

‘The Burden of Diversity’: The Sociolinguistic Problems of English in South Africa

Berrington X. S. Ntombela¹

¹ Faculty of Arts, Department of English, University of Zululand, KwaDlangezwa, Republic of South Africa

Correspondence: Berrington X. S. Ntombela, Faculty of Arts, Department of English, University of Zululand, Private Bag X1001, Kwa Dlangezwa 3886, Republic of South Africa. Tel: 27-35-902-6791. E-mail: Ntombelab@unizulu.ac.za

Received: February 9, 2016 Accepted: April 2, 2016 Online Published: April 5, 2016

doi: 10.5539/elt.v9n5p77

URL: <http://dx.doi.org/10.5539/elt.v9n5p77>

Abstract

At the emergence of democracy in South Africa the government corrected linguistic imbalances by officialising eleven languages. Prior to that only English and Afrikaans were the recognised official languages. The Black population had rejected the imposition of Afrikaans as the medium of instruction. However, such rejection did not mean the adoption of indigenous languages as media of instruction; instead English was supposedly adopted as a unifying language among linguistically diverse Africans. Such implicit adoption of the English language has created a stalemate situation in the development of African languages to the level of English and Afrikaans. Although there is a widespread desire to promote indigenous languages to the level of being media of instruction, the desire is peripheral and does not carry the urgency that characterised the deposition of Afrikaans in the 1976 uprisings. On the other hand this paper argues that the hegemony of English language as a colonial instrument carries ambivalence in the minds of Black South Africans. Through ethnographic thick description of two learners, this hegemony is illustrated by the ‘kind’ of English provided to most Black South African learners who do not have financial resources to access the English offered in former Model C schools. The paper concludes that Black South Africans do not only need urgency in the promotion and development of indigenous languages, but further need to problematize, in addition to the implicit adoption of English language, the quality of the language they have opted. The paper therefore suggests that this is possible through a decolonised mindset.

Keywords: decolonisation, English language teaching, linguistic resistance, multilingualism

1. Introduction

South Africa comes a long way. Her formation as the present ‘last born’ democratic child of the African continent cannot be set outside the experiences of her neighbours who went through similar gruelling histories to attain that long dreamt destiny: freedom. The dream for freedom must have meant the realisation of selfhood where the chains that had bound them, cutting deeply into their economies, cultures, languages, etc. were to be undone. Freedom would therefore ensure that, among others, economic, cultural, and linguistic chains were broken. It was in this light that the first democratic government of South Africa, among many initiatives, moved to restore the dignity of the nine indigenous South African languages by setting them on equal official status alongside Afrikaans and English which had been the only official languages of the country.

But the journey into linguistic emancipation was not to be an easy one. Whilst on the one hand the military, economic, social, and educational repression easily prompt cries for freedom, the subtlety of linguistic and cultural repressions on the other do not seem to carry immediacy. This is even truer in colonised people where the immediate quest appear to be economic inclusion and participation in the distribution of wealth. The paradox in this is that such inclusion may lie in the hands of the language of the coloniser, which is the case in Africa generally and particularly in South Africa.

This paper is therefore set to interrogate such obstacles as the elitist nature of the English language, the economic power that it wields to the obliteration of indigenous South African languages as media of instruction in the schooling and academic systems, the continued linguistic subjugation of the majority of South Africans who by economic reasons cannot catch up with the politics of English language learning.

It should be highlighted that although eleven languages have been elevated to an equal official status, a diglossic

situation seems to have been created at the same time (see Wardhaugh, 1996; Spolsky, 1998 & Ntombela, 2008). Prior to 1994, English and Afrikaans had enjoyed a prestigious position and were therefore regarded as high varieties in a language community. However, Ntombela (2008) argues that the elevation of eleven languages into equal official status saw a slight shift in diglossia in that many schools among Black Africans dropped Afrikaans in their curricular so that English remained the only high variety. In other words, all important or formal communication such as in the media, judiciary, employment sector, education, etc. continues to be carried out mostly in English whereas other communications occur in vernacular. Before embarking on such issues it is imperative to contextualise the South African multilingual reality.

