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LANGUAGE HARMONIZATION IN SOUTH AFRICA: PRACTICES AND ATTITUDES OF UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

By

Leketi Makalela

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ABSTRACT

LANGUAGE HARMONIZATION IN SOUTH AFRICA: PRACTICES AND ATTITUDES OF UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

By

Leketi Makalela

Language harmonization is perceived by some linguists as an alternative route toward effective use of indigenous African languages in high prestige positions. This study investigated the feasibility of uniting orthographies of Sotho language varieties (a harmonization process) among student-participants who speak Sepedi, Setswana, and Sesotho. In order to assess degrees of mutual intelligibility, a determining factor for harmonization, practices involving interdialect conversations, reading judgments, and speaker attitudes were used as core variables.

A within-subject experimental design was conducted involving six procedures: pre-task questionnaire, focus group discussion, information gap activity, reading judgment test, post-task questionnaire, and delayed interviews. First, frequency counts, chi-square, and one-way ANOVA analyses showed positive attitudes toward harmonization with no statistically significant differences across the language varieties. Second, a matched t- test revealed that the intervention methods (interdialect conversations and reading tasks) increased the positive attitude ratings in the posttest questionnaire with statistically significant mean differences. Another one-way ANOVA analysis of reading judgment scores showed mutual comprehension of each of the three language-based texts and the sampled harmonized text.

Results from qualitative data analyses showed a general support for the feasibility of harmonizing Sotho orthographies. First, content analysis revealed arguments for harmonization, which included, among others, national unity, protection against extinction, wider readership, and reduction of illiteracy. Arguments against harmonization, on the other hand, were the lack of market value for African languages, fear of loss of identity, and the possibility of creating an artificial language. It was noteworthy, however, that there was no disagreement on whether these Sotho language varieties are indeed mutually intelligible.

Discourse analysis based on Grice's (1975) rubrics of conversational maxims showed that there are high degrees of mutual intelligibility. The maxims (relation, quality, quantity, and manner) were observed, and implicatures were appropriately inferred from illocutions. Personal observations of the interactions also confirmed that the speakers' communicative patterns resembled those of speakers of the same language.

In brief, the high degree of mutual intelligibility in both written and spoken registers provided adequate evidence that Sepedi, Setswana, and Sesotho befit the category of dialects of the same language, not distinct languages as proscribed in the Constitution. Given the history of linguistic differentiation and the current need to develop and promote the use of indigenous African languages in high prestige domains, the study concluded with recommendations for harmonization of orthographies, re-categorization of Sotho to represent the current three varieties and a Constitutional amendment reducing the number of official languages. In this way, indigenous African languages can be used with minimal costs and delays in key areas such as the media of education within the aegis of the African Renaissance.

DEDICATION

To all scholars dedicated to the revival of indigenous African languages and their use in

high prestige positions in African societies.

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my studies. Dr. Luanga Kasanga, my friend and former colleague, constantly encouraged me to think big and prioritize. I also had student friends at Michigan State University who touched my student life when it heavily snowed. Thank you, Spartans!

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I am grateful to God for spiritual guidance throughout the tough but rewarding adventure of a PhD degree. To the Makalela ancestors: *Dinoko tša ga makalela ka dipakele, lena baphalalaborwa ba ga malatji bollanoto ke yo Leketi la ra mapulana, yena lebaba la masetlapelo a bo rare, a re o e apere kobomabiloko, o fihleletše magomong a yona Thutokgologomang- ka- nna.* (Act of pouring libation: Dear porcupine venerators, Leketi has finally attained a terminal degree).

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

It has been nearly a decade since the South African Constitution made provisions for use and promotion of indigenous African languages, which were historically marginalized in all public domains and high prestige positions (RSA, 1996). Recognition of the indigenous languages as official languages was borne out of the language struggle that saw a consistent domination of these languages by Dutch, English, and Afrikaans throughout a history of more than 300 years. Inclusion of the indigenous African languages in the Constitution therefore formed part and parcel of the democratization process that sought to extend people's rights and freedoms as well as to guarantee their human dignity in the post-Apartheid dispensation (Department of National Education, 1994). There has been, however, very little, if any, progress made regarding the use of these indigenous languages in education, government administration, the media, and other public spheres. On the contrary, the historically advantaged languages- English and Afrikaans- have continued to be dominant languages of Parliament (Phaswana, 2003) and education, despite the Constitutional commitments to multilingualism and specifically to official use of 11 languages as stated: Sepedi, Setswana, Sesotho, IsiZulu, IsiXhosa, IsiNdebele, SiSwati, Xitsonga, Tshivenda, English, and Afrikaans (RSA, 1996).

According to Alexander (2001), failure to implement language provisions in the Constitution has had negative consequences for the education of African children and has continued over time to put these children on an unequal footing with their English and Afrikaans counterparts. Such unequal treatment of school going children in the post-Apartheid language practice is poignantly reported as follows:

It is an amazing fact that South Africa, in spite of its modernist pretensions, is one

of the few countries worldwide where at least primary school children are not

taught through the medium of the mother tongue or a language of immediate

community... It is an equally amazing fact that within the South African context

the only children who receive mother tongue medium education virtually from

cradle to the tertiary level are the minority English and Afrikaans-speaking

children of the country. Children born to parents whose home language is one or

other African language; i.e., the vast majority of our children, are doomed to be

taught through a medium of the second language (mostly English) from the third

or fourth year of school, mostly by teachers for whom this medium is at best a

second language but often only a third language (Alexander, 2001, p.16-17).

This statement reflects a growing concern that the new socio-political

dispensation has reproduced the linguistic status quo of the past that traditionally favored

speakers of Afrikaans and English. Reproduction of such inequalities of the past is seen

to be undermining the efforts of democratization and to creating a social paradox at the

time of political shift toward Africanization (referred to as the "Renaissance era"), which

advocates development of Africa through integration. For some linguists, success of the

African Renaissance is deeply rooted in the revival of linguistic heritage as well as in the

cultural cohesiveness embedded in the indigenous languages of the masses (e.g.,

Alexander, 2004; Prah, 2001).

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The lack of visible progress on the use of indigenous African languages and the ideology of the African Renaissance have increasingly revived the debate on what has come to be known as the Nhlapo-Alexander proposal. Realizing that there were ethno-linguistic divisions among speakers of indigenous African languages in the 1940's, Jacob Nhlapo proposed unification of Sotho languages (Sepedi, Setswana, and Sesotho) and Nguni languages (IsiZulu, IsiXhosa, IsiNdebele, and Siswati). He believed that these languages were mutually intelligible and that they could be unified in writing. In the late 1980's, Alexander (1989) restated Nhlapo's proposal when recommending harmonization of the orthographies of mutually intelligible languages as an alternative path to resolving the twin language question of multilingualism and use of indigenous languages in high prestige positions. The proposal was premised on the assumption that arbitrary linguistic divisions of the past have exaggerated "multilingualism," which impedes prospects for equal use of African languages in official domains. For this reason, South African multilingualism has been regarded as a challenge that needs to be re-conceptualized (e.g., Makalela, 2005; Makoni, 2003, Matubatuba, 2002). Matubatuba (2002) offers a categorical view on the multilingual complexity as stated below:

> Language power struggle hinders and delays progress from a simple task of choosing a medium of instruction for Grade 1 to the choice of a national language for official and business purposes. This boils down to the fact that some linguistic groups of South Africa still exist in separate political and puristic pockets though they co-exist in all social settings such as education, residential and government (Matubatuba, 2002, p.252).

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Matubatuba's argument here presents not only a comprehensive view of the problem of multilingualism in the post-Apartheid period, but also provides grounds for the need to harmonize mutually intelligible dialects, which have been elevated to the status of languages. Whereas language harmonization is often construed in different contexts to mean a variety of things (see for example, Nakin, 2002), the harmonization of languages as proposed for the South African context is generally understood to mean re-standardization of the *written* varieties within Nguni and Sotho language clusters so that lexical, terminological and orthographic conventions could proceed on a convergent path (Heugh, 2002).

This study sought to investigate the harmonization proposal as an alternative route to resolving the complex multilingual situation in South Africa. In order to test the feasibility of the harmonization project, the study focused on the degrees of mutual intelligibility among Sotho dialects, which are Sepedi, Setswana, and Sesotho, and the attitudes of native speakers about these dialects within this language group. In order to provide a broader perspective on the harmonization question investigated in the study, the following section describes the socio-political context that reflects a history of language struggle and arbitrary linguistic divisions that date as far back as 1652 when the crew for the Dutch East Indian Company settled for the first time in the Cape.

SOCIO-HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Research in South African language policy and practices covers a period of more than 300 years that begins with the arrival of Dutch settlers in 1652 (Alexander, 1989;

Kamwangamalu, 2001; Kloss, 1978; Malherbe, 1977). A plethora of studies categorizes the language policy of South Africa as one with a history replete with linguistic discrimination that was characterized by two main factors: (a) exclusive use of exogenous European languages and (b) marginal use of indigenous African languages in high prestige positions of power and information (e.g., Makoni, 2003; Phaswana, 2000). Furthermore, the indigenous African languages were consistently divided by elevating dialects of the same language into distinctive languages with differentiated orthographic and spelling representations. These divisions were strengthened under the aegis of the Bantustan homeland system, which was based on the Apartheid policy of separate development. As a result of these underlying socio-political forces, linguistic practices in South Africa became fraught with a vicious language struggle between the indigenous African people and the European settlers (e.g., Reagan, 2001), on the one hand and linguistic tribal enclaves within the indigenous African languages, on the other hand.

The South African language struggle can be classified under five broad historical themes in the order discussed below: (a) Dutchification period that began with the arrival of the Dutch settlers in 1652, (b) Anglicization period beginning with the invasion of the English in 1795, (c) Afrikanerization that started with Afrikaner nationalism in 1925 and endorsement of Apartheid policy in 1948, (d) the 1976 Soweto Students Uprising and (e) the democratization period that resulted in the multilingual policy of 1996 (see Kamwangamalu, 2001). All these periods uncover the complex language struggle in ways that connect to the harmonization proposal.

The Dutchification period started with the arrival of the Dutch settlers through the Dutch East Indian Company on Table Bay on April 6, 1652. The settlers wanted to use

the Cape region as their refreshment station and as a temporary stoppage area on their way to India. Troup (1972) presents the initial mission of the Dutch as follows:

Some five years after the wreck of the Harlem and 154 years after Vasco da Gama's voyage, Jan van Riebeeck, a tough, much traveled and very able ship's surgeon, set from Holland with three small ships, Goede Hoep, the Dramedaris and the Reiger, to found at the Cape "a depot of provisions," to enable ships of the company to refresh themselves with the vegetables, meat, water, and other necessities, by which means the sick on board may be restored to health (Troup, 1972, p.40).

