

Language Policy and Practice at a Secondary School in Manzini: The Case of Teaching and Learning in Form 4

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DECLARATION o

The research reported in this thesis is my own original work, except for cases where due reference is made. The work was completed by the author between June 2016 and December 2020. It does not contain any person's data, tables or any other information except where specifically acknowledged. It will not, and has never been submitted for any award at any university for any diploma or degree except at the University of KwaZulu-Natal.

Signed by me, Sipiwe Dlodlu, on this 12th day of December of 2020.

Signature:



Supervisor's signature

DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my children Mayenzeke, Mayenziwe and Mzomuhle. Your support, understanding and reassurance that mommy must pass so we can go for her graduation cannot go unnoticed. I want you to know that knowledge is power, and with dedication and focus, anything is possible. May you be inspired to achieve greater things in life.

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ABSTRACT

The thesis explored language policy and practice at a secondary school in the Manzini region of eSwatini. Studies have shown that language policy is a key determining factor for learner-academic performance, yet no study has endeavoured to look into the experiences of teachers and learners in using the language policy currently operant in education in eSwatini. The majority of learners in the eSwatini EGCSE exit examination fail to pass English yet language testing constitutes a high-stake examination that impacts the future of learners. The purpose of the study was to document teachers and learners' perceptions of the language policy currently operant in the country. It was a qualitative case study grounded on the interpretive paradigm which utilised document analysis, observation and one-on-one interviews to collect data. The study was informed by Cobarrubias' four language planning ideologies and the micro language planning framework. There were six teachers who were purposively sampled and ten learners selected using systematic random sampling. Data was thematically analysed using content analysis. Interview data revealed that teachers and learners have positive sentiments towards the eSwatini language policy. Moreover, teachers and learners were equally divided on the issue of language and academic performance, with some arguing that English competency does affect learner-performance whilst others believed this did not. The researcher also established that teachers and learners codeswitched between English and siSwati for clarity during teaching and learning. It was therefore concluded that codeswitching is a useful and essential instructional tool for effective teaching and learning to take place. The study then recommended a teaching and learning model for effective pedagogic purposes.

IQQQA

Lolucwaningo lolu lubukeze izindaba zolimi nokusetjenziswa kwalo ezikoleni eziphakemeyo esigodini saKwa-Manzini ezweni laseSwazini. Ucwaningo luveza ukuthi ulimi okufundiswa ngalo ludlala inzima enkulu kakhulu ukuze kuthi umfundi aphase ekufundeni kwakhe isikole kodwa nomakunjalo, alukho ucwaningo olwenziweyo kulelizwe laseSwazini olubuyekeza indima yolimi ekufundeni kwabafundi nokuthi bona abantwana nothisha babo banemibono ethini ngendaba yolimi lokufundisa ezikoleni. Kubonakele ukuba abafundi abaningi ababhala uhlolo lwe – EGCSE bayasifeyila isifundo seSingisi kanti lesi sifundo ngusona simcoka kwedlula zonke ezinye abazibhalayo, Futhi ngusona esikhombayo ukuthi ikusasa lomfundi lichakazile na noma cha. Inhloso yalolucwaningo lolu bewukubuyekeza imibono yo-thisha nabafundi mayelana nolimi lokufundisa olusetjenziswayo esikoleni sinye saseSwazini. Lolucwaningo lu – qualitative, lusebenzise i-interpretive paradigm kuthola umumvo wothisha nabafundi kanti lubuye lwasebenzisa ukucwaninga amabhuku, ukugoloza kanye nokukhulumisana nothisha nabafundi ngamunye ngamunye. Lolucwaningo luthathelwe emibhalweni ka-Cobarrubias (1983) ohlazulula imibhalo emine ulimi olungasetjenziswa ngalo kanye ne Micro language planning framework. Kusetjenziswe abothisha abayisithupha, nabafundi abayishumi abakhethwe ngenhloso kusetjenziswa ukusampula okungahleliwe. Abakukhulumileyo okuvelile kwimininingo kubuyekwezwe ngokusebenzisa ukuhlaziya kokuqokethwe kanti okubonakeleyo wukuthi othisha nabafundi abakhulunyisiwe bayibona inguleyo ekahle kakhulu inqubomgomo yezemfundo yaseSwatini. Ngakulokunye, othisha nabafundi abavumelani ngokupheleleyo ukuthi ulimi umfundi afundiswa ngalo lunendima enkulu kabi ukuze umfundi aphase noma afeyile ezifundweni zakhe. Kubonakele futhi ukuthi kuningi ukushintja amakhodi kusetjenziswa iSingisi nesiSwati nabafundisa othisha. Lokhu kubonakalisa ukuthi ukusebenzisa ulimi lwendabuko kanye neSingisi uma kufundiswa kumcokwa kakhulu kuyabanceda nabafundi kuthi benze kahle ezifundweni zabo. Yingakho lolucwaningo luveza isifanekiso nesilinganiso sokufundisa esingasetjenziswa othisha nabafundi uma befunda ukuze benze kahle ezifundweni zabo.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Title page	i
Declaration	ii
Dedication	iii
Acknowledgements	iv
Abstract	v
Abstract in isiZulu	vi
Table of Contents	vii
Appendices	xiv
List of Tables	xiv
List of Figures	xiv
Acronyms	xv
Glossary	xvi

CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

1.0	Introduction to the chapter	1
1.1	Sociolinguistic context of the study	2
1.2	Eswatini's political landscape	4
1.3	History of the education system in eSwatini	5
1.4	Defining language	6
1.5	Problem statement	8
1.6	Implementing language policies in Africa	9
1.6.1	Why language policy is important in education	10
1.7	Language planning and policy studies in eSwatini	11
1.8	Research objectives	12
1.9	Research questions	12

1.10	Significance of the study	13
1.11	Delimitations of the study	14
1.12	Limitations of the study	14
1.13	Forthcoming chapters	15
1.14	Conclusion	16

CHAPTER 2 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0	Introduction	17
2.1	History of LPP research	18
2.1.1	Defining language planning	23
2.1.2	Types of language planning	24
2.1.2.1	Processes during language planning	26
2.1.3	The role of language planning	29
2.2	Defining language policy	30
2.2.1	Language practice, beliefs and Management	32
2.3	Language beliefs	32
2.4	Language policy in eSwatini	33
2.4.1	The linguistic ecology in eSwatini	36
2.5	Origins of language policies in Africa	37
2.5.1	Features of national language policies in Africa	39
2.5.2	Language policy in the SADC region	41
2.6	English as a status language	42
2.6.1	The value of siSwati in education	44
2.6.2	The SiSwati National Language Board (SNLB)	46
2.6.3	The status of English in eSwatini	47
2.7	Views on English as a language of teaching and learning	49
2.8	Language-in-Education policy in eSwatini	51
2.9	Issues in implementing language policies	53

2.9.1	Implementing language policies	54
2.9.2	Endangered minority languages	54
2.9.3	Language management	55
2.10	Conclusion	56

CHAPTER 3 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

3.0	Introduction	57
3.1	Major concepts on language planning ideologies	58
3.2	The four language planning ideologies	60
3.2.1	The use of the four language planning ideologies in this study	63
3.3	Micro language planning framework	65
3.3.1	Fundamentals of micro-level language planning	67
3.3.2	Micro language planning in the current study	68
3.4	Previous research employing both frameworks	68
3.5	Conclusion	70

CHAPTER 4 RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

4.0	Introduction	71
4.1	Research aims	71
4.2	Research design	72
4.2.1	Case study	73
4.2.2	Interpretive paradigm	74
4.2.3	The use of the interpretive paradigm in this study	76
4.2.4	Qualitative approach	77
4.3	Pilot testing	79
4.4	Data collection schedule	80
4.5	Sample and sampling procedure	80
4.6	Target school	83
4.7	Data generation methods	84

4.7.1	Document analysis	85
4.7.2	Participant observation	87
4.7.3	Interviews	88
4.8	Recording	89
4.9	Data management	89
4.10	Research ethics	89
4.11	Challenges encountered when collecting data	91
4.12	Data analysis procedures and interpretation	92
4.13	Validity and reliability	93
4.13.1	Trustworthiness, reliability and rigour	94
4.13.2	Credibility	94
4.13.3	Confirmability	95
4.13.4	Dependability	95
4.13.5	Transferability	95
4.13.6	Reliability	96
4.13.7	Rigour	97
4.14	Conclusion	97

CHAPTER 5 DATA PRESENTATION AND INTERPRETATION

5.0	Introduction	98
5.1	Policy documents informing LPP at School J	100
5.1.1	Information from document analysis	100
5.1.1.1	The education and training sector policies	101
5.1.2	The constitution of the kingdom of eSwatini	102
5.1.3	Internal language policy of the target school	103
5.2	Data from classroom observation	104
5.2.1	The language of teaching and learning	104

5.2.2	Codeswitching	109
5.2.3	Learner participation and behavior	110
5.3	Interview data	111
5.3.1	The eSwatini language policy	112
5.3.2	The education policy	114
5.3.3	The implementation of the education policy	119
5.3.4	Reasons for teachers' choices of codeswitching	121
5.4	English as the language of teaching and learning in eSwatini	122
5.4.1	Learners' performance in English and siSwati	123
5.4.2	Reasons for learners' performance in English and siSwati	125
5.4.3	The value of English in the education sector	126
5.4.4	Learners' attitudes towards English	131
5.4.5	Perspectives on English being the passing subject	132
5.5	Perspectives on the policy directives	140
5.5.1	The value of siSwati in the education sector	144
5.6	English proficiency and learner-performance	146
5.6.1	Resources to enhance English proficiency among learners	150
5.6.2	Policy versus practice	153
5.7	Chapter summary	157

CHAPTER 6 DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

6.0	Introduction	159
6.1	Research findings	159
6.2	Discussion	161
6.2.1	Language policies governing teaching and learning in eSwatini	161
6.2.2	Teachers and learners' knowledge of the language policy	163
6.2.3	Perceptions about the language policy	167

6.2.4	Adherence to the LiEP during teaching and learning	169
6.2.5	Learners' attitudes towards English	171
6.2.6	The persistent hegemony of English language	174
6.2.7	English as the passing subject	175
6.2.8	Factors influencing the choice of English language	179
6.2.9	Codeswitching	182
6.2.10	Negative attitudes towards the mother tongue	184
6.3	Language education policy and learners' academic performance	185
6.3.1	Learners' performance in English and siSwati	188
6.3.2	Reasons for learners' performance in English and siSwati	189
6.4	Implementation of the language education policy	190
6.5	Resources to enhance learners' proficiency in English language	193
6.5.1	English speaking rule in the school	194
6.5.2	The library as a language resource centre	195
6.6	Conclusion	197

CHAPTER 7 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

7.0	Introduction	198
7.1	Overview of the study	198
7.2	Responding to the research questions	199
7.3	Summary of the study	201
7.3.1	Codeswitching as translanguaging	202
7.3.2	SiSwati as the language of teaching and learning	206
7.3.3	Language policy and learners' academic performance	207
7.4	Strengths and limitations of the study	208
7.5	Significance of the study to policy and practice	209
7.6	Original contribution to the study	209
7.6.1	New insights from this research	210

7.7	Recommendations	212
7.7.1	Recommendations for policy	213
7.7.2	Recommendations for further study	215
7.8	Conclusion	215
	References	217

APPENDICES

Appendix A	Ethical clearance	229
Appendix B	Consent letter for director of education	231
Appendix C	Consent letter to head teacher	233
Appendix D	Permission letter from head teacher	235
Appendix E	Informed consent letter for participants	236
Appendix F	Informed consent letter for parents	239
Appendix G	SiSwati version of parents' consent letter	241
Appendix H	Turn-it-in report	244
Appendix I	Editor's letter confirming editing	245
Appendix J	Interview questions for teachers	246
Appendix K	Interview questions for learners	249
Appendix L	Observation checklist	250

LIST OF TABLES

Table 4.1	Summary of the population, sampling and method	82
Table 4.2	Teacher profiles	82
Table 4.3	Learners' profiles	83
Table 5.1	Summary of the themes and subthemes	99
Table 6.1	Summary of the findings	161

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 4.1	Diagram explaining how data was generated	85
Figure 7.1	Diagram showing current language policy	204
Figure 7.2	Recommended language policy for effective teaching and learning	204

ACRONYMS

ECESWA	Examinations Council of Eswatini
EFL	English as a Foreign Language
ESL	English as a Second Language
IGCSE	International General Certificate of Secondary Education
LEP	Language Education Policy
LiEP	Language in Education Policy
LoTL	Language of Teaching and Learning
LoWC	Language of Wider Communication
LPP	Language Planning and Policy
MoE	Ministry of Education
MoET	Ministry of Education and Training
REO	Regional Education Officer
RA	Regional Administrator
SNAT	Swaziland National Association of Teachers
SWAPA	Swaziland Principals Association
SWATI	Person from eSwatini
UNESCO	United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNICEF	United Nations International Children Education Fund
UNESWA	University of Eswatini
USA	United States of America

GLOSSARY

- Gatekeeper subject** : A core subject that is key, one that a learner needs to pass in order to progress to the next level of schooling.
- Mother tongue (MT)** : The language that is acquired by a child from their mother when they are born.
- First language (L1)** : The language that a child acquires at birth and continues to acquire high literacy levels in it.
- Second language (L2)** : The language that a child learns after having acquired the mother tongue.
- Learner's constructions:** Learners' understanding, their views or perceptions on a particular subject.
- Exoglossic languages** : Former colonial languages, normally of European origin such as English, French, Portuguese and others.
- Language-in-education policies** : Policies that seek to establish what language or languages will be used as a language of teaching and learning at the various levels of education in the units of a nation.
- Internal class** : A class which, at the end of the year, sits for an examination that has been set or prepared by the local teachers in that particular school or by a panel of inspectors for that particular subject. These are Grades 1 to 6 (primary level) and Form 1, 2 and 4 (secondary level).
- External class** : A class which, at the end of the year sits for an examination that has been set or prepared by the examination council of Swaziland, the national examining body in Swaziland. These include Grade 7 (primary level), Form 3, and Form 5 (secondary level).

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

1.0 INTRODUCTION TO THE CHAPTER

This study focuses on the language policy and practice, henceforth, LPP, of a secondary school in the Manzini region of the Kingdom of eSwatini. It specifically concentrates on how teachers and learners view the language policy currently operant in secondary schools as it pertains to teaching and learning. It further addresses the linguistic practices of the target population and juxtaposes these to the national language policy and the education policy, in particular. The ultimate aim is to document the reasons for the choices the participants make in relation to language policy in their context. The research aspires to study teachers and learners' perceptions regarding the language of teaching and learning (LoTL) and also explore if there is a correlation between the language of teaching and learning and learners' academic performance. Unlike many countries who are multilingual and thus have to grapple with complex linguistic situations brought about by the diverse linguistic background of its people, eSwatini has a single mother tongue (MT) which is siSwati.

This is a qualitative case study that makes use of semi-structured interviews, participant observation and document analysis to explore the teachers and learners' personal views and constructions of the language policy and practice at the research site. The chapter begins by outlining the sociolinguistic context of the study and then defining language policy and language practice. It further traces the history of the education system in Eswatini followed by the problem statement, theoretical and conceptual framework, objectives, and research questions. The significance of the study is subsequently outlined, followed by delimitations and limitations before giving a brief summary and conclusion to the chapter.

1.1 SOCIOLINGUISTIC CONTEXT OF THE STUDY

The study is based in eSwatini, one of the smallest countries in the south-eastern part of the African continent. It is a landlocked country sharing borders mostly with South Africa to the south, north, north-western parts and Mozambique to the east (see map next page). Since independence in 1968, the country was called Swaziland until recently in 2018 when the reigning king, Mswati III changed it to eSwatini. The country has four administrative regions namely; Hhohho, Manzini, Shiselweni and Lubombo, each governed by a regional administrator (R.A.). As already alluded to earlier, eSwatini has siSwati as the major MT, English being the other official language (eSwatini Constitution, 2005). These are the only two official languages recognised in the country's constitution. It is crucial to highlight that there are traces of Zulu-speaking Swati people, especially in the southern parts of the country in areas very close to the border with South Africa. However, these are only a minute minority who clearly understand siSwati thus communication is possible because both siSwati and IsiZulu are Nguni languages hence sister languages.

About 66 per cent of the population of approximately 1.5 million people live below the poverty line (Vandome, Vines and Weimer, 2013). Eswatini also has one of the highest HIV and AIDS prevalences in the world. According to the 2012 eSwatini HIV Incidence Measurement Survey, 31 percent of Swati people are HIV-positive and life expectancy has fallen to approximately 48 years (Khumalo, 2013).

Figure 1 : Map of eSwatini



Downloaded from www.mapsofworld.com, 16th March 2020

1.2 ESWATINI'S POLITICAL LANDSCAPE

Eswatini is one of the last remaining absolute monarchies with King Mswati III and the Queen Mother Ntombi Tfwala, who rules as his co-monarch, having ultimate authority over state institutions. Eswatini was under British colonial rule from 1906 to 1967. Under the leadership of the former king Sobhuza II, eSwatini attained independence in 1968. The country is governed using the Tinkhundla system of governance, a system of representation in which elections are held under different constituencies. There are over 50 constituencies currently. No election on party lines has been held in Swaziland since 1972, and there is no mechanism for registering political parties (Vandome; Vines and Weimer, 2013). Candidates for parliamentary elections, held every five years under the monarchical democracy of the Tinkhundla system, are required to stand in an individual capacity and not represent political parties.

As already alluded to earlier in the chapter, eSwatini has two official languages, siSwati and English (eSwatini constitution, 2005). There are traces of isiZulu spoken by a minute minority in the south and eastern parts of the country, especially in areas close to the border with South Africa in the Shiselweni and Lubombo region. However, the dominant language and mother tongue that is spoken by the majority is siSwati, which is one of the Southern Bantu languages in Africa, belonging to the Nguni group (Dludlu, 2016). Eswatini also falls under the Anglophone community by virtue of being a former British protectorate hence English was inherited as the other official language in 1968 when the country attained independence (Dludlu, 2016). The EDSEC policy (2011) clearly states that both languages shall be used in the education system, with siSwati being used as the LoTL in the first four grades of school and then switching to English from Grade 5 onwards.

As a former British protectorate, eSwatini offers an education system that was previously modelled on the British education system (Khumalo, 2013). Primary education is a seven-year cycle (Grade 1 to 7) which is then followed by three years of junior secondary learning (Form 1 to Form 3) and finally two years of senior secondary or high school (Form 4 to

Form 5). Preschool learning or Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD) has throughout been provided by both private and government-aided institutions but government policy regulation it is still upheld by the Ministry of Education (EDSEC, 2011).

1.3 HISTORY OF THE EDUCATION SYSTEM IN ESWATINI

In order to understand the country's language policy, it is important to trace the history of the education system in eSwatini. During the pre-independence era, the British controlled the education system in the country (Khumalo, 2013). Though eSwatini was once a South African protectorate (from 1894 until 1902), it was the British (who soon took over in 1903), who shaped the country's education sector including laying the foundation for formulating the country's language policy (Zwane, 1998). During the pre-independence era, the school curriculum was based on the British curriculum (Zwane, 1998). English remained the medium of instruction whilst French was taught as an additional subject in three exclusively white schools at first. It was taught at Goedgegun (Evelyn Baring), Mhlatane and St Marks schools. Moreover, isiZulu was offered as another African language in addition to siSwati.

Upon attaining independence, the country's education sector was characterised by poor quality education, uneven distribution of schools and high drop-out, and repeater rates, serious shortages of teachers and an irrelevant curriculum (Magagula, 1990). It was for this reason that the government then embarked on a process to review the country's education policy which was viewed by the National Review Commission as being highly academic and only preparing learners for white-collar jobs. The curriculum was thus irrelevant to the Swati learners' educational needs and vocational prospects. According to Gamedze (2015), three documents were reviewed in order to formulate a relevant education policy, namely; the manifesto of the Imbokodvo National Movement (INM) of 1972, a report of the National Educational Commission (NEC) of 1972 and the National Education Review Commission Report (NERCOM) of 1985. As a result, in the five-year period of 1984-1988, there was a marked improvement in curriculum development, there

was more systematic educational planning, monitoring and evaluation, marked improvement in teacher training, and there was generally more support to the sector from the Ministry of Education.

1.4 DEFINING LANGUAGE

Language is a very crucial social construct used for interpersonal communication, community identity and cultural solidarity (Harriman and Burnaby, 1996). It is an integral component that defines a community or nation as language is interlinked with the culture and traditions which characterize a society. Language is the principal medium for expressing civility, community and shared values hence it is a symbol for group solidarity (Harriman and Burnaby, 1996). In the same vein, Halliday (2010) defines language as a means of our socialization into our group and the principal means of our meaning-making. Expressing a similar view is McQuown (1982) who defines language as an instrument used for personal and social integration, man cultivated ways of behaving to his offspring, and through which he induces his peers to share his culture and with him to form a larger social group. These three definitions all boil down to the fact that language is a crucial cultural construct whether in written or spoken form, used to express views and values by a specific group and in that process, facilitating communication.

Language is as old as humankind. The diversity of humankind would mean that there are thousands of languages in existence, with some being more prominent when one analyses the spectrum in which they are used, such as in education. Viewed from the standpoint of Wright (2004), language maybe an artefact that has been in existence for centuries but what is important is that language itself is not static but dynamic in the sense that it develops as new facts, ideas and events necessitate new language (Wright, 2004). New vocabulary is thus developed to fulfil new linguistic needs that arise as each society actively creates their own reality instead of passively reflecting reality (Wright, 2004). Based on Wright's definition, there is reason to believe that both language and human beings enjoy an interdependent relationship in the sense that humans form language whilst they are also formed by language. People use the language they know, most times

the MT, to express their thought processes which brings Wright (2004) to interpret language as a social construct and a cultural artefact.

Noam Chomsky described language as an innate ability as humans are endowed with a very rich and explicit set of mental attributes that make them genetically predisposed to learn languages (Wright, 2004). Based on Chomsky's view, humans are therefore born with the ability to learn a language. This view is in congruence with the Universalist view that describes languages as not just any cultural invention but the product of a special human instinct (Wright, 2004). The Universalist view is pertinent in this study as it holds that learners already have the language prerequisite L1 codes when they learn English, which is their second language. Gandara and Gomez (2009) argue that language, in its varied forms [sign language, spoken or written language], defines us, who we are and in turn, helps us articulate and define the world.

In the field of applied linguistics, language is widely interpreted as a resource. Kaplan and Baldauf (1997) view language as a valuable resource that requires systematic organization, intelligent protection and coherent planning. Affirming this observation is Kamwangamalu (2000) who views language as one of the natural resources a country has in addition to its other resources such as mineral resources. If languages are a natural resource just like other natural resources which a country may have, this means that they need to be preserved and protected as a resource. This research study is underpinned by this line of thinking. The study further asserts that as a natural resource, language should be preserved methodically through erecting sound language policies. Even though some policies are not documented but are realized as a result of practice, still there is a lot to learn in such contexts about language being a resource. As Ricento (2011) asserts that the lack of a language policy or even a language planning commission – is itself not a bad thing. For instance, Ricento (2011) highlights the USA as one nation that lacks a federal language policy because English features so prominently that the USA government remains remarkably uninterested in developing second language proficiency or even acquiring basic information about other peoples' languages, values, attitudes and

traditions. This however has not stopped the USA from implementing bilingual programs meant to assist immigrants assimilate into their education system.

1.5 PROBLEM STATEMENT

As an educator of English as a second language (ESL), I noted with concern the poor English language skills amongst the majority of Swati learners in general and secondary learners in particular, manifested mainly through their poor performance in the subject. As a marker of the EGCSE exit examination, it became more apparent that a majority of Swati learners struggle to get a credit pass in English language, with many failing to engage with the variety of exercises such as the continuous writing test which requires them to express themselves meaningfully in English. A credit pass is anything above 60% or symbol A* - C and this is generally the requirement in tertiary institutions such as the University of eSwatini (www.uneswa.co.sz). The demands of the English examination leave the majority of learners in a predicament whereby they fail this gatekeeper subject which determines whether they may be admitted to tertiary institutions or not. As Mazibuko (2014) noted, on average, only about 13% of the whole population of Form 5 eSwatini learners get a credit pass in English language each academic year. This is problematic in the sense that the general requirement of tertiary institutions such as the University of eSwatini (UNESWA), is that learners should get a credit pass in English before they can be admitted to further their studies. Moreover, English is the language of teaching and learning in upper grades including tertiary level. The question that arises then would be, if learners struggle to pass English as a subject, will they manage to understand the content of other subjects such as Geography or Biology which are also taught in English? The study therefore intends to study the language policy of the country, more specifically the role of English as the LoTL, and how effectively the language-in-education policy is implemented by teachers in schools. It therefore became imperative to undertake research on why a majority of learners perform so poorly in English.

In eSwatini, English is not only the LoTL but it was also the passing subject for fifty-two years post-independence (1968- January 2020). This meant that a learner could not

proceed to the next level of schooling or class without having passed English! The policy was revoked by the eSwatini government in January 2020, through the Minister of Education, Mrs. Lady Howard-Mabuza (Times of eSwatini; January 9, 2020). There were many critics of this government policy including the Swaziland National Association of Teachers (SNAT) and EPA, which is the Eswatini Principals' Association. Their main gripe stems from the fact that in the Grade 7 exit exam, Form 3 (Secondary Junior Certificate) and Form 5 (High school) exit exams, it is a requirement that a learner should get a credit pass in English Language in order for them to be admitted to the next class or even tertiary institution.

Before the normal progression policy was implemented in 2016, the situation in schools was such that the learner had to repeat the class even if they had passed all the other subjects and failed only English. However, with the introduction of the government's 5 per cent retention policy in 2016, more learners had been pushed to the next class whether they have failed English or not (Eswatini Observer, 2017, 4 January). This normal progression policy means that teachers in schools have to ensure that all their learners pass to the next level at the end of each academic year. In the event that there are learners who fail in that particular class, they must not be above five per cent of the whole learner population (EDSEC, 2018).

1.6 IMPLEMENTING LANGUAGE POLICIES IN AFRICA

Before the advent of European colonialism in Africa, there were no language-related policies apart from the introduction of Islam in some north, east and western parts of the African continent (UNESCO, 2003). Many language policies in Africa were introduced by the former colonialists and common practice is that new language policies - and modifications done to existing ones - have been adopted based on the country's political orientation and local circumstances (Bamgbose, 1991). As a result, Bamgbose (1991) states that there is thus little regard paid to maximal participation of the people, linguistic rights and true democracy. An interesting observation made by the same author here is that there are policies in Africa that are often declared but not implemented – what he

calls, declaration without implementation (Bamgbose, 1991). Bamgbose's theory of declaration without implementation summarises the reasons that cause these policies not to be implemented as follows: avoidance, vagueness, arbitrariness, fluctuation and declaration without implementation. These concepts are explained in detail in Chapter 2 on the origins of language policies in Africa.

1.6.1 WHY LANGUAGE POLICY IS IMPORTANT TO EDUCATION

The subject of language is hotly contested in the education and politics arena, for instance, whose language is to be taught, the medium of instruction or whose language varieties constitute the standard form (Gandara and Gomez, 2009). The issue of language in education does not only revolve around pedagogical strategies but about the hegemony that exists in the linguistic space. In the same vein, the most important factor in the origins of language educational policies in Africa is the legacy of colonial language policies (Bamgbose, 1991). Language policy is crucial in education because it clearly delineates the functions of a language and thus solves problems which would otherwise arise from not pointing out which language will be the MoI and which languages shall be taught in the school curriculum. This applies more in African multilingual contexts where the population has different linguistic backgrounds due to tribalism. A clear definition of language policy remains elusive in light of the fact that the LPP field is relatively new (Gandara and Gomez, 2009). Crawford (2000) in Gandara and Gomez (2009) defines language policy as what government does officially through legislation, court decisions, executive action or other means to;

- a) determine how languages are used in public contexts
- b) cultivate language skills needed to meet national priorities
- c) establish the rights of individuals or groups to learn, use and maintain language.

Another definition of language policy by the same author Crawford (2000) in Gandara and Gomez (2009) is government regulation of its language use, including steps to facilitate clear communication, train and recruit personnel, guarantee due process, foster political participation and provide access to public services, proceedings and documents.

In European countries such as England, Germany, Spain, Italy and others, the issue of the MT in education is not a hindrance to the accessibility of education the way it is in African countries. In the USA for example, there are immigrant learners who speak English as a second or even third language however, the United States of America sees no point in stating the obvious – English remains the LoTL and even though there are bilingual programmes meant to teach immigrants their MT, these have not gone without being criticised and blamed for the English learners' (EL's) poor academic performance. On the other hand, the proponents for using the MT in education such as UNESCO argue that teaching using the MT closes the gap between home and school life, which is beneficial to the learner, as she does not have to struggle with mastering the MoI as well as the content. A language-in-education policy is therefore crucial to determine which languages shall be taught as subjects and which language or languages will serve as the language of teaching and learning.

1.7 LANGUAGE PLANNING AND POLICY (LPP) STUDIES IN ESWATINI

Studies on language planning and policy (LPP) constitute a wide ranging and growing trend in current international research. Literature on language planning and policy does exist in eSwatini but it is very limited. As such, there is a need for more research on language planning and policy in the country. There is a dearth of knowledge pertaining to language planning matters. Previous work on language policy in eSwatini includes Mordaunt (1990), who used document analysis to study circular No. E21/73, which was the language policy passed by the Imbokodvo National Movement (INM) in 1973. When documenting learners' attitudes towards English Language learning in eSwatini, Mordaunt (1990) observed that language policy will most likely affect classroom performance. He noted that if teachers, for example, do not value the language policy, they are more likely to alienate the learners from it. He based this observation on the presupposition that teachers have the capacity to be focal points of learner motivation or demotivation.

Other scholars who have written on languages in eSwatini include Kamwangamalu (2003) who describes the characteristic features of English in eSwatini, focusing specifically on the phonology, syntax and semantics of the English language spoken in the country. Dlamini (2008) analyses policies relating to the education sector in eSwatini whilst Dlamini (2014) analyses the impact of siSwati L1 on the acquisition of academic English by tertiary students in eSwatini. Dlodlu (2016) writes about the language policy in Eswatini, describing the gatekeeping role of English in the education system in the country. Kamwendo and Dlamini (2016) made use of the micro-LPP theoretical framework to zoom in on language planning at a cross border university in Mbabane where their study reported that at this university, English was selected as the medium of instruction and administration. There are also some studies on the current SGCSE (Swaziland General Certificate in Secondary Education) curriculum implementation, (now called EGCSE), such as Gamedze (2015), Nxumalo (2016).

As can be noted from the discussion above, the area of language planning and policy (LPP) in secondary schools in eSwatini has been relatively unexplored hence this study seeks to address that gap. There is a dearth of knowledge pertaining to the relationship between policy and practice in secondary classrooms in the country. This research therefore seeks to study the teachers and learners' views of the country's language policy. Viewed from the standpoint of UNESCO (1953), Gandara et.al (2003), Ndjoze-Ojo (2013), UNICEF, 2016 and other language scholars, it is clear that a good language policy is crucial for learners as it is intricately linked to improved academic performance by the learners.

1.8 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The study is guided by the following research objectives:

1. To determine teachers' and learners' perceptions regarding the language policy operant in eSwatini.

2. To explore language practices regarding teaching and learning at the selected secondary school in eSwatini.
3. To ascertain the effectiveness, or not, of the language policy at the research site in eSwatini.
4. To analyse Language Policy and Practice (LPP) decisions at the research site in eSwatini.
 - (i) To establish why, if they do at all, these LPP decisions influence teaching and learning the way they do.

1.9 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The study is guided by the following research questions;

1. What are the teachers and learners' perceptions of the language policy operant in eSwatini? Why do they have these perceptions?
2. What are the language practices regarding teaching and learning at the selected secondary school?
3. How effective, or not, is the language policy at the research site in eSwatini?
4. How do LPP decisions at the research site shape teaching and learning?
 - (i) Why, if they do at all, do these decisions influence teaching and learning the way they do?

1.10 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

This study is significant since it seeks to supplement and enhance the available literature on language policy and practice in secondary schools, not only for Swati people alone but for linguists in general, especially those studying language policy matters. It is crucial to highlight at this point that literature on language policy in the Swati context does exist (such as Mordaunt 1990, Kamwendo and Dlamini 2016, Dlodlu 2016) however, it is

limited. The study is therefore very significant because it will bring additional knowledge on teachers and learners' views of the language policy currently operant in Swaziland.

Teachers' views are crucial because they are the people directly on the ground to implement the language policy. As already alluded to earlier in the chapter, language policy is open to interpretation hence different people will have varying outlooks on how it must be implemented. Teachers' voices are especially important because as Jones and Barkhuizen (2011) state, they are the central agents of policy implementation hence their role in interpreting the policy is crucial for its success or failure. It is therefore important in comprehending how effective language policy is in the education sector in eSwatini and what decisions they have to make in their day-to-day teaching that relate to language and language use. The study is significant also for policy makers in the country because through the findings of the study, they will be in a better-informed position to take language policy decisions based on findings from authentic research. Moreover, language testing constitutes a high-stake examination in eSwatini which impacts the future of learners.

1.11 DELIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The study employed a qualitative case study design. The reason for a case study was the time constraints and financial limitations which would not allow for a bigger or longitudinal study. Given enough time and finances, the researcher would have preferred to have a larger population from which to collect the data. The aim is not to generalise the findings and a larger sample would provide broader and thicker descriptions of the phenomena that would result in generalisable findings. However, the case study design does suffice for the purposes of the research because it is also an in-depth enquiry (Yin, 2014) in the sense that only one or a few entities are studied but in so much detail that it yields rich, informative data from which conclusions may be drawn. The study further triangulated its data collection procedures. Semi-structured interviews, participant observation and document analysis were used to collect data in order to validate it

through cross verification from two or more sources. This results in more consistency in the findings which makes the results more valid and trustworthy.

1.12 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

My experience is that it normally takes a substantial amount of time to apply for permission from the Ministry of Education to conduct a study in schools. This may be due to normal processes done before permission is granted. In order to counteract any delays, the researcher applied for permission early enough in order to allow for the normal processes to occur without causing any further delays to the overall research.

As already alluded to earlier, time and financial constraints did not allow for a larger study that would see a bigger sample being collected in for the study. The study is not supported by any funding; therefore, a case study was best suited for the purposes of the research.

1.13 FORTHCOMING CHAPTERS

This is how the thesis shall be organized:

Chapter 1: Introduction and background to the study

This chapter introduces the study by providing a brief background of the local context where the study takes place. This is done by providing insight under listed subheadings. The research objectives and questions are outlined before giving an outline of how the whole thesis shall be structured.

Chapter 2: Literature review

This chapter will be a review of literature on language planning and policy. The chapter will provide a brief background before providing a synopsis of the language policy and language-in-education policy in the local setting, the African continent and in Europe.

Chapter 3: Theoretical Framework

In this chapter, a discussion of the theoretical frameworks shaping the study are discussed. Two theoretical frameworks were used: Cobarrubias (1983) - the four language planning ideologies and the micro language planning approach.

Chapter 4: Research methodology

The methodology chapter describes the paradigm and methods used to gather data for the study. This is a qualitative case study that uses the interpretive paradigm to understand issues on language policy and practice at the selected research site. Document analysis, observation and one-on-one interviews were used as data gathering methods.

Chapter 5: Presentation of data

Data is presented and further analyzed in chapter 5. The data conveys teachers and learners' perception of the language policy and language-in-education policy currently operant in the country.

Chapter 6: Research findings

The findings are presented and discussed in relation to literature on language planning and policy. The two theoretical frameworks are also used as a lens to interpret and thus establish the themes emerging from the data.

Chapter 7: Conclusion and recommendations

This final chapter makes a conclusion and provides recommendations for policy, practice and further research based upon the findings.

1.14 CONCLUSION

This chapter has provided background knowledge on the study and a brief background of the local context where the study will be undertaken and further explained how it shall be carried out. Focus points such as language policy and planning were defined. The next chapter concentrates on reviewing literature on language policy and practice germane to this study.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 INTRODUCTION

Chapter 1 dealt principally with the introduction and background to the study. Chapter 2 provides a thematic critical review of literature as it critiques relevant literature based on important themes or theoretical concepts which are crucial in language planning. The study aims to document teachers and learners' perceptions of the language policy currently operant in a secondary school in eSwatini as it relates to teaching and learning in the Form 4 class. Journal articles, books, reports, policy documents, as well as dissertations were reviewed in order to describe issues that relate to language planning and policy, implementation, practice and to identify a gap thus establishing a warrant for the study.

This study concerns itself with the language planning of a secondary school in the Manzini region in eSwatini. The study is grounded on the evidence that there is a language-in-education policy that governs the education sector in eSwatini which is the Education Sector policy (EDSEC) recently reviewed in 2018. The focus is to examine how the EDSEC policy is being enacted in the school. This research therefore points to the agency of the teachers and learners in implementing the language policy at this research site. UNICEF (2016) amassed evidence that a good language policy is one prerequisite central to learners' academic success - others being teacher capacity, infrastructure, and the curriculum. However, the language practice will ultimately have a bearing on the learners' academic performance. This is the reason why this study concerns itself with both the language policy as well as practice in the selected research site.

2.1 HISTORY OF LPP RESEARCH

Language planning and policy (LPP) as a field of study emerged post-World War II in the early 1960s (Kaplan and Baldauf, 1998; Ricento, 2000) as a result of the formation of new states, hence the need to address linguistic challenges in the new developing independent and post-colonial states such as those in the Sub-Saharan part of the African continent. When it began, it was known as language engineering (Kaplan, 2013) and it was confined to the fields of Anthropology and Sociology with earlier studies belonging to fields such as Ethnolinguistics and Anthropological Linguistics. Language planning was consolidated as a separate field of study in Applied Linguistics in the 1960s (Hamid, Jahan and Islam, 2013; Kaplan and Baldauf, 1998; Ricento, 2000) with early scholars such as Haugen, 1959; Fishman 1968, 1971; Kloss, 1968; Rubin and Jernudd, 1971 amongst others. The 1950s and 1960s was an era of decolonisation and state formation hence the eruption of language problems in Africa, Asia and the Middle-East.

The emergence of the field was important owing to the growing interest in the study of multilingualism, nationalism, language planning and standardisation. According to Goundar (2017), when it originated, language planning (henceforth LP) was problem-oriented with the aim of establishing stable diglossic language contexts in which majority languages (mostly English and French), were promoted as public or official languages of communication. It employed a pragmatic approach which at the time was seen as not political but solely meant to solve language problems emanating from nation building during the post-colonial period. As a field, LP addresses language issues and languages have a fundamental importance in the organisation of human societies, it affects peoples' lives in more ways than the people themselves realise; and it has an impact on family, friends, occupation, home and income (Fishman, 1971). African countries presented language issues emanating from its multilingual linguistic makeup with earlier theories interpreting multilingualism as problematic and a hindrance to the growth and economic development of a country. Multilingualism presented issues of language planning such as selecting official languages, which in most cases were the languages of the former

colonising state, and the indigenous languages were used in other lesser important domains.

The evolution and development of LPP research was informed by the linguistic needs of newly independent nations post World-War II who became the focus of sociolinguists in solving their language problems. Fishman (1968a) in Ricento (2000) clearly presented the development of LPP research by arguing that *the developing nations are at an earlier stage in development . . . the problems and processes of nationhood are more apparent in such nations and their transformations more discernible to the researcher. As a result, the developing nations (new nations) have come to be of great interest to those sociolinguists who are interested in the transformations of group identity in general as well as to those interested in societal (governmental and other) impact on language-related behavior and on language itself* (Fishman 1968a: 6 in Ricento, 2000).

According to Ricento (2000), there are three main factors which guided the evolution and development of LPP research. These are the macro sociopolitical, epistemological and the strategic. Macro sociopolitical factors are the events and processes that are obtained at national or supranational level such as decolonisation and state formation. Epistemological factors concern the paradigms of knowledge and research such as structuralism and postmodernism whilst the strategic factors relate to the ends for which research is conducted which was basically the pervasive belief that language problems could be solved through language planning (Ricento, 2000).

Early work on LPP centered on the selection of a national language for purposes of modernisation and nation building hence earlier positivism viewpoints gave rise to language planning and modernisation theories with linguists such as Fishman who interpreted multilingualism as problematic hence advocated for monolingualism to foster development and economic growth (Fishman et al, 1968). The general consensus was that a major European language (such as English or French) should be used for formal

functions and specialised domains while local languages could serve other lesser important functions. Linguistic diversity was seen as a problem for national development (Ricento, 2000). Linguistic homogeneity was associated with modernisation and monolingual language planning worked for western societies whose main focus was corpus planning as opposed to status planning due to the fact that they had monolingual ecologies, which is not the case for other settings such as the African context. The notion by Fishman presented challenges with multilingual societies hence could not adequately address LPP issues in those settings such as in newly independent African states.

These theories were thus followed by post-modern theories which approached LPP research from a cultural, political, economic and historical perspective (Ricento and Hornberger, 1996). The concept of stable diglossia was questioned as newly independent states found themselves in some ways more dependent on the languages of their former colonial masters than they had been during the colonial era. The critical theory gave awareness that earlier models on LPP such as Haugen's, were inadequate (Ricento, 2000) hence examined linguistic inequalities in societies and language policies and planning were viewed to only represent the ideologies of dominant powers. This parallels the historical-structural approach (Ricento and Hornberger, 1996) which focuses on how language policies are implemented and it avows that the ideologies of those in power are meant to protect their own socio-political and economic interests as opposed to the individuals at the bottom of the linguistic make-up ladder in a polity or state.

The second phase of the history of LPP research (1970s -1980s) was thus focused on the social, economic and political effects of language contact. Languages of the former colonising states occupied a higher status as opposed to indigenous languages who remained low on the linguistic radar and this translated to the economic status of its speakers and for this reason, the choice of European languages tended to favour the economic interests of the former colonising state.

Current research on LPP is informed by massive population migrations and globalisation and is focused also on endangered languages which are mostly minority languages whose existence is threatened by more influential and powerful world languages such as English and French (Ricento, 2000). The global linguistic ecology presents cases of languages that are dominant hence preferred (such as English) over minority languages and these are threatened with extinction. In Kenya, for example, there is the Elgon community in which the Sabaot language group predominates. However, as the Kenyan education policy states, KiSwahili, as the language of the catchment area, is the MoI and this pushes the Sabaot language toward extinction (Jones and Barkhuizen, 2011). As a result, tensions and discomforts were bound to occur in the classroom as Sabaot teachers implemented the education policy due to the fact that KiSwahili is not their MT. This is because agents (in this case, teachers), “are not just uncritical bystanders passively acquiescent of the state practice; in their own ways, they resist and contest state policy ... it is quite clear that the agency of the teachers in the classrooms makes them the final arbiters of the language education policy and its implementation (Mohanty et.al, 2010:228).

In interpreting and implementing language education policy, teachers become practical and may or may not adhere to the macro state policies hence resulting in micro language practices which are in themselves policy derived from practice. Even in the 21st century, agents do have power, as the final implementers of policy, to decode macro policies and implement them to suit their own classroom environments.

Current LPP studies also focus more on bilingualism or multilingualism and the state of minority languages such as Skutnabb-Kangas (2000), Fishman (1991, 2001). Bilingual education is interpreted to be intricately linked to ethnicity. In many cases the world over, people prefer the more influential languages and this negatively impacts minority languages. Empirical studies on language policy processes around the world, show that macro-level language policies can be instruments of power that marginalize minority and indigenous languages (Johnson and Ricento, 2013). Studies such as Ricento and Hornberger (1996) introduced the ethnography of language policy which they

metaphorically referred to as slicing through an onion to refer to the ethnographic study of language policies in their social and cultural contexts. The incorporation of the ecology of language to LPP studies is another conceptual framework that is tackled by current LPP studies such as Hornberger (2002) whilst critical discourse analysis has also helped to formulate theoretical and conceptual frameworks that unearth new areas for LPP research.

