that, if Labov is correct, then:

> ... speech communities do not know how to behave;
> or else linguists do not know what speech
> communities are or how they behave.
>
> 1982: 15

She believes the latter is the case. Suzanne Romaine, along with Nancy Dorian (1982), believes that any definition of a speech community should take into account also those members of a speech community who have passive or semi-passive competence but are actively competent in understanding and interpreting the norms shared by the speech community, because as she says:

> We scarcely know how heterogenous some speech
> communities are.
>
> Ibid

Furthermore, this does not seem to represent any considerable shift from Labov's definition but rather is complementary thereto since Labov's emphasis is also on shared norms.

2.2.1.2   Speech Communities and Language Surveys

The significance of speech communities in language surveys can be summed up by saying that they yield variation in language. The biggest threat to the success of any language survey, especially one that is intended to uncover information critical to the teaching of that language as a second language, is the point of departure that assumes homogeneity of language. This assumption leads the researcher to see the language community as one entity and disregard the various elements that constitute it and the effect that these may have on their sum total. A suitable point of departure can be best illustrated as one that sees language as a jungle made up of a number of different species with differences in their respective functional values and vitality potential. The jungle itself is an abstraction. Thus, no-one, who is interested in understanding this jungle, can afford to ignore the various species that constitute it. Speech communities are therefore the social elements that form the bigger community of the language jungle. All those features that set each speech community off from the others find expression in their linguistic behaviour which is different from that of the others. These differences are determined to a large extent by the intensity of the demarcation lines separating the speech communities. This is how varieties in a language emerge. As the speech communities yield varieties, the

varieties themselves reflect the speech communities within the language community. The importance of speech communities can be measured by the importance of varieties in a language survey. The importance of varieties in language education is discussed later in this chapter.

However, I may just mention those areas of language education for which the identification of speech communities is crucial. The link between language and culture is universally recognized resulting in the recognition and acknowledgement of the importance of culture in language study. This emphasizes the importance of the speech communities since they represent the various sub-cultures within the culture of a community. As the speech communities exist in diglossic relationships and since membership of them is not mutually exclusive, information about them can also throw light on situations for which a particular variety is appropriate. Those involved in language syllabus design can benefit from their knowledge of the speech communities of the community in which the syllabus is to be used. This is true too for those who compile courses on communication for special purposes such as worker and occupational groups. The language learners' communication needs can be successfully met if the speech communities are accurately identified. The achievement of some of the objectives of the language syllabus depend on awareness. The lexicographer and the translation

scientist/practitioner, even though their work may not have a very direct bearing on teaching, also stand to benefit from information about speech communities. Thus the taxonomy of the language varieties, be they sociolinguistic or discourse varieties, which is becoming even more important, with the emphasis on second language learning now being on communicative competence, relies for its accuracy on the proper identification of speech communities.

It should be noted, however, that within each speech community, there may be differences in the choice of forms according to geographical distribution. The speech community of dock workers in Cape Town may have forms which are different from those of their counterparts in East London.

2.2.2   Language Attitudes

In the previous chapter it was shown how attitude towards a language contributes to its diversification. It was shown that a situation of language homogeneity is not conducive to the development and/or formulation of clearly observable language attitudes. Thus language heterogeneity is the premise for these.

In this section language attitude will be considered from three further points of view. First, since we are here

concerned with the contribution that sociolinguistic surveys can make towards language teaching, attention will be given to the people's attitudes towards the varieties of a language. Second will be considered the attitude of the speakers of one language towards another one which co-exists with theirs. Third, and very briefly, I shall consider also the attitude of the speakers of a language towards the manner in which their own language is spoken by the speakers of other languages. The second and third points of view are even more relevant to this thesis, since it is concerned with the sociolinguistics of second language teaching and learning. They are even more so in the context of teaching an African language as a second language in South Africa because of the unique socio-political nature of the South African society where the separation of races is constitutionalized. Thus, for the purposes of this section, language attitude is treated as having a bilateral nature. On the one hand it is taken as internally projected, while on the other it is taken as externally projected. It is internally projected when it refers to the people's attitude towards the varieties existing within their language. The externally projected attitude is two-dimensional as shown in the second and third points of view above. The difference between these, however, is very marginal since the extent to which a language is diversified is invariably conditioned by differences in the backgrounds of those who speak it. Examples of these differences in backgrounds are minority

groups such as immigrants who find themselves compelled by certain pressures to give up their native languages in favour of the language of the majority group until they eventually become linguistically assimilated to the latter group. Together with other factors operating within the majority group's language, they contribute to the emergence of varieties in the language. Perhaps a significant difference between these last two projections of attitude is the extent to which the externally projected attitude is embedded in the history of socio-political relations that exist between the speakers of the two languages. Another even more significant difference between them, for the purposes of this thesis, is the extent to which an externally projected attitude affects second language teaching. This is comparable with the extent to which an internally projected attitude affects first language teaching.

2.2.2.1   <u>Internally Projected Attitude</u>

Ryan, Giles and Sebastian have provided an organizational framework within which attitudes towards language varieties may be studied. This framework consists of three notions, namely the notions of:

> ... sociostructural determinants underlying the development and expression of language attitudes ... the three types of measurement technique ... and the two primary evaluative dimensions.

<div align="right">1982: 3</div>

: From a number of possible socio-structural determinants they consider the most important ones. The first is standardization and the second is vitality. In the previous paragraphs reference has been made to the standard variety.

> The primary distinction among varieties is based upon the extent to which they have been standardized.

<div align="center">Ibid</div>

Sociolinguists working in the area of language varieties are unanimous in feeling that to assert that one variety of language is better than the others is a myth. It is quite extensively documented in sociolinguistic literature that the principles that form the basis of standardization of one particular variety instead of another lie outside of the variety itself. In other words, a variety has no intrinsic value that justifies its being chosen for standardizing. The main determining factor in the advancement of the process of the standardization of a variety is the socio-political power of those who speak it. This group of powerful elites codify a set of norms which define the "correct" usage of their variety and these norms get accepted by the speakers of other varieties who, as a result of their powerlessness, have no say in the matter. The power elites, using their socio-political power, then proceed to make these norms available to the people in the

form of dictionaries, grammars, phrase books etc. These are backed up with a language policy which entrenches the standardized variety. Such policy stipulates that the variety be used in institutions such as the government, the schools and in the mass media and literature. Hence such idealized forms of speech as the B.B.C. or Queen's English. For these reasons, the variety enjoys the advantage of a wider dissemination over the others and also the advantage of being associated with the nation's formal social institutions and all the social interaction values in these institutions. Ultimately this variety becomes synonymous with language in terms of perception, with the result that whenever people talk of language x, y or z, this is a reference to the standardized variety. Other factors pertinent to the process of standardization are to be found in the history of a nation.

The fact that Eastern Cape Xhosa (the Xhosa of the amaNgqika) became the standard dialect of Xhosa is a result of historical coincidence. Had the missionary societies started their work among the amaMpondo and had they started schools in Pondoland, there is no doubt that isiMpondo would have been the standard dialect today instead of Xhosa. The missionaries working among the Xhosa in the Eastern Cape, motivated by their desire to have their converts able to read and write, committed Xhosa to writing and taught their converts reading and writing skills. As Ryan et al. say:

> Variants which are used in written communication
> are much more likely to be standardized than those
> which are used solely in the oral modality.

> Ibid

This is exactly how Eastern Cape Xhosa came to be the standard.

In South Africa, however, we have a linguistic situation which is interesting in its complexity. As a result of the multilingual nature of the country there are as many standard varieties as there are ethnic groups. Because of the political power factor the national language choice has not been determined by numerical strength. As a result of factors which are to be found in the history of the relations between the two minority ethnic groups that form the ruling elite, as well as factors in their respective historical backgrounds, and also as a result of their equality in socio-political power, their respective power elite varieties have become official languages. This situation, together with the current waves of political thoughts, have given impetus to academic debates as to what the language policy will be in a politically changed South Africa. The South African situation and the academic debates on future language policy are, however, relevant to my discussion here only insofar as they are examples of the interaction between history and standardization and insofar

as they have bearing on the shaping of language attitudes that are now, and in the future will be, significant for language teaching and learning.

A significant aspect of the process of standardization is that in very many cases it conflicts with reality. The choice of a standard variety may not be a reflection of the general feeling of the population. The assumed, or alleged, number of its speakers may conflict with the number of people who actually use it in their everyday lives. R. Y. Bourhis (1982: 37) cites the example of France where the National Convention in 1793 commissioned Abbe Gregoire to undertake a language survey aimed at determining the number of French speakers in France. In his report, which was curiously entitled: "Report on the needs and means to destroy the 'patois' and to universalize the use of the French language", Gregoire had to reveal that out of a population of 26 million people in France at the time, only 3 million could speak the standard variety fluently. This was despite the fact that as far back as 1539 Ile de France was declared by the power elites to be the only official language of France and all other varieties were banned. Notwithstanding this revelation, contempt for other varieties continued and manifested itself in a number of laws that were passed to entrench the standard variety. A similar situation existed in Spain where the standard dialect is Castilian solely because, as St Clair says:

> ... it is the dialect that was spoken under the political hegemony of Castile at the time when this group defeated the other provinces of Spain and imposed its regional dialect on them.
>
> 1982: 165

The Castilian Spanish which was imposed as the standard variety did not succeed in stifling the aspirations of the other varieties' speakers such as Catalan, Basque, Gascan and Galician.

: This determinant relates:

> to the degree to which a variety has visible vitality ...
>
> Ryan and Giles 1982: 4

It is related to the survey of speech communities discussed above because it is concerned with a variety's potential to survive. The factors that are necessary for this potential to survive are the interaction networks that actually use it and its essential uses. The more interaction networks there are that use it and the greater the range and importance of its functions are, the greater the potential to survive becomes. A reduction in the numerical strength of the speakers and in the functional value of a variety results in the weakening of its vitality. In a paper read at a conference of the African Languages Association of Southern

Africa (Western Cape Branch) in 1984, Professor Louwrens of the University of South Africa showed how the Pai variety of Sotho has lost its vitality as a result of these same factors. The province of Quebec in Canada provides an example of an increase in the vitality of a variety. Because of the numerical strength of the speakers and the increasing functional value of Quebeçois, which the French Canadians use more for all their daily interaction than they use the French of France, the French Canadians have gained the legitimation of Quebeçois. The economic importance of the area in which a variety is spoken also affects its vitality. An example of this is the Catalan variety of Spanish. Catalonia is a very heavily industrialized area of Spain, and as a result, Catalan is spoken by people who primarily belong to the middle and upper socioeconomic classes. The economic strength of the area has rendered the recognition of the variety inevitable in various domains. M.A. Carranza says:

> By the late 1960s the push for language autonomy was being led not only by the lower but also middle-class Catalanians. The open repression by the Nationalist government only served to reinforce the determination of the people to make Catalan an official language. In many ways Catalan did become the official language of workers, students and politicians.

> 1982: 66

Against the background of socioeconomic weakness the government's repressive measures would have succeeded in eliminating this variety.

Another factor contributing to the vitality of a variety is the political climate of a country which yields certain attitudes within the population in general and the various speech communities in particular. An example of this is the development of the Black Power movement in the United States of America as a result of which the ingroup values of Black English became well recognized and the Afro-Americans became less and less willing to give up their speech variety. There is evidence of this unwillingness in the language used in some books written by Afro-Americans, especially those in which pride and need for it in blackness are extolled. The extract below is taken from Soledad Brother:

> Inside the joint it is the same, only much more intense. A sense of terror, betrayal and insecurity prevails at all times..... An Italian in the Syndicate at one time killed a Mexican in Falsan because the Mex suddenly started telling everyone not to trust someone, who was supposed to be a rat. The pigs wanted to put him out of business (importing dope into the joint) and wanted to get the Mex killed. So they call the Mex into their office and showed him some phoney papers indicating that the guy was a rat.

> Jackson 1970: 187

The possible effect of the South Africa Black poets writing in English may speed up the awareness and use of Black

English in South Africa even in sectors where its use has hitherto been considered highly improper.

The vitality and standardization determinants complement each other. Since the various interaction networks are held together in diglossic relations, the variety that, subsequent to the operating of the factors mentioned above, serves the function of outgroup and formal communication more than the others acquires a stronger vitality. It therefore stands to reason that such a variety stands a better chance than all the others to be standardized. Standardization in turn strengthens its vitality while it may result in the decline of the vitality of some of the other varieties, as shown by the Pai example.

: A sizeable amount of work on the techniques of measuring language attitudes has been done, mostly within the realm of social psychology. Sociologists and sociolinguists have also made a considerable contribution in the field, which, by its very interdisciplinary nature, calls for symbiotic relationships among scholars working in it. The works of these sociolinguists outline the actual modus operandi which the researchers followed and the kinds of responses that were elicited, as well as some of the factors that have a potential to cause a gap between the responses elicited and their accuracy. The presence of such factors has made a

positive contribution to the field insofar as they have given more insight into the complex nature of the field and into the problems that may face a prospective researcher. The planning of researc work can only benefit from this insight.

In 1960 Lambert, Hodgson, Gardner and Fillenbaum published "Evolution of reactions to spoken language" in Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology 60 (pp. 44-51). In this work they introduced the "matched-guise" technique in measuring reactions towards French and English guises in Montreal. This technique involved asking the English and French respondents to evaluate the personality of a speaker after listening to his tape-recorded reading of the same passage in each of two or more varieties. All the English respondents rated the English guise more favourably than they did the French guise. A conclusion was reached by the researchers that, while the speakers of the high variety responded favourably towards their variety, those of the low variety had also adopted the same attitude towards the variety of the high-status group. Lambert and his colleagues improved on this technique in 1967 by making a more specific list of personality dimensions such as:

> ... speaker's competence (e.g. dimensions like intelligence and industriousness), personal integrity (helpfulness and trustworthiness) and social attractiveness (friendliness, sense of humour)

> Edwards 1985: 148

Later scholars adapted and used Lambert's technique as a basis for their own studies. More factors were taken into account and the backgrounds of the respondents were diversified. Other means of eliciting responses were employed, such as direct questions, interviews and the indirect or anonymous observation of attitude from language used in speech and mass media.

A number of factors have been found to play a significant role in measuring language attitudes. The sex, the age, the place of residence of the respondents, the spatio-temporal context of the interview and the role relations between interviewer and respondent. In the next paragraph (2.2.2.2) reference will be made to another factor which, from all the comments on attitude measurement techniques, seems to stand out as the most important for the purposes of this thesis, namely, the socio-political setting of the research.

: This socio-structural dimension of the framework within which to consider language attitude is concerned with the investigation of the different perceptions that are evoked by the different varieties insofar as these perceptions manifest themselves in distinctive patterns of language preference for two contrasting varieties that have a diglossic relationship. There are some factors which determine variety preference

patterns. The socioeconomic status of the speakers of a variety significantly influences the perception of their relative prestige. Thus speakers of the 'low' variety may choose to use a 'high' variety in certain social interaction contexts simply because, in these interaction contexts, they may wish to project the same status that is associated with its speakers. Invariably this variety is the one that has been standardized and some of the reasons for its being associated with a high status are the same as those that led to its being standardized. However, the speaker of the non-standard varieties may associate this high variety also with such attributes as intelligence, expertise and confidence (Ryan et al. 1982: 8). Another factor which determines variety preference patterns is solidarity. Speakers of a 'low' variety may use it for ingroup interaction as a symbol of ingroup solidarity. Invariably the contexts of such ingroup interaction are those of intimate friendship, family and informality. In some situations this feeling of ingroup solidarity is motivated by a desire to resist certain pressures that threaten the autonomy of the group since one's native language normally invokes feelings of belonging and unity. Such pressures usually emanate from the nature of the socioeconomic relations that exist between the two groups of speakers. If the relations are healthy there is a marked decline in the feeling of ingroup solidarity, while a decline in healthy intergroup relations results in an increased sense of group solidarity.

Variety preference patterns are also determined by what John Edwards (1985: 151) refers to as linguistic accommodation. This has already been referred to in Chapter . Although this was in a different context, the principles involved are the same and will therefore not be gone into again here. Giles and Powesland (1975) as quoted by Edwards (1985: 152), sum up the accommodation theory when they define it as:

> ... an attempt on the part of the speaker to modify or disguise his persona in order to make it more acceptable to the person addressed.

Despite Giles' and Powesland's definition quoted above, a speaker may not be consciously aware at all times that, in addressing the listener, he is accommodating the speech of the listener in his manner of speech. Depending on the relations that hold between the speaker and the listener, the accommodation attempts may or may not yield the required acceptance. The listener may feel that such accommodation attempts are indicative of a condescending attitude on the part of the speaker if their social relations are negative. True as it is, this is quite unfortunate because effective communication can be severely hampered if one of the speakers is perceived to have a low opinion of the other. In a country where there is polarization of language groups and in which intergroup relations can therefore be easily strained, this can have very serious implications for second language learning.

2.2.2.2   Externally Projected Attitude

The points that have been discussed in the above paragraph are equally valid here. As in the case of attitudes towards varieties within an individual language, in a society that is multilingual there is normally one language which assumes a higher status than the others. The reasons are the same as those that make one variety higher than the others. Even in South Africa where English and Afrikaans are the official languages, English is viewed by the majority of speakers of Black languages as more prestigious than Afrikaans. These points shall therefore not be repeated here. However, from these, one seems to stand out as more important in determining the attitudes of the speakers of one language towards another, namely the socio-political context may be looked at from both a diachronic and a synchronic point of view. The diachronic point of view, on the one hand, takes into account the history of the socio-political relations of the speakers of the concerned language. On the other hand, the synchronic point of view considers the current socio-political relations.