In spite of the mission to settle temporarily at the Cape, the Dutch eventually settled there permanently and moved inland. As they moved further inland, they first clashed with the Khoe and San people who had inhabited the area for approximately 120 000 years and later with the Bantu speaking communities who had settled mainly in the upper regions some time before 800 A.D (Webb, 2002). The Dutch were not interested in learning the languages of the indigenous people. Instead, they used interpreters to communicate with the people who later became slaves. The Khoe and San languages were disregarded and castigated as the "clucking of turkeys" (Alexander, 1989, p.21). According to Troup (1972), the settlers had a condescending attitude toward the San languages because they had a "small vocabulary and strange clicks" (p.22). As a result, the languages of the indigenous people were denigrated, deemed inferior to be learned and used for official communication between the Europeans and the Africans.

The Dutch settlers had a further mission of changing and replacing the African social reality with a foreign culture and ideology. To this end, they imposed their own language on the local people and consequently used it as the language of learning and teaching in the European modeled schools. Language was, in this connection, enforced as a tool of re-socialization (see Alexander, 1989, 1995). According to Marteens (1998), as quoted in Phaswana (2000), there were other languages of the Cape such as Portuguese and Malay-Portuguese. The former was spoken by a few slaves from Angola, Mozambique, and Madagascar, who were brought to the Cape by Portuguese settlers as indentured slaves. The latter came from Malaysia as indentured slaves who were used for cheap labor in the "found" refreshment station. Because the languages of the slaves began to threaten Dutch as the sole dominant language of the Cape, the Dutch settlers decreed the use of "Dutch only" in all official domains. This period marks the first known language policy in South Africa.

The second phase is the Anglicization period that involved the invasion of the English settlers for the first time in 1795 and secondly in 1802. It was in the second invasion that the English were vigorously engaged in the Anglicization of the country where the English language was enforced as the language of use in the government business and other public spheres like education. In order to succeed in spreading the use of English throughout the country, the English sought to reduce Dutch, which had been the sole official language since 1652, in all spheres of life (Kloss, 1978). In this connection, language was also used as an ideological tool to entrench the Anglicization mission sanctioned under the auspices of the British imperialism that targeted African colonies for its expansion. Among other factors, competition for linguistic domination

between the two colonizing groups saw a settler-settler clash between the Dutch and British that resulted in the Anglo-Boer War, which lasted from 1889 to1902. What is unique about this Dutch-British rivalry for domination is that both colonizing groups had a common mission that had far-reaching linguistic implication for the indigenous languages, i.e., de-Africanization through marginalization of the indigenous African languages (see Kamwangamalu, 1997; Heugh, 2002; Malherbe, 1977). These expositions reveal that indigenous African languages were consistently inhibited as means of expression in government, business, and educational affairs from the 17th century to the turn of the 20th century due to political control based on colonialism.

The role of missionary linguists in the 19th century was of linguistic importance in ways that provide a context for the harmonization proposal. The missionaries were the first to create the orthographies of indigenous African languages because they wanted to Christianize the natives and to translate the Bible into these languages. According to Doke (1993), "The period concerning about 1830 down to the present day became a period of intensive monograph study of the Bantu languages, a period in which almost all the research and recording work was done by the missionaries"(p. 34). These missionaries include Isaac Hughes (1789-1870), and Andrew Spaarman (1747-1820) who respectively developed Setswana and IsiXhosa (called "Kafir language" at that time). According to Miti (2002), IsiXhosa and Setswana were the first Southern African languages that were reduced to writing by the missionaries. IsiXhosa was put to writing in 1826 by the missionaries from the Glasgow mission who used the English alphabet while Setswana orthography was developed in 1837 by James Archbell in 1841 by the French, Eugene Casalis, and in 1858 by David Livingstone (Miti, 2002). IsiZulu, which is

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a sister dialect of IsiXhosa, was developed by American missionaries in 1849; Sepedi—a sister dialect of Setswana- was put to writing by the German Lutheran missionaries. This brief history reveals that indigenous languages were reduced to writing by non-mother tongue speakers of European origin who, according to Banda (2002), had no knowledge of the history and relationship that existed between the languages. This led to elevation of dialects of the same language to the status of fully-fledged languages with orthographies that coincided with the missionaries' mother tongues. Banda (2002) contends that the European colonialists and missionaries treated African sounds as if they were from a European phonetic system. A prototypical example of orthographic "disinvention" (Makoni, 2003) can be seen with different orthographies of Sesotho dialect. Sesotho of Lesotho and Sesotho of Free State to date still have different orthographies even though they are the same dialect of the Sotho language. For many linguists (e.g., Mansour, 1993), missionaries have exaggerated the number of actual languages spoken today in South Africa. Arguments for harmonization of differentiated orthographic representations and spelling systems are rooted in this context of exaggerated multilingualism, which resulted in a proliferation of many indigenous languages (Prah, 2001, Alexander, 1989).

The third socio-historical phase in the language practices of South Africa is the Afrikanerization movement that emerged in 1914 (Mbeki, 2005) and reached its peak in 1948 when the nationalist government took power and instituted Apartheid policies of separate development. When the formally known as "Union of South Africa" was declared in 1910, Dutch was used as a second official language side by side with English. The Afrikaners who spoke a Dutch creole, Afrikaans, protested against the bilingual official language system that excluded their own mother tongue. They insisted that their

language should have official recognition until it was finally able to replace Dutch in 1925 as the second official language side by side with English. According to Marteens (1998) as quoted in Phaswana (2000), Afrikaans emerged as a result of slave-master and slave-slave conversations, which were derogatorily referred to as "kitchen Dutch." Over time, however, Afrikaans became a unifying symbol of nationalism among the Dutch descendants, and it was promoted and officially declared a fully-fledged official language above all the indigenous African languages. At the beginning of the official Apartheid policies in 1948, the National Party ensured that Afrikaans became a medium of learning and teaching, side by side with English, which still had its official status secured. Like their predecessors, the Afrikaners had a mission of reducing the domination of English in public spheres. But far beyond their battle against English, they wanted to reduce Africans to linguistic-tribal enclaves under the pretext of separate development ideology. Such linguistic tribalization was enforced in accord with the architect of Apartheid, Dr H. F Verwoerd's "blue print of Apartheid" (Smitherman, 2000). Dr H. F Verwoerd decreed that "Africans who speak different languages must live in separate quarters" (Alexander, 1989, p. 21). Furthermore, a Group Areas Act was passed with the aim of teaching a Black child that "he was a foreigner when he [was] in White South Africa, or at best stateless; that equality with Europeans was not for him; that there was no place for him in the European community above the level of certain forms of labour" (Malherbe, 1977, p. 546).

In order to teach Black children to feel that they were foreigners in South Africa, foreign languages were promoted at the expense of the indigenous languages. Systematic exclusion of indigenous languages meant that the indigenous majority population was

reduced to the position of a social minority in their own country and that they would

"enjoy" the same status as legal and illegal migrants in Europe (Alexander, 2001, p.9).

Using the Bantustan homeland system, the Apartheid government embarked on

exploiting the ethno-linguistic boundaries that had been arbitrarily drawn by the early

missionary linguists (i.e., the nine indigenous languages) and entrenched dialects of the

same language as different languages. Ten Bantustan homelands were created in

accordance with each of the dialects that had been elevated to the status of languages by

the missionaries as follows: (1) Lebowa (Sepedi) (2) Bophutatswana (Setswana), (3)

Qwaqwa (Sesotho), (4) Kwa-Zulu (IsiZulu), (5) Kwa-Ndebele (IsiNdebele), (6)

Kangwane (siSwati), (7) Transkei (IsiXhosa), (8) Ciskei (IsiXhosa), (9) Venda

(Tshivenda), (10) Gazankulu (Xitsonga). It was only IsiXhosa that had two homelands

that were divided by the Kei River (Ciskei and Transkei). While the laws of

disintegration during the Apartheid era were formulated on the belief that the people of

South Africa had different cultures and languages, the general principle of divide and rule

was the main driving force. Jokweni (2002) portrays this dominant mode of thinking

when stating that "it is ... a fact that the real cause for disintegration was fear of unity or

integration of any form among Africans, as it was always perceived as a threat to White

supremacy" (p.178). This perspective points out that the indigenous languages were at the

center of the struggle for domination and that they were targeted as tools for social

disintegration and the maintenance of White supremacy. The politics of racial domination

therefore permeated the sociolinguistic landscape of the country in this unprecedented

manner as described through the homeland system.

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Afrikanerization of South Africa from 1948 to 1994 was the most overtly

politicized period with a number of language related events. First, the Bantu Education

Act 47 of 1953 increased the use of mother tongue from grade 4 to grade 8, for

fragmentation of the African people whose majority status was both a political and social

threat to the minority settlers. Even though the use of mother tongue was recommended

as the best policy for development of indigenous literacies by UNESCO in the same year,

a number of scholars (Heugh, 2002; Kamwangamalu, 1997; Reagan, 1986, 1988, 2002)

observed that the Bantu Education Act was not based on UNESCO's declaration for

mother tongue education as a universal norm. On the contrary, the Act was meant to re-

tribalize the Africans so that they had no access to the languages of power and to restrict

them to menial estates and lowly occupations (Prah, 1995, p.68). Following the extension

of mother tongue education to grade 8, Afrikaans and English were used as languages of

instruction from grade 9 to 12 on a 50:50 basis. This means that 50% of the school

subjects were taught in Afrikaans, and another 50% taught in English. Subsequently,

mother tongue instruction was reduced to grade 6 after mounting protests by the main

liberation movements in the 1950s: African National Congress and Pan African

Congress. These organizations negatively associated mother tongue education with

Apartheid policies of divide and rule and inferior education for Africans. Because

education in mother tongue was used to inculcate an inferior Bantu Education curriculum

specially designed for subordination of the African child, it had already tainted the very

notion of mother tongue education (Alexander, 2001, p.16).

In 1976, the students filled the streets of South Western Townships (SOWETO)

decrying the imposition of Afrikaans as the medium of instruction in their education. The

protests were prompted by the Apartheid regime's attempts to impose Afrikaans as the medium of instruction in primary schools in order to reduce the domination of English, which was then used as the medium of learning and teaching from grade 5. This attempt was met with one of the bloodiest resistances to language practice in the history of South Africa where schoolchildren sacrificed their lives in pursuit of linguistic justice (Kloss, 1978). Opinions do vary as to the purpose of the struggle, but Omer-Cooper (1994, p.226) captures the mood of the event by categorically stating: "in 1976, school children throughout Soweto staged a massive demonstration against the use of Afrikaans as a medium of instruction." Language thus became a source of social strife in the socio-political affairs of the country.