An empirical study on problems of diversity in policy and practice in the United Kingdom by Sutherland (2000), Celtic languages in Scotland (Scottish), Northern Ireland (Irish) and Wales (Welsh), were lesser preferred in relation to major European languages such as English. Welsh students preferred to be taught in English even though Welsh was added to the core subjects as pronounced by the Welsh Language Act of 1993 (Sutherland, 2000). Even though the students are free to take their exams in Welsh, many did not find this a plausible move. This signifies the influence of more powerful languages which ultimately coerces native speakers to see them as of lesser value and in any given situation, would not prefer to choose them when paralleled with major European languages. This also rings true in the African continent whereby exoglossic languages are seen as lending themselves the value and importance that comes with enhanced social standing much to the disadvantage of the indigenous languages.

In conclusion, the evolution and development of the field of language planning and language policy (LPLP) shows that all societies, whether monolingual or multilingual, allocate important functions to recognised languages and language varieties. Moreover, agents continue to have power during policy implementation whilst LPP researchers are presented with an increasingly rich body of work upon which new findings may be derived.

2.1.1 Defining Language Planning

When it emerged as a branch of Applied Linguistics, LP examined the language situation in different nations and communities around the globe more especially in newly independent states in Africa, Asia and the Middle East. Defining language planning, Kaplan (2013) speaks of an activity most visibly undertaken by the government (simply because it involves such massive changes in society), intended to promote the systematic linguistic change in some communities of speakers. Language planning may be undertaken not only by the government but people in authority depending on the level within which it is happening (such as organisations, the home). Haugen (1983) describes LP as the activity of preparing normative orthography, grammar and a dictionary for the guidance of writers and speakers in a non-homogenous speech community. Haugen's definition speaks more to corpus planning than it does status or acquisition planning but language scholars such as Hornberger and Johnson (2007), Bamgbose (1991) and Cooper (1989) are some of the writers who have addressed language issues relating to status or acquisition planning.

Cooper (1989) defines LP as deliberate efforts to influence the behavior of others with respect to acquisition, structure and functional allocation of their language codes. More recently, Spolsky (2007, 2009) who prefers to use the term language management than to use LP, identified it as one of three components of language policy, with the others being, language ideology and language practices. LP is defined by Ramachandran (2014) as a conscious human intervention in the process of language selection within a given group of people. Harriman and Burnaby (1996), on the other hand, define language planning as a government authorised, long-term, sustained and conscious effort to alter a language function in society for the purpose of solving communication problems.

These definitions allude to a linguistic change or transformation in the sociolinguistic ecology of a society. In the African context, multilingualism is a norm with people alienated along tribal linguistic splits. It is thus characteristic of many African countries to have the languages of the former colonising power (English, French, Portuguese) as the

official language alongside the indigenous languages as a national means of daily communication. In European contexts, monolingualism is a norm though there are bilingual programmes aimed at teaching immigrant learners. The language targeted for LP changes in status and structure accompanied by acquisition planning aimed at helping the people learn the language or acquire skills in it. It is clear therefore that LP is a conscious and deliberate effort to transform the sociolinguistic profile of a speech community through well designed means of implementation.

In simple terms, language planning involves itself with studying all the languages that exist in a linguistic setting and determining the roles that the languages should assume. It is future-oriented, involves complex decision-making, assessment and committing valuable resources, both human and material, assigning functions to different languages or varieties of a language in a particular community (Kamwangamalu, 2003). This is a government-authorized exercise at the macro level and it is aimed at solving communication problems. Language planning therefore results in a language policy, which then determines, for instance, which official language or languages, will be used as MoI and national language alike.

2.1.2 Types of language planning

Sociolinguistics put simply, is a wide field of study that concerns itself with language and how different groups of people use language. Literature on Language Policy and Planning (LPP) began to increase rapidly during the period of nationalism whereby language planning was an integral part of nation building (Wright, 2004). However, it was in the 1940s - post Second World War that language policy and language planning was firmly established at university level as a recognised subject of academic inquiry (Wright, 2004).

Basically, there are two types of language planning and these are status and corpus planning. Status planning is simply the study of a language's status in relation to other languages within a specific speech community, whereas corpus planning concerns the standards for a language, such as spelling and grammar. According to Harriman and

Burnaby (1996), status planning involves decisions that affect the relative status of one or more languages in respect to that of others, whereas corpus planning concerns itself with the development of the forms of the language such as dictionaries and style manuals.

Kummer and Gramely (2008) identify these two types as relating to measures on behalf of language and language varieties (status planning) and also structural linguistic activities aimed at standardising the language (corpus planning). For instance, choosing a language and making it an official medium of instruction (MoI) among other languages changes the status of the language in relation to other existing languages. In the African context, the choice of exoglossic languages as media of instruction elevates them and enhances their prestige when compared to their indigenous competitors. Status planning therefore changes the function or uses of a language in relation to other languages that exist in the linguistic ecology of a particular context. Corpus planning on the other hand speaks to those measures that affect the structure of the language hence its results show the phonemes and morpho-phonemes of the language (Kummer and Gramely, 2008).

Adding to the two basic types of LP is Cooper (1989) who identifies three types of LP being: status, corpus and acquisition planning. Cooper's interest was to study LP in the school setting. His research in acquisition planning aimed to explain phenomena pertaining to how students learn a language. Moreover, Hamid, Jahan and Islam (2013) further identify prestige planning as the fourth type of language planning which basically involves activities and decisions aimed at creating positive attitudes towards the language. LP interferes with the language or languages involved therefore tensions may arise and these may inhibit the successful implementation of the language planning activities. Whereas language planning occurs at three basic levels: subnational (or regional and organisational), national and supranational or across nations (Goundar, 2017), Kennedy (1982) states that language planning occurs in different levels beginning from the macro to the micro situation as indicated by the table below.

Table 2.1 Macro and Micro language planning

Level	
Macro LP	1 Government
	2 Ministry
	3 Regional authority
	4 Institution
	5 Department
Micro LP	6 Classroom

Adapted from Kennedy (1982)

At the macro level of LP is the government which oversees national decisions and activities aimed at transforming or expanding the role of languages in a linguistic polity. These activities are not only confined to government but LP occurs in different levels including at regional, institutional or organisational, department and at classroom level.

2. 1.2. 1 Processes during language planning

In a fairly recent publication, one of the earliest and most prominent legends in the field of LPP, Haugen (2012), harmonises his widely accepted earlier model (1966, 1972, 1969) on language planning. Haugen (2012) asserts his earlier stance that language planning is a process that undergoes four stages namely; selection, codification, implementation of function and elaboration of function. The selection and implementation of a norm enhances its status whilst codification and elaboration deal with the corpus of the selected norm. Cobarrubias (2012) also evaluated Haugen's four-fold language planning model and is in agreement with Haugen on the stages that manifest during language planning.

Cobarrubias (2012) defines norm selection as choosing a language or variety for specific purposes frequently associated with official status or national roles. In order for norm selection to occur, there ought to be a language problem that has been identified such as when there are conflicting norms which need to be assigned relative status (Haugen, 2012). In some instances, a particular norm could be replaced with another such as the Faeroese language in the Faeroe islands. According to Ferguson (2012), the linguistic history of the Faeroe islands shows that medieval old Norse was replaced with Faeroese before Danish substituted Latin but ultimately, Faeroese became the preferred language in the islands. The selection of a language is often guided by government officials and it can be either private, public, short or even a lengthy process. The final decision of the selected norm can be arrived at through a decree or even a vote (Haugen, 2012).

Once a norm has been selected, the process of codification follows. This is the stabilisation and standardisation of the selected norm in order to produce prescriptive orthography, dictionary and grammar (Haugen, 2012). The grammatication (making rules on the correct grammar) and lexication (the selection of the appropriate lexicon), helps to identify correct forms whilst also classifying defiant or incorrect forms. According to Cobarrubias (2012), there are mainly two distinct language strategies used to codify a language and these are the elaboration of a language variety or the creation of a new variety altogether.

The next stage after codification is implementation. This refers to that work of cajoling or enforcing compliance with decisions made during norm selection and codification, something which Haugen calls acceptance (Haugen, 2012). In simple terms, implementation involves itself with attempting to spread the language form that has been selected and it can be the work of individuals, institutions or the government. This is evident through the production of literature in the selected norm or making it the medium of instruction in schools or even modify the curriculum and introduce the norm as a subject to be taught. Implementation is mostly an educational issue even though the mass media can also enforce implementation through newspapers and other publications.

The final stage in language planning is elaboration. This is the expansion of a language's functions and the assignment of new codes (Cobarrubias, 2012). It is the continued implementation of a language with a view to maintain its superiority yet also meet the demands of a modernized world. Haugen (2012) defines elaboration as the continued implementation of a norm to meet the functions of a modern world and further argues that this is synonymous with developed rather than developing nations as it is characteristic of older, developed languages. An example of a major challenge of language planning as it relates to elaboration currently is the conflicting spelling between British and American English as established by Noah Webster (Haugen, 2012). As a result, English orthography varies from country to country. The implication is that writing for a British audience would require a writer to adopt British English, likewise with American English.

The four stages of language planning as advanced by Haugen have been widely accepted as a model in the language planning field. Even though reviewed and also harmonized by other linguists as evident in the discussion above (such as Cobarrubias 2012), the basic agreement is that this model is a useful tool for language planners and language scholars alike.

2.1.3 The role of language planning

Language planning is meant to solve communication problems. The decision to assign roles to different languages erases ambiguity such as which language to use as a medium of instruction (MoI). In the 1970's and 1980's, it was perceived to be a non-political activity solely intended to solve immediate language issues and establishing stable diglossic language contexts (Goundar, 2017). The common belief was that European languages such as English and French should be official languages whilst local languages serve in other non-official and lesser important domains. The crux of the matter is that LP cannot be divorced from being a political activity right from the macro to the micro contexts. The choice of which language to use is connected to nationalistic opinions likewise the choice of a language a teacher uses in the classroom may or may not reflect

the enacted macro policies guiding the education sector at that particular time. It is therefore impossible to divorce LP from politics.

Apart from solving communication problems, LP expands the role of languages. During LP, some languages are assigned new roles, such as becoming national languages or selected to be the MoI. This also applies in supranational contexts whereby a language may be selected to be the authorised language of communication across nations. So, a language may be selected from being a regional to national or supranational language of communication. In the African context, when countries regained independence, some indigenous languages were selected to be an additional medium of instruction alongside the exoglossic languages albeit being confined to the lower levels of schooling. In the case of Tanzania, KiSwahili was selected to be the MoI in the whole duration of primary school and it has now been extended to secondary school. This is not without criticism as English is generally the preferred language of power and social mobility, not to mention the fact that there are pockets of multilingual communities whose MT is not KiSwahili, such as the Sabaot language community in the Mt Elgon area (Jones and Barkhuizen, 2011). This happens despite the fact that only 10% of the African population speak the languages of the former colonising power (Prah, 2008). During corpus planning, new standardised forms or lexical items may be introduced to facilitate meaning and better communication. The variants and appropriate words to use are selected to be the standard form and these may be formally codified in dictionaries and grammars.

In some instances, there are languages that may be expanded from being oral languages without an orthography. LP helps to guide the development of an orthography and lexication. It would be impossible to formally use a language that does not have an orthography so LP helps to transform it into a written language, with standardised forms in the process of codification. Apart from oral languages, LP ensures the standardisation and codification of existing languages to solve communication problems.

2.2 DEFINING LANGUAGE POLICY

Language planning should ideally lead to the formulation of a language policy which will then result in language policy implementation. As Kaplan (2013) states, the exercise of language planning is directed to the promulgation of a language policy by the government or some other authoritative figure propelling the language planning exercise. This presupposes that language planning should ideally precede the formulation of a language policy and its implementation thereof. However, this is not always the case as policies are either overt (formally stated in language planning documents) or covert (left unstated, implied or unplanned). Language planning therefore has subcategories which include language policy, implementation and language practice. The following paragraphs define language policy.

Language policy is a conscious decision taken by a government to organise and solve communication problems by assigning various language roles in a country. It is the government's prerogative for instance to establish and declare what language(s) shall be used for teaching and learning, which ones are going to be taught as subjects in the various levels of education and also what languages shall be assigned the status of being national and official languages. Kaplan (2013) defines language policy as a body of ideas, laws, regulations, rules and practices intended to achieve the planned language change in a society, group or system. Ndjoze-Ojo (2013) defines policies as being first and foremost, a political decision. Harriman and Burnaby (1996) define a policy as a principled approach or plan in some matter affecting public or individual interest. This in itself presupposes that a policy is deliberately, consciously and intentionally created or made. Therefore, a policy needs planning before it can be implemented. A language policy is interconnected with language planning because normally, prior to a language policy being put in place; a language planning exercise should first be undertaken. This, though, may not always happen in this fashion because there are some contexts whereby the language policy exists but it has not been documented for various reasons. In these contexts, language policy does exist from practice except that it would not have been reduced to a

written document. This leads to the issue of language planning which normally precedes a language policy.

Laitin and Ramachandran (2014) define language policy as a means of (re) distribution and social (re)construction, as well as a key arena in which political conflicts among countries and ethno-linguistic social and political groups are organised. A language policy is a document which is aimed at solving communication problems by stipulating which roles are assigned to the different languages that exist in a particular community or country. Katenge (2013) defines language policy as an official decision taken by a government regarding the use and promotion of language or languages. Katenge (2013) holds the view that language policies are actually transitional tools that facilitate the move from old language functions that need to be discarded to new language functions that are aspired to.

A good language policy therefore is one that recognises the cultural diversity of the population and further aims to involve all the languages and cultures at different levels and hence promote a sense of self-esteem, self-determination and a feeling of being valued by everyone. It is one whereby all the cultures and minority groups are represented instead of being left out or made to feel any less important. In fact, it should advocate for the promotion of indigenous life skills for survival (Batibo, 2014). This presupposes that all cultures and traditions of the minority groups are sustained and protected as valuable life skills.

2.2.1 Language practice, beliefs and management

Language policy has three interrelated but independently describable components which are language practice, language beliefs and language management (Spolsky, 2007). Macro language policies are open to interpretation hence language practice includes the real perceptible practices which ultimately result in a policy themselves. Spolsky (2007) defines language practice as the observable linguistic behaviours and choices that people

actually make. These constitute a policy because they are regular and predictable even though the people or agents may not want to admit it. Language practices are the linguistic features chosen and the varieties of the language used (Spolsky, 2007) ranging from standard to non-standard varieties. Language practices are evident or seen through the language users in domains such as at school, work, family or even religious gatherings and these culminate to micro language planning whereby groups, institutions or individuals hold agency and create a language policy which is a response to their own needs, language problems or their own requirements for language management (Baldauf, 2006). The impact of language planning and policy depends heavily on the meso and micro-level involvement and support (Kaplan and Baldauf, 2003). In the school setting, both the macro and the micro language planning are needed in any readjustment in the education policy because policy is both the document and the act in the real-life situation which informs what works for the agents and what does not work in their own context.

2.3 Language beliefs

Language beliefs are the values assigned to languages and language varieties (Spolsky, 2007). This connotes that languages are not all equal in the linguistic radar but some are revered more than others. The norm is that prominent exoglossic languages such as English and French are assigned more value as opposed to indigenous languages and also undeveloped languages such as those that do not have an orthography. The general belief therefore is that prominent languages are crucial because they have the ability to empower skilled users socially and economically. This is the reason why in any given situation, people are likely to choose exoglossic languages instead of local languages because these offer opportunities to good paying jobs.

At family level, it is the parents who pass on their language beliefs to their offspring. Some immigrant parents, for example, make an effort to converse in their MT at home in order to educate their children of the value of their indigenous language. When this does not happen, the children are susceptible to learning the language currently used in the home thus missing out on the opportunity to be familiar with their own MT.

2.4 The Language Policy in eSwatini

Reviewing literature on language planning, policy and practice in the eSwatini context meant analysing documents and texts in order to learn more about the sociolinguistic space in the country. There is scarcity of literature on LPP in eSwatini. Available literature shows that the country's language policy dates back to colonial times when eSwatini was still a protectorate under British administration. Eswatini, was colonised by the British hence forms part of the Anglophone community. She attained her independence in September 1968. At the time of independence, the education system in eSwatini was characterised by poor quality, uneven distribution of schools, high dropout rates, serious teacher shortages and an inappropriate and highly academic curricula (Magagula, 1990). Moreover, the education system was foreign as it was crafted based upon the British education system and largely channeled locals to white-collar jobs.

The eSwatini government was concerned about the type of education, more specifically the curricula inherited from the colonial British government hence the establishment of the first National Education Commission (NEC) in 1972 to restructure the education system to be friendly to the Swati learners (Magagula, 1990). It is worth mentioning that from the period 1984 there was marked improvement in the educational planning, monitoring, and evaluation in the country. The LoTL however has remained unchanged ever since and it is clearly articulated in the EDSEC policy of 2011 and revised in 2018, which currently governs the education system in the country.

English and siSwati have always been the two official languages since they were introduced in the school curriculum in 1904 (Zwane, 1998). In the pre-independence era, the history of the language policy in eSwatini can be traced back to the manifesto of the Imbokodvo National Movement (INM) which was the majority and ruling party at the time (Gamedze, 2015). This was King Sobhuza II's movement who ruled the country for 61 years until his demise in 1982, after taking over kingship from Queen Regent Labotsibeni in 1921. The manifesto identified siSwati and English as the two official languages in the country. The Imbokodvo National Manifesto states that:

- a) The Government of Swaziland believes that education is an inalienable right of every child and every citizen, to receive to the limit of his/her capabilities
- b) The purpose of education is to produce an enlightened and participant citizenry;
- c) Therefore, the content of education must be work-oriented from the primary to the higher levels;
- d) The ultimate goal is to achieve universal free primary education for every child of Swaziland;
- e) Merit and aptitude will be the only criteria for selection into secondary and other forms of higher education;
- f) Special state bursaries and scholarships for higher education will continue to be supported;
- g) Improved and enlarged facilities for secondary education, with special extra-mural facilities, will continue to be provided;
- h) Specialised educational institutions, including special schools for handicapped and retarded children, will be provided;
- i) The control of education lies with the government of Swaziland whether it concerns state schools, subsidised schools or private undertakings;
- j) The policy of the Government of Swaziland is that all education should be designed to inculcate love for the land, loyalty to the King and country, self-respect, self-discipline, respect for the law accompanied by the highest degree of knowledge and the building of character;
- k) Realising the crucial role of teaching above educational policies, the government policy acknowledges that teachers should be well looked after, for example, a free ordinary medical scheme, pension scheme, Teaching Service Commission, etc. (adapted from Magagula, 1990).

To start with, English was inherited to be the MoI while siSwati assumed the role of being a national language even though a circular (No. E21/73) passed in 1973 stated that both English and siSwati were both official languages (Mordaunt, 1990). An official language is one in which the constitution or the organic laws of the country have been written (Laitin and Ramachandran, 2014) yet a national language is utilised principally for communication purposes especially outside of the classroom environment.

The circular further scrapped IsiZulu and Afrikaans, which were languages offered in the curriculum prior to independence. There is also the normal progression policy which the Swati government introduced in 2015. The policy stipulates that only 5% or less failures should be allowed to repeat a class at any given time. As can be seen, English occupies a prestigious status when compared to siSwati in the school setting. It also dominates socially as the language of the government and the judiciary. In the post-independence era, the language policy became clearly enshrined in the Constitution of the Kingdom of eSwatini stating succinctly in chapter 1, section (3), subsection (2) that, “the official languages of Swaziland are siSwati and English”. This is a norm in many African states and Batibo (2014) argues that many national language policies in Africa have been adopted based on the country’s former political orientation.

In eSwatini, the language policy guided the formation of the language-in-education policy (LiEP). SiSwati is the only MT and it is used for communicative purposes across the country. When the country attained independence in 1968, steps were taken to restructure the education system in eSwatini. According to Khumalo (2013), the government aimed to make education free and accessible to all Swati learners and this led to the formation of the National Education Commission in 1972. This commission formulated the Education Act of 1973 which aimed to increase literacy rates among the Swati people (Khumalo, 2013). However, there were a number of challenges back then emanating from the fact that there were only a few schools and also qualified educators at the time. Since then, there has been a review of the education policy with the most recent one being the 2018 education sector policy. This is the document that currently governs the education system in eSwatini.

2.4.1 The Linguistic Ecology in eSwatini

Eswatini is a bilingual state with English and siSwati as the two official languages (Eswatini Constitution, 2005). SiSwati belongs to a group of Nguni languages which are a subgroup of other Bantu languages spoken in Southern Africa by the Nguni people. These languages have similarities and share a history of a monolithic unity of their native

speakers. Nguni languages are subdivided into the Zunda and Tekela groups (Dlamini, 2014). Languages that belong to the Zunda groups include IsiZulu, IsiXhosa and IsiNdebele. Under the Tekela group, siSwati is the only language that attained recognition as a language in its own right while IsiBhaca, IsiPhuthi, Isihlangwini, IsiLala and IsiShumayela remained undeveloped dialects (Dlamini, 2014). These languages came to be known as Nguni which is a type of cattle found in the Southern African region hence the name was derived from the Nguni cattle type (Dludlu, 2016).

SiSwati is the only African language in the eSwatini school syllabus. As stated above, it is the language of daily communication outside of the classroom environment. A vast majority of the learners are therefore first language speakers of siSwati and they speak it as the language of everyday communication. Even though the constitution portrays both languages as being official, the reality depicts English as the official language in eSwatini because it holds more value by virtue of the domains in which it is used. The mere fact that it is the medium of instruction (MoI) from upper primary automatically elevates it to a status of more importance as compared to siSwati. Though the country's constitution clearly articulates that siSwati is also an official language, however, it is automatically demoted to the status of being a national language with English being the official language used in crucial domains such as in courts and schools as mentioned above.

2.5 ORIGINS OF LANGUAGE POLICIES IN AFRICA

The origins of language policies in the African continent dates back to colonial times when conquered African countries were made to also adopt languages of the former colonising states as official languages. Thus, the African continent has a bleak linguistic history which Wa Thiong'o (2018) contends emanates from its dark history of conquest whereby the conquerors delegitimised African languages as credible sources of knowledge and imposed their own languages as being superior and more relevant than the indigenous languages. As a result, according to Wa Thiong'o (2018), Africans accept Europhonicity to describe their countries as either Anglophone, Francophone or Lusophone. South Africa is one of the few countries that has not shied away from the social reality of

multilingualism thus enacting a language policy with all eleven languages recognised as official languages in the post-apartheid government.

Bamgbose (1991) concurs with Wa Thiong'o about the legacy of colonialism in the origins of language policies on the African continent. He postulates that during the colonial era, language policies in Africa fell into three categories as determined by the colonial super power at the time. First, there were colonisers who favored the use of the MT in the education sector such as Britain in countries including eSwatini, Botswana, Lesotho, Kenya, Uganda, Zambia, Tanzania, Ghana, Gambia, Nigeria, Sudan and Zimbabwe. The Belgians also encouraged the use of the MT in Burundi, Democratic Republic of Congo and Rwanda (Bamgbose, 1991). Secondly, some colonial powers such as France, Portugal and Spain, discouraged the use of the MT in the education sector and instead propagated their own colonial languages on their conquered territory such as in Benin, Burkina Faso, Chad, Senegal, Niger, Togo, Mauritania, Cote d'voire, Mozambique, Sao Tome, and Equatorial Guinea (Bamgbose, 1991). The third category includes countries in which the language policies were dual in nature thus implying that in the same territory, there was the use of languages which were different from those of the colonising state. Somalia was one such country with British and Italian linguistic influence. Cameroon also had French influence in the East and British influence in the West (Bamgbose, 1991). Others include Namibia, Ethiopia, Madagascar, Sierra-Leone and Liberia.

Current language policies in many African countries can thus be traced back into the colonial era. Policies are deliberately or consciously crafted hence they usually involve some language planning and in Africa, language planning orbits around the legacy of the linguistic influence of the former colonising power. Only a few African languages are developed to such capacity as to be used in crucial domains such as KiSwahili in education in Tanzania. Most are used in the lower levels of schooling with a switch to exoglossic languages in the upper levels of schooling. This must not be the case. Indigenous languages need to be empowered because research has proven that the cognitive ability of learners is greatly improved if the LoTL is the MT. Indigenous languages should thus be developed to play a complementary role to the exoglossic languages instead of reserving them only for lower levels of schooling.

Banda (2009) argues that this is a major drawback for language policies in Africa because they tend to be modelled on the colonial notions of multilingualism which basically involves multiple monolingualisms. Instead of establishing research facilities to develop indigenous languages, African states simply inherited policies that existed in the colonial era hence Bamgbose (1991) asserts that many language policies in Africa are mismatched and not tailor-made for the African continent. He further postulates that policies in the African setting are generally characterised by the following; avoidance, vagueness, arbitrariness, fluctuation and declaration without implementation (Bamgbose, 1991).

Avoidance speaks to a scenario whereby there is no formal pronouncement with regards to language policy and usually the absence leads to the automatic use of the official languages. Vagueness exists when the pronouncement on language policy is made but it is ambiguous such as KiSwahili in Kenya. Though declared as an official language and used in important domains such as parliament, it is still superseded by English which is the MoI and is used to keep official records and documentation. Arbitrariness points to a language policy based on a random choice than any reason or system such as Somali in Somalia which is used as the MoI at primary school level but no feasibility study was undertaken to inform the implementation. Fluctuation refers to a language policy which changes usually with a new government coming into power whilst declaration without implementation speaks to circumstances whereby a language policy is declared but there is lack of a clear implementation plan or a policy made but with escape clauses which when interpreted, cause confusion in implementation (Bamgbose, 1991).

Africa is too dependent on European languages which were inherited from the colonial era. This is a mismatch when considering that only about 10% of the population in Africa have adequate skills in the use of exoglossic languages. In the European context, policies tend to be monolingual in nature and are characterised by not enunciating a clear language policy which is something seen as an advantage by linguists. In these contexts, language planning mostly entails corpus as opposed to status planning with the standardisation of the official language.

2.5.1 Features of national language policies in Africa

The over-reliance of African countries on former colonial languages has been well documented. Due to her multilingual nature, national language policies in Africa tend to be criticised for lack of representation of the majority thus limiting maximal participation of the people, infringing on their linguistic rights and watering down any means of true democracy. African countries are either Anglophone, Francophone or Lusophone which explains their colonial past as having been colonised by either the British, French or Portuguese. According to Batibo (2014), national language policies in Africa are divided into the following subcategories; inclusive, partially inclusive, exclusive, hierarchical, colonial or isolation.

An inclusive national language policy aims to promote all the indigenous languages in a country at national level such that all the languages are to be used in all public functions or gatherings such as in Namibia, Eswatini and Lesotho (Batibo, 2014). In Namibia, there are about twenty-six indigenous languages and a study conducted on the use of the MT in learning showed that about sixteen of these are effectively used in education, albeit in the lower levels of schooling (Batibo, 2014).

Partially inclusive national language policies allow for only a selected number of indigenous languages to be promoted and used in education, administration, judiciary, media and other public domains (Batibo, 2014). South Africa is one such example whereby all the indigenous languages are recognised as official however, only English and Afrikaans play a major role in key domains such as education. A partially inclusive national language policy works for countries whereby there are too many languages for an inclusive policy. Other examples include the Democratic Republic of Congo and Malawi.

An exclusive national language policy is characterised by having only one dominant indigenous language as a national language to be used in all crucial domains such as education, judiciary, administration, media and other public functions. Such policies are the most criticised for not being representational of the linguistically diverse population with examples being Tanzania, Botswana, Kenya, Libya, Madagascar and Algeria (Batibo,

2014). In Kenya and Tanzania, KiSwahili is the national language and is used in education irrespective of the fact that learners come from heterogeneous linguistic backgrounds.

A hierarchical national language policy is one in which the status of a language is graded hierarchically starting from national, provincial or district, area etc. In such a case, different languages are assigned localised functions or roles such as being the MoI in lower education, customary courts, local administration, media and others. Zimbabwe is one such country whereby languages are assigned roles regionally (Batibo, 2014). Colonial national language policies are mostly associated with the Francophone and Lusophone communities whereby the colonial language was both the national and official language such as in Angola, Ivory Coast, Togo, Benin and Senegal (Batibo, 2014).

Isolation national language policies have been abandoned thus no longer exist in Africa because they did not work to foster economic growth and virtuous international relations. These are policies that degraded the former colonial languages and viewed them as remnants of colonialism such as in Tanzania, Ethiopia and Somalia (Batibo, 2014).

In all the various types of national language policies in Africa, it is prudent to say that due to her diverse linguistic ecology, monolingual language policies can never work. Out of the fifty-three countries, about twenty-six list English as an official language (Plonski, Teferra and Brady, 2013). Former Francophone countries such as Rwanda and Gabon are also adopting English as official languages due to the linguistic prowess of the same and other factors such as globalisation and the fact that English is a unifying language whilst also being the language of commerce and trade. To this end, the inclusive, partially inclusive and hierarchical national language policies are quite accommodative of Africa's multilingual nature. It is for this reason that Banda (2009) argues that monolingually-oriented policies crafted using the European context are mismatched thus not appropriate for Africa.

2.5.2 Language policy in the SADC Region

Eswatini is one of the 16 member states of the Southern African Development Community (from now SADC). This is an intergovernmental organisation with its headquarters in

Gaborone, Botswana. The main goal is to foster socio-economic cooperation, integration as well as political and security cooperation among the member states which are Angola, Botswana, Comoros, Democratic Republic of Congo, eSwatini, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Seychelles, South Africa, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe. The SADC objective also extends to other spheres such as environmental matters, gender issues, battling HIV-AIDS and cultural matters (Mooko, 2009).

The SADC operates a trilingual policy which recognises English, French and Portuguese as the official languages (Mooko, 2009). The zoning of Africa into Anglophone, Francophone and Lusophone is the main influence of the trilingual policy which extends to other African organisations such as the Economic Community of West African States (COMESA) and the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA). The African Union (AU) on the other hand operates a fourfold language policy which adds Arabic to the basic three as discussed herewith. African languages do not feature in major African organisations instead there is a strong reliance on languages of former colonising states. KiSwahili, one of the cross-border languages in Africa also does not form part of the language policy for SADC or any of the other African organisations. This means that African languages are pushed to the periphery while exoglossic languages occupy core functions in the African continent.

Even though SADC operates a trilingual policy, English supersedes the others in its use in the organisation. The trilingual policy is evident mainly through the documentation. The global status of English makes it a preferred choice for many governments and organisations because it enables linguistic connection to other people from different linguistic backgrounds. As such, Crystal (2003) argues that English long reached the status of a global language because of its special, prioritized role by different countries the world over. It is a global language because in many countries especially in Europe, the majority use it as a first language or MT (USA, Britain, Ireland, Australia, New Zealand etc.) but also, it occupies a prioritised role in other parts of the world such as being the LoTL in many African states.

2.6 ENGLISH AS A STATUS LANGUAGE IN ESWATINI

English is without a doubt the language of wider communication (LoWC) as it is by far the language of choice for many of the world's population. In the African continent, it is the most common exoglossic language; others are Arabic, French, Portuguese and Spanish. Coming closer home, English plays a very important role in the education sector in eSwatini by virtue of it being the language of teaching and learning (LoTL) and was, until recently, a passing subject as well (Eswatini Observer, January 9, 2020). It is thus a prerequisite for tertiary admissions that a learner not only passes English but gets a credit pass (symbol A* - C) in it to compete for the limited available spaces.

In eSwatini, for over fifty years, English remained a passing subject in the exit examinations in Grade 7, Form 3 and Form 5 (ECESWA, 2011). Learners who failed English could not proceed but had to repeat that particular level. The policy was reversed in January 2020. It is even worse for those learners who happen to pass all the other subjects at the EGCSE exit examination only to fail English, which then becomes an obstacle to their academic success. Now the question would be, why does English remain a compulsory passing subject for learners who acquire it as a second language? In the local context, there are two reasons as far as I see it – first, the political background of the country, but also the undisputed fact that English is a global language and a language of wider communication.

On the one hand, the political climate post-independence favoured the continued adoption of English as one of the official languages in the country alongside siSwati, due to our political history with the British as a former colonising state until 1968 when independence was attained. English became the obvious choice since the general trend in many African states is that the exoglossic language together with the majority's MT, become the official languages though contexts may vary especially in multilingual nations. English supersedes siSwati in function and the main reason for this scenario is her colonial history. Like many other African states, upon conquest by the colonising state, the imperial powers imposed their language at the centre of the universe, and as the source of light (Wa Thiong'o, 2018). This became the language of power even though in most cases, no more than 10% of the population used it for their daily linguistic needs.

Even though the country's constitution recognises both languages as official, the reality differs from what is enshrined in the constitution.

The Kingdom of eSwatini is an exoglossic state even though linguistically, it is not highly heterogeneous. Kloss (1968) claims, that most exoglossic states are highly heterogeneous linguistically, with tribal groups and dialects deemed unfit for the functions of modern government. In the case of eSwatini, there is a single MT, siSwati. As a result, there are no tribal divisions or dialects which could cause divisions linguistically.

On the other hand, English became the obvious choice due to globalisation. The world is interconnected into a global community and this necessitates that there be a language common to all, such as English, which will unite the diverse speech communities. Secondly, the official language of a country is determined by the economic status of that country such that one determines the other. With third world countries such as eSwatini, foreign aid forms a larger part of the economy. As de Wet (2002) contends, the validation of an African language in education can only be successful if it is supported by the economic and private sector. Unfortunately, African languages do not offer upward social mobility when compared to exoglossic languages hence in any given time, people will choose a language such as English, which will offer them opportunities for better economic and living standards.

The use of an unfamiliar language as the LoTL is well documented. Kretzer (2016) reveals that as far back as 1953, the United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), compounded its stance on the use of the indigenous languages to avoid discrimination in the education sector. In its Convention against Discrimination in Education, Article 5 clearly states that:

It is essential to recognise the right of members of national minorities to carry on their own educational activities, including the maintenance of schools and, depending on the educational policy of each State, the use or the teaching of their own language, provided however:

- (i) *That this right is not exercised in a manner which prevents the members of these minorities from understanding the culture and language of the community as a whole and from participating in its activities, or which prejudices national sovereignty;*
- (ii) *That the standard of education is not lower than the general standard laid down or approved by the competent authorities; and*
- (iii) *That attendance at such schools is optional. (UNESCO, 1953).*

The use of English as the LoTL provides learners with a double set of challenges in the sense that learners have to struggle with learning the new language as well as the new content delivered in the unfamiliar language.

2.6.1 The value of siSwati in education

Despite it being subservient to English in function, siSwati remains important in education by virtue of it being the only MT in eSwatini. It is the only indigenous language taught in the Swati school syllabus as it replaced IsiZulu which used to be taught during the precolonial era. In recent times, the government has taken a stand to rejuvenate the language by announcing new directives with regards to siSwati. The country's Prime Minister at the time, Dr. Barnabas S. Dlamini, took a swipe at private schools who were normally using English as the MoI from the earliest level of instruction. Some of these private schools were further not offering siSwati as a subject in the lower classes of schooling.

In a gathering to mark International Mother Language Day, on the 22nd February 2017, the then Prime Minister announced that in all public and private schools up to and including Grade 4, a child's education will be conducted in siSwati (Times of eSwatini, 23rd February, 2017). This assertion brought about mixed reactions and confusion over the language of teaching and learning (LoTL), with critics believing that this was a drive meant to kill the country's education system. Compounding their stance was the Prime Minister's further directive that apart from it being a core subject, all prospective students

who wish to enroll in institutions of higher learning would now be required to take a siSwati competency test. This was cause for concern because it virtually meant that students of foreign descent would be practically excluded from being admitted to tertiary institutions in the country. This necessitated the then Minister of Education, Dr. Phineas Magagula, to clarify the PM's statements whereupon he explained that these changes would not happen overnight but would be a process spearheaded by a siSwati board, which would oversee the whole process (Times of eSwatini, 23rd February 2017).

In a separate story captured approximately eleven months after the PM's pronouncement in the same newspaper, (Times of eSwatini, 30 January 2018), one school administrator revealed that many of their learners were struggling to cope with the new language policy because they were of foreign origin. The deputy principal explained that some of their learners were from Mozambique where Portuguese is the LoTL hence to them, English is a third language. With the addition of siSwati as a fourth language, the administrator noted that the learners were now faced with a mammoth task especially because they have to do the same syllabus as everybody else. This was not an isolated case and it proved that the siSwati board already had its work cut out.

2.6.2 The SiSwati National Language Board (SNLB)

The siSwati National Language Board (SNLB) was established on the 10th April 2017 by former Prime Minister Dr. Barnabas Dlamini at an event held at the George Hotel in Manzini (Eswatini Observer, 11 April, 2017). The initial members were introduced as Sibusiso Mkhonta (Chairman), Celiwe Mohammed, Khanyisile Dlamini, Khayelihle Mlotsa, Cynthia Hlophe, Thembekile Msibi and Gloria Malambe. The core function of the board, as the PM explained, was to resuscitate the siSwati language and promote its use such that it becomes the main language in schools (eSwatini Observer, 11 April, 2017). The PM clarified that this was in no way meant to downplay the importance of English as the language of wider communication. However, it was meant to put policy into practice because it has always been just in print that siSwati is used as the MoI from Grade 1- 4. This meant that English would continue to be taught while also giving priority to the siSwati language in order to reinstate it to its rightful position and encourage learners to be adequately skilled in it and admire it as their only MT. The formation of the SiSwati

National Language Board is therefore a clear indication that the government is spearheading a linguistic campaign meant to restore siSwati into parity with the English language. The basis for this campaign is the country's constitution of 2005 and the education sector policy (EDSEC) of 2018 which recognises both languages as official.

The past few years have seen the kingdom's authorities empowering and giving more pronounced value to siSwati, the lone MT in the country. The government's standpoint is that the siSwati language was slowly diminishing in value due to its limited functions in official domains such as the education sector. For starters, the government was concerned that some schools, specifically private schools, were not using siSwati as the LoTL in the first four grades of primary schooling as entrenched in the country's EDSEC policy. Moreover, some of these schools even offered siSwati as an elective subject yet it is a core. This means that every learner, including those of foreign descent, are compelled to learn siSwati however, this was being ignored by some private schools. The government took the initiative to resuscitate and further restore the language by giving it more function hence the seven-member team of the SLB, led by Chairperson Mr. Sibusiso Mkhonta. Whereas it is still early days to speculate about the intentions of the revitalisation of the nation's MT, recent events such as the official name change of the country (in April 2018, during the 50th independence celebration) from being known as Swaziland to the Kingdom of eSwatini, does reflect that the government is determined to empower and rejuvenate siSwati in all the contexts where she can.

2.6.3 The status of English in eSwatini

When studying the functions of both languages, one realises that English occupies an elevated status when compared to siSwati in eSwatini. English is the language of the courts. It also remains the medium of instruction in the education sector. The government also disseminates most of its written documents in English. There are documents that are translated to siSwati if there is a need to such as the country's constitution document passed in 2005. The dominant language in the country's parliament is siSwati, English is used when there are state functions, and even then, interpretation is provided. As a result, it is not a must for members of parliament to have English competence because the

language of deliberations is siSwati. It is however an obvious advantage to have English skills as this enables meaningful engagement with current issues.

The first woman member of parliament in post-democratic eSwatini, Lomasontfo Martha Dlodlu, was illiterate, (Times of Swaziland, 13 January 2011). She came from a rural area outside Mbabane called Maphalaleni and she was elected into parliament from 1993-1998. She was widely described as intelligent and wise and showed engagement with parliament debates especially when soliciting aid for her Maphalaleni constituency (Times of Swaziland, 13 January 2011). Her appointment shows that even though English is the official language in eSwatini, it does not become a barrier in the political space. Unlike multilingual parliament settings whereby the exoglossic language is an absolute necessity to unite people from diverse linguistic backgrounds, politicians in eSwatini are elected on the basis of their popularity amongst the electorate. It is the masses who determine the calibre of the member of parliament for their constituency. There is a catch however in that the level of literacy determines if the candidate or member of parliament should be considered for further appointments, such as being a minister. Dealing with policies and being a member of the legislature at this level requires adequate literacy skills hence being uneducated becomes a disadvantage.

The Imbokodvo manifesto declared English as the medium of instruction in the education sector in eSwatini and also established it as a passing subject (Zwane, 1998). English is a core subject which for a long time remained a passing subject until January 2020 when this was revoked by the minister of education, Lady Howard Mabuza. In the past, English determined a learner's progression from Grade 7 (exit class at primary level) to secondary school. Learners who failed English could not proceed to secondary school. Moreover, English determined if a learner could proceed from the junior certificate class (Form 3) to senior secondary (Zwane, 1998). With the removal of English as a passing subject, learners in these levels are now able to move from one level to the next even after they fail English. The determinant for moving from one level to the other is currently passing the required minimum number of subjects, excluding English. English does, however, remain a MoI and a core subject and is taught alongside siSwati in all public and private schools at all levels.

In the education sector, even though English is the medium of instruction, siSwati remains the dominant language of communication outside of the classroom context (Khumalo, 2013). The country's constitution states succinctly that learners must not be punished for speaking in siSwati around the school premises (Eswatini constitution, 2005). This often creates confusion because some schools' internal policies and rules, wish for learners to communicate in English to maximise the time learners spend using English especially because English is not used in most home environments but siSwati. In the context of the school under study, the school rule is that all learners should communicate in English during school hours. The explanation given is that this will encourage learner-competence and improve their skills in the language of teaching and learning. In practice however, siSwati is used mostly in and outside of the classroom by both teachers and learners. In other contexts, though, such as in Kenya and Nigeria, it is a precondition for members of parliament to be skilled users of English language since these are multilingual societies.

Further afield in the United States, English is closely connected to one's economic circumstances, the social relationships they can keep and is also a determining factor for jobs with high salaries and which people will compete at different levels of education and power (Tollefson, 1991). This means that in order for one to qualify as being American, they should be competent in standard American English. This phenomenon is better explained by Wright (2007) who argues that in such cultures, language attitudes are dominated by powerful ideological positions that are largely based on the supposed existence of this standard form, and these, taken together, can be said to constitute the standard language ideology or 'ideology of the standard language'. So, there may be varied points of disagreement in issues of language policy and practice depending on the context but one thing is common in all the different contexts: this is the harmony in agreement over the fact that exoglossic languages such as English, French, and others, are powerful and therefore preferred over indigenous languages because they are prerequisites for economic success and sustainability.

2.7 VIEWS ON ENGLISH AS A LANGUAGE OF TEACHING AND LEARNING

The issue of English being an official language and subsequently becoming a language of teaching and learning is widely debated by language scholars and concerned organisations such as UNESCO, UNICEF, ACALAN amongst others. On the one hand, the past two or three decades have seen the growth of English as the undisputed language of wider communication (Rubdy, 2008), hence the fact is that English language is an international language and the major gatekeeper in socio-economic and political domains. It is a language that promotes upward social mobility unlike indigenous languages which still lack the ability to provide this advantage to its competent speakers (Kamwangamalu, 2003). English proficiency is seen as a gateway to economic empowerment because it is the language of work, trade and industry (de Wet, 2002), whereas a lack of English skills is described as a costly disadvantage because one is more often than not, definitely excluded as English skills are seen as a potential path out of poverty (Ferguson, 2013). The exclusion is more pronounced now that the world is becoming a single global community and English is the dominating lingua franca with the highest number of competent speakers as compared to other international languages such as French, Spanish, Portuguese and other world languages. After all, English is the official language of important domains in many spaces such as the judiciary and courts, government, education, and formal presentations.