Speakers of one language may have negative attitudes towards another because their past relations were characterized by conflict and domination, especially if these resulted in what was understood to be language oppression. As St Clair puts it:

> These patterns of development may have once
> surfaced in the form of social movements and, even
> when these events are now part of the written
> record, their forces still remain.

<div align="right">1982: 164</div>

The history of the Afrikaans language in South Africa is an example of this. The formation in 1875 of such organizations as the Genootskap van Regter Afrikaanders "om te staan vir ons Taal, ons Nasie en ons Land" and other subsequent organizations such as De ` Zuid-Afrikaanse Taalbond, were all a culmination of dissatisfaction with what was seen as language oppression.

St Clair goes on to say:

> They are evident in the subtle metaphors of
> everyday speech; and they can be found implicitly
> stated in standardized texts, teacher training
> courses ... legislation and administrator's
> handbooks.

<div align="right">Ibid.</div>

Afrikaans and English speakers in South Africa, for example, may have mutual negative attitudes towards one another's language solely because of historical factors despite the parity in socio-political power and despite the relatively narrow gap between their respective cultures.

The synchronic point of view can be exemplified in the South African context by looking at the relations of Blacks and Whites. South African Blacks may have negative attitudes towards Afrikaans and English not only because of historical factors but also because of current socio-political relations. An example of this is the triggering of the 1976 uprisings by the enforcement of Afrikaans as the medium of instruction in Black schools. As in the case of varieties within an individual language, increased political awareness tends to draw people closer and closer to their language and further away from the one they associate with their oppressors. Indeed, a study of attitudes towards a language is the study of attitudes towards its speakers. Among Blacks in South Africa my observation, for instance, is that since the development of the Black Consciousness Movement in the sixties, the use of English in informal interaction among people of the same language is no longer considered as proper. Yet prior to this period, this was not only common but also considered a high status symbol, obviously because of the traditional influence of mission schools and the prestige attached to English. This point may interest John Edwards who seems to confuse the growth of the number of Black people who, as a result of growing literacy, are becoming proficient in speaking English and the number of those who actually use it. He says that, among the Blacks, English "is generally viewed as more prestigious ... and English speaking is on the increase" (1985: 173). On the

contrary, the number of those who are products of mission schools is decreasing. The schools are no longer as strict about the use of English by the pupils on the school premises as they used to be. The so-called national states and the independent homelands are giving official language status to their respective languages. Edwards' alleged increase in the use of English is not proved by any increase in competence and proficiency on the part of the Black pupils as teachers of English and university lecturers would verify.

Another aspect of the synchronic point of view is the notion of culture. The question of culture does, however, interlock with historical factors since views held by speakers of one language about their culture may be rooted in the history of their relations with the speakers of another language. These may strengthen or weaken attachment to their culture. If, historically, the relations had been those of ill-will, those who feel that they suffered more from this ill-will may tend to be inhibited in assimilating the culture of those who inflicted the suffering. This may find expression in their attitude towards the language of their former tormentors. If, on the other hand, history does not provide them with any grounds for cultural inhibition and the two cultures themselves are not very different, the extent of conservatism may be a factor in determining culture values and therefore language attitudes.

The more conservative the speakers of a language are, the more sensitive they are to cultural assimilation. This resistance to cultural assimilation also finds expression in language attitudes since language is one of the instruments for maintaining group identity. In such a conservative language group the use of another language may be frowned upon as indicative of cracks in the walls of cultural identity.

The issue of culture interlocks also with that of current socio-political climate. The politically disadvantaged tend to use culture as one weapon in their fight to change their position. Therefore they attach more value to their culture. The implications of this for language attitude are tremendous.

The gap between the culture of the speakers of one language and that of the speakers of another also plays a significant role in determining language attitudes. A narrow culture gap enhances the chances of mutual understanding. The understanding and appreciation of a culture are bound to have a positive effect on attitudes towards the language in which that culture is expressed, since they result in more interaction with the speakers and more interest in the use of their language. The opposite is the case when the gap is wide.

Notwithstanding all the above, it should always be noted that practical considerations such as functional expediency may overweigh negative views about a language, and this may not be reflected in the responses elicited by means of direct questions. It should be remembered:

> that people are not generally swayed by abstract or romantic appeals which cannot compete with more immediate exigencies

Edwards 1985: 141

This underlines the importance of the use of anonymous observation in the survey of language attitudes. For this reason Edwards (p.140) warns that, in assessing attitudes, a careful distinction should always be made between attitude and belief, even though belief is an element of attitude. A person may believe and acknowledge that a language is useful and important for him and his kind in their everyday lives, but ne may also hate it because of what he may feel it stands for.

There are a number of other factors that contribute to the problem of eliciting responses that are a true reflection of language attitudes. These are such factors as the researcher himself, the institution under whose auspices the research is carried out, the role relations that exist between researcher and respondent and the physical setting of the interview itself. The researcher, for example, may

be influenced (in framing the questions for the interview) by his own biases as well as those of the institution for which he is working. This could be worse even if he has not been involved in the framing of the questions since he could then be restricted by the questionnaire. It would not be far-fetched, for instance, to suspect that when the National Convention commissioned Gregoire to undertake the survey in 1793 (para. 2.2.2.1 above) they were secretly hoping that the outcome of the survey would justify the enforcement of Ile de France. It is noteworthy that in the Human Sciences Research Council's report on English and Afrikaans amongst Blacks in South Africa, which outlines the findings of a survey completed during December 1975 by G.K. Schuring, there is no indication, according to responses analysed, of negative attitudes towards Afrikaans. On the contrary, the responses obtained induced the researcher to end the report by saying:

> The continued existence of Afrikaans amongst Blacks is thus apparently not primarily determined 'in the streets of Soweto' but by the Whites. The knowledge that they acquire of Afrikaans will be decided by the extent to which Whites develop, enrich and use this language.

> Schuring 1979: 63

Yet what happened on 16 June 1976 is now history. One cannot help feeling that, had the research been carried out, say, under the auspices of the Black Peoples Convention, the report would have ended differently. Perhaps a classic

example of possible disparity between pronounced and actual attitude is provided by the fact that a Minister of Education in the Transkei made the following statement in 1972:

> My government has no intention of pushing Afrikaans into the background. It is a language not generally spoken in the Transkei, but as long as it remains a language of the Republic, our children will learn it.
>
> Rapport 22 October 1972 (as quoted by Schuring 1979: 63)

However, when the Transkei got its independence in 1976 Afrikaans was removed from the schools' curricula.

The researcher may not be conversant with the behavioural patterns of the community in which he is working. Can one consider as significant, in measuring attitudes towards English among Blacks, that there is more English used at parties than in any other situation, according to Schuring (1979: 21), given the fact that there usually is drinking of alcohol at parties and the fact that intoxication tends to have an effect on linguistic behaviour? Some people tend to use more English when intoxicated. Moreover, the question does not specify the kind of party in terms of whether it is formal or informal.

The social distance between respondent and interviewer and the setting of the interview may also affect the accuracy of the responses. Respondents are known for their capacity to predict the expectations of the interviewer and their tendency to want to confirm these expectations. It is the unfortunate fate of research into some issues that the researcher has no access to the inner feelings of the respondent and that indirect observations, for obvious reasons, are not always accorded the same validity that is accorded to responses directly elicited within visibly identifiable data bases. How often, for instance, does one hear a person say "I like to use language x because you can use it anyhow and mix it with tsotsitaal, language y or z. I don't worry about grammar as long as the message is conveyed, unlike in language y where I have to think of correct grammar."?

There are a number of other factors that have a bearing on the practical realities of a country's situation. Schuring's survey, for instance, reflects a low percentage of Blacks who read newspapers in their languages, but he does concede that this may possibly be due to the fact that "newspapers and periodicals are not available in all the Bantu languages." (p.29) In addition to this, another possible explanation may be the fact that in the case of the few available newspapers and periodicals, these appear

mostly weekly and monthly respectively and their news coverage tends to be too parochial.

All these inhibiting factors do not, however, detract from the value of responses directly elicited because they are still capable of producing a considerable wealth of new and valuable information. Instead they call for further exploration into the ways and means of reducing - and even eliminating - their chances of affecting the accuracy of responses.

The research done by Lambert et al., referred to above, showed that speakers of one language can have a negative attitude in their evaluation of the manner in which their language is spoken by speakers of other languages. We have also mentioned in the previous chapter the tendency of speakers of one language to accommodate other language-speakers by speaking in the same "incorrect" manner. The converse of this can be a reluctance to respond positively to the speech of other language-speakers if it is regarded as "incorrect". This may result in a breakdown not only in communication but also in intergroup relations. It may have serious implications for second language teaching as it can result in the adoption of biased evaluative methods if the teacher is a first language speaker who is consciously or unconsciously opposed to the "incorrect" use of his language. A positive attitude will manifest itself, for

instance, in complimenting the non-mother-tongue speaker for his attempts and in showing appreciation for them. This encourages the learner-speaker. Amongst Xhosa speakers, for instance, it is very common to hear people say of a learner-speaker, "O, usithetha kamnandi isiXhosa lo mntu",("O, this person speaks good Xhosa".) while a mother-tongue speaker's "incorrect" use of Xhosa is less tolerated. In Chapter Four we will attempt to demonstrate in detail how the externally projected attitude is implicated in language learning and teaching.

2.2.3   Language Learners' Communication Needs

The question of the language needs of a community is one aspect of a language survey that can very easily be overlooked, especially if the language surveyed has a long history of standardization and is not an official language or one of the official languages of a country. The possible reasons for this are not difficult to imagine. Language surveys are usually carried out as a response to some language-related problems at administrative levels with a view to gathering information that may lead to the devising of workable language policies. This information may relate to such issues as the number of speakers of that language, the number of people with speaking, writing and reading proficiency in it, their geographical distribution, its dialects (usually regional), the number of the speakers of

each dialect, and attitudes towards the language. Findings of these surveys may result in the implementation of certain policies such as which language to standardize (where there has been none standardized) and therefore, which one to teach in schools and in which areas. Surveys of this nature are typical of a situation where language education is still in its infancy or where there has been a disruption in the linguistic status quo. All these surveys are invariably and understandably characterized by a tendency on the part of the administrators to assume authority in identifying and pronouncing the language needs of the community with little or no regard for the actual needs and ways of meeting them as perceived by the communities themselves. I say "understandably" because there has to be somewhere to start - even though the Leninist language policies have shown that there is an alternative to this tendency (Edwards 1985: 180).

In the case of an already standardized language or, to be exact, one that already has a dialect that has been standardized, language surveys are usually undertaken to inform the administrators on such issues as attitude, preference in use, preferences in medium of instruction in schools or to reassess the geographical distribution in order to readjust the areas in which the language is taught or in order to draw up and/or update language atlases. Examples of these, to mention just a few, are: T.

Hauptfleisch's <u>Language Loyalty in South Africa</u> (Four volumes), G. Schuring's <u>A Multilingual Society (English and Afrikaans amongst Blacks in RSA)</u> and its Afrikaans version by Schuring and Yzel <u>'n Ondersoek na die taalsituasie in die Suid-Afrikaanse Swart gemeenskap</u>, all HSRC's projects, and Afrikaans Language Atlas at the University of Pretoria. K.P. Prinsloo (1978) gives a list of all institutions that are involved in research in the field of language.

The unfortunate aspect of surveys of a language or languages that already have a standardized variety, as far as the needs of the second language learner are concerned, is that they seem to assume that proficiency in the standard variety is the only way of meeting these needs. Thus the focus tends to be on proficiency in the standard as well as on attitudes towards it. Writing about language research programmes of the Sociolinguistic Division of the HSRC, Prinsloo says:

> Error analyses are being undertaken to establish what standard types of error are made when using an official language, so that these errors may be taken into account in language instruction.
>
> 1978: 54

It is true that proficiency in the standard variety can lessen the burden of the second language learner to a very great extent. However, it is my contention here, that given the idealistic nature of the standard variety, the

variability of a language and the diversity of the communication needs of second language learners, any language survey that is concerned with second language education but confines itself to the standard and does not consider the other varieties, is not likely to yield any findings that can help solve the problem of meeting the communication needs of second language learners.

The relevance of the notion of learners' communication needs in a language survey lies in the fact that the identification of speech communities and, therefore, varieties within the target language and the measuring of the attitudes of its first language speakers towards the speech of its second language speakers, can go a very long way in helping to identify or predict the needs of second language speakers, in making them aware of these, if they are not, or to respond to them when expressed by the learners themselves. This can be achieved by structuring or adjusting a syllabus or lessons accordingly. On the other hand, there is no possibility of this if only the standard variety is the focal point of the survey, since such a survey presupposes a homogeneous language community. The tragedy of this, of course, is the possible frustration of the learner who may discover that, after all the learning time demanded by and devoted to the standard variety, it does very little to help him meet the demands of his own day-to-day real life communication situation. This is true

of second language learners of Xhosa in South Africa, for example, who have gone out after finishing at school or university to fields such as civil service, health and welfare, industry, etc., only to discover that what they learnt is not equal to the task of enabling them to meet their communication needs.   Malcolm X, in a different context though, gives a classic example of a person thoroughly schooled in the use of the standard variety of American English but who could not make head nor tail of what a hustler meant when he said:

> "Hey, baby!   I dig you holding this all-originals scene at the track ... I'm going to lay a vine under the Jew's balls for a dime - got to give you a play - Got the shots out here trying to scuffle up on some bread ... Well, my man, I'll get on, got to peck a little and cop me some z's ..."

(This can be translated as: Hullo mate! I understand you are having a Black-only bazaar at the hall ... I shall pawn my suit for ten dollars because I must patronise your bazaar although I am struggling to make ends meet. Well my man, I must go now, I want to go and eat a little and then sleep for a while.)

Perhaps in the case of Black languages in South Africa, the work of G. Schuring on the varieties of Sotho in Pretoria will lead to more similar surveys in other Black languages and these may eventually sensitize second language educators and learners and even administrators to the importance of

relating these to the communication needs of second language learners and then revise the syllabi. The growing number of English poems written in township English may lead to the appearance of similar literature in the vernaculars with similar possible effect.

In the last chapter we shall attempt to show how John Munby's 1978 suggestions for identifying and trying to meet the learners' communication needs can be helpful in the teaching of Xhosa as a second language.

2.2.4   Importance for Language Education

The question that is addressed in this section is the extent to which the sociolinguistic survey of a language can benefit language education with special reference to second language education. Therefore, in order to avoid the risk of generalization, it may be necessary to start byexplaining what is meant by language education in the context of this chapter. I have chosen to do this by presenting a descending hierarchy of the parties involved in language education. At the highest level of this hierarchy are the language policy-makers, followed by the language syllabus designer, then the language teacher trainer, the language teacher, and, finally, the language learner. All these parties are active participants in an activity taking place within a given community. Therefore, although the other

members of the community may not be actively involved in the activity and although they may, therefore, not have a place in this hierarchy, any language education discussion that excludes them can hardly be complete. It is with this in mind that I include the members of the community (parents) among those who not only can benefit from sociolinguistic surveys but also contribute towards making the task of language education and learner less burdensome.

2.2.4.1 The Policy-Makers

In the preceding paragraphs it has already become clear how the policy-makers can benefit from sociolinguistic surveys. Therefore I shall not repeat it here. Perhaps what can be added here is that these surveys can help them make language policies that are conducive to the promotion of positive language attitudes and that allow for a certain degree of flexibility giving the language syllabus designer room to respond to the practical needs of the learner. In other words, sociolinguistic surveys can enable the language policy maker to strike a balance between his responsibility as the custodian of the standard variety and the need to avoid enslaving the language syllabus designers and practitioners to it, thereby saving them from linguistic idealism. In any case it seems reasonable to avoid any lengthy discussion of the policy makers in a study that is about language teaching and learning, although the language

policy-makers have to be responsive to any feed-back coming

from those at the lower levels of the hierarchy. Moreover,

it is only through information from language survey findings

that language policy-makers are better able to make the

society aware of the importance of teaching and learning the

second language. Through lack of information about a

language it is possible that people may resist being taught

that language, arguing that it is not necessary for them.

As Stewart says:

> Where reactions of this type have caught language
> planners unawares, it has not necessarily been
> because they were totally unpredictable, but
> rather because not enough information was sought
> in advance about the ways in which languages may
> interact with other aspects of society.

> 1972: 532

2.2.4.2   The Language Syllabus Designer

The unfortunate fate of the teaching of any second language

is that it is invariably modelled on its teaching as a first

language. For instance, the teaching of Xhosa to non-

mother- tongue speakers, as the various syllabi show, had to

be modelled on its teaching to mother-tongue speakers. The

same is true of the teaching of Afrikaans and English to

non-mother-tongue speakers. Any differences that there may

be are usually those of content rather than those of

teaching methodology. I say this is unfortunate, inevitable

though it .may be, because it is how conflict between means

and ends in second language teaching is created. This would not be so if the teaching of a language to mother-tongue speakers were not so concerned with structural analysis of the standard variety, as has always been the case, and still is with African languages especially.

Although second-language teaching has a longer tradition than sociolinguistics, the advent of the latter has compelled language practitioners to review the means by which the ends of second language teaching can be achieved. The main aim of second language teaching has always been the acquisition of communicative competence with the objective being the understanding of its speakers and their culture. Thus, the ideal of communicative competence itself is hardly new as such. What is new, however, is the emphasis on the need to make speech, rather than structure, the target in second language teaching and learning. This has resulted in a vast amount of empirical research on speech behaviour patterns. Research findings have called for the revision of the methodology and content of second-language teaching with a view to tying it up with the new insights. The liberalization and democratization of society have also resulted in a change in the communication needs of communities thereby necessitating a faster application of these new insights.

