The politics of language planning in post-apartheid South Africa

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There is no politically neutral theory of language planning, in spite of the fact that the power elites tend only to examine language policy under conditions of crisis. In South Africa, language planning was associated with the discredited racist social engineering of the apartheid era, especially because of the deleterious effects of Bantu education and because of the stigma of collaboration that came to be attached to the Bantu language boards. The same conditions, however, gave rise to an enduring ethos of democratic language planning (by NGOs and by some community-based organisations). This tradition, together with the peculiarities of the negotiated settlement, has had a lasting influence on the character and modalities of language planning agencies in post-apartheid South Africa. The article explores the implications of consociational and orthodox liberal democratic approaches for language planning in South Africa and underlines the persuasive effects of integrating a costing component into every language planning proposal, given the tendency of middle-class elites to exaggerate the economic cost of any policy change.

Two points of theory

A few futile attempts have been made from time to time to put forward ideologically and politically "neutral" theories of language planning.[1] In the real world, all language planning, even that which denies that it is language planning, serves specific ideological and political ends. Because these ends are seldom articulated, the impression is created, especially for the laity, that all that matters is the "correct" procedure and sequencing of interventions by language planners and other "experts." As against this notion of a "science" of language planning, Lo Bianco says unequivocally that

> language policy is not some de-contextualized set of protocols that can be transported from context to context, setting to setting, and applied by disinterested technicians … [The] historical settings of culture, legal and political environment, ethnic relations, socio-legal parameters of policymaking and memory influence not only what is possible in any specific setting but also serve to shape its form and its content. (2002:25)

Lo Bianco also makes the sobering comment that it is rare that language planning is undertaken by "experts," i.e., it is usually politicians or other opinion formers who are the inspiration and government bureaucrats who are the practitioners of language planning projects (Lo Bianco 2002:24). As I shall show in a moment, this should not be read to mean that in the course of language planning exercises, there is no place for the specialist, the academic or, in short, the language planner.

All language planning is tantamount to an appeal from an "author" to those whom it may concern to stop to look *at* the window pane rather than merely *through* it. Precisely because the medium of communication and information transfer is taken for granted, it is extremely difficult for most people to accept that it can itself be an object of study and manipulation with a view to changing it to make it more suited to its purpose. There is a tendency — in a kinder period we might have said "an understandable tendency" — to leave well enough alone, to "let nature run its course." Language is one of the last social domains in which planning, understood as a means to achieve specific ends most efficiently, is felt, probably by a majority of formally educated people, to be taboo. Yet, today even the most intimate domains of social life, such as establishing a family, are the object of well-established planning procedures and techniques. Be that as it may, it remains true that those who wield power in any society see no reason why they should examine the mechanisms which keep them where they are, unless these are threatened. Language policy is one of those levers of power which are virtually invisible to those who have their hand on it. It is as though the aircraft they steer is set on autopilot at all times.

Taken together, these two points tend to indicate that language planning as a profession and as an academic discipline remains a protean domain. On the other hand, it ought to be clear that the sociology of language has become a vital aspect of applied language studies insofar as it alone can bring to the surface and thus to the consciousness of people the systematic activities and the discursive manipulations that constitute language planning in practice. In this way, sociologists of language are also in a position to show up the mismatch among language policy, language use and other social policies, if such contradictions

indeed exist, as well as the socioeconomic, political and cultural implications that they carry with them. Along this route, the importance of language planning for public policy studies becomes almost self-evident.

The legacy of apartheid and of resistance to it

To understand the complex power relations and ideological agendas that have a bearing on the content and modalities of language planning in the new South Africa, we must refer to some of the relevant moments in pre-1994 South Africa that have influenced, and to a large extent still influence, these processes.