Whereas this assertion is without a doubt true, a contradictory view exists that if poorly taught as a subject, (and thus poorly mastered by the learners), English can serve as a catalyst for academic disaster when used as a medium of teaching and learning. This view is supported by UNESCO (1953, 2003) whose position is that a child learns best if the language of teaching and learning is their MT as opposed to a second language, henceforth L2, which the learner may struggle to express herself in. For this reason, UNESCO (1953, 2003) recommends that a learner should be taught in their MT for as long a time as possible. English therefore serves two functions as Williams (2006) views it: first as a bridge and also a barrier. This is because people who have English skills get immensely empowered. They are also simultaneously afforded numerous opportunities and benefits because this is a language of hegemony and power. Since English is the language of wider communication, third world countries especially, stand to benefit more if they acquire

skills in these exoglossic languages. On the other hand, Williams (2006) views English as a barrier in the sense that those who lack skills in the language are automatically sidelined and excluded from the economy because most well-paying jobs require one to possess English skills.

Marginson (2007) concurs with Williams (2006) that exoglossic languages also tend to divide people along the lines of having English skills as those who lack adequate skills in English language tend to be marginalised and disadvantaged. It is for this reason that Crystal (2003) labels these as “killer languages” because they normally outshine indigenous languages or the MT and make them appear less useful in the presence of exoglossic languages. This is because there is a huge benefit in learning them hence people will definitely choose them over African languages which lack the economic benefits of providing a pathway to economic opportunity and mobility. In a globalised world, therefore, international languages such as English are generally valued higher than indigenous languages. This is largely because people have come to the realisation that English provides a means to better opportunities. Many people feel it is the path out of poverty and a gateway to certain well-paying professions (UNESCO, 1953).

2.8 LANGUAGE-IN-EDUCATION POLICY IN ESWATINI

Language acquisition is a field of study which concerns itself with the complexities of language and language use in the education sector. A language-in-education policy is the choice of an official language(s) which a country or state chooses to be the medium of instruction in the educational fraternity and which then becomes the language of communication for the transmission of knowledge in the school (Batibo, 2014). The most important factor in the origins of language educational policies in Africa is the legacy of colonial language policies (Bamgbose, 1991). This pre-supposes that most LEPs in Africa are modelled on the policies of the former colonising state. As a result, the common trend is that the former exoglossic languages are adopted to be the official languages whereas some indigenous languages are called national languages (Schmied, 1991; Roux, 2014).

The education sector in the country is governed by the National Education and Training Sector policy, from now on NEDSEC, of 2018. The policy is a revised version of the 2011 education sector policy or EDSEC, which came about as a result of the 2009 draft EDSEC policy which in turn was reviewing the 1999 National Education Policy (NEC), (Gamedze, 2015). The EDSEC policy was further reviewed twice in 2010, in May and in August, after which it was approved and subsequently adopted in 2011. The mission statement of the education system as stated in the 2018 NEDSEC policy is:

“to provide relevant, quality and affordable education and training opportunities for the entire populace of the Kingdom of Swaziland in order to develop all positive aspects of life for self-reliance, social and economic development, and global competitiveness” (NEDSEC, 2018).

The vision of EDSEC policy is,

“Attainment of equality in educational opportunities for all pupils of school going age and adults irrespective of their socio-economic backgrounds, with the ultimate goal of enhancing their productive capacity, thus improving the quality of their lives” (NEDSEC, 2018).

In the centre of this policy lies the quest and passion to reduce socio-economic inequalities, improve productivity and the overall quality of the life of the people of eSwatini through a well-coordinated, defined, and guided education and training sector. The policy directive is that the mother tongue (MT) siSwati shall be used officially as the medium of instruction from Grade 1 to Grade 4 and then a switch to English from Grade 5 onwards”. Section 7.4 states that

“SiSwati and English are both regarded as official languages in the Constitution of the Kingdom of Swaziland, which provides the necessary guidance for EDSEC policy. While this implies that either language may be used as a medium of instruction, the policy directive is that the mother tongue siSwati shall be used officially as a medium of instruction for the first four Grades of school, after which English shall be the medium of instruction” (NEDSEC, 2018).

The NEDSEC policy applies to all learners, teachers, employees, managers and other providers of education in all public, private, formal and non-formal learning institutions at all levels of the education system in eSwatini. It is important to note that the EDSEC policy has policies very similar to those of the Imbokodvo National Movement (INM) which was the ruling party and the former King Sobhuza II's party and it ruled before independence was attained in 1968. One of the policies of the EDSEC policy which was also a policy for the INM, is to provide free primary education (FPE) to all Swati children enrolled in public schools. This is to say that FPE, which was introduced in 2010 does not apply to private schools. The idea is that the country is moving towards King Mswati III's vision of socio-economic empowerment for all Swati people by the year 2022 in line with sustainable development goals which were launched in 2015.

The 2018 education policy is referred to as the National Education and Training Sector policy (NEDSEC) and is driven by the framework of the Education Act of 1981 and the national development goals presented on eSwatini's 1997 National Development Strategy and its Vision 2022. It is a review of the 2011 policy after a lengthy consultative process inside and outside the Ministry of Education and Training (MoET) from June to August 2017 (NEDSEC, 2018). The review was necessitated by findings from recent studies such as the SACMEQ study, the National Education and Training Improvement Programme Review, the repetition study and the out-of-school children study amongst others (NEDSEC, 2018).

The guiding philosophy of the education and training sector is to produce an enlightened and participant citizenry that has skills and knowledge to contribute positively to economic and social development. It further contextualises and enables the many policy instruments required to operationalise the delivery of high-quality teaching and learning such as the United Nation's 2030 agenda on Sustainable Development Goals especially the goals on education (Goal 4) and gender equality (Goal 5). The 2018 policy also includes instruments of regional co-operation such as the African Union's Agenda 2063 for Africa's socio-economic transformation, the SADC Revised Regional Indicative

Strategy Development Plan 2015-2020 and the SADC Industrialisation Strategy and Roadmap 2015 - 2063 (NEDSEC, 2018).

Section 3.4 deciphers medium of instruction matters and reiterates the 2011 EDSEC policy that English and siSwati are the official MoI as per the 2005 constitution. SiSwati is to be used in the first four grades of elementary schooling, after which there must be a switch to English in the upper grades until tertiary level. Moreover, English and siSwati are offered as core subjects in all schools at all grade levels. The policy also introduces sign language as an officially recognised language in all schools and will be taught and used where appropriate.

2.9 ISSUES IN IMPLEMENTING LANGUAGE POLICIES

Language is a crucial means of disseminating information hence it is of utmost importance to implement language policies that reflect the languages spoken by the majority of the population in any particular context. In some contexts, this has led to concerns of linguistic subordination and ultimately the demise of some minority languages which ceased being used in the society and thus died. There are four issues which shall be tackled in this part of the thesis in as far as implementing language policies is concerned. These are: implementing language policies, English as a bridge and also a barrier, bilingual education and endangered minority languages.

2.9.1 Implementing language policies

First, implementing language policies is interpreted often as a complex process especially in contexts with deep ethnic texture where linguistic minorities may be disadvantaged and thus coerced into using majority languages at the expense of their own MT (Gandara and Hopkins, 2010). In the linguistic context, Marginson (2007) argues that whenever there is cultural diversity within a specified community, the stronger, majority language systems, particularly English, dominate that context. Exoglossic languages have proven to be a unifying factor whenever there are issues of linguistic diversity. In many social contexts especially in the African continent, former colonial languages such as English,

French or Portuguese are seen as having the ability to unify people in the sense that they enable people from diverse linguistic backgrounds to communicate. When documenting issues on restrictive language policies in the USA, Gandara and Hopkins (2010) postulate that English learners (EL) who comprise mostly of immigrant students, are disadvantaged as compared to their counterparts who are first language speakers.

2.9.2 Endangered minority languages

Current language planning research also concerns itself with endangered minority languages whose existence is threatened by what Williams (2006) terms, killer languages. Language policy is one mechanism available to the state for maintaining its power and that of groups which control state policy (Tollefson, 1991). One way of sustaining power relations in modern society is through language policy whereby the significance of minority languages is shifted to the background while influential languages occupy crucial roles in the linguistic make-up of a state. In the education sector, the norm is that the curriculum itself is assimilationist in nature hence does not accommodate speakers with limited proficiency in the LoTL (Ferguson, 2006). As a result, learners who wish to succeed in their academic journey need to assimilate or else risk underperforming due to their inability to understand the LoTL. As mentioned in the above section, bilingual education is the only way to teach learners in the 21st century and bilingual programmes emphasise the need for the acquisition of the LoTL (Ferguson, 2006). Studies have shown that a learner's incompetence in the LoTL is sure to result in cognitive disadvantage and marginalisation.

In multilingual contexts, learners are expected to adapt to learning in a regional or national language which may or may not be their MT. As a result, minority languages would face extinction thus the reason why BE is encouraged because educating children bilingually enables language practices which cater for the minority languages as well (Garcia, 2009). Western educational systems are generally assumed to do reasonably well in imposing the standard language on their students (Spolsky, 2009). Whereas in the United States there is little or no room for minority languages but English, in Britain, the language situation is almost similar to that in the USA except that there is a Bureau of Lesser Used Languages and the European charter for Regional or Minority Languages,

who cater for traditional British languages known as Celtic languages such as Welsh, Cornish, Gaelic, Irish and others (Sutherland, 2000). For example, the Welsh Language Act of 1993 allows learners from Wales to have Welsh added to their normal core subjects taught by all schools in England. In all three countries however (Wales, Scotland, Northern Ireland), only a few students were willing to take their exams in the traditional languages, instead they showed stronger preferences for major European languages such as standard British English (Sutherland, 2000). This proves that the learners themselves are aware that their minority languages do not have the ability to take them up the social ladder and they recognise the need to become proficient in the LoTL.

2.9.3 Language Management

Language management is the explicit and observable effort by an individual or group to modify their language practices and beliefs (Spolsky, 2009). Even though language management starts with an individual making choices pertaining to which language or language varieties to use, a more organized form of this phenomenon starts at a micro (family) to macro level (nation-state). At a micro level, speakers may choose to use the MT or the LoTL for colloquial purposes however at a national level; laws or policies are established to regulate some aspects of official language use. In the school setting, both the teachers and the learners become agents of language management. The school therefore becomes a site where national language policy is implemented, and even challenged or modified (Batsalelwang and Kamwendo, 2013). The country's constitution encourages learners to converse in siSwati both at home and in school. This is the situation in the target school for purposes of this study, the learners are encouraged to speak in English, the LoTL however, practice shows that learners prefer to communicate in siSwati instead of English. The reason for their language choice will be studied in detail later in the thesis. In the United States, BE programmes emphasise the need for immigrant students to acquire English thus automatically discouraging the use of L2. Teachers also are powerful agents of language management. It is in schools whereby language policy is acted out, implemented, challenged, and even modified.

2.10 CONCLUSION

The emerging school of thought on the importance of the MT is a crucial aspect in the area of language planning and policy. In Africa, many countries still have the language of the former coloniser as the LoTL. The schooling system itself in many of these countries is modelled on those of the former colonising states, which is why Kamwangamalu (2005) argues that the curriculum is often foreign and mismatched thus unfriendly to the learners. The benefits of using exoglossic languages as the LoTL are well documented with the MT reserved for the foundation phase. In the European context, the sentiment is similar because research findings show that not being competent in the standard variety of the official languages such as English, excludes speakers from well-paid jobs. The next chapter will focus on the theoretical framework that underpins this study.

CHAPTER 3

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

3.0 INTRODUCTION

In qualitative research, a theoretical framework may not be explicitly articulated since qualitative enquiry typically is oriented towards grounded theory development in the first place (Corbin and Strauss, 2008). However, it is crucial for all research to be guided by a theoretical framework whether quantitative, qualitative or mixed methods (Lederman N and Lederman J, 2015). This is the window through which the entire research shall be perceived. It is the lens that a researcher chooses to use in order to explain concepts in their study. Theories are constructed in order to explain, predict, and master phenomena such as relationships, events or behavior. Moreover, a theoretical framework helps to limit the scope of the relevant data by focusing on specific variables and defining the specific viewpoint or framework that the researcher will take in analysing and interpreting the data to be gathered.

This chapter discusses the theoretical frameworks guiding the study. The study is couched under two theoretical frameworks. The first one is Cobarrubias' (1983) four language planning ideologies which are: Linguistic Pluralism, Internationalization, Vernacularisation and Linguistic Assimilation. These four ideologies help to articulate issues on language policy and planning in the Kingdom of eSwatini in general whilst also shedding light on the education policy that currently controls teaching and learning in schools. The four ideologies therefore assist in understanding better the linguistic ecology in the country. The study not only focuses on language policy issues but on language practice too, hence the second approach selected as a theoretical framework: the micro language planning framework. This second framework will assist in articulating the language policy emanating from practice at the research site. In doing this, I follow Fishman (1984:41) who posits that:

the level of language planning that has thus far received the lion's share of attention is that which pertains to the nation as a whole, or the target populations which are, at least theoretically, distributed throughout the country. Microanalysis of language planning, in particular, school agency for example, has not yet received the attention it deserves.

The assertion by Fishman (1984) is true for eSwatini in the sense that there are studies, though very few, which pertain to language policy in eSwatini (Mazibuko, 2014; Van der Merwe, 2014; Morope, 2010, Kamwangamalu & Moyo, 2003; Kamwangamalu, 2013; Brock-Utne, 2001), however literature on language policy for schools is scanty (Mordaunt, 1990; Kamwendo & Dlamini, 2016, Dlamini & Kamwendo, 2018; Dlodlu, 2016). In using this framework, I agree with Baldauf (2006) who defines micro language planning as referring to cases where business institutions, groups or individuals hold agency and create what can be considered as a language policy and plan to utilise and develop their language resources, one that is a response to their own needs, their own language problems, their own requirement for language management. So far, both frameworks have been simply outlined. The sections below explain in greater detail what each one entails and how they both are relevant for the study, beginning with the four language planning ideologies by Cobarrubias (1983).

3.1 MAJOR CONCEPTS ON LANGUAGE PLANNING IDEOLOGIES

Juan Cobarrubias is one of the language scholars who have dealt with the concept of status planning. He wrote about the four language planning ideologies during the second phase of the history and development of the LPP field (1970-1980s era), as a response to earlier theories and ideologies which were viewed as inadequate to explain language planning in different countries at the time, such as stable diglossia. One of the key concepts of the LPP studies is based upon the fact that the function of any particular language bears upon its language status in a significant way. Major contributors to this school of thought include Kloss 1969, Ferguson 1959, Stewart 1968 and Fishman 1971. Viewed from the standpoint of Stewart (1968), the social characteristics of a language have an effect on the role that a particular language system may assume in the linguistic makeup of a multilingual polity.

Stewart (1968) holds the view that each language is graded for its importance based upon four attributes which are; degree of standardisation or standard correct language usage, degree of autonomy or unique linguistic function of the language, historicity or language tradition and vitality of the language relating to who uses that particular language – is it a large percentage of the total population or just a community of native speakers?

Supporting this observation is Kloss (1969) who shared similar sentiments when he established four categories of a language-nation typology. These are: the origin of the language used with respect to the speech community, the developmental status of the language, the ratio of users of the language to the total population and the juridical status of a language which relates to the choice of a language for judicial administration. This concept establishes a linkage between language function and the status of a language such that the more a language is used in crucial linguistic domains, such as when it is used as a LoTL: the more importance is attached to that particular language. Ultimately, Kloss (1969) introduced the concepts of languages being either endoglossic or exoglossic. When a country uses an indigenous language as an official language, it is said to be endoglossic. With most countries, however, especially in the African continent, their official languages are mostly the imported former colonial languages hence them being described as being exoglossic states. These countries are often heterogeneous linguistically with tribal groups and dialects deemed unfit for the functions of the modern government.

Another key issue in LPP studies, as advanced by Ferguson (1959), relates to the concept of diglossia which is the status distinction between two functionally different linguistic varieties of the same language being “high” and “low” (colloquial) varieties. According to Ferguson (1959), the “high” is the variety that is used in formal settings such as in the education sector as a LoTL, whereas the “low” is used in more colloquial settings. Fishman (1971) went a step further to articulate that the “high” and “low” are not just varieties of the same language but separate languages altogether used by different communities such that each of the two has got its own ethoglossia thereby translating to bilingualism. Fishman (1971) holds the view that a community may fall in the quadrant of bilingualism

and diglossia at either a local or a national level by including a sub community of speakers either concentrated in a given geographic location or spread over the nation.

These scholars (Kloss 1969, Ferguson 1959, Stewart 1968 and Fishman 1971), influenced Cobarrubias into constructing his four language ideologies. Cobarrubias (1983) argued that Kloss' (1969) study, was more concerned with language nation taxonomy and not adequately addressing the conceptual clarification of language status or function. Cobarrubias (1983) had his viewpoint and work built upon these scholars. It is not the scope of this study to delve deep into the work of these scholars but the point is that they influenced Cobarrubias into coining the four language planning ideologies that underpin this study.

3.2 THE FOUR LANGUAGE PLANNING IDEOLOGIES

As alluded to earlier on in the chapter, Cobarrubias (1983) coined the four language planning ideologies, which are: Linguistic Pluralism, Internationalisation, Linguistic Assimilation and Vernacularisation, in order to describe issues that are pertinent to language policy and planning. The four ideologies will now be defined. According to Cobarrubias (1983), linguistic pluralism involves the coexistence of different language groups and their right to maintain and cultivate their languages on an equitable basis. More simply, linguistic pluralism refers to a situation whereby coexisting languages are accorded the status of being official languages in a specific linguistic context, for instance, in Belgium (French, Flemish and German), Sri Lanka (Sinhalese and Tamil), and eSwatini, (English and SiSwati). Each language is therefore viewed as an autonomous entrenchment deserving as much respect as any other coexistent language. These languages normally constitute of the languages spoken by the vast majority in any given linguistic context together with the languages of wider communication, which in the African context, refers to former colonial languages such as English, French or Portuguese.

Cobarrubias (1983) further describes internationalisation as involving the adoption of a non-indigenous Language of Wider Communication (LoWC) either as an official language or as a LoTL at some level of the educational process. There are various degrees of internationalisation as advanced by this theory. First, a language of wider communication may be granted an official status for purposes of external communication such as English in India where it is viewed as a “window-to-the world”. India is very diverse linguistically with over a thousand languages and dialects hence she opted to use English for purposes of external communication. In other contexts, such as the Scandinavian countries (Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Iceland and Finland), the LoWC is only used as a LoTL at some level of their educational process thus upgrading its status to “high”. In the most common linguistic situations, the LoWC is declared as an official language thus being utilised in the important linguistic domains.

The basic tenet of linguistic assimilation is that all speakers of all languages other than the dominant ones should be able to speak and function in the dominant language regardless of their origin (Cobarrubias, 1983). It attaches linguistic superiority to the dominant language and does not, in principle, grant equal rights to linguistic minorities. Linguistic assimilation can be achieved in many different ways chief amongst which is colonisation such as the Philippines under American rule. Annexation is another way of achieving linguistic assimilation such as the Texas state in the USA. Other ways include immigration and migration.

Lastly, vernacularisation involves the restoration and or elaboration of an indigenous language and ultimately its adoption as an official language (Cobarrubias, 1983). Before independence, IsiZulu was the only vernacular language taught in the school syllabus in eSwatini (Mordaunt, 1990). SiSwati was viewed as still not well developed enough to be taught at secondary level at the time hence it was first introduced in schools in 1967, a year before the country was granted independence in 1968. When eSwatini attained independence in 1968, there was a strong motivation to reinstate and resuscitate the siSwati language. This has largely been possible because eSwatini is one of the few

countries in the world with only one MT and is thus not facing problems of ethnic diversity. In the African continent, Swahili remains a good example of vernacularisation when one considers that it is a trans-national language and a LoTL for the whole duration of primary schooling in Tanzania (Babaci-Wilhite and Geo-Jaja, 2014). Otherwise, vernacularisation remains a distant reality for most African countries and this works to the favour of exoglossic languages who then occupy centre stage unifying the people who would otherwise be divided along their ethnic linguistic barriers.

The concept of Linguistic pluralism in eSwatini exists only in theory but not practically in the sense that the country's 2005 constitution recognises both English and siSwati as the two official languages in the country. The truth of the matter is that English supersedes siSwati, something which is generally the norm in many other African countries where the exoglossic languages occupy a prestigious role while the indigenous language is used largely for colloquial purposes and probably as a LoTL in the first few years of school.

This concept of internationalisation by Cobarrubias (1983) describes precisely the language policy and the EDSEC policy of 2011 in the country in the sense that English was adopted pre- and post-independence as the official language and the LoTL. The status distinction of English when compared to siSwati is "high" in eSwatini and being competent in English is seen as an advantage because the well-paid jobs have a general requirement of competence in English language. In a study on English being a gatekeeper subject in eSwatini by Dlodlu (2016), the learner participants revealed that they viewed English as an extremely important language skill to possess because without it, your opportunities of being successful become slim. They also mentioned that even their parents prefer to have them taught in English and as such, are in favor of English occupying a prestigious position in the country's EDSEC (2011) policy. This supports the assertion that English is a LoWC hence people would rather have English skills than competence in any other language. This language ideology cascades into the next concept which is linguistic assimilation since it has an element of demanding competence in the exoglossic language or risk being on the side-lines.

Eswatini is labelled an English-speaking country by virtue of it having once been colonized by the British until she attained her independence in 1968. This labelling is deceiving mainly because it denotes that Swati people are competent English language speakers and yet this is far from the truth. In his study on language policy in Eswatini, Mordaunt (1990), established that less than 10% of the population have adequate English language skills. Another study by Dlodlu (2016) supported this claim as one of its findings were that Swati learners had difficulty in expressing themselves in English. Though noting the importance of English as a LoWC, the learners explained that they do not have adequate skills in English because of their lack of an English-rich environment which would see them having access to literature to read and thus improve their English language competence. The ideology of linguistic assimilation therefore emphasizes the importance of exoglossic languages over indigenous languages. The fact is that they (exoglossic languages) have the potential for upward social mobility whereas our native languages lack the economic muscle which would see them in an equitable basis with former colonial languages.

3.2.1 The use of the four language planning ideologies in this study

The four language planning ideologies by Cobarrubias (1983) help to explain the different positions which a country may take in relation to language policy and planning matters. These ideologies are appropriate in helping to explain and further clarify issues pertaining to language ecology in the monolingual Kingdom of eSwatini whilst also shedding light on the language choices Swati people make in their social space, work, or school.

In light of Cobarrubias' (1983) linguistic pluralism, one could bring to the fore the fact that in the local context, both English and siSwati are official languages (EDSEC, 2018). The country's constitution which was adopted in 2005 clearly states that both these two are the country's official languages. Whereas siSwati is used mainly in colloquial or less formal contexts such as at home, English is normally used for more formal contexts such as it being the language of teaching and learning and the language of the courts. This linguistic concept as advanced by Cobarrubias (1983) is therefore applicable in the

kingdom as opposed to other contexts whereby a single language is accorded official status. For example, unlike in Africa, where there are issues around multilingualism and tribalism, in the European context, it is a different case.

The common practice in many European countries is to have a single official language, for instance, in the case of the USA and Britain. President Roosevelt once clearly articulated the USA's discriminatory stance to the Spanish language in 1915 when he said, "We have room for but one language here and that is English" (Edwards, 1994, p.166). Criticising bilingual education programmes, another former USA president Reagan's stance compounded this feeling in 1981 when he said, "it is absolutely wrong and against American concept to have a bilingual education program that is now openly, admittedly dedicated to preserving their (Latin) native language and never getting them adequate skills in the English language (Freire, 2014). As Johnson and Brandt (2015) argue, in America, learners who lack English skills are often marginalised and treated as people with a disability! Garcia (2009) claims that in today's globalised world, bilingual education is often criticised on the one hand because it is seen as maintaining separate linguistic enclaves.

Normally, internationalisation exists in multi-linguistic contexts whereby there are diverse tribal or ethnic backgrounds which then divide the people along linguistic orientations. Such is not the case in the kingdom hence the explanation why English is only used in official domains and not for traditional purposes of day-to-day communication. In multi-linguistic societies such as in Nigeria and South Africa, internationalization is clearly observable whereby people resort to using English in order to iron out linguistic barriers that exist due to manifold ethnic backgrounds. In the local context of eSwatini, English is a requirement in the world of work including the government sector and the judiciary but it is not the language of day-to-day communication. Even debates in parliament are held in siSwati because there are no tribal differences which may raise linguistic barriers during motions and debates. In the Kingdom of eSwatini therefore, English is an official language but it is not adopted as a

lingua franca. In as far as linguistic assimilation is concerned, only about 10% of the population are fluent in English language (Mordaunt, 1990), hence this is not a reality for eSwatini. Lastly, even though there are visible initiatives and government directives to empower siSwati, these cannot be interpreted as vernacularisation because this ideology describes a situation whereby the indigenous language is developed and empowered with a view to utilise it in crucial domains such as making it a medium of instruction.

3.3 MICRO LANGUAGE PLANNING FRAMEWORK

Spolsky (2007) postulates that language policy has three interrelated but independently describable components namely: language practice, language beliefs and language management. Micro language planning falls within the component of language practice as it concerns itself with language practices at a local, small or micro level. Language practices are the observable behaviours and choices people make pertaining to the language or languages entrenched in the macro language policy. Spolsky (2007) defines micro-level language planning as the linguistic features chosen or the variety of language used and further cites the school domain as one of the most complex domains as agents of micro language planning are often heterogeneous in age, gender, social background, motivation and language proficiency – to mention but a few. Other domains include the courts, family level community level and business institutions such as the banking sector (Baldauf, 2006).

Fenton-Smith & Gurney (2016) give a shallow definition of micro language planning as actions and decisions of teachers operating alone or in small groups. This definition excludes other crucial agents for micro language planning in the school domain which is the learners and the administrators as cited by Liddicoat (2014). Ricento (2011) defines it in simple terms as the actions and decisions taken by individuals and institutions or groups as opposed to the macro level which is associated with events and processes that operate at the national or supranational level.

In borrowing a descriptive phrase widely associated and coined by Fishman (1971), micro language planning pertains to individuals or groups' behaviour towards language. On the other hand, when studying micro language planning, it is not possible to ignore macro language planning because they both influence each other (Kamwendo & Dlamini, 2016), hence Baldauf (2006) argues that in micro language planning, it is the impact of macro-polity policy (or lack thereof) on micro situations that is being examined – however the agency remains firmly located in the macro. For purposes of this study, I follow Baldauf's (2006) definition of micro language planning as:

cases where business institutions, groups or individuals hold agency and create what can be considered as a language policy and plan to utilise and develop their language resources, one that is a response to their own needs, their own language problems, their own requirement for language management.

The study of language education policy in schools is perhaps the most difficult and challenging field of all (Spolsky, 2007). In a recent publication, the same author asserts that studying the interplay between top-down and bottom-up policies is among the greatest challenges in researching empirical reality (Spolsky, 2016). Even though language policy and planning is a field which was formally recognised after the Second World War, language planning scholarship began to recognise the role of micro-level in language planning in the 1990's (Kaplan & Baldauf, 1997; Liddicoat, 2014).

Micro language planning is inherently diverse as it seeks to explore local responses to local needs, with local actors as well (Liddicoat, 2014). It is a field that concerns itself with the implementation and interpretation of the macro-level policies that make provision for the use of languages other than exoglossic languages such as non-dominant or indigenous languages. In the African context, African languages normally feature alongside exoglossic languages in many countries such as eSwatini, Lesotho, Mozambique, Malawi and more as national languages serving a subservient role while former colonial languages become official languages.

3.3.1 Fundamentals of micro level language planning

There are key fundamentals to consider in micro language planning, namely: structure, agency and domain (Baldauf, 2006). Structure refers to the macro language policy, whether overt or covert. The micro planning occurs not in isolation but in response to the main structure hence Baldauf (2006) posits that the macro and the micro planning are often simultaneously at work. In larger contexts, the macro lies with the government while the smaller states determine the micro planning (Baldauf, 2006). Baldauf (2006) further argues that in the micro level, planning and agency are equally important and while the planning work is often small scale, agency lies centrally with the macro provider. Liddicoat (2014) cites teachers, learners and administrators as being central agents in language-in-education micro planning. Agency refers to the people responsible for interpreting the macro language policy and these may be at family, institutional or regional level. Liddicoat (2014) warns that agency is not totally free but is constrained by macro policy as structure. In the same vein, LPP agents have the ability to act in many ways that change the structure in which languages are spoken, taught and conceptualised or their actions may be constrained by these structures (Liddicoat, 2014).

Domains are simply the contexts under which micro-level planning occurs. Spolsky (2007) gives several examples which include the religious domain, work, family or school domains. Spolsky (2007) further claims that in the school domain, there are two main agents – the teachers and learners yet it is often the most complex domain because of multiple factors, chief amongst which is the multilingual background of the learners. Teachers also vary in age, gender, training, experience, social status, language proficiency and economic status.

3.3.2 Micro language planning in the current study

The current research studies language policy and practice at a selected school in the Manzini region in eSwatini. The micro language planning framework was carefully selected because it encapsulates the gist of this research which is to determine the

language practices at School J as portrayed by teachers and learners during teaching and learning. The researcher aims to use this framework as a lens through which to interpret findings relating to language practice at the research site. The study aims to explore language practices and decisions informing such practices in the selected school. The teachers and the learners are the participants in the study and they are listed as the main agents in micro language planning hence the framework is relevant to the demands of the study.

3.4 PREVIOUS RESEARCH EMPLOYING BOTH FRAMEWORKS

The four language ideologies are appropriate to use when describing the linguistic atmosphere of an institution or country. Efurosibina (2004) employed the same ideologies in a study on the language policy and planning in Nigeria. Basing his study on Akinnaso (1991), Efurosibina (2004) utilised linguistic pluralism, linguistic assimilation, internationalisation and vernacularisation to bring more clarity on language planning and policy in Nigeria. His study discovered that the selection and adoption of Yoruba, Hausa and Igbo as official languages alongside English, was a clear example of linguistic pluralism. Even though there are more than 450 languages in Nigeria (Efurosibina, 2004), the cultivation of the three indigenous languages as ‘official’ equals linguistic pluralism. The study further describes linguistic assimilation as being achieved through the requirement for all speakers to be skilled in at least one of the three main indigenous languages (Yoruba, Hausa, Igbo) whilst vernacularisation has not been pursued much due to the diverse linguistic background Nigeria has. Lastly, the study showed that internationalisation is achieved through the emphasis placed on the dominance of English in virtually all aspects of life. The framework of the four language ideologies enabled Efurosibina (2004) to describe the linguistic ecology whilst also describing language policy in relation to teaching and learning in Nigeria. Efurosibina’s (2004) study further confirms Cobarrubias’ (1983) assertion that language planning in any particular context follows some or all of the four language ideologies.

Another study by Dlodlu (2016) also adopted Cobarrubias' (1983) language planning ideologies as a theoretical framework for a study on the role of English as a gatekeeper subject in eSwatini schools. The study used semi-structured interviews, observation and focus groups to establish learners' constructions of English as the gatekeeper subject in the case of teaching and learning in eSwatini. The findings presented in that study revealed that learners found English to be a very crucial element in their journey to acquire an education. The participants labelled English as a gatekeeper for them at two levels: during teaching and during learning and it being a determining yardstick for admission at tertiary level. The framework enabled the researcher to determine learners' viewpoints on English by focusing mainly on internationalisation and vernacularisation as concepts advanced by the ideologies.

On the other hand, the micro-level language planning framework has been used in previous research to study language planning and policy in institutions such as a study by Kamwendo and Dlamini (2016). Kamwendo and Dlamini (2016) used micro-level language planning to study language planning at a cross-border university in eSwatini with a focus on three thematic domains namely: teaching and learning, research and institutional administration. This was a qualitative study which employed document analysis (newspaper articles), University website, observation and interview schedule to collect data on the language situation at the university. The findings showed that English is the language chosen to address the three thematic areas of teaching and learning, research and institutional administration. For instance, it was noted that Midlands State University (MSU) uses English for teaching and learning and also offers language for academic support programs such as academic communication skills (ACS). Since this is a cross-border university, the authors noted that in Zimbabwe, it offers Shona and Ndebele alongside English as subjects of study whilst in eSwatini, English and siSwati are the two languages offered as subjects. What is important to note in the selection of subjects offered in both universities in Zimbabwe and eSwatini is that the micro-level responds to the macro-level as the languages offered are also recognised at national level as official languages. Lastly, the study established that the language for research and institutional administration is English thus fits into the global trend of using English as the lingua

franca of knowledge production and knowledge dissemination (Kamwendo and Dlamini, 2016).

Through the use of the micro-level language planning framework, Kamwendo and Dlamini (2016) were able to establish the language planning and policy at Midlands State University (eSwatini campus). The framework allowed them to compare both the macro and micro-level language planning as Fishman (1971) argues that when studying the micro-level LP, it is virtually impossible to ignore the macro-level that comes into play as agents implement language policy in their contexts. The framework is thus a useful tool when studying language planning hence it was appropriate to use in establishing the language policy and practice for the current study because it enabled me to solicit data from the agents (teachers and learners) in order to explain the language planning at this selected secondary school.

3.5 CONCLUSION

This chapter has given a detailed discussion of the two theoretical frameworks and further clarified the relevance and function of both phenomena to the current study. Close attention has been paid to defining the key concepts around the theoretical frameworks and further qualified why these theories are feasible for this study. These determine the lens to use in discussing the findings. The next chapter will focus on the design and methodology of the study.

CHAPTER 4

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

4.0 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter focused on the theoretical frameworks underpinning this research. Chapter 4 presents the description of the research process. It provides information concerning the method that was used in undertaking this research as well as a justification for the use of this method. The chapter also describes the various stages of the research, which includes the selection of participants, the data collection process and the process of data analysis. Additionally, it discusses the role of the researcher in qualitative research in relation to reflexivity and it concludes with a discussion of validity and reliability in qualitative research and discusses the ways in which these two requirements were met in this study. The last section also outlines briefly how the report was finally written before providing a summary and conclusion.

4.1 RESEARCH AIMS

The aim of the study was to investigate teachers and learners' perceptions of the language policy currently operant in Eswatini. It further aimed to explore how teachers and learners apply the education policy in the process of teaching and learning and their rationale for implementing it the way they do in their context. It was also crucial to understand teachers and learners' perceptions on how effective the current language policy is.

The study was guided by the following objectives.

The main objective of this study was:

1. To determine teachers and learners' perceptions regarding the language policy operant in eSwatini.

Other objectives are:

2. To explore language practices regarding teaching and learning at the selected secondary school in eSwatini.
3. To ascertain the effectiveness, or not, of the language policy at the research site in eSwatini.
4. To analyse the Language Policy and Practice (LPP) decisions at the research site in eSwatini.
 - (i) To establish why, if they do at all, do these decisions influence teaching and learning the way they do?

4.2 RESEARCH DESIGN

The research design of a study is shaped by the focus of the study. This presupposes that each study adopts a research design that suits the needs of what that particular study focuses on. A research design is a plan outlined by the researcher of how they intend to conduct the research. Leedy and Ormrod (2005) define research design as procedural ways which the researcher adopts to respond to the research questions objectively, accurately and economically. These procedural ways include a description of how data shall be collected, managed, and analysed. This is echoed by Mouton (2004) who states that a research design is a necessity for every scientific research study hence a plan or layout of how the researcher intends to conduct the study is of absolute importance.

Since the aim of the study was to investigate language policy and practice at a selected secondary school in Manzini, a case study was best suited for this research. The participants were therefore required to give more insight into this phenomenon as it relates to their specific situation (Cresswell and Clark, 2010). This study is therefore a qualitative case study located within the interpretivist paradigm. Reasons for opting for the case study are explained below.

4.2.1 Case study

Creswell (2014) defines the case study as a design found in many fields, especially evaluation, in which the researcher develops an in-depth analysis of a case, often a programme, event, activity, process, or one or more individuals. Yin (2014) affirms that a case study is a strategy for doing research which involves an in-depth empirical investigation of a particular contemporary phenomenon with its real-life context through triangulating the sources of evidence. The case study approach was therefore best suited for this study because it is a descriptive approach which allowed me to solicit in-depth information on the phenomenon of language policy and practice from the participants at a selected secondary school in Manzini. In an earlier book, Yin (1981), defines it as a strategy for doing research which involves an empirical investigation of a particular contemporary phenomenon within its real-life natural environment using multiple sources of evidence. Yin (2012) further postulates that in a case study, the researcher collects detailed information using a variety of data collection procedures over a sustained period.

In her definition of a case study, Hakim (2000) highlights that case studies take as their subject one or more selected examples of a social entity. She further gives the different types of case studies as ranging from individual case studies to community, social groups, organisations, events, life histories, roles and relationships, and finally – cross national comparative case studies which are all studied using a variety of data collection techniques. For the purposes of this study, Yin's (1981) definition will be adopted because it explains in clearer terms how a case study is done in the natural environment of the phenomena, which allows for real-life interactions and experiences with the sources of evidence. The study adopted the case study design because it will allow for an in-depth analysis of the language policy and practice at the selected research site since the researcher will typically be involved in an intensive experience with the participants.

Researchers who adopt the case study design conduct an in-depth study of the phenomenon through triangulation. They concentrate on a single case and study it in so

much detail thus gaining a clearer understanding of the concept. Hakim (2000) equates case studies to a microscope for the simple reason that its value depends crucially on how well the study is focused. Using multiple sources helps the researcher to develop converging lines of inquiry (Yin, 2014) which could have otherwise been overlooked. This helps to make the findings or conclusion more convincing, accurate and reliable (Yin, 2014).

Even though the case study is a viable approach which can provide a richly detailed 'portrait' of the phenomena (Hakim, 2000), it has its limitations. First, due to its nature, a case study may be time-consuming because adequate data needs to be collected from information-rich participants in order to produce valuable data which will then be interpreted to find emerging themes. More time is consumed during the transcription and analysis of the data as the mass of data is coded to produce emergent themes. Apart from it being time consuming, there may also be problems of validity as fundamental links are difficult to test and sweeping statements cannot be made from case studies (Terre Blanche, Durrheim and Painter, 2006). It is therefore crucial for researchers using the case study approach to explain clearly how they dealt with issues of ensuring validity in their study.

4.2.2 Interpretive paradigm

In this study, the interpretive paradigm was used to find out how teachers and learners implemented the language policy in their school context. A paradigm may be viewed as a set of basic beliefs that deals with ultimates or first principles (Guba and Lincoln, 1994). It is a belief about the nature of knowledge, a methodology and criteria for validity (Mackenzie and Knipe, 2006). A paradigm is therefore the lens which a researcher adopts as best suited to fulfil the objectives of a research study. A paradigm constitutes the ontology of what is the reality or truth, the epistemology of what counts as knowledge and the choices of methodology. Ontology is the theory of being and it entails what exists as truth in the world whilst epistemology is the theory of knowing and of how we obtain knowledge of external reality. Methodology on the other hand relates to the procedures

and processes adopted to investigate reality. Guba and Lincoln (1994) summaries a paradigm as being the belief system or worldview that guides the investigator not only in choices of method but in fundamental ontological and epistemological ways.

This study adopted the interpretive approach since it seeks to understand and describe meaningful social action (Samuel, 2016). This approach is also known as the constructivist approach even though constructivists move further than just understanding the context but also dwell much on the language in order to encode meaning (Guba and Lincoln, 2005). Interpretivists believe that truth is not just one but many. The theory emanated from Edmund Husserl's phenomenology and Wilhere Dilthey's and some German philosophers of interpretive understanding known as Hermeneutics (Mackenzie and Knipe, 2006). These philosophers postulated that knowledge is socially constructed.

Dilthey's early work on interpretation suggested that the findings of any research rely heavily on piecing together the context of the text's creation and thereby recreating the meaning of the author's words (Terre Blanche, Durrheim, and Painter, 2016). The main focus of this study was to understand - which Wilhere Dilthey termed, 'verstehen', not just the words or text provided by the participants but the focus was also on the socio-historical and linguistic context in which the participant worked (Terre Blanche, Durrheim and Painter, 2016). The interpretive paradigm therefore seeks to 'recontextualise' the data obtained and place it back in its author's context and empathically endeavor to imagine and understand the texts in their contexts (Terre Blanche, Durrheim, and Painter, 2016). For instance, a researcher who wants to study other cultures needs to see things and understand them from the native's point of view in order to grasp the true and correct meaning of the participant's data. For purposes of this study, Guba and Lincoln's (1994) s definition of interpretive approach will be followed. They postulate that interpretivists seek to understand the subject's own constructed view in their own contexts such that the nature of knowledge is individualistically constructed.

There are limitations to the interpretivist approach and these include interviewer bias, social desirability bias and challenges in comparing data for emergent themes (Terre Blanche, Durrheim and Painter, 2016). Interviewer bias presupposes that the researcher herself may ask semi-structured questions which are biased and affected by their own life experiences which will ultimately result in unauthentic data being collected. On the other hand, the bias may emanate from the participants themselves whereby they may lie and provide data that is not honest and trustworthy and this tends to undermine reliability and representativeness of the findings. So, interpretivists tend to involve emotion and bias in their views but this may not always be beneficial as they may get in the way of the truth or what is really happening. It is for this reason that the researcher needs to ensure that they limit bias as much as possible by remaining as objective as possible and allowing themselves to be informed by the data. Finally, the researcher may end up with a mass of data derived from all the interviews and may find it harder to find common emergent themes due to the volume of data available. Making the situation worse is the fact that the interviews make it harder for comparability as they are all based on a personal representation of beliefs, views, and attitudes.

4.2.3 The use of the interpretivism in this study

The table below summarises the use of the interpretivism in the study.

CHARACTERISTIC	EXPLANATION
Main research aim	To explore how teachers and learners' implement the language policy in their school context and their perceptions about the language policy currently operant in the country.
Main research question	What are teachers and learners' perceptions of the language policy currently operant in the country?

Ontology	What exists as truth and reality was discovered through interacting with both teachers and learners on language policy and practice matters. Teachers and learners' actions also informed language practice at this particular school context. How teachers make sense of the language policy and thus how they implemented the language policy in their own context.
Epistemology	Teachers and learners' responses were interpreted in context and through the interview interactions with the researcher.
Methodology	Data was collected using document analysis, an observation checklist and individual interviews.

4.2.4 Qualitative approach

A research study may either be qualitative, quantitative or use the mixed method approach depending on the objectives and focus of that particular study. The qualitative approach was used as the design for this study. McMillan and Schumacher (2010) describe the qualitative approach as one that is based on some form of positivism and constructivism which assumes that multiple realities are socially constructed. This implies that qualitative researchers collect information from carefully selected persons specific to each context. Joubish, Khurram, Fatima and Haider (2011) adequately sum up that if a study is qualitative, it is concerned with collecting in-depth information and developing explanations for social phenomena in its natural context which in turn helps us understand how the people feel and why they feel as they do. Golafshani (2003) defines it simply as a kind of research that produces findings not arrived at by means of statistical procedures or other means of quantification.

There are both strengths and limitations to the qualitative approach. To begin with, a qualitative research is an enquiry in which the researchers collect data in face-to-face situations by interacting with selected participants in their natural settings (McMillan and Schumacher, 2010). Creswell (2014) explains that qualitative research is different from quantitative research because data is collected in the natural setting where the participant experiences the issue or problem under study. Thus, a qualitative approach adopts an inductive open-ended exploration of the variables which may not be clearly known in the beginning of the research as in a quantitative research (Terre Blanche, Durrheim and Painter, 2016). It is an advantage to collect data from participants in their natural contexts as this results in data which is authentic thus more reflective of the truths of the phenomena under study.

The researcher is the key instrument in a qualitative study because he collects data himself through relying on various methods of data collection such as observing behavior and interviewing participants. The methods of data collection are varied or triangulated such that ultimately, the researcher has to organise the data and recognise emergent themes that cut across all of the data sources (Creswell, 2014). In a qualitative design therefore, the researcher is the primary research instrument. This denotes that the quality of the data collected depends largely on the personal involvement of the researcher in the research setting. The researcher was present in the research site to interview and further observe the language practices in the school. It was an added advantage that the selected school is the researcher's workstation hence observation was done more intensely thus yielding richer data. Terre Blanche, Durrheim and Painter (2016) hold the view that researchers who approach their studies from an interpretive perspective study the participants in the 'real world' and 'natural setting' when they go about their daily lives instead of under an artificially constructed environment. This natural setting enables the researcher to gather data that is a true reflection of the participants' daily living hence results in rich data which when analysed appropriately, illustrates a genuine picture of the participants' point of view.