This is where the language syllabus designer comes in and this is where sociolinguistic surveys can prove useful to him. The language designer occupies a very important position in the hierarchy of language education as he plays the role of the middleman between the policy maker (government department) and the language practitioners. As a member of either a Language Committee (ad hoc or long standing) or a Language Institute which the policy-maker may commission to design a syllabus, he is an applied linguistics specialist who has to mediate between the theoretical linguist and the teacher whose task is a practical one (Bell 1981: 13). Armed with the information from the findings of the sociolinguistic survey of a language on the areas discussed in the preceding paragraphs, especially needs and varieties, the language syllabus designer will be able not only to draw up a flexible syllabus to suit the varying demands of the learners from area to area and from level to level, but also to specify in the syllabus itself the rationale behind such a syllabus. This will allow the teacher to adjust and adapt his teaching accordingly, using the syllabus as a framework within which such adjustments and adaptations are made. Such a flexible syllabus will subsequently allow for flexibility in the evaluation procedures. It would be futile to specify rigid evaluation procedures if the teaching process has not been rigid.

On the other hand a syllabus designer who sees language merely as a system of forms or of knowledge and does not take its functional value into account may make the task of the teacher a burdensome one, as the teacher may find his hands full with motivating learners who do not see any link between what they are learning and their communication needs. The escape route from this is via the collection of enough information about a language before its syllabus is designed.

2.2.4.3   The Teacher Trainer

Both the teacher trainer and the teacher are essentially involved in the same activity. They both have the skills in the target language and their level of proficiency in it is the same. However, the difference between them is that the teacher trainer teaches the already skilled how to impart these skills. It is for this reason that I have chosen to treat them separately.

It has been a tradition that the teacher trainer and the teacher have been people who were mother-tongue speakers of the target language. Although this is no longer the case, nor has it always been possible, it is still ideal that they should be people with mother-tongue proficiency – even though this is not the case in places where there is a shortage of suitably qualified teachers resulting from a

variety of factors. In both cases the result has been that they attached the same value to the notion of "correct" language and adopted the same attitudes towards what they regarded as "wrong", "bad", "careless", "sloppy", "slovenly", "vulgar" or even "gibberish" (Edwards and Giles 1984: 125).

There are two categories of second language learners that the teacher has to contend with. There is the second-language learner who may come to the language class with no previous knowledge of the language. It may sometimes be argued that this is an easy learner to teach as he may not have the problem of having to unlearn the "incorrect" language acquired previously. Provided that this learner has only the teacher to use as his model and provided too that all members of his class are like him, this may be true. Then it may be argued that when this learner leaves school he is able to speak the "correct" language. However, this is unlikely to happen, except perhaps in situations where the pressure on the learner to acquire proficiency is very great - as is the case with the study of English and Afrikaans by Blacks in south Africa - or in the case of an exceptionally highly motivated learner, because immersion into the community that speaks the language is the best means of acquiring mother-tongue proficiency. Even if this were possible this learner would discover, after leaving school, that this "correct" language is not of much help to

him since there are very few situations in which he can use it. He may discover, to his disappointment, that successful interaction involves having to learn new skills, because, although he may be understood by his listeners, he may find it difficult to understand them. Of course his "correct" language foundation will be helpful to a certain extent, but the point is that the school will have failed him.

The second category of second language learner is the one who comes to school having acquired a certain degree of competence in the language, whether it be passive or active. Traditionally, from the teacher's point of view, this is a more problematic learner since he is competent in a variety which may conflict with the one that is the target at school. What is significant here is that this competence has been acquired through interaction with the members of one or more speech communities within the language community into which the first category learner has to move during or after his school career to put into use or improve what he has learnt at school. Yet, instead of taking advantage of the presence of this semi-competent learner by encouraging him to share his skills with the first category learner and by encouraging the latter to take advantage of his presence, the teacher requires them to learn the prescribed abstract variety. The irony of this is that the teacher encourages the learners to "mix with and talk to" as many speakers of the language as possible and as frequently as possible even

though he has shown by trying to change what is already known that what they will bring to his school from such interaction will not be acceptable.

Unless the teacher trainer is aware of the sociolinguistic realities of the target language, he may continue to design language teacher training programmes which may not be suitable for enabling the teacher trainee to be prepared to teach the language in a manner that will tie up with the needs of his future pupils because its content does not take account of currently used varieties and currently held attitudes. Unless the teacher trainer is aware of these realities, he is, in essence, himself not suitably qualified to train second language teachers.

The inevitable result is that he will produce low calibre teachers because they are not sensitized to the sociolinguistic realities of the languages they have been trained to teach. This eventually may lead to a number of other adverse results. Standards may drop, the number of takers of the language may either drop or remain static; teachers may leave the profession for less arduous and more fulfilling jobs. What is even worse is that the national objectives of teaching the second language may never be achieved, with the result that the whole idea of second language teaching may become an exercise in futility.

2.2.4.4   The Teacher and the Pupil

Teaching is an elitist activity taking place within an elitist institution, the school. Thus teachers are members of the elitist sections of the communities in which they work and, as such, share in almost all the elitist stereotypes.

> Teachers' attitudes have typically been built upon an assumed correctness of certain speech styles, usually those of the middle class. this has led logically to attempts to teach children "proper" linguistic habits, and to the assumption that their natural varieties may not always be completely adequate.
>
> Edwards and Giles 1984: 125

Depending on their training backgrounds, the syllabi which provide the framework of their activity, as well as on their communities' language values, teachers may or may not find themselves equal to the task of second language teaching. However, as Edwards and Giles observe, teachers are more than likely to be very easily initiated into the conservative norms of the school "... however they may feel before entering their school career ..." (Ibid.). In a second language situation pervaded by this kind of teacher attitude the disadvantages for the pupil are numerous.

A second-language learner is a disadvantaged learner regardless of which of the categories mentioned above he may belong to. Sociolinguistically, according to J.R. Edwards:

> Disadvantaged children are those whose home background and early socialization are such as to make the transition from home to school difficult.

> 1979: 22

Although many sociolinguists have treated the notion of language disadvantage within the context of social class, this cannot apply to South Africa - at least not in the context of second language teaching. Here language disadvantage has to do with language or race group identity and language Darwinism which manifests itself in the emergence and growth of non-standard varieties. A second-language teacher who does not take cognizance of this may unfairly hinder a child's progress at school. The tendency of such a teacher is to treat his subject in the same manner as the other subjects offered at his school. Yet the learning of these other subjects does not necessarily remove the child from his own cultural milieu.

> Hence, one could reasonably conclude that most school learning involves the acquisition of knowledge or habits which are already part of the make-up of the culture with which the student identifies. Such is not the case with second languages, however.

> R.C. Gardner 1979: 193

All the things the child has to learn during his second-language class do not just involve acquiring new information on such issues as grammar, vocabulary, tone etc. They involve the acquisition of "symbolic elements of a _different_ ethnolinguistic community". It is for this reason that Gardner suggests that second-language teaching should be viewed as a "central pyschological phenomenon" rather than a merely educational one. Unless the teacher adopts this approach, he is not sensitive to such questions as to what extent

> ... do affective factors such as social prestige,
> assumed superiority or, contrarywise, assumed
> inferiority,or enforcement of a hated language by
> a hated nation affect language learning in a
> child.

> (Gardner 1979: 194).

Gardner quotes Lambert (1936: 114) as saying that this approach, i.e. treatment of second language learning as a central psychological phenomenon:

> ... in brief, holds that an individual
> successfully acquiring a second language gradually
> adopts various aspects of behaviour which
> characterize members of another linguistic-
> cultural group.

> Ibid.

My thesis here is that the second language teacher can adopt this approach only if there has been a sociolinguistic survey of the target language, from the findings of which he

can draw all the information about the culture of its speakers, their language attitudes, the attitudes of the community from which the pupils come towards the target language and therefore the possible attitudes of the pupils as well as their ethnocentricity, the varieties and the speech communities. With this information he will be better equipped to handle the tasks of sensitizing his pupils to their possible future communication needs and therefore guiding them accordingly, motivating them, reshaping their attitudes should they be negative and encouraging them should he find them positive. Since sociolinguistic surveys reveal so much about the culture of the speakers of a language, a teacher who draws on their findings for his teaching strategies will easily see the importance of weaving some cultural aspects of speech behaviour into his lessons. Sociolinguistic survey findings inform the teacher also about the possible attitudes of the first language speakers towards the speech of the second language speakers of the target language. With this information the teacher is better able to programme his second language teaching in such a way that his pupils can not only predict the possible reactions of the first language speakers to their speech, but also cope with such reactions if they are negative, or to take full advantage of them if they are positive. Another possible contribution of sociolinguistic surveys to second language teaching is that their findings can form the basis of the teacher's own mini-sociolinguistic

survey among his pupils and of the community in which the school is situated. This would enable him to have some insight into the possible causes of what he would otherwise regard as "incorrect" use of the language and to enlighten the pupils on the appropriate contexts in which such "incorrect" forms can be used, rather than penalise them. All this is true also for such education officers as school inspectors and subject advisors or co-ordinators.

The frustration suffered by a second language learner who finds himself thrown into a language situation characterized by hypercorrection, is succinctly summarised by Ryan, Giles and Sebastian when they quote from Rodriguez' essay on his experiences as a Spanish-Mexican pupil attending an American school where he had to learn English. Rodriguez, a college school teacher, as Giles et al. put it:

> ... writes regretfully and self-questioningly of abandoning his Spanish-Mexican heritage in order to succeed at school and in the broader American society represented by the school.

He writes:

> The change came gradually but early. When I was beginning grade school, I noted to myself the fact that the classroom environment was so different in its styles and assumptions from my own family environment that survival would essentially entail a choice between both worlds. When I became a student, I was literally 'remade'; neither I nor my teachers considered anything I had known before as relevant. I had to forget most of what my culture had provided, because to remember it was a disadvantage. The past and its cultural values

became detachable, like a piece of clothing grown
heavy on a warm day and finally put away ...

                                          1982: 1

A vast number of sociolinguistic researchers into second-
language teaching and learning have confirmed the prejudices
to which a second language learner may be subjected by
teachers who are enslaved by the tradition of "correct"
language and who, consequently, may have negative attitudes
towards what they regard as deviant speech norms. In these
cases teachers are not necessarily aware that their beliefs
about language use are prejudicial to the pupils. Many of
these researchers have focussed mainly on the teachers'
stereotypes and the effects thereof on linguistically
disadvantaged pupils. One hardly ever comes across a survey
carried out within a situation where both the teachers and
the pupils are linguistically disadvantaged. This is
presumably because such a situation can only be found where
second language teaching activity takes place under
extremely peculiar socio-political conditions. The findings
of such a survey would be interesting.

2.2.4.5   The Parents

Any teaching takes place within a conceptual triangle
consisting of the teacher, the pupil and the parent,
although the parents are not directly involved in the actual
teaching and learning mechanisms. Parents represent the

wider membership of the community from which the teachers and the pupils come and, as such, they form the largest part of the socio-political arena in which the teaching and learning activities take place. Since, as has been stated earlier, second-language teaching is a social and psychological phenomenon, discussion of language teaching and learning in a sociolinguistic context has, of necessity, to include the parents. While the role of parents is taken for granted in the education of their children, it is equally easy to assume they have very little or no role at all to play in their childrens' actual process of learning. On the contrary, the importance of parents' roles in their children's learning of a second language is clearly shown in Ryan and Giles' second part of the quotation from Rodriguez's essay:

> I remember when, 20 years ago, two grammar school nuns visited my childhood home. They had come to suggest ... that we make a greater effort to speak as much English around the house as possible. The nuns realized that my brothers and I led solitary lives largely because we were the only Spanish-speaking students. My mother and father complied as best they could. Heroically, they gave up speaking to us in Spanish - the language that formed so much of the family's sense of intimacy in an alien world - and began to speak a broken English. Instead of Spanish sounds, I began hearing sounds that were new, harder, less friendly .... The bonds their voices once secured were loosened by the new tongue.
>
> Ibid.

Although the notion of spill-over benefits is always mentioned with reference to learners whose homes or families have the potential to offer a climate that can be supportive to the learning process, it is also possible to mention it in the context of the learners' wider social environment and this is probably more so in the case of language learning. The extent to which the parents can be supportive to the children's learning efforts depends largely on the views they hold about language and their level of awareness of the sociolinguistic realities pertaining to it. In the case of the second language learnt by their children, even more important is the extent of their own proficiency in it and their attitudes towards that language and its speakers.

As we have seen earlier, it is very difficult to gain conclusive evidence about a community's attitudes towards any given language. These can, however, become manifest in a variety of discernible ways. Generally parents are known to be very conservative about language usage in relation to their children. With regard to the appropriate use of language, parents and children are always at loggerheads. Parents consider the use of "correct" language an important step in the upward social mobility ladder and therefore tend to have similar expectations to the school authorities. On the other hand, the children tend to see parents as allies of an army of linguistic prescriptivists whose main aim is to take away their freedom to speak as they please. This is

the case not only with the first language but also with the second in the case of parents who are proficient in both languages.

How then can sociolinguistic surveys mediate in this situation? In the case of second languages, the findings of sociolinguistic surveys can sensitize the parents to the functional value of the languages. In this way they can change their attitudes if they are negative. They may even see the speakers of these languages in a different perspective and understand them better. Parents who are indifferent to a language, its speakers and their culture, cannot hope to be able to give support to the efforts of educational authorities and teachers to motivate unmotivated children. Neither can they help the children withstand the traumatic experience of the culture shock that goes with learning a second language.

Information from these surveys would also give the parents some insight into their linguistic environment which can very easily be taken for granted. Once this happens they are able to predict the future language needs of their children. The children can then study the second language within a supportive rather than an ignorant and indifferent community. This would lessen the burden of the teacher. Speaking at a language-teaching conference at the University of Cape Town in 1986, Professor Mawasha, co-author of a

number of school books on the teaching of English, now professor of Language Teaching Methods at the University of the North, told of how he once spent sleepless nights preparing a speech in English on behalf of the leavers at his former primary school although his audience was going to be Black. He did all this to please his mother who was so interested in his progress in English that she had always expressed a desire to hear him speak the language. What I am trying to show in mentioning this here is that it takes a parent with a positive attitude towards a language to be able to give encouragement and support to a child in learning the language. Such an attitude does not require any knowledge of the language, even though, in terms of the help a parent can give the child, this knowledge can be an added incentive to the child. All that is necessary is awareness of its usefulness and this awareness is more possible against the background of information from sociolinguistic surveys.

This is especially the case with African languages in South Africa if their present status in relation to English and Afrikaans is considered, and also if their possible future status in post-apartheid South Africa is taken into account.

CHAPTER 3

SOME HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVES

3.1 Introduction

In this chapter I shall give a brief history of the teaching
of Xhosa to non-mother tongue speakers in South Africa from
the 1920s to the present.   The aim of this is two-fold.
First, it is to show that the teaching of Xhosa, both as a
first and second language, has always been very heavily
influenced by language-teaching models imported first from
Europe and then America.   These models themselves were a
reflection of the interests of their times in linguistic
studies.   Second, it is to show that (until recently) the
history of the teaching of Xhosa to non-mother tongue
speakers has been marked to a great extent by a constant
conflict between the ends and the means. This will form the
background to a question to be raised later on as to whether
or not the successive changes in the syllabi have succeeded
in eliminating this conflict.

In this historical background I have included also the
universities, although the main focus in this work is on the
teaching of Xhosa at school - both junior and senior. In a
work that is about the teaching of Xhosa as a third language
the justification of the inclusion of universities may be

questionable, considering that all evidence points to the fact that the teaching of African languages at the universities has academic interest as the major motivation for its introduction and development. This academic interest was anchored on two main traditions:

> One which has been primarily concerned with language learning and description ... and another (tradition) which was primarily concerned with comparisons of languages, the setting up of classifications and the postulations of a so-called Proto-Bantu language.

> `G. Poulos 1986 : 4

There are, however, some considerations that have made the inclusion of the universities inevitable. The teaching of Xhosa to non-mother-tongue speakers started at the universities, and it is the universities that supply the schools with teachers. Thus the success of the teaching of any newly introduced subject at school level depends largely on the extent to which universities are ready to supply the necessary manpower (personnel). It is for this reason, therefore, that in looking at the extralinguistically based problems in third-language teaching and learning, the role of the centres of tertiary education can never escape scrutiny. The universities, in all disciplines, (those that are offered in schools, that is) are usually the trend-setters. This results in co-ordination of areas of coverage in such a way that the new teachers find their university experience a reinforcement of their school experience and

also one that prepares them for being able to plough back into the community, in a variety of ways - including teaching - what they gained at university. But for this, universities would be of no relevance to the communities.

Briefly then, the rationale for the inclusion of universities is mainly to consider whether or not in the case of the teaching of Xhosa as a second language there has been a proper co-ordination between university studies and the needs of the schools on the one hand, and society as a whole on the other.

With regard to the history of the teaching of Xhosa to non-mother-tongue learners, there are some coincidences which are worth mentioning at this point. The one is that, until recently, with the introduction of Xhosa at the University of the Western Cape at Bellville and at a few schools under the Department of Education and Culture of the House of Representatives, being a non-mother-tongue learner of Xhosa has always meant being White. The other is that, as a result of this, and also as a result of factors to be found in the history of South Africa, being a non-mother-tongue learner of Xhosa has, for a long time - and still does to a great extent today - coincided with belonging to a section of the population that has more political, military, educational, economic and technological power than the Xhosa. The significance of this coincidence lies not only

in its implication for the status of Xhosa in relation to
Afrikaans and English, but also in its implication for
attitudes towards it both at governmental level and learner
level.