Until the late 1980s, there was no explicit theory of language planning to which either the regime-orientated applied linguists or those associated with the liberation movement adhered. This can be explained both by the fact that language planning as a discipline was still in the early stages of its evolution and by the fact that language engineering was seen by the ideologues of the post-war white supremacist regime as an integral component of the larger project of segregationist social engineering, which the world came to know as apartheid. That project was based, among other things, on a biologistic conception of the relationship between "race" on the one hand and ethnicity and language on the other. Every move made in the domain of language policy and planning was determined by the single-minded pursuit of the goal of a society segregated in terms of the criterion of "race" in virtually all respects along both vertical and horizontal axes. Thus, by way of example, the unparalleled investment in single-medium mother tongue schooling for all "white" children and other learners has to be seen as part and parcel of the investment in material as well as human resources that was undertaken in order to lift up the Afrikaans language to the position where it was at least equal to English in most social functions and, in fact, superior to the language of Wordsworth and Tennyson in some of them. It was taken for granted that the *Herrenvolk,* i.e., the master race of both Afrikaans- and English-speaking whites, ought naturally to get the lion's share of the national product. The grotesque reasoning behind this zoological dystopia can be followed in a few works, notably that written in the mid-1950s by I. B. Tabata on the subject of *Education for barbarism.* The investment in the intellectualisation of Afrikaans for use in "higher order" social functions such as university education, big business and the public sector produced a steady stream of Afrikaans-orientated applied language professionals. Building on civil-society initiatives that had their origins in the 1930s, some even in the 1920s, the

Afrikaner National Party set about establishing formal state control of language management via generous subsidies to Afrikaner think tanks such as SABRA (the South African Bureau of Racial Affairs) and to Afrikaans-language projects.[2]

For reasons that will become evident in a moment, I stress the fact that the advance and development of Afrikaans without too much conflict was made possible in the first instance by the twin facts of the language equality clause in the Act of Union of 1910 and the reality of an, albeit whites-only, liberal democracy. According to Giliomee (2003:545), by 1970 Afrikaans was fully established as a public language. It was one of only three languages that had succeeded in establishing themselves in this way in the course of the twentieth century.[3] Giliomee cites the Afrikaans poet and essayist, N.P. Van Wyk Louw, as stating that the Afrikaans language was "the socialism of the poor Afrikaner."

> Once the state enforced Afrikaans as an official language, the 'small man' knew that his language would help him to get work…. In 1957 Louw wrote that the language movement had triumphed; it had secured more rights than other 'small' languages, like Irish and Welsh, and had built up a respected literature. To Afrikaners, Afrikaans provided a sense of personal worth, as well as jobs and other economic advantages…. But Louw warned against complacency; the language could still perish unless it served as a vehicle for the real and vital needs of large groups of people. (Giliomee 2003:545)

Anyone who is familiar with the conceptual framework of Bourdieu and his school will immediately recognise the incarnation of "cultural capital" and of the "linguistic habitus" in this paragraph. In order to complete this rosy picture, however, it is essential to remind ourselves that a prominent, indeed dominant, feature of this habitus was the seamless connection between Standard Afrikaans and the racist hubris of "the white man." Giliomee in fact goes on to analyse the manner in which the language came to acquire the label of "the language of the oppressor" (2003:545–547). For our purposes, the salient point is that it was the language planners of *Algemeen Beskaafde Afrikaans* who deliberately engineered the standard language to reinforce the racist agenda of the ruling strata of the white establishment.[4]

If the engineering of Afrikaans as a standard language gave rise to an enviable language infrastructure in all domains of social life as well as a core of well-trained language professionals, the complementary impact on the other languages used in South Africa, especially on the Bantu languages, has been as enduring. In this connection, I particularly want to stress the complicity of the very language professionals which the system had incubated so abundantly.[5] Many scholarly articles have been written on both the macro- and the micro-linguistic

planning that these languages were subjected to.[6] For the purpose of this article, three points need to be highlighted. Firstly, all language-related research and development activities, were systemically underfunded, including (crucially) "Bantu Education," which necessarily deprived black people generally, and scholars in particular, of even the opportunity to emulate the moves made in respect to Afrikaans. As in the rest of the body politic, apartheid language policy and planning for black people was no less than a carefully designed obstacle race at the same time as it was a wonderfully crafted affirmative action programme for white, especially Afrikaans-speaking, people. Secondly, *Ausbau*-languages were deliberately created to block the convergence of Nguni and Sotho varieties towards two standard written languages respectively.[7] Finally, we have to underline the methods of corpus planning instituted by the Bantu Language Boards. These boards, even though in retrospect we have to review our earlier blanket condemnation of their collaborationist stance, came to be stigmatised and their often exceptionally creative and useful linguistic products to be rejected.[8] Ultimately, the politics of apartheid South Africa and of the resistance to apartheid brought not only corpus planning, but language planning as such, into disrepute.