2. Towards a Multilingual South Africa

The narration surrounding the arrival of the Dutch, the first coloniser of South Africa, and the subsequent landing of the English during the imperialist expansion of the British Empire is well beyond the scope of this paper except for mentioning the fact that these occurrences introduced Afrikaans and English as languages that would undermine and conquer indigenous African languages. It should be borne in mind that the linguistic landscape at the time was very different. Part of that comes from the fluidity of the flow of people from one place to another, which among other reasons was necessitated by such occurrences as marriages that brought different linguistic communities into contact. This was well before 1884 where the scramble for Africa culminated in Berlin (Ngugi, 1996).

It was in Berlin that borders were created, mapping the African landscape into different patches where people of the same tribe suddenly found themselves alienated from each other. Though the Berlin conference was at the continental scale, newly formed countries were still to embark on an even more brutal mapping. In South Africa, demarcations were drawn on the basis of linguistic differences. That is, Bophuthatswana housed the Batswana; Gazankulu was home for Shangaan; Lebowa inhabited the Pedi; Zululand: the Zulu; Free State: the Suthu; and Transkei and Ciskei consisted of the Xhosa. These divisions are obviously not exhaustive as they exclude such language people as the Swazi, the Venda and the Ndebele. These divisions were created to be homelands such that the rest of the lush South African landscape belonged to the Afrikaners and the English which they regarded as the real South Africa. That meant anyone who came from the homelands would be regarded as a foreigner in South Africa which explained why they had to carry a form of identity with them whenever they move (just as a passport is carried when you cross a border to another country except that there was no formal border – border checkpoints were anywhere and everywhere). The official languages in South Africa were English and Afrikaans, obviously because the indigenous South African languages were strategically confined to homelands. The reality however, was that even in the ‘English and Afrikaans South Africa’, the native South Africans and their languages far outnumbered Afrikaners and English with their languages. The absent recognition for the indigenous South African languages was part and parcel of the repressive regime.

It should also be mentioned that the creation of these homelands along linguistic lines was aimed at fostering animosity between native people. Each was meant to see the other as different. This was very conducive for a divide-and-rule strategy. English and Afrikaans were therefore well set to appear as unifying languages among such diverse language groups where none would want to be dominated by the other. This was a psychological blatant lie as indigenous languages had long coexisted and had enriched each other freely without any threat of dominating or being dominated.

Although English and Afrikaans were official languages, in education, the Afrikaner and the English could each operate with either of the languages from the first year of schooling to doctoral level at university. The choice obviously would default on one’s home language – a luxury that a native South African child could only dream of then and unfortunately now. The luxury that is increasingly becoming alien to the African child as the hegemony of English language unleashes its subtleties. Whatever the future, nonetheless, African languages would still remain a defining factor in the multilingual state of South Africa.

The immediate response by the South African government at the dawn of democracy, to officialise the previously marginalised indigenous South African languages should therefore be understood in the same reality that however dominant the European languages are in the linguistic map of South Africa, the country is a multilingual one and the constitution ought to recognise that. In fact, the language policy is towards the promotion of multilingualism and not just the recognition. That promotion envisages the development of indigenous languages to the same level of functioning in education, commerce, science, technology etc. as English and Afrikaans. Research, on the contrary, suggests that the development of indigenous languages is reaching a stalemate if not retrogressing. In December 2009, for instance, the government suddenly discontinued the funds that were allocated for the development of indigenous languages (Moyo, 2011). English on the other

hand continues dominating the linguistic landscape with Afrikaans not very far behind, a fact confirmed by Kamwangamalu (2000) who argues that English dominates all other languages and is followed by Afrikaans despite the official status enshrined in the constitution.

3. Linguistic Resistance and the Place of English

1976 will always be remembered in the history of South African liberation as the youth resistance of the imposition of Afrikaans as the medium of instruction. This imposition meant the replacement of English as the medium of instruction. In other words, the apartheid regime was attempting monolingualism in a multilingual South Africa with an aim of promoting separatist ideals of ethnic identities (Banda, 2000, p. 51). It was against this background that part of the freedom for the oppressed was to embrace racial and linguistic differences and fight for liberty.