3.2 Xhosa at South African universities

> Excepting the hope of being useful, there is
> nothing in South Africa to stimulate philological
> inquiry. The languages of the Aboriginal tribes
> offer no literary treasures for the amusement of
> the student.
>
>   W.B. Boyce 1838 : iv

The study of African languages in South Africa has come a
long way since Boyce wrote this in the introduction to his A
Grammar of the Kaffir Language in 1838, the first book of
Xhosa grammar. However, what is of significance now in what
Boyce said is his perception of the usefulness of
philological inquiry, which becomes apparent later in this
introduction when he goes on to say:

> The importance of the Kaffir and Sechuana
> languages, as opening to us the means of
> communication with all the tribes of Africa south
> of the Equator, renders every attempt to
> facilitate their acquisition interesting to the
> merchants and traders of the Cape colony. As a
> medium of communication of Divine truth, the
> Sechuana, from the extensive range of its
> influence, has peculiar claims on the attention of
> the British and Foreign Bible Society.
>
>   op cit. : x

Thus, for Boyce, communicative proficiency in the African languages was useful insofar as it would facilitate trade and the spreading of Christianity. The other advantage of such proficiency as far as he was concerned would be that it would enable the missionaries to counteract the spread of Islam, which was then "rapidly spreading from the commercial depots on the coast into the interior" under the patronage of the Imam of Muscat in "the vast extent of country between Delagoa-Bay and the Red Sea." (p xi)

The sentiments expressed by Boyce were, no doubt, consistent with the general attitude of the missionaries and traders of his time towards the acquisition of communication skills in an African language. In the absence of evidence to the contrary, it is a fair assumption to say that the feeling of the time was that there was no great need, if any at all, for one to learn an African language, unless one was a trader or missionary. The unfortunate aspect of this kind of attitude was that the usefulness of communication skills in an African language would last for only as long as the Africans themselves were not able to communicate in the language of the trader or missionary. This view was later confirmed by a Bishop whom the Rev. W.A. Norton met in South Africa in 1903 and who expressed the view that:

> ... it is hardly worth while to fash oneself about
> Native tongues very deeply, because they are
> doomed to die out soon through adoption by all of
> English.

> Norton 1921 : 1

The vast body of works on the grammar of African languages during the period between the time when Boyce wrote the above, and the opening of the School of African Life and Languages at the University of Cape Town in 1921, bears witness to the fact that awareness about the usefulness of and interest in African languages did not die out.

However, the efforts that preceded the opening of the School reveal two interesting aspects of the history of the teaching of African languages to non-mother tongue-speakers. First there was a shift in the perception of their usefulness from that propagated by Boyce. Second, the need for the study of African languages was now embedded in the political rut that came to be known as the Native question in the corridors of administration departments. There is, however, no evidence that those in the higher echelons of administration were aware of it, for neither in the terms of reference nor in the report of the Milner Native Affairs Commission of 1903-05 was any reference to language ever made, even though this Commission:

> ... had shown South Africa and the rest of the
> civilised world something of all that they did not
> know of the native life and mind.

<div align="right">Walker 1929 : 106</div>

The Commission itself was set up specifically:

> ... to gather accurate information on certain
> affairs relating to the Native administration and
> to offer recommendations to the several
> governments concerned, with the object of arriving
> at a common understanding on questions of Native
> policy.

<div align="right">Report Volume I 1905 : 1</div>

It was left to the academics to discover the links between

this objective and the study of African languages.

Addressing a meeting of the British Association for the

Advancement of Science held in South Africa in 1905,

Professor A.C. Haddon remarked that the work of the Native

Affairs Commission of 1903-5, admirable though it no doubt

was, was but a small part of what had to be undertaken to

get "an accurate account of the Natives of South Africa" and

preserve it for scientific use. He suggested that if the

Government was not able to undertake that:

> ...adequate assistance should be given to
> societies or individuals who may be prepared to
> take the matter in hand.

<div align="right">Haddon 1906 : 524</div>

He went on to say:

> I am not competent to speak concerning
> linguistics, but ... gather that a very great deal
> yet remains to be done, at all events in
> phonetics, grammar and comparative philology.

In spite of this and the subsequent efforts by the Royal
Anthropological Institute, by interested persons in South
Africa, as well as by certain of the universities of South
Africa, no action was taken for a decade and a half after
Haddon said this. Part of this inaction was related to the
availability of funds to finance African Languages Chairs,
and part to the fact that the Government failed to see any
urgency in the opening of such departments at the
universities, and therefore in the study of African
languages.

Those individuals who devoted their time and energy to press
for the establishment of "Native Languages" Departments at
universities were seeing their usefulness from a different
angle from that which Boyce mentioned above. What was,
however, common between their pleas and those of Boyce was
that in their pleas there was no suggestion that the
usefulness of African languages extended beyond those
officers of the Government that were involved in "Native
Administration". In a memorandum drawn up by the Senate of
the South African College (the present University of Cape
Town) for the College Council in 1917 to motivate the

establishment of a Chair of Bantu Languages, it was stated,
among other things, that:

> ... for magistrates and officials employed among
> Natives a knowledge of the Native language is
> highly desirable, if not absolutely necessary.
>
>   S.A.C. Senate Memorandum 16 May 1917

This view was echoed in the inaugural address of Professor
W.A. Norton, the first professor of Bantu Philology at
University of Cape Town, when he said:

> ... we in South Africa have still to learn more
> fully that a knowledge of the mentality of the
> people ruled is necessary in rulers.
>
>   1921 : 11

Quoting Dale and Smith, he goes on:

> Attention has been called repeatedly at meetings
> of societies to the fact that unless something is
> speedily done in the matter of systematic study of
> South African languages the opportunities of study
> may be permanently lost owing to the changes and
> decay which are rapidly overtaking Native
> languages.

The importance of the study of African languages as an
academic exercise was, however, never overtaken by its
functional importance in administration, even though, it
would appear, the latter was seen to be a potentially more
effective strategy in persuading the government to respond

positively to their pleas.   In addition to being of
practical benefit the study of African languages would add,
it was argued, a new dimension to the wider interest. of
human knowledge in general.

So desperate   were the universities becoming that the
University of Cape Town senate resolved in July 1919 to
appoint a lecturer from January 1920 and pay him from its
own funds if the government did not sanction the resolution
which the Council had approved .   This was to be on
condition that enough funds were available from the
university's own resources.   Even the students, through
their S.R.C., expressed their wish to do a course in African
languages.   In the same year the Royal Anthropological
Institute again   suggested to   the government that an
anthropological bureau be established and the Universities
of the Witwatersrand, Pretoria and Cape Town renewed their
requests for the establishment of "departments dealing with
Native life or languages" (Levy 1971 : 3). The Government
was impressed at last and referred the whole matter of the
requests of universities and colleges to a special
commission, the Coleman Departmental Committee.   It is to
this special commission that the teaching and learning of
Xhosa at the White universities owes its origin.

The Committee recommended that the Government should:

> ... at once take steps to establish a school of
> such strength as will show a real and adequate
> interest on the part of South Africans in problems
> whose solution is necessary for the future safe
> development of a country in which white and black
> are to live side by side.
>
> Committee Report 1920 : 92

The Committee recommended further that for the initial

period of five years such a school should be concentrated in

only one of the centres that had applied and that at the end

of this period the Government should be free to transfer one

or more of the posts to another centre, and establish a

second school (Report : 93). The University of Cape Town

was recommended as the centre to be invited to present a

scheme for the establishment of the school along the general

lines recommended by the Committee.

These were to be the main aims of the work of the school as

envisaged by the Committee:

> The first and most important work of such a school
> will be investigation of ethnology, history, folk-
> lore, religion, psychology and habits of the Bantu
> race ...
>
> The second aim should be the study of the many
> languages and dialects of the race, with their
> relations to one another and those of other parts
> of the Continent. A third and very practical
> objective must be instruction in native life and
> language for those intending to work for or among
> natives.
>
> Committee Report 1920 : 22

On receiving the Committee's report the University of Cape Town requested the Board of the Faculty of Arts to work out the scheme requested therein. With regard to the staff of the language-teaching section of the school, which they recommended be called the School of African Life and Languages, the board recommended:

> One professor of Bantu philology with three readers or lecturers in African languages (viz. for the Xhosa and Zulu group, for the Sotho-Tswana group, and for Swahili and kindred dialects); ...
>
> Roberts 1968 : 652

Also, as a result of this Committee's report, and the 3 000 per annum subsidy recommended therein, the university was able to appoint the first professor of Bantu Philology even though "Bantu will not be regarded as a qualifying B.A. course this year ..." (Robertson 1968 : 650). This had to wait until 1921.

Thus, after a very long struggle to convince the Government, the stage was now set for the teaching of Xhosa to non-mother-tongue learners. Twenty years later, in 1941, at Rhodes University the first course in Xhosa was offered.

> ... a fact tinged with some irony when we remember that it was here in the Eastern Cape ... that first large-scale contact between Bantu-speaking people and white settlers took place!
>
> Fivaz 1974 : 3

Ironically, although Stellenbosch University started teaching African languages in 1926, Xhosa was not one of the languages offered. Instead Zulu and South Sotho were offered. It was only in 1964 that Zulu was replaced with Xhosa. Unlike the older universities, the Universities of Port Elizabeth and the Western Cape did not take long after they had been established before they started teaching Xhosa.

A significant aspect of the history of the teaching of Xhosa to non-mother-tongue learners at university is that the interest of the universities in African languages came at a time when Carl Meinhof, a German linguist, was publishing a series of works in comparative Bantu. As a product of the era of comparative linguists in Europe, Meinhof was applying comparative linguistic principles in reconstructing a proto-parent language of all the Bantu languages. It can therefore be said that the teaching of African languages at the South African White universities came at a time when Bantu languages were beginning to feel the effects of William Jones's discovery of similarities between Sanskrit on the one hand, and Latin and Greek on the other, a discovery which ushered in the era of comparative linguistics in Europe. This was also a time when interest in phonetics was very great in Europe.

Thus, these two components, together with some structural analysis, dominated African language studies at White universities. The teaching of communicative competence was obviously not considered to be at the same level of importance as these other components. This explains why the employment of mother-tongue speakers to handle this component was not considered very necessary. All that they were needed for was as "native subject for phonetic purposes in illustration of dialects being taught". This also explains why a university could offer any African language irrespective of its location as long as there was somebody to teach it. At Rhodes University, for example:

> There was a time apparently, when a course on any Bantu language was offered subject only to the following being available:
>
> 1. Prospective students
>
> 2. A dictionary
>
> 3. A New Testament in the language
>
> Fivaz 1974 : 4

Evidence from the history of the teaching of African languages at the White universities in South Africa seems to reveal that it was motivated by two main reasons: the quest for scientific knowledge on the one hand, and control on the other. There is no evidence to indicate that they were introduced for any other functional importance. The universities could afford to treat African languages in this

manner, because, unlike in the case of the other languages, they were not under any pressure to produce teachers (for the schools) as there were no schools at which African languages were offered. They had also been made to believe by some "authorities" such as Norton and Boyce, that these languages were doomed to extinction.

The teaching of Xhosa and other African languages at White universities has come a long way since those days. However, the significance of this history for our purposes here is that in it are the roots of the dilemma in which the universities were to find themselves in the years ahead. The tradition grew and entrenched itself. The African languages, needless to say, did not "die out through adoption of English", as Norton and others had warned. The dream of endless control gradually disappeared. As it did so, the functional importance of African languages dawned on White communities, resulting in a fast-growing interest on their part to learn these languages. This interest manifested itself in White parents wanting their children to be taught African languages and in the introduction of these languages at the schools.

In the paragraphs below we look at the historical background of the teaching and learning of Xhosa as a second language in the White schools. The dilemma in which the universities were to find themselves revolved around the question of how

they were going to reconcile their tradition of theoretical analysis of the structure of African languages with the functional needs of the communities which they served. Would they be able to supply the schools with suitably qualified teachers to achieve all the objectives as stated in the schools' syllabuses? This, however, does not suggest that the universities were immediately aware of the expectations of the schools and the communities. On the contrary, the syllabuses followed at the schools, as we shall see, initially conflicted with the needs of the learners and the expectations of the communities. Thus, because of the emphasis on the structure of the language in these syllabuses, the few university graduates who went out to teach African languages did not immediately realize the limitations of their university training. The other reason why the universities did not immediately become aware of this dilemma was that initially there was very little or no consultation between the schools and education departments on the one hand, and the universities' African languages departments on the other, about the teaching and learning of Xhosa in the schools.

3.3 The Post-Primary Schools

According to available records the Joint Matriculation Board already had a syllabus for Xhosa Third Language by 1936. Although until the late 1960s there were no schools at which

Xhosa was offered as a second language, there were many private candidates who wrote Matriculation examinations in the subject long before it was offered at any school. (J.M.B. Secretary - personal communication)

It has not been possible to find out when Xhosa was introduced at the White post-primary schools. The reason for this is that in some schools Xhosa was first introduced as an extra-mural subject. When this happened, the schools did not have to notify the Department as the subject was not part of the curriculum and was taught outside the school timetable.

The first known school to offer Xhosa as an examination subject introduced it in 1964. They had their first Standard Ten examinations in 1968. The story of the teaching of Xhosa at the White schools has a sad but amusing beginning. It all started in Paarl, at a school called Paarl Gymnasium. The story is that one day during the political uprisings of the early 1960s, the local Blacks marched to the small Boland town in very large numbers. This march made the White community aware of the need to know the language of the people with whom they lived, with the result that they decided that they wanted their children to be taught Xhosa. Thus Xhosa was introduced at Paarl Gymnasium in 1964.

Paarl Gymnasium's example was followed by a number of other schools in the Western and Eastern Cape. By 1975 already there were six schools that entered candidates for Xhosa in the Senior Certificate examination. However, by this time these schools were experiencing so many problems with the teaching of Xhosa that the Cape Education Department was inundated with a constant stream of telephone calls and letters requesting that the Department should assist them in overcoming these problems. Unfortunately the Department was itself not prepared for this, because there was no provision within the personnel structure for somebody to take the responsibility for the planning and supervision of the teaching of Xhosa.

In response to these requests, the Cape Education Department requested one C.G. de Jager, an inspector of schools at De Aar who had university qualifications in Xhosa, to look into the Xhosa teachers' problems and make recommendations about possible steps to be taken to alleviate them. Armed with only the list of the schools at which Xhosa was offered, a copy of the core syllabus and a rough preliminary copy of the syllabus that was to be followed from 1977, he toured the Eastern and Western Cape, visiting the schools. He discovered more schools which were also offering Xhosa in Standards Six, Seven and Eight, and about which he was not told by the Department. He discovered also that there were schools which had once offered Xhosa, but which gave it up

because of the unavailability of teachers. He had talks with school principals and the teachers of Xhosa. These talks enabled him to draw up a profile of the problems that pervaded the teaching of Xhosa to non-mother-tongue speakers. He also held talks with some individuals involved in the teaching of Xhosa at the Universities of Rhodes and Port Elizabeth to canvass their views.

In October 1976 de Jager presented the Cape Education Department with his findings and recommendations concerning steps to be taken to help teachers overcome their problems. One of the major problems of the teachers of Xhosa in the Cape schools was that they could not interpret the Joint Matriculation Board's core syllabus. The other problem was that there were no grammar textbooks available that were written for second-language learning of Xhosa. The teachers themselves were not suitably trained to teach Xhosa as a second language and they did not have anybody to give them guidance.

De Jager's most significant recommendation was that the Department had to establish a Study Committee for Xhosa. He also submitted names of people he thought would be competent to serve on such a Committee. These people were officers of the Education Department and university and school teachers. This recommendation was well received by the Department and de Jager was given a departmental mandate to go ahead and

constitute the Committee. The Department also nominated him as the first chairperson of the Xhosa Study Committee. A conspicuous feature of this Committee was the absence amongst its members of a mother-tongue speaker of Xhosa.

The Xhosa Study Committee had its first meeting on the 19th November 1976 at the School Board Office in Port Elizabeth. According to the notice of this first meeting sent out to the Committee members:

> Die vernaamste taak van die Studiekomitee op die eerste vergadering is die behandeling van die nuwe sillabus en die waarskynlike opstel van 'n inligtingstuk aan die onderwysers.

> TRANSLATION

> The most important task of the Study Committee at their first meeting was the handling of the new syllabus and the possible compilation of an information sheet.

At about the same time as the first meeting of the Xhosa Study Committee the new senior secondary Xhosa syllabus was completed and gazetted in the Education Gazette. Thus, from November 1976 through the Xhosa Study Committee, the Education Department began to be involved in the promotion of the teaching of Xhosa in White secondary schools and in giving assistance to the teachers. This assistance was in the form of guidelines sent to the schools through circular letters. The Xhosa Study Committee worked very closely with

the Language Teaching Institute of the Universities of Stellenbosch, Rhodes and Port Elizabeth to assist teachers. Talks, refresher courses and teacher's study groups were arranged at which common problems were discussed.

Despite all these efforts, however, there still were problems which proved difficult to solve. The problem of the lack of teachers persisted. Teachers had problems with the literature component of the syllabus. Both the teachers and the pupils found the prescribed books too difficult to follow, with the result that teachers translated these for the pupils and taught the English or Afrikaans version. To help overcome this problem the Universities of Port Elizabeth and Rhodes simplified and abridged some Xhosa novels and plays. These were prescribed by the Education Department.