If we now approach the legacy from the side of the liberation movement, we have a similar mix of elements. Probably the single most important imprint left by the struggle for liberation from apartheid on activist scholars working in the field of language planning and policy development is the firm belief that this activity cannot and should not be controlled by government alone. While it is understood that the state, because of its access to resources, will necessarily play a central role in any language planning strategy, it is equally clearly understood that unless the speakers of the language(s) concerned are consulted adequately and unless NGOs and CBOs are involved at the grassroots level, any language planning will be oppressive and will — necessarily — lead to resistance. Democratic language planning "from below" has to be built into any radical social transformation exercise.

Languages came to be seen as resources in both the economic and the cultural sense of the term. In this respect, applied language scholars in South Africa find themselves in the best international company. Their first-hand experience of a multicultural dispensation has helped many of them to appreciate the significance of what we have come to call "functional multilingualism."[9] Constitutionally as well as in terms of the nation building project, it is more than obvious that no language can be treated as though it is intrinsically superior or inferior to any other. At this point, linguistic theory and political

strategy intersect in a manner that reinforces the democratic aspirations of most of the people who constitute the citizens of post-apartheid South Africa. As will be pointed out shortly, because of elite closure,[10] this deep-rooted disposition has not prevented the situation from arising in which English is treated by most South Africans as the first among equals.

For related reasons, there exists a healthy scepticism among these scholars towards the claims made for standard varieties of languages. Consequently, much attention is devoted to varieties other than the standard and to the acceptability of many lexical, phonological and semantic variants. This disposition is clearly the result of the deep craving which such community-based intellectuals had, and some still have, for genuine democratic practices. It is manifest also in the special attention paid to the most marginalised languages, above all to sign languages and endangered languages such as those of the San. On the other hand, this kind of justifiable preoccupation with cultural diversity has blinded many applied language scholars, especially sociolinguists, to the possibilities of justifiable and desirable language planning. Ironically, most of these scholars tend to accept the *Ausbau* character of the languages engineered by the apartheid ideologues even where it is abundantly obvious that **from** a literacy and an economic development or enterprise efficiency point of view, such accommodation might be counter-productive. The sometimes oddball debate on the question of harmonised written standards for the Nguni language cluster and the Sotho cluster respectively is only one of many similar debates. The passion with which many scholars and some politicians defend the inherited standard written forms of the Bantu languages that were very deliberately *not* provided with the armies and the navies which, according to Weinreich's famous definition, mark the difference between a language and a dialect, remains one of the great paradoxes of the post-apartheid dispensation. As language professionals, with regard to socially and economically vital questions such as the harmonisation of mutually intelligible varieties of a language, they fail to evince the historical imagination and the civic courage which the evolution of a new historical community demands of its leadership cadre. Because of this timidity, major social, economic, political and cultural advances that would lift the South African political community above current levels of stagnation and mediocrity are being blocked.