After the Soweto uprisings of 1976, there was a rapid emergence of private English medium schools (called Model C) and the reversal of the Afrikaner language policy to the original missionary policy of first 4 years of mother tongue education in public schools (Education Act of 1979) (Murray, 2002). While Afrikaans was reversed as the medium of instruction in primary schools, the struggle did not help to elevate the status of indigenous African languages. By default, English gained more clout over Afrikaans as the language of learning and teaching in Black schools.

The socio-historical context described above roughly summarizes the South African language struggle prior to the multilingual policy of 1996 (which will be discussed in the next section) and can be summed up as: (a) exclusion and ethno-linguistic division of African languages, on the one hand and (b) promotion and exclusive use of Afrikaans, Dutch, and English on the other hand. Both factors (a and b) formed the core of the language question that has remained unresolved even in the new socio-

political dispensation that started in 1994. The role of missionary linguists and the history of harmonization in South Africa are described in details in the following subsections to preface the statement of problem presented in the study.

Dialect Differentiation and the Role of Missionary Linguists

The proposal for harmonization of mutually intelligible, but differently encoded dialects is premised on the assumption that "multilingualism" as it is conceived in South Africa is an artificial construct that was invented by the missionary linguists (Makoni, 2003; Mansour, 1993; Prah, 1998). Nakin (2002) provides a broader picture as to how Sotho language varieties were differentiated in spelling and orthographies as follows:

The emergence of Sesotho, Setswana and Sepedi, as distinctive languages owes much to three different missionary societies whose activities were centered in different areas where Sesotho was spoken. The London Missionary society was active in the western side and the Sotho language became Setswana, the Catholic missionaries were active in the south and the Sotho language became Sesotho while the Lutheran missionaries were located in the north and the Sotho language became Sepedi. Therefore there were three varieties of the same language created: words pronounced the same way were now spelt differently (Nakin, p.238).

This description explains how "multilingualism" became exaggerated where, for example, one language was encoded into three different languages irrespective of their similarities. Because the European missionaries created a "multilingual complex"

(Mansour, 1993) for African societies, proponents of the harmonization proposal see the need to unite spelling systems and orthographies as a necessary step to reduce the number of languages with higher degrees of mutual intelligibility.

The Sotho example reflects an Africa wide problem where missionary linguists arbitrarily elevated the status of dialects to that of languages often without consideration of the sociolinguistic landscape and communicative practices of the speakers (Alexander, 1989; Bokamba; 1995; Campbell-Makini, 2000; Makoni, 2003; Mansour, 1993; Prah, 1995, 1998). Campbell-Makini (2000) notes that mishearing and faulty transcription by the missionaries occurred throughout the continent with the result that dialects of the same language and different languages were created from what was one language (p.115). In another study, Mansour (1993) contends that the first linguists in Africa were European and American missionaries who were sent to a specific colony to found, and later expand Christian missions. But over and above that, "it was part of the missionaries' task to analyze the phonology and grammar of the African language in order to devise a writing system, and ultimately, to translate the Bible, the catechism, and hymns" (Mansour, 1993, p. 12).

According to Mansour (1993), practical goals of the missionaries' linguistic analysis surpassed development of a scientific methodology for the study of indigenous African languages. There were two steps in the process of translating the Bible into indigenous languages. First, data were collected from one particular place and from one or two informants. Limited responses from these informants were generalized and used in encoding the written registers. In addition, the researcher received the native speakers'

preconceptions and prejudices concerning their language and its relationship with varieties from neighboring villages through the informant (s). This introduced the problem of language labels, which still haunts African linguistics.

The second problem with missionaries was that they were coming from different countries and from denominations whose rivalries were reflected in their encoding of the languages, in which they were not conversant. As a result, they did not make scientific comparison of data on the languages they were transcribing in order to establish the degree of relationships between language varieties (Mansour, 1993). Groenewald's (1995) study of the Sesotho orthography also supports the view that the missionary linguists misinvented the orthographies of African languages (see also Makoni, 2003) and elevated dialects of the same language to fully-fledged languages through the lack of a centralized system. He elaborates on the work of missionary linguists that "the different missionary societies worked independently of one another, and developed written forms in order to translate the Bible in the different languages as well as to provide liturgical documents in these languages" (Groenewald, 1995, p.381). In extreme cases, one dialect was encoded with two different orthographies. As previously stated, one of the known cases of orthographic differentiation in one dialect is the case of Sesotho, a language variety spoken in Lesotho and in the Free State. Prah (2001) observes that the orthography of Sesotho of Lesotho was designed by the Protestant Evangelical Mission and the one in Free State was designed by the London Missionary Society (see also Nakin, 2002). As a result of the lack of coordination and centralized system of standardization, spelling system of one dialect was differentiated, with Sesotho of Lesotho following a conjunctive system (toward agglutinative) while the one in Free

State followed a disjunctive orthographic system (toward isolating). These systems were studied in Groenewald's (1995) project where he concluded as follows:

> … Southern Sotho today has two writing forms. This clearly shows that languages, which on the surface appear to be innocent vehicles of communication, in fact often are more than that for their users: *they can be the stick with which the dog is beaten* (Groenewald, 1995, p. 381).

The clause in italics shows that linguistic barriers that are caused by misspellings and divergent orthographic representations can be detrimental in dialects whose speakers share a high degree of mutual intelligibility. These arbitrary orthographies have created a language problem in Africa where the speakers "are now faced with the phenomenon of having a number of languages entered into the catalogue of African languages where in fact there should be only one" (Mansour, 1993. p13). In another study on creation of orthographic representations, Prah (1995) highlighted the fact that ethno-linguistic boundaries were caused by missionary involvement in the writing system of the indigenous African languages. He drew a similar conclusion when stating that:

> Missionary linguists were fairly idiosyncratic in the way they developed orthographies and through such practices projected their own views in the creation of separate identities for people who were not really ethno-linguistically different (Prah, 1995, P.81).

The observation articulated in Prah's (1995) statement that the missionaries projected their own views in dividing languages into dialects coincides with Makoni's (2003) description of disinvention. According to Makoni (2003), division of African languages in the current boundaries reflects a European centered mode of thinking, positivism, as reported in this passage:

The missionaries created languages, which were describable as mutually exclusive boxes as opposed to the interconnectedness. In fact, the very notion of languages as discrete units, or "boxes" is a product of European positivism reinforced by literacy and standardization (Makoni, 2003, p.141).

This quote implies that Eurocentric lenses of individuality and separateness contributed to the missionaries' view of the African sociolinguistic landscape. They could not adequately comprehend the interconnectedness of speech that cuts across a wider spectrum of the communities they found.

Studies by Groenewald (1995), Mansour (1993) and Prah (1995, 1998) restate the widely held view that the present nine indigenous languages are missionary created languages, which do not reflect a true sociolinguistic landscape of South Africa. Reasons for dialect differentiation include lack of detailed studies on African languages, urgency to translate the Bible into the local languages, rivalry among various denominations and nationalities, mishearing, and European positivism. Harmonization, as proposed, in this particular case is seen as a recourse to redress the missionary "errors" especially when the

current Constitutional provisions for use of African languages have become difficult to implement in a society that seeks to reform itself toward a "Renaissance" era.

The Proposal for Language Harmonization

The proposal for harmonization of indigenous South African languages with higher degrees of mutual intelligibility was initiated in 1944 by Jacob Nhlapo who reported on the "trouble of a Babel of Bantu tongues" (p.10) in South Africa. Nhlapo's (1944, 1945) proposal was prompted by the growing linguistic tribalization among people who spoke mutually intelligible dialects that were separated in writing by missionary linguists. For example, he cited a word for 'cow', which has three distinct spellings in Sepedi, Setswana, and Sesotho as *kgomo*, *khomo* and *kxomo*, respectively, even though these words are pronounced in mutually comprehensible ways. For Nhlapo, these spellings are evidence of the fact that these three varieties are in fact one language that needed to be unified in writing because "writing is the best way to make languages grow together" (p.7). In this connection, unification of orthographies of closely related languages could save them from further fragmentation and death, and enrich them as useful vehicles of national cohesiveness. Specifically, Nhlapo (1944, 1945) proposed that Bantu languages of South Africa be united in at least two categories: standard Nguni formed from a "mixture" of IsiZulu, IsiXhosa, IsiNdebele and siSwati and standard Sotho derived from Sotho dialects (Sepedi, Sesotho and Setswana). He stated the original version of his proposal as follows:

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Having agreed as to which are the chief Bantu languages in South Africa, we can also agree that the work of joining Bantu languages would chiefly have to do with these languages. From these tongues we can at first build up two languages. Zulu and Xhosa, together with the branches known as Ndebele, Swazi, Baca, etc., are so much alike that, put together, they can make one good strong language called Nguni. In the same way, Pedi, Tswana, and Southern Sotho, together with Kxatla, Tlokwa, etc., are so much alike that joined together, they can make one good strong language called Sotho (Nhlapo, 1944, p.6).

The advantages of harmonizing South African languages as elicited from *Bantu Babel* (Nhlapo, 1944) include the following:

(1) Reducing the costs of translation

(2) Enriching literary tradition and widening readership in African languages

(3) Use of similar orthography for educational purposes

(4) Creating a basis for the use of Bantu languages as the media of instruction in higher domains of science

Apart from the linguistic unification necessary for nation building and the advantages outlined above, Nhlapo's second concern was the deteriorating standards of education, higher rates of illiteracy, dropouts and repeats in the Black community. He pointed out that only a third of African children were going to school while two out of three among those who were going to school would fail. For these reasons, Nhlapo (1944, 1945) saw

the need for mother tongue education as a necessary step in alleviating the educational problems associated with the use of a foreign language. Language harmonization was regarded, therefore, as a transitional phase toward mother tongue education. Taken together, Nhlapo's (1944, 1945) proposal called for a language planning-policy in South Africa with two main thrusts: (a) linguistic unification as a basis for national unity and (b) use of the unified vernaculars for the education of South African Black children.

Nhlapo's proposal was not developed for over four decades of Apartheid rule until it resurfaced through the National Language Project (NLP), a non-governmental body formed in the mid 1980's to work on language policy for new South Africa and Dr Neville Alexander's controversial text: *Language policy and nation building in South Africa/Azania* (1989). After elaborating on the linguistic balkanization of Bantu languages under the Apartheid government, and contemplating the exigencies of planning for the new language policy of post-Apartheid South Africa, Alexander (1989) forcefully re-stated Nhlapo's proposal as follows:

> ...one issue has engaged my attention and will not be postponed. I refer to what I call the question of the possibility and desirability of consolidating (standardizing) Nguni and Sotho respectively. In a nutshell, I am examining and airing the possibility that major varieties of Nguni (Zulu, Xhosa, Swati, Ndebele) and Sotho (Southern Sotho, Northern Sotho and Tswana) can and should be standardized or unified in writing and in all formal settings (school, church, law, court, etc.) (Alexander, 1989, p.74).