Finally, the qualitative approach was best suited for this study because it allows for a smaller group to be representative of the larger population. Viewed from the standpoint of McMillan and Schumacher (2010), the sampled group is studied in so much depth and detail such that the results are meaningful and representative of a comparable larger population though these may not be generalised because no two contexts are the same. The main aim of a study was to generate hypotheses about possible relationships among variables which are the language policy itself and the teachers and learners who are guided by it and have to interpret and implement it in their social space (Terre Blanche, Durrheim and Painter, 2016). Moreover, my aim was to interview and further observe language practices in the selected research site in order to have a much deeper understanding of the language policy and practice decisions that teachers and learners make during teaching and learning on a daily basis. My aim was to make sense of the feelings, experiences, social situations, or phenomenon as they occur in the real world and in their natural setting.

4.3 PILOT TEST

For the purposes of this study, a structured pilot study was conducted before the actual data collection was undertaken. A smaller scale preliminary study is necessary in order to test if the research instruments are appropriate for the study. A sample of similar respondents (one teacher and two learners) were identified whereby they were requested not only to respond to the questions posed to them but to also comment on the questions themselves as a way to produce a more scientifically sound study (Terre Blanche, Durrheim and Painter: 2016). A pilot study was important for this study because it would be a yardstick to determine any impending failures which could be caused by not properly adhering to standard research protocols or even using research methods which are either complicated or inappropriate (Leedy and Ormrod, 2005). By conducting the pilot study, I was thus able to adjust the research questions in line with the research objectives so as to ensure that they remain accessible and unambiguous to the research participants.

4.4 DATA COLLECTION SCHEDULE

Data was collected during the second term which runs from May to August 2018, for a period of about two months. Since document analysis was concluded during the reviewing of literature, the researcher began by doing five, 40-minute lesson observations in order to perceive first-hand the language practices in the selected school. The idea was to then follow up the observation with separate individual interviews of the ten learners, lasting anything between 30 to 40 minutes. These were done at the learners' convenience and spare time in order to minimise any classroom disturbances. The interviews were conducted in a quiet location where chances of interruption were minimised. These were then immediately followed by the six teacher-interviews. The administrator was interviewed separately in her office. The anticipated duration as informed by the pilot study, was anything between 40 minutes to an hour. As already mentioned earlier, the main aim was to discuss with the participants issues that were observed during classroom observation and any other issues and views on language policy and practice, which may arise and be relevant to the objectives of this particular study.

4.5 SAMPLE AND SAMPLING PROCEDURES

This study identified teachers and learners to be the major players in the implementation of and practice of the language policy in schools. This is because they are the people directly on the ground to effect or not effect policy. McMillan and Schumacher (2010) posit that a population comprises all the possible units of analysis about which a researcher wishes to make possible conclusions. As Bamgbose (1991) argues, there are so many great policies which relate to language and language use in Africa, however many of these remain unimplemented, a situation he describes as “declaration without implementation”. Many governments in Africa form very good policies but most of these remain a theory and are not practiced. The study therefore recognised that teachers and learners are an integral component in the real implementation of language policy in eSwatini hence their selection as participants for the study. A population sample was thus drawn from them using purposive sampling as explained below.

To address the issue of language policy and practice in the selected school, six teachers (including one administrator), and ten learners were sampled to be participants in the study. Scholars such as Cresswell (2014) and Yin (2014), claim that in qualitative research, a small sample can be selected to be representative of a larger similar population. Rather than choosing a large sample, qualitative researchers enter the world of the people they plan to study and identify key informants who they then establish rapport with. They create a relationship with them and a level of trust. These are people who have inside knowledge of what exactly is going on in the selected context and these are people who stand a good chance of offering in-depth information on the subject under study (Cresswell, 2014).

The main objective of this study was to investigate teachers and learners' views on language policy in schools and the language practices in their own context in order to get a clear understanding of whether or not the country's language policy is effective or not in this school context. Six teachers were selected as a sample to be participants using purposive sampling. The teachers had to be degree holders and thus be eligible to teach in the senior secondary level. They had to have at least five years' experience teaching in the target school so that they could be better positioned to comment on the language policy and practice matters concerning this school.

The school principal who is also coincidentally a languages teacher, was selected purposively as a specialist to share her views on the subject under study thus the teacher population was six in total. Ten learners were chosen through systematic random sampling. The focus was not on balancing gender during selection but it was assumed that all Form 4 learners were in a good position to share their views on the language policy and practice issues. In order to select the learners using systematic random sampling, I obtained a class list of all the fifty-two learners in the class. In this list, the learners were arranged in alphabetical order hence the sample was selected as objectively as possible. So, they all came from the Form 4 class which has senior learners who have been tested at least twice in external examinations and have since made it to Form 4. As a result, Form

4 learners were viewed as better positioned to have insight on language policy issues in schools as compared to the juniors who are fresh from primary school. This class was also not sitting for the external EGCSE exit examination at the end of the year hence this allows the researcher more time to work with the learners during data collection than, say, the Form 5s who are expected to write their high school exit exams sooner. These normally begin quite early in September when they do their practical sessions in preparation for the final exam that starts around early October each year. The Form 4 class was thus ideal to work with for purposes of the research study. The following tables summarise participants information and the sampling techniques used to sample them.

TABLE 4.1 Summary of population, sampling and method

Target population	Sampling technique	Data collection tool
Teachers	Purposive	Observation, interviews
Learners	Systematic random	Observation, interviews
School administrator	Purposive	Observation, interview

Table 4.2 Teacher profiles

Pseudonym	Qualification	Teaching experience	Age bracket
T1	B.Ed.	15 years	40-50
T2	B.A. Hum, P.G.C.E.	16 years	40-50
T3	B.A. Hum, P.G.C.E.	6 years	20-30
T4	B.A. Hum	5 years	20-30
T5	B.Ed. hons	14 years	30-40
Administrator	M.Ed.	6 years	50-60

TABLE 4.3 Learner profiles

Pseudonym	Age bracket	Class	Gender (M/F)
LR1	15-20	Form 4	F
LR2	15-20	Form 4	F
LR3	15-20	Form 4	F
LR4	15-20	Form 4	M
LR5	15-20	Form 4	M
LR6	20-25	Form 4	F
LR7	15-20	Form 4	F
LR8	15-20	Form 4	F
LR9	15-20	Form 4	F
LR10	20-25	Form 4	M

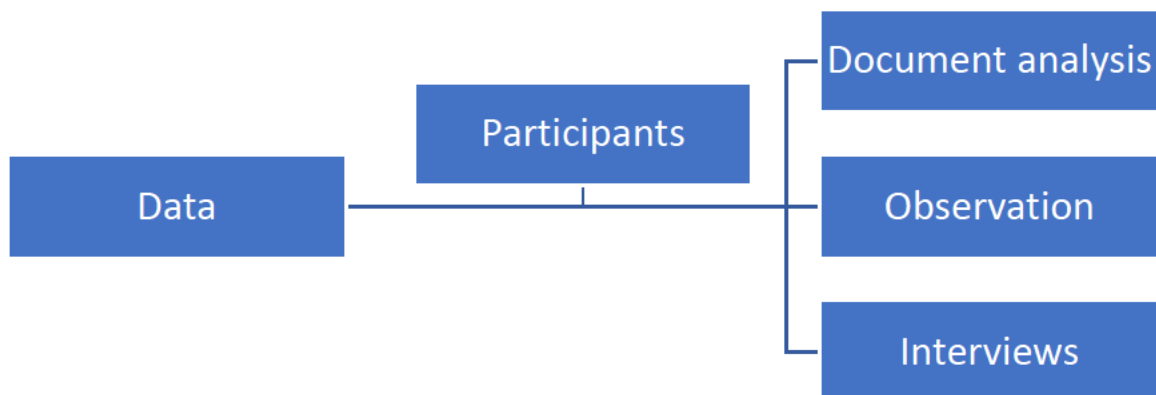
4.6 TARGET SCHOOL

Participants were selected from one school in the Manzini region. The school is located in a peri-urban area in the sense that it is located in a rural community, headed by a chief. However, it is about 7km from Matsapha, a major industrial town of the Kingdom of Eswatini. Furthermore, it is about 10km from Manzini, the second most important town in the kingdom after the capital city, Mbabane. The school had a total population of 539 learners in 2018 when the data was collected. There were fifty-two learners in the form 4 class. They come from the surrounding rural community as well as those from the urban areas as highlighted above. The school was chosen mainly because of convenience. It is the workstation of the researcher hence it would be convenient to collect data whilst also allowing the researcher to go back to the research site and recollect complementary data should the need arise. In research, it does happen that during data analysis, the researcher finds that there is a need to recollect certain data in order to clarify a particular concept and this is much easier and faster if data is collected from your own duty station even though one has to guard against bias during the process.

4.7 DATA GENERATION METHODS

Yin (2014) argues that data generation methods must be triangulated in order to produce findings or conclusions which are likely to be convincing and accurate. I followed Yin (2014)'s standpoint and triangulated the methods for data collection in order to increase the validity of the findings by developing converging lines of inquiry. There are instruments of data collection which are associated with the case study approach and these include documents, archival records, interviews, direct observation, participant observation and physical artefacts (Yin, 2014). For purposes of this study, I enlisted three data generation methods which were documents, direct observation and interviews. This was in line with the triangulation approach which is synonymous with multiple data generation methods. Document analysis, observation and individual interviews were employed in order to collect rich data from which conclusions could be made. This section elucidates the variety of research methods employed in the study and further presents a rationale for their use. Below is a diagram explaining how data was generated for the purposes of the study.

Figure 4.1 Diagram explaining how data was generated



The diagram explains the process of data collection for the study. The data was sourced mainly from the participants who are the teachers and learners through the use of observation and interviews. Document analysis is not divorced from the participants since those that were analysed relate to the language policy where teachers and learners are the major players in the implementation of macro educational policies (Liddicoat, 2014). Through the use of the three data generation techniques, the researcher was able to accumulate adequate data to inform and respond to the research questions and objectives of the study. The section below elucidates how each data gathering tool was employed for the purposes of data generation in the study.

4.7.1 Document analysis

Document analysis is one of the data collection methods synonymous with the case study design. Examples include but are not limited to: progress reports, proposals, community newspapers, agendas, announcements, diaries and articles appearing in the mass media (Yin, 2014). I used document analysis as the first procedure of data gathering because unlike interviews or observation, it is in some ways easier to do because there is no tedious process of transcribing everything or even having to think on one's feet. Moreover, it was imperative to comprehend the language policy documents currently operational in eSwatini and how these translate to the internal language policy for the selected research site. Most importantly, the country underwent a name change during its 50th independence celebration in April 2018 hence, it became crucial to update policy documents. The EDSEC policy of 2018 is one such document.

The correct spelling for the country is still not well articulated in documents, with some such as the EDSEC (2018) spelling it Eswatini not eSwatini, and the MT being spelt siSwati, not Siswati or SiSwati. The country's constitution, which came into effect in May 2005, was also studied in detail in order to understand the eSwatini government's official position in relation to language policy matters in the country. The second documents to be analysed were the Education Sector Policy (EDSEC) 2011 and 2018. The reason was that when the study was undertaken in 2016, the 2011 EDSEC policy was still in use yet

during the course of the research in 2018, a new EDSEC policy came into effect, repealing the former. Thirdly, the internal language policy for the selected school, coded School J, was studied in greater detail because it was crucial to be aware of the school's language policy and its expectations thereof. Therefore, the school rules and regulations were analysed in order to have a picture of the language situation in the research site.

Furthermore, the issue of language policy has recently taken centre stage since the country's Prime Minister announced in March 2017, transformation in the language policy for schools hence a lot was written about this subject in the country's newspapers. For this reason, the press also provided a wealth of information on the recent developments relating to language and language use in schools. Moreover, reports for meetings and announcements made by the leader of the current government in relation to language policy were also analysed.

Document analysis allows researchers to make inferences, verify correct spelling, titles or names of people and can further provide other specific details to corroborate information from other sources (Yin, 2014). However, not all documents contain unmitigated truths hence it is crucial to verify the data sourced from documents.

4.7.2 Participant observation

Observation seeks to explore the natural scene as unobstructively as possible so that neither the researcher presence nor the methods disturb the situation (Woods, 2006). Participant observation was the next data collecting instrument after analysing the documents as mentioned above. I was not a passive observer but was involved in the actions being studied (Yin, 2014). Since the research site is the researcher's duty station, it became apparent for participant observation to be used when observing the linguistic practices in the school. The researcher was not a passive observer but was involved in the data collection procedure as things were actually happening, in order to get as close to the action as possible (Terre Blanche, Durrheim and Painter, 2016). Descriptive,

observational evidence was therefore useful in providing additional information about the topic being studied (Yin, 2014).

The study is placed under the interpretivist paradigm, which is synonymous with unstructured approaches to conducting observation because the data needs to be collected in the most naturalistic context. As Terre Blanche, Durrheim and Painter (2016) posit, observational approaches are impressionistic since the researcher notes down what they see as they see it in that natural setting. Observation was carried out for the duration of two weeks. The researcher observed the process of teaching and learning by sitting-in on some of the lessons in the Form 4 class (English language, Biology, History and Geography) so as to gather data on the language policy practices that are observable from the research site. It was crucial to obtain first-hand information on the teachers and learners' attitudes towards the country's language policy which will be manifested through the language practices that they make in the case of teaching and learning. Moreover, observing teachers further allowed me to explore the language decisions that they have to make daily in their scope of work in order to facilitate effective teaching and learning.

4.7.3 Interviews

Interviews are guided conversations rather than structured queries in which the questions are rather fluid and not rigid (Yin, 2014). Conducting interviews is a more natural form of interacting with the participants instead of sending out or requesting them to fill out a questionnaire, do a test or perform some experiment (Terre Blanche, Durrheim and Painter, 2016), hence one of the reasons why interviews were conducted when gathering data for this study. Interviews are not simply conversations we have on a daily basis but they are also highly skilled performances (Terre Blanche, Durrheim, and Painter, 2016) in the sense that it gives the researcher an opportunity to get to know people quite intimately so that we get to really understand how they think and feel about a particular matter. Moreover, interviews allowed me to read and interpret non-verbal cues, which could otherwise be missed for instance, if questionnaires were used.

According to Yin (2014), there are different types of interviews. Varieties include a prolonged case study interview, survey interview - which uses a structured questionnaire and a shorter case study interview which may last for about an hour. I used the shorter case study interview to corroborate certain findings already established during observation (Yin, 2014). The interviews were held in a quiet place in the library save for the administrator's interview which was held in her office. Learner interviews were all conducted in the school and this process was not rushed because they were conducted during the learner's free periods so as not to interrupt teaching and learning. These lasted between 20 and 30 minutes per interview. Teacher interviews were done after the learner interviews. Again, these were conducted in the school as explained earlier. It was a bit harder to get the interview with the school administrator because she was quite busy with the operations of the school. When she finally was available for the interview, it was conducted in her office. The duration for all the interviews combined lasted for a month.

4.8 RECORDING

Audio-recording equipment was used to record interviews and lesson observation because this minimises distraction that could be caused by detailed note-taking (Terre Blanche, Durrheim and Painter, 2016). Moreover, recording the data helped to keep available every little detail of the interviews and observation sessions no matter how small, thus increasing the chances of drawing correct conclusions from the data. Recording the interview also has a particular notion of seriousness which may assure the participant that their views and contribution are valued and taken seriously.

4.9 DATA MANAGEMENT

Data management involves itself with organising data and the safe storage, preservation and sharing of the data which was collected and used in a research project. This is done because data is a very important resource which also helps to prove that indeed research was done. The requirement is that all data must be safely kept away for a period of five years at UKZN after which it should then be disposed of permanently through

incineration. Data was translated and transcribed from a voice recorder immediately after the data collection session had taken place in order to understand the essence of the interview whilst it was still fresh in my mind. This also helped because there was no accumulation of data which could prove too difficult to transcribe thus making the whole research a failure (Bogdan and Biklen, 2003). The observation checklist was harmonised together with the field notes to make sense of the observation data.

4.10 RESEARCH ETHICS

I am in agreement with Burton and Barlett (2005) that in research, considerations should be made for the person, knowledge, democratic values, and the quality of educational research. As such, I sought consent from the participants whereby letters were sent to them requesting their informed consent. This is because it is unethical to collect data without the knowledge of the participants, their expressed willingness and informed consent (Kumar, 2015). Frankel and Siang (1999) claim that informed consent has three components. First, the consent relates the information to the participants. Secondly, it is the duty of the researcher to ensure that the participants understand the informed consent letters fully. Obtaining voluntary agreement from the participants is the last step (Frankel and Siang, 1999).

Permission to conduct the study was formally sought from the Ministry of Education through writing. The letter detailed how the study would be carried out, who the participants would be and the tentative duration of the data gathering exercise. After this permission had been granted, another gatekeeper letter was written to the school administrator requesting for authorisation to conduct the study at School J, which is the pseudonym for the target school as per research ethics that the identity of the informer or participant should always be protected. Finally, informed consent letters were written to the prospective participants and their parents. It was vital to involve the parents since the learners were students hence it became important for their parents to give consent as well. It was also anticipated that some learners could be below the consent age hence their parents' permission was important. In the letters, their role was clearly explained and if

there would be a possibility of any effects on their side, this was clearly explained before the study was undertaken. The letters clearly stated that participation was voluntary and participants were at liberty to withdraw at any time should they feel the need to do so.

Moreover, participants were treated with respect and not just as objects from which data may be sourced. Confidentiality was assured right from the outset such that pseudonyms were used instead of their real names in order to conceal their identity as per research ethics. It was also imperative that at the end of the study, a debriefing session with the participants is held for them to access the findings by availing the final report or thesis to them (Burton and Barlett, 2005). This further shows respect for the participants, allowing them access to see the final product of the report or thesis they have been involved in producing. It was imperative to be honest and open with the participants such that there should be no deception because dishonesty in research can be counter-productive and morally objectionable (Frankel and Siang, 1999). For the purposes of this study, deception was not used.

4.11 CHALLENGES ENCOUNTERED WHEN COLLECTING DATA

The data collection exercise for the study was largely successful albeit minor glitches being experienced along the way. It was helpful that data was collected at the researcher's place of employment hence there were no problems in contacting the participants. Even though learners consented almost immediately to participate in the study, some teacher-colleagues were not so keen to participate citing personal reasons for not wanting to be observed when teaching. Some admitted to feeling as though they would be doing teaching practice all over again hence did not want to participate for those reasons. It was after the researcher explained the purpose of the observation and interviews that some of them consented. The researcher had to replace one teacher who felt she was not ready to participate at all. This did not impede on the data collected in any way because a replacement was sought as she had not consented to participate. This helped because she did not pull out during the actual data collection stage but she indicated in good time for a replacement to be sought.

The interview sessions with the learners were mostly within the anticipated 30 minutes as informed by the pilot study. Only one learner participant took longer than anticipated because his responses were quite long and he took his time to ponder responses. This did not affect the quality of the data collected in any way. Interviews with three of the six teachers also took longer than anticipated because they gave detailed responses. Some of the questions also had to be rephrased because the responses given were not informative enough hence the extended duration. This again did not hamper the quality of the collected data.

Thirdly, some of the observed lessons were viewed as not informative enough because they appeared to be revision sessions. As a result, the researcher opted to re-observe these in order to experience the actual teaching and learning taking place hence observation took two weeks rather than the anticipated one week as previously projected. This exercise was ultimately successful. The lessons cited in this thesis are therefore a mix of observed and reobserved lessons.

Finally, document analysis was done first in order to be well acquainted with the documents on language policy in eSwatini. These included the education policy (EDSEC 2011) which was annulled by a new national education policy (NEDSEC 2018). This necessitated the researcher to re-align the thesis with the new policy which was a revision of the former. Even though there are marked changes in the 2018 education policy, the pronouncement on language policy and languages to be taught as subjects in schools is similar for both the 2011 and 2018 education policies.

4.12 DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Cresswell (2007) states that qualitative data analysis is an on-going process which includes constant comparison and continual reflection about the data, asking analytic questions and jotting down memos throughout the study. In a much more recent publication, Cresswell (2014) describes data analysis as involving segmenting and taking

apart the data, equating the process to peeling back the layers of an onion as well as putting it back together. Making sense of the data is a process which requires total commitment and concentration in order to reach reliable findings or conclusions.

Rapley (2016) states that there are four types of data analysis in qualitative research. These are: framework analysis, thematic analysis, interpretative phenomenological analysis and constructivist grounded theory. I followed thematic analysis whereby the raw data was read and re-read until it was familiar. Thereafter, it was read with the intention of coding and categorising it to come up with broader emerging themes. The data was constantly compared with the aim of identifying common patterns and ideas or beliefs. Taylor-Powell and Renner (2003) state that in qualitative research, coding and categorising does not involve assigning numerical codes but identifying themes or patterns such as ideas, concepts, terminology or even the phrases used. Moreover, it means organising the codes into coherent categories that summarise and bring meaning to the text since interpreting data is all about attaching meaning to the data at hand (Taylor-Powell and Renner, 2003).

Yin (2014) advises on strategies to analyse case study evidence or data. He advises that a researcher may rely on theoretical propositions, or work the data inductively from the ground up, or better yet examine plausible rival explanations and lastly, develop a case description whereby you organise the data according to some descriptive framework. Once again, I followed Yin's (2014) advice of working with the data inductively or from the ground up hence allowing the data to 'speak' for itself instead of formulating my own descriptions of data findings. Great care was taken to avoid 'cherry picking' which is looking for particular literature or data that helps to illustrate a researcher's point of view hence presenting data in a certain way which is more favorable to creating the impression that we want (Pettinger, 2016).

4.13 VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY

According to McMillan and Schumacher (2010), validity is the degree of congruence between the explanation of the phenomena and the realities of the world, which means it is the degree to which the interpretations have mutual meanings between the participant and the researcher. Brink (2003) briefly defines validity as the accuracy and truthfulness of scientific findings. Interpretivists ensure validity and reliability of the research methods by relying on very detailed accounts from each participant while also giving a full explanation of how data was sourced from the participants (Burton and Barlett, 2005). In qualitative research, trustworthiness is the equivalent of validity in quantitative research.

Reliability on the other hand is the degree to which a given procedure for transforming a concept into a variable produces the same results in tests repeated with the same empirical tools (stability) or equivalent ones (Burton and Barlett, 2005). Even though a high level of reliability does not routinely translate into an accurate reflection of the phenomenon under study, it does help to produce a scientific study which may be a true reflection of issues on the ground and thus shed more light on these issues. Validity on the other hand refers to the truthfulness or accuracy or correctness of the research data (Burton and Barlett, 2005). A research may thus be said to have high or low validity through looking at issues of trustworthiness, authenticity and credibility (Cresswell, 2014).

4.13.1 Trustworthiness, Reliability and Rigour

There are four principles to ensure validity or trustworthiness in qualitative research. These are: credibility, confirmability, dependability and transferability (Golafshani, 2003; McMillan & Schumacher, 2010; Guba & Lincoln, 1995).

4.13.2 Credibility

Brink (2003) claims that there are several methods of ensuring credibility in qualitative research. These include remaining in the field for a long time, triangulation, having participants review the data collected to ensure it is written exactly the way they meant for it to be captured. The target school is my place of employment hence my presence in the school for a long time, especially during the data collection period, helped to ensure credibility of the study. This is because it was possible to observe language policy and practices on a daily basis thus yielding richer data. This also made it easier to have access to the participants in the event that there was data presumed to be missing during data analysis. Moreover, as per the demands of the interpretive paradigm, I triangulated the methods of data collection. The participants were also triangulated in the sense that data was solicited not just from a homogenous population of participants but from both teachers and learners, who are the people directly on the ground in the implementation of language policies. All these steps were undertaken in order to ensure that the study is credible.

4.13.3 Confirmability

Transcribing the interview data proved to be a long process for me because I wanted to capture the interviews verbatim. The data was first translated before being transcribed as some of the participants had requested to use the MT during interviews. After transcribing the interview data, I sent the transcripts back to the participants for them to review and check if their views were captured in the correct manner. This was done in order to increase objectivity whilst also mitigating my own possible biasness (Brink, 2003); this would result in findings which are a true reflection of events taking place at the research site.

4.13.4 Dependability

Dependability and credibility are interwoven because a study cannot be said to be dependable if it is not credible. Dependability concerns itself with the repeatability of the

study. A study is dependable if it can be replicated in a similar context and still yield the same results or findings. Golafshani (2003) refers to it as the consistency of the findings. Dependability can be achieved through using multiple data gathering methods whilst also giving a clear description of the methodology in such a manner that the study can be repeated and still yield similar results. Great care has been taken to pay attention to detail in relation to the description of the methodology in this study hence making the study dependable. Moreover, the data gathering methods were triangulated in order to ensure that crucial data is not missed through the use of a single data gathering instrument.

4.13.5 Transferability

The results of a study should be transferrable. Transferability is a concept which seeks to ensure that the findings of a study are generalisable or asks if the findings can be transferred to other similar contexts. Brink (2003) refers to it also as the applicability of the findings. This study for instance was a case study of one secondary school in Manzini on language policy and practice – the case of teaching and learning in Form 4. Samples were drawn from both teachers and learners. Transferability means that the findings of the study should be applicable in other similar schools with similar participants.

The researcher ensured validity by incorporating interpretive validity strategies. For starters, the researcher triangulated the data collection procedures so as to enhance the ability to assess the accuracy of the findings (Cresswell, 2014). Moreover, member checking with the participants will be achieved by taking certain themes or specific descriptions back to them to assess whether the data they provided has been captured correctly, in the way they meant it to be understood. Cresswell (2014) also suggests taking the final report copy or thesis back to the participants so that they can feel that the descriptions they provided, have been accurately captured. The intention is to make a hard copy of the final version of the thesis available in the school library for future reference. Finally, it helps that the researcher will collect data from her duty station which Cresswell (2014) argues increases validity since the researcher has a prolonged experience with the participants in their setting.

4.13.6 Reliability

Reliability is not easy to achieve in qualitative research because this type of research deals with human beings and people are dynamic and not static creatures. Social sciences do not use controlled but dynamic variables in studying the human dimension therefore these studies are hypothetical. For this reason, many qualitative researchers avoid terms such as validity and reliability and use terms such as credibility, trustworthiness, truth, value, applicability, consistency and confirmability (Brink, 2003). According to Golafshani (2003), reliability refers to the replicability or repeatability of results or observations. This means that the attribute of the instrument yields stability hence dealing with a stable measure means that the results should be similar (Golafshani, 2003). Brink (2003) concurs with Golafshani (2003) that reliability deals with the consistency, stability and repeatability of the informant's accounts as well as the researcher's ability to collect and record data accurately. In order to ensure consistency of the results or findings, research methodology is key. The most appropriate research methods which best responded to the research questions were applied to this study as explained earlier in this chapter. Moreover, the data collection instruments were triangulated so as to yield a highly-reliable study. These instruments were carefully selected because they best responded to the research questions and objectives of the study. For this reason, the study is reliable because attempts were made to triangulate the most relevant data collection methods. Moreover, I was able to prolong the observation of the participants since the target school is my place of work. It was also easier and convenient to do member checks to ensure that the data collected is rich and captured in the manner the participant intended for it to be. This is what is referred to as internal validity.

4.13.7 Rigour

Trustworthiness and reliability in a qualitative study result in rigour. Steps to ensure rigor have been alluded to under the subheading trustworthiness and reliability. Rigour is essential in qualitative research because it makes the study credible and reliable for policy makers to depend on. In this study, data from audiotapes was recorded verbatim and I

aimed for objectivity in analysing the data so that the findings may be a true reflection of the events at the research site.

4.14 CONCLUSION

In this chapter, the research design and approach have been outlined. The research method was explained as well. Effort was made to outline strengths and limitations of the design, approach and research methods while also explaining issues pertaining to trustworthiness and reliability of the study. Ethical considerations were also well-thought-out as per research ethics and the steps to ensure that consent was granted prior to gathering data are explained in this chapter. The next chapter focuses on the presentation and analysis of data gathered using three research instruments namely: document analysis, observation and interviews.

CHAPTER 5

DATA PRESENTATION AND INTERPRETATION

5.0 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter discussed the research methodology and issues of research ethics, which ultimately explained how the researcher would produce the data which will eventually inform the views and conclusions reached in this study. This chapter presents the data collected through document analysis, observing the process of teaching and learning at the research site and also interviewing the targeted participants, who are the teachers and the learners. The data was sourced from six teachers and ten learners from School J and it was analysed using thematic content analysis. The participants were interviewed individually and the Form 4 learners were further observed during lessons for two weeks. The data presented responds to the following research questions:

1. What are teachers and learners' perceptions regarding the language policy currently operant in eSwatini? Why do they have these perceptions?
2. What language practices are observable during teaching and learning at the selected secondary school?
3. How effective, or not, is the language policy at the research site?
4. How do LPP decisions at the research site shape teaching and learning?
 - (i) Why, if they do at all, do these decisions influence teaching and learning the way they do?

The data was presented thematically from the context of how both teachers and learners perceive the country's language policy, what language practices were observable at the selected school, and how the implementation of the language policy plays out in light of the NEDSEC policy and the Constitution of the Kingdom of Eswatini. The data is thus presented as per each research question under the following themes and subthemes;

Table 5.1 Themes and subthemes

Theme	Subtheme
Policy documents informing language planning at School J.	The education and training sector policy The Constitution of the Kingdom of eSwatini. The internal language policy for School J.
The language of teaching and learning.	Codeswitching. Learner participation and behaviour.
The eSwatini language policy.	The education policy. The implementation of the education policy. Reasons for teachers' choices of codeswitching.
English as the LoTL in eSwatini.	Learners' performance in English and siSwati. Reasons for learners' performance in English and siSwati. The value of English in the education sector. Learners' attitude towards English. Perspectives on English being the passing subject.
Perspectives on policy directives.	The value of siSwati in the education sector.
English proficiency and learners' academic performance.	Resources to enhance English proficiency amongst learners. Policy versus practice.

5.1 POLICY DOCUMENTS INFORMING LPP AT SCHOOL J

Data presentation begins with information sourced from document analysis before presenting data from interviews and the observation checklist. Document analysis provided the framework for data gathering as it is practical and manageable.

5.1.1 Information from document analysis

In order to be conversant with issues of language and language policy in the country in general and at School J in particular, it became obligatory that the researcher reads and analyses documents that give clarity on same. Three documents were scrutinised namely; the 2005 Constitution of the Kingdom of eSwatini, the education and training sector policies (EDSEC 2011, NEDSEC 2018) and the target school's internal language policy. The documents have been coded as document A, B and C respectively. The National Education Sector policy (NEDSEC) of 2018 is the document that guides the education sector in the kingdom.

5.1.1.1 The Education and Training Sector Policies – (EDSEC 2011, NEDSEC 2018)

When I embarked on the data collection exercise, the EDSEC policy of 2011 was the current document regulating the education sector in eSwatini. However, during the course of the study, a new education policy came into effect in 2018, repealing the former. The revised National Education and Training Sector Policy (NEDSEC, 2018) is based upon the EDSEC policy of 2011 which was a culmination of the legal framework of the education act of 1981 and the national development goals presented in eSwatini's development strategy in 1997. The 2011 EDSEC policy was the first document in the country to set the stage for developments in the education and training sector by providing strategic direction on matters relating to education (Nxumalo, 2016).

Of note is that the 2018 NEDSEC policy contextualises other policy instruments which are meant to ensure delivery of high-quality education for Swati children by 2022. These policy instruments include the United Nations 2030 Agenda, which has been summed into the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG's) which have specific goals on education (Goal 4, 5 and 16). Other policies are the African Union's Agenda 2063 for Africa's Socio-Economic Transformation over the next 50 years (under the leadership of Rwandan president, Paul Kagame), the SADC Revised Regional Indicative Strategic Development plan for 2015-2020 and lastly, the SADC Industrialisation Strategy Roadmap 2063 (Nxumalo, 2016). All these policy instruments have been adopted by the country by virtue of being a member of the United Nations (UN), African Union (AU), and the Southern African Development Community (SADC). What the revised NEDSEC policy does is to contextualise these policies thus ensuring improved development in the education and training sector. The mission statement of the education system as stated in the NEDSEC policy is:

To ensure equitable access to inclusive, life-long quality education and training for all Swazi citizens, through sustained implementation and resourcing of a comprehensive education and training policy. (NEDSEC 2018:7).

The policy goal for the NEDSEC (2018) is:

The provision of an equitable and inclusive education and training system that affords all the learners access to free and compulsory basic education and senior secondary education of high quality, followed by the opportunity to continue with life-long education and training, so enhancing their personal development and contributing to eSwatini's cultural development, socio-economic growth and global competitiveness. (NEDSEC 2018:7).

The crosscutting principles of the NEDSEC 2018 include the following

- *Access to and equity of education and training: Every Swazi child has the right to education and training appropriate to their age and needs, including the provision of free and compulsory basic education.*

- *Equality and protection: Every Swazi citizen has equal rights, opportunities and responsibilities and shall be protected from all forms of stigma and discrimination, including those based on faith, culture, gender, disability, orphan-hood, economic vulnerability or HIV-status.*
- *Relevance and quality of education and training: All education and training shall be of appropriate quality and relevant to the socio-economic and cultural needs of eSwatini and its citizens.*
- *Affordability and participation: No Swazi citizen shall be excluded from age-appropriate formal and non-formal quality education and training because of its cost.*
- *Partnerships: MoET shall be responsible and accountable for the implementation of this policy but shall at all times seek to develop effective national, regional and international partnerships to enhance and ensure the success of the revised policy.*

The policy states that the mother tongue (MT) siSwati shall be used officially as the medium of instruction from Grade 1 to Grade 4 and then a switch to English from Grade 5 onwards”. Section 3.4 states that:

SiSwati and English are both regarded as official languages in the Constitution of the Kingdom of Swaziland, which provides the necessary guidance for EDSEC policy. While this implies that either language may be used as a medium of instruction, the policy directive is that the mother tongue siSwati shall be used officially as a medium of instruction for the first four Grades of school, after which English shall be the medium of instruction. Moreover, sign language shall apply throughout. (NEDSEC 2018).

5.1.2. The Constitution of the Kingdom of eSwatini – Document B

The country’s revised constitution was passed in July 2005. This was after a lengthy consultative process, which was locally termed the vusela exercise, meant to promote fundamental rights and freedom thus affording good governance to the Swati people. The constitution clearly articulates language policy matters as Chapter 1 3(2) of the

constitution states succinctly that both English and siSwati are the official languages in the country. This is in harmony with the EDSEC policy (2018) which further clarifies the roles each of the two languages play in the education sector.

SiSwati is the only MT hence it is spoken by the vast majority in eSwatini but more than that, it also functions as an expression of local and cultural identity whereas English is important as the primary means in achieving a global presence. Moreover, siSwati acts as a unifier in the sense that it is the only MT hence the primary language of communication outside of the classroom environment. Recently, the country's former Prime Minister made declarations on behalf of the government of eSwatini that all students who are admitted to tertiary institutions would at some stage, be expected to take a siSwati pre-entry test which would have an overall bearing on whether the student gets admitted to university or college (Times of eSwatini; 22 February, 2017). As discussed in the Literature review chapter, this declaration was not embraced by some sectors of society such as the teachers' union, SNAT, who viewed it as a means to exclude and disadvantage students who are non-Swati.

5.1.3 Internal language policy of the target school – Document C

The internal policy of an organisation or institution such as a school is deemed fit or proper if it corresponds with the macro policy of the country. The internal rules should corroborate the government policy or else they would not stand. This was the view the researcher had in mind when going to solicit data from the target school. School J has a set of rules and regulations in the school's prospectus document which clearly explains an internal language policy that the school has in place. It stipulates that English is the official language in the school and learners are expected to converse in English at all material times when inside the school premises.

The document "school rules and regulations" has a set of guidelines, which every learner must read and sign to show conformity to the rules and culture of the school. The document further clarifies that all the learners must speak English during school hours,

much against the EDSEC (2018) which allows conversing in the local language inside the school premises.

5.2 DATA FROM CLASSROOM OBSERVATIONS

I intended to hold classroom observation for a whole week at School J in order to confirm or disconfirm adherence to the school's internal language policy and effects thereof. However, this exercise was extended to two weeks because some lessons appeared to be a revision session hence some themes on the observation checklist could not be observed clearly the first time thus necessitated the need to re-observe the lesson. It was imperative to observe the real classroom interactions because this is the place where we expect the language policy to be implemented. Part of the onus of this study was also to study language practices observable at School J in order to comprehend the implementation of the language policy or lack of thereof. Observational data is discussed under three subheadings below: the language of teaching and learning, codeswitching and learner participation and behavior.

5.2.1 The Language of Teaching and Learning

The language of teaching and learning, while central to academic success, is just one of a number of elements that result in quality education. Other components may include teacher capacity and the curriculum among others. Studies (SACMEQ, 2010; Gandara & Hopkins, 2010; Babaci-Wilhite & Geo-Jaja, 2014) have shown positive strong correlations between the language of instruction and learner-achievement. Research has also proven that using the MT as the LoTL enhances the learner's cognitive learning processes and brings forth improved learning outcomes. The main purpose of observing lessons at School J, was to find the level of adherence to the language policy as stipulated by the EDSCE (2018) and constitution as explained in chapter 2. Moreover, it was also crucial to document language practices among the teachers and learners, which ultimately reflect the linguistic culture of the school.

In the Geography lesson, the topic was, “The Land Tenure System”. The objectives of the lesson were: 1) to describe the land tenure system, 2) to explain how land is distributed in the land tenure system. The teacher used the lecture method to deliver content on what the land tenure system was all about and where this type of land is located in the kingdom. The learners were quiet as the teacher explained facts on the land tenure system. The LoTL used was English mainly, except for some siSwati words which were part of the lesson yet there is no known English word for it. An example is the word “Kukhonta” which means requesting to be given a piece of land in the chiefdoms to build a home. The method of lesson delivery was the lecture coupled with a question-and-answer session which was done orally. When the teacher asked them if they were following the lesson, the learners responded with a weak, “yes”. Moreover, the learners did not ask any questions when the teacher invited them to. The researcher also noted that when the teacher asked them questions to summarise the lesson, they remained quiet and after some probing, they offered brief responses that lacked expression. For example, the teacher asked them,

“How does one acquire land in the land tenure system?”

“Through Kukhonta”

The teacher had to probe the learner to explain more clearly and in more detail. The learner remained quiet and failed to provide an informative answer. The teacher explained the process all over again.

Another question was misinterpreted by the learners when she asked them,

“where is this type of land located?”

“In Swaziland”

The expected answer was to mention *rural areas* as the precise locations where the land tenure system is used. The lesson was quite informative which shows that the teacher prepared for it. The teacher ended the lesson by questioning the learners orally and then proceeded to give them classwork to do. In summary, the lesson was conducted in English

with the use of a few siSwati words as explained above. It appeared that learners took time to absorb and comprehend questions posed to them because they were slow to give responses. The teacher had to repeat some questions several times before there could be an answer.

In a separate History class, the topic was, *“The Sharpeville Massacre”*. The teacher had prepared a lesson plan which had four objectives namely: 1) to identify Sharpeville on a map of South Africa, 2) to define and provide synonyms for massacre, 3) to explain reasons behind the Sharpeville massacre and lastly, 4) to describe how the Sharpeville massacre unfolded.

I observed that the language of instruction was English mostly, however, the teacher did use a few siSwati words when she wanted to clarify certain concepts. For instance, when explaining the extent of the carnage by the police, the teacher used the word; *“busacasaca”* which is a siSwati proverb that means that the people were falling down and dying in large numbers (*“...bantfu bebawa busacasaca”*). Codeswitching was however, kept to a minimum though there was a repetition of the siSwati expression, *“yebo ke bomngami – (Yes my people),”* and *“angitsi – (Isn’t that so?)”* which shows agreement between the teacher and the learners that they are following the lesson. The lesson itself was interesting and informative in the sense that all the learners began the lesson standing up, and each learner had to answer a question before they could ‘earn’ taking their seat. The researcher found this to be motivational to the learners and it made the lesson lively. Learners responded to questions in English and the general interaction between teacher and students was in English. The learners attempted to venture beyond simple English expressions when the teacher asked them an empathy question:

“If you were a policeman during the time of the Sharpeville massacre, what would you do to the demonstrators?”

The responses varied between 1) *shooting them*, 2) *arresting them all* and 3) *joining them*, which caused laughter to the class. The class interacted with the teacher in English

and volunteered to read when requested to do so. What was noted was that their responses whenever the teacher asked a question did not incorporate the reason for the response. Even though the researcher had thought the objectives were many, the teacher managed to exhaust all four within the stipulated 55-minute period. Overall, the lesson was enlightening and it adhered, though partly, to the LoTL, which is English. Codeswitching was used to explain concepts which were difficult to comprehend.

In an English Language lesson, the topic was, “The Argumentative Composition”. The teacher coupled the lecture method with a class discussion whereby she gave learners handouts to read an example of an argumentative composition and then discuss the structure of the composition. The lesson objectives were; 1) to discuss the structure of an argumentative composition, 2) to write an introduction of an argumentative composition. The researcher could hear some of the learners interacting in siSwati as they went about the activity and the teacher seemed to accept it because she did not call the learners to order. When time for discussing their findings came, the learners gave responses in English. The teacher asked:

“From the handouts, what do you observe about writing an argumentative composition?”

In their responses, one learner said:

“the structure shows agreement first in the first few paragraphs and the opposite side discussed later.”

The learners asked a question about this kind of structure and the teacher explained that this was one of three methods to use when writing the argumentative composition. The teacher then focused on the introduction of an argumentative composition after which, she gave learners an assignment to write down their own introductions using the same format.

The Biology lesson was informative and explanatory. The topic was, “*Respiration.*” The lesson objectives were 1) to define respiration, 2) to explain the process of respiration, 3) to write classwork. The teacher frequently used in siSwati words to explain how the process of respiration takes place. When describing breathing intensely due to lack of oxygen in the body, the teacher used the word “*kuhefutela.*” The learners murmured to show that they understood what she was talking about for which the teacher responded by saying, “*inhhi na ke, yebo – exactly that, yes*”. The learners enjoyed the lesson and even requested to do a practical by running outside in order to experience heavy breathing which the teacher denied citing time limitations. The learners asked many questions and the teacher explained concepts to them which, also demonstrated by their gestures and expressions, showed that they enjoyed the lesson. However, poor classroom management meant that the learners talked anytime during the lesson and there was generally noise all around. The teacher proceeded with the lesson and at the end of lesson delivery, divided the learners into groups to do classwork. The highlight in this lesson was the frequent codeswitching emanating from both the teacher and the students alike. During a follow-up observation session, I noted that codeswitching was a norm in this class and it originated from both the teacher and the students.

In all the observed lessons, I discovered that teachers and learners used English as the medium of communication during teaching and learning however, there was some codeswitching and codemixing between English and siSwati. In the Biology lesson where codeswitching was extensively used, the learners were lively and involved, asking questions and commenting as the lesson progressed. The learners responded to questions and asked questions which made the lesson vibrant. However, they seemed to do this in an unstructured manner whereby they would also discuss the task amongst themselves without the teacher’s permission. At all material times however, they were on task. The participants alluded to this fact during interviews. When asked what his views are pertaining to codeswitching during teaching and learning, LR10 explained saying;

Kukahle kakhulu lokutsi nakangayi understand lentfo ngesingisi ungayifoseleli, uyikhulume ngesiSwati atoyi understand kancono because vele uliSwati (It is a

good thing that if they do not understand in English, switch to siSwati so that they understand because after-all, they are Swati).

LR5 concurred with LR10 that,

Sometimes when the teachers ask them (learners) questions in English, they respond a little bit in English then they put siSwati.