Ethnic nationalism versus Anglocentrism

There can be no doubt that the decisive influence on conformist and conserva-
tive applied language studies in the new South Africa is the social, political and
economic vision of the middle-class elites who have been the immediate and
possibly the only beneficiaries of the transition from apartheid to a liberal
democracy. At this level, we can register two apparently contradictory tenden-
cies. In the first place, we have the ethnic nationalist tendency, spurred on by
irredentist Afrikaner nationalists. At the constitutional level, these people want
a consociational democracy based on clearly delineated social groups defined
largely in terms of language but where necessary also of "race" or so-called
culture. It was to appease this tendency in South African society that the ANC
negotiators agreed to the establishment of the Section 185 Commission in spite
of the palpable constitutionalisation of ethnic politics which that move entails.
It is this tendency which is spearheading the agitation for the protection and
promotion of the human rights of "minorities" in South Africa. In the domain
of language policy and practice, this agitation translates into a demand for the
inviolability of linguistic human rights, a demand which is, naturally, supported
by most democrats insofar as the rights are conceived as individual human
rights.[11] It is abundantly obvious, however, that many of the scholars who are
treading this path have nothing less than a right-wing restorationist and
rejectionist agenda and that they are cunningly exploiting the constitutional
space afforded them via Sections 185, 186 and 235 of the South African consti-
tution. At the level of the sociology of language and of language planning, the
proponents of this approach adopt a rights orientation which, on the surface,
seems to be synchronous with the more generally accepted language-as-a-
resource approach. In reality, the lack of clear definition that characterises the
language planning domain is a reflection of the contested character of the
incomplete transition to a democratic society. This lack of definition is a
harbinger of hope, since the road towards a larger measure of consensus among
South Africans who accept a non-racial, integrated, multicultural society, as
opposed to a so-called multicultural but segregationist one, remains open.

   On the other side, we are faced with the rising black middle-class elite
which, for reasons that have been canvassed in many different essays by many
authors as well as by myself,[12] are completely enthralled by the value of the
English language for their own and their progeny's upward mobility. For our
purposes here, it suffices to draw attention to the fact that the phenomenon of
"the unassailable position of English" can be understood in many different

ways. However, the decisive explanation is to be found in Bourdieu's theory of linguistic markets and cultural capital. This theory has found many incarnations in some of the best known writings on the subject of language policy in Africa. In the post-apartheid South African setting, the hegemonic position of English assumes an added significance because of the very clear and explicit constitutional and legislative commitments to language equity and to the development of marginalised languages. Beyond this rhetorical border, however, lies the global reality of the increasingly close link between the promotion of the English language — to the exclusion of local languages — and advocacy of a neo-liberal economic strategy. While one has to be extremely careful not to make simplistic connections between autonomous domains of human endeavour,[13] there can be no doubt that next to the class-positioning effects of proficiency in English,[14] this same proficiency, by giving access to global markets, makes it possible for one to be elevated to the charmed circle of the global elites. The Growth, Employment and Redistribution (GEAR) Strategy, like its predecessor the Reconstruction and Development Programme, does not place any importance on the question of language deployment as a resource for national economic development, since it is assumed that everything will happen by means of English. Through such assumptions, of course, these national development plans unintentionally restrict the potential for growth and development even within the contested neo-liberal frame of reference within which GEAR especially was formulated. In linguistic terms, the attitude of the elites towards the English language is reminiscent of Fukuyama's prematurely proclaimed "end of history." No other language in their estimation is or will be able to challenge the position and utility of English as a means of communication and therefore as an instrument for the production and exchange of commodities. The elites are captive to the notion that there is no alternative to English and in this respect, they have not moved beyond the position where a Dr. Abdurahman found himself in about 1910.[15]

Quite apart from the anti-democratic implications of this approach, it ought to be obvious that under the conditions of a South Africa that is mired in illiteracy (in any language) and unemployment as well as being afflicted by the scourge of AIDS, this anglocentric attitude and the *de facto* language policies it spawns are a recipe for the perpetuation of the deep social inequality that continues to characterise the society nine years after "liberation."

It ought to come as no surprise, therefore, that the language terrain is a field of tension between contending elite conceptions of democracy, namely, first, a liberal notion based on individual rights and favoring a unilingual, English-only,

public service and formal economy and, second, a consociational notion of group rights-based democracy, which necessarily entails a multilingual approach to public service and the economy. This ambivalence is the direct result of the negotiated compromise of 1993. Both conceptions find some backing in the relevant sections of the constitution. From the point of view of a radical popular democratic project, a multilingual public service and an economy based on all the languages of the country is the only possible frame of reference, however gradually its realization in practice will come about. However, given the recent history of the country, it ought to be obvious to all but those who will not see that a group-rights-based approach would be inimical to such a project. Consequently, language rights, approached as linguistic human rights, have to be approached as individual rights even if in certain contexts they also reflect and serve specific language communities.[16]

"Leaders" and "masses"

Most South African students of applied language agree that the most difficult obstacle in the way of the rapid development of the African languages is what Ngugi wa Thiong'o has called "the colonised mind" — that is to say, the fact that the vast majority of black people simply do not believe that their languages can or should be used for higher-order functions even though they cherish them and are completely committed to maintaining them in the primary spheres of the family, the community and the church.[17] Because we know why and how this situation has come about — Ngugi's famous essay on the matter was the first of a series of analyses that demystified it — the pertinent question is, what is to be done?