Both Nhlapo (1944) and Alexander (1989) conceptualized harmonization only for writing. As in the quote above, the harmonized form is envisaged for use in formal settings like schools, courts, etc. Overall, this proposal underscores the view that communication within the Bantu language clusters is mutually intelligible and that degree of inter-comprehension should be a guiding principle in the formulation of a language policy for South Africa (see also Prah, 1993, 1995, 1998).

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

In order to end the language struggle that saw a systematic exclusion of African languages in public domains and to foster national unity among ethno-linguistically divided people, the South African Constitution accorded 11 languages an official status at its inception in 1996 (RSA,1996). Including the nine major indigenous African languages as well as Afrikaans and English, which were historically privileged as national official languages, the act recognizes the new official languages: Sepedi, Sesotho, Setswana, IsiZulu, IsiXhosa, IsiNdebele, SiSwati, Tshivenda, Xitsonga, English and Afrikaans (RSA, section 2). In addition, the Constitution made specific provision for the development and use of African languages as follows:

> Recognizing the historically diminished use and status of the indigenous
> languages of our people, the state must take practical and positive measures to
> elevate the status and advance the use of these languages (RSA, section 6 (2)).

As a way of translating these Constitutional provisions to concrete and practical action, a Pan South African Language Board (PANSALB) was established and tasked with the following general responsibilities:

a) Promote, and create conditions for the development and use of

    (i)   all official languages;

    (ii)   Khoe, Nama and San languages

    (iii)   sign language;

b) Promote and ensure respect for-

    (i)   all languages commonly used for communities in South Africa , including German, Greek, Gujerati, Hindi, Portuguese, Tamil, Telegu and Urdu; and

    (ii)   Arabic, Hebrew, Sanskrit, and other languages used for religious purposes in South Africa. (RSA, 1996, 6 (5)).

The rationale for this inclusive policy was to extend language rights and freedoms of all the people of South Africa and to build national unity in response to the history of ethno-linguistic and racial divisions. Makoni, Ridge & Ridge (1999), however, pointed out that the Constitutional provisions are too wide ranging and that practical implementation of the provisions might prove a daunting task. In a later study, Makoni (2003) critiqued the Constitution on the basis that it repackaged the missionary "errors" and disinvention of indigenous languages. He states, "South African Constitution language policy creates a self-serving amnesia by encouraging Africans to "unremember"

the historical and material contexts, which the so-called African languages were invented or cobbled together" (Makoni, 2003, p.132).

This critique showcases the fact that the Constitution does not make reference whatsoever to the key notion of unification of the arbitrarily divided indigenous languages. This is problematic. Makoni (2003, p.139) further argued that the policy should have specified only two or three African languages as official languages and explicitly made provisions for re-conceptualization of the so-called "language."

In nearly a decade, attempts to implement multilingualism and use African languages in the high prestige positions have proved complex and hard to translate into concrete action despite the PANSALB engagement in the process. As a result, the old linguistic status quo is reproduced in the new socio-linguistic dispensation with traditionally privileged languages remaining the dominant languages of education, science, medicine, and official communication. Phaswana (2000, 2003), for example, reported that there has been no visible progress with regard to the use of African languages in the national Parliament. His study showed that language practices in parliamentary sessions still favor the two previously dominant languages, English and Afrikaans, while members of Parliament who are not communicatively confident in these languages often withhold their participation. There has also not been much progress in using the indigenous African languages in most public services like the banking system, the media and the job market (e.g., Simmons 2003; Kamwangamalu, 2001) For example, Simmons (2003) reports that the Department of Home Affairs was still unable to produce a birth certificate in IsiZulu- the largest indigenous language- as late as October, 2003.

More negative developments were noted regarding the use of African languages as the media of learning and teaching. Indigenous African languages have not yet been used as the media of instruction beyond grade 4. By default, the public schools still follow the missionary designed subtractive bilingualism program, which is a deficit model that forces learners to make a sudden transfer from their mother tongue to English at grade five. This program is continued in the post-Apartheid era despite volumes of research documenting its association with high failure and attrition rates in primary and secondary schools (see Adler, 2001; Macdonald, 1990). Taken together, these expositions show that the Constitutional commitments to promote the use of African languages have not been upheld. It is in this context that Kamwangamalu (2000) succinctly observes: "if any thing has changed at all, it is that English has gained more territory and political clout than Afrikaans" (p.129).

It is, however, noteworthy that the difficulty of developing and using all the African languages in their current status in the official domains was predicted as early as the forties and fifties by Nhlapo (1944, 1945) and in the late 80s through the seminal work of Alexander (1989). Nhlapo (1945) and Alexander (1989) argued that development of African languages and their use as vehicles of science and technology needed to be preceded by a redress of arbitrary linguistic divisions of the past. In redressing the divisions in indigenous African languages, they specifically proposed that orthographies and spelling systems of mutually intelligible language varieties within one cluster like Sotho (Sesotho, Sepedi and Setswana) and Nguni (IsiZulu, IsiXhosa, IsiNdebele and siSwati) can be unified into a common written language, respectively. Known as the "Nhlapo-Alexander proposal", language harmonization is described as a re-

standardization process that codifies language varieties in the same cluster into one core written standard. Heugh (2002) explains this process comprehensively as follows:

> The proposal concerned the further standardization of the *written* (not spoken) varieties within each of these language clusters so that lexical, terminological and orthographic conventions could proceed on a convergent path (Heugh, 2002, p.457).

Whereas the harmonization proposal was neither favored in the 1940's nor in the early 1990's, the perceived difficulty of implementing the multilingual policy of 11 official languages has increasingly brought the proposal into focus (Makoni, 2003; Prah, 1998; Webb, 2002). It is viewed as an alternative language-planning endeavor that would ease the problem of multilingualism and create a conducive climate for development and use of indigenous African languages in official domains (e.g., Alexander, 1989; Makoni, 2003). Some scholars, however, regard it as a sociolinguistic impossibility because speakers of these languages have already formed strong identities that are attached to the current language entities (e.g., Titlestad, 1996; Zotwana, 1989). Amid these competing views, it remains unknown whether or not harmonization is a feasible language project for post-Apartheid South Africa. There is very little, if any, known about (i) the attitude of speakers in one cluster toward harmonization of their language varieties and (ii) the degrees of mutual inter-comprehensibility among speakers of the sister languages proposed for harmonization. Given this knowledge gap, this study focused on language

attitudes and degrees of inter-variety comprehensibility in the Sotho language cluster (i.e., Sepedi, Setswana, and Sesotho).

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The main research question for the study was whether or not harmonization of language varieties in the Sotho cluster is feasible, given the inter-variety practice and attitudes of speakers of these varieties. The research question is subdivided into the following five specific questions:

(a) What are the preconceived attitudes of speakers of sister language varieties toward other language varieties in the Sotho language cluster?

(b) Can speakers of Sotho language varieties (Sepedi, Setswana, and Sesotho) communicate among themselves, given a shared topic of mutual interest, without major linguistic barriers?

(c) Can inter-variety communication among speakers of Sotho language varieties achieve a set communication goal?

(d) Can speakers of Sotho language varieties read and comprehend texts written in varieties of Sotho other than their own?

(e) Does language contact among speakers of Sotho language varieties harden or reinforce speakers' preconceived attitudes toward other varieties?

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of the study was to explore the feasibility of harmonizing Sotho language varieties to reduce differentiated orthographic representations and develop a core written standard emerging from Sepedi, Setswana, and Sesotho. In order to explore the feasibility factor, two variables were identified: attitudes of native speakers and degrees of mutual intelligibility. Within the context of speaker attitudes and degrees of mutual intelligibility, this study has the following five identifiable sub-aims:

(1) To assess the preconceived attitudes of native speakers of Sotho language varieties toward other varieties in the same language cluster: Sepedi, Setswana, and Sesotho.

(2) To investigate the extent to which communication without major linguistic barriers (mutual intelligibility) can be achieved when speakers of the Sotho language varieties are involved in interactions in which all their vernaculars are used (inter-variety communication).

(3) To asses whether Sotho inter-variety communication can accomplish a set communicative goal.

(4) To explore the extent to which reading and understanding of written texts from varieties of Sotho other than the informants' own can be achieved.

(5) To examine the degree to which preconceived attitudes are changed or reinforced after the speakers were immersed in the inter-variety interactions and exposed in the inter-variety text.

METHODOLOGY

This study triangulated methods of inquiry in order to gain the depth and range of the harmonization phenomena investigated. There were six stages that required the use of both qualitative and quantitative measures within the over-arching umbrella of an experimental design. These stages were preceded by a pilot study that was used to predict areas of potential difficulty in the design and to modify the research instruments and procedures.

The pilot test involved three students who represented ideal respondents from three Sotho language provinces: Limpopo (Sepedi), North-West (Setswana), and Free State (Sesotho). The students provided answers on the questionnaires that were written in their own language varieties, and they participated in inter-variety communicative activities designed for the study. As they followed all the procedures of data collection, the students were asked to give feedback on areas that needed changes and clarification. This procedure proved useful in enhancing internal validity of the study, as will be reported in Chapter Three.

The first part of the research involved a survey of preconceived attitudes on themes relating to harmonization: (a) the speaker's beliefs and perceptions about clustering their dialects in national television channel, (b) the use of Sotho language varieties as media of learning and teaching in post-primary school education, (c) mutual comprehensibility of their dialect with sister dialects, and (d) unification of the varieties' writing systems. Responses from 12 out of 48 participants were used as the pre-task data, which were later compared with data collected from the post-task questionnaire (see Chapter Three for full description).

The second part of data collection involved a focus group discussion on a topic of mutual interest- "ethnic stereotypes"- among the selected participants who used their mother tongues in carrying out their communicative tasks. This mimicked actual inter-variety communication in real life. Focus group discussion was complemented by an information gap activity involving an orange game, which was conducted not only to assess the level of mutual intelligibility, but also to ascertain whether the participants were in a position to reach a communicative goal in their interactions.

Another procedure of data collection was based on a reading comprehension task. This was a judgment test to determine whether the present orthographies of Sotho language varieties and a sample of their unified form are intelligible across the dialect spectrum. To this end, the speakers were required to answer questions based on readings from all the three written dialects and on a model of Harmonized Sotho developed by Jacob Nhlapo in the 1950's.