The learners' responses show that there is codeswitching sometimes during teaching and learning. LR10 even suggests that codeswitching is of benefit to them as learners, therefore it is not a bad thing hence teachers should do it more because it aids students with comprehension of the content. This section therefore revealed that the LoTL at School J is English but codeswitching happens at times and both the teachers and learners feel that this is reasonable since it accommodates those learners with weaker English language skills, helping them to follow and not be excluded in the process of teaching and learning.

5.2.2 Codeswitching

The EDSEC (2018) stipulates that English is the LoTL from Grade 5 upwards. During observation, the teachers adhered to the education policy however; codeswitching and codemixing with siSwati was also common especially during the Biology class. Codeswitching and codemixing are different, though they seem to have a common concept of juxtaposing elements of two or more languages. Defined simply, codeswitching involves changing codes and speaking in another language yet codemixing involves roping in a word or phrase to certain parts of the speech. In the Geography, English and History lessons, the teachers used English to deliver content however: there was codeswitching, which was kept to a minimum.

Codeswitching appeared to be common in the school and teachers seemed not to be perturbed by it. During the History class, the researcher could hear some learners

conversing in siSwati in the corridor along the Form 4 class. This was also identified during interviews when one teacher (T1) said,

Within our school, the system has not sunk much into some of the teachers, and also the setting of our school – we are in the rural areas and the local language is dominant. So, for them to understand some of the things, the local language will chip in here and there in order to clarify things but that does not finish English as the medium of communication.

LR7 attested to this when she added that the students normally speak what she termed siSwati-English throughout the year. She said:

We know the rules and regulations of the school, but as time goes on, sigcina sijwayela and be like mxm...bese sikhuluma siSwati. It is a bad idea because bese kuyasikhama ekugcineni nasesenta emaOrals, siyikhuluma ekucaleni and asiyikhulumi right, sikhuluma siSwati-English (we get used to it and then be like argh, then continue to speak in siSwati. It is a bad idea because we normally complain at the end when we have to take the orals exam, we only speak English in the beginning (of the year) and even then, we do not speak it correctly, we speak siSwati-English).

Therefore, the practice with both the teachers and the learners at School J is to codeswitch for either clarity or convenience. Both the teachers and the learners know that English is the superior language at school but they do communicate in siSwati. One cannot blame them for conversing in siSwati because the EDSEC (2018) clearly specifies that even though English is the LoTL, learners must not be penalised for speaking in siSwati. This provides a leeway to the learners to communicate in siSwati because they are aware that siSwati is acceptable and tolerated in the school setting.

5.2.3 Learner Participation and Behaviour

In all the observed lessons, the learners participated in classroom activities albeit their inability to be expressive in their responses to questions. During the Geography and English lessons, they appeared to be quiet and took time to respond to questions

whenever the teacher asked one. In the Geography lesson, they could not venture beyond simple English language expressions but simply stuck to reading what they had in their notes exercise books. In the English language class, the teacher divided the learners and they were doing some group work. They had to read and then discuss what the structure of an argumentative composition was like. A discussion followed this exercise and the learners participated by explaining the structure as they discovered it from the handouts that they were reading from. They were livelier and more energetic during the History class, which was a question-and-answer session whereby learners responded by raising their hands. They remained standing until they responded to a question and that gained them the permission to sit down. The Biology class, even though it bordered on poor classroom management whereby some learners made utterances in siSwati at any time, the learners were lively and interacted with the teacher more. They asked questions and made comments which showed that they were following the lesson. The learners were interested and participated more during the Biology lesson.

5.3 INTERVIEW DATA

The data presented in this section of the thesis was generated through in-depth, semi-structured interviews with the stakeholders enlisted for the purposes of finding the language policy and practice at the selected school in eSwatini. Analysis of the interview data is organised and discussed based on the participants' responses to the research questions. The data was coded to identify emergent themes and it is presented in comparison with the data from document analysis and the participant observation. The researcher did this based on Elliot and Higgins' (2012) advice that engaging the data in constant comparison with multiple data sources for emergent themes works for purposes of data triangulation. Cresswell (2014) concurs and stipulates that the researcher has to organise the data and recognise emergent themes that cut across all of the data sources. The data captured is presented under themes and subthemes as explained below.

Themes and subthemes

- Policy documents informing language planning at School J
- Teachers and learners' perspectives of the language-in-education policy
- The language of teaching and learning
- Policy directives and their impact on learning
- English: the gatekeeper subject
- The importance of the mother tongue in the education sector
- Learner participation and behaviour
- Codeswitching as a strategy for teaching and learning
- Adopting siSwati to be the language of teaching and learning
- English language proficiency and learners' academic performance
- Resources to enhance English proficiency amongst learners
- The main language of communication at School J
- Policy versus practice - implications for learning
- Policy emanating from practice – codeswitching – translanguaging.

5.3.1 THE ESWATINI LANGUAGE POLICY

Participants were requested to give their views on the country's language policy as enshrined in the constitution that came into effect in May 2005. The teacher participants articulated views on the language policy simultaneously with the language-in-education policy. The learners also struggled to separate the language policy and the education policy hence their responses talked more to the EDSEC policy rather than the language policy. This is the reason why this section of the thesis presents interview data on the language policy and the education policy simultaneously. The school administrator, when asked to state her views on the language policy had this to say:

***DHT:** actually, it is a good language policy because it is in line with policies all over the world. It allows the child to learn in the MT when they're still young and this helps them not to forget the MT as much as the LP exposes them to a global language and in our case its English Language so that is why I say it is not*

bad, actually, it is a good language policy. The issue then would be, are the teachers adhering to the language policy and for my school, I know that the teachers are not adhering to the policy. I get to ask the teachers as to why do you teach your Biology in siSwati, why do you teach your Geography in siSwati and they will tell you that then ma'am, it means I will have to go cover the lesson with five learners, the forty, I know I wasn't talking to them. And normally, teachers would want to involve everyone in the class and they will tell me that when they do that everyone gets to talk and there is explanation that some learners will want to talk and they will request to talk in the MT....

In an ideal world, the language of state administration and the national language would be one but this is not common in Africa instead, the exoglossic languages become national languages while the MT plays a subsidiary role. T3 concurred saying:

T3: Uhmhhh, the policy is ok because it accommodates both languages, our indigenous language the siSwati language which most of our learners are familiar with and English language is basically the passing subject of Swaziland which is really fine.

It was revealed that the language policy as stipulated in the constitution is clear. It states that both siSwati and English are official languages in eSwatini. It appeared to be normal that English supersedes siSwati as T3 argued that this is “*really fine.*” T2 also shared the same sentiments about the language policy. She remarked that:

T2: We Swazis are just a landlocked country, a small country and the population is not that much, which means for us to be at par with other countries, we need to have a command of this language (English). We are just a small country and the opportunities are not that much and our kids, whether we like it or we don't like it, will have to spread out to other countries and if this kid is well prepared to converse in English, it means this will benefit him or her if he is exposed to this language, when he ventures out to other countries.

T2 alludes to the fact that English is the language of the economy and it offers skilled users upward social mobility. The participant noted the importance of embracing English because it opens more opportunities for the skilled user, in this case, the learner. In fact, the participant put it as though the learners do not have a choice but to adopt English when she says, “*whether we like it or we don’t like it, our learners will have to spread out to other countries*”. T1 also thought that the country’s language policy is good, but the implementation lacks proper planning. In his words he claimed;

T1: The country is going on a positive note on its language policy; it’s only the implementation that is rushed. There should have been a language board first to look into issues of where each of the two official languages will be used and that should have been documented. Right now, people use siSwati as a choice, not as an important MT, which then gave rise to the former prime minister to say siSwati should be given prominence, just like its counterpart, English.

The participant was referring to the recent language board as explained in the literature section that was created so many years after independence. His feeling is that it should have been created earlier as an important organ to look into language policy matters. He views the policy directives as an outcome of people not appreciating siSwati but choosing English at the expense of siSwati.

5.3.2 The Education Policy

Both the teachers and learners gave the impression that the education policy is best suited to the needs of the learners in the country except for one participant who thought it should be changed. T4 gave the following opinion when asked to comment on the country’s education policy:

Well, I think it is not so good in one way or the other because when we say the subjects should be taught in siSwati, in my view or perspective I’m like, how can you teach the subjects in siSwati yet you will test in English. How does that benefit the learners who grasp siSwati more than English? How do you come to that conclusion?

T4 further argued that it would be better for the learners to be taught in English as early as the first grade so that they get adequate exposure to the language of assessment. It was therefore evident that the participant advocates for the early English approach which according to her, will improve learner-outcomes. On the other hand, research has shown that learners have to be taught in their MT for as long a time as possible because this is beneficial to them and it is a good foundation for acquiring a second language (UNESCO, 1953, 2012). The declaration by UNESCO maintains that:

Psychologically, it (mother tongue) is the system of meaningful signs that in his mind works automatically for expression and understanding. Sociologically, it is a means of identification among the members of the community to which he belongs. Educationally, he learns more quickly through it than through an unfamiliar linguistic medium (UNESCO, 1953:11).

T5 thought that the education policy is good. However, she gave an opinion almost similar to T4 and said it would be greatly beneficial for the learners if the early English approach would be adopted as opposed to the current status quo of teaching the early grades in siSwati then later switching to English. When requested to give her views of the education policy, this is what she said:

Ok for me I think it's ok because there is nothing better that I know of, so for me it's ok because it's what we've always done. We grew up knowing this is what we should do, this is the language we must use and I've also become a teacher and this is what I'm also using. I have seen the benefits of it as a policy so there is nothing I've really questioned about it or that I see is different from what we already know.

It is evident that the participant had no qualms with the education policy as she even hinted that it has always been the same and beneficial in the sense that schools have always operated using the same policy. She had reservations though about teaching the lower grades in siSwati:

Ehmmmm, eh...for me I would be happy if like when they start learning, like when they go to Grade 1, they would use the English language because English is

a passing subject for us and the books that the kids read are all written in English. So, because the kids come to school already knowing siSwati fluently, as for the grade 1's, when they are supposed to start learning, they should start learning in English so that they do understand what is written in the books because the problem here is when the learners are in Grade 0 to Grade 4, the books are written in English. It would have been better if the books were also in siSwati. The books must be in the language (of teaching and learning).

T5 had these reservations on the education policy otherwise she thought it was good. It is crucial to note that most African states such as eSwatini, Lesotho, Botswana, Malawi and others, adopted education policies of this nature even after independence. Tanzania adopted Swahili as the LoTL at primary level and this is unique in Africa. There are many reasons for this, some of which are political. Another reason is the lack of a strong financial muscle in many African states to effect changes of this nature hence they prefer to continue with pre-independence education policies because they lack adequate resources to change them. And then the fact that the world is now a global community hence people prefer to be skilled in exoglossic languages such as English because they are beneficial economically.

The deputy head teacher also confirmed that the education policy is good in theory however the practice does not conform to the policy all the time. She said:

It is not bad, actually it is a good language policy and for my school, I know that the teachers are not adhering to the policy. As this is a high school, at high school, the policy states that the LoTL should be English but when you go around, you will hear that teachers are not adhering to the language policy and they have their reasons for that. Some of them will tell you that there is no need to teach in English if you can tell that you are just talking to yourself, so there's a tendency to codeswitch. So, you do not want to blame them at the end of the day because again we are aware that the level of understanding of the language (English) is not the same. They come from different schools, like we are placed here in between the town and the countryside, we will get learners from everywhere.

The researcher noted that there was indeed codeswitching during observation in all the lessons observed. The major reason for codeswitching, as recorded during the interviews, is to benefit the learner and help them grasp and comprehend the content delivered to them. One teacher participant claimed that the education policy is good, however, its implementation is not done properly. He claimed:

On the education policy, there must also be the rightful board to take into consideration what should be included in education rather than non-governmental organisations taking anything to school, it makes the education system overwhelmed and the quality to fall down. So, the education policy as well, must be done by experts, people who are well aware of what is happening on the ground because some policies are a nonstarter when it comes to the school situation or classroom situation because everything is now being put in the school.

The views above highlight a need for proper planning before any policy can be implemented. What is also highlighted with the teacher participants is that they viewed the education policy positively overall, however, there were opinions on how the policy can be best suited for the Swati children.

On the other hand, the learner participants needed clarification on what the education policy is and what it entails. They understood the language policy and the education policy to be the same document. Thus, they expressed their views in relation to the contents of the education policy, as they themselves were not well conversant about the policy itself. The crucial nuggets that the researcher highlighted when explaining the contents of the education policy to the learners were the use of English as the LoTL, and the fact that siSwati is on par with English as the other official language in eSwatini. This is how the learners viewed the education policy.

It is OK for English to be the LoTL because it is much easier and we get to really understand it much better than siSwati (LR 1).

L5 added that:

What I can say is that English being the LoTL is a very important thing because if subjects were to be taught in siSwati, most of the questions appearing in the exam paper are written in English so if siSwati was to be used to teach, so we cannot attempt some questions and we will end up failing. So, it is key to teach in English because we can not be able to attempt some questions if we are taught in siSwati (LR5).

LR 7 remarked that:

When you are learning in English kuba lula kutsi u-Understand lokunye lokubhalwe phasi ngesingisi, iMaths is written in English, Physics is written in English so I think it is a good idea [it becomes easier to understand other things written down in English], (LR7).

LR 3 remarked that:

Ehm, ma'am, I think kukahle kutsi singisi kube ngiso iLoTL ngoba kulamanye emaCountries abasati lesiSwati lesisikhulumako tsine kani kumele siCommunicate nabo sati kutsi bona bacabangani sitotfolo emaIdesa from outside. [I think it's ok for English to be the LoTL because in other countries, they are not skilled or conversant in siSwati yet we have to communicate with the outside world and share ideas] (LR3).

English being the medium of learning is like, we've got different subjects and most of them are in English, so English should be the medium of communication so that we can understand the concepts and understand them much better in the way labhalwe ngakhona [in the way they are written] (LR10).

LR 8 believed English allows them to be able to communicate with the outside world. She argued that:

Ehm, it helps because siyakhona kuCommunicator with the outside world and kwenta kuCommunicator kube lula but I think we need to codeswitch as well because some of us will not be able to get, like if you are using English the whole time, ngeke siUnderstand but if you codeswitch siyeva [It helps because we are able to communicate with the outside world and this makes communication

easier, but I think we need to codeswitch as well because some of us will not be able to get it if you are using English the whole time, we will not understand, but if you codeswitch, we hear] (LR8).

LR 6 concurred with other respondents and stated that:

I think it is a good thing because English is the medium of communication, yah, wherever you go, in order to communicate with people, you communicate with them using English, siSwati will only help you here in Swaziland. (LR6).

The learners expressed how they felt with the education policy which states that English is the LoTL from Grade 5 upwards. They generally felt it is a good thing for them to be taught in English. Even though she concurred with the other learners on their position regarding the same subject, LR8 was of the view that the use of English should be paralleled with codeswitching for much more clear understanding of the content. She clarifies that if the teachers codeswitch, ‘we hear’ – to mean that we understand. The learners also postulated that English helps them to understand other subjects such as Mathematics and Physics much easier if the LoTL is English. They explained that there is terminology specific to both Mathematics and Physics which cannot be found in the siSwati language hence the belief that this would hinder their understanding of the subject. It also emerged that English is understood to be an important language globally and therefore knowing English helps to communicate and also share ideas with the outside world. They clarified this by saying siSwati is only a local language and it is therefore understood by Swati people whereas English is an international language which is used for wider communication with people from different linguistic backgrounds. This connotes the fact that English is a unifier as it allows people who would otherwise be divided by the language factor, to communicate.

To conclude this section therefore, it emerged that both the teachers and the learners generally felt that the education policy is a good policy and it benefits the Swati learner. There were a few reservations but these did not overshadow the positive sentiments shared by the participants on the policy.

5.3.3 THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE EDUCATION POLICY

The major finding in this sub-category was that instead of using strictly English as the LoTL, teachers codeswitched and codemixed whenever they deemed appropriate. The following are the perceptions of the teachers on this important sub-category.

Within our school, some of the teachers, and also the setting of our school – we are in the rural areas and the use of the local language is dominant. (T1).

I teach them Geography and most of the stuff we teach is in English because even there, there is the diction, the concepts; we're talking about weathering, weather – the language specific to Geography. There is no way I can tell them these words in siSwati but when I encounter a challenge whereby the kids do not grasp the concepts – they are not following: so then I try to explain these things in siSwati but at the end of the day, I emphasise on the English because they are going to write their exam in English. I always use few siSwati words such as the names of areas and towns and stick to English because even the examples they use [in the books], there are a few that are in the kingdom, most are in the developed world. (T2).

Ok, in my school we do sometimes teach in siSwati, but we use the English language in the English department. (T3).

T4 concurred with T3 and said that:

Ok, because learners are from different backgrounds, I can say I do mix when teaching for the benefit of those who come from the extremely rural areas since in our school, we admit each and every learner regardless of the background. (T4).

T5 remarked that:

Sometimes you find that when you are teaching them in English language, it is like they are not following. So, you find that the teacher is forced to codeswitch (T5).

The school shared the following opinion that:

Oh yah, but not all teachers are doing that, to give the learners some advantage of understanding the concepts or the teachers themselves have a challenge, it's not all the teachers who went to schools whereby English was used from Monday to Friday, they went to schools like mine [meaning this one, the current school] or even worse. (School Administrator).

Two major findings emerged from this sub-category. First, the interviewed teachers at School J generally use English as the LoTL most of the time. Secondly, the teachers codeswitch and the most prominent reason why they do it is for clarity. The teachers claimed that some learners have difficulty understanding concepts when they use English only hence the need to codeswitch. T1 and T4 argued that they use siSwati because their school is located in a rural area where there is strong interference of the mother tongue therefore, they also find themselves having to codeswitch to enhance comprehension of concepts. T2 claimed that even though she uses English, her subject, Geography, has examples of local areas and towns or even rivers which then prompts her to codeswitch.

5.3.4 Reasons for teachers' choices of codeswitching

There were various reasons cited by the teachers for codeswitching but the common factor amongst these was to bring clarity to the learners. Teachers declared learners to be the main beneficiaries of their codeswitching as explained in their responses below. The school administrator alluded to the clarity factor but further pointed out that some teachers could codeswitch to aid their own inefficiencies of speaking in a second language which they are not masters of. These were the teachers' reasons for codeswitching.

So, for them [learners] to understand some of the things, the local language will chip in here and there in order to clarify things but that doesn't finish English as the medium of communication. (T1)

It is only when we have to clarify certain things that we switch to siSwati. (T2).

For clarity purposes we do use siSwati, so we use English, sometimes the siSwati for clarity so that they can be in a position to understand very well the concepts we are teaching them. (T3).

I would say I do mix for some clarification at some point but most of the time I use English – but when I see a learner that is frustrated like I can see he or she doesn't understand what has just been said, then you must make the learner be part of your teaching and learning so you also use siSwati for that particular learner. (T4).

...so, you do find that the teacher codeswitches for clarity so that the learner can understand better. Because some of the things you can tell that the learner is not even understanding so it's better to codeswitch to the mother tongue. (T5).

So, some of the teachers are not comfortable themselves so sometimes they are doing it to help themselves, they are codeswitching. At times yes, they could be doing to help the learners. As a teacher, you don't want to be seen as being stuck. In a way to help get you out [of that situation], you just switch to the language that everyone understands As this is a high school, at high school, the policy states that the LoTL should be English but when you go around, you will hear that teachers are not adhering to the language policy and they have their reasons for that. Some of them will tell you that there's no need to teach in English if you can tell that you are just talking to yourself, so there's the tendency to codeswitch. So, you do not want to blame them at the end of the day because again we are aware that the level of understanding of the language in fact is not the same again. They come from different schools, like we are placed here in between the town and the countryside, we will get learners from everywhere. (school administrator).

It was evident from the data collected during interviews that teachers revealed they codeswitch to facilitate comprehension by the learners whilst the administrator believes switching codes also enabled teachers to deliver their lessons much more freely than they would if using only English.

5.4 ENGLISH AS THE LANGUAGE OF TEACHING AND LEARNING IN ESWATINI

The country Swaziland, now eSwatini, back in 2017 February 23 woke up to newspaper headlines, “Conduct Lessons in siSwati, PM Orders Schools”. Different stakeholders such as parents, Swaziland National Association of Teachers (SNAT), principals, religious groups and the citizenry at large received the policy directive with mixed emotions. Parents even went to the extent of saying this move was absurd and it undermined the country’s education. There were many unanswered questions such as what would happen to international students, as this would affect them. Other questions touched on who should decide on such a directive – the parents or government. The editor of the Times Newspaper, dated 24th February 2017, noted with concern what he termed overnight decrees, as not long ago, there was an imposition of Christianity as the sole religion to be taught in schools in eSwatini something which had brought joy to the Christian community.

Even though this directive was aimed at the lower primary level of schooling, it brought to the fore sentiments about English being the LoTL in the education sector. This section of the research explores views, feelings and thoughts of both teachers and learners on English being the LoTL, its value in the education sector and the fact that it is a passing subject in eSwatini. Both teachers and learners viewed English as an important language which can either be a bridge or a barrier. As such, they felt it was important for it to remain the LoTL in eSwatini. This section will now concentrate on the value of English and it being the passing subject.

5.4.1 Learners’ performance in English and siSwati

The participants were asked to state generally their opinions on how learners performed in both languages, English and siSwati. The assessment was that learners pass siSwati more than they do English. They expressed their views below.

DHT: Yah if you compare the two, they perform better in siSwati but again if you look at siSwati as a subject, they are not performing like it’s their MT or first language. But

when you compare the two subjects English is performed better. Actually English, more than half the time, is the worst subject when it comes to performance.

T2: Ok, my observation is, these kids they do not even shine in this siSwati but when we look at the marks, maybe the Siswati has got more marks than the English.

T3: Ok, uhmmm, with the English Language I can say they are average because there are those who are passing the language excellently and there are those who are below the 50% which is the passing mark. And then comparing with the siSwati, they are passing Siswati more...

T4: Ok, thank you ma'am, well what I've noted is that the learners here fail English so much. As a result, when we are analyzing results, we found that only 30% of our learners can be admitted to higher institutions because they have passed English, yet the others have failed dismally because they had failed English, they failed.

T5: They fail siSwati, ey.... but they perform much better in siSwati than in the English language.

All the teacher participants revealed that when comparing the two subjects, learners pass siSwati more than they do English. T2, T3 and T5 allude to the fact that the rate at which learners pass siSwati is not praiseworthy as they should be passing it more since it is their MT. Whereas it is laudable that they perform better in siSwati, the teachers believed learners could do better in the siSwati subject. T4 further explains that learners fail English such that on average, only a small minority (30%) pass English annually. T3 views the learners' performance as being average in English. The administrator was concerned that their yearly results analysis, most often than not, show that English is the worst performed of all the subjects. Learners were also requested to provide their own general observation as far as performance in the languages is concerned. Their views are presented below.

LR3: Average, as for my class it's average..... It's because they are less interested in it , there are some people who just don't take it serious... some of them don't like reading,

they don't like reading English they speak the simple English not the deep English, they don't look for new words in the dictionary...

LR4: No, English, they perform better in English....

LR5: Yah the funny part is that they also fail siSwati, most of them fail siSwati just like they do English.so they are ranging between 43 and 50, if they pass maybe 2 or 3 of them get over 60 because here at school the passing mark is 60.

LR6: I think they pass English more than siSwati. SiSwati is very difficult compared to English. I think they perform

LR7: Ever since the school produced novels for us, English has improved in the school since every student is expected to grab a novel and read, especially in Form 4....

LR8: Here in school, my observation is that they perform better in siSwati. You find that they are getting 80's and 90's in siSwati but in English they are getting 40.

T9: Actually, I think it's like half-half. Some of them perform better in English and some perform better in siSwati but what I can tell is that siSwati is not the subject you can play with. SiSwati is very hard. When you get to Form 4, form 3, you discover that siSwati is not very easy actually.

T10: Kuphaswa kakhulu siSwati because basisebentisa kakhulu, English is more like average. (it is siSwati that is passed better because they use it a lot).

Only one learner opined that English is passed better than siSwati, whilst the rest were split equally between saying the performance was average in English or that learners passed siSwati more than English. Two learners (LR 9 and LR10) opined that siSwati is a very difficult subject largely because the siSwati curriculum which they are taught in class, is different from the everyday colloquial genus used outside of the classroom.

5.4.2 Reasons for learners' performance in English and siSwati

The participants were further requested to state what they thought could be the determining factors behind students' performances in both languages. They mentioned that exposure to the language was one of the factors. These were their views.

T2: because the siSwati they use it also at home and with their friends so they are used too much of the words. Even some of the things they ask I understand they do them in the community which means they have more exposure in the siSwati field such as when they ask about “umhlanga” (traditional ceremony for girls), they are familiar with.

T3: I think because it’s their language they are familiar with the language and the content taught in the siSwati syllabus. Most of them are familiar with the things taught in the siSwati syllabus hence they pass siSwati more than English.

L3: I think it’s the way siSwati is taught, you see, they are not teaching everyday siSwati, if they were teaching everyday siSwati, I mean I would get even an A, but it’s not the everyday siSwati, there’s theory into it but you also have to have a deeper understanding of it.*

L5: I think they just don’t know the meaning of English taught in schools,

LR6: I think they pass English more than siSwati. SiSwati is very difficult compared to English

LR7: Ever since the school produced novels for us, English has improved in the school since every student is expected to grab a novel and read, especially in Form 4, everyone is expected to grab a novel, present it in class every month-end, by that way, English has been improved in Form 4....

LR10 Kuphaswa kakhulu siSwati because basisebentisa kakhulu, English is more like average. (it is siSwati that is passed better because they use it a lot)

What transpires from the participants’ responses above is that it is important to get exposed to the language as much as possible as this helps in understanding the curriculum much better. The language used in the home environment is better passed. LR7 mentioned that it also helps to obtain literature or reading material as this improves the language skills.

5.4.3 The value of English in the education sector in eSwatini

All the learners viewed English as being very important in the education sector. They believed that the mere fact that it is a LoTL makes it to be significant and of more value than their MT siSwati. Another reason they cited is the fact that English is an internationally acclaimed language that connects people from diverse linguistic backgrounds. The question asked was: how important is English to you as a learner, and in the education sector and in the country as a whole?

Interviewer: How important is English in the education sector now, as a whole in your country? How important is English?

It is important because coming to the tourism part, English has to be used and not the siSwati language. (LR1).

Even though LR 1 failed to quantify her given response, hence only alluded to the tourism factor, still it was clear that she prefers English and ‘not the siSwati language’.

Kimi si-Important because ngyakhona kufundza tintfo, ngiInterestwe tincwadzi, ngyatsandza kufundza emaNovels because ngifuna kwati more about what is happening nangehandle. [To me, it is important because I'm able to learn new things and become interested in my books. I love reading novels because I want to know more what is happening in other foreign contexts]. Ok laskolweni singisi asisiko mcoka, nabothishela bakhuluma ngeSiswati, kute nje lokuphendvulana ngesingisi vele nje asisiko mcoka, naseklasini kuphela lapho sizama kuphendvula khona ngesingisi. [Ok here at school, English is not important, teachers speak in Siswati, there is no culture of speaking English, it's just unimportant. It's only inside the classroom where we try to speak English.] (LR3).

The learner claimed that even though English is a crucial language in the education sector, the teachers and the learners in her school do not speak it as often. She claimed that English is used only inside the classroom during teaching and learning. This is refuted by LR4, LR 6 and LR8's responses below who both argued that teachers at their school take English seriously and they encourage the learners to converse using it, however, the learners do not heed the instruction most times. As a result, they argued that the learners

fail to communicate adequately in English. LR6 further revealed that at times the teachers even go to the extent of meting punishment to the vernacular speakers as a way to encourage them to communicate in English. It is crucial to note that penalising the learners for speaking in siSwati is against the EDSEC (2018) as it succinctly states that as a way of preserving the language, learners should not be punished for speaking in siSwati at school. This on its own gives a leeway to choose between the two languages. It also creates confusion as to which language to use and when.

It is very important; it is first priority. In English language it is important to be able to communicate with other people for instance, I stay with Ugandans in my place, they have just adopted me and so I can't speak siSwati to them but English, because if they try to speak their language, I won't be able to understand them and if I speak my MT they won't understand me so the only language we can use to communicate is English. It is very important because if I didn't learn English, I wouldn't be able to communicate with the people. At school, they take English to be not so important, but as for me I take it very seriously. Teachers say we must speak English at school because we need it for making presentations, speeches and other things but students do not and they are unable to communicate.

(LR4).

It is very important because English is a passing subject, if you get 49% and below, you just fail dismally.

(LR5).

LR5 thought that English is important because it is the passing subject, not siSwati.

Mhhhm, ma'm, it's very important because in order to understand other subjects, they are also written in English so in order to understand, we first have to learn the English to be able to analyse the other subjects, so which makes our marks increase. It is treated as important but for the students it's not, for the teachers it is important, they sort of sometimes introduced some punishment for vernacular, so I think for the teachers it is important but for the students, they feel like it's a boring language. They (teachers) are trying to introduce more lessons to revive English which shows that indeed English is important. English clubs are introduced, a lot of things.

(LR6).

English is very important because everything that happens nowadays is being written in English.... Kuyenteka kube nemaDebates, you find that kuba naDifferent schools from different countries, labanye vele abasati leSiswati so kubese kukhulunywa lesingisi bayakhona kuUnderstanda so I think I-English yiLanguage lejwayelekile to everyone. [it does happen that there are debates, you find different schools from different countries, some do not know siSwati after which we switch to English because they are able to understand it so I think English is a common language to everyone]. It is very important to me, and to improve it, I read novels. I have read more than 300 novels. When I'm in the kombi I always find a newspaper and read. I remember when I was in Form 1, I started reading novels and I improved. (LR7)

I think it is important, some companies have international workers they have to use English to run the business, so yah it is important. To be honest, yaaah (laughs) Ok, teachers do want us to speak English but not all of us do. The students just think we are just being bullied, why can't we speak our language? They feel like it's just too much. (LR 8).

Mhhh, for an example, recently, I went to the States and I was forced to speak in English so it's been very important to me because actually, America is my home so it's very important to me. Actually, even to every child in the school, everywhere English is the key actually. Yah it is, it is. Because even our English teacher when maybe she comes to class and she's got work to do, she'll advise us to read novels which is a very good thing, it helps us to improve the English yah. And recently I've read even ten novels and it's really improving. (LR 9).

To me English is very important, it's essential for me to learn it, to understand it, to be fluent enough, to be fast to read something written in English because the world is moving to digital. When we are moving to digital, everything lesinayo, kuncane lotokukhandza kubhalwe ngesiSwati, noma kuncane lotokukhandza kukhulunyiswa ngesiSwati. [everything we have, there is very little that you will

find written in siSwati, or being deliberated upon in siSwati]. Going to a meeting, you'll find that it is conducted in English, interviews are in English and for me, once I get an opportunity to go outside the country, English is very important, it's key to open doors, it's the only means of communication because most of the people ngeke basati lesiSwati bat isiZulu bat isiXhosa whatever, leEnglish bese iyasala iyasakha iba ngu the medium of communication [most of the people won't know siSwati, they may know isiZulu, or Xhosa whatever, then English remains as a unifier and becomes the medium of communication]. (LR10).

All the learners viewed English as being of value in the education sector. There were learners who believed that teachers, more than the learners, viewed English as essential hence they do not heed the call to communicate in English when instructed to do so by the teachers. One learner alluded to the fact that English is so important as it helped her to communicate with her foster family in the USA hence English should be treated as very crucial in education. Another learner stays with Ugandans in a mixed family set. He also viewed English as being the unifying factor helping him to communicate with his other family members.

The teacher participants concurred with the learners on the importance of English. To avoid repetition in their responses, only T 1's views were captured.

English plays a very important role and takes the students to the next level of learning especially now that we have different forms of learning, we learn online and you find that there is English. you can get a job outside the country; you need to communicate with the other people. Maybe if I can give you an example, we have Madagascar, Mozambique and they are finding it difficult to communicate with the rest of Africa because of the language barrier. They, Mozambicans, speak Portuguese and they have a lot of skills but they can't connect with the rest of Africa – why, because of the language barrier. They are struggling to pick up with English so that they are connected with the rest of Southern Africa, language becomes a barrier for them and their connectivity and development. They seem

to be isolated due to language barrier. They are our neighbors but we cannot even trade much even the skills. And our local people if they go to Mozambique, they need someone to interpret for them and that level of trust also fluctuates so English plays a very big role in connecting different people, concepts at different learning levels. (T1).

The feeling with T1 is that English is so important that countries who were once colonised by either Francophone or Lusophone instead of Anglophone states, struggle to trade well with neighboring countries due to the language barrier. He uses the word, isolated, to explain that Mozambique remains detached from the English-speaking nations because they speak Portuguese instead of English as the official exoglossic language.

5.4.4 Learners' attitude towards English

Next, students were asked to state their feelings about English language. The purpose of this question was to find out their attitudes towards the language. The responses given by the students are stated below.

LR 1: I do like English a lot ... It is easy and nice, and when you speak English, it is like Levels you know... levels (both laugh at the demonstration for levels)

LR2 : English is good for us. I like it and I try to speak it but it is very difficult to know it well. Sometimes I forget what I want to say and then speak in siSwati.

LR3: Ok singisi ngyasitsandza though sometimes It's challenging nemaIdioms akhona nje ngyasitsandza nawusifundza uyeva kutsi yah ngifundza iLanguage yangephandle but still ngyakhona kusifundza. {Ok I like English though sometimes it is challenging with its idiomatic expressions. When you learn it, you can clearly feel that you are learning a foreign language.}

LR4: English? Yah I do love English; I do love English obviously...

LR5: I do like English, because English is most common and the easiest language it is just straight because if you speak Siswati your tongue gets flipped but English is just straight forward.

LR6: I'd say I love English ma'am; I try every day, I've joined the English club which was revived this year. I've also started reading novels this year in Form 5 because I want to improve my English, then also this year I also try to ask on things that I don't understand.

L9: Yes, I like English but my peers don't.... They don't really enjoy English. Yah, some of them are pushed, some of them they adapt to the situation, some of them are just flexible to allowing it and it's been helping but the majority they don't want to learn it, actually they are lazy I don't know why and this is dragging them down actually.

The learners' responses show a number of important aspects in relation to how they feel towards English language. First, a majority of the learners responded to the affirmative on the question of whether or not they liked English. The minority who do not like English also explained that they felt compelled to like it and do well in it because of its status in the education sector (LoTL and passing subject). L2 and L3 stated that their mastery of the language is not adequate and this is evident when they try to speak it, they forget some of the words which then forced them to revert to siSwati.

5.4.5 Perspectives on English being the passing subject

The EDSEC (2011, 2018) is clear that English shall be the LoTL from Grade v upwards. It does not clearly state though that English shall also be the passing subject. The country's constitution is also clear that both English and siSwati are the only official languages in eSwatini, even elevating English as the official LoTL. However, scrutinizing the ECESWA exam report for the past five years, (2014 - 2018), indicates that a learner who fails English does not proceed to the next class in the eSwatini's primary and high school system. On the other hand, entry requirements in tertiary institutions such as universities and some colleges require a credit pass in English language, which is grade symbol C or better.

The adoption of a foreign language as the passing subject is a clear example of what Cobarrubias (1983) terms, internationalisation whereby an international language is preferred over the MT. It emerged during interviews that the participants were divided over this matter. Whereas they established and concurred that English is important as the language of wider communication hence needs to be retained as the LoTL, they had mixed perceptions over whether it should also remain the passing subject. Tollefson (1991) maintains that people prefer English because its spread is seen as a tool for modernisation. He argues therefore that English language is a driver towards monolingualism, which is perceived as a practical advantage for modern social organisation as against multilingualism, which is viewed as a characteristic of 'unmodernised' traditional societies. Teacher 1 believes that in order for learners to be conversant in English, it should remain a passing subject. He argued;

English being a passing subject makes it possible for the children to be conversant and to be able to interpret what they write in the exams and when they read and learn other subjects so it's still a common language that we're using in our teaching and learning system, so if there's any change that needs to be made, it should come after proper research and implemented in phases to say now we're changing from English to siSwati or any local language. (T1).

Citing a similar view was T4 who added:

Interviewer: So, what are you saying, are you saying it should remain the passing subject except that teachers should help the learners?

T4: Yes it should remain a passing subject, in the institutions of higher learning, when you go there they do not regard siSwati as a passing subject, even if you can pass siSwati and fail English you cannot go anywhere but if you fail siSwati and pass English some colleges they accept you...yes.

T2 also supported the idea arguing that if English remains the passing subject, learners will take it seriously thus work hard to improve their proficiency in the language. She remarked;

I think it should remain the passing subject, because as I've said earlier, most of our subjects are in English so for the kids to be able to grasp and understand concepts within even the other subjects, they have to understand the diction. Take for instance here at school I teach Literature, it's a challenging subject for a kid who doesn't have the command of the English language, more especially when it comes to writing his or her paper during the examination. There are key words that he should understand for him or her to be able to tackle that essay. Take for instance, there was one question in my subject which said, "how has the poet alluded to the nostalgia....." and the kids were confused because they didn't understand the meaning of nostalgia and they failed so English should remain the passing subject more so because our kids, I've seen them during teaching time, they're just lax. They are not attentive, they do not take much notice of whatever we say which means if we say we drop English as the learning subject or passing subject, we are going to have a disaster because the type that they are, need this as a type of a guideline, even now they are already lax, which means once they know that this language is no longer a passing subject, they are going to be worse because even now they are not that much attentive to the language, though they know that it is the passing subject but they are still lax. Some of them, let me make an example, when they write "because", they cut off the "be-" they write "cause" because of the influence of the other cultures and media because they are exposed to these gadgets, cell phones, they are just negligent which means once this language is no longer a passing subject, there will be less teaching and learning taking place in our classrooms and they will fail more.

T3 is of the view that English must remain a passing subject because it renders their leaners eligible for admission in overseas universities.

Interviewer: So, from your response I get that English is not just the LoTL but it is also the passing subject, what are your views about English remaining the passing subject 51 years later after we got our independence?

T3: I think it is fine because the English language is used internationally so if we are saying it's not a passing subject, we are depriving our children to be accepted

in international universities because if they do not have the language, the English language, they will not be accepted, they will not consider them in universities that use English such as in the USA.

The school administrator was doubleminded about the issue. Clarifying her point of view, she explained:

Administrator: ...a bigger part of me is saying yah, maybe it should remain a passing subject but then a part of me says no. There are so many things that you would want to look at. For some reason it has been said that those students who are scientifically inclined, I don't know what measure we use to say thus one is Scientifically inclined but we do have that, and those students never do well in the language part whether it's English or siSwati. Because one would think that because Siswati is their MT, they'll perform better as compared to English. But if you look at their grades, those who are scientifically inclined, you find that they have very good grades now when it comes to English, the grades are so low. Then, you ask yourself that if the child understood the English in that field where he is competent in, why do we want this English which then blocks the child? So, that is the small part of me which wouldn't want English to remain the passing subject. But the bigger part of me is, I don't know what is happening to our children. They are even different from the way we were doing things at school because we understood that being in school, you are expected to carry yourself in a certain manner but now things are changing. Maybe having it remain as a passing subject will help learners to conform to what a school is.

The administrator was seemingly more concerned with the learners' behavior and the manner in which they carried themselves around the school. She explained how she believes culture is embedded in the language thus her belief was that the English culture is more civilised and 'toned down' to be precise. There is an element of truth in her assertion when one considers the definition of a language by Wright (2004) who argues that language is a cultural construct, it expresses a group's social and cultural reality and

indeed informs it as well. There is no way we can separate language from culture because as Wright (2004) posits, we form language and we are also formed by our language.

Whereas this is true, de Wet (2002) reveals that from a linguistic point of view, English is the most important language in the area of politics, education, science and technology as well as industry and trade however, there is no reason that home languages, even those that serve a very narrow range linguistically, cannot be expanded so that they may serve an expanded range of purposes in government and the economy. Fishman (2009) on the other hand disputes that all languages are the same hence are all capable of developing lexicon especially for uses as the LoTL. Spolsky (2009) concurs with Wright (2004) and postulates that during language management and cultivation, new lexicon is added to a language to enable it to adopt the function of being a LoTL. It thus becomes clear that a language may be developed to serve in more noble functions in the society.

On the flipside, the school administrator was of the view that the passing subject disadvantages those learners who are scientifically inclined whom she postulates are normally not that gifted in languages as well. For these learners, she describes English as being a 'block' that obstructs their quest for academic success. She even predicts that no matter how many times such a learner may take the English exam, odds are they are going to fail it. This therefore makes her have reservations albeit not offering a solution on how such learners can be assisted. T5 is of a similar view with the school administrator. She interprets English to be an obstacle that compromises the Swati learners and renders their future in limbo. She highlighted:

Interviewer: Ok, I hear you, thank you so much for your views so far, T5. Now, I know that you are for the idea that learners should be taught in English from the first grade up to the highest standard, now in eSwatini, English is also known as the passing subject, some say it's a failing subject, do you think that it is OK that 51 years later after we got independence, we still have English as the passing subject, do you think it should be scrapped.... you know, just offer it as a subject but not as the passing subject, what are your views on that?

T5: Personally, I think English is good as a subject not as a passing subject because it really compromises the learners. Because you find that some of the learners get credits in the other subjects and fail the English probably because of their background and you find that now it is difficult for the learners to move to tertiary. This particular learner has to keep upgrading herself until she passes the subject to be able to go to tertiary. Some don't even have the money for upgrading, now you find that their future is on hold just because of English language so I believe English shouldn't be made a passing subject, instead it should be passed just like the other subjects.

T5 was of the view that English must be taught and assessed just like all the other subjects. She believes it must be the LoTL, however, sees no need for it to be the passing subject. This view was echoed by some of the learner participants who noted that English paralysed their dreams and ambitions to be successful with education. LR1 strongly believes it is wrong for English “to be the passing subject”. She remarked;

I think English being the passing language in eSwatini is wrong, very wrong cause most people nje (for instance) are being taught in siSwati from le ekhaya labasuka khona (from home) even though kukhuluma siSwati (speaking siSwati) doesn't mean kutsi soyasati (you are skilled in it). But if ula Eswatini uphasiswa ngale language yakini, loko kutawukwenta nawe ungayitsatseli phasi (if you are here in eSwatini, and siSwati is made the passing subject, that will help you to not despise your own language). So, I think it's not ok.

Interviewer: so, you are for the idea that English should remain the LoTL but it should stop being the passing subject?

LR 1: Yes

LR3 also concurred:

Interviewer: OK what is your opinion on the fact that English is a passing subject?

LR3: Kukabi fine kona siyasidzinga but kukabi, what if ngyakhona kusikhuluma but angikhoni kusibhala so why sona singibambelele singibuyisele emuva? [It's

bad, fine we need English but it's bad, what if I'm able to speak it but I can't write it down correctly, why should it be a barrier and hold me back?]

Interviewer: So, what would you prefer, that we learn in English but it doesn't be the passing subject?

LR3: Yes because vele sifundza ngaso singisi all subjects except Siswati, but kuba yiPassing subject kukabi. [Yes, afterall, we learn all the subjects in English except siSwati, but English remaining a passing subject is wrong.]

LR4 even pleaded with the government to stop doing such a horrendous act on them as learners. He revealed:

Interviewer: I see, now what is your opinion on the fact that English Language remains a passing subject in schools in your country?

LR4: OK, now it being the passing subject not the LoTL?

Interviewer: Not the LoTL, the fact that if you fail English, maybe internally that is Form 1, 2 and 4, you could be promoted but once you get to Form 3 or Form 5, once you fail English then you don't pass?

LR4: OK, yah English is important but it shouldn't go that extent, the government should not be doing that to us, because the fact that I passed my Maths which is also in English, means that I do have an idea of it so failing English does not mean that I don't know it but it's the fact that it's a second language that's why I'm failing it.

LR7 had dissenting views and felt that the current status quo should prevail. She argued:

Interviewer: Ok, I see, now what is your opinion to that English is not just the LoTL but it is also the passing subject, some people call it a failing subject, the fact that if you pass English, you don't pass. What is your opinion on that?