The content of the syllabus itself conflicted quite markedly with the needs of the learners. It was mostly concerned with the structure of the language, that is, the grammar. Of the 300 marks in the two papers in Standard Ten, for instance, only 50 were for oral proficiency in the language. Of these dictation and reading were given 10 marks each, which, left 30 marks for the actual oral proficiency, that is only 10% of the examination.

It was inevitable that the 1976 grammar-orientated syllabus would either be revised or done away with and be replaced with another in which grammar would be de-emphasized. Indeed in 1982 a new syllabus was introduced. In this new syllabus, which is still in use currently, there was very little on the structure of the language. Its emphasis was on communicative competence. We remark on this currently-used syllabus in Chapter Five.

3.4 The Primary Schools

On the 31st July 1975 the Cape Education Department sent a circular letter to the principals of post-primary schools with primary divisions, a copy of which was sent "for information" also to Chief Inspectors, Regional Chief Inspectors and Inspectors of Education. In this letter, Circular Letter Number 105 of 1975, they were informed of the Department's plan to introduce Xhosa as a non-examination subject in Standards Three to Five. The Department's plan was as follows:

(a)   The Department was 'composing' a programme for the use of both English- and Afrikaans-speaking pupils

(b)   The Department intended, for the implementation of this programme, to make available the "necessary tape-recordings and other teaching aids ..."

(c)   "Depending on the availability of suitably qualified
       teaching staff", the programme would be offered in
       Standards Three to Five for two periods of about thirty
       minutes each per week "at a specific school"

(d)   Because the Department was aware of the fact that
       "teaching staff with suitable qualifications for the
       teaching of Xhosa at this stage" were not available,
       the programme would be carried out at a limited number
       of schools on an experimental basis

                                        Circular No. 105, 1975

In order to make the required selection of the schools the
Department had to make sure that schools were interested and
willing to take part in the experiment and that they had
suitably qualified teachers for the teaching of Xhosa. For
this purpose, the schools were each sent a questionnaire
with this circular letter which they had to complete and
return by the 15th August 1975. The questionnaire required
information such as the names and number of teachers who had
studied Xhosa, the levels at which they did, their levels of
proficiency in speaking, writing and reading Xhosa. The
most important information with which the schools had to
furnish the Department was whether or not they would be
interested in the experiment and also whether or not they
would be willing to take part in the experiment.

Other than stating that:

> ... the Department intends to promote an
> elementary knowledge of Xhosa as a spoken language
> among pupils in the primary standards ...

the letter did not contain any reference to the importance of such knowledge or to the objectives of the programme. Presumably this was because these would be contained in the outline of the programme. It can also be speculated that the Department did not want to be seen to be persuading the schools to take part in the experiment.

The Responses and Preparations

On the 21st November 1975 the Department sent out another circular letter (Circular Letter Number 164 of 1975) to the same schools. In this letter the responses to the questionnaire sent out in July 1975 with Circular Letter Number 105 were summarized. They were as follows:

(a) Only 49 (7%) of the 703 schools have teachers available who can read and write Xhosa, and speak it fluently

(b) Of the 703 schools, 515 (73,3%) are interested in the experiment. Of the 703 schools, 435 (61,9%) are prepared to participate in it

(c)   Of the 703 schools there are 188 (26,7%) schools that
      are not interested and 268 (38,1%) schools that are not
      prepared to participate in the experiment.   A large
      percentage of these schools do, in fact, show interest
      and willingness, but have answered NO because they, for
      example:

(i)   do not have the required staff available

(ii) live in areas where not Xhosa, but some other
      Bantu language, e.g. Tswana, is of particular
      importance

                                        Circular No. 164, 1975

The Department selected 45 schools for the experimental
programme, as follows:

School Board Division	Number of schools selected
Albany	1
Cape Town	6
Cradock	2
East London	12
Elliot	2
Graaff-Reinet	3
Humansdorp	1
Kingwilliamstown	3

Oudtshoorn	1
Paarl	2
Parow	1
Port Elizabeth	3
Queenstown	2
Stellenbosch	2
Sterkstroom	1
Uitenhage	1
Umtata	1
Uniondale	1

In an attempt to assist these schools, the Department arranged one-day orientation courses in January 1976 (Circular Letter Number 167 of 1975). These were held on 26, 28 and 30 January 1986 in Cape Town, Port Elizabeth and East London respectively. Each course was divided into units. Unit I was on Learning Xhosa Songs, Questions and Discussion; Unit II was on Singing, Questions and Discussion; and Unit III was devoted to Singing, Questions, Discussion, Language Games and Exercises and Use of Tapes and Overhead Projectors.

Thus the teaching of Xhosa in the White primary schools got underway. However, the responses to the questionnaires raised issues which indicated the problems in store for the Department in the implementation of the idea of teaching African languages. That 73,3% of the schools were

interested in the experiment, that there were only 49 schools which had teachers available who could teach Xhosa and that schools wished to offer some other African language, meant that the Department had to undertake a very vigorous programme to meet this need. This also meant that the universities and training colleges were themselves going to be under great pressure from the schools to supply them with suitably trained teachers. It was against this background that the teacher-training colleges of Graaff-Reinet, Port Elizabeth and Wellington introduced Xhosa at third and fourth year level. No previous knowledge of or training in Xhosa was required for taking the subject.

The number of primary schools at which Xhosa is offered has gone up so much that by 1985 there were 114 of them.

CHAPTER FOUR

SOCIAL FACTORS IN SECOND LANGUAGE LEARNING OF XHOSA

4.1 Introduction

Although the nature of language acquisition has for a long
time been considered to be of interest mainly to
psychologists, linguists working within the sub-field of
applied linguistics today are stressing its importance for
language teaching in general and second language teaching in
particular. These applied linguists are unanimous in their
conviction that the understanding of the process of first
language acquisition facilitates the understanding of second
language acquisition. The various theories of first
language acquisition will not be discussed in this thesis.
However, two points seem to be noteworthy here, namely (a)
that, under normal circumstances, human beings are born with
the capacity to acquire language, that is, a language
acquisition device, and (b) that there is a stage in human
development after which this capacity to acquire language
gets weakened. The significance of these points for second
language teaching will be discussed later.

It is possible to talk of language acquisition as synonymous
with language learning, but essentially the former is the
product of. the latter. It is for this reason that applied

linguists make a distinction between language acquisition that results from spontaneous language learning on the one hand, and language acquisition that results from guided language learning on the other. First language acquisition is spontaneous and it occurs:

> ... when the learner - usually a child - has been without a language so far and now acquires one.
>
> Klein 1986 : 4

Although this normally involves one language, Klein (1986) says, in very infrequent cases bilingual first language acquisition may take place. Examples of such cases in South Africa would be those children of White farmers or village store-keepers who acquire simultaneously both the language of their parents and that of their Black "mothers", "sisters", and "brothers".

Second language acquisition results from either spontaneous or guided language learning which starts before or after proficiency in the first language has been fully acquired. In other words second language learning may start while first language learning is still in progress or after it has reached the end state. However, since we are here concerned mainly with the social factors in guided second language learning which normally starts long after the process of first language acquisition has reached the end state, we shall first look at some of the social factors that

influence second language learning. Against this background we shall attempt to consider how these are implicated in the learning and teaching of Xhosa as a second language.

4.2 Social Factors in Second Language Learning

It may be necessary at this point to explain what the social factors are considered to be for the purposes of this thesis.   Social factors are those conditions in the learner's social environment in which the process of language learning takes place, that are capable of promoting or retarding the learner's interest to acquire the target language itself. The breakdown of these factors in the following paragraphs is not according to their order of importance.   It should, however, be remembered that the learner may or may not be conscious of the influence of these factors on his learning process.

4.2.1 Communication Needs

The need to acquire communicative skills in a second language arises when an individual finds himself in a situation in which he finds it difficult to cope without such skills. Such a situation results in the individual developing an urge or propensity, as Klein (1986) calls it, to learn the language. The individual may not be aware of this urge and the forces that are responsible for its

development, depending on his age. The younger the person is, the less the chances are of awareness of this propensity. A small child whose playmates speak a language unknown to him may not be aware of the urge to learn the language of his playmates; he may not even be fully aware of the little inconveniences caused by his inability to communicate verbally with his new friends. On the other hand, a medical practitioner practising in a community whose language he does not know, will be clearly aware of the need to communicate directly with his patients. However, in both cases the urge will facilitate and even help speed up the learning process. Whatever the individual's situation is, what is clear is that at the centre of these situations are the practical benefits accruing from successful acquisition of the target language. Again there is no reason why the learner has to be aware of these benefits. What seems to be necessary, however, is that the individual's situation should be conducive to the development of the propensity. But an individual's situation will not be fully conducive if it does not allow him to translate the urge into action.

Therefore, although it is necessary for a person to experience a situation that generates the need for learning a language in order to develop an urge to do so, there are other factors that may promote or inhibit a productive reaction to that urge. These are such factors as access to

the target language, attitude, the status of the language, its variability etc.

4.2.2 Access

The learner's language acquisition device cannot operate if the learner has no access to the target language. Chances of acquisition are enhanced by more access and inhibited by less access to the target language. Access itself is made easy or difficult by other factors, some of which have to do with the context of learning. A number of terms have been used to refer to access - "exposure", "immersion" and "integration" being some of them. In attempting to define access Klein says:

> The term 'access' in actual fact covers two distinct components which, whilst having many things in common, should be carefully distinguished: one is the amount of 'input' available, the other the range of opportunities for communication.
>
> 1986 : 44

'Input' does not involve just the hearing by learner of the sounds in order for him to be able to acquire knowledge of the language. It is necessary that the learner should experience also some other information which is in parallel to the linguistic input in order for learning to be possible.

> ... the learner must know who is speaking to whom,
> when and where, he must be able to watch the
> accompanying 'body language' (gesture, facial
> expression etc.), and he must note the reactions
> of the listener. Eventually he should be able to
> establish a relationship between identifiable
> segments of the sound stream and particular pieces
> of the parallel information.

In other words the context of the linguistic input is more crucial to learning than the input itself. Therefore input is not complete without its real-life context. Books and tapes are not able to make all this parallel information available to the learner.

In addition to receiving this input the learner will need to put the knowledge it has provided into practice by producing his own utterances, that is, the input must by followed by the learner's own output. In order to do this, he needs opportunities for communicating with the speakers of the target language. Klein's distinction between input and opportunities for communication may be very marginal. However, it is worth taking note of, since it is possible for a learner to be exposed to the input from the speakers of the target language without having sufficient or any opportunities to test his own production. This has to do with what Schumann (1978) refers to as "integrative strategies" and "social dominance patterns" (p.165). These are very closely related to the notion of access, although, as we shall see below, they are also related to

another cluster of social factors which Schumann breaks down
into cohesiveness, congruence, size, enclosure and
attitude.

There are three integrative strategies mentioned by
Schumann. These are assimilation, preservation and
acculturation. He explains:

> If the 2LL group assimilates, then it gives up its
> own life style and values and adopts those of the
> target language group ... If the 2LL group
> chooses preservation as its integration strategy,
> then it maintains its own life style and rejects
> those of the TL group ... If the 2LL group
> acculturates, then it adapts to the life style and
> values of the TL group but maintains its own
> life style and values for the intragroup use.

These strategies have varying implications for second
language acquisition. Assimilation maximizes access to the
target language and therefore facilitates acquisition, while
preservation minimizes contact and therefore inhibits
acquisition. On the other hand, acculturation results in
varying degrees of acquisition.

Cohesiveness of the learner's group will promote
preservation since the group members tend to remain separate
from the target language group if they are cohesive.
However, congruence between the two groups' cultures
promotes social contact since cultural differences are

reduced tremendously, to the point of being negligible. This situation is conducive to language learning.

With regard to size, Schumann (1978) maintains that if the target language group is large, intragroup contact is more frequent than the intergroup and therefore opportunities for communication are reduced (p.166). However, the effects of the numerical differences between the two groups will vary according to the other social factors that are at play. As we have already seen, communication opportunities are necessary for second language acquisition. These may be enhanced if the target language group is large. Yet, if the learner's group is too small, it may be more cohesive and choose preservation as its integrative strategy. On the other hand, if the target language group is too small, even though intergroup contact is sufficiently frequent, the learner's language may be the instrument of group interaction.

Enclosure refers to the extent to which the learner's group and the target language group share the same facilities, professions, trades and crafts in their area (Schumann, 1978: 166). If they share the same educational, religious and recreational facilities and if their professions, trades and crafts are the same, contact between the two groups is enhanced. This facilitates access to the language. If their situation is opposite, enclosure is said to be high.

The higher the enclosure, the less the access and therefore the less the chances of language acquisition. The level of enclosure is, to a very large extent, determined by other social factors, such as the differences in economic position (which in turn results in differences in educational achievement); religious differences and the country's policies that determine the use of facilities as well as the residential distribution of the language groups.

From the above we can see that the notion of access revolves around the issue of the social distance that exists between the learner's group and the target language group. A wide social gap between these two groups makes it difficult for the learner to experience the language in natural operation. He depends solely on the lessons whose scope is limited and retarded by the amount of time spent in explaining the grammatical rules of the language. Reliance on grammatical rules without social integration tends to treat a second language as a foreign language. The futility of the practice of concentrating on the grammatical rules in the teaching of communicative skills is summed up by Klein as follows:

> Imagine the driving instructor letting the learner practise pressing the clutch and operating the gears without moving the car.

> 1986 : 45

Although the language teacher may do everything in class to approximate a real-life communication situation, the acquisition process will not go far without access to the most important material necessary for language acquisition, namely the speakers of the target language.

In the treatment of social distance as an inhibitor of second language acquisition there are two contradictions that have to be taken into account. Firstly, it should be noted that if the learners happen to belong to a socio-politically dominant group, it is possible that they may learn the language of the subordinate group to maintain their position of dominance and thereby the social distance is maintained. In such a case the propensity for learning is rooted in a desire to control the subordinate group. Soldiers occupying a country, for example, may desire to acquire the language of the occupied country, solely because proficiency in it is crucial to their control of the country concerned. Secondly, it should be noted that individual learners may violate the modal tendencies of their group. In South Africa, for example, there are many white learners who have acquired proficiency in Xhosa against all the odds that inhibit access to its speakers. In these cases success in acquiring the language can be attributed to personality factors.

4.2.3 <u>Attitude</u>

In Chapter 2 we saw how important attitude is in socio-linguistic surveys. We saw also the factors that are responsible for the development of language attitudes. These are factors such as the socio-political context of learning the history of relations between the learner's group and the target language group; the variability of the target language; the differences or similarities in the two groups' cultures; the relative prestige of the target language and language instruction methodologies. These factors, together with the factors mentioned in sections 4.2.1 and 4.2.2 above, contribute collectively in shaping attitudes towards a language or language variety. In addition to these there is also the question of how long the individual intends to live with the speakers of the target language. If the learner knows that he is not going to stay among the speakers of the target language for any considerable length of time, he may have a casual attitude towards their language. Such a learner may have only a transient interest which will come to an end with his intended departure.

In Chapter Two attitude was dealt with in general terms. In this section it will be dealt with in terms of the extent to which it influences the second language learner's motivation for learning. Here we make a distinction between two

learner types, namely the child type and the adult type. Both these types exist within communities that have certain language value judgements which influence theirs. However, because of the age differences, these language stereotypes have different manifestations on the two learner types.

A young child learning a second language is unlikely to have any conscious beliefs about its functional significance, even though by the time he starts learning it, his environment may have already created in him certain awarenesses about its speakers. Even at this stage, however, although he may not be aware of it, certain social factors are already at work in shaping his attitudes towards the target language. The current attitudes in the community and within the school may manifest themselves in the casual remarks made about the language and its speakers, such as: "it's a difficult language to learn", "it's a primitive language", "it's inferior", "it sounds aggressive" etc. The school may have certain practices in the teaching of the language which unconsciously influence his attitude. The time devoted to it in relation to the time devoted to the other languages, the fact that not everybody learns it at school, while the others are learnt by everybody and the fact that it is treated as a non-examination subject, may make the child subconsciously adopt an attitude that inhibits motivation. All this places an enormous strain on the teacher whose duty is to motivate the learner. This

attitude may manifest itself in poor performance and a drop-out rate which does not parallel the learners' aptitude that is reflected by performance in the other subjects.

As the child learner advances in age and grade, he gradually displays certain attitudinal tendencies that approximate those of the adult learner. Although a number of studies have been made on children's attitudes towards language, there seems to be no unanimity on the stage of child development at which children begin to display certain attitudinal tendencies. These studies have been made in situations where the learners and the speakers of the target language live together. This makes the applicability of their findings to the learning of Xhosa as a second language difficult. This is because the legal prescriptions that determine the social-demographic arrangement of the two groups are more inhibiting to the development of positive attitudes.

The point of departure in many of these studies is the stage at which the children are able to discriminate, on the one hand, between one language variety and another, and on the other hand, between one language and another. According to Day (1982), Labov claimed that:

> ... he had evidence indicating that it was not
> until 19 or 20 years of age that full sensitivity
> to socially significant dialect features is
> acquired.

The other scholars mentioned by Day (1982) place the age at which children are able to make language attitudinal judgements between three and four and a half years. But they all agree that by the age of five children are already able to discriminate linguistically (p.117). Another conviction shared by these researchers is that children's language attitudes are consistent with those held by the adult members of their communities. These experiments on children's attitudes towards language also reveal a relation between racial and ethnic attitudes and language attitudes.

Although an adult learner is faced with the problem of a language acquisition device which is past its prime, he has an advantage over the child learner because he is conscious of the functional significance of the language as well as of his communicative needs. This is, however, not to say that an adult learner's language acquisition process is immune to the other contraints that operate alongside his awareness of his own needs.