It should be noted that English had never been resisted as the medium of instruction. This positive attitude towards English should be understood in the light of missionary education which offered much better than the Bantu education which was deliberately crafted to provide inferior education. That is, Bantu education was instrumental in creating a negative attitude on indigenous languages as languages of learning (Kamwangamalu, 2000). There should therefore be a natural association of Afrikaans with the apartheid system of education. Even indigenous languages came to be associated with inferior education because the missionary schools operated in the English language. In fact, Kamwangamalu (2000) contends that the enforcement of Afrikaans as a language of teaching and learning saw the increase of the influence of English among Blacks.

English was also associated with internationalisation especially given the number of exiled people who were absorbed in English speaking countries. The proliferation of American films also contributed to the positive regard for English. These films provided an avenue for the oppressed to forget about their condition for a moment. It was also through these films that a vibrant popular culture was born among urban Blacks in such places as Sophiatown in Johannesburg. This culture made Blacks feel as though they could identify themselves with the international community especially that of the African American.

It should also be remembered that the British Empire still had a lot of interest in the affairs of South Africa and was seen as a potential ally in delivering Blacks from the Afrikaner oppressive regime. For that reason English was associated with freedom. It can be argued therefore that the most successful weapon that the British used for colonisation was their language. Even presently British English, especially in its written form, is held in the highest esteem by many Black academics.

After the dawn of democracy, linguistic resistance took a different form, which however had many things in common with the 1976 linguistic uprisings. With the new language policy advocating for multilingualism, there was an urgent need for schools to offer indigenous languages in the curricula. Although there was hope that African languages could be elevated to the level of English and Afrikaans as being media of instruction, in KwaZulu Natal particularly, many Black schools dropped Afrikaans and the question of English being the only viable medium of instruction became irrelevant. In addition, there was an increase of Black parents enrolling their children in Afrikaans schools where the medium of instruction was Afrikaans and then demand that an English medium class be opened to cater for them. The demand for an African language to feature in the curricula of former White schools was also irrelevant. In fact, there are many former White schools that do not offer any African language in their curricula. Notably, as Banda (2000, p. 60) observes, the preference of English as a medium of instruction is firmly established among learners despite many academics who argue for the mother tongue instruction. Also many academics and researchers have argued the futility of being held captive by mother tongue instruction albeit the benefits that are enjoyed by those who never have to learn a new language which is to be used as a medium of instruction.

Those who persistently argue for mother tongue instruction cite such cases as Swahili in Tanzania, Hebrew in Israel, and Malay in Malaysia where vernacularisation has been successfully implemented (Kamwangamalu, 2000). What makes such cases dissimilar to the South African situation is the linguistic makeup. In fact, the principal argument for mother tongue instruction in South Africa seems to be anchored in Cummins who writes from a different context than South Africa which begs a question of whether there is feasibility in that given the multiplicity of languages in South Africa (Banda, 2000, p. 61). That is, with eleven official languages it is not an easy thing to choose the one that will be the medium of instruction. In Gauteng for example, a large percentage of those who live there were not born there but come from almost all over South Africa. Which medium of instruction would therefore be used? The immediate solution would be the status quo because as Banda (2000), perhaps following the colonial line of argument, predicts that the option for one particular language in South Africa is likely to result in linguistic feud where one language would be elevated or favoured than the others.

4. The Research

The research focused on a family from which two young learners attended different schools. Focusing in that family was necessary to ground the reasons behind these learners attending different schools. It was therefore appropriate to adopt ethnography as a research method (Canagarajah, 1999; Scot & Morrison, 2007).

We shall call the two learners Sbusiso and Slindile. They live in the same house. Sbusiso is aged eight and attends a preparatory primary school where he is doing Grade 2. The school is about seven kilometres from home near the town's central business district. He commutes there by a school mini bus every day. The school is a former Model 'C' where previously, only White children could attend. At present, the school has a multiracial learner population, and communication in English predominates within the school premises. It has impressive sporting facilities including hockey field, tennis court, rugby sports field and a swimming pool. The school charges about R13000.00 per annum for tuition. The school offers English as a Home language which is also the medium of instruction. Afrikaans is also offered as a First Additional language. Although Sbusiso speaks isiZulu as a Home language, it is not offered at his school. He does not have problems with English as a medium of instruction because his pre-primary education was in an English only day care centre.