LR7: It is a good idea I guess because singisi [English] is something that you have to practise, it is not our mother language but when you practise it, you end up being perfect.

LR9 concurred with LR7 and said;

Interviewer: I see. Now, what is your opinion, coming to the other part whereby English is now a passing subject, what do you think about English being a passing subject, do you think it should remain a passing subject or should we just learn in English and it be stopped from being the passing subject?

L9: I think it has to be the passing subject because most students will pull up their socks on the English part because once they teach in English but relax on the marking part; it won't be that effective but making it the core subject in schools, then all the students will pick up and yah.

The discussion about English being the passing subject shows that 60% of the teachers thought this is in the best interest of the Swati learners hence should not be changed. Whereas the school administrator seemed to see good points on both sides of the situation, two teachers felt that this disadvantages the learners hence English should cease being a passing subject so that it does not become an obstacle on the learners' academic journey. On the other hand, 80% of the learners thought the current status quo must be changed while only 20% believed it should prevail.

In summarising the issue of English being a passing subject, it is worth mentioning that in January 2020, the government of eSwatini through the minister of education, passed a directive through the media to nullify English from being the passing subject. The directive evoked mixed reactions from different sectors of the society and education stakeholders when it was announced that for the first time since independence, there were about 1500 primary school learners who had passed the Grade 7 exam yet they had failed English language. The same was true for the junior certificate or Form 3 examination as learners passed to Form 4 even though they had failed English language. When this thesis was submitted, various stakeholders such as tertiary institutions, SNAT and parents were still deliberating on the issue of the sudden change to strip English of its power to be a passing subject. During data generation, a majority of the teachers and learner-participants were for the idea of removing English however there was a concern of how the government intended to implement this as there was a general outcry that some

stakeholders were not all consulted before the decision was taken (Times of eSwatini; 9 January, 2020).

5.5 PERSPECTIVES ON THE POLICY DIRECTIVES

The country's former Prime Minister, Dr. Barnabas Dlamini, announced policy directives on the 22nd February 2017 at the George Hotel in Manzini. These directives became headline news for the next few days, (Times of Swaziland, 23rd, 24th February 2017). The Prime Minister decreed that all lessons must be conducted in siSwati from Grade 1 to Grade 4. He also made mention of a compulsory siSwati pre-entry test that would be taken by all applicants at tertiary institutions as a requirement for admission. These directives were soon followed by a seven-member siSwati Language Board (SLB) announced by The Swazi Observer on the 10th April 2017. More details on the SLB are given in the literature review chapter.

These policy directives were met with mixed reactions as aforementioned hence the researcher requested the participants to respond on how they view the directives. Once again, the responses were varied. T1 shared the following views on the subject.

Interviewer: mhhhhh, OK. Now, we also saw recently there were some policy directives coming maybe from the former Prime Minister and government or cabinet whereby siSwati was, I would say, empowered in that students both in private and public schools were “forced” to learn siSwati....so what can you say about that.....the fact that even if this is a foreign student, you have to learn siSwati it is in the policy. What can you say about that?

T1: It's a good thing, it makes the nation safe because if we do not encourage the learners to learn siSwati, it would be a mistake because for communication, they interact with somebody who may not be educated, so, minimum understanding of siSwati is important. They (foreign students) can learn it, we have different levels of learning it ... yes or siSwati for communication, that's what is very important so that when they come to communicate with anyone they need to, they

have yes, that general language, not unique for Swaziland but for every country. When you visit any country, they ask you to learn the basics of the language. In the syllabus, even in private schools, the children that come from those private schools, universities, colleges need to communicate with us, you don't pick up like fish out of water, even in work places, they will require the basics.

T2 believes that the directives were a bit harsh. She argued;

T2: Ok, I think the directive was a bit harsh, the way it was introduced was sort of sudden whereby we have international students here, all these past years they were allowed to choose between siSwati or French especially the foreigners, which means it was a challenge for them to be forced now to learn siSwati. Take for instance there are candidates who were forced to write the siSwati exam, they had to understand and acquire this language in six months, because we cannot say, in the twelve months we spend with our kids, the actual time we spend with our kids is about six months, 63 days 60, it's two months each. It's not practical because the sixth one is when they are going to sit for their exam, so acquiring the language within five months is not practical. That's why I'm saying it was a bit harsh and it caused confusion because all along the students were learning French, now all of a sudden, they had to accommodate siSwati within the short period of time. I think it was a bit unfair for them because I don't, they were going to learn it within the five months. The process of acquiring and analysing the language and apply it wasn't possible within that short period of time, even, because I was also part of the examiners of the part.....

The directive had the implication that all learners have to learn siSwati, either as a first or second language. Unlike before, when learners were allowed to choose between siSwati and another international language, be it French or Portuguese, siSwati would no longer be an elective but a core subject even to international students. When questioned by journalists as to how foreign students would cope under the new law, the former Prime Minister, responded that provision had been made since post-independence for them to attend international schools such as Waterford ka-Mhlaba in Mbabane. It is in this vein

that T2 reveals how the foreign student in her school had to take a siSwati exam after only 6 months of learning it. Even though T2 had some reservations on the new laws, T3 thought these were meant for a good cause, empowering the siSwati language. She submitted that:

Interviewer: I hear you, now, the country's Prime Minister actually made some policy directives which were actually meant to empower siSwati. There were some policy directives to the effect that every learner in the Swati education system should learn siSwati and also take a siSwati exam, what are your views about those directives?

T3: OK, Uhm, (long pause), I can say it is fine though to some point because that directive is actually empowering the siSwati language. The language of the Swati people, we need to know our language. But once again we should bear in mind that it is not only the Swati children who go to schools, there are other foreign students who attend school, so for those ones, it puts them at a disadvantage since they are not familiar with siSwati hence they are not going to perform well in siSwati than they do in English language.

Interviewer: I see, so it was not a good policy directive you say?

T3: It was not really a good policy directive at all.

The concern of how foreign learners would handle the new laws was also brought to the spotlight as highlighted above. T4 also had similar concerns. She stated that;

Interviewer: early this year 2017, there were some policy directives that were passed by the country's PM Barnabas Dlamini, to say that every student who is learning in the Swati education system should learn siSwati and also write a siSwati examination, what are your views on those policy directives?

T4: Mhh... It is... I can say.... letting every child write and read in siSwati is a bit disadvantageous to some of the learners that we have in Swaziland simply because we've got different nationalities and they attend different schools where they can maybe send their children. For example, the Indian community, in the house, siSwati is never spoken, they never write siSwati, how do you expect them

to learn siSwati so they do not go to public schools, they go to private schools where they can choose whether they do French or siSwati. In the public schools, those communities, the Indians and coloreds.

T5 believes the Prime Minister was absolutely correct to effect these policy changes. Her argument was that if a learner gets admitted to a Swati school, then they should be in a position to be conversant with the Swati language. She thought;

T5: Personally, I think its OK, the directives are OK, and because you are in eSwatini I believe you must learn the language spoken in Swaziland. Yah, so it's OK, if you are in a Swati school, then learn the language spoken in eSwatini so yah I think its OK.

The deputy head teacher had strong reservations about the new laws. She believed they were decreed prematurely and without proper consultation. Stating her point of view she argued:

Interviewer: ...of the siSwati culture and language, OK. Thank you about that ma'am. Now, what do you think of the recent policy directives by the country's PM, in fact, maybe starting with the education policy itself, it says that the student should not be punished for speaking in siSwati, whether in or out of school, the policy says the student should be allowed to communicate in a language they are comfortable in, and then the former PM made these recent policy directives which are, in my view, strengthening the siSwati language...ehh, things that have always been there but they were overlooked in the education policy so what would be your view on the policy directives and the fact that the policy cushions them to say they should speak in any language that they want.

DHT: Yah I heard the old man, I was listening to his speech over the radio and I just wondered to myself, who did he consult with when he came up with such, but again, to me that he has actually removed (pause) that, (pause) I would say, I would call it what,.... because now it is coming from a political perspective, it is not coming from an educational point of view or perspective. So, now we have to follow it more like it's a rule, but again to me it is just an umbrella thing and I feel that schools can come up with their own policies. They do not have to be guided

by a directive, it's not helping our course, where we are, yes we are going to allow the learners to speak in siSwati, from what we have always had, we just allocate a day and we call it a "SiSwati day", you can speak in your Siswati for the whole day, then the other days, let's try to polish this language that we do not use at home, even though it's not everyone who willingly does that. A lot of them don't want, they will still tell you... "but the PM, but the PM".

The deputy head teacher believed that the directives were of a political nature and not based on educational research hence she was of the view that schools could still put in place their own internal policies, as an interpretation of the directive. It is a fact that language planning is by its nature political. Ferguson (2006) posits that language planning denotes both language-planning practices, that is, organised interventions by politicians, linguists and others in the language use and form. Similarly, Tollefson (1991) has equivalent views and postulates that language policy is one mechanism available to the state for maintaining its power and that of groups that control state policy. On the other hand, a study by UNICEF (2016) on the impact of language policy and practice on children's learning in Eastern and Southern Africa revealed that many countries in Africa are promoting MT language policies however the actual practices frequently diverge from the national language policy and instead use international languages such as English.

5.5.1 The value of siSwati in the education sector

Even though there were mixed thoughts about them, the 2017 policy directives were generally interpreted to have meant to empower siSwati and make it have more prominence thus be on par with English language, which occupies a more pronounced role such as that of being the LoTL. The EDSEC (2018) clearly states that learners should not be penalised for conversing in siSwati in and out of the school premises. It also articulates that siSwati and English are the two official languages in the country. On the other hand, both the teachers and learners also revealed during interviews that they do codeswitch to siSwati during teaching and learning to facilitate comprehension of pedagogy. This enunciates clearly that siSwati is a significant language in eSwatini. This

question aimed to solicit from the participants the value of the language in the education sector. This is what they had to say;

L9: No, I don't think so. SiSwati is only used in Swaziland and other students have that wish to work outside the country which is a good thing because it boosts the economy of Swaziland and when they start to introduce siSwati as the main language, that will destroy everything the whole teaching and learning process. The students won't even enjoy it, I guess.

L10 had different views and stated that;

syafuna kusati nesiSwati, syafuna kwati lemihambo nemasiko esiSwati, kuwati lamagama esiSwati because sihamba ngekuwa looser as time goes on, bese sesiFocus kakhulu kulesingisi, ukhandza kutsi sesitsatsa kakhulu lolokungasiko kwetfu because ingcondvo itsi lolokufaka kakhulu, lolokunye kuyaphuma mara ke nasikuInterchanger sometimes kunelitemu lotaliva, ulisebentise, but nabangatsi likhulume ngesiSwati ungangingita nje kuphela. Kukahle lokutsi nakangayi understand lentfo ngesisngisi ungayifoseleli, uyikhulume ngesiSwati atoyi understand kancono because vele u Liswati. [we do want to know siSwati and Swati culture and traditions because we tend to lose them as time goes on and we focus more on foreign cultures. It becomes easier for us to speak English words but siSwati words we stammer and fail to pronounce them correctly. It is OK to switch to siSwati and help the learner understand better because they are Swati after all].

T4 thought that learners love their culture and this helps them to perform well in their academic work. She stated:

SiSwati is our mother language, when we grow up we know certain words in siSwati, we know their meanings. When the examination comes, for instance in Swaziland we have umhlanga, ask me about that culture, as a girl you go there, it takes about seven days you go to the royal residence, you cut the reed so you write something that you know, you've done it, something that is practical you can't easily forget that.

The learners thought that siSwati is important but it should not be made the LoTL because it will create limited perimeters for learners to explore opportunities especially post high school. They did explain though that siSwati is crucial in understanding local content.

5.6 ENGLISH PROFICIENCY AND LEARNER-PERFORMANCE

A research done by UNICEF (2016) on the impact of policy and practice on children's learning in Eastern and Southern Africa shows that there are strong positive correlations between speaking the LoTL and learner achievement, especially in reading. The researcher requested participants to respond to whether they thought that the level of English proficiency among the learners influenced, either positively or negatively, their academic performance. Some participants thought the level of English proficiency does have a bearing on a learner's overall academic performance whilst others thought this does not affect performance at all. Stating his views on the matter was T1 who said:

Interviewer: Do you believe that here in eSwatini those students who speak English as their first language, do you believe they are at an advantage as compared to those who speak English as a second language? Do you think there is any effect pertaining to that?

T1: First, I want to say that those who speak English as their first language have no advantage over those who speak it as a second language because you may find kuthi (that) in all languages, there's a certain informal terminology that we use in that language and that impacts on the perfection of the language. So, those who learn it, they learn it the right way, rather than.....they don't have the colloquial kind of terms that affect the formality of the language, so even our local students, they compete well with those who take it as their first language. There are many students who speak it but those who learn it, they learn it well. I can take for example in siSwati, you ask somebody....ligama lakho ngubani (what's your name)? Is it really ligama lakhe (his name) or libito lakhe (his name)? So you see, there is that kind of distortion of the proper terminology.

In a similar vein, T3 also believed that competence does not affect performance. This was revealed when she remarked that:

Interviewer: Ok, what would you say, learners who speak English as a 2nd language and those who speak English as a first language, that is the white people, do you think those who speak it as a 1st language are at an advantage compared to those who speak English as a 2nd language? Or do you think that doesn't matter?

T3: No, no, it doesn't matter because most of our schools are writing it as a second language so even if they are fluent, those who speak it as a first language, those writing it as a 2nd language I don't think it is a problem. They are even passing the language.

Interviewer: OK, so you are saying is that you both have equal opportunities because they write it as a 1st language and you write it as a 2nd language so the standards are not the same?

T3: Yes.

T5 believed that English proficiency has nothing to do with a learner's academic performance. She stated that learners need to understand the content and also do question analysis in order for them to attain high marks. She reported that:

Interviewer: Do you think those learners who speak English as a first language will perform better than those who speak it as a second language – the English Language?

T5: No, no, because I believe that performance as a whole is not based on how you speak the language. I don't think the L2 speakers will perform badly when compared to the L1 speakers, because this is just about English and how you perform in English and how you probably express yourself probably in the language, but when it comes to performance for as long as they can read and understand the question, they can perform better than the L1 speakers.

ME: So the most important thing is the understanding of the content?

T5: Yes, it's the understanding of the content.

The school administrator on the other hand, thought that learners who lack adequate English proficiency will automatically perform poorly when compared to those who speak English as a first language. This was revealed when she reported that:

DHT: I think what you are saying does happen in the school because again I'm thinking of myself if you would ask me in my level 1 of French that I know, even if I know that you are saying, "Bonjour" I will have a problem so I think they are also in the same predicament. They know what you are saying and they will know the response, then putting it down in English, the proper way that the exam is actually demanding, it's actually a problem so I think it does affect them when it comes now to exam performance where there are people who may not be lenient enough as the teachers themselves, so I think it does affect them in one way or the other.

According to the administrator, learners need to be able to express themselves in the LoTL in order for them to attain better results academically. T2 concurred when she stated:

T2: Yah I think the one who speaks English as a first language has an advantage in that they are going to be able to understand these concepts clearly than the one who is doing it as a second language because there is a difference between the two obviously. The one who is using it as a first language is going to have a command and understand much on the concepts which are in English than our kid who is doing it as a second language. Even the performance at the end of the day is going to be different as the one who is doing it as a first language will outshine, will pass better than our kid who is doing it as a second language because we, we do English as a second language, it's not our MT, it's not the language we use every day, which means our kids like I've said, are exposed to siSwati, which means it's only learnt at school, the English language. At home they are going to converse in siSwati throughout which means it's only the teacher at school who is going to help the kids know the language itself which is a disadvantage to her in that way because she doesn't have much exposure. When it comes to applying these concepts, the one who does it as a first language will

have an added advantage because she's used to the language, she's able to venture even deep than my kid because while she's trying to the concepts, there's a limitation, worse they use cell phone jargon which pokes in and influence them, now it will take some time to try and find the right word for that siSwati word which has just popped into his mind. So, I think it is a challenge.

Some of the learners also concurred with the teacher participants on this matter. L5, L6 and L8 agreed that having good English skills will translate to a learner's academic work.

L5 revealed that:

Interviewer: Do you think that having good English skills helps one to perform better in their studies such that if you're not good in English, then you won't perform well in your studies.

LR5: Yah that's just ehheh..... I can say that's true because in English if they say write a letter to your friend, you can't write the letter if your English is bad, you put an "is" where there is supposed to be an "are" and at the end of the day you end up getting low marks than the marks you were supposed to get.

L6 concurred with L5. This was revealed when she remarked:

Interviewer: Ok, so from this response, from your answer right now, do you believe that someone who speaks English as a first language, do you think that person has an advantage over you who speaks English as a second language; do you think they would do better than you because they speak English as their MT?

LR6: I think so ma'm, they will do better because I feel like, it's their MT so they know the basics better than us.

L8 also shared similar sentiments and this was revealed when she stated that:

LR8: Yah utawuphasa ncono but since nesiSwati siba involved, utawufeyila lakasiSwati aExcele lakaEnglish so I don't think it's so much of an issue since siSwati is not the passing language. [Yes they will pass better but since siSwati is

also involved, they will fail siSwati so I don't think it's so much of an issue since siSwati is not the passing language].

A study by Mahlalela (2017) on the implementation of free primary education (FPE) in eSwatini showed that some learners have trouble grasping some of the concepts taught in English and this had adverse effects on their academic performance. The study also revealed that this situates some schools in an awkward position because they have to ensure that learners understand English yet they lack adequate resources to do so.

Another study by Rudwick and Parmegiani (2013) on divided loyalties in language matters at the UKZN indicated that even though some students struggled with English, they would not necessarily choose to be educated in IsiZulu, which is their MT. The reason for their choice was that they felt it was more advantageous to improve their English for their future professional careers. Yet another study by Gandara et al (2003) revealed that if learners are not proficient in the language of assessment, their scores in a test or exam will not accurately reflect their knowledge and capability of the subject assessed. As a result, Roux (2014) indicates that over the years, English has grown to become a formidable gatekeeper for people who use it as a second language. It was therefore evident that in the context of the participants, English was interpreted to be both a gatekeeper and a bridge.

5.6.1 Resources to enhance English proficiency among learners

English language is offered as a subject in the eSwatini curriculum alongside siSwati. Schools are entrusted with the responsibility of ensuring that learners have adequate English skills in order for them to understand concepts taught to them in English as the LoTL. The researcher wanted to find out if there were adequate resources at school J to enhance learner English proficiency. This is what the respondents had to say

T2: OK, yes I can say they are exposed to English. We the English department, particularly I with my kids, I converse with them in English. I am not comfortable to converse with them in siSwati, maybe it's my background because I'm from a

school that emphasised the speaking of English Language while still at school, so I think the kids are exposed to the English language itself. The only hiccup is that it is not all of us, the entire staff, some converse to the students in siSwati. As a department we do try to expose our kids to this language we ensure that the library has books and we do encourage our kids to go to the library and borrow books and read because I for instance, know that it is going to help me in my Literature class, if the kid practises reading on their own because when it comes to reading the text in class it won't be a hassle because they will now be used to reading, more so because now we tried to introduce the English Club, whereby we encourage our kids to join the club and partake in whatever activity to increase their English abilities or performance here at school. We have tried to also encourage them to converse in English on their own, it's just that them being kids, they just lag or switch on to Siswati but as a school, we try our best to expose them to this language, the English language.

Apart from maintaining a culture of conversing with the learners in English language, T2 revealed that the school actually has a library where learners can read and improve their English vocabulary. She also mentioned that there is an English Club, which prepares different activities to enhance English skills. T4 also confirmed this and said:

Interviewer: Does the school help the learners, does it create an English- rich environment whereby there are enough books for the learners to read, there is enough literature, is the school helping the learners to be exposed to English?

T4: Ok, in the school, we have a library and last year McMillan donated about forty books where learners can go and read them at the library, yes they are not enough but it's a donation we cannot complain. So, they just come and read the novels, we like it when they come and ask about a certain word which they do not understand because we can see that the English is being instilled in them.

The school administrator concurred with the teachers. Even though explaining that there are challenges relating to the use of the library books, she confirmed that the school does its best to provide learners with teaching materials to enhance English language learning. She also mentioned that they are still a work in progress as a school and are doing all they

can to provide a richer environment for developing English vocabulary. In her words, she stated that:

DHT: I would doubt that anyone would say we have enough to teach a second language but we are trying our best. We do have a library, even though there is a need from the teachers to say buy these books, buy these books, you find that there are books that are not used in the library yet the teachers asked that those books be bought. We have a library, we have other teaching materials that the teachers requested, the school owns a television set and we own a radio which they could actually use to expose the learners to so many features that can help them in teaching English because the environment we are in, it's not an environment that you can bank your hopes on to say it's good for them to learn English as they do with siSwati.

The learners also observed that even though there are initiatives to support English language learning, some learners do not tap into them hence their English skills remain retarded. However, it was revealed that those who use the library improve their proficiency levels.

LR7: Yes, reading novels, reading newspapers, somehow listening to music it can boost your English because you listen to those audios and you want to speak those languages they speak and that way you improve your English. If you did not understand, you're able to go back to that audio again and listen again, by that way, sowyakhona kuva [we'll be able to hear]. Kuyenteka kube nemaDebates [it happens that there are debates], you find that kuba [there are] na Different schools from different countries, labanye vele abasati leSiswati so kubese kukhulunywa lesingisi bayakhona kuUnderstanda so I think I-English yiLanguage lejwayelekile to everyone [others do not know siSwati so then English is common and spoken by everyone].

Reading novels helps the learners improve their skills as explained by L9 below.

(L9): ... our English teacher when maybe she comes to class and she's got work to do, she'll advise us to read novels which is a very good thing, it helps us to improve

the English yah. Recently I've read even ten novels and it's [English] really improving.

The availability of English reading materials or lack thereof affects learners' proficiency in English as explained by the respondents above. Pedagogy on the other hand requires that learners be adequately acquainted with the LoTL because this puts them at an advantageous position to understand what they are taught (UNICEF 2012).

5.6.2 Policy versus practice

Kamwendo and Dlamini (2016) postulate that practice does not always conform to the laid-out policy as it is a known fact that policy is open to interpretation by the implementers in their own context. The EDSEC policy guides teaching and learning at School J and one of the things highlighted by the policy is that learners must not be penalised for communicating in siSwati during school hours if they so wish. This nugget in the policy was viewed by Mordaunt (1990) as a possible source of frustration for teachers in the eSwatini education sector because the LoTL is English and yet learners are expected to be given the liberty to converse in the MT, which then creates confusion as to which language to use precisely for teaching and learning.

This part of the thesis aimed to ascertain whether practice at the target school conforms to the policy or not. As alluded to earlier, the process of teaching and learning happens in English but codeswitching is sometimes used for clarity. The researcher aimed to discover which language the learners used within the school premises. Both teachers and learners were asked to respond to this question. The school administrator had the following to say.

DPT: Like I said, these being Swazi children, when they are alone, they speak in siSwati and you hear it when you are just coming, they shout to the next learner that, "Ey, so and so is coming so change, change to English and you can hear them say that because they would be shouting, still in that siSwati mode So, I would say, 80% of them, when they are alone, I doubt that they do speak in English. They will only do it to impress the person in authority who is coming,

just to save their skin; they may never know what will happen to them if they continue speaking in siSwati especially if there is someone who can reprimand them.

T2 believed the learners' education background greatly influences their attitude towards conversing in English.

T2: OK, I can say not all, some of them they do speak in English and when you teach them they are just OK because they understand. I think maybe it also depends on their background before they came in to our school. It also matters because they are not at the same level, some of them, when you talk in English, they understand but there are those few who are quite challenged and are left behind, whereby those you need help them.

T4 agreed that learners do not speak in English under normal circumstances but they do it when they see a teacher approaching. She explained;

T4: OK what happens is when the learners see....you see the learners grade us, when they see a teacher that they respect, they switch to English but if they see a teacher who is not strict and their friend, they speak in siSwati and even say, Unjani medemu beyinjani iWeekend (How are you madam, how was the weekend?) when a strict teacher comes, they will say, "good morning teacher how are you," so it's only when they see some teachers that they practice speaking English, or when they see the head teacher because they know that when you speak siSwati the head teacher will call you to his office and get some punishment.

It was clear that the teachers believed the learners did not make enough effort to speak English at school. T5 shared similar sentiments with the other teacher participants. She explained that

T5: Our learners are not so motivated to speak the language. I'm not sure if it's because of their background where they are from so a few do speak the language and the rest of them speak siSwati and when they have to respond to a teacher,

then they speak in English. So you can see that if they are not forced to speak in the language, they just speak the siSwati and that's it.

Learner participants concurred with their teachers on this matter.

LR 1: No, actually here when you try to speak English it's like utenta loncono or something (You claim to be better than the other students) but then after all, it's levels.

L3 remarked that;

LR3: OK laskolweni singisi asisiko mcoka, nabothishela bakhuluma ngeSiswati, kute nje lokuphendvulana ngesingisi vele nje asisiko mcoka, naseklasini kuphela lapho sizama kuphendvula khona ngesingisi. (OK here at school, English is not important, teachers speak in siSwati, there is no culture of speaking English, it's just unimportant. It's only inside the classroom where we try to speak English.)

L4 concurred and stated that;

LR4: Yes they do, some but I'd say the majority of students do not speak in English, it's only a minority who do that.

Interviewer: OK, what would be a reason for that, your own analysis, what would you say is the reason for them not communicating in English?

LR4: It's the fear of being pointed out as trying to be better than the others, I think English has been taken as..... there's this view that students have about English that if they see someone speaking English, then they believe that student is actually segregating themselves and they still have this white mentality that if you're speaking English, you are actually trying to be white, so that is why. Even if a student speaks in English, you find that as time goes on, they start to speak in siSwati because of how much stigma is attached to speaking English.

Interviewer: I see, so there is some prestige that is attached to speaking English?

LR4: Yes, there's still that white mentality as I said.

L4 revealed that at school J, a high status is attached to speaking in English.

LR5: Some do speak in English some don't. I think it fails on the practice, because if they practise it, they'll be able to speak it, now they fail to practise it they'll not be able to speak it. Sometimes when the teachers ask them in English, they respond a little bit in English then they put siSwati.

L7 stated that most learners speak English during the first term only. She revealed that:

LR7: Well, partly we do.... Kakhulu(mostly) nge (during) 1st term because we know those are the rules and regulations of the school, but as the time goes on, sigcina sijwayela and be like mxm.... Bese sikhuluma Siswati [we get used to it and be like whatever! Then we speak siSwati]. It is a bad idea because bese kuyasikhama ekugcineni nasesenta emaOrals. Siyikhuluma ekucaleni and asiyikhulumi right, sikhuluma Siswati-English (it then becomes problematic for us when we do orals. We speak English in the beginning and we don't speak it correctly - we speak siSwati-English).

Some learners did make an effort but faced challenges along the way such as L8 who proceeded to say that;

LR8: OK, for instance, I, when I came here I spoke English, then everyone was staring at us like we were trying to be better people so we ended up being discouraged so syachubeka siskhuleme (we do continue to speak in English) but not like nasfika laMbekelweni (not the same way we did when we came here) ngoba bebasibona ngatsi sifuna kubancono (we were making ourselves better than the other students).

L10 remarked that;

Interviewer: OK so it's very important. Now let's come to the school situation, in your school T10, do the learners speak in English, do they communicate in English?

T10: Learners do communicate in English but akukashicilelwa kangako so kuya ngekutsi uyatsandza yini noma uyaFeeler like speaking in English. Lokunye

lokuphindze kuInfluence loko kutsi ucoca nabani nini, ngani (but it is not stated officially so it depends on whether you like.... another thing that influences this is who you chat with - about what). For example, when I was doing Form 2 at Masundwini High, there was a friend lowangikhutsata (who motivated me). He used to like novels. Every day he would come with about five or six new terms mane mine bengimbeater ngentwey-one, bengitsi nangibuka iDictionary yami ukhandze kutsi ushaywe yiMeaning in context and sewu wrong (I would beat him with one thing, when I looked at the dictionary, I'd discover that he lost meaning in context therefore he was wrong). kwangiInfluencer kutsi ngente (it influenced me to do more reading) more reading and we communicated in English, in a 100 words esingisi ukhandze kutsi kutawungena 20 esiSwati, (in 100 words, you could find that only 20 of these will be siSwati) so that was very influential. So, as long as we are going to make English the medium of communication, it can make them, given an opportunity to practise more, they can be more fluent especially in orals and staff and they can gain self-confidence.

Interviewer: what makes the students not to be confident in speaking in English like you are saying, but maybe it's a minority?

T10: Like I said, it's the exposure, how exposed are you to the language, how frequent do you speak in English, amongst who. Have you ever been given an opportunity to stand in front of people and say something, to speak in that language, because emsebentini baba like itsini experience yakho (at work they be like what is your work experience?). Kuma embikwebantfu once or twice kukwenta ube calm, ube confident enough, utfole nale fluency in speech (standing in front of people once or twice makes you calm, confident enough and also achieve fluency in speech.)

Findings from the study revealed that there was no English-speaking culture at School J. Whereas both teachers and the learners were equally concerned about this; they seemed to be powerless to change the current status quo. Some learners though making an effort to speak English were cognisant of the fact that this resulted in them being misinterpreted as trying to make themselves superior as compared to the other students. L4 revealed that

other students would accuse them of trying to be better than them when they converse in English.

5.7 CHAPTER SUMMARY

In this chapter, the participants shared their views on language policy and practice as it applies to their context at School J. It should be noted that according to the participants, the country's language and EDSEC policies are good mainly because they are equivalent to policies generally in other similar contexts in Africa and beyond. The analysis further revealed that codeswitching was a normal practice at the school and it was generally done to bring clarity during teaching and learning. Based not only on observations but also on other methods of data collection, the issue of language of teaching and learning, as well as English being the passing subject, was brought under scrutiny in light of the interplay between policy and practice in eSwatini. This chapter, therefore, provided a foundation for the presentation and discussion of findings in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 6

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

6.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter focuses on discussing the findings presented in chapter 5. It makes sense of these findings by subjecting them to literature control. The discussions in this chapter are based on the premise for this research study, which sought to explore language policy and practice at a selected secondary school in the Manzini region in Eswatini. Teachers and learners were observed and further interviewed for their opinion on language policy and practice matters. These are the main players and implementers of the language policy in the education sector in general and in a school setting in particular hence the reason why they were carefully selected as participants for this study. Moreover, documents pertaining to the administration of the education system in the country such as the EDSEC (2018) were also analysed.

The study was guided by the following objectives:

1. To determine teachers' and learners' perceptions regarding the language policy operant in eSwatini.

Other objectives are:

2. To explore language practices regarding teaching and learning at the selected secondary school in eSwatini.
3. To ascertain the effectiveness, or not, of the language policy at the research site in eSwatini.
4. To analyse the Language Policy and Practice (LPP) decisions at the research site in eSwatini.
 - (i) To establish why, if they do at all, do these decisions influence teaching and learning the way they do?

The researcher asked herself the above questions in interpreting the collected data. The intention was to identify common themes from the data which would then allow the researcher to develop a theory. The data was subjected to theoretical control in order to describe the findings in light with previous literature in the same linguistic field.

6.1 RESEARCH FINDINGS

When the documents data, observation checklist and perspectives of the participants were analysed using inductive coding, a number of codes emerged. Key concepts in the research questions were measured and even though interpretation depends on the perspective of the researcher, great effort and care was taken to substantiate the findings using the collected data. The table below summarises the emergent themes of the study.

Table 6.1 Summary of the findings

THEME	SUBTHEME
Language policies governing teaching and learning in eSwatini.	Perceptions about the language policy. Adherence to the LiEP during teaching and learning. The persistent hegemony of English. English as a passing subject. Factors influencing the choice of English.
Codeswitching	Language practices during teaching and learning. Negative attitudes towards the MT.
Language education policy and learners' academic performance.	Learners' performance in English and siSwati. Reasons for learners' performance in English and siSwati.

Implementation of the language education policy.	
Resources to enhance learners' proficiency in English language.	English-speaking rule in the school. The library as a language resource centre.
Teachers' perceptions of the 2017 language policy directives.	

6.2 DISCUSSION

This section of the thesis presents a discussion of the findings of the study. This discussion is based upon both the four language planning ideologies and micro language planning which are the theoretical frameworks for the study. The knowledge obtained during the literature review was also used as a mirror in understanding the emerging themes and comparing this with what other authors have said.

6.2.1 Language policies governing teaching and learning in eSwatini

There are mainly two documents which guide the languages to be used during teaching and learning in the country. These are the 2005 constitution and the 2018 national education sector policy. Both documents state succinctly that English is the LoTL from Grade 5 upwards, with siSwati reserved for the lower classes. These documents also clearly state the languages to be taught as core subjects in the school context in eSwatini as being English and siSwati. The language policy in eSwatini is thus clearly articulated unlike in some contexts such as in the USA and other European countries, whereby this is not be the case. The language policy in eSwatini is similar to a host of other African counterparts who adopt the languages of the former colonising state as the official language, while the local language is accorded a lesser status. This is also highlighted by Bangbose (1991) who argues that language policies in Africa are often mismatched as they advocate for the promotion of European languages thus do not work in favour of the African community. The intention of studying the education policy was to investigate matters pertaining to language policy and language of teaching and learning in schools,

as well as the languages that are offered as subjects in the eSwatini school curriculum. Moreover, it became crucial to unearth information on the languages offered in the Swati schools' curriculum and the motivation for the choices offered. What was particularly striking with the newly revised NEDSEC 2018 policy was that apart from it reiterating the 2011s stance that both English and siSwati are the two official languages for teaching and learning, it also introduces sign language as an official language to be offered in different contexts across the country (NEDSEC, 2018).

In relation to the issue of language, the policy emphasises that learners should not be punished for speaking siSwati in and outside of the school premises. This standpoint was also accentuated by the EDSEC policy of 2011. It highlights also that preschool learners should be taught in either of the two official languages depending on their competency and that teachers of the lower grades (Grade 1- 4) should never be reprimanded or penalised for explaining concepts to their learners in siSwati. The NEDSEC policy is very clear about the role that each of the two languages play in the education system. English is predominant since it is the LoTL officially from Grade 5 upwards. On the other hand, siSwati is empowered and protected as the only MT predominantly spoken by the vast majority of the Swati population. Clearly, learners have the freedom to speak in siSwati, in and out of school.

The findings of this study show that the internal language policy at School J is not in synchronisation with the first two policies. First, the school rules are against the use of the siSwati language within the school premises. Not only that but learners attract punishment for breaking this rule. SiSwati is thus not accommodated in the school rules as a way of discouraging its use amongst the learners. The argument is that speaking English is meant to encourage improved skills in English, which the school authorities believe will enable learners to perform better in their academic work. This is a misconception which has not been proved through research yet it is believed by multitudes in the African continent. Brock-Utne (2005) claims that expecting L2 learners in public schools to understand European languages such as English is a distant reality

because more often than not, the majority of students and some teachers do not understand English. It is true and has been proven through research (Kamwangamalu, 2010; Rudwick and Parmegiani, 2013) that English Learners (EL) who are those learners who learn English as a second language, perform poorly when compared to their counterparts who use English as their MT. It is also true that learners need to have access to adequate English language material in order to improve their competency and skills in the language, however, we need to be mindful of the fact that having good English skills does not amount to good education by itself. English should enable a learner to understand concepts better but this on its own does not warrant excluding indigenous languages from teaching and learning. At School J, the learners are not expected to converse in siSwati but English and ultimately, teaching and learning is expected to be carried out in English as well. Therefore, even though there are nonconformities from the country's language policy by the school, both documents view English as being a crucial skill hence all the learners are expected to be conversant and well acquainted with English.

Qorro (2002) concurs with Brock-Utne (2005) that the majority of learners in public schools and some teachers do not understand English. In a study by the same author in Tanzanian public schools, Qorro (2002) discovered that in one secondary school, the head teacher admitted that in a staff of 45 teachers, only 3 understood English and used it correctly. What this implies is that learners will be taught by teachers who are hardly competent in the language themselves resulting in learners internalising incorrect English. The administrator in this study alluded to this during the interview that it is possible that some of her staff members at School J codeswitch because of their own inefficiencies in English language. It would thus be prejudicial to expect learners to be adequately skilled in English more so because the school is located in a rural community where most learners come from disadvantaged backgrounds.

6.2.2 Teachers and learners' knowledge of the language policy

One of the emerging themes from the data alluded to the fact that teachers had a comprehensive understanding of the language policy currently operant in eSwatini. This is crucial and is in line with the micro language planning approach which maintains that teachers, learners and parents are the key agents of the implementation of top-down macro language policy and planning (Liddicoat, 2018). It is imperative therefore for these agents to be knowledgeable and show understanding of these policies because they may act in ways that change the structure in which languages are spoken, taught and conceptualised or their actions may be constrained by these structures (Liddicoat, 2018). It was further revealed that the teachers had a comprehensive understanding of culture being embedded in a language policy hence they used this as a basis for their position to argue that eSwatini has a good language policy since it acknowledges the importance of the MT, siSwati, which is recognised as an official language alongside English language.

On the other hand, a majority of learners had a sketchy and inadequate knowledge of the language policy. The learners however did show an understanding that there are two official languages in eSwatini and that they are supposed to learn in English at secondary level and not in siSwati. It is important for learners to know and understand language policy issues because they are the people directly affected by policies effected for teaching and learning in schools. As Baldauf (2006) maintains, the voice of students is a valid component of language planning in school contexts. For instance, some were not well conversant with the 2017 policy directives on the language of teaching and learning. Their knowledge of the language policy can therefore be described as inadequate or insufficient. This implies that the learners need more access and exposure to the language policy.

Through their language practices and beliefs, students and teachers construct hierarchies of languages thereby accomplishing the different roles assigned to each language in what Spolsky (2009) calls language management. The data confirms this as teachers and learners unanimously concurred that English is crucial as a LoTL and the current status quo should remain so. On the flipside, both teachers and learners saw the subservient role

played by the MT to English as normal. The expectation from the participants was that English should have a more pronounced and distinct role than siSwati because it is the language used to communicate with people from different geo-political spaces. UNESCO (2003) emphasises the importance of the MT in educating learners. Allard (2019) concurs with UNESCO (2003) by affirming that using students' native languages in school allows teachers to connect with them as a whole human being and build upon their existing knowledge. It was also evident from the findings that learners perceive the country's language policy as a good policy. All the ten learners believed that the country's language policy is advantageous for learners since it promotes the use of English which, to them is a language that enables them to communicate with people from different sociolinguistic backgrounds.

The learner participants further indicated that even though it is an advantage for them to be able to communicate in English, it was a challenge for them to acquire the necessary English skills. Evidence demonstrates that a majority of the learners love English language and are aware of the benefits that come with being a skilled user. The learners' views are in line with Mordaunt's (1990) study on language policy in eSwatini. The study exhibited evidence which shows that Swati learners struggled to acquire English language skills hence he documented that psychologically, the learning of English by Swati learners is exacting. Glanz (2013) on the other hand avers that most language policies in the Sub-Saharan countries focus on using international languages yet a majority of the learners are not fluent in them. Out of the ten learners, only one expressed his reservations that even though it is a good policy, English would continue to be a stumbling block to Swati learners because it is a second language and not the learners' mother tongue hence there are challenges of learning the language.

The learners felt that siSwati was an important language which they value and have reverence for. Its recognition as an official language strengthens the language policy in eSwatini. Teachers and learners' attitude towards language is key in the implementation of language policy. Spolsky (2009) asserts that students bring with them preferences for

language policy whilst teachers also bring with them a set of language beliefs about the value to be assigned to the languages and varieties used in their society. These two stakeholders are therefore significant in the implementation of the micro language policies because they interpret the macro policies as policies that by their very nature, are open to interpretation. Most African countries have adopted language policies that, in theory, seek not only to elevate African languages to the status of official languages so as to bring them to equality with the ex-colonial languages but also promote their use in the education system (Kamwangamalu, 2010). However, the reality on the ground in the local context is to the contrary in the sense that even though both languages are declared as official, English has a prime role as the language of the courts, government and the LoTL. There is evidence from the findings which points to the fact that both teachers and learners believe that we cannot be successful as a nation without English.

The learners also reiterated their love for siSwati but mentioned that siSwati would not empower them in the global linguistic space hence the need for the English language. For this reason, English must supersede siSwati in value and function. In his article on the language policy balance sheet in Africa, Kamwangamalu (2010) raises this issue of language economics whereby he insists that languages, language varieties, utterances and accents, are treated as goods or commodities in a linguistic market whereby some products are valued more highly than others. He further maintains that the knowledge of African languages does not pay off in the linguistic market place hence he advocates for indigenous languages to be promoted in order to induce potential users to adopt the languages. The participants' viewpoints confirm Kamwangamalu's assertion in this regard. In the same sense, Kamwangamalu's (2010) theory on language economics enunciates Tollefson's (1991) assertion that in the USA, English remains a barrier for non-competent speakers but presents opportunities for higher education and a successful career for its skilled users. With this said, and using Williams' words (2006) words, English acts as both a bridge and a barrier because it enables those with good English skills to have opportunities for growth whilst also being a hindrance for non-competent speakers.

6.2.3 Perceptions about the language policy

The findings of the study under this theme were that both teachers and learners viewed the country's language policy as a good one. Out of the six teacher participants (five teachers and one administrator), five of them, (83%), thought the language policy in eSwatini is a good policy. The sentiments they shared under this theme show that the language policy embraces both English and siSwati as official languages in eSwatini hence this was the basis upon which it was interpreted as a good policy.

The fact that siSwati is used only in the entry grades was not interpreted as abnormal by both teachers and the learners. It is a norm in many African countries, including eSwatini, that the indigenous languages are reserved for use in the lower levels of schooling, with an indefinite switch to a European language in higher grades, usually in Grade 4 and 5. Hartshorne (1992: 187) in Walters (1996) better explains this scenario by arguing that, "In the schooling systems of (presumably, Anglophone) Africa the practical question is at what stage, and how, the transfer should be made from the use of an indigenous language as medium, to the use of English." It is interpreted as abnormal for a mother tongue to be used, say, for the whole duration of primary schooling or even considered for use in secondary education such as is the case with KiSwahili in Tanzania. In fact, studying in one's language, and delaying the introduction of English were interpreted by the black community as having one powerful aim; the permanent and total subjection of blacks to whites (Walters, 1996). This was glaringly witnessed during the apartheid era in South Africa whereby black South Africans were provided with the poorest education that lacked most of quality-education constituents including well trained teachers, libraries, resource centers, electricity etc. (Walters, 1996). Schools in the homelands such as Bophuthatswana, were coerced to employ indigenous languages as media of instruction due to the carefully crafted lack of trained educators by the nationalist government. This planted a seed of inferiority for indigenous languages and ensured that English literacy levels amongst black learners remained very low or non-existent.

The teachers and learners' beliefs that the language policy is a good one for the country, is in line with Stewart (1968) in Cobarrubias (1983) who argues that the social characteristics of a language can have an effect on the role which a particular language system may assume in the linguistic makeup of a multilingual polity. Stewart's observation illustrates that there is a hierarchy in the linguistic space, with some languages occupying higher positions than others. For this reason, the roles assigned to different languages are determined by their social characteristics. Indication points to the fact that exoglossic languages are assigned a higher status in many African states because they are believed to have added benefits of upward social mobility to the skilled user as opposed to the indigenous languages. Based on the findings therefore, there is reason to believe that the teachers and learners' viewpoint on the language policy defines a widely accepted norm in the African continent whereby exoglossic languages are seen as more significant than the MT. In this regard, evidence from the data showed that both the teachers and the learners believe that the education policy is a relevant policy since it allows for siSwati to be used as the LoTL in the lower levels of schooling with a switch to English in the upper levels of schooling.