In attempting to answer this question, we are led into the heart of the politics of the elite, for the immediate answers are abundantly obvious. It is essential that the African languages acquire market value in the short to medium term and it is clear that they will do so only if there is bold leadership from the front. While it is wrong to suggest that the political and cultural leaders alone have to break the logjam, it is clear after many years of reflection and intervention at many different levels that political will and commitment are going to be the decisive elements if we are to move from the point where the European languages dominate our societies to a point where African languages do so. In the midst of the rhetoric surrounding the African Renaissance, few other questions can be more relevant than the language question.[18] Indeed, the

next few years may well be our last opportunity to profile this question in a way that can no longer be ignored. Above all, the leadership has to ensure that both the public service and the private sector adhere strictly to the national language policy and plan, and to the provisions of the South African Languages Bill.[19] For reasons I intimated in the introductory paragraphs of this paper, it is extremely unlikely that of their own accord, the political leadership in the ruling circles will take decisive steps in the direction of closing the yawning gap between exemplary policy documents and real-life practice. Unless some dramatic opportunity for cashing in on the language question presents itself to one or other major political party, we are likely to see the same developments in South Africa as those that have characterised the post-colonial societies of most of the continent. With a few notable but none the less patchy exceptions in Tanzania, Somalia, Ethiopia and Eritrea, most of the countries south or east of the Sahara have promoted and entrenched a neo-colonial policy in which English, French or Portuguese continue to dominate the commanding heights.[20]

In South Africa at present, there is a move away from the *de facto* neo-apartheid policy of dominance of both the public and the formal private sector by English and Afrikaans. But it would be a mistake to think that the movement would be in the direction of the valorisation, equalisation and intellectualisation of the indigenous African languages. As I have stated already, it is a single-minded movement in the direction of a unilingual, English-only dispensation. In this way, the ruling elite, besides pushing the Afrikaans-orientated middle class on to the political margins, ensure their "profits of distinction" (*à la* Bourdieu). The question forces itself on us: are the people who are driving this policy aware of its anti-democratic and class-exploitative implications? The short answer must be in the negative, simply because, like most other people, the politicians and even many of the cultural leaders have never thought deeply about the language question. They are guided in the first instance by what they consider to be the immediate positive effects of the policies they are pursuing. It is not clear to them, to take a few random examples, that an English-only or even an English-mainly policy

– prevents the majority of the people from gaining access to vital information and, therefore, from full participation in the democratic political process;
– undermines the self-confidence of L2-speakers and, even more so, of those for whom English is effectively a foreign language;
– by the same token smothers the creativity and the spontaneity of people who are compelled to use a language of which they are not in full command, and

–   at the economic and workplace levels causes major avoidable blockages that have significant negative impacts on productivity and efficiency.