The question to consider, however, is: in a situation where the number of inhibiting social factors is minimal, how is attitude implicated in language learning? We have seen in section 4.2.2 how important the level of input is for language acquisition. However, studies have been carried out that have shown that input by itself is of no consequence to language learning. Although it may be one of

the most important requirements for language acquisition, it pays more dividends in the presence of a positive attitude towards the target language. The manner in which such a positive attitude benefits the learner is the extent to which it yields motivation to learn the language. A motivated learner of language is one who is not only ready at all times to interact with the speakers of the target language to obtain the necessary input, but also one who is able to utilize that intake for acquisition. It is in this context that linguists working on the issue of attitude in language teaching talk of a socio-affective filter. If the filter is strong, the acquisition is less because a strong socio-affective filter allows less intake than a weak filter.

> Thus, attitudinal factors relating to language acquisition will be those that contribute to a low affective filter.

> Krashen 1981 : 22

There are two types of motivation strategies in which a weak socio-affective filter is realised. Firstly, there is the integrative motivation strategy. Krashen (1981 : 22) defines integrative motivation as the "desire to be like valued members of the community that speak the second language...". Integrative motivation has been found to be a predictor of a low filter. Studies made by a number of scholars have shown that integrative motivation is even more

important in language learning than aptitude. It benefits the learner in a number of ways. An integratively motivated learner does not feel any threat from the speakers of the target language. This motivation also affects the learner's classroom behaviour and outlook. He does not fear to make the mistakes that are generally predictable in second language learning. This puts him in a better position than the others to benefit from the teacher and that, in turn, facilitates a faster development of positive attitude towards the teacher. One of the benefits of integrative motivation has been proved to be the development of more staying power. A study carried out by Gardner and Lambert among English-speaking learners of French in Montreal showed that:

> While drop-outs did tend to get lower grades and show lower aptitude, the primary motivation for the stay-ins showed more integrative motivation, as well as overall motivation to learn French.
>
> Krashen 1981 : 27

Learners who are integratively motivated have the necessary will to persist in second language studies.

Integrative motivation is an aggregate of a number of factors that relate to the personality of the learner. Low anxiety is one of the features that characterize an integratively motivated learner. He never fears that interaction with the speakers of the target language may

result in loss of identity. He is self-confident and has an outgoing personality. Quoting from H.D. Brown's Introduction to Snow and Ferguson (1977), Krashen sums up the advantages of self-confidence as follows:

> Presumably, the person with self-esteem is able to reach out beyond himself more freely, to be less inhibited, and because of his ego strength, to make the necessary mistakes involved in language learning with less threat to his ego.
>
>   1981 : 23

Although Krashen (1981) feels that there is as yet no conclusive evidence to prove it, he cites some scholars who have gone to the extent of trying to prove that integratively motivated learners are also able to empathize with the speakers of the target language as a result of their personalities and conducive social contexts of learning.

> Empathy, ... is also predicted to be relevant to acquisition in that the empathetic person may be the one who is able to identify more easily with speakers of a target language and thus accept their input as intake for language acquisition (lowered affective filter).

The other type of motivation is instrumental motivation. This type of motivation is determined by the practical value of proficiency in the target language. Thus, whether the filter is strong or weak in instrumentally motivated learners depends very largely on how the learner perceives

the functional value of the language in relation to his need. On this will depend also the level of desire to integrate with the speakers. What seems to be the disadvantage with instrumental motivation is that, unlike integrative motivation, it may at times be characterized by a certain degree of compulsion. The learner's intended career may indirectly compel him to acquire the target language. A learner may be compelled directly by an institution of learning to acquire the target language to fulfil certain requirements. In both cases motivation may cease: in the first case it may cease with change of career plans, and in the second, it may cease with the fulfilment of the prescribed requirement. However, the importance of instrumental motivation cannot be underestimated in second language learning. Language manipulates people in the same way as people manipulate it. One may be instrumentally motivated to learn a language but, because of the influence of language, may end up integratively motivated. A Standard Five pupil who is required to learn a language in order to be admitted to Standard Six, may be so influenced by the language that his perspectives of and attitude towards its speakers are completely re-orientated. Consequently he may persist in his learning and feel the urge to reach out to them in the same way that an integratively motivated learner does. There are many cases in South Africa today of people who owe their proficiency in one African language or another to the need they once had of the language for research

purposes, and who would confess to how the language changed their perspectives of the speakers and their culture values.

4.2.4 Language Variability

In Chapter 2 we saw that language is not homogeneous. In addition to the standard variety, which is normally the target in guided learning, the language learner has to contend also with the non-standard varieties which are more dominant in the real life communication situations outside the learning institution. The existence of non-standard varieties is another social factor which inhibits learning, especially if the social context of learning is one in which a strong socio-affective filter is predictable - e.g. no access, high anxiety, unawareness of needs etc. The issue of language varieties and variety-promoting factors, as well as the emotional crisis they may cause, have been dealt with in the preceding chapters and therefore will not be pursued any further.

4.3 Significance for Xhosa as a Second Language

As was pointed out in Chapter 3, learning Xhosa as a second language in South Africa has always coincided with being a White learner. Although the so-called Coloured schools are now beginning to introduce Xhosa in their curricula, we shall here attempt to look at how the social factors are

implicated in the teaching and learning of Xhosa as a second language at the White institutions.

4.3.1 The Socio-political Context

The history of relations between the Xhosa and the Whites in South Africa has been that of conflict. At its initial stages this conflict was characterized by physical confrontation in the form of a series of wars known as the Frontier Wars, the last of which was in 1877. These were wars of conquest and dispossession and out of which the Xhosa emerged as losers. Conquest and dispossession meant the final colonization of their country by a super-power, Great Britain. With everything, except their numerical strength, having passed from their hands, the Xhosa, together with all the other indigenous races of the country, became a servant race under the socio-political dominance of the White races. The exit of the British colonialist in 1961 when South Africa became an independent Republic, did not put the indigenous races of South Africa on an equal footing with their White counterparts. Not satisfied with this, the indigenous races have since been engaged in conflict with the White races. Although this conflict has come a long way since the Frontier Wars, and although the relations between the Black and White races can be said to have improved tremendously in relation to what they were in the past, tension between the two races has always been

there, albeit with varying degrees of intensity. In the last ten years this tension has been characterized by political strife which has culminated in the declaration of a state of emergency.

This, then, is the socio-political background against which Xhosa has been and still is taught at the White institutions in South Africa. The question we have to ask is: What are the implications of all this for the teaching and learning of Xhosa at White institutions? In attempting to work out the answers to this question, it has to be remembered that the socio-political domination of the Black man by the White man in South Africa is anchored on a statutory policy of separation popularly known as apartheid. This is a policy that is realized in a number of laws that prohibit the sharing of residential, educational, religious and recreational centres by Blacks and Whites, that is, a policy that has constitutionally kept Blacks and Whites apart, although it must be conceded that lately there have been some changes. These changes would have some limited advantages for language learning and teaching but the effect on other factors will be dealt with below.

4.3.2 The Status of Xhosa

The socio-political subordination of the Xhosa meant also the subordination of their language. Although there are a

number of cases in history of governments deliberately suppressing subordinate languages or language varieties, Xhosa did not assume a lower status in relation to English and Dutch (later Afrikaans) as a result of explicit constitutional action by the various governments in South Africa. The status of a language in a country is determined by the status of its speakers. Although Xhosa was taught as a subject in Black schools, mainly in the Cape, it did not have any official status. English became the language of education, commerce and politics. The use of English as a medium of instruction at school started quite early, in Standard Three. The ability to read and write English was associated with social and educational advancement. Naturally the growth of literacy and change in the socio-economic conditions of the Xhosa were accompanied by a growing prestige of English in the eyes of the literate and semi-literate Xhosa. Everybody aspired to proficiency in English, something which the earlier Xhosa creative writers relished dramatizing in their works. School authorities punished pupils for using the vernacular within the school premises; university students who took Xhosa as a major subject were looked down upon by their colleagues because they were said to be taking the "easy option", while those who took English as a major subject were considered to be the cream of the crop.

As elsewhere in the continent, the colonialist did not consider it necessary to acquire any oral skills in the indigenous languages, unless he was a trader or a missionary among the indigenous races. The status of Xhosa was not enhanced by the documented misguided views of the earlier linguists, some of whose remarks about the state of African languages projected these languages as barbaric. Fivaz, in his inaugural talk cites one such view as expressed by one linguist as late as 1960:

> Bantu languages (other than Swahili) are oral. Indeed to write them down is to give them a rigidity as unknown to their speakers as to the sweet bird-songsters of the forest.
>
> Potter 1960 as quoted by Fivaz 1974 : 7

The history of the teaching of Xhosa in White institutions in South Africa shows clearly that Xhosa, and indeed other African languages, are now seen in a different light by the White communities, just as they are seen in a different light in Black communities as a result of the Black Consciousness Movement of the late sixties. However, Xhosa still has a lower status in relation to English and Afrikaans. This is an inhibiting factor in the learning of Xhosa as a second language. Yet the irony of this situation is that, despite this relatively low status of Xhosa, White people, children or adults, who are competent in Xhosa, are envied and even respected in a growing number of circles. Whether this envy is motivated by academic judgement values

or by the practical benefits associated with this competence

is of no significance here. What is significant here is

that it needs to be exploited to the benefit of teaching and

learning. Schumann explains the relevance of language

status for second language learning thus:

> If the 2LL group is politically, culturally,
> technically or economically superior (dominant) to
> the TL group, it will tend not to learn the target
> language.
>
> 1978 : 165

This is so because the status of a language is determined by

the status of its speakers. The issues of socio-political

context and the status of Xhosa, as factors that inhibit

learning, are compounded by others that are closely related

to them, such as the needs of the learners, social distance,

attitude and personnel.

4.3.3 Xhosa-learners' Needs

From what has been said in Chapter 3 about the history of

the teaching of Xhosa at White institutions (universities),

it is clear that initially the study of Xhosa was motivated

by two needs. Firstly, the need for learning Xhosa was felt

because of a desire to advance scientific knowledge.

Secondly, this need was motivated by the awareness of the

importance of language in facilitating political control.

On the other hand, the missionaries and the traders who had

worked among the Xhosa had recognized the functional importance of proficiency in the language for their work and trade respectively. Thus, for quite a long time Xhosa was the language of the convertor and the trader. This is the unfortunate aspect of the history of the learning of Xhosa as a second language because it means that Xhosa gradually became a language for giving instructions as a result of the role relations that held between the convertor and the converted, and between the trader and the consumer and, later in the case of farmers and labourers, between the employer and employee.

It was then left to the missionary to sensitize the White community to the functional significance of Xhosa in the kind of role relationship that pertained between it and the Black community. This is clear from the phrase books that the missionaries produced for the non-native learners of the language. The following are examples of communication situations and dialogue that one missionary, James Stewart, envisaged:

BREAKFAST

This chapter is about (speaks about) food and cooking.

Breakfast,

Where is the cook?

She is outside the door,

Call her,

Would you call her to come into the house?

You are called,

Is the breakfast ready?

Yes, Madam. Yes, Sir,

Boil some eggs,

Boil six eggs,

Boil them soft,

Boil them hard,

I also want some bacon,

I want you to toast some bread on the coals,

Fry the bacon with the eggs,

Make tea and coffee,

Call the other girl,

Clean those knives,

Strain the milk,

Pour it into that dish,

Cream,

Take off the cream,

Wipe the table

Put the tablecloth on the table,

Bring the cups and plates, and knives and spoons,

Wait to help at the table,

Take away the dishes,

Shake the tablecloth,

Sweep the floor,

After that, go and wash the dishes.

ABOUT WORK IN THE HOUSE

I want a boy to work in the house,

His work will be to clean the boots; and to go
messages; and wait at the table,

Are you willing to do that?

Yes, I am willing; I have done that work before,

Who was your last master?

It was Mr Smith,

How long did you stay with him?

I stayed two years; six months; eight months,

Have you a certificate, lit, a paper of character?

Yes, I have it, here it is,

What wages (money) do you want?

I want sixteen shillings a month,

I want a pound a month,

That is too much; I cannot give that, till I see
how you work,

What will you give me?

I will give you fourteen shillings a month and
your food,

I agree to that,

When will you come?

I want you to come on the first of next month,

I will come then, at that time,

Can you speak English?

No, I can speak Xhosa only,

You ought to learn to speak English,

Yes, sir, I will try.

From these we can see the extent to which proficiency in Xhosa was considered useful. The importance of the knowledge of Xhosa in the advancement of scientific knowledge is borne out by the vast literature that was churned out by scholars working in the field of African linguistics. In this situation is to be found the source of conflict between the needs and ends to meet them, that has characterized the learning of Xhosa as a second language.

When formal instruction in Xhosa was introduced in White institutions it was entrusted to people who were essentially equipped to deal with the language as a means of advancing scientific knowledge and not as an instrument of interaction with its speakers. On the other hand those members of the community who needed the language, needed it for communication purposes. The reality of their situation was such that they communicated with the speakers of Xhosa in a master-servant relationship. Hence communication instruction in the form of books had this orientation. Role playing exercises had to reflect this orientation since anything else would be in conflict with reality.

The gradual change in political outlook, both of the White and of the Black people, brought with it changes in perspectives. Advances made by the Blacks in education helped to make the White communities realize that there were other domains within which interaction with Black people was

possible.   Political   demands   by   Blacks   pressurized   the

government   to   make   some   concessions.   These   demands,

together with the gradual liberalization of some sections of

the   White   communities,   speeded   up   the   change   in

perspectives.   This change in perspectives was accompanied

by a certain degree of panic.   The political uprisings of

the early sixties created an urge to learn the Black man's

language in order to gain a better understanding of his

culture, history and generally to make it possible to

understand the Blacks as people.   Newspapers and individuals

encouraged people to recognize the need to learn African

languages.   This resulted in a number of schools introducing

Xhosa as a subject.   The initial need for learning Xhosa was

aptly summarized in the introductions of the school syllabus

pamphlets.   In the syllabus for secondary schools which

appeared in the Education Gazette of 16 May 1974, one of the

aims of teaching African languages is given as:

Om die   leerlinge se belangstelling in die taal en
kultuur van die Bantoe aan te wakker en sodoende
by hulle 'n beter begrip van die Bantoe as mens
moontlik te maak.

TRANSLATION:

To instil the pupils' interest in the language and
culture of the Bantu in order to enable them to
have a better understanding of the Bantu as a
person.

Later, on 11 November 1976 the Education Gazette contained a syllabus for Xhosa (Standard Grade) in which some of the aims of teaching Xhosa were stated as:

> 2.1.1 Om leerlinge in staat te stel om met moedertaalsprekers van Xhosa te kommunikeer en sodoende wedersydse respek en agting tussen eersgenoemde en laasgenoemde te bevorder;
>
> 2.1.3 Om leerlinge se belangstelling in die Xhosa-kultuur te ontwikkel;

TRANSLATION:

> 2.1.1 To enable pupils to communicate with mother-tongue speakers of Xhosa in order to promote mutual respect;
>
> 2.1.3 To develop the interest of pupils in all facets of Xhosa culture;

It can thus be concluded from the above that the motivation for learning Xhosa changed from control to peaceful coexistence. However, in the South African context it is reasonable to assume that coexistence means different things to different people. For some people it may mean the maintenance of the political status quo, yet for others it may mean a complete revolution in the status quo. What is clear, however, is that the ever-changing face of the country, socially, educationally, economically and, to a certain extent, politically, continues to change communication situations between Whites and Blacks. These new communication situations result in new awareness of the need to learn Xhosa. Changes in the job market are causing

an increasing need for the acquisition of proficiency in Xhosa. New career opportunities demand it. We think here of such fields as translation, mass media, and with the creation of independent homelands in which Xhosa is an official language, the diplomatic corps. This proficiency has now become a significant feature in commerce and industry. Learning institutions are gradually becoming integrated.

The change in the needs of the learner of Xhosa has been acknowledged by the Cape Education Department by designing a Xhosa syllabus which has shifted completely from a structure-based to a communication skills-based method of teaching. This has also been acknowledged by respondents to a questionnaire in the Cape Peninsula.

Despite the above promising picture of people's awareness of the need for acquisition of communication skills in Xhosa, there are still many problems in this regard. Some of these are dealt with in the paragraphs below. One of these is the effect of the past on the present. The above picture does not necessarily mean that all sections of the White communities have similar perceptions of the need to acquire communication skills in African languages. It is significant to note that The Core Syllabus for Bantu Languages : Third Language Higher and Standard Grade, which the Joint Matriculation Board sent out on 1 November 1983 to

the Committee of Heads of Education, suggested the following

conversational or contact situations between Black and White

"for the purpose of communicative tuition"

> The conversational or contact situations from
> which a choice may be made, are
>
> - in the house with a servant, a person looking
>   for work, a hawker, a lost person, a
>   collector, a painter, a repairer, a
>   telephonic contact with somebody, etc.
>
> - around the house with a gardener, a garbage
>   remover, a milkman, a deliverer, a postman,
>   etc.
>
> - in the street with a lost person (looking for
>   the way), a hawker, a constable, etc.
>
> - at the garage with a petrol attendant, a
>   lubrication service assistant, an assistant
>   mechanic, etc.
>
> - on the building site with a bricklayer or his
>   assistant, a carpenter or an electrician,
>   etc.
>
> - on the school ground with a gardener,a
>   cleaner, etc.
>
> - in the shop or supermarket with somebody busy
>   unpacking, a security officer, a cashier,
>   etc.
>
> - in a hotel or restaurant or road cafe with a
>   waiter or a receptionist or a room attendant
>   or a porter

The other problem is that of the contradictions that emanate

from the socio-political context within which the learning

of Xhosa as a second language takes place. While the

changing face of South Africa is increasing the need for

learning African languages, the government policies that

determine the lives of the South African people, as well as the reaction to these policies, serve only to polarize the Black and White communities. This renders all attempts to meet the needs of the language learner less effective.