Slindile is also eight. She attends a primary school in the township which is about two kilometres from home. She is doing Grade 2 and she normally walks to school every day. Sporting facilities in her school consist of two sports fields: one for soccer and the other for netball. The school tuition fee is about R500.00 per annum. However, children from poorer families are exempted from paying tuition fees. The school offers isiZulu as a Home language. English is offered as a First Additional language and is the medium of instruction. However, learners predominantly communicate in isiZulu within school premises because they all speak isiZulu as a Home language. Slindile also attended a pre-primary school, albeit in the township. The schooling was predominantly conducted in isiZulu although children were introduced to rudimentary English vocabulary and nursery rhymes.

These two live with their grandmother who was never married. In the household there are six members who permanently live there. These members are grandmother, Slindile and Sbusiso, Lucky (who is four) and his father, and a domestic helper who looks after the children. Grandmother works as a cashier at a supermarket in town. Slindile's father, Sbusiso's mother and Lucky's father are siblings. Sbusiso's mother and Lucky's father have the same father (who is deceased). Slindile's paternal grandfather is also deceased. The parents of these children are all single which is why their children live with grandmother.

Sbusiso's mother is the second born. Her father was a successful businessman who owned a fleet of taxis, several rental properties and few shops. After completing Grade 12, she enrolled for a National Diploma in Civil Engineering in one of the province's University of Technology. She presently works for a civil engineering consulting company. She owns a car; moreover, the house where her mother and her brother's children live is hers.

Slindile's father, on the other hand, is the first born. His father was unemployed. After completing Grade 12, he enrolled for journalism at a college. However, he dropped out due to financial constraints, which was exacerbated by doubts on the accreditation of the college. Later, he was offered an opportunity by the Department of Health to train as a Staff Nurse. After completing his two-year training, he worked at different health clinics in rural areas. At present he works in the township health clinic. He rents a room in one of the houses in the township.

This description explains why the two children attend two different schools. We can see that Sbusiso's mother comes from a financially privileged background where her father was a businessman. This enabled her to enrol for an engineering qualification which bettered her employment status and remuneration. She was therefore able to afford a car, a house and a relatively expensive school for her child. Slindile's father on the other hand comes from an impoverished background. He was unable to gain entry in a university because there was no one to pay for school fees. Although he eventually got a qualification as a health professional, his qualification was still at an entry level and did not reward him with a salary that would enable him to take his child to an expensive well-resourced school.

We highlighted that the two schools attended by these children differ from each other on account of facilities and languages offered. We mentioned that Sbusiso attends a school where English is taught as a Home language and is the medium of instruction whereas Slindile attends a school where English is offered as a First Additional Language and is also a medium of instruction. Our discussion will now turn into the two English language offerings.

5. The Home Language and the First Additional Language Dichotomy

The teaching of English to speakers of other languages has been approached from either ESL (English as a Second Language) or EFL (English as a Foreign Language) perspective. The former presupposes an environment where learners of English need the target language to communicate with each other or with the immediate community; the latter assumes that learners of English will use it to communicate with native speakers of English who are outside their immediate environment. That is, in an EFL environment most students share the same language whilst the ESL environment is characterised by a multilingual group of students (Ntombela & Dube, 2010). This distinction is important because it informs the teaching approach that must be adopted. ESL and EFL should further be contrasted with the teaching of English as a first language.

ESL dominated former British colonies, especially where there were diverse linguistic groups who used English as a *lingua franca*. In such places, English had already established itself as a language of education, science and commerce. Because most people in such countries would have learnt English at school, they would find it instrumental in communicating with other members who speak a different language.

EFL on the other hand dominated countries that had established local languages but needed to access the British or American education. In such contexts, those who learn English would do so because they want to travel and further their education or business in the UK or the US. The question of the type of English one must learn becomes an important one in EFL as learners would logically need the type spoken in a place where they want to go. That is, the aim of EFL is to teach the language that will produce the same 'sound, syntax, and conversation patterns [say,] of British, American or any English associated with a country where English is spoken as a native language' (Mpepo, 1998, p. 83).