If we give these men and women the benefit of the doubt, we would expect that should they become aware of these and the many other socio-political and socio-economic impacts of the current language policy, they would be eager to switch to more appropriate policies. I believe that for many of them, this is indeed the case, even though it would be naïve to underestimate the weight of bureaucratic and systemic inertia and the invisible force of convenience and vested interest. Certainly, on the basis of recent experience in costing the implementation of elaborately formulated policy, there is reason for this optimism. Indeed, what initially most of us in the language planning field thought of as the most sensitive feature of the official policy, based on the constitution of South Africa, of promoting multilingualism and the development of the marginalised languages, i.e., the common-sense expectation of the increased cost of such a policy, has turned out to be a moment of strength. It transpires that in all cases a consistent application of reasonable implementation plans based on the phasing-in over three to five years, requires no more than, on average, an increase of 0.5% to 0.7% to the annual budget. This is true at the national, the provincial and the institutional levels. Above all, it is completely in line with the findings of similar multilingual structures in other parts of the world, notably in the European Union. While the initial investment in the language infrastructure that will make such a policy work is undoubtedly considerable, it has to be seen as both inevitable and profitable in the longer run. The economic and social costs of not making this initial investment and following it up with the negligible increments to the annual budget are almost incalculable. Certainly, insofar as ill-considered language policies are one of the causes of dysfunctional societies and communities, victim to illiteracy, unemployment, crime, violence and drugs, among other social pathologies, language policy reform is an essential and progressive move. For the language planning profession, the most important lesson to be drawn from this experience is obviously the fact that the costing of any language plan, no matter how limited, should be an integral aspect of the planning process. It is in the final analysis the most influential argument for the feasibility and acceptability of the new policy.[21]

I wish to stress that I am not arguing that we have found the key to unlocking the iron gates of anglocentric prejudice. The political class is adept at devising shibboleths to catch out and retard those who think they have made out an irrefutable case. The middle-class, elitist character of an English-mainly

policy involves class struggles for the formulation and implementation of a democratic language policy that will truly empower the ordinary people on the ground. No amount of planning or the perfection of theory can obviate this. It is only the mobilisation and organised pressure of the first-language speakers of the marginalised languages that will, in the end, make the difference. In this connection, the real danger of opening a Pandora's box of ethnic conflict exists. Hence, it is of the utmost importance that not group rights but rather solidarity rights that straddle all the groups be the strategic objective.[22]

Concluding remarks on language management in post-apartheid South Africa

The Pan South African Language Board (PANSALB) was created, among other things, to ensure that ethnic nationalism be de-linked from the language question. For reasons that are too complex to canvass in this paper,[23] the Board is currently moving in exactly the opposite direction, i.e., instead of being premised on the promotion of cross-cultural, horizontal multilingualism, it is tending increasingly to stress a vertically segregated multiple monolingualism.[24] Instead of dealing with clusters of cognate languages, the Board is sitting as the representative of eleven, sometimes fourteen, separate pillars. Increasingly, a kind of ethnic, as opposed to a multicultural and multilingual, ethos appears to be the driving principle behind the activities of the Board. It would seem that only economic imperatives and, sometimes, popular pressure, bring about *ad hoc* adaptations to the multilingual clustering on the ground. This is similar to the *de facto* harmonisation practised by the South African Broadcasting Corporation in respect of its television channels. But, precisely because it is an *ad hoc* arrangement, the policy is not applied with maximum effect.

Although the tensions and overlapping areas of interest and activity between the Board and the National Language Service are being addressed, there is still a considerable degree of duplication. Since both are subject to the Ministry of Arts and Culture, it is difficult to understand why they are expected to operate as separate and autonomous entities. In addition to these agencies, the newly established Section 185 Commission will also have a language component ("linguistic communities") and much of its work will duplicate directly the linguistic human rights monitoring function of PANSALB. To complicate matters, a language competency also resides in the Office of the President, so that there are potentially four points from which confusion and

contradictory trajectories could emanate. I want to repeat what I have said and written on various occasions in the recent past: the PANSALB should consist of a small number of competent applied-language scholars with some language planning experience. Their main task should be language planning strategy and advice to central government on language use and language development and they should be accountable directly to Parliament. Most of the work that is now centralised in the Pretoria offices of the Board should be contracted out to the universities, technikons and other relevant research units. In that way, the burgeoning bureaucracy that is beginning to characterise the Board could be minimised.

Having said this, it is necessary to state clearly that in spite of initial problems, the PANSALB has achieved many important milestones.[25] It has, specifically, begun to establish the infrastructure (lexicographic units, provincial language committees, national language bodies, databanks, etc.) which are essential for planning and for the implementation of policy. It remains true, however, that the entire spectrum of language planning agencies, especially those that are directly accountable to government, needs to be reviewed in order to establish to what extent the agencies are cost-effective and, in their present form, socially necessary.