4.4 The Practical Effects

Although it is possible from the preceding paragraphs to predict the kind of effect these social factors have had on the teaching and learning of Xhosa as a second language, we shall here attempt to highlight these in the form of the problems that both the teachers and learners have had to contend with. Information about these problems has been drawn from the records of the Cape Education Department, and, through the use of questionnaires and informal discussions from individuals involved in the teaching and learning of Xhosa as a second language. I have also drawn from my personal experiences with teaching Xhosa to non-mother-tongue speakers. Some of these problems are reflected in examination and test question papers. Although an attempt is being made to give a break-down of these problems according to the various areas in which the effect of social factors has shown itself, the lines of demarcation between these areas are very thin. The reason for this seems to be that all these problems revolve around the issue of the socio-political context within which the learning and teaching of Xhosa take place.

4.4.1 Planning

The long overdue interest in African languages on the part of the White communities almost caught the learning institutions and the education departments with their pants down. The teaching and learning of Xhosa had for a long time been confined to mother tongue speakers. Consequently, virtually all the available teaching and learning material was oriented towards first language teaching, and not towards communicative skills teaching. . It was therefore structure-based. Students who studied Xhosa at university did so either out of interest or because they intended to pursue academic careers in the language. Education departments at the universities did not offer teaching method in Xhosa, since there were no schools to which they could go and teach the subject. The Black universities and teacher training colleges did not offer methods in the teaching of African languages as second languages, because there was no need for it in the Black schools - this position has not changed.

In response to this interest in Xhosa, any school could introduce it as a subject if the parents, pupils and teachers requested it. The principal and his school committee would convey the request to the Education Department. According to C.J. de Jager, a retired schools

inspector who was the first chairperson of the Xhosa Study Committee:

> If the department was convinced that there was a demand for the new subject in that school, that the quota for that school justified a Xhosa teacher, that classroom accommodation was available, and that there was a reasonable chance that a Xhosa teacher would be procured, the application was usually approved of ...
>
> (personal communication)

In many cases when there was that reasonable chance of getting a teacher it was a member of staff within the school who, as a result of home background, had a speaking knowledge of the language, or one who happened to have done it at university.

An interesting observation about this situation is that, unlike in the case of the introduction of Afrikaans at the Black schools in the Cape during the mid-fifties, the Education Department did not have any influence on the resolutions of the schools. For this reason, no planning preceded the introduction of the subject. This does seem to confirm the differences in perceptions with regard to the need for learning Xhosa. On the other hand when Afrikaans was introduced at the Black schools in the Cape, indications were that it had been thoroughly planned for at departmental level. Teachers, mainly from the Orange Free State, who were not only able to speak the language, but who were also

qualified to teach it, were placed at all the schools with
Standard Six. Others were sent to the post-primary schools.
In the case of post-primary schools some of these teachers
were mother-tongue speakers of Afrikaans. In-service
courses were arranged to train other teachers. The subject
was not optional - all schools and all pupils had to take
it. Because of this planning and because of the
availability of teaching material, and also because of the
keen involvement of the education authorities in the
programme of Afrikaans teaching and learning, it did not
take long before training colleges and universities could
produce teachers who were competent enough to take over from
those teachers who had been "imported" by the Education
Department from the Orange Free State.

There obviously were other factors motivating the
departmental keenness in the Afrikaans teaching programme in
the Black schools. Granted the absence of these factors in
the case of Xhosa, there is, nevertheless, no doubt that
many problems relating to the introduction of Xhosa at the
White schools would have been averted if there had been
proper state planning.

4.4.2 Teachers and Teacher Training

In dealing with the personnel situation in the teaching of
Xhosa as a second language, it should be remembered that the

teachers are drawn from communities that are generally linguistically disadvantaged in relation to the Black communities. While many White people speak only two South African languages, English and Afrikaans, many Xhosa speakers can communicate in both these languages and have passive competence in other Nguni languages. The teachers who teach Xhosa as a second language are themselves victims of social factors over which they have no control.

Most of these teachers learnt the language at school within a structure-oriented framework. Those who have gone through the present communicative skills-based syllabus and who continued with Xhosa at tertiary level, are still either at training college or university. The first Senior Certificate examination on this syllabus was set in November/December 1984. It is reasonable, therefore, on the basis of this alone, to assume that the present teachers are under-prepared for coping with the demands of the present syllabus, except those few who grew up speaking the language. This situation has shown itself through feed-back that the Cape Education Department has had from the teachers with regard to the kinds of problems that they experienced.

During 1979 the Language Institute of the University of Stellenbosch undertook a survey of these and came up with revealing findings about the Xhosa teachers' situation (in the Western Cape). The most interesting aspect of this

study was how the teachers evaluated themselves in the various components of the subject:

	Good	Average	Weak
Oral proficiency	17%	66%	17%
Reading Proficiency	41%	59%	-
Writing Competence	47%	53%	-
Understanding of the Language	41%	59%	-

With regard to how they felt about their training in Xhosa Teaching Method, 59% felt that it had been weak; 12% felt it had been average and 17% felt it had been good. The other 12% had had no formal training in teaching method. With regard to their experience with the subject at university, only 29% felt that their preparation had been good; 59% felt it had been average and 6% felt it had been weak while another 6% could not evaluate it.

Most of the teachers' remarks about their experiences with the subject at university reflected the fact that the universities had not yet come to grips with the needs of the schools. These are some of them.

1. 'n Goeie akademiese opleiding in fonetiek, fonologie, ens maar 'n swak opleiding in praktiese taalgebruik.

2. Lesings was oninteressant; dosente onvoorbereid . vir
    praktiese klasse; te min mondeling werk.

3. Te   veel   klem   op   teoretiese   aspekte   as
    onderwysbehoeftes... Baie dele van kursus is irrelevant
    vir skoolonderrig,   bv.   linguistiek,   vergelykende
    Bantoetaalkunde ens.

6. ... te veel en te gou klem op transformasioneel
    generatiewe   grammatika   wat   nutteloos   is   vir
    skoolonderrig.

                                        Botha 1979 : 2

TRANSLATION:

1. A good academic training in phonetics, phonology, etc.,
    but a weak training in the practical use of the
    language.

2. Lectures were not interesting; lecturers not prepared
    for practical classes; very little oral work.

3. Too much emphasis on theoretical aspects as an
    educational necessity ... Many components of the course
    are irrelevant for school teaching, e.g. linguistics,
    comparative Bantu linguistics, etc.

4.4.3 The Learners

The problems of the teachers with a subject are, essentially, predictors of the problems of the learners. This is especially the case with the second language learners of Xhosa because their social backgrounds and the context of their learning are themselves predictors of strong socio-affective filters, lack of integrative motivation, high anxiety, lack of empathy and, above all, minimal chances of access to the speakers of the language.

One of the teething problems that featured prominently in the feedback from the schools - through correspondence or findings of surveys - was the question of big numbers in Standard Six. This would have been the most encouraging aspect in the history of second language teaching of Xhosa, were it not for the operation of the other social factors. This showed that, for whatever reason, there was enough enthusiasm from the pupils to learn Xhosa. Moreover, these learners had the advantage of youth. This enthusiasm to take Xhosa at the primary schools has continued to grow since 1976. In 1976 Xhosa was offered at 41 primary schools to 3 800 pupils in Standards Three to Five (De Jager 1977). In 1985 there were 114 primary schools offering Xhosa to 22 884 pupils in the same standards (Cape Education Department - personal communication). These figures do not include the private schools. Despite this encouraging

picture at the primary schools, the statistics at the post-primary schools portray a completely different picture.

According to De Jager (1977), in 1977 there were eight high schools that offered Xhosa to 1 877 pupils in Standards Six to Ten, and yet in 1986 38 high schools offered Xhosa to only 1 390 pupils in the same standards. This represents a seriously high drop-out rate between primary and post-primary school.

A drop in the number of learners who continue with the subject beyond primary school may be predictable if it is remembered that up to Standard 5 the subject is taken as a non-examination subject. It is possible that a number of them during these earlier years decide to take it specifically for that reason. Therefore they drop it when it starts demanding more of their time as an examination subject. But this contrasts with what we said earlier, namely that involvement with a language has potential to generate more interest even in the case of those who were initially not fully motivated (see Section 4.2.3). It is also possible to predict the drop in numbers on the basis of reasons to be found within the language itself, such as the big structural difference between it and the first language which renders it more difficult to cope with.

There are, however, other possible explanations. One of the problems that has been cited by many teachers is that their classes are heterogeneous, consisting of learners who grew up speaking the language, those who had done it in the previous standards and those that were beginners. This situation is caused by the fact that there are no admission requirements. This allows for discouragement and frustration on the part of all three categories.

The other possible explanation is the question of time given to the subject. In many cases this is one hour per week. This amounts to about forty hours a year. This problem is closely related to the biggest problem that faces the second language learners of Xhosa, that is, exposure to the language and its speakers. In section 4.2.2 we have seen how important it is for second language learners to have access to the target language through contact with its speakers. The second language learners of Xhosa do not have this contact, for the reasons of the socio-political context of their learning. It inhibits the development of positive attitudes towards the speakers of the target language and their language. The question of access puts teachers in a very difficult position. In order for their teaching to be of immediate use to their pupils, they have to choose those communication situations in which the pupils are likely to be able to practise what they learnt. Conscious of the pupils' backgrounds, the teacher will teach them how to

communicate with domestics, shop assistants, petrol attendants, ushers in parking lots etc. Unconsciously or consciously, this may give the pupils the impression that they have no need for the language other than for communicating with workers. Eventually they may not be motivated to learn a language which is used to communicate with servants. Or they may think that Xhosa-speakers never advance beyond these occupations. Because the teacher knows that this is not the case and because he is aware that these impressions are likely to be created in the minds of the pupils, he may avoid teaching these communication situations. If he introduces other situations, it may be idealistic since pupils are not likely to need to communicate in such situations. What is more, that may discourage the pupils since they would be equipped with communication skills that they would not be able to use for a long time.

A teacher who wants to overcome this problem of access may wish to establish more contact with the speakers for the pupils. However, the polarisation of the speakers' community and that of the pupils has created distrust and feelings of insecurity which make it difficult for the teacher to put this into practice. Parents, school authorities and education departments' officers may be reluctant to sanction visits to the speakers' residential areas. Even if this were possible, the question would still

remain as to whether the learners would be able to cope with the varieties that the speakers use and which are different from the standard variety taught at school.

The other problem in learning Xhosa as a second language is that of the home environment. It is difficult for it to be supportive to the pupils' learning processes, since most of the pupils' parents do not speak Xhosa. Parents, though they would like to be supportive of their children's learning, consequently find themselves helpless in giving support to the children. Discussing the effects of the home environment on the learners' motivation in language learning, Botha says:

(a)   In baie gevalle is dit ouers wat hulle kinders van
        jongs af aanmoedig om die vreemde taal aan te
        leer.   Dit geld ook vandag vir die aanleer van
        Xhosa.   Ouers wat enigsins realisties dink,
        beklemtoon die voordele by hulle kinders. Aan die
        ander kant is daar ouers wat hulle negatiewe
        houding teenoor die sprekers van die taal en die
        taal self, oordra op hulle kinders.

                                                1977 : 1

        TRANSLATION

        In many cases it is the parents who encourage
        their children from an early age to learn a
        foreign language.   This applies also to the
        learning of Xhosa.   Parents who are realistic at
        all, emphasise the benefits to their children. On
        the other hand there are parents who perpetuate
        their own negative attitudes towards the speakers
        of the language and the language itself towards
        their children.

This is possible, says Botha, because :

(b)   Die leerling kan nie beskou word as 'n verskynsel
      wat in isolasie groot geword het nie ... Hy hand-
      haaf 'n spesifieke beskouing teenoor vreemde tale
      in die algemeen. Hiermee saam gaan ook sy houding
      teenoor die sprekers van die vreemde taal. Beskou
      hy hulle as afsonderlike wesens, as mense wat nie
      in sy omgewing tuishoort nie?

TRANSLATION

The pupil should not be seen as a phenomenon who
grew up in isolation ... He harbours a specific
view about foreign languages in general. Coupled
with this is his attitude towards the speakers of
a foreign language. Does he view them as separate
creatures, as people who do not belong to his
environment?

From this, it is clear that the home environment contributes
significantly also to the learners' attitudes towards the
target language and its speakers.   In the case of second
language learners of Xhosa there are a number of factors
that inhibit the development of positive attitudes in the
learners' environment.   This has an adverse effect on the
learners' motivation.

In the light of all these factors it is very difficult for a
second language learner of Xhosa to fit Krashen's
description of a good language learner. He describes a good
language learner as:

          ... an acquirer, who first of all is able to
          obtain sufficient intake in the second language,
          and second, has a low affective filter to enable

him   to   utilize   this   input   for   language
acquisition.

<div align="right">1981 : 37</div>

However, despite all these factors that inhibit learning and
acquisition, interest in learning Xhosa is not waning and
the need to do so is becoming urgent.   This places a
challenge to   the educators,   namely,   the challenge to
reconcile this   interest and this need with all those social
factors that inhibit learning.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSION

5.1 Introduction

After a number of years of African languages teaching at some universities in the United States of America, it was realized that these programmes were not succeeding as much

Page Missing

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:ies would have liked them to. The major

it was felt, was that there was not

1g before their introduction. Another

was that African language instruction was

1pported by the U.S. government (Wiley and

There were other factors which the

1rious African Studies Centres and the

co-ordinators felt needed to be

:he need for co-operation among the

set clear and common objectives and the

_Jɛ collective effort in persuading the government to take a keener interest in African language instruction. Thus on November 1, 1978, the Africanists concerned "met for one day of discussion at the African Studies Association Annual Meeting in Baltimore, Maryland". A draft paper was developed from these discussions entitled "African Languages : Needs and Priorities". The discussions at this meeting led to the holding of a conference on 10 to 11 March 1979 at

the Michigan State University African Centre whose theme was, <u>African Language Instruction in the United States :</u> <u>Directions and Priorities</u>. Among the major issues that emerged out of this conference and on which the conferees agreed, were the questions of effective teaching material and that of personnel.

- Therefore, the most urgent need for African studies in the United States is for support to conduct basic linguistic research on African languages and to produce the needed instructional materials, giving especial attention to new research on language learning and teaching

- For the continuing African language instruction programs, the highest priorities are for fellowships for language area studies, for research funds and stipends for African linguists to update their knowledge and conduct original field research on the languages, and, only then, for summer support and learning programs.

Wiley and Dwyer 1980 : 2

The American experience is cited here as an example of the importance of the analysis of needs and the setting of priorities that should precede embarking on a programme concerned with teaching a language to non-mother tongue learners, either as a foreign or second language. It has been cited also because there are some parallels between the American and the South African experience, which are of significance here in the light of some of the observations expressed in the paragraphs below.

As has been mentioned in Chapter 3, the two major reasons that served as a motive for the introduction of African language studies in South African universities were: political control and the pursuit of scientific knowledge. We have seen that with the passage of time, perspectives changed resulting in the recognition of the importance of African language studies for intergroup understanding and peaceful coexistence. This change in perspectives manifested itself in the introduction of African languages at the White schools; in a steady growth of extra-mural African language instruction activities; in the improvement of the oral skills component at the universities and in the introduction of African Language Teaching Method at universities and teacher training colleges. According to Wiley and Dwyer, (1980 : 4) in the U.S., the instruction in African languages was important also "for the humanistic reasons of understanding and communicating with our fellow man and for the promotion of peace".

Although the hurdles to be overcome were the same in both the South African and the American situations such as lack of suitable teaching material, lack of suitably qualified personnel the prospects for success were brighter in South Africa than in the U.S. The reason was that South Africa had "the most valuable resource, namely mother-tongue speakers" (Gxilishe 1987(b)). The question of whether the American programme of instruction in African languages has

been successful or not after the Michigan State University Conference of March 1979 will not be addressed here. The question that will be addressed in the following paragraphs is whether the teaching of African languages to non-mother-tongue speakers has realized the expected dividends. This will be done by attempting to give an objective summary of how social factors have placed, and are still placing, heavy constraints on the teaching of Xhosa to non-mother-tongue speakers. The summary is concluded by taking a brief look at the prospects for the future. This will be presented in the form of recommendations.

5.2 Summary of the Constraints

The expectations of a society with regard to what education should do for the learner represent the aggregate of what each subject is expected to do for the learner. The value that a society attaches to education is a macrocosm of the value that is attached to any subject that has been considered worthy of inclusion in the curriculum. The presence of these expectations and the recognition of this value are usually manifested in the amount of input that is made to facilitate the process of learning. The right that the learner has to have access to education is the right to the facilitation of his process of learning. In giving a summary of the constraints that have pervaded second-language teaching and learning of Xhosa as a result of

social factors, the question may be asked as to whether the learner has not been denied his right of access to meaningful education. If this is the case, then the question is: "What are the implications thereof for the national objectives that motivated the second-language teaching and learning of Xhosa?"

In the light of what has been expressed in the preceding three chapters, it becomes very difficult to feel that the input that has been made has been realistic enough as to be able to facilitate the achievement of the stated objectives. It becomes difficult also to feel that these stated objectives are achievable at all, because the reality of the context within which the learning and teaching of Xhosa take place does not allow for this.