In the South African situation it may seem that some schools reflect the EFL situation especially in rural and township schools, particularly in KwaZulu Natal where all students speak the same language i.e. isiZulu. On the other hand, former Model 'C' schools may strike one as reflecting an ESL situation where learners speak different languages. In practice however, there may seem to be a bias towards offering English as a Foreign Language where local varieties especially South African Black English or South African Indian English are frowned upon (Mpepo, 1998). In fact, it is a case of the South African White English variety which is generally regarded as the proper English on which teaching and learning must be based. In that respect, Mpepo (2007, p. 27) postulates that good teaching should expose learners to varieties of English in their society so that they know which one to use in particular contexts.

English as a first language would be taught in countries where it is spoken as a native language. In practice however, English as a first language exists in both ESL and EFL environments especially where the education system caters for English native speakers who often prefer their own education instead of the local one. Because of that, it is very common to have learners taught from the perspective of EFL or ESL and have others in the same context taught from English first language. Generally, English first language is viewed as superior to ESL or EFL. That is evidenced by the fact that students who come from an EFL and ESL background would be subjected to such proficiency tests as IELTS (International English Language Testing System) or TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language) before they could be admitted to institutions of higher learning in certain universities.

In South Africa, presently, the teaching of English is divided into Home Language and First Additional Language. The former refers to the language first acquired by a learner whilst the latter is the language learnt after home language. Just like ESL/EFL versus English first language, English Home Language is regarded as superior to First Additional Language. For instance, some university departments of English would reject students who have obtained say, a 50% pass in English First Additional Language but accept those who have attained the same percentage in English Home Language. English First Additional Language is offered in most government African public schools whilst English Home Language is offered in all former Model C schools (or Whites' schools). Similarly, schools in the same vicinity, servicing similar communities would offer either First Additional Language or Home Language where the choice for learners largely depends on economic status. That is, children who come from affluent homes are sent to schools that offer English Home Language whilst those who cannot afford go to schools that offer First Additional Language. For instance, in the research it was shown that Slindile could have easily gone to a former Model C school if there were no financial constraints.

It seems that the distinction between Home Language and First Additional Language is not solid, just like ESL/EFL and English first language. What the distinction does is stratify learners into first and second class citizens where the first class represents Home Language and second class the First Additional Language. Slindile would fall in the category of second class citizenry whereas Sbusiso would fall on the first class. What further

makes the distinction shaky is that in the South African schooling system, children could start school at the age of 4 in Grade RRR, move to Grade RR at the age of 5, progress to Grade R at the age of 6, and begin Grade 1 at the age of 7 (Department of Basic Education 2011). First Additional Language is introduced at Grade 1 with an instructional time of 2 hours and subsequently becomes the medium of instruction (ibid, 2011). This is unlike Home Language which is introduced in Grade R with an instructional time of 10 hours which also becomes the medium of instruction (ibid, 2011). This should easily explain why learners who attend English Home Language schools are more advantaged than those attending English First Additional Language ones. This arrangement does not take into account the fact that before the onset of adolescence, children can learn any language with ease (Aitchison, 2008). There is therefore no linguistic or pedagogic rationale to teach one group of students English Home Language and the other English First Additional Language. Such a distinction seems to be embedded in the historical fallacy that English is best taught by first language speakers (Canagarajah, 1999). In that case, it would be expected that since former Model C schools have first language speakers, English Home language would be offered there, but because in most Black African schools there would likely be no first language speakers of English, then English should be taught there as First Additional language.

Furthermore, as Banda (2000, p. 58) argues, the historical factor of institutional inequalities especially between former Model 'C' and Black schools results in unequal quality of education and language input to the disadvantage of Black schools. The inferiority of English First Additional language to English Home language should therefore be understood in the same context. Indeed, problems of incompetence have been reported among learners of English First Additional language where Banda (2000, p. 59) explains that such incompetence does not lie much with the medium of instruction but with how such is taught in the classroom.