The teachers were of the view that the complementary role played by both languages, especially in the education sector, makes for a good policy. The recognition of siSwati as an official language in the country's constitution made the teachers believe that it was an important heritage for future generations hence it is a good move to have it preserved and recognised in this manner. The teachers' opinions are in line with Bamgbose (1991) who claims that in order for a language policy to succeed, it must be spoken by the majority of the people. As already mentioned in the literature review chapter, siSwati is the only MT in the Kingdom of eSwatini hence it is the language of communication in the home or outside of the classroom environment. English on the other hand, is the language of teaching and learning in eSwatini hence it is used in all schools. Cobarrubias (1983) defines this choice of an international language as a medium of communication as internationalisation and it is the norm in multilingual contexts in the African continent whereby the language of the former colonising state becomes the official language with

the indigenous languages of the demographically larger groups becoming the national languages.

Even though interpreted as good, two teachers (33%) had reservations about the use of the mother tongue in the lower levels of schooling. For them, the straight-for-English approach (Kamwendo, 2016) would be best whereby learners are taught in English right from the earliest level of schooling. They explained their preference for the straight-for-English approach as emanating from the fact that it is the LoTL in higher levels of schooling hence, for them, it was better to immerse the learners in the language as early as possible. The proposition of the earlier-the-better approach has not been proven to be successful, instead, research has established that there are grounds to believe that literacy skills in L1 provide a good foundation for learning the same skills in a L2 (Ferguson and Gibson, 2006). UNESCO (2003) believes that the straight-for-English approach would only work for learners whose mother tongue is English otherwise UNESCO's position regarding the LoTL is that students learn best when they are taught in their mother tongue hence its use in the education sector should be encouraged for as long a time as possible. In fact, a study done by Ferguson and Gibson (2006) on bilingual programmes in the USA, showed that too quick a shift to English-only instruction may impede parental involvement with their child's schooling and this will have adverse consequences on the child's learning abilities. Studies show that learners who are taught in a language that is not their own are often disadvantaged and their test marks are not normally a true reflection of their capability (Tollefson, 1991; Zondi, 2014; de Wet, 2002; Mokibelo, 2016; Babazi-Wilhite and Geo-Jaja, 2013). Moreover, the proposition of the earlier-the-better in L2 learning is not sustainable.

6.2.4 Adherence to the LiEP during teaching and learning

Previous research on policy studies in schools, shows that the road from policy development to successful implementation is often difficult and challenging and sometimes never accomplished (Ricento, 2006; Bamgbose, 1991). It was established from the data that teachers do make an effort to comply with the stipulated macro LiEP as

stated in the EDSEC (2018) however, it also occurred that due to some linguistic limitations from some of the learners, the teachers had to deviate from the macro language policy and codeswitch. This confirms what Spolsky (2007) claims to be happening in schools whereby the language practices of the agents, (in this case, teachers and learners), is inclusive of the mother tongue even though some people may not want to admit it.

A study by Kretzer (2016) on language practices of educators in the North-West province in South Africa showed that educators claim to use only English as the LoTL yet they also use indigenous languages for oral communication even though written communication on the blackboard takes place in English. The teachers in this study revealed that they do not adhere to the 'English-only' rule but codeswitch between siSwati and English, however, this was for the sole purpose of assisting the learners to understand better. In other words, the teachers were aware that they must be using English but they chose to switch codes in light of the classroom realities pertaining to the calibre of learners they have. These mostly come from the rural areas and have disadvantaged family backgrounds hence the findings revealed that their English skills are, for the most parts, not adequate.

The school administrator explained that when doing her supervisory duties, she does overhear teachers codeswitching or using siSwati when teaching. She explained that this did not bother her much because the teachers are doing it for the benefit of the learners. She did however connote that some of the teachers could be switching codes to cover up their own inefficiencies in the LoTL. A study by Alimi (2011) in Botswana indicates that switching codes from English to Setswana did not only benefit the learners but the teachers as well who themselves struggled with having a good command of English language. The administrator's point of view in this regard therefore cannot be disregarded. Another study by Mgqwashu (2008) on literate English for epistemological access shows that successful engagement with English literary texts depends entirely on a certain level of competence in the LoTL and without such a level, it is unlikely that there

will be effective teaching and learning. So, the adherence to the stipulated language policy was altered by the teachers for facilitating better understanding. The teachers did not suggest that they too, were limited in their English language proficiency levels but this was obliquely implied by the school administrator.

6.2.5 Learners' attitude towards English

The findings of the study established that a majority of the learners generally like English and have positive attitudes towards it. Whereas some learners found English to be easy and enjoyed learning it, others explained that they had challenges with learning English because it is difficult, however it is a subject that is good for them. When probed further on why English is good for them, all the learners clarified that it is an important language they use for learning and their textbooks are written in English. Their responses allude to the fact that they hold English in high esteem and they somehow feel that they have to like it so that they pass it.

LR 1: I do like English a lot ... It is easy and nice, and when you speak English, it is like ... Levels you know... levels (both laugh at the demonstration for levels)

LR2 : English is good for us. I like it and I try to speak it but it is very difficult to know it well. Sometimes I forget what I want to say and then speak in siSwati.

LR3: OK singisi ngyasitsandza though sometimes it's challenging nemaIdioms akhona nje ngyasitsandza nawusifundza uyeva kutsi yah ngifundza iLanguage yangephandle but still ngyakhona kusifundza. (OK I like English though sometimes it is challenging with its idiomatic expressions. When you learn it, you can clearly feel that you are learning a foreign language.)

LR4: English? Yah I do love English; I do love English obviously...

LR5: I do like English, because English is most common and the easiest language it is just straight because if you speak siSwati your tongue gets flipped but English is just straight forward.

LR6: I'd say I love English madam; I try every day, I've joined the English club which was revived this year. I've also started reading novels this year in Form 5 because I want to improve my English, then also this year I also try to ask on things that I don't understand.

L9: Yes, I like English but my peers don't.... They don't really enjoy English. Yah, some of them are pushed, some of them they adapt to the situation, some of them are just flexible to allowing it and it's been helping but the majority they don't want to learn it, actually they are lazy I don't know why and this is dragging them down actually.

Learner 1's response shows that for her, speaking English has some prestige attached to it, something she called 'levels'. This is a common mentality whereby languages of the former coloniser are given a more important status such as being the language of instruction. Brock-Utne (2005) argues that learners are labelled as dumb just because they lack knowledge of the LoI. Learner 9 believes his peers do not do well in English because they are lazy. What can be deduced from the responses here is that learners feel compelled to like English as this positive attitude may assist them to pass English. Whereas a positive attitude towards learning is a step in the right direction, the learners are acutely aware of the repercussions of failing English.

The issue of language of instruction for African learners is a sensitive matter. Whereas there is an agenda in most African countries (SDGs, Millennium goals, Agenda 2063) including eSwatini for free education for all, Brock-Utne (2005) questions, in whose language? In a study on the language-in-education policy and practice in Tanzania under the LOITASA project (Language of Instruction in Tanzania and South Africa), Brock-Utne (2005) discovered that learners in public schools are taught incorrect English by teachers who they themselves struggle with adequate competency in English language because it is a second language. Another project in neighbouring South Africa, the Molteno project, which was funded by the Institute of Studying English in Africa also aimed to analyze and rectify problems connected with the incorrect use of English among lower primary learners whilst also assisting teachers with their own English competencies. This was

necessitated by the general, poor English literacy outcomes in black South African schools due to the lack of qualified teachers. Lower primary learners were widely unable to read with understanding or write meaningful texts in English. The project was therefore spearheaded in order to identify what the weaknesses were in the teaching of English and how these could be met (Walters, 1996). One of the major findings of this project was that African learners could not read in their mother tongue after half a year in school and this made it a mammoth task for them to switch to English or a second language (Walters, 1996). This proves beyond doubt the important role played by the MT in L2 acquisition. It was for this reason that the project ultimately produced, “Breakthrough to Literacy”, a teacher’s manual in all the 11 languages so as to enhance reading in the MT within the first year of schooling. Teachers were introduced to new materials and methodology with a view to present the Bridge to English course in year 2 of primary schooling aimed at promoting cognitive growth and expanding world view and social skills (Walters, 1996). Teachers were provided with step-by-step guidelines to improve learners’ reading skills whilst also navigating their own linguistic inabilities. The Molteno project was one initiative that made a distinct contribution towards the development of mother tongue literacy and English language proficiency. Even though learners still exhibited patterns of inadequacy and their command of English was below the expected threshold for their level, the project presented by far the best hope of developing English language proficiency in that Molteno learners proved to be better at reading and English proficiency when compared to non-Molteno learners (Walters, 1996).

In conclusion, the positive sentiments towards English language shared by the learners here indicate a deep love for English albeit the difficulties in attaining adequate proficiency and skills in it. Apart from the learners, parents also have strong preference for English as opposed to indigenous languages. As a result, people generally prefer the straight-for-English approach whereby English is the medium of instruction from the earliest possible grade (Kamwendo, 2016).

6.2.6 The persistent hegemony of English Language

It is also evident from the findings that both teachers and learners were not opposed to English being the language of teaching and learning. If anything, all the learners believed that using English as the LoTL was beneficial for them because even the textbooks that they use in class are also written in English hence it would be a great disadvantage for them to learn in siSwati because examinations are also assessed in English. Teachers highlighted the need to teach in English since the examination learners take are in English.

The issue of the LoTL continues to be a theme of major discussion in LPP studies in the African continent with sociolinguists such as Brock-Utne (2006, 2012) arguing that the medium of instruction must be at the centre of any efforts to give education to the African children. Therefore, the most important policy decisions in language-in-education are those related to the choice of languages as LoTL (Hamid, Jahan and Islam; 2013). In a keynote address at the Implications of Language for Peace and Development conference, Prah (2008) echoes similar sentiments when he argues that the most nettlesome problem in many African countries is the issue of language of instruction. Prah (2008) traces the history of the medium of instruction conundrum in Africa back to precolonial times when missionaries introduced literacy of selected elites. He claims that the missionaries were very much aware that in order to reach across the hearts of the African congregants and win their souls, it was expedient to reach them in their own languages hence education was centered around the use of the mother tongue.

In post-colonial Africa however, exoglossic languages generally form the nucleus of the education sector space while African languages are shifted backwards or sideways due to a number of reasons. These reasons range from arguing that in the African continent there are just too many languages which have limited demographic and geographical significance thus do not make the cut for societal unity and also that they have limited lexical capacity to deal with the realities of modern society, science and technology (Prah, 2008; Kamwangamalu, 2010). As explained above, Prah (2008) posits that Africa will

only be able to move towards unfettered modernity if she develops on the basis of culture and African languages. This argument is in line with the proclamation by UNESCO (1953, 2003) that a learner must be taught in their own mother tongue and the introduction of a second or foreign language as a LoTL must be delayed. This is not to say that learners should not learn or use two languages at the same time because research has proven that the learning and use of two languages in school is not an obstacle to educational attainment (Ferguson and Gibson, 2006). This however has not been successful in the African continent as countries who use a local language as a LoTL for the whole duration of the primary school are a minute minority.

In Tanzania for instance, KiSwahili was adopted as the LoTL at the primary level in 1967 (Babaci-Wilhite and Geo-Jaja, 2013) after a lengthy inter-territorial language committee promoted its standardisation in Tanzania, Kenya and Uganda. A study in Nigeria on the use of an L2 as a LoTL showed that students who were taught in a mother tongue learnt faster and proved to be more resourceful and better academically prepared hence the conclusion that was made was that students learn faster and better if their L1 is used to teach them (Babaci-Wilhite and Geo-Jaja, 2013).

6.2.7 English as the passing subject

One of the points of discussion around the education policy in eSwatini has been the issue of English being the LoTL and also a passing subject. In some sectors, English is not referred to as a passing subject but as a failing subject. Both statements, though, refer to the same policy which is that a learner who has failed English language cannot proceed to the next level of study or class. Dlodlu (2016) documented the extent of harm this policy brought to Swati learners as learners who failed to get a credit pass in English in the Form 5 exit examination, would not be legible for admission in tertiary institutions such as the University of eSwatini. As a result, many learners remained frustrated and opted for doing odd, unskilled jobs because English had cut short their academic journey. The argument around English has been that it must cease to be the passing subject but remain a language of teaching and learning and a core subject in the school curriculum. The reason behind

this argument was that it disadvantages learners especially those who are scientifically inclined who may struggle with language mastery.

One of the major findings of this study on the issue of English being the passing subject was that 50% of the teachers were in favour of this policy. Three out of the six teachers believed that this policy is good for our education system and the reasons for their viewpoints varied. First, the teachers argued that learners need international exposure for tertiary education and English language allowed them a platform to be marketable even in tertiary institutions beyond our borders. The fact that institutions of higher learning use principally English as the LoTL was another reason why the teachers felt English should remain the passing subject. Moreover, the teachers argued that since the textbooks were written in English, it makes sense for English to remain the passing subject. Only one teacher felt strongly against this policy. Her main argument was that this policy compromises the learners who pass other subjects well and qualify for tertiary education only for them to be hindered by English. She lamented the fact that such a learner is forced to repeat or attempt to upgrade the English mark and there is always no guarantee that the learner will pass the second or third time around. She also brought in the economic aspect whereby a majority of the learners come from poor home backgrounds and can barely afford to pay school fees.

Finally, the school administrator was doubleminded about this matter. She was skeptical of allowing English to be a stumbling block to those learners who are exceptionally good in science subjects and pass really well, only to be hindered by English language. She believes that if the student managed to attain good grades in science, then it means they were able to understand English because science subjects are taught and assessed in English hence to say the learner failed just because of English is not a true reflection of the learner's capability. This is a valid point and it has remained one of the focal points in the discussion of this policy in the country. Proponents for the removal of English as a passing subject strongly object to it being a stumbling block for scientifically inclined learners.

The teachers who are in support of the policy show a narrow understanding of the magnitude of this policy on learners who are second language speakers of English. It also shows that the teachers do not differentiate between teaching English and having it as a passing subject. This is because there is a difference between learning English as a subject and having it as a passing subject. Learners may learn English successfully and acquire the necessary level of skill in it without it being a determining factor of whether the learner passes or not. In fact, English remaining a passing subject has connotations of neo-colonialism in that second language speakers are judged using a language that is not their own to determine if they are smart or not so smart. This disadvantages those learners who struggle to acquire adequate skills in the second language. On the flipside, it is possible for learners to learn English language and be skilled in it without it being the passing subject. This will allow them competency to interact with their textbooks whilst also enabling them to be marketable internationally for tertiary education.

On the other hand, 50% of the learners supported the idea of English remaining a passing subject in eSwatini. Once again, the reasons ranged from that English is an important world language for wider communication which allows communication between people from diverse linguistic backgrounds hence acts as a unifier. Another reason given was that it is a requirement for those learners who wish to enroll with the university or any of the colleges therefore learners need to pass it. One learner claimed that if English remains a passing subject, learners will pull up their socks and purpose to get a credit pass in it. Another student failed to give a reason for their viewpoint but maintained that English must not be removed from being the passing subject. This in its own seems to have remnants of a colonial attitude which glorified all things European as good.

Three of the learner participants were strongly against this status quo. They argued that this policy encourages learners to look down upon siSwati and only focus on English because it is the subject that determines whether they will pass or fail at the end of the year. One learner was at pains trying to explain the extent of the damage done by this policy. He begged that,

“...government should not be doing that to us because the fact that I passed Math which is also in English, means I do have an idea of it so failing English does not mean that I don’t know but it’s the fact that it’s a second language that’s why I’m failing it.”

These sentiments are similar to those shared by the school administrator and they are valid when one considers that these are second language speakers hence their competency should not be equated to first language speakers.

The insights emerging from both the teachers and the learners with regard to English being the passing subject, are that many remain convinced that the education sector would be paralysed if English was stripped of its current position. This borders on linguistic assimilation as advanced by Cobarrubias (1983) in that the dominant language which is English, was selected in this domain to be the passing subject without appreciating that siSwati exists and is mastered better by the Swati learners as compared to English. The issue has thus remained a thorn in post-independence eSwatini.

Contrary to these views advanced by the participants above, were policy directives by the Minister of Education, Lady Mabuza-Howard in January 2020 who announced that after over fifty years of the current status quo, English would no longer be the passing subject in eSwatini (Times of eSwatini, January 4, 9, 23, 2020, eSwatini Observer, January, 9). This was a major milestone in the education sector in eSwatini because for the first time in many years, there were learners who passed their external examinations and proceeded to the next class without passing English language. A Times of eSwatini newspaper article dated 4 January 2020, revealed that in the Grade 7 examinations, over one thousand five hundred learners who would have in fact failed because of English being a passing subject, passed and proceeded to secondary school. As a result, 2019 results were the best in over ten years (Times of eSwatini, 9 January 2020).

This has been a long-awaited directive from the eSwatini government when one considers the fact that English as a gatekeeper subject prevented multitudes of learners from proceeding with their academic journey once they failed it (Dludlu, 2016). Evidence to this effect is the declaration by the current minister of education, Lady Howard-Mabuza, who announced that about one thousand five hundred Grade 7 learners would have failed the Grade 7 examination in 2019 had English remained a passing subject (Eswatini Observer, 9 January 2020). These were learners who ultimately passed and proceeded to secondary school without passing English. This is a step in the right direction however, it may remain a fallacy and an ambiguous policy if the pronouncements by tertiary institutions in the country are anything to go by. Reactions to the new directive are still in embryonic stages and relevant stakeholders are still deliberating on the policy change. For instance, the University of eSwatini (UNESWA) held a symposium on the pronouncement on the 29th January 2020. One crucial issue that emerged during the discussions was that there is disharmony with regard the new directive between schools and tertiary institutions. Whereas it will no longer be a passing subject in schools, its requirement by tertiary institutions has so far not been disputed by higher education stakeholders. In concluding this section, it is appropriate to mention that, as implementers of all government policy, educators are currently readjusting their own internal school systems in relation to the pronouncement. What remains unchanged is the entry requirements by tertiary institutions in eSwatini in as far as passing English is concerned.

6.2.8 Factors influencing the choice for English language

The findings demonstrate that the persistent hegemonic status of English language is directly linked to its empowerment for upward social mobility. All the teachers and the learner-participants strongly believed that English skills allow one to move up the socio-economic ladder in the sense that it opens more job opportunities for skilled users. A study by Conduah (2003) on members of staff and students at the university of Witwatersrand, confirms the learners' claim because the findings show that, to a large extent, both had a negative attitude towards the introduction of African languages as a

medium of instruction. This was because generally, English was viewed as the means to better opportunities. On the other hand, Makoni (1997) argues that African languages are still viewed with suspicion and are considered neo-colonial strategies to separate blacks from whites. Of course, this is directly linked to South Africa's apartheid past.

There is evidence that teachers and learners felt there was dire need for the English language since we live in a global community. Both felt that English allows interconnectedness through trading and tourism and their views revealed that without English, the language of wider communication, we as a country, would be disconnected from the global community. Learners highlighted that English enables them to communicate with people from other countries hence described it to be a unifier of linguistically diverse groups. Research alludes to this fact that languages of wider communication especially English, have the ability of bringing together people who would otherwise have been separated by their diverse language backgrounds. Unlike African languages who tend to divide people along tribal lines, English draws them together into a monolingual society.

There is evidence to support that both teachers and learners believed that having English as the LoTL in the eSwatini education system is beneficial to the learners because it ultimately is the language of assessment. As a result, teachers believed it would not be feasible to teach in siSwati and yet test in English because this would not expose the learners to the language used in their assessment. Glanz (2013) postulates that most education systems in Sub-Saharan countries focus on using international languages yet a majority of the learners are not fluent in them. As a result, Glanz (2013) advocates for African languages, culture and history to be placed at the heart of the development of education and training so that skills are acquired in connection to their own specific heritage.

A study done by Gandara, Rumberger, Maxwell-Jolly and Collahan (2003) on English learners in California showed that when learners are not proficient in the language of assessment (English), their scores on a test in English will not accurately reflect their knowledge of the subject assessed hence such assessments do not help teachers to enhance their instruction. Another study by Thamaga-Chitja and Mbatha (2012) on enablers and barriers to multilingualism in South African classrooms revealed that many students fail to acquire academic literacy and that their deficiency is compounded by poor competency in English as a LoTL. On the other hand, a study by UNICEF (2016) on the impact of language policy and practice on children's learning in Eastern and Southern Africa proved that there are positive strong correlations between speaking the LoTL and pupil achievement especially in reading.

Similarly, UNESCO (2003, 2012) advocates for teaching in the MT for as long a time as possible because this is the language that learners understand best hence do not have to grapple with comprehending the content delivered in their own language. In Africa, only two countries (Somalia and Tanzania) have adopted a single language or national language as a LoTL throughout the primary school cycle (Mooko, 2009). In both countries, there is a switch back to English at secondary school, which has the connotation that African languages are not empowered to deal with academic discourse in higher levels of schooling yet all languages are equally capable of discourse expansion to serve in the education sector as the LoTL (Mooko, 2009).

With English being the international language of wider communication, teachers and learners believed it was advantageous for learners to be taught and assessed in it. The participants viewed English as necessary mainly because it acts as a unifier, connecting them with people from different linguistic backgrounds. Learners elucidated that, as young people with prospects of a bright future, they felt that they need English as a core language in their quest for success or else they felt they would remain on the side-lines and lose opportunities due to the lack of English skills. As the LoTL therefore, the learners

felt safe and content that they would not be disconnected from the modernised world. Tollefson (1991) sheds light on the spread of English being linked to modernisation. He contends that some linguists view English language as being linked to modernisation mainly because research, development and application requires access to the latest research worldwide, hence English is seen as the most effective tool to achieve that because it is the language of wider communication.

6.2.9 Codeswitching

Findings from observation data and interviews showed that teachers and learners switched codes a lot during teaching and learning. It can be argued, therefore, that teachers implement an English-only policy which they alter and modify by codeswitching and codemixing to the mother tongue to assist learners to understand better the concepts taught in the second language (Mugweni, Ganga and Musengi, 2012). As Wright (2004:3) rightly claims, “our thought processes are bounded by our mother tongue”. In a History class for example, the topic was, “*The Sharpeville Massacre.*” The LoTL used was mainly English. However, the teacher did use some siSwati words during the lesson when explaining the extent of the carnage by the police during the Sharpeville massacre. For instance, the teacher said, “*people were dying in large numbers, kwakubusacasaca nje.*” This word describes falling down of a large number of people at the same time to mean that the police shot and killed many people in a short space of time. The same was true for a Biology class where the topic of the day was, “*Respiration.*” There was a lot of codeswitching and codemixing from the teacher and the students. For instance, when explaining how lactic acid is formed in our body, the teacher used the word, “*kuhefutela*”, to mean breathing in and out very fast. Codeswitching and codemixing occurred at regular intervals during teaching and learning in the Form 4 class. It originated from both the teachers and the learners and the main reason for codeswitching as given by the participants was to bring more clarity on delivered content.

Ferguson (2009) argues that codeswitching may progress to bilingualism. In the same vein, Allard (2019) describes the native language as “oxygen” in the sense that it allows

teachers to connect with their learners and build upon their existing knowledge and strengths to gain access to grade-level content material. A study by the same author (Allard, 2019) on immigrant students in the USA revealed that students who become bilingual do better academically than their peers who do not. Similarly, Auerbach (2012) describes bilingual instruction as not just a right but a necessity for adult English as Second Language (ESL) learners with limited L1 literacy skills. Even though the context is not similar in the USA and eSwatini, the Swati learners use English as a second language too.

A study by Mugweni, Ganga and Musengi (2012) in Zimbabwe on why teachers codeswitched during Mathematics lessons revealed that sometimes teachers felt obliged to codeswitch in order to facilitate understanding of complex Mathematical concepts. Some teachers even anticipated which sections of the lesson they would present in ciShona because they found them to be challenging for learners. As a result of codeswitching, the study discovered that learner performances improved especially in exercises which involved mechanical operation. Moreover, learners were better able to express themselves when they switched codes to ciShona. We think better and we comprehend much clearer in our mother tongue. Jones and Barkhuizen (2011) postulate that decision-making processes at micro-level language planning, rests with teachers in their classrooms, especially regarding the choice of language to be used for instructional purposes, a feature that makes them central agents of implementation.

Ferguson (2009) on the other hand argues that codeswitching, if widespread and persistent, can evolve into a de facto bilingual instructional medium at odds with official policy requiring monolingual English instructional medium thus directly challenging the official language education policy. According to Garcia (2009), bilingual education is the education of learners who are already speakers of two languages. Garcia (2009) finds no fault with either codeswitching or bilingualism and sees both as ways of providing meaningful and equitable education, as well as an education that builds tolerance towards other linguistic and cultural groups. Ferguson (2009) also points out that the learning

and use of two languages in school is not an obstacle to educational attainment and does not impede the learner's overall cognitive or linguistic development instead, this leads to positive growth in these areas. Garcia (2009) also explains that in today's globalised world, bilingual education is often criticised, on the one hand because it is seen as maintaining separate linguistic enclaves yet this is not true. If anything, bilingualism aids learners to learn better and understand concepts much more clearly.

Though the findings show that codemixing and codeswitching was widely used during teaching and learning, and vouched for as being helpful in understanding content and facilitate better expression from the learners, there are opponents to this approach who label it as being problematic and are doubtful that it works to the favor of the learners. These label codeswitching as being a distractor that does not help learners to internalise content especially in multilingual contexts. Codeswitching is also blamed for not helping learners acquire the necessary skill in the language of teaching and learning. The findings in this study show that codeswitching helps to facilitate better understanding of the content by the learners.

6.2.10 Negative attitudes towards the mother

From the lesson observations, it emerged that there was a widespread use of siSwati at School J. As highlighted above, codemixing and codeswitching formed a major part of the teaching and learning process. Observation of student interactions outside of the classroom environment also revealed that learners communicated largely in siSwati except when communicating with a teacher which also happened to be in the local language at times. There were only a few instances whereby learners were overheard communicating in English. Since there is preference for the mother tongue, my assumption at the beginning of this study was that both teachers and learners would have positive attitudes towards siSwati.

The findings, however, show that even though the MT is widely used at School J, the attitudes towards siSwati were largely negative. A majority of the teachers felt that it was important for the mother tongue to be taught to all learners however, they were content with it being nothing more than the language of local communication. Whilst they acknowledged that many learners passed siSwati better than English, they were of the view that siSwati would limit learners' exposure to the global space because of its limited demographic penetration. 80% of the learners shared similar sentiments with the teachers that, though they loved siSwati, they would not appreciate having it given any major prominence since their normative and summative assessments are given in English. In response to policy directives passed in 2018 which strengthened the use of siSwati as the LoTL in all schools in eSwatini, a majority of the participants felt this was not a good move. The teachers' main argument was that more consultations should have been done with the concerned stakeholders before the pronouncement could be made.

The micro language planning approach proposes that an individual's language attitude and practice can influence the implementation of language policy in schools. Kretzer (2016) postulates that language practices within the classroom and the general school environment can affect the language attitudes of other educators, learners and parents.

6.3 LANGUAGE EDUCATION POLICY AND LEARNERS' ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

One of the key elements of language education policy or LEP, is to establish what languages will be used as the LoTL in the education sector and what languages shall be taught at the different levels of education. A major observation by UNICEF (2016) is that an effective language education policy coupled with an appropriate LoTL, is crucial for academic success.

In the African setting, language education policies or LEP's, originate from Africa's colonial past. According to Bamgbose (1991), there are mainly three different categories

of LEP's in Africa. In the first category, the former colonial powers favored the use of the mother tongue in the education sector (such as in Tanzania, Botswana Burundi, Ghana, Lesotho, Kenya, Uganda, Zimbabwe, Zambia, Swaziland (renamed eSwatini), Nigeria, etc.). The second category of LEP's as propagated by former colonial states discouraged the use of the mother tongue in the education sector (such as Benin, Mali, Chad, Central African Republic, Mozambique, Equatorial Guinea, Senegal, Togo etc.). Finally, there were LEP's which were either different from the language of the colonising state or were dual (such as Somalia, Mauritius, Madagascar, Ethiopia, Sierra Leone).

A proposition I made in the commencement of this study was that the language of teaching and learning (LoTL) does affect the academic performance of learners. This is to say that if the learners lack adequate proficiency in the LoTL, they will struggle to understand the content delivered in that language. Apart from the content, they will struggle to express themselves clearly in that language which then culminates in them failing assessment granted in that language. The findings from the interview data shows that 50% of the teachers were of the idea that indeed, the LoTL affects the academic performance of a learner. The reasons given for this proposition were that learners who are first language (L1) speakers of the LoTL will understand concepts better than the second language (L2) speakers. Their competency in the LoTL will help them attain better marks as opposed to the L2 speakers. One teacher argued that,

“The one who is using it [English] as a first language is going to have a command and understand much on the concepts which are in English than our kid who is doing it as a second language. Even the performance at the end of the day is going to be different as the one who is doing it as a first language will outshine, will pass better than our kid who is doing it as a second language because we, we do English as a second language, it's not our MT, it's not the language we use every day, which means our kids like I've said, are exposed to Siswati, which means it's only learnt at school, the English language. At home they are going to converse in siSwati throughout which means it's only the teacher at school who is going to help the kids know the language itself which is a disadvantage to her in that way

because she doesn't have much exposure. When it comes to applying these concepts, the one who does it as a first language will have an added advantage because she's used to the language, she's able to venture even deep than my kid because while she's trying to analyse the concepts, there's a limitation, worse they use cell phone jargon which pokes in and influence them, now it will take some time to try and find the right word for that siSwati word which has just popped into his mind. So, I think it is a challenge.

Moreover, the teachers argued that the exam in itself is quite demanding and is not tolerant to a learner who struggles to express himself. On the other hand, 50% of the teacher participants believed that the LoTL had nothing to do whatsoever with a learner's academic performance. They explained that all that is needed is for the learner to be adequately competent in the LoTL so as to understand the questions asked otherwise, L1 learners have no advantage over L2 learners.

Similarly, 50% of the learner participants believed that the LoTL played a major role in the academic success of learners. Their main argument was that the lack of adequate skills in English results in learners' inability to clearly express themselves which ultimately results in them acquiring lower marks. Three of the ten learners (30%) strongly believed that the language of teaching and learning does not matter at all. For them, all that matters is for a learner to work hard having that little competency in the LoTL. They believe that even now, teachers were not using English only throughout their teaching but still, some learners failed and this according to them, had nothing to do with the LoTL but everything to do with the commitment that a learner exhibits towards their schoolwork.

Research shows that the LoTL does, in fact, affect learner performance in class. For example, a study by Glanz (2013) shows that the longer learners acquire academic competencies through a familiar language, the better the performance. Another study by Mwelwa and Spencer (2013) revealed that the exclusive use of English as the LoTL hinders a child's intellectual growth yet learners become more actively involved in the process of teaching and learning if the LoTL is familiar. In the same vein, a study by

Mokwathi and Webb (2013) in Botswana showed that code-switching helped learners to understand concepts better and their academic performance improved greatly if both Setswana and English were used to explain content to the learners. Brock-Utne (2006) posits that education for all is crucial, but a more important factor to consider is, in whose language? Language therefore is a central component to teaching and learning.

6.3.1 Learners' performance in English and siSwati

The findings further established that learners performed better in siSwati than they did in English. Both teachers and learners confirmed that learners passed siSwati better than English language. This confirms what was discussed in the literature review section whereby UNESCO (1953, 2003) argue that learners learn best if the MoI is their mother tongue. The study shows that this is true as learners performed better in siSwati which is their MT. What this means is that learners understand much better when content is delivered in the MT hence, they were able to recall and remember the content to convey it in an assessment situation. Brock-Utne (2005) posits that indigenous languages are not supported to become mediums of instruction but former colonial languages are promoted instead. Even though there are organisations such as CASAS (Center for Advanced Studies of African Society) which try to harmonise orthography for African languages, publishing houses support producing literature written in English or other European languages as opposed to African languages. This promotes former colonial languages to continue being used as MoI yet African learners do not understand them and thus perform poorly in them as demonstrated by the learners' performance in this study. Prah (2002) argues in the same vein that Africa can only develop if Africans are empowered with the use of their native languages. This cannot be further from the truth. Another argument against teaching in indigenous languages claims that there are too many indigenous languages as a result, it would be too expensive to produce textbooks in all these languages. Once again, Brock-Utne (2005) argues against this notion and states that many African languages are actually cross-border languages hence can be used across different countries. Moreover, some of these are categorised as languages yet they are merely dialects of the same language. I am in agreement with Brock-Utne (2005) that it

is possible to use indigenous languages by adopting the main cross-border languages such as Swahili, to be mediums of instruction. The argument that there are more than one 1400 languages in Africa (Westley 1992 in Brock-Utne, 2005), with some claiming there are close to 2000 languages (e.g., Grimes 1992 in Brock-Utne, 2005) is used to give preference to European languages over African languages.

6.3.2 Reasons for learners' performance in English and siSwati

The participants were asked to give reasons for the learners' performance in English and siSwati as discussed above. Teachers explained that learners pass siSwati more than English because it is a language familiar to them as they use it even at home. As a result, they are free to converse in it and understand it best. The teachers observed that some of the topics covered in the siSwati curriculum such as tradition and culture activities, have been experienced by the learners hence are familiar and knowledgeable with them. For this reason, the learners understand the content better because they experience it in their daily living and it is also taught to them in their MT. This is in agreement with UNESCO (1953) who state that learners must be taught in the MT for as long a time as possible because they understand it best and are free to use it to express themselves. The learners' views were in agreement with their teachers that they pass siSwati more because it is their MT and they understand it better. Even though some learners revealed that the curriculum that is taught is different from everyday colloquial siSwati thus making it a difficult language to learn, they explained that still, the majority pass siSwati more than English.

It was further established by the study that there is a lack of facilities to expose learners to English language which would help them perform better in English. The only source of reading material is taken from the school library. Moreover, there is a lack of role models for speaking English at School J. This contributes to the poor performance in English as learners seldom communicate in English. This is explained better by the micro language planning approach in the theoretical chapter that groups or individuals hold agency and deviate from the macro policy to suit their own language needs thus resulting in a new

policy for that context (Baldauf, 2006). The observation findings for this study established that the learners communicate in siSwati when out of class and that there is a lot of codeswitching during teaching and learning.

6.4 IMPLEMENTATION OF THE LANGUAGE EDUCATION POLICY

According to Zuniga, Henderson and Palmer (2018), language education policy is embedded with language ideologies and, as such, educators articulate these ideologies which ultimately influences policy implementation. The micro language planning approach on the other hand views language policy as being open to interpretation by the agents in the school setting who are teachers and learners. Teachers' language decisions in class are influenced by a host of social factors and personal convictions about what is 'best' for their students (Zuniga, Henderson and Palmer, 2018). One major objective of this study was to analyse language policy decisions at the research site zooming in specifically on decisions that teachers make on a daily basis inside their classrooms. This would in turn, inform me of how these policy decisions influence teaching and learning at the target school.

Observation findings revealed that even though the LoTL is English, there was a lot of codeswitching and codemixing during teaching and learning. As mentioned earlier on in this chapter, codeswitching and codemixing emanated from both the teachers and the learners. When asked during interviews to explain their policy decisions during teaching and learning, this is what the teachers had to say: first, the school administrator revealed that when she moves around the school doing her supervisory duties, she overhears some teachers not adhering to the language policy by using siSwati instead of English for teaching. The administrator was quick to mention, though, that not all the teachers codeswitch, some stick to English language with the exception of the siSwati subject which is taught in the local language. She also highlighted that she personally did not blame the teachers for codeswitching because when she asked them why they do it, they gave valid reasons. In her own words she said:

“Some of them will tell you that there’s no need to teach in English if you can tell that you are just talking to yourself, so there’s the tendency to codeswitch. So, you do not want to blame them at the end of the day because again we are aware that the level of understanding of the language is in fact not the same again. They (referring to the learners) come from different schools, like we are placed here in between town and the countryside, we get learners from everywhere.....to give the learners some advantage of understanding the concepts or the teachers themselves have a challenge. It’s not all the teachers who went to schools where English was used from Monday to Friday, they went to schools like mine, or even worse. So, some teachers are not comfortable themselves, so sometimes they are doing it to help themselves, they are codeswitching. At times yes, they could be doing it to help the learners.”

According to the school administrator, codeswitching influenced teaching and learning positively because it enhances comprehension for the learners whilst also allowing the teachers to express themselves much clearer and more freely. Many educational authorities are normally hostile and have a negative attitude towards codeswitching and yet codeswitching is a pedagogically useful communicative tool (Ferguson, 2009). These negative attitudes are usually a result of nationalism that embodies feelings of linguistic purism in which the language must be kept free from defilement thus maintaining the standard forms of the language (Ferguson, 2009).

The teachers themselves concurred with the administrator’s observation that they do codeswitch from time to time, depending on the lesson. Some lessons according to them, do not require codeswitching but some do and the purpose of codeswitching is for clarity. The teachers further revealed that when they can tell that the learners are following, they do not codeswitch. Codeswitching therefore was described as being situational, to meet a need. It is imperative to note that though admitting to codeswitch from time to time, the teachers were quick to explain that this did not happen every time during teaching and learning. Ferguson (2009) argues that the attitudes of teachers towards codeswitching, who are the official implementers of the language policy, are often conflicted. On the one

hand, teachers find codeswitching a necessary communication tool, useful for humanising the classroom environment but on the other hand, they worry about impeding pupils' familiarisation to the L2 (Ferguson, 2009). These attitudes manifested with the teachers when the question on policy implementation was posed to them in the sense that though they admitted to codeswitching, they explained that this was only situational otherwise they endeavored to stick to the official LoTL which is English.

A study by Dlamini and Kamwendo (2018) on codeswitching among first-year students at the then University of Swaziland (now, University of eSwatini), disclosed that 90% of the students concurred that codeswitching is a valuable ladder to epistemic access at the university. The students explained that the use of siSwati enhances their acquisition and retention of knowledge. Even though the study is on tertiary learners, it is relevant as an example on codeswitching since its location is in the Swati context and the participants are learners. Moreover, there is a dearth of knowledge on codeswitching as an instructional practice in Eswatini. Another study on codeswitching is by Mugweni, Ganga and Musengi (2012) who studied Grade 1 – 7 Zimbabwean Mathematics teachers on why they used codeswitching during their lesson delivery. The findings of their study showed that teachers felt obliged to codeswitch to CiShona in order to facilitate learner understanding as they claimed that learners remembered better if mathematical long formulae were in CiShona. The teachers also codemixed English and CiShona words which they claimed helped learners understand better. Once again, this study is in a different context and it had primary school teachers as participants. It is used as an example because even though the contexts are not the same, the language policy in both settings required the teachers to use English as a LoTL which they transformed to generate their own micro-level language policy to enhance teaching and learning.

The micro language planning approach in the theoretical chapter demonstrates that the choices teachers make in relation to the language of teaching and learning, culminates in a defacto language policy. It is clear from the discussion here that another language education policy has been formulated at School J. Whereas the macro language policy

advocates for English as the LoTL at secondary school level, codeswitching forms a big part of the teaching and learning process in this particular context. Schools can be sites for policy generation (Liddicoat, 2018). Whereas there is a study by Kamwendo and Dlamini (2018) on codeswitching at tertiary level in eSwatini, this study is an original contribution to knowledge on language policy and practice at secondary school level. The findings show that adherence to the macro language policy is intercepted by codeswitching which is meant for clarity. The findings thus expose the ill-advised nature of official policies that fail to acknowledge widespread classroom realities and deny legitimacy to practices many teachers feel are necessary for effective instruction (Ferguson, 2009). The utility of my study therefore is to add more knowledge to the available literature on language policy and practice at secondary school level in eSwatini.

Codeswitching in the classroom has its benefits and drawbacks. To begin with, codeswitching assists learners to understand better the content delivered to them in a familiar language. On the flipside, codeswitching or codemixing does not encourage the learner to be fluent and adequately skilled in the LoTL because of the ‘cushion’ provided by the mother tongue. A study by Mokgwathi and Webb (2013) in four senior secondary schools in Botswana shows that codeswitching has benefits and disadvantages too. Whereas it increases learner participation and lesson comprehension, it contravenes the LiEP (Language in Education Policy) and it does not help learners to acquire the necessary skill in English language. Having said this, Garcia and Wei (2014) argue that bilingual education is the only way to educate children in the 21st century and codeswitching, when used extensively during teaching and learning, results in bilingual education.

6.5 RESOURCES TO ENHANCE LEARNERS’ PROFICIENCY IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE

Brock-Utne (2006:21) claims that, “to want to give education without considering the medium of instruction is like wanting to give water to a village but not considering the pipes.” Thus, the importance of the LoTL cannot be overemphasised hence the participants were asked if the learners were sufficiently proficient in English language and

whether the school had adequate resources that could satisfactorily enhance their skills in the English language. The responses determined the following themes.

6.5.1 English-speaking rule in the school

The participants revealed that the school's prospectus has a rule that demands learners to converse in English at all material times when they are within the school premises. Learners who fail to adhere to this rule attract punishment from the authorities in the school. The punishment ranges from detention to performing extra duties such as remaining behind when the others leave after school to clean classrooms and other designated places within the school. In past years, corporal punishment would be meted as punishment as well but not anymore. This indicates that the school adheres to the NEDSEC of 2018 which eliminates any form of corporal punishment in the education sector. Certain privileges may also be withdrawn, such as being part of a team in extra curricula activities such as soccer, netball, volleyball etc. Both teachers and the learners concurred about the speaking of English in the school.

First, they all deemed it an inevitable necessity for learners to speak in English citing the reason that their formative and summative assessments are in English. They also were in harmony that the reality was however the opposite of what is stipulated in the school's prospectus in the sense that learners mostly conversed using siSwati during their conversations. The learners mentioned that they felt much freer when conversing in their MT than to speak in English, which was more challenging to them.

It also emerged that some learners do try to adhere to the school's language policy when conversing with a teacher, however, this did not always happen because some of the teachers also used siSwati to communicate with the learners. The conclusion here was that most learners at School J lack the appropriate, proper skills to effectively execute learning tasks given to them in English language. To this end, they were accused of not making the effort to grow their English proficiency even after an English club had been

set up to enhance English-speaking around the school. The teachers might need to strategise ways to promote initiatives that will develop learners' proficiency in English language because the LiEP in eSwatini actually encourages learners to converse in siSwati in and out of school (NEDSEC, 2018). In fact, the policy clearly states that learners must not be punished for using siSwati at school.

A study by Rudwick and Parmegiani (2013) on divided loyalties at the University of KwaZulu Natal revealed that Zulu-speaking students hold their indigenous language in high esteem. They preferred to speak in Zulu amongst their fellow colleagues however they expressed their feelings that they felt it would not be proper to learn in Zulu. Their loyalties were thus divided between the two languages, Zulu and English. This shows that learners are aware of the benefits of social mobility that come with exoglossic languages such as English. They are also aware that indigenous languages lack these benefits hence the preference of exoglossic languages over African languages.

6.5.2 The library as a language resource centre

The findings further show that there is a library at School J for learners to use as a language resource centre. Both teachers and learners concurred that the library is furnished with books or novels which learners can access for extensive reading to enhance their skills in English language. This is commendable when considering that this is not an urban school hence access to English literature may be a challenge for the learners. Ranta and Meckelborg (2013) postulate that many people learn a language better when they study it in a country where the language is widely spoken because the environment is naturalistic thus permitting the learner maximum exposure to it.

Moreover, a study by Al Zoubi (2018) on the impact of exposure to English language on language acquisition revealed that there is a strong impact of exposure to English on language acquisition. The study further recommended that students should be continually exposed to English language through reading books and magazines, watching

English movies, surfing the internet, listening to English news and practising speaking English with the native speakers. Even though this study was undertaken with 42 university students using a mixed method approach in a different context in Jordan, its findings are relevant because they focused on students learning English as a foreign language. The consensus thus reinforces Ranta and Meckelborg's (2013) findings that exposure to English is crucial for proper acquisition. The library in this case is a point of contact for English material which learners can utilise to improve English skills. Learners therefore need to make maximum use of this resource centre since they are not in a position to be exposed to a naturalistic environment of the language.

Figure 6.1 Library at School J



The mere fact that learners' exposure to English is available only within the school premises, suggests that using English as the sole LoTL is disadvantageous for the learners at School J. This is wrong more especially because the learners hardly communicate in English out of the classroom. The culture of codeswitching and codemixing is rife during lessons and is not discouraged by the teachers. This further compromises the learners' ability to get maximum exposure to the target language.