The next procedure involved the same attitudinal survey based on the questionnaire that was used to gather data on preconceived attitude (serving as the pre-task). Since the same questionnaire was administered among the participants who went through these intervention tasks of the experiment: focus group discussion, information gap activity and reading comprehension, it gave post-task data comparable to the data from the pre-task questionnaire. Finally, a 2 week delayed interview was conducted to follow up on issues of the questionnaire responses that needed further clarifications and more input.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

There are far-reaching implications for this study on language harmonization. First, failure of the 11 official languages policies in a period of about nine years has negative consequences for development of indigenous African languages and speakers of the languages. As the trend shows, reproduction of the linguistic practices of the past excludes speakers of African languages from meaningful participation in the socio-economic and technological affairs of their country. This has therefore made it imperative for current language planning research to interrogate alternative policy options, their feasibility, and practical implications. It is envisaged that the results of this study will inform future language planning initiatives that may involve re-conceptualization of "languages" in South Africa and subsequent revision of the current language policy, which has proved untenable for a decade.

Secondly, harmonization of mutually intelligible language varieties, if feasible, can be one important alternative to resolving the language struggle that divided the country into artificial linguistic boundaries. Its specific policy implications include the following:

(1)   The number of indigenous African languages currently enshrined in the Constitution will be reduced dramatically from nine to four languages. Two of these languages may become national official languages: Nguni and Sotho.

(2)   The costs of developing and translating into four indigenous

languages (Sotho, Nguni, Tshivenda and Xitsonga) may be low

compared to translations into nine languages.

(3)   Harmonized written Sotho may be used for a wider array of social

functions including development of education materials, the print

media and literature and maintenance of government records.

(4)   Unification of written codes, by extension, may unite the speakers

through a common cultural expression.

(5)   It would be possible to cluster the teaching of Sotho varieties to become

a single language and to facilitate its effective use as the medium of

learning and teaching.

Achievement of the above goals of harmonization provides a fertile environment

that enables development and use of indigenous African languages in science and

technology. This will mark a significant progress on the language question that stagnated

and saw various struggles of more than 300 years.

A third contribution this study will make is that it will increase the body of

knowledge on the harmonization question and inter-variety language attitudes, which

have not been studied to date. The results of this study will provide a niche area of

research on the harmonization issue. What exists in the harmonization literature is the

debate for or against harmonization and analysis of linguistic similarities of languages

deemed to be mutually intelligible. This study takes the issue a step further by centering

the harmonization proposal among the actual speakers who would be affected positively

or negatively by top-down decisions. This approach subscribes to the view that harmonization is not only about languages, but also about people who speak these languages.

Furthermore, this study shifts the predominant paradigm of research on language attitudes, which has always been lopsided toward the informants' choice between English and African languages, with no similar studies on attitudes of the speakers of African languages toward sister varieties of the same cluster. This is the first study to investigate attitudes from within closely related African languages in South Africa.

The study of inter-dialect attitudes will reveal stereotypes within language varieties in the Sotho cluster and raise social awareness about languages and mutual tolerance. This study is therefore important in making contributions to mutual understanding, which is vital for nation building and development.

Taken together, the results of this study showing the support or lack of support for harmonization are socially significant with respect to (1) potential development of a core written standard as a common tool for cultural expression among the Sotho group and (2) revelation of the linguistically embedded attitudes whose awareness can lead to tolerance and cooperation in a country that has been riddled with ethnic conflicts until 1993. Both (1) and (2) are necessary conditions for future language policy direction and for providing new dimensions on the study of language harmonization.

DEFINITION OF TERMS

The following terms are operationalized within the context of South Africa.

Afrikaans

Afrikaans is a Dutch creole that emerged in South Africa and used as a mother tongue of white people of Dutch descent. People of African descent generally associate it with Apartheid policies of racial discrimination.

Afrikanerization

Afrikanerization is the period in which the Dutch descendants, who have lived in South Africa since 1652, formulated Apartheid policies that sought to change the social reality through cultural and linguistic domination of the indigenous people. This period stretched from 1925 to 1994 when Apartheid ended. The concept is used in this study to reflect the domination of Afrikaans as a Dutch creole over the indigenous African languages from 1948 when Apartheid was officially instituted in South Africa.

Apartheid

The concept "Apartheid" derived from two Afrikaans words "apart", which means separate, and "heid", which is the suffix equivalent to the English "hood" as in "brotherhood". Apartheid therefore means a system of separation. In 1948, this system was practiced in South Africa where people of different skin pigmentation were separated and treated unequally in all domains of South African life. Based on the belief of supremacy of one race over another, the South African racial hierarchy was developed in

this descending order: (1) White, (2) Indian, (3) Colored (mixed race), (4) Black. Within the Black community, separateness ideology was used to divide speakers of various dialects into Bantustans (defined below).

Bantustan

Bantustan refers to reserves that were set aside for indigenous people who spoke Bantu languages. Bantu is the umbrella term to refer to language spoken by the largest group in African geo-linguistics. In South Africa, it is used to refer to speakers of all the nine indigenous African languages. "Stan" is an Afrikaans word meaning a place of living. The coinage "Bantustan" is an Afrikaans code that referred to the homelands and/or reserves inhabited by people who spoke any one of the Bantu languages. It is used in this study to refer to these "homelands."

Bi-dialect interaction

Bi-dialect interaction refers to instances where speakers of two different dialects are involved in verbal interactions and are mutually comprehensible.

Dialect

There are no linguistic differences between a language and a dialect even though a dialect is generally seen as a subset of a language. Socially, it has acquired a negative connotation of inferiority. Because of the negative public view of a *dialect*, many linguists started to use the term *variety* (Smitherman, 2000, p.14). For the purpose of this study, the language varieties under study (Sepedi, Setswana, and Sesotho) are referred to

as dialects of the same language: Sotho. The concept *language variety* is used interchangeably with dialect to emphasize that the dialect referred to is perceived as being different.

Harmonization

According to Nakin (2002) harmonization is a very complex concept because it means different things to different people. On the one hand, it can mean the merging of a number of dialects to form a single language. On the other hand, it can also mean the merging of a number of languages belonging to the same group to form one standard variety. At the core of harmonization lies an assumption that unified languages or dialects are mutually intelligible. As used in this study, harmonization means re-standardization of the orthographies and spelling system of three Sotho dialects: Sepedi, Setswana, and Sesotho so that they form a common written language.

Indigenous African languages

This concept is used to refer to native languages spoken in South Africa. These languages are related in terms of their morpho-syntactic and phonological structures. Whereas arguments may be launched that Afrikaans is an African language because it originated in South Africa, and it is not spoken anywhere outside of Africa, it is not classified in this category because its morpho-syntax is close to that of Germanic languages outside of Southern Africa. The concept, indigenous African languages, as used in this study, encapsulates both grammatical structure and place of origin.

Intervention tasks

Intervention level is a technical term used to refer to a procedure or activities carried out between the pre-task and post-task in experimental designs. In some cases, the concept is used interchangeably with *treatment*. It is used in this study to refer to three activities that were used between the pre-task questionnaire and the post-task questionnaire. These levels were focus group discussion, information gap activity and reading comprehension task.

Language

There are various definitions of language. The approach taken in this study defines language as a system of human sounds that convey meaning. Mutually intelligible dialects are classified as subsets of a language. Sepedi, Setswana, and Sesotho are regarded as dialects of the same language: Sotho.

Language attitude

An attitude refers to beliefs, preferences, feelings and perceptions of speakers toward a language. The concept is used in this study to refer to the beliefs and perception of speakers of Sotho dialects.

Language cluster

Language cluster refers to a number of related languages that have an immediate common ancestor language. Sotho is referred to as a language cluster in the study because it has three sister language varieties that emerged from it. These variants are

Sepedi, Setswana, and Sesotho. But as will be shown in the study, Sotho fits the category of a language, not a cluster in the South African context.

Language planning

Language planning involves deliberate efforts to change the use and function of languages in a society. According to Tollefson (1991, p.16), these efforts involve creation of orthographies, standardization and modernization programs, or allocation of functions to particular languages within multilingual societies. This is the operational definition of language planning used in this study.

Language policy

Language policy refers to the guidelines, laws, principles that govern the use of language in a given setting. The Constitutional provisions under section 6 of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, Act 108 of 1996 are referred to as guidelines constituting a language policy.

Mutual intelligibility

Mutual intelligibility is a complex term and one difficult to define. In broad terms, however, two forms of mutual intelligibility are identified: structural intelligibility and attitudinal intelligibility. For example, there are languages that have the same structure, but its speakers do not necessarily understand each other due to socio-political factors associated with the language. Conversely, there are languages that do not have the same structure, but their speakers understand each other due to positive attitudes attached to

these dialects or languages. The concept is operationalized in this study to refer to attitudinal intelligibility (positive inter-dialect attitudes) and mutual understanding in inter-dialect interactions among the speakers of Sotho dialects. The approach taken in this study departs from classical comparison of linguistic components of the languages because such intelligibility among the Sotho dialects is widely accepted. This is "people" intelligibility as opposed to the classical "linguistic" intelligibility.

National language

A national language is a language that is widely understood across a wider spectrum of a given country. According to Fishman (1971), it is viewed as furthering integration at the nationwide level through domains such as home, religion, sports and initiation or circumcision schools.

Official language

An official language refers to the language the government uses to run its business. It is used in courts, in schools, the media, etc. Reference is made in this study to languages that are official as stated in the South African Constitution, but which are not necessarily used in official spheres.

Orthographies

According to Mtenje (2002), orthography is a set of conventional signs, which decode the phonological system of languages. Such a system is, among other things, a representation of the major (distinctive) sounds of a language (both consonants and

vowels), suprasegmental information (such as tone, stress, segment, length) phonological features (nasalization, glottalization and pharyngealisation, palatalisation, labialization and so forth) and phonotactic constraints (Mtenje, 2002, p.32). Mtenje's (2002) definition is adopted in all references to orthography in the study.

Pan South African Language Board

According to Phaswana (2000, p.45), Pan South African Language board (PANSALB) is the umbrella body for all language specific boards in South Africa. It is an independent statutory body appointed by the Senate in terms of the Pan South African Language Board Act (Act NO. 59 of 1995) that is tasked with the responsibilities of creating conditions for use and development of all the official languages and other languages that are specified in the Constitution.

Sotho

Sotho is an umbrella term to refer to language varieties: Sepedi, Sesotho and Setswana. For the purpose of the study, Sotho will be referred to as a language while its subvarieties will be referred to as dialects (e.g. Sotho language, but Sepedi dialect).

Sesotho

Sesotho is a dialect of Sotho spoken mainly in the Free state province of South Africa. While some use "Sotho" and "Sesotho" interchangeably, there is a clear line drawn between the two with the latter being a dialect of the former.