6. Towards a Decolonised Mindset

The prevailing attitude that suggests English is the only viable language to be used as medium of instruction speaks volumes about the damage that colonisation caused in the minds of the colonised. Such a mindset in Africa is not only visible among Anglophones but cuts across Francophone countries as well. In fact, there is a gradual shift of preference where, for instance, countries like Mozambique and the Democratic Republic of Congo are now calling for more English instead of Portuguese and French respectively. This is echoed by Ndebele (2006, p. 102) who argues that the ownership of English language has long shifted from the native speakers to reside in all speakers of the language around the world. In South Africa, the growing number of Blacks who use English for whatever need means that their reliance on the minority of South African native speakers of English will diminish (Ndebele, 2006). It is problematic that colonised countries, like South Africa, that have diverse linguistic representation have opted for English, a European language, because of its perceived economic value. Banda (2000, p. 54), however, argues that the adoption of an additional language to any African is generally linked to 'political, socioeconomic and educational consideration'. This explains why non-Africans, particularly speakers of English and Afrikaans in South Africa are mostly monolingual – their languages have political, economic and educational cache. On the other hand, Stroud (2001, p. 342) believes that what seems to drive a choice towards a European language at the expense of an African one in the belief that 'African cultures and ways of knowing' carry less weight in comparison to European ones which makes parents regard mother tongue instruction as a waste of time.

But the perception goes beyond economic value to suggest intelligence. Ngugi (1996) noted that unless one displayed proficiency in the English language, the route to higher education remained closed however intelligent a person may be in such subjects as Mathematics. Therefore, a person who could speak English fluently is immediately regarded as intelligent which opens many educational and employment doors.

The proliferation of English should not be thought as localised in Africa as its influence permeates the global linguistic map. In fact, as Ndebele (2006) asserts, the historical spread of English around the world ensured that the colonised were robbed of their ability to opt for native languages but, in the guise of freedom and perhaps civilisation, found it natural to choose English. This further created a tendency of mother tongue speakers of African languages to devalue their languages (Stroud, 2001, p. 340). The dominance of English language across the globe as blanketed by the notions of globalisation assumes the process of linguistic colonisation. In fact, the spread of English is pinned to the economic cache that goes with the English Language Teaching (ELT) enterprise: the publication of teaching materials, the training of English teachers, the testing of English proficiency, which all rake billions in monetary value. It remains a paradox why such an investment is not given to the development of local languages.

The other side of the coin is represented by such a mindset that non-native speakers of English would never rise to the level of native proficiency both in teaching and learning. That is, whilst in the same context, learners who

due to a robust economic status have access to English taught as first language, the majority are condemned to ESL/EFL for the rest of their educational lives, or First Additional Language in the case of South Africa. One instance that exemplifies this even better is the Malawian one where President Banda envisioned a prestigious English Grammar school that would teach English Language the same way it is taught in Britain. The teachers were to be imported from Britain because local ones would never be good enough. That is, the government (or public) African schools would never offer English Home language in South Africa not only because the learners attending these schools are perceived to have acquired an African language prior to English, but also because teachers of English language in public African schools would not be good enough and the learners would not cope with English Home Language.

It is imperative to problematize these matters because it is almost impossible to disengage issues of language from social and economic equity (Stroud, 2001, p. 351). That is, although 1994 is celebrated for the emergence of democracy and the demise of apartheid regime which for many brought equal access to the economy and social existence, the emancipation of indigenous languages and the equal access to language education has not progressed. In fact, the issue of indigenous languages has largely been evaded in the political arena and unless such issues are inserted in political discourses, the dominance of colonial languages will prevail (Stroud, 2001, p. 343).

7. Conclusions

The founding of democratic South Africa as a rainbow nation has complicated the linguistic emancipation for native South Africans. The ideal situation is the one where the languages of the formerly oppressed are developed to the same level of operation with those of the former oppressors. Unfortunately, this seems easier said than done. Whilst the promotion of one or two languages sounds feasible, it seems a difficult task for nine of the eleven official languages in South Africa. The complication is that these languages are dominantly spoken in different provinces, where even the number of people speaking these languages differs. This means the promotion of some of these languages could be most viable at a provincial level but would pose difficulties where, for instance, that language had been promoted to the level of being a medium of instruction and the learner who was schooled through that language moves to another province where that language is not spoken. These are some of the excuses that are generally cited when defending the lethargy of promoting African South African languages. However, it is still possible to operate in the mother tongue up to university level and only learn English for communication purposes as it is the case in monolingual countries.