6.6 CONCLUSION

This chapter of the thesis deliberated on the findings of the study which are under four main thematic blocks. First, the chapter discusses teachers and learners' perceptions regarding the country's language policy. Secondly, language practices during teaching and learning are reflected upon. The language education policy and its influence on the learner's academic performance was also discussed before looking into issues of language policy implementation. The four language planning ideologies as well as the micro language planning approach, were lenses through which the data was illuminated and analysed. The next and final chapter focuses on the conclusions, recommendations and implications for further study.

CHAPTER 7

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

7.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides a summary of the study by drawing major conclusions as informed by the findings. The study explored teachers and learners' perceptions of the language policy currently operant in eSwatini. This chapter further presents a model that can be used for effective teaching and learning of bilingual learners who are doing English as a second language. It is structured as follows; the summary and conclusions will be followed by recommendations for further study and a conclusion.

7.1 OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY

The study aimed to explore teachers and learners' perceptions regarding the language policy currently operant in eSwatini. The high failure rate of English language at the EGCSE exit examination prompted the researcher to undertake this study in order to establish how teachers and learners view the language policy currently operant in the country. The data from both the teachers and the learners helped to elucidate processes of teaching and learning in relation to the current language policy for schools. The study made use of interviews, document analysis and observation as data gathering methods.

The literature review discussed in chapter 2 expounded more on matters of language planning and policy, briefly tracing its origins and also highlighting LPP issues in eSwatini and eSwatini schools. The employment of the two theoretical frameworks, the four language planning ideologies and micro language planning framework, assisted in articulating the national language policy for eSwatini whilst also being cognizant of the micro language policies that exist in micro situations such as in the target secondary school from which the study was based. Cobarrubias (1983) coined these four ideologies that language policies are formulated in line with namely; internationalisation, linguistic

pluralism, linguistic assimilation and vernacularisation. The linguistic ecology of eSwatini shows both internationalisation and vernacularisation but no linguistic pluralism or assimilation. Moreover, the linguistic situation at the target school confirmed issues described by the micro language planning framework that there happens in some instances that another policy exists in micro contexts, different from the official policy.

7.2 RESPONDING TO THE RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Research question 1:

What are the teachers and learners' perceptions of the language policy operant in eSwatini? Why do they have these perceptions?

The research revealed that both teachers and learners are in favour of the language policy currently operant in the country and believe it is the best policy for the country. They particularly appreciate the recognition of siSwati as the solitary mother tongue and revere the superiority of the English language over the MT. They cited that this is the trend in most African countries hence the reason why they believe the language policy is a good one. To a larger extent, the participants identified English to be a crucial international language which is used for a wide range of global communication, education, technology and business ventures. The teachers believed that having English skills helps the learners to perform better in their academic work and they believe that teaching English from the earliest grade helps learners to have better English language proficiency. The participants believe that the language policy does not denigrate the mother tongue in any way however, they are alive to the fact that not having good English language proficiency incumbers academic performance.

Research question 2:

What are the language practices regarding teaching and learning at the selected secondary school?

The study discovered that even though the LoTL and general communication at School J is supposed to be English, its use is quite limited to teaching and making announcements otherwise the wider communication is siSwati-based. To a larger extent, both teachers and learners use siSwati for communication outside of the classroom and codeswitching is rampant during teaching and learning. The learners use siSwati extensively and they are embarrassed to speak English because their colleagues laugh at them for two reasons: first, they are not eloquent speakers of the language hence are prone to falter in their attempt to speak grammatically correct English. Secondly, they are accused of trying to look better and superior than their fellow classmates hence winning the favor of their teachers. Learners only attempt to speak in English whenever a teacher is close-by and there is generally no intrinsic motivation to use English for general communication. This negatively affects the English-proficiency levels among the learners. Using English for teaching therefore presents a huge task for the learners hence the reason why there is widespread codeswitching during teaching and learning in this school. Codeswitching helps both teachers and learners to explain and understand concepts better.

Research question 3:

How effective or not, is the language policy at the research site in eSwatini?

Thirdly, the study unearthed that the language policy is not effectively enacted at School J. Whereas the language policy stipulates that only English language must be used for teaching and learning from Grade 5 upwards however, there is limited compliance at this secondary school. As explained above, there is widespread codeswitching and there is no strict reliance on English for teaching purposes. The language policy encourages the use of the mother tongue for communication inside and outside of the school premises and no learner is supposed to be punished for conversing in the mother tongue. This is also not effectively adhered to because learners are fearful to speak siSwati in front of the teachers hence, they codeswitch when a teacher is nearby. This is because the school rules

are in total contrast to the language policy as learners are expected to use English whenever they are within the school premises. All the teachers are aware of the rule but some do not comply instead use siSwati to communicate with their learners. Meting punishment to the learners for failure to speak in English means that the language policy is not strictly adhered to at this secondary school. Moreover, the use of codeswitching especially inside the classroom implies that there is another language policy that is enacted at School J, and it is not in harmony with the national language policy.

Research question 4:

How do LPP decisions at the research site shape teaching and learning?

(ii) Why, if they do at all, do these decisions influence teaching and learning the way they do?

Finally, this research discovered that LPP decisions at this research site such as codeswitching are meant to enhance teaching and to make taught content more accessible to the average learner. This is because the learners understand siSwati more than English and are therefore freer to converse in it and also comprehend it better. Moreover, the decision to coerce learners to speak English is not yielding the desired fruit because learners are coy to practise speaking English. Even though there are resources available in the school to enhance English skills such as the library, these are not used much, resulting to a limitation in linguistic skills for the learners. To a larger extent, the limited linguistic ability impedes teaching and learning.

7.3 SUMMARY OF THE STUDY

The study was hinged on the interpretive paradigm. It is a qualitative case study that sought to understand teachers and learners' perceptions regarding the language policy currently operant in the country as its main objective. Other objectives were to explore language practices regarding teaching and learning at the selected secondary school in eSwatini, to ascertain the effectiveness of the language policy at the research site in eSwatini and finally to analyse language policy and practice decisions at the research site

and study how, if they do at all, these decisions influence teaching and learning. The summary of the findings will be discussed under the following subtitles:

- Codeswitching as translanguaging
- Attitudes towards mother tongue education
- Language education policy and learners' academic performance

7.3.1 Codeswitching as translanguaging

What stands out as crucial to note in this study is the fact that codeswitching is viewed positively by both the teachers and the learners. Codeswitching is interpreted to facilitate meaning and understanding of concepts which would otherwise be a challenge for the learners to grasp in the second language. The teachers' codeswitching is viewed to function as translanguaging since it happened as a deliberate and planned approach for pedagogical purposes with their bilingual learners.

Translanguaging is a theory in which named languages such as English, have material and social reality as opposed to a linguistic reality (Garcia and Kleyn, 2016). When translanguaging, teachers go beyond the notion of additive bilingualism because it simply does not refer to the addition of a separate set of language features but it acknowledges that the linguistic features and practices of bilinguals form a unitary linguistic system that interacts in dynamic ways with the other (Garcia and Kleyn, 2016). Codeswitching at School J is viewed as a basis for translanguaging because the teachers did not abandon the traditional understanding of the material and social reality of English because they know that in order to succeed academically, learners need to be equipped with English skills. However, the teachers drew on the learners' linguistic repertoire (Garcia, 2009) and used it as an advantage for the learner to absorb new content.

Codeswitching is beneficial to the learners because it bridges the gap between the teachers and the students. There was more classroom interaction between the teachers and the

students when they switched codes than when English only was used. This shows that using this teaching strategy or tool helps to yield more positive results in as far as teaching and learning is concerned. Learner participation increases when codeswitching is used and this also facilitates better understanding of the content.

One major finding as it relates to codeswitching is that it forms a big part of teaching and learning hence it cannot simply be wished away. The biggest propelling factor for codeswitching is that both teachers and learners appreciate it as a pedagogic instructional tool that has multiple benefits for the learners. It should therefore be viewed positively rather than negatively even though there is the downside of codeswitching. The negative effects of codeswitching show that it contravenes the language-in-education policy which stipulates that the LoTL at secondary level is English language. Moreover, it does not encourage learner-confidence in the LoTL. However, the benefits far outweigh the disadvantages. It is time to realise that indigenous languages do make a positive contribution towards the process of teaching and learning and this will perhaps illuminate the importance of mother-tongue education in schools.

This study argues that the current language policy in eSwatini does not meet the educational needs of the learners thus it needs to be realigned to accommodate the MT as a useful instrument for pedagogical purposes. The two models below show the existing status quo and the recommended operational model for effective teaching and learning in the eSwatini education system.

Figure 7.1 A diagram showing the current language policy for schools in eSwatini – NEDSEC, 2018.

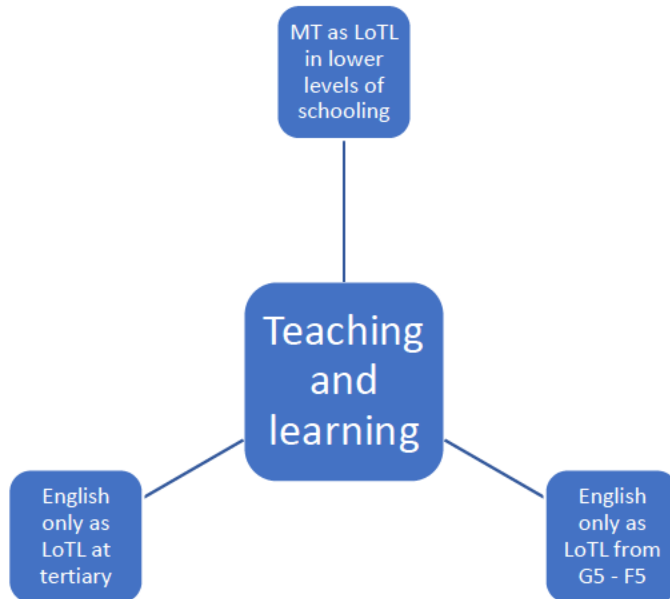
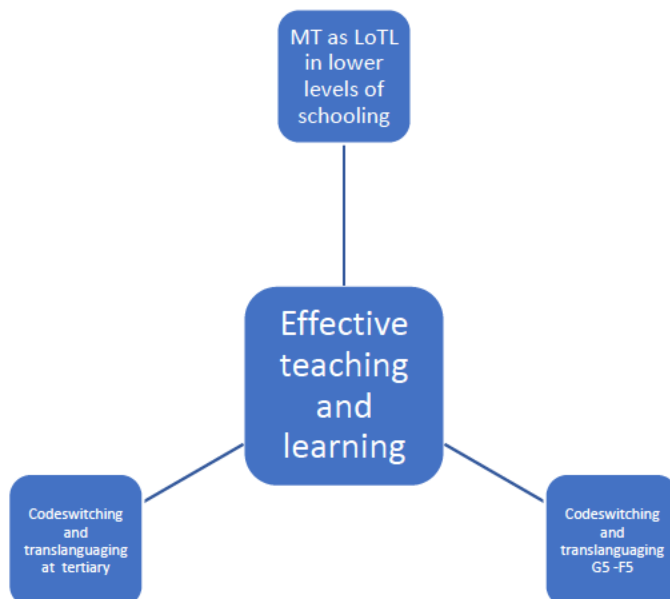


Figure 7.2 Recommended language policy for effective teaching and learning



The diagram proposes the use of codeswitching and translanguaging for pedagogical purposes from Grade 5 upwards. This study and other studies have shown that codeswitching is an effective and useful tool for teaching bilingual learners (Kamwendo and Dlamini, 2018; Garcia, 2009, Garcia and Kleyn, 2016). The current language policy does not reflect classroom realities as it excludes codeswitching as a key instructional technique. This is propounded by Ferguson (2009:234) who posits that “there is an ill-advised nature of official policies that fail to acknowledge widespread classroom realities and deny legitimacy to practices many teachers feel are necessary for effective instruction.” This of course should be done with the best interests of the learners who are at the receiving end of the classroom content. As the findings show in this study, the realities of language use as it pertains to teaching and learning, show a magnified use of codeswitching to facilitate comprehension. The proposition for the employment of translanguaging is meant to reinforce codeswitching to navigate language restrictions that may come with learning in a second language (such as English), which some learners find difficult to master. Translanguaging therefore is a useful resource to navigate restrictions that educational policies and institutions often impose on the language uses of bilingual students and break with language hierarchies that render minority languages invisible (Garcia and Wei, 2014). It is a concept that encourages language integration and alternation in reading and production activities.

Translanguaging goes beyond codeswitching because it refers to the process by which bilingual students perform bilingually in the myriad multimodal ways of classrooms – reading, writing, taking notes, discussing, signing etc. (Garcia, 2011 in Garcia and Wei, 2014). Learners are thus enabled to scaffold instruction and make sense of language and learning thus creating meaning to enhance instruction. Garcia (2009) in Duarte (2019) defines translanguaging as an act performed by bilinguals of accessing different linguistic features or various modes of what are described as autonomous languages, in order to maximise communicative potential. Garcia and Leiva (2014) in Duarte (2019) describe it as both an act of bilingual performance and pedagogical approach for systematically teaching multilinguals, by encouraging them to use the totality of their language knowledge to engage in educational learning. What these definitions imply is that

translanguaging views multilingualism in a positive light as a resource to enhance communicative potential amongst learners.

Translanguaging is met with scepticism particularly in monolingual-oriented spaces because it embraces indigenous languages as useful communicative resources (Duarte, 2019) hence there is a need for more research on the concept in order to provide insights of its benefits for learners. At the same time, translanguaging brings attention to the micro-dimension of bilingualism which will enable language scholars to engage with actual language practices and determine the linguistic repertoires of individuals and communities (Amfo and Anderson, 2019).

7.3.2 SiSwati as the language of teaching and learning

The study has revealed that the MT is not preferred over English language which provides skilled users with upward social mobility since it is the language of political and economic power. English is preferred to remain the LoTL because it is a language of wider communication, therefore it allows the learners to compete at a global level with learners from other countries for tertiary education. Basically, the learners could not imagine textbooks written in siSwati and felt this would be a huge setback in the country's education system.

The study demonstrates that English is a dominant language that enables people from different social backgrounds to communicate. Globalisation makes the world a single community of people with diverse linguistic backgrounds, and English helps to unify this global community. There is no doubt that English is a language of wider communication and a global unifier. The indigenous languages on the other hand lack power resulting in an increased level of disregard and indifference from concerned stakeholders to empower them. As a result, the study illustrates that there are misinformed and deluded points of view that lack research backing on MT education. In fact, as alluded to above, the MT is a useful tool which facilitates better understanding of the content presented. The reality is

that it would be a longer process to implement MT education due to the logistics involved such as producing new books to replace the current lot which is mostly written in exoglossic languages such as English.

Finally, vernacularisation as advanced by Cobarrubias (1983), is not viewed as a positive step that can result in an empowerment of African languages. The accepted 'norm' is that exoglossic languages especially English, should be ahead of African languages which are expected to occupy an obscured background position. This is very unfortunate and suggests that as Africans, we need to decolonise our minds (Wa Thiong'o, 2018) and begin to empower African languages.

7.3.3 Language-education-policy and learners' academic performance

When reviewing whether language had an effect on the learner's academic performance, the findings reveal that 90% of the learners believed this was true. On the other hand, only 50% of the teachers viewed language as a determining factor in a student's academic performance, while the other 50% thought language has no bearing at all on learner performance. Those teachers who believe language has no impact on learner performance are of the view that it is actually other factors that may cause a learner to perform poorly in their academic work, including learner complacency, disadvantaged social background and outright laziness. This is of concern coming from the teachers because research proves that linguistic complexity increases the difficulty of understanding content and that foreign language anxiety does have a negative impact on learner performance (Gandara & Hopkins 2010, Kamwangamalu 2010). Research also shows that learners who are L1 speakers or those with L1 competency of the LoTL, will have an advantage over L2 learners (Kamwendo, 2016). It is unfortunate that the education system in many African countries embraces exoglossic languages as the LoTL due to the fact that indigenous languages have not been adequately empowered to handle upper-level discourse. The findings were therefore inconclusive as to whether language policy does influence learners' academic performance.

7.4 STRENGTHS AND LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The use of the four language planning ideologies supplemented with the micro language planning approach helped to illuminate the realities of language policy and practice at the target school. Subjecting the data to literature control and relying intensively on these two theoretical approaches brought more clarity and meaning to the collected data.

Furthermore, the use of the case study design enabled me to focus on a single entity and study it in greater detail so as to describe and understand complex phenomena (Yin, 2014). Focusing on the single research site, which is also the workplace of the researcher, resulted in an ethnographic kind of a study and this became advantageous during data collection because the researcher was in constant contact with the participants should a need arise to seek clarity or ‘beef’ up collected data as dictated by the study objectives.

This is a qualitative study which allowed me to inductively generate conclusions of classroom realities and useful practices which facilitate effective teaching and learning. The study unearthed teachers and learners’ experiences with the language policy currently operant in eSwatini whilst also allowing them to suggest ways of improving the same, depending on whether they feel there is a need to alter it. It is a strength for the study that qualitative methods for data collection were triangulated when collecting rich, informative data from which codes and categories emerged. These are observation, interviews and document analysis (Yin, 2014). It is also advantageous that the data was collected in naturalistic settings as these minimised chances of collecting unauthentic data which could result in misleading and false findings.

On the other hand, one school was selected for purposes of conducting this study due to financial limitations and the time factor. Even though the intention was not to generalise the findings, using a single case study made it harder to test the hypothesis because the findings are contextual and specific to the participant school. The findings could apply to a similar target population elsewhere as they are enlightening however the intention was

never to generalise these. Finally, there is the issue of personal prejudices and idiosyncrasies associated with qualitative studies. To navigate this concern, triangulating the data collection methods and relying on rich descriptive data, transcribed word-for-word, facilitated a more reliable and trustworthy study.

7.5 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY TO POLICY AND PRACTICE

The study is significant to policy and practice as it informs the Ministry of Education about the incongruity rendered by the comprehensive switch to English in higher levels of learning. The Ministry should realign the education policy and further come up with policies that are cognisant of the fact that most Swati learners come from disadvantaged family backgrounds hence lack the exposure to English-rich environments, something which inevitably interferes with their mastery and skills of the English language. For example, the study revealed that some learners have a negative attitude towards English language and this is evident in their lack of motivation to converse in English, something that ultimately has a negative bearing in their academic work as well. It was also evident that some teachers do not want to assist with the speaking of English, leaving this responsibility and obligation to the English department. The Ministry must use the removal of English from being a passing subject as a basis for further policies that encourage codeswitching and translanguaging to facilitate effective teaching and learning as explained by the model in Figure 7.2. The importance of English for Swati learners cannot be undermined hence codeswitching and translanguaging should play a complementary role to facilitate learner-comprehension of content and concepts.

7.6 ORIGINAL CONTRIBUTION OF THE STUDY

Studies on language policy in eSwatini do exist such as Mordaunt (1990) and Dlodlu (2016). These two studies focus on the language policy for schools while Dlodlu (2016) zoomed in on the gatekeeping role of English in the school curriculum. Dlamini's (2008) study is focused on language policy development, arguing for a review of language policies which place indigenous languages at a disadvantage probably because they are a barrier

to social goods. Dlamini (2014) focuses on the impact of LI siSwati on the acquisition of L2 while Kamwendo and Dlamini (2016) study language planning at tertiary level. Dlamini and Kamwendo (2018) looked at codeswitching as a strategy for learning at tertiary level as well. Most of these studies were focused on the macro policy and its implementation except for the latter two (Kamwendo and Dlamini 2016, Dlamini and Kamwendo 2018) who focused also on the micro policy albeit at tertiary level. No study is focused on the micro language policy at secondary school level hence this study fills that gap.

The new knowledge generated by this study is that the current language policy for schools is not representative of learners who lack adequate skills in English which is the LoTL in eSwatini. These learners are those that come from disadvantaged social backgrounds in rural areas whereby they lack the means to be exposed to English language. This is evidenced by their lack of motivation to converse in English due to the fact that they are not adequately exposed to English-rich environments. This makes adopting strictly English for pedagogical purposes in upper grades misplaced hence the recommendation for policy realignment to officiate the employment of codeswitching and translanguaging for pedagogic purposes as illustrated by figure 7.2. The previous studies did not explore language policy and practice at secondary level hence the need for the current study.

7.6.1 New insights from this research

The findings of this study show that Swati learners experience difficulty when the language of teaching and learning is not siSwati, their indigenous language. The study established that learners are better able to express themselves in their MT and conversely understand it better than English which is not their MT. The take-home message from this observation is that siSwati must form a big part of the learning for Swati children. Even though it may prove to be costly and a long process to get to implementation stage, there must be consideration for Swati learners to be taught in siSwati as opposed to English. In the meantime, codeswitching and translanguaging must be officially adopted for all pedagogical practices. Using strictly English is not practical because the learners

expressed their inability to be fluent and conversant with grammatical structures relating to same. This is not a new phenomenon when one considers what happens in the industrialized countries in Europe and elsewhere where learners learn using their mother tongue.

Secondly, it has been established from this study that micro and macro level educational policies are different. Even though the national policy assumed an English-only approach, the reality on the ground is that this policy is only a fallacy devoid of the truths that play out inside the classroom during teaching and learning. The micro language planning approach confirmed in this study that the actual policy exists in the micro context during lesson delivery. Even though the national education policy adopts an English only approach for teaching at secondary schools, codeswitching is widespread and it has been identified as being a useful strategy that both teachers and learners can use during lesson delivery. There must be a juxtaposition of both languages for purposes of teaching and learning in order to benefit the learner hence the proposed teaching model in Figure 7.2 in this chapter.

Thirdly, as Kamwendo (2016) rightly argues, there is a tendency in Africa of denigrating the indigenous languages in favor of foreign languages especially former colonial languages that were imposed on African societies by former colonial masters. This was also evident in this study in the sense that even though both the teachers and learners expressed great love for siSwati, they were hesitant and not necessarily keen to see it empowered to the level of being a language of teaching and learning. They simply did not see that as a possibility during our lifetime and were aptly comfortable with English being used in more important settings and siSwati to serve a subsidiary kind of supporting role. One teacher even revealed that the current linguistic set up is fine because that is the way things have always been, hence there is no need to adjust a working formula.

That said as it may be, there is a need to empower indigenous languages and grant them status of serving crucial roles in society instead of them being communicative, colloquial languages in most instances. African cross-border languages such as Swahili exhibit the

potential of being used for status roles such as being the LoTL. The work of the SiSwati National Language Board (SNLB) is crucial in the revival and rejuvenation the language hence the government should continue to fund such initiatives. The truth of the matter is that all languages possess the ability to be developed into fully-fledged operational languages that can serve in important domains such as English, French etc. The lack of funding to cater for such language development is another huge obstacle in the development of indigenous languages however, collective resource mobilization can see such projects come to fruition. If African languages are empowered, people will only then begin to hold them in high esteem and revere them. UNESCO (1953) already paved the way by declaring that indigenous languages must be used for as long a time as possible because of the benefits of learning in a first language as proven by research. African organizations such as SADC and ACALAN should consolidate their efforts and attempt to empower African languages. The tendency to denigrate the indigenous languages is not empowering African languages.

7.7 RECOMMENDATIONS

The Eswatini government needs to organise infusion workshops to capacitate relevant stakeholders of newer policies which they may not be acquainted with. When this research was undertaken in June 2016, the eSwatini education policy indicated at that time that English language is not only the LoTL but it also was the passing subject. However, due to concerns about the policy and mounting pressure to have it re-evaluated, it was ultimately overturned in January 2020, fifty-two years after the country attained independence. It is important to have sensitisation workshops for the relevant stakeholders in order to facilitate a uniform transition to the new policy and further iron out any discrepancies that could arise during the implementation stage. For example, schools and institutions of higher learning need to harmonise their positions regarding the new policy because it is futile to remove English from being the passing subject in schools, only for it to be a requirement for admission to tertiary institutions. Ultimately, a review of declared new policies will help to inform all pertinent stakeholders of the success or failure of the same.

Moreover, schools need to be assisted in creating English-friendly environments by ensuring that there is a well-equipped library in each and every school in the country because English language remains a core subject and more importantly, the language of teaching and learning in eSwatini (EDSEC, 2018). The importance of English as a language of wider communication cannot be overemphasised. For this reason, it is imperative for Swati teachers and learners to have adequate skills in the LoTL. All schools should have fully-functional libraries that learners can easily access. The reading material available in the libraries must also be refurbished at reasonable intervals to give learners access to relevant and contemporary literature. This will create a solution to the problem of lack of adequate literacy skills among learners.

7.7.1 Recommendations for policy

Codeswitching as translanguaging should form the basis of the teaching and learning process in all schools in eSwatini. Codeswitching is seen as an important tool that facilitates better understanding of the content. Both teachers and learners are of the view that it enhances understanding of content hence it is recommended that instead of switching codes to English language from Grade 5 upwards, policy makers need to consider the use of both English and siSwati as languages of teaching and learning in the upper levels of schooling. As it stands, siSwati is officially used in the lower levels of schooling, with a switch to English language in Grade 5.

Secondly, there must be visible steps taken to ensure the vernacularisation of the siSwati language with a view to empower it. The 2017 directives by the government provide the foundation for the recognition of siSwati as the only MT in the country. However, in order to encourage more positive attitudes toward siSwati, the government needs to consider making it a requirement for all students in the eSwatini education system to attain a certain predetermined level of ability in siSwati. Moreover, the empowerment of siSwati should not be confined to the siSwati language board or academics only, but this must be

a collaborative effort between the University of eSwatini and all language institutions including colleges, researchers and relevant stakeholders. There must be visible and stronger calls for Swati people to take pride in using their MT and these should not be reserved only for the national siSwati day celebrations. It is a commendable effort that the siSwati language board was established in 2017 to spearhead revitalization strategies for the siSwati language but more stakeholders need to be roped in to successfully empower the siSwati language. For instance, there are traditionalists who may assist in developing and implementing oral traditions which may not be covered by the academics who solely focus on developing the orthography, lexicon or a siSwati dictionary. Oral traditions will further help explore the cultural aspect which could assist in revitalizing the sentimental value attached to the siSwati language.

To add to these, the siSwati board, together with the Ministry of Education should ensure that they present periodic reports on the initiatives meant to empower siSwati. For instance, the siSwati day celebrations should be a platform to reflect on past successes and pitfalls in order to inform new reviews and ensure continuity in strengthening the language. Of course, there are also financial implications to these reviews and novel strategies informed by previous successes or failures hence why this should be a collaborative effort between the government and relevant stakeholders. The recommendations here are in no way meant to downplay the efforts that the eSwatini government together with other stakeholders currently engage in to promote the value of siSwati but these are meant to highlight new strategies that could help end the marginalisation of siSwati.

In a nutshell, there must be an official, clear admissions policy for tertiary institutions now that English is no longer a passing subject. In the past, English was a factor for a student to be admitted at tertiary level. Now, the government needs to consult and make the necessary pronouncement on this issue because currently, there is a lot of speculation on whether or not EGCSE learners who fail to pass English in their exit examination will be admissible for higher education or not.

7.7.2 Recommendations for further study

This study on language policy and practice was undertaken at a secondary school in the Manzini region. For future research, it is recommended that a larger study involving secondary schools from all the four regions of the country be done. In the same vein, a study of this nature could be done at primary school level in order to ascertain language policy and practice issues as they relate to teaching and learning. This would yield diversified findings to inform policy makers about pertinent issues on language policy and planning in eSwatini schools. There is also the dearth of knowledge in the area of language policy and practice in eSwatini hence such studies will add to the existing body of knowledge on the subject.

Moreover, this is a qualitative case study. A larger study making use of the mixed method approach is recommended for future research. Using both quantitative and qualitative research methods will lead to more informative and reliable findings which are crucial not only for policy makers but for teachers and learners as well.

7.8 CONCLUSION

The chapter has summarised the findings of the study while also citing the strengths and limitations of the research. Recommendations for policy and further research are discussed. This study is contextualised in one secondary school in the Manzini region of Eswatini and it investigates language policy and practice matters relating to teaching and learning. It involves revisiting policy documents, observing practice and interviewing the key stakeholders in implementing policy in a school setting, the teachers and learners. The study revealed that even though the country's language policy for schools is good, codeswitching is an instructional practice that forms a big part of teaching and learning. It is viewed positively as enhancing teaching and learning because it brings clarity on content that would otherwise be difficult for the learner to grasp and internalise. For this reason, therefore, the official macro policy has been modified in the micro context which is School J to navigate teaching and learning. It is concluded that learners experience

difficulty in grasping content presented to them in English language. It is recommended that the Ministry of Education and Training (MoET) revisit the language policy for schools to ensure that its implementation does not disadvantage the learners.

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Appendix A: Ethical Clearance



08 March 2018

Mrs Siphwe Monicah Dladu (214581382)
School of Education
Edgewood Campus

Dear Mrs Dladu,

Protocol reference number: HSS/0169/0180

Project Title: Language Policy and Practice at a Secondary school in Manzini: The case of Teaching and Learning in Form 4

Approval Notification – Expedited Application

In response to your application received 01 March 2018, the Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee has considered the abovementioned application and the protocol has been granted **FULL APPROVAL**.

Any alteration/s to the approved research protocol i.e. Questionnaire/Interview Schedule, Informed Consent Form, Title of the Project, Location of the Study, Research Approach and Methods must be reviewed and approved through the amendment /modification prior to its implementation. In case you have further queries, please quote the above reference number.

PLEASE NOTE: Research data should be securely stored in the discipline/department for a period of 5 years.

The ethical clearance certificate is only valid for a period of 3 years from the date of issue. Thereafter Recertification must be applied for on an annual basis.

I take this opportunity of wishing you everything of the best with your study.

Yours faithfully


.....
Professor Shenuka Singh (Chair)

/ms

Cc Supervisor: Professor Ayub Shik
Cc Academic Leader Research: Dr SB Khoza
Cc School Administrator: Ms Typer Khumalo

Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee

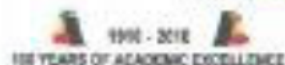
Professor Shenuka Singh (Chair)

Weetville Campus, Govan Mbeki Building

Postal Address: Private Bag 354301, Durban 4004

Telephone: +27 (0) 31 260 3587/3582/4887 Facsimile: +27 (0) 31 260 4808 Email: uhsr@ukzn.ac.za / ethics@ukzn.ac.za / ms@ukzn.ac.za

Website: www.ukzn.ac.za



Faculty Centres:  Edgewood  Howard College  Medical School  Pietermaritzburg  Westville

Appendix B: Consent letter to Director, Education



1 November, 2017

The Director

Ministry of Education and Training

P. O. Box 976

Mbabane

Dear Sir/ Madam

Re: Request to collect data for educational research at Mbekelweni Lutheran High School in the Manzini region.

I am Dlodlu Sphiwe, a teacher at [REDACTED] High school. I am currently pursuing my doctoral studies in *Language Education* with the University of Kwa-Zulu Natal in Durban. I hereby request for permission to collect data from the above-mentioned school. The topic for my intended area of study is “*Language Policy and Practice at a Secondary School in Manzini: the case of Teaching and Learning in Form 4.*” I intend doing observation with a Form 4 class and interviewing six teachers and ten learners on the above-mentioned subject.

For further information on any matter pertaining to this study, you may contact my supervisor or myself. My contact details are:

Email: sphiwedlodlu@yahoo.com

Cell: +268 7613 5053

Supervisor's contacts;

Phone no: +27 31 260 3436

Email: sheika@ukzn.ac.za

Thank you in advance for your time.

Yours faithfully

A solid black rectangular box used to redact the signature of the sender.

Dludlu Sipiwe Monicah

Appendix C: Consent letter for the head-teacher



1 November 2017

The Head teacher

██████████ High School

Dear Madam

RE: Permission to collect data from your school

I am Dlodlu Monicah Sipiwe, a PhD candidate studying Language Education at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, Edgewood campus, in Durban. The topic for my research is *“Language Policy and Practice at a Secondary School in Manzini: the case of Teaching and Learning in Form 4.”*

I humbly seek for permission to collect data at your school. I intend to interview ten learners and six teachers in your school. I further request to do observation with a Form 4 class. The information gained will be highly confidential, and useful to the schools, teachers and policy makers in the country. For further enquiries kindly contact my supervisor Prof. Ayub Sheik at Edgewood campus of the University of KwaZulu-Natal, at +2731 260 3436 (w) or electronically at Sheika@ukzn.ac.za.

I greatly appreciate your support to pursue my study. Thank you.

Yours sincerely



Dludlu Monicah Sipiwe

Appendix D: Permission letter from School administrator



Mbekelweni Lutheran High School

P.O Box 198 Kwaluseni M201, Swaziland

Tel / Fax: 2548 0006

Email: mbekelwenihigh@gmail.com

November 2, 2017

To: whom it may concern

Ref: Permission to collect data

This serves to confirm that Dlodlu Sipiwe Monicah has been granted permission to conduct her research in the school. Her topic is, "Language Policy and Practice at a Secondary School in Manzini; a Case of Teaching and Learning in Form 4".

Yours Faithfully,


T.A Nxumalo Mrs.
Acting Principal.



Appendix E: letter for participants



UNIVERSITY OF
KWAZULU-NATAL
INYUVESI
YAKWAZULU-NATALI

3 November 2017

Dear participant

My name is Dlodlu Monicah Siphiwe. I am a PhD candidate studying at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, Edgewood campus in Durban under the supervision of Professor Ayub Sheik.

The topic for my intended study is “Language Policy and Practice at a Secondary School in Manzini: The Case of Teaching and Learning in Form 4.”

I hereby request you to partake in this research by giving an oral interview whereby we shall be discussing on the subject mentioned herein. I will further request you to form part of a focus group to discuss this topic further with other participants.

Please note that:

- Your confidentiality is guaranteed, as your input will not be attributed to you in person but reported only as a population member opinion.
- Any information given by you cannot be used against you and the collected data will be used for purposes of this research only.
- Data will be stored in secure storage and will only be destroyed after 5 years.
- You have a choice to participate, not participate or stop participating in anytime during the research. You will not be penalised for taking such an action.

- Your involvement is purely for academic purposes only and there are no financial benefits.

For further information on any matter pertaining to this study, feel free to contact either me or my supervisor. My contact details are as follows:

Email: sphiwedludlu@yahoo.com

Cell: +268 7613 5053

Supervisor's contacts:

Phone no: +27 31 260 3436

Email: sheika@ukzn.ac.za

Thank-you for your contribution to this research.

Yours Faithfully



Dludlu Sphiwe Monicah

DECLARATION

I (full names of participant) hereby confirm that I understand the contents of this document and the

nature of the research project. I give my consent to participating in the research project. I understand that I am at liberty to withdraw from the project at any time, should I so desire.

SIGNATURE OF PARTICIPANT

DATE

.....

.....

Appendix F: Parent’s consent letter



UNIVERSITY OF
KWAZULU-NATAL
INYUVESI
YAKWAZULU-NATALI

3 November 2017

Dear parent

My name is Dlodlu Monicah Siphwe, a teacher at [REDACTED] High School. I am currently advancing my doctoral studies at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, Edgewood campus in Durban under the supervision of Professor A. Sheik. My research topic is “Language Policy and Practice at a Secondary School in Manzini; the Case of Teaching and Learning in Form 4”.

In accordance with the requirements for conducting research at UKZN, I hereby request permission to interview your child, on the above-mentioned topic. The interview will last about 30 minutes. Please note that you are at liberty to allow or disallow your child to partake in the research study. There is no penalty for refusing to partake. Moreover, the identity of the child will be protected using a pseudonym such as a number should the findings be broadcasted in the media. All views and opinions shared by the child will be stored safely by relevant authorities at UKZN after which these will be destroyed after a period of 5 years. The learner is therefore partaking in the study out of her/his own freewill and is at liberty to withdraw at any given time during the course of the study without and penalization.

Please take note of the following:

- All views and opinions shared will be solely used for the purposes of this research and nothing else.
- Relevant authorities at UKZN will store all views and opinions safely for a period of 5 years.
- The aim of the study is to ascertain learners' views pertaining to the current language policy and practice in schools in the country.
- Please indicate your consent below;

YES

NO

For further information on any matter pertaining to this study, feel free to contact either me or my supervisor. My contact details are as follows:

Email: sphiwedludlu@yahoo.com

Cell: +268 7613 5053

Supervisor's contacts:

Phone no: +27 31 260 3436

Email: sheika@ukzn.ac.za

Thank you for your contribution to this research.

Yours Faithfully



Dludlu Sphiwe Monicah

Appendix G: SiSwati version of parent's consent form



UNIVERSITY OF
KWAZULU-NATAL
INYUVESI
YAKWAZULU-NATALI

3 Lweti 2017

Mtali

Libito lami ngingu Monicah Sipiwe Dlodlu. Nginguthishela esikolweni i- [REDACTED] [REDACTED]. Kungumanje ngichuba tifundvo tami enyuvesi yaKwazulu-Natali, eEdgewood campus ngaphansi kwathishela wami longu ngcongcoshe A. Sheik. Empeleni ngenta luhlolo lolunesihloko lesitsi *‘Umgomo nekusentjetiswa kweluwimi lwekufundzisa esikolweni lesiphakeme kaManzini: luhlangotsi lwekufundza nekufundzisa ebangeni lelishumi nakunye.’*

Kuhambisana nemtsetfo waleNyuvesi, ngicela imvume yakho kukhulumisana nemntfwana wakho longu..... ngalesihloko lesingehla. Sitawukhulumisana sikhatsi lesingaba sigamu seli-awa. Uvumelekile kutsi ungamvumela noma umalele umntfwana wakho kutsi angenele lolucwaningo.

Kute sijeziro latasitfolo nemntfwana nangabe akhetsa kungalungeneli loluhlolo. Kani futsi nakungenteka lusakatwe emaphephandzabeni lolucwaningo, umntfwana wakho utawuvikeleka ngekutsi ligama lakhe litawufihlwa, kusetjentiswe inombolo esikhundleni seligama lakhe.

Yonkhe imibono latasipha yona ngeke ibekwe ebaleni kepha itawufihlwa baphatsi labafanele khona eNyuvesi eNatali.

Umntfwana wakho utalungenela loluhlolo ngekutsandza kwakhe akacindzettelwa. Kunjalo nje kute nenzuzo latayitfolo yena ngekuvuma kungenela lolucwaningo

Ngicela unake naku lokulandzelako ;

- Yonkhe imibono letfolakele itawusetjentiselwa tinjongo talolucwaningo kuphela, hhayi lokunye.
- Lonkhe lwati lasinike lona umntfwana wakho lutawugcinwa iminyaka ize ibe sihlanu enyuvesi bese ke iyalahlwa.
- Lolucwaningo luhlose kutfolala imivo yebantfwana besikolwa mayelana nekufundziswa baphindze bahlolwe kusetjentiswa lulwimi lwesingisi.
- Uma umvumela umntfwana wakho ngicela ukhombise ngekumaka lapha ngentasi:

Ngiyavuma

Angivumi

Uma kungenteka kube khona umbuto lonawo mayelana nalolucwaningo, ungatsintsa mine noma thishela wami. Sitfolakala ku:

1. Mrs M.S. Dlodlu

Email: sphiwedlodlu@yahoo.com

Tel: 25480006 (work)

Cell: 00268 7613 5053

2. Professor A. Sheik

Main Administration & Tutorial Building

University of KwaZulu-Natal

Edgewood Campus

Contact details: Tel: +27 (0)31-260 3531

E-mail: Sheika@ukzn.ac.za

Siyabonga kubambisana natsi.

Ngimi lotitfobako



Dludlu Siphwe Monicah

Incwadzi yekuvuma noma kungavumi kwemtali

Mine..... (ligama
lemtali)), umtali wa.....,
ngiyavuma / angivumi (khansela kunye) kutsi alungenele lolucwaningo. Ngiyifundzile
lencwadzi futsi ngiyacondza kutsi angicindzetelwa kumvumela umntfwana wami kutsi
alungenele.

Appendix H: Turn-it-in report

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Appendix I: Letter from editor

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Kate Efomi, Copywriter
Efomi Ltd
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kate@efomi.com

1st December 2020

To whom it may concern,

This letter is to confirm that I have proofread/edited the thesis entitled 'Language Policy and Practice at a Secondary School in Manzini: The Case of Teaching and Learning in Form 4' by Dlodlu Siphwe Monicah, Student# 214581382, supervised by Professor A. Sheik.

Yours



Kate Efomi, Copywriter
BA(Hons) English Studies (Literature and Language), University of Nottingham.

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Appendix J: Interview questions for teachers

Teachers` Biographical Data

Name (Optional):

Gender:

Male:

Female:

No of years in the current school:

No: of years as a teacher:

1. What do you think of the language policy of eSwatini?
2. What are your views pertaining to the education policy in schools in eSwatini?
3. Generally, how do you implement the language policy? Do you codeswitch during teaching and learning?
4. What is your view - is there a relationship between the way teachers implement the language policy and the learners' performance in schools in eSwatini?
5. How is the performance of your learners in English language over the years?
6. Share with us how you interpret and further implement the education policy in your daily teaching.
7. What reasons do you have for interpreting the education policy the way you do?
8. Do you believe that the education policy in eSwatini schools serves in the best interest of the learners? Why? Why not?
9. How do your learners perform in tests and assessments? How would you explain their performance and relate it to the language policy in the country?
10. Is there a way that could be done to help improve learner performance in schools?
11. What is your own perception of the language policy in schools? Do you believe it is perfect as it is or would it improve the learners' performance if it were to be modified or changed?
12. Do you think that think learners in your school possess adequate English skills to grasp content delivered to them?
13. Please comment on the use of the LoTL by learners in your school.
14. What is the level of adherence to the national language policy?
15. Do you think the language policy is effectively helping the learners to perform better academically?

Appendix K: Learners' interview questions

Learner's biographical data

Name: (optional)

Gender:

Male:

Female:

Class:

Learners' interview guide

1. What is your view of English being the LoTL in eSwatini?
2. How do you feel about being taught in English Language?
3. How do you feel about English being the passing subject?
4. Please explain how you perform in your English subject?
5. Please share with us your experience of being taught in English language? Have there been any challenges?
6. How does it benefit you to have adequate or good English language skills?

7. Does it disadvantage you in any way if you don't have adequate English language skills or if you fail English?
8. How often do you get exposure to English language material in your life?
9. Does exposure to English language help you in passing the subject better?
10. Would you say you get adequate exposure to English language?
11. How important is English language to you as a learner?
12. Do you like English? Why? Why not?
13. How important is English in the education sector in your country? How important is English in your own school?
14. Do you think your school is doing enough to help you have good English skills?
15. Do you make efforts to have good English skills? How?
16. How do learners perform in English language in your class?
17. How do learners perform in siSwati in your class?
18. Do learners perform better in siSwati or English?
19. How would you feel if siSwati was to be used as your LoTL instead of English?

Thank you for agreeing to take part in this interview.

Appendix L: Observation checklist

Inside the classroom

1. What is the language used during teaching and learning?
(siSwati / English / both).
2. Is there any codeswitching?
3. Is codeswitching done by both teachers and the learners?
4. What is the reason for codeswitching?
5. What is the level of the adherence to the language policy for schools – by both the teacher and the learners?
6. When responding to questions, which language do learners use?
7. Does the teacher use multiple teaching methods e.g., group discussions? If yes, what language do learners use during pair/groupwork?
8. Availability of any English reading material for learners.
9. Are there any teaching aids in English language e.g., visuals such as video/TV/audio?
10. How do learners respond to the content presented to them in English?
11. What is the general level of English proficiency among the learners?

Outside of class

12. What is the language of communication outside of the classroom – for both teachers and learners?
13. What language is given more prominence between English and siSwati?
14. Is there any availability of resource material e.g., magazines, novels to enhance proficiency in English?
15. Is there adherence to the national language policy?
16. Are there any methods used to enforce the speaking of English in the school? If yes, what are these and how are they implemented?
17. What is the language culture in this school?