Sister language/dialect

Sister languages are variants of a language that have a common ancestor language. Sepedi, Setswana, and Sesotho are referred to as sister dialects instead of sister languages because they are believed to be variants of one language.

Standardization

Standardization refers to accurate representation of the salient phonetic and phonological features of a language or varieties. It also involves a thorough understanding of the manner in which those features function and relate across the varieties or languages in question (Mtenje, 2002, p.32).

Subtractive bilingualism

Subtractive bilingualism is a deficit model of bilingualism that forces learners to transfer from learning through their mother tongue to learning in a foreign/second language. This model was used in all British colonies in Africa during the colonial period and is still in place in most states to date. South Africa is one typical example that still uses this model despite its negative impact on literacy and educational success.

Tri-dialect interaction

Tri-variety interaction refers to a communication situation where speakers of three different dialects interact with each other, using their own respective dialects.

ORGANIZATION OF CHAPTERS

This section presents the organization of chapters in the order they are presented in the study.

Chapter Two provides a review of prior research and related literature on language policy and planning in an African context. It provides a theoretical framework for language harmonization within the theories of Language Planning (LP) and reviews scholarly literature on attitudes toward indigenous African languages and research on harmonization of African languages, with a specific focus on work conducted on the Sotho language varieties.

Chapter Three outlines the methodological procedures, design and data analysis carried out in the study. It emphasizes the benefits of triangulating methods of enquiry in a research topic that needed answers from both qualitative and quantitative perspectives.

Chapter Four presents of the results of the study, with related graphs, figures, tables and statistical procedures, showing significance levels to accept or reject hypotheses formulated.

Chapter Five presents the results of qualitative data using content analysis and discourse analytic procedures based utterances captured on the video-recorder used in the study.

Chapter Six summarizes the results of the study, draws conclusions, and provides recommendations for Language Policy and Planning (LPP) in South Africa and niche areas for further research.

CHAPTER 2: REVIEW OF LITERATURE

INTRODUCTION

This study investigated the feasibility of harmonizing Sotho language varieties by testing (a) degrees of mutual intelligibility among university students who speak dialects of the Sotho language and (b) their attitudes toward each other's language variety and perceptions on a proposal for Sotho harmonization. The study is contextualized within the scholarly literature that deals with the following themes:

1) Theoretical framework for language harmonization
2) Attitudes toward indigenous African languages
3) Research in harmonization and standardization

The aim of this chapter is to provide a synopsis of language planning issues that pertain to the harmonization and standardization of indigenous African languages. First, it provides a theoretical framework from which the harmonization proposal can be contextualized. This is followed by research literature on a topic akin to language harmonization: attitudes toward indigenous African languages. Research that extols a project on mutual intelligibility and harmonization by the Centre for Advanced Studies in African Society (CASAS) is given prominence in the last section of the chapter. In the end, concluding remarks are made to tie up different sections of the literature and to place the current study within the existing body of knowledge on the harmonization subject, showing gaps that the present study seeks to fill.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK FOR LANGUAGE HARMONIZATION

Language harmonization as a school of thought is grounded within the framework of language planning (LP). A plethora of studies defines LP as a systematic effort of the policy makers to influence the use of a particular language in a given speech community (Bokamba, 1995; Christian, 1988; Cooper, 1989; Eastman, 1982; Fishman, 1971; Tollefson, 1991). LP has become a useful model, especially in multilingual countries, where direct intervention in changing and giving direction for change in language practices are necessary to diffuse potential tensions that may result from rivalry and competition for linguistic domination (Tollefson, 1991).

One of the most comprehensive definitions of language planning is offered by Christian (1988) who describes it as an "explicit and systematic effort to resolve language problems and achieve related goals through institutionally organized intervention in the use and usage of languages" (Christian, 1988, p.197). This definition emphasizes explicit efforts as opposed to implicit ones that are decided and executed by the elite. Rather, as some scholars have argued, LP is and should be a bottom-up project involving the grassroots masses who are directly affected by decisions about their languages (Bamgbose, 2000). For example, a trifocal (three-language model) language policy is considered inclusive of the majority of the population groupings in the US (Smitherman, 2000) and in South Africa (Alexander, 1995) instead of an "English ONLY" decree in these societies that are inherently multilingual.

The next key word in Christian's (1988) definition is the systematic nature of LP as a process, which involves stages that are carried out in a cyclical manner. This implies that LP is a continuous process that has no terminal endpoint; it is responsive to changes

in the language practices of the speakers. According to Tollefson (1991) who also sees the significance of LP in multilingual countries, LP efforts should involve, among other things, development of orthographies, standardization and modernization programs or allocation of functions to particular languages within multilingual societies (p.16). This view is supported by Webb (2002) and Cooper (1989) who connect LP to "people planning" because it is tied to the educational, economic, political and social development of a country. People planning, as articulated by Alexander (2001), involves the use of indigenous African languages as vehicles for development of national unity and a cohesive culture in South Africa, which has a long history of ethno-linguistic divisions. These descriptions of LP extolled in these studies place language harmonization as an integral part of LP since it seeks to resolve dialect differentiation through unification of the dialects' orthographic representation and divergent spelling systems within the realm of standardization and modernization of language forms.

There are three main foci of LP that spell out the connections between harmonization and LP in an explicit way. They are status, corpus and acquisition planning (Cooper, 1989). Status planning entails allocation of functions to languages either as national, regional or official languages. Bamgbose (1991, p. 109) outlines decisions on the role of a language such as (a) maintenance, expansion or restriction in a range of uses of a language for particular functions, (b) language standardization which involves the development of a given dialect or a group of dialects as a norm for the language in question, (c) revival of a dead language (e.g. Hebrew in Israel) and (d) introduction of an artificial language (e.g., Esperanto in Europe).

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Activities that are carried out with regard to language standardization, codification and development of new vocabulary fall within the corpus planning strand. These activities include the following:

1. Vocabulary expansion, which also includes terminology creation and standardization of variants of existing terms

2. Changes in aspects of language structure

3. Simplification of language registers

4. Orthographic work which includes creation of orthographies for languages hitherto unwritten, harmonization of existing orthographies, orthographic reform (including change in script and spelling reform)

5. Prescribing rules for pronunciation, correctness of style and usage

6. Production of language material such as primers, dictionaries, grammars, supplementary readers, translations and special manuals

(Bamgbose, 1991, p.110).

In acquisition planning, learning and teaching of the language through second and foreign language instruction programs become central. In addition to having a medium of instruction, some policies require that certain languages be learned as school subjects. Bamgbose (1991) shows that by the time learners complete their secondary education in Nigeria, they have learned three languages other than their mother tongues. As a model for acquisition planning in the US, Smitherman (2000), proposed a trifocal policy that

fosters competence in the Language of Wider Communication (Standard American English) and a second language, and supports local dialects or vernaculars.

A number of studies describe LP through four tasks in order to emphasize that it is a systematic and cyclical process (e.g., Bokamba, 1995; Eastman, 1982). The first stage is code selection, which refers to a process of choosing a language or a number of languages by the state as national or official medium. When analyzing the East African language policy situation, Fishman's (1971) study identified three typical choices African states make when designing policies for national and official languages. The first choice (A) involves the option of the Languages of Wider Communication (LWC). LWCs are colonial languages like English that assume official status due to perceived difficulties of choosing one of the many competing local languages. The second option (B) is that of a local language that is understood across a wider spectrum of the population like Swahili in Tanzania and Amharic in Ethiopia. The third choice (C) involves a combination of both a LWC and one indigenous language (see also Heine, 1992). It should be noted, however, that Fishman's characterization overlooked the fact that LWCs could also be indigenous African languages such as Swahili in Tanzania, Sesotho in Lesotho, Setswana in Botswana, Siswati in Swaziland, Shona in Zimbabwe, etc. The indigenous LWCs tend to be more widespread in use than the colonial languages.

Whereas South Africa has made a unique option of including all languages (indigenous and exogenous), it has not moved beyond this first stage of planning, code selection, with regard to the use and development of indigenous African languages. This relates to Bamgbose's (1991) view that language policies in African countries are

characterized by some of the following: avoidance, vagueness, arbitrariness, fluctuation and declaration without implementation.

The second stage of LP is codification. Codification of languages refers to functions such as standardization and development of grammars and dictionaries. This stage is followed by code elaboration that involves modernization where new terminologies are coined so that the language adapts to modern use of scientific and technological concepts. Finally, LP requires a stage called implementation. At this stage, a modernized language is spread through education as a school subject or medium of instruction and used in other state organs like national television channels (see Bokamba, 1995; Eastman, 1982). According to Bokamba (1995), code selection and implementation form part of status planning while codification and elaboration are components of corpus planning.

The study of language harmonization and re-standardization fits in well within this model of language planning since it involves unification of orthographies in order to resolve the problem of implementing the eleven-official-language policy in South Africa. The present orthographic representations of the 9 indigenous languages were devised arbitrarily regardless of oral intelligibilities among speakers of the language variants (Prah, 2001). In contrast to other situations where there are no written forms, the languages proposed for harmonization have written codes. This kind of harmonization, according to Bamgbose (1991, p.137), may be directed at the use of similar letters or symbols for similar significant sounds in different languages, or the use of identical letters for the same significant sound where current conventions sanction divergent

representation. Re-codification of the current orthographies thus falls squarely within the realm of LP (i.e., corpus planning).

ATTITUDES TOWARD INDIGENOUS AFRICAN LANGUAGES

There are no known studies that directly deal with attitudes of speakers toward language harmonization in the South African context. This section, however, reviews literature on attitudes of states, teachers and students toward indigenous African languages because language harmonization centers on and promotes the use of indigenous African languages.

Research in language planning for African languages in post-colonial Africa shows that the policy-makers do not move beyond the first phase of code selection because of the low regard for these languages by the policy-makers and dependence on exogenous languages. Abdegbija (1994) conducted a series of attitudinal studies in sub-Saharan Africa where he found that:

...attitudes towards [African] languages in the educational and official circles, which filter into the general aspects of life in the societies, constitute a prime motivation for western dependent, generally outward looking stance of sub-Sahara Africa (Abdegbija, 1994: 99)

As a result of dependence on the West, most African states opted to choose exogenous foreign languages as official and national languages. Out of the 53 African nation states, only five countries have opted for the use of African languages as the national official languages. They are Ethiopia, Eritrea, Somalia, Sudan, Mauritania

(Webb, 2002). Forty three countries opted for exogenous languages like Portuguese (Lusophone Africa), English (Anglophone states) and French (Francophone). Compared to all African countries, South Africa is the only one so far to recognize as many indigenous languages as nine as official languages. Even in Nigeria, which is regarded as the most multilingual country on the continent with over 400 language varieties, only three languages are recognized as national languages: Yoruba, Igbo and Hausa (Bamgbose, 2000; Ohia, 1998). Whereas studies show that there is a general low regard for African languages on the continent, African Americans show great interest in learning African languages like kiSwahili (see for example, Smitherman, 1998) as opposed to learning European languages.