But the promotion of indigenous languages to the level of media of instruction is being hampered by the socioeconomic prestige attached to English. On the onset, learners who cannot competently communicate in English are immediately relegated to second class in favour of those who are competent. This means learners and parents would see it logical to invest heavily in learning English than in learning an African language. Unfortunately, even that investment would have to depend on socioeconomic factors as the majority of South Africans do not have access to the prestigious English offered as Home language. This is because most public schools offer English as First Additional language which is perceived as of lower class compared to the Home language. The paradox however, is that it does not seem to matter whether a learner has own home language prior to attending school – any learner can be taught English as Home language as long as the parents can afford exorbitant fees.

In other words, it is the conclusion of this paper that there is no ground for not promoting indigenous languages to the level of operation with the European ones. The damage seems to have been done in the minds of African South Africans and politicians who all lack the will power to bring the question of linguistic emancipation into the public conscience. Similarly, there are no grounds for segregating English First Additional language from English Home language. The only person who suffers is the learner. Therefore, it is the recommendation of this paper not only to interrogate the lethargy of not promoting indigenous languages but to further call for the dismantling of different English language offerings in favour of teaching English equally across the schooling system especially as it is equally used as a medium of instruction in all schools regardless of whether it is offered as English Home language or First Additional language.

References

- Aitchison, J. (2008). *The Articulate Mammal: An introduction to psycholinguistics*. Oxon: Routledge.
- Banda, F. (2000). The dilemma of the mother tongue: Prospects for bilingual education in South Africa. *Language Culture and Curriculum*, 51-66. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/07908310008666589>
- Canagarajah, A. S. (1999). *Resisting linguistic imperialism in English teaching*. Oxford: Oxford University

Press.

- Department of Education. (2011). *Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement Grades 10-12 English First Additional Language*. Pretoria: Department of Basic Education.
- Kamwangamalu, N. (2000). A new language policy, old language practices: status planning for African languages in a multilingual South Africa. *South African Journal of African Languages*, 50-60.
- Moyo, T. (2011). Unequal official languages: the case of South Africa's official languages. *Faculty of Arts 5th Annual Conference* (pp. 74-83). KwaDlangezwa: University of Zululand.
- Mpepo, M. (1998). The distinction between EFL and ESL and the ESL bias in Language Teaching. *Southern African Journal of Applied Language Studies*, 82-90. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/10189203.1998.9724687>
- Mpepo, M. (2007). The foundation of sociocultural characteristics in English Language Teaching in ESL situations. *Faculty of Arts 2nd Annual Conference* (pp. 21-29). KwaDlangezwa: University of Zululand.
- Ndebele, N. (2006). *Rediscovery of the ordinary*. Durban: University of KwaZulu Natal Press.
- Ngugi, W. T. (1996). *Decolonising the mind: The politics of language in African literature*. Nairobi: East African Educational Publishers.
- Ntombela, B., & Dube, E. (2010). L1 in EFL context in Oman colleges. *The Tenth Annual ELT Conference Current Perspectives in ELT: New Methodologies, Research, and Best Practices* (pp. 76-88). Muscat: Sultan Qaboos University.
- Ntombela, B. X. S. (2008). Language in education: Sociolinguistic aspects in Black African high schools in Eshowe District. Unpublished M.A. Dissertation. KwaDlangezwa: University of Zululand.
- Scott, D. ,& Morrison, M. (2007). *Key ideas in educational research*. London: Continuum.
- Spolsky, B. (1998). *Sociolinguistics*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Stroud, C. (2001). African mother tongue programmes and the politics of language: Linguistic citizenship versus linguistic human rights. *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Developments*, 339-355. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/01434630108666440>
- Wardhaugh, R. (1996). *An introduction to sociolinguistics*. Oxford: Blackwell.

Copyrights

Copyright for this article is retained by the author(s), with first publication rights granted to the journal.

This is an open-access article distributed under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution license (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/3.0/>).