Developments elsewhere in Africa, especially the move towards the establishment of an African Academy of Languages as a specialised agency of the African Union, are beginning to create a climate of opinion on the language issue which, ultimately, will impact positively on South Africa. The African Renaissance, if it does nothing else, could well be the wind of change that will sweep away the myths that litter and also clutter this fundamental terrain of social life. South Africa could play a pivotal role in this connection. Beginning with the LANGTAG process in 1995 and 1996, which was itself the culmination of almost fifteen years of "language planning from below," there have taken place at all levels of government some of the most promising language planning exercises that the continent has hitherto experienced. We have much to learn from others on the continent and elsewhere but we also have a few important insights since 1994. It is appropriate, therefore, to end this article with a few encouraging words from the doyen of language planning on the continent:

> Viewed against the background of policies generally in Africa, South Africa's language policy presents several positive and some negative features as well. The positive features include respect for multilingualism, legal backing for policy, democratization of policy-making, and serious attention to language planning.... Perhaps the most significant aspect of the country's language

policy is respect for multilingualism…. I am of the opinion that this policy stands to yield better dividends than the monolingual policy embraced by many African countries. For one thing, the problem of exclusion of the masses will be considerably reduced, since nine African languages will be available to different segments of the population for participation in the national system. (Bamgbose 2003: 51–52)

Notes

1. "Language planning" should be understood as an overarching term under which are subsumed both language policy formulation and implementation planning or operationalisation.

2. Some of the details of this process are referred to in Webb 2002: 283–84.

3. The others were Bahasa in Indonesia and Malaysia, Hebrew in Israel and Hindi in India. To this list, we ought, in my view, to add Kiswahili.

4. See Alexander 1999a. The comment by Webb (2002) to the effect that Afrikaans language planning was not as systematic as is usually suggested by both its acolytes and its critics does not alter this judgement. One of the consequences of the habitus is precisely the intuitive but systematic — though not inflexible — production of a given set of practices.

5. I support the position that we should reconnect with professional practice in the rest of Africa and the world by rehabilitating the term "Bantu language(s)" to denote (following Greenberg's classification) the relevant sub-set of the Niger-Congo branch of the Niger-Kordofanian languages and, thus, do away with the confusion and the awkwardness which the intended elegant variation "African languages" invariably occasions. We should not allow the dead hand of apartheid to continue to haunt our scientific discourses.

6. Webb 2002 as well as Heugh 2003 provide useful summaries of the process.

7. See, among others, Msimang 1996.

8. There is no doubt in my mind that most of the original condemnation of the Bantu Language Boards and of the people who made them work was based on the anglophile and anglocentric prejudices of the rising black middle class that constituted the leadership of the liberation movement, taken as a whole. Having said that, it is as well to bear in mind that the political myopia of those who collaborated with the nefarious designs of the apartheid ideologues remains inexcusable.

9. This concept does not imply some kind of invariant diglossic situation in which different languages are always used in well defined distinct domains. It is based on an understanding of the appropriate use of different codes and includes the use of any of a range of South African languages in any domain provided the requisite registers have been, or are, adequately developed.

10. See Myers-Scotton 1990.

11. For an innovative and important method of determining when rights can be deemed to be "individual" rights as opposed to "group" and "solidarity" rights, see Perry 2003.

12. See, among many others, Alexander 1989, 2000.

13. See Lo Bianco 2002.

14. See Alexandre 1972:86.

15. This popular leader of the coloured "African People's Organisation" called upon the readers of his *APO* newsletter to "endeavour to perfect themselves in English — the language which inspires the noblest thoughts of freedom and liberty, the language that has the finest literature on earth and is the most universally useful of all languages" (cited in Adhhikari 1996:8).

16. Perry (2003:39–40) makes the distinction as follows: "(One) should consider the goods latent in … (a) rights assertion. If these goods are divisible, one can safely conclude that the right is "individual" in character. If these goods are indivisible, one can conclude the opposite, that the right is "group" in character. This method, moreover, constitutes a *sufficient means* of distinguishing individual rights from group rights." (Emphasis in the original)

17. Elsewhere (Alexander 2002:119), I have referred to this phenomenon as a "Static Maintenance Syndrome."

18. See Alexander 1999b.

19. This Bill is likely to be enacted towards the end of 2003 or the beginning of 2004.

20. See, among many others, Alexandre 1972, Myers-Scotton 1990.

21. An excellent example of the persuasiveness of the costing exercise in implementation of South Africa's national language policy and plan is Emzantsi Associates 2002; see also Emzantsi Associates 2003.