Bokamba's (1995) study on the critical language choices in the 21st century for post-colonial Africa makes three observations about language planning-policy in African states; namely, (a) they are not systematic, (b) they are impositions of missionary policies and (c) the people at the grassroots level are not consulted. Bamgbose (1991, 2000), Alexander (1998), Campbell-Makini (2000), Prah (1998), Mazrui (2002) carried out similar studies that showed that the policy decisions are decided upon by the elite groups without consultation with the people at the grassroots level (top-down instead of bottom up). The top-down decisions have led to the lack of change with regard to the value and use of African languages even in countries that have 90% monolingual speakers like Botswana, Swaziland, Rwanda, Burundi, and Lesotho.

There are a number of post-Apartheid studies that focused on the attitudes of speakers toward indigenous languages, especially after the endorsement of 11 languages as official (e.g., Barkhuizen, 2002; Barkhuizen and De Klerk, 1998; Mmusi, 1996; Thiba,

2000; Verhoef, 1998). These studies provided mixed results on the value and use of indigenous African languages as media of science, technology, education, and business. Findings from these studies provide a picture through which attitudes toward the harmonized Sotho may be anticipated.

Thiba (2000) carried out a study of attitudes and language practices among parents, teachers and learners in seven high schools of the North West Province (total of 109 subjects). In all the three categories of the study on preferences for (1) language of instruction, (2) language as a school subject and (3) language of extracurricular activities, English was the most preferred language by parents, teachers and the students. In the same province, Verhoef (1998) investigated language preferences among 145 African learners. Over 64% of the learners chose English as their favorite language of instruction and school subject. The surprising result of the study is that Afrikaans was chosen second, with Setswana, which is the most dominant language of the province and mother tongue of most of the learners, becoming the third choice. Both studies confirm the stigmatized perceptions about African languages as opposed to exogenous languages. Despite this pattern shown in the Thiba (2000) and Verhoef (1998) studies, these researchers recognize the pedagogical importance of mother tongue. In this connection, Thiba recommends that:

> The pedagogic implications of mother tongue instruction have to be emphasized
> in teacher training programs and in in-service-training of teachers. The notion of
> insufficiency of mother tongue instruction must be eradicated by introducing the
> sociolinguistic approach to language policy and planning as a sub-discipline of

language studies and linguistics at university and training colleges (Thiba, 2000,

p. 142).

This statement implies that the choice teachers and parents make is not

pedagogically informed and as a result, learning institutions need to have specific courses

in line with "attitude planning," which might change negative attitudes toward indigenous

African languages over time.

Some studies show contradictions between what is preferred and actual language

practice. Separate studies by Adler (2001) and Brock-Utne (2004) showed that teachers'

classroom practice involved code-switching from English to African languages even

though these teachers would prefer English to indigenous African languages. The

problem is that there were communicative difficulties in conveying the subject matter in

the language that both the teachers and the learners are not functionally competent in.

Another study comparing the attitudes and practice of the South Africa Infantry Battalion

in Grahamstown, a city in the Eastern Cape Province, showed that 34% of IsiXhosa

speakers prefer English even though Afrikaans, which had a long tradition of domination

in the military, is still widely used despite the Constitutional commitment to 11 languages

(Barkhuizen and De Klerk, 1998). This case and others elsewhere (e.g., Barkhuizen,

2002) reveal that attitudes of speakers do not always match their actual language practice.

The paradox of choice between preference and actions reflects that English is necessary

for resources, opportunities, and social mobility, which have always been associated with

the people who speak it. This kind of reaction may be anticipated with regard to

harmonized languages unless they are tied to economic opportunities.

Studies on the attitudes of university students toward African languages in South Africa are also relatively few. Some of the known studies were carried out by Mmusi (1996) and Prah (1993). Mmusi (1996) investigated the languages of preference by the students, faculty and staff at the University of the North. Using questionnaire surveys, the study focused on three variables: language use in curricular, extracurricular and non-curricular contexts. The results showed an overwhelming preference for English as a language of learning and teaching with Sepedi and Xitsonga (two of the three indigenous languages of the province) following second. For extra-curricular and non-curricular activities at the university, the respondents preferred a multilingual policy where languages used campus wide are encouraged and thus allow the university community to communicate in African languages in non-academic interactions.

A more positive picture of the need to use African languages in institutions of higher learning is portrayed in a comprehensive study conducted by Prah (1993). In this study, 720 university students in Southern Africa, involving the universities of Botswana, Namibia, Swaziland, Western Cape, Transkei and Lesotho were used as respondents to a questionnaire designed to investigate attitudes toward and perceptions of African languages as media of instruction in science and technology. The respondents involved a diverse category of students whose ages ranged from 16 to 25. The respondents were asked to provide answers to these questions, among others:

a) Whether or not scientific and technological ideas could be rendered in African languages,

b) If the respondents' understanding of science and technology would improve if they were taught in African languages.

On question (a), 76% of the respondents believed that scientific and technological ideas could be rendered in African languages. More importantly, 91% of the students believed that their understanding of science and technology would improve if they were taught in African languages.

Goduah (2003) carried out an attitudinal survey at the University of the Witwatersand among freshman students, third year students and faculty members. The aim of the study was to investigate whether or not an African language could be introduced as a second medium of instruction in addition to English in university programs. The respondents were asked to respond to the following:

1.   An African language should be introduced in addition to English as languages for teaching and learning at Wits University.

2.   Would you like to see both English and an African language as languages for teaching and learning (medium of instruction)

3.   Zulu or Sotho should be the African language chosen for teaching and learning (medium of instruction) at Wits University.

4.   There will be more significant improvements in student's academic performance if an African language is introduced in addition to English for teaching and learning at Wits University.

First year students answered question 1, third year and faculty members answered question 2. Question 3 was answered by both first and third year students while question 4 was answered by members of the faculty. The results of the study on question 1 show that only 34% of the students agreed with the idea of introducing an African language as the second medium of instruction. 42% of the respondents disagreed while 24% were neutral on the question. Comparison between third year students and the faculty on question 2 is interesting. On the one hand, the third year students responded to the question of a dual medium of instruction involving an African language with 64% positive (yes) answers and 27% negative (no) responses. The faculty members, on the other hand, were negative 69% of the time and only had a positive rating of 31%. Question 3 had almost equal negative and positive responses among the third years while the first year students gave 51% negative responses. The faculty in question 4 gave 45% of positive responses, 22% negative and 33% neutral responses. Goudah (2003) acknowledged that the choice between Zulu and Sotho was problematic even though the need for the use of African languages is positive. This boils down to the problem of many languages, where a choice of one instead of the other might cause social strife. Given the complexity of the language question, the Goudah recommends harmonization of Nguni and Sotho languages so that the choice of an African language becomes less complex than it is at the moment.

Collectively, research on language attitudes shows a trend where parents, high school teachers and their students prefer English as the medium of communication for instruction, extra- and non-curricular activities. The preference for African languages is very low at this level (Thiba, 2000; Verhoef, 1998). At the university level, there is a

different picture. Preferences for the use of African languages as non-curricular and extra-curricular medium of communication were reported at the University of the North (Mmusi, 1996), and as the medium of instruction at the universities of Transkei and Western Cape (Prah, 1993). The Witwatersrand University project shows that multiplicity of languages accounts at least in part for the low regard for choosing an African language because that involves competition among multitudes of languages. The study brings into light that harmonization of mutually intelligible languages can ease the choice for indigenous African languages and ultimately change attitudes toward these languages.

One of the issues overlooked in the studies that reported negative attitudes toward African languages is the attitude of speakers toward other African languages, not in comparison to their attitude toward English. Studies that focus on attitudes toward African languages within the same linguistic cluster would give a comparative view of the attitudes toward African languages. Further, the studies made a comparison between African languages vis-à-vis English while using English as the medium through which the questions were asked. This has the potential for skewing the attitudes toward the language of communication at the point of data collection. Whereas the harmonized languages will in the long run be compared (attitudinally) with present dominant languages (English and Afrikaans), more African language-centered studies are needed to provide a comprehensive account of the attitudes toward African languages - an issue that is crucial in determining the feasibility of the harmonization proposal.

RESEARCH ON LANGUAGE HARMONIZATION

There are a number of projects that attempted to harmonize indigenous African languages in Africa. These include: (i) the stock of symbols prescribed for Senegal's six recognized languages, (ii) UNESCO-sponsored Bamako meeting of 1966 on unifying the alphabets of Hausa, Falfude, Madingo and Kanuni, (iii) A Seminar on the Normalization and Harmonization of the Alphabets of the sub-region of Togo, Ghana, Upper Volta, Nigeria and Benin in 1975 and (iv) the Meeting of Experts on the Transcription and Harmonization of African languages in Niger in 1978 which has been cited elsewhere (Bamgbose, 1991). The successful harmonization models in Africa are Shona in Zimbabwe, Igbo in Nigeria and Runyakitara in Uganda. The Ugandan harmonization has been successful due to the high level of sensitivity in choosing a name for the harmonized languages and its spin-offs in neighboring states. The process of choosing a name is explained as follows:

> Runyakitara is a general name adopted by Makerere University in 1996 to refer to four western Ugandan dialects, namely; Runyuru, Rutooro, Runyankore, Rukiga…Other languages outside Uganda, such as Ruhunya in Tanzania and Ruhema in Zaire can also be considered to be dialects of [the evolving] Runyakitara language (Quoted in Owino, 2002, p.24).

The benefits of harmonization as reported in the Ugandan situation include internationalization of the languages in ways that ease cross-border communication in African states.

Apart from the three successful models of harmonization explained above, there is an Africa-wide project being carried out by the Centre for Advanced Studies of African Society (CASAS) in Cape Town, South Africa. CASAS started in the early 1990s with the mission that "Education in Africa at all levels should be transacted in African languages, the languages of the majorities of the people, and the languages in which these majorities create and think..." (Prah, 2002a, p.1).

CASAS saw the need to embark on harmonization projects as a means toward achieving mother tongue education for the masses of the continent. According to Prah (2002b), the task of harmonizing African languages is part of the process of rehabilitating these languages so that they are used as the media of instruction (p.1-6). Since this period, there's been a proliferation of studies that focused on degrees of mutual intelligibility among Africa's 1200-2400 languages. An important finding was revealed that among the African languages that are believed to be ranging from 1000 to 2500, there is mutual intelligibility to a degree of 85% and above and that these languages can be divided into 12 language clusters. Prah (2001) explains this finding as follows:

Classification of African languages on the basis of mutual intelligibility has so far demonstrated that, as first and second language speakers, over 80% of Africans speak no more than 12 key languages (clusters which enjoy 85% of mutual intelligibility) (Prah, 2001, p.189).

The 12 key languages are: Falfude, Hausa, Swahili, Nguni, Sotho-Tswana, Western Interlacustrine Bantu, Amharic, Yoruba, Igbo, Bambara, Oromo, and Luo (Prah,

2001). In an earlier study reported by Prah and King (1998), the degrees of mutual intelligibility were elaborated. The study showed that Falfude is spoken in 13 countries, with about 50 million speakers; Sotho is spoken in 6 countries in Southern Africa while Nguni is spoken in over 7 countries with about 40 million speakers. The CASAS research findings have renewed an interest in the harmonization question in African linguistics.

Harmonization for Sotho Languages

Under the aegis of CASAS, there has been a number of studies that focused specifically on harmonizing Sepedi, Setswana, and Sesotho, using morpho-syntactic and phonological similarities as measures of mutual intelligibility among these language varieties (Nakin, 2002; Matubatuba, 2002; Mwikisa, 2002). In all these studies, there is a commonly held view that the Sotho languages, even though written differently, derive from a common 'mother language' and that they still share a high degree of mutual intelligibility. The connection between the three varieties was established in what is known as the Doke classification of the Bantu languages in the South Eastern Zone as represented in the following table:

Doke's classification:

1. Nguni group- Xhosa, Zulu and Swati

2. Sotho group- Sepedi, Sesotho and Setswana

3. Venda

4. Tsonga group- Tonga, Ronga, Twa

5. Inhabane group- Chopi or Lenge, Tonga

(Nakin, 2002, p. 238)

Nakin's (2002) study on harmonizing Sotho languages provided salient facts that need to be considered in harmonization, and linguistic reasons why the Sotho dialects need to be unified. Nakin defined harmonization in the Sotho case as standardization that adopts a dialect democracy approach in which all dialects are elevated to the standard level, as opposed to the imposition of one dialect as standard over others. Following this definition, these various dialects are united, refined and neutralized until they merge into a common standard language (p.241). Three factors that need to be taken into account were identified as:

1. Establishment of a basic vocabulary
2. Establishment of word pairs
3. Exclusion of borrowing and language universals

With regard to the establishment of vocabulary, Nakin (2002) refers specifically to parts and functions of the body, domestic vocabulary, weather and natural phenomena. Some of these vocabulary types are demonstrated as being common in Sepedi, Setswana, and Sesotho as in:

English	Sesotho	Setswana	Sepedi
"ear"	tsebe	tsebe	tsebe
'fat'	mafura	mahura	mafura
'water'	metsi	metsi	madi (metsi)

Establishment of word pairs in these languages involve words that have similar phonological shape and represent the same field of meaning. Nakin (2002) identifies words for 'try' and 'buy', which are identically represented as *leka* and *reka*, respectively, in all three dialects.

With regard to exclusion of borrowing and language universals, Nakin (2002), pointed out that words that have the same form but do not conform to established sound shifts will be regarded as not having their source from the original language. As a result, they need to be excluded from a pool of words that are standardized in the new written system. This is seen as a very important aspect of harmonization because the project intends to use already existing words instead of coining new terms altogether (Nakin, 2002).

The study went further to show that similar lexical, syntactic and morphological structures in three Sotho dialects are compelling reasons for harmonization (Nakin, 2002, p.246). For example, all three language varieties share the same noun class prefixes used in agreement markers, the pronominal system, number, and other morpho-syntactic features. Similar to other advantages of harmonization as outlined elsewhere, Nakin drew on points highlighted in Machobane and Mokitimi (1998) (quoted in Nakin, 2002) who viewed Sesotho harmonization in the following light:

1) The proposed orthography simplifies the reading and the writing of Sesotho for

  students.

2) It renders writing of Sesotho uniform wherever it is spoken.

3) It makes it possible for all Sesotho books to be read by every Mosotho.

4) It will reduce the publication costs.

5) The market for Sesotho books will increase.

Matubatuba (2002) carried out another comparative study of Sepedi-Setswana-Sesotho dialects, following a phonological process of palatalization. The results of this comparison show that palatalisation occurs in at least five identical categories as listed:

a. with diminutives of nouns

b. with passives of verbs

c. with causatives of verbs

d. with locatives of nouns ending with *–ng*

e. with certain nouns of the *bo-* class

f. with certain nouns of the *le-* noun class

With these examples, Matubatuba (2002) argued that a high degree of mutual intelligibility of the three languages could be established. As a result of this analysis, he draws the following conclusions:

Because of the level of mutual intelligibility of these languages, I strongly believe that we might not even need dictionaries as a matter of urgency while doing projects such as skills development to the illiterate masses and medium of instruction through the special lingual franca (p.253).

Mwisa (2002) conducted an analysis of mutual intelligibility in the spoken and written forms of Sesotho, Setswana and Lozi (a Sotho variety spoken in Zambia). Using the Lord's Prayer version written in Sesotho (1855), Setswana (1840) and Lozi (1951), Mwisa aimed at discovering the extent of vocabulary correspondence among the three versions of the Lord's Prayer, and the extent to which the variation in orthographic representations in the three languages can be described in a way that makes it easy to predict and transcode from one language to another. The study shows that Sesotho has 81 words, Lozi has 81, and Setswana has 70 words. Out of these words, it was found that correspondence between Sesotho and Lozi made up 87%. Correspondence between Setswana and Lozi is 68% while 66% was recorded for correspondence between Setswana and Sesotho. The study shows that even though the missionary linguist differentiated these dialects as different languages, the languages still have more cognate resemblances.

Generalizing from the work of Matubatuba (2002), Mwisa (2002) and Nakin (2002) one can argue that Sotho language varieties have mutual intelligibility on the basis of morphosyntactic, lexico-semantic and phonological features. The question remains, however, whether the speakers themselves will find these languages mutually intelligible

as these linguistic analyses indicate. Empirical studies examining speaker receptivity and inter-dialect interactions have not been conducted.

The studies reviewed in this chapter have shown that language harmonization is premised on the objectives of language planning that provide a framework for re-standardization. From the Centre for Advanced Studies in African Society (CASAS), linguistic analyses that test degrees of mutual intelligibility have been advanced, demonstrating that the language varieties under study are mutually intelligible in ways that warrant their harmonization. Whereas linguistic intelligibility is clearly attested, it was pointed out that no empirical studies have yet been carried out to test intelligibility through actual interactions among the speakers of these languages. A slightly different, but related set of literature focused on the attitudes towards indigenous African languages. Most of the attitudinal studies focused on the choice between African languages vis-à-vis English. Attitudinal studies focusing on African language vis-à-vis-African languages are not yet available. This study of language harmonization, with its focus on inter-variety interactions and inter-variety attitudes is the first of its kind. It begins to fill the gap in the existing body of knowledge on both mutual intelligibility and the feasibility of harmonizing Sotho languages in South Africa.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

The aim of this study was to investigate the feasibility of harmonizing Sotho language varieties, taking into account the degrees of mutual intelligibility among these varieties and the attitudes of native speakers toward the harmonization proposal. In order to carry out this investigation, a multilayered research design was used. This chapter presents details of the research design, population and sampling frame, methods applied in collecting data and data analysis techniques.

RESEARCH DESIGN

This is a six-phased study that triangulated methods of inquiry and data collection procedures. Given the complexity of assessing mutual intelligibility and the need to test the feasibility of harmonizing three dialects into a common written standard, a multilayered design was employed in order to maximize external and internal validity while at the same time providing a range and depth of the phenomena under investigation. Triangulation is a research procedure that is bent on hybridity of research methods in order to make sure that qualitative research informs quantitative research and vice-versa (Balnaves and Caputi, 2001). This combination increased the power of explaining the intertwined question on mutual intelligibility and attitudes of the native speakers toward harmonization of their dialects in this study.

The over-arching design for the study is experimental, using within-subject intervention tasks to assess how the participants react to harmonization as a sociolinguistic practice. Balnaves and Caputi (2001) contend that within-subject design

exposes the same groups to the independent variable at different times and the individuals themselves act as a control. In this study, the participants were tested before and after the intervention tasks to see whether their initial responses (attitudes as dependent variables) would be affected by inter-dialect communication and exposure to the sampled harmonized text (independent variables). While study is mainly experimental, the tools of data collection were based on a survey design where the attitudes of the participants were elicited in both pre- and post tests. To this end, intersection of the experimental and the survey designs provided a rich database in both qualitative and quantitative respects. In addition to this intersection, the intervention tasks in the study (focus group discussion, information gap activity, and reading comprehension task) provided more qualitative data that proved useful to understanding the harmonization phenomena. The experimental design is visually represented in the following table:

Table 1: Within-Subject Experimental Design

Pre-Task Questionnaire	Intervention Tasks	Reading Comprehension	Post-Task Questionnaire	Delayed Interview
Attitudes on harmonization	Focus group Discussion & Information Gap Task	3 dialects & harmonized Sotho text	Attitudes on harmonization	Clarifications
48 participants	12 participants	12 participants	12 participants	4 participants
Data: Yes/No counts & descriptions	Data: Utterances	Data: Reading Scores	Data: Yes/No counts & descriptions	Qualitative
Analysis: frequencies, chi-square, one-Way ANOVA	Analysis: Discourse Analysis (Grice's maxims)	Analysis: Frequencies, chi-square, One-way ANOVA	Analysis: Matched t- test, strength of association	Analysis: Content

The phases of the design as shown in Table 1 above can be described as follows: 1) pre-task questionnaire to assess preconceived attitudes, beliefs, and perceptions of speakers from Sepedi, Sesotho and Setswana varieties toward their own respective varieties and sister varieties that constitute the Sotho language cluster. This questionnaire was also used to select main respondents who were asked to participate in subsequent phases of the study; 2) focus group discussion, this was based on a topic that addressed

ethnic conflicts and ways of resolving ethnic stereotypes. It was aimed at ascertaining the degree of mutual comprehensibility in inter-dialect interactions; 3) information gap task that sought to test whether participants who speak different dialects could achieve a communicative goal when involved in a discussion that required simultaneous use of the three dialects; 4) reading comprehension that assessed comprehension of passages written in each of the Sotho language varieties and of the harmonized Sotho text (i.e., a passage that combined words and phrases from all the three Sotho dialects); 5) post-task questionnaire, testing attitudes of the participants after they were immersed in the communicative activities (i.e., intervention tasks). The results of this attitude test were compared with responses from the pre-task questionnaire; 6) delayed