With regard to the teaching and learning of African languages as the pursuit for scientific knowledge, the amount of academic material that has been put out theses, journals, books, etc. and the number of scholars who have become international figures, are proof that the exercise has been useful and worthwhile. It is in the area of the quest for acquisition of oral proficiency that the exercise has been characterized by a conflict between the ends and the means to achieve those ends. The history of the second-language teaching and learning of Xhosa is the history of attempts to resolve this conflict.

The various syllabuses that have been used reflect these attempts. The move away from grammar to communicative competence, which is reflected in the current syllabuses, represents a very significant step in these attempts to reconcile the means to the ends. But can it be said that these syllabuses have brought an end to the conflict? The principle itself certainly has potential to end this conflict. However, a closer look at these syllabuses reveals that their potential to eliminate the conflict is very limited. Quite a number of sentences seem to suggest that they are literal translations from English and therefore sound like English spoken in Xhosa, so to speak.

Examples:

1. Unobutyala bokumondla   (You have an obligation to feed him)

2. Unobutyala bokuba undincede (You have an obligation to help me)

St. : 20

3. Lumkela ukuba ungawi (Be careful you do not fall)

: 25

Apart from the fact that this may conceal the meaning for a native speaker who does not understand English, there is also the risk that the speaker may convey the opposite of

what he intends to convey. For instance, in the above examples the translations from English have been so literal that the original meanings are lost completely. Examples 1 and 2 respectively mean "You are guilty of feeding him" and "You are guilty of helping me". Example 3 means "Be careful in case you do not fall", that is "Make sure that you fall".

This tendency to use dictionary language unfortunately finds its way into the Matric of the Cape Senior Certificate external final examination question papers. One question in the November 1987 Xhosa H.G. (First Paper) was:

Wanele yintoni kwitelevizhini? Bhala le nto unike nezizathu. (What are you satisfied with on television? Write about it and give your reasons).

But to a mother-tongue speaker of Xhosa the sentence means: "What have you had enough of on television?"

The implication of this is that interaction with mother-tongue speakers may be hindered. This is more likely also because, although the syllabus is intended to approximate very closely real-life communication situations, adherence to the standard variety has been very strictly observed. The syllabuses also seem to have been designed with the teacher and the examination in mind. Language to be used within any given concept is indicated in the form of

sentences and/or phrases. In the teaching material that has been compiled in accordance with these syllabuses, these are extended by using them in certain situations and by providing exercises based on them. These exercises form the basis of examination questions. Thus the learner's and the teacher's versatility in the language does not become a crucial factor in the attainment of success in examination. Drills in accordance with these exercises ensure the success of the learner in the examination and also make the task of the underprepared teacher less burdensome than it had been when the previous syllabuses were still in use.

Another feature of these syllabuses that is significant in this conflict between the ends and means is the distribution of marks in the various components. In Standard 8 only 15% of the total mark is allotted to oral proficiency in the Higher Grade and 20% in the Standard Grade. In Standard 10 oral proficiency accounts for only 15% of the total mark in the Higher Grade and 13% in the Standard Grade.   This represents a contradiction since the nature of these syllabuses represents a recognition of the importance of communicative competence in Xhosa. However, in the light of the context within which these syllabuses operate, this contradiction is predictable.   Although this has been questioned for quite a long time by teachers and applied linguists (e.g. Endly 1983 and Gxilishe (1986(a)), it is doubtful whether allotting equal or more marks to oral would

not result in more frustration for both the teacher and the learner. This is so because teachers whose own communicative competence is weak would not be able to stand up to the demands of such an arrangement.

From what has been said in the previous chapter, it is clear that the source of this conflict lies not with the syllabus designer nor the teacher nor the learners. The cause of this conflict is rooted in the very manner in which the South African society is structured. As Poulos says:

> ... the very nature of our society, in which certain communities are isolated from one another, hampers the mutual learning process of languages a process which is most effectively achieved in a natural way, by constant interaction between speakers of different language communities. ... Non-motivation coupled with isolation are perhaps two of the major counter-forces to any successful language learning process, and both these forces are evident in the White society.
>
> 1986 : 9

We have seen that when the end in a language teaching programme is communicative competence, the best means is exposure to the target language. Thus any language programme that operates within a socio-political context that is opposed to social integration, is unlikely to achieve its objectives. This is so because in such a socio-political context all those factors that promote integrative motivation are not operative. The context is conducive to the sustenance of all the inhibiting factors. The collective

effect of these inhibiting factors is that the second language learner of Xhosa is denied his right to have access to effective education. Again here there is a clear contradiction. Research findings, the increase in the number of White schools that offer Xhosa, and opinions expressed through the media, have shown that White communities are positively disposed to the learning and teaching of African languages. However, their commitment to the elimination of those social factors that inhibit effective teaching and learning does not match their stated awareness of the need to acquire communicative competence in these languages. Evidence from the socio-political history of South Africa proves that the context within which the teaching and learning of African languages occurs and which allows for the inhibiting socio-political factors, has the approval of White society.

This means that intervention strategies that are devised to deal with the task of effective teaching and learning of African languages should come out of the input of both the members of society outside the institutions of learning and those who are inside these institutions, that is, educators and learners.

5.3 Possible Intervention Strategies

Although we have suggested above that the task of devising intervention strategies should be engaged in from two planes, the success of the exercise will depend very largely on the extent to which the groups involved consult. It is the contention in this dissertation that in the teaching of Xhosa as a second language, the methodologies employed are not at issue. The issue is the reconciliation of such methodologies on the one hand with the context within which they are employed and, on the other, with the stated objectives of undertaking a language teaching programme.

For our purposes here, we shall divide the society outside the institutions of learning into: (a) government, and (b) the parents.

5.3.1 Institutions of Learning

As stated above, those actively involved in second-language teaching of Xhosa no doubt have access to all the best literature available on foreign and second-language teaching methodologies. However, it is clear that the success of these methodologies has been inhibited by social factors which, while they also need urgent attention, are not likely to be eliminated over a short period of time, especially in the light of the points raised in the next paragraph

(paragraph 5.3.2). What can the language practitioners do in the meantime to deal with the task of effective teaching and learning? It seems that an appropriate point of departure would be for language practitioners to ask, and answer frankly and objectively, the question: "After so many years, has the exercise we are involved in succeeded in satisfying the needs of the society?" If, for the reasons outlined in the previous chapter, the answer to this question is recognized to be an unequivocable "No", that will lead to further questions and actions. Such actions would have to be divided into those that can be undertaken by the practitioners as a group and those that they can undertake as individuals at their respective institutions.

Already in South Africa there exist a number of organizations that are concerned with language study, such as the African Languages Association of South Africa, South African Applied Linguistics Association and others. A look into the activities of these structures reveals that, in relation to English and Afrikaans, not much attention has been paid to the problems that have pervaded the second-language teaching of African languages. Even in such journals as the Journal of African Languages, its fore-runner Limi, and African Studies, which deal with African languages, one hardly comes across an article that addresses this issue. On the other hand, it is a view in this work that structures like these can be used effectively to

influence the government to undertake to remove or relax the restrictions that hinder the effective second-language teaching of African languages. One of these restrictions is the one that prohibits the employment of mother-tongue speakers as teachers of African languages in the White schools. Closely related to this restriction is the one which prevents an individual teacher inviting mother-tongue speakers to assist in classroom activities.

The Black universities and teacher training colleges should also be influenced by these organizations to introduce Second Language Teaching Method of African languages, so that mother-tongue speakers are available who are qualified to teach these languages as second languages. This is even more urgent now against the background of the current thinking which suggests that African languages should be compulsory at the White schools and that these schools should open their gates to learners of all races.

The language study organizations owe it to the learners and the society in general to sensitize them and the government authorities to the need for reorientating attitudes and perspectives with regard to the role of African languages in the future of human relations in the country. On the question of language practitioners' obligation to address the issue of a community's language needs, Rubin (1984) considers the following questions important:

What language/communication inadequacies have been identified, and by whom?

What plans or goals have been set out to attend to the communication inadequacies identified?

Who are the planners who have the authority and power to make and influence language-related decisions?

Language practitioners, through their organizations, can address these questions by demanding more involvement in the government structures concerned with language education planning and by embarking on programmes of identifying the inadequacies of steps followed to solve the communication problem. Weinstein summarizes this obligation very explicitly when he says:

> ... although government bodies are usually the major agents of language planning, private or semiprivate specialized organizations and groups of writers, printers and other communication specialists play an essential role too, with or without government approval.

> 1984 : 233

The private sector is known to have given support to the second-language teaching of English, for instance. There can be no reason to doubt that they would be supportive to programmes intended to achieve effective second-language teaching and learning of African languages. It is for the language practitioners to convince them (the private sector) satisfactorily of the need to do so. This could be done, inter alia, by making bursaries available to prospective

teachers of African languages, and by giving financial support to projects involving production of suitable teaching material and to sociolinguistic or applied linguistic researchers whose findings are intended to improve the quality of teaching of African languages.

From the views expressed, in discussions and through answers to questionnaires, by second-language teachers of Xhosa in the Cape Peninsula on working relations with tertiary institutions, it is clear that language practitioners need to attend to the question of more interaction and co-ordination between these institutions and the schools.

The place of non-standard varieties in language education can be ignored only at the risk of failing to achieve the set objectives. Therefore it is necessary that the effects of language conservationism on the learner's efforts to acquire communicative competence should be taken cognizance of. At the time of writing this dissertation the Sociolinguistic Section of the Human Sciences Research Council was planning a project involving research into the influence of non-standard varieties on the standard varieties of the various African languages. According to the head of this section, Dr G.K.S. Schuring, it is hoped that the findings of this research will influence the attitudes of language educators and language authorities towards the non-standard varieties (personal communication).

Although the research will focus on the effects of non-standard varieties on first-language teaching and learning of African languages, its findings will also benefit second-language teaching and learning.

Since it is not likely to be easy for the existing organizations to break with their traditions, which seem to have been those of associating second-language teaching and learning with the teaching and learning of the official languages, it may even be necessary to establish an organization that is concerned only with the second-language teaching and learning of African languages. Current activities seem to suggest very strong concern with the state of the official languages, especially English, at the Black schools. This is not matched by any concern for Black languages in White institutions. Yet it is more critical than the state of official languages in Black institutions. It is a misconception to think that Black learners are more linguistically disadvantaged than their White counterparts. The reverse is true.

The role of culture in language and literature is recognized by all involved in language education. We saw in the preceding chapters how appreciation of a people's culture may yield positive attitudes towards their language through which that culture is expressed. Thus building in a culture component into a second-language teaching and learning

programme can contribute to the development of positive attitudes, not only towards the target language, but also towards its speakers. Language practitioners need to consider the need to reorientate people's attitudes and perspectives with regard to culture. However, care needs to be taken not to present African culture as if it is immune to social dynamics, for that may defeat the ends of the task. An example of this is an undated article put out by the Cape Education Department entitled: "African Culture and Customs". It is doubtful that an article that presents Xhosa culture as this one, can succeed in influencing the development of positive attitudes towards Xhosa and its speakers. On the contrary, learners may see the Xhosa as a backward people who are not worth interacting with. These are some of the things said in the article.

(1) <u>About children</u>

> The birth of a child is an auspicious occasion. It is announced with joy. There is much chanting and praying. The woman stays in seclusion for about three months after giving birth.

(2) <u>Naming children</u>

> This happens on the eventful day the baby appears for the first time with its mother after 3 months seclusion. ... The baby is held at the fire and moved through the smoke, while it is praised and the dangers of the life ahead are told.

(3)   About initiation schools

> Once the wounds are healed the initiates go
> roaming for food in the veld or they steal as long
> as they are not caught.

(4)   About death

> It is customary to bury the corpse with all the
> personal belongings of the deceased, because
> should they fall into the hands of a sorcerer they
> could well be used for malevolent purposes.

Also cultural understanding should be aimed for as a tool to

narrow the social distance and not to maintain or widen it.

The following, for example, from the same article can only

give learners the idea that Xhosas are a child community

which needs parental treatment from the members of the White

community.

> When working for a long time they expect to get
> gifts, maybe a chair in some cases. If nothing is
> given they feel it is their right to take some
> sugar, tea, soap or whatever article they are in
> need of.   Many of them see us as their mothers or
> fathers and they tell us so. This is, in fact, so
> and we must be proud to be given such a title or
> when our advice is asked. They want to be led and
> expect leadership from us.   When there is not
> enough leadership or discipline we are regarded as
> weak.   Also if we as Whites give in to every whim
> of theirs.   "No", must stay "no" and strict order
> is appreciated.

The above shows how necessary it is for language

practitioners to revisit the reasons for the inclusion of a

culture component in a language teaching and learning programme.

One of the explanations given by teachers in the Cape Peninsula for the big drop in the numbers of pupils who continue with Xhosa is that Xhosa is grouped with subjects which are regarded by the pupils as more functional than Xhosa. Thus pupils choose subjects which they believe will be more useful to them than Xhosa. This reflects the pupils' awareness of the low status of Xhosa as well as their ignorance of the value of communicative competence in the language. This grouping can be changed if language practitioners make a joint effort to influence the education authorities. Moreover, more awareness of the value of competence in Xhosa on the part of the learners and the adult community can result in more learners continuing with the language after primary school.

The efforts of the language study organization can then help facilitate the task of the individual teacher in dealing with the effects of social factors on second language teaching and learning of Xhosa. Gxilishe recommends that:

> ... efforts be made to establish some contact
> between the Xhosa-speaking community and the
> schools
>
> 1987(a) : 190

The individual teacher can achieve this by taking advantage of whatever goodwill there still is between the Black and White communities by arranging visits by pupils to local Black schools and vice versa. Discussions with teachers in the Cape Peninsula and answers to a questionnaire revealed that all those teachers interviewed have no working relationship with their counterparts in the Black townships although all of them would like to establish contact with Black schools. They would like to have Black pupils come to their schools. Visits to Black townships by White pupils seem to be out of the question. Teachers are, however, ready to organize trips to the Ciskei and Transkei, which are more costly than frequent trips to nearby townships. Although it is clear that the reason for this anomaly is the question of uncertainty about security, it is the view of this thesis that there is more goodwill between Black and White youth now than there has ever been before. Such visits would break some of the pupils' anxieties and result in integrative motivation. This would enable the learners to have access even to those non-standard varieties that are in use in their neighbourhood and this would result in improved versatility in the language. Integratively motivated learners would make it easy for the individual teacher to educate the community about the value of communicative competence in Xhosa and the importance of positive attitudes in the attainment of such competence.

It is not possible to exhaust all possible intervention
strategies that language practitioners can devise to tackle
the problems that are inhibiting effective second-language
teaching and learning of African languages. However,
whatever the strategies are, it should be noted that their
success will depend largely on the elimination of all those
factors that lead to communication deficiencies. For as
Weinstein (1984) puts it:

> ... communication problems are themselves the
> result of non-linguistic socio-economic or
> political changes.

5.3.2. Society Outside Learning Institutions

It should be clear from the preceding paragraphs how the
government authorities and the public can intervene in the
fight to eliminate the social factors that are inhibiting
the success of the second language teaching and learning of
African languages.

As far as the public are concerned their contribution would
be very significant if they were to undertake to work
towards the creation of an environment which will be
supportive to the learning of African languages. The family
would be the best point of departure since the individual
families are the constituent elements of society. We saw in
Chapter 4 how effective the home environments are in shaping

the learners' attitudes towards the target language and its speakers.

Many metropolitan areas today have a number of extra-mural adult centres where African languages are taught along with other subjects. Parents need to be encouraged to enrol at these centres and learn these languages. This would motivate the pupils and also enable the parents to give support to their children. What is more, this would eventually result in a reorientation of perspectives and attitudes in the learners' communities. The importance of such a situation for the individual learner is summarized by Doughty as follows:

> Whatever "society" and "language" may actually be, our understanding of social and linguistic reality makes us readily aware that both of them act upon the life of every individual in ways which are decisive and inescapable.
>
> 1972 : 83

The socio-political developments in South Africa today suggest that there is no unanimity on the necessary steps to be taken in order to create a society in which the inhibiting social factors mentioned in the previous chapter will cease to be a problem. There is, however, consensus on the importance of communication in healthy human relations. It is not within the scope of this work to deal with the manner in which those in the government should deal with the

task of creating a socio-political environment that will
promote integrative motivation to acquire communicative
competence in African languages. However, it is the view in
this thesis that, while the debates are still going on as to
how best the South African society should be structured,
there are certain decisions which could be taken and
implemented as a matter of urgency. These would serve as a
short-term part-contribution by the government to the task
of devising workable intervention strategies to deal with
the communication problems. As has been indicated earlier,
the following seem to constitute the minimum contribution
the government should seriously consider making:

- The opening of White schools to teachers who are
  mother-tongue speakers and who are adequately qualified

- Making funds available for financing research projects
  that are concerned with the production of suitable
  teaching material and with the collection of useful
  information such as has been mentioned in Chapter 2

- Making bursaries available for students who display
  potential for, and interest in, being second-language
  teachers of African languages

- Allowing individual schools to invite mother-tongue
  speakers to assist in classroom activities whenever the

need arises, without having to go through bureaucratic procedures

- Encouraging, and even organizing, closer working relations with local Black schools where these languages are taught

The government authorities need to respond quickly and positively to the needs of the society, which, in a number of researches, has been found to be positively disposed to the learning of African languages. The history of the teaching of Xhosa at the White schools reveals that some individuals have, in the last ten years, given almost all of their time and energy to the cause of second-language teaching and learning of Xhosa. It will be a sad day if it has to be publicly admitted that these efforts have not been rewarded with success - because of the intricate and contradictory connection between the stated objectives of second language teaching and learning of African languages and the expressed desires of the White community on the one hand, and the historical and socio-political reality in South Africa on the other.

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