22. For a careful treatment of this difficult subject see Perry 2003.

23. See Alexander 2002; also Perry 2003.

24. See Heugh 2003.

25. See PANSALB 2002, and Webb 2002.

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Opsomming

Die Politiek van Taalbeplanning in Suid-Africa **na Apartheid**

'n Polities neutrale taalbeplanningsteorie is onmoontlik, nieteenstaande die feit dat die magselite daartoe neig, om taalbeleid eers dan te oorweeg, wanneer die toestande alreeds krisispunt bereik het. In Suid-Afrika was taalbeplanning as deel van die maatskaplike ordening van die apartheid-era beskou veral weens die nadelige gevolge van Bantoe-onderwys en van die stigma van kollaborasie, wat die Bantoetaalrade gebrandmerk het. Dieselfde toestande het darem ook daartoe gelei, dat 'n voortdurende etos van demokratiese taalbeplanning (hoofsaaklik deur nie-regerings- en gemeenskaps-gebaseerde organisasies) posgevat het. Hierdie tradisie, asook die spesifisiteit van die onderhandelde politieke ooreenkoms, het 'n volgehoue invloed op die karakter en die werksaamhede van taal-beplanningsinstansies in Suid-Afrika na apartheid uitgeoefen. Die artikel kyk kortliks na die implikasies van 'n konkordanz- en 'n ortodoks liberale benadering tot die demokrasie vir die taalbeplanning in Suid-Afrika en onderstreep die oortuigingspotensiaal van die insluiting van 'n kostebepalingskomponent in enige taalbeplanningsvoorstelle, gesien die neiging van middelklas leiers om die ekonomiese kostes van enige beleidsverandering te oordryf.

Resumo

La politiko de lingvoplanado en Sudafriko post Rasapartigo

Ne ekzistas politike neŭtrala teorio de lingvoplanado, spite tion, ke la potencelitoj emas ekzameni lingvopolitikon nur okaze de krizoj. En Sudafriko oni ligis lingvoplanadon al la rasista socia inĝenierado, nun senkredita, de la periodo de Rasapartigo, precipe pro la damaĝaj efikoj de Bantua edukado kaj pro la kunlaborismo, kiun oni emis atribui al la Bantulingvaj konsilioj. Tiuj samaj kondiĉoj tamen rezultigis daŭran etoson de demokrata lingvoplanado (de neregistaraj kaj kelkaj komunumbazaj organizaĵoj). Tiu tradicio, kune kun la apartaj ecoj de la negocita interkonsento, havas sian daŭran influon je la karaktero kaj laborformoj de lingvoplanaj instancoj en Sudafriko post Rasapartigo. Tiu ĉi artikolo esploras la implicojn de kunsociaj kaj ortodoksaj liberalaj demokrataj aliroj rilate al lingvoplanado en Sudafriko kaj substrekas la konvinkajn efikojn de integrado de kostotaksa komponento en ĉiun lingvoplanan proponon, konsidere la emon de mezklasaj elitoj troigi la ekonomian koston de kiu ajn ŝanĝo de politiko.

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About the author

Neville Alexander, Director of the Project for the Study of Alternative Education in South Africa (PRAESA), a Research Unit at the University of Cape Town, has played a key role as advisor on language policy to various government departments. He chaired the Language Plan Task Group (LANGTAG), which drew up the outline for a national language plan, and until March 1998, was Vice-Chairperson of the Pan South African Language Board. He is currently special advisor on language policy and planning to the Minister of Arts, Culture, Science and Technology, and a member of the Western Cape Language Committee. He has written extensively on issues of ethnic and racial prejudice and the politics of identity, and is the author, most recently, of *An Ordinary Country: Issues in the Transition from Apartheid to Democracy* (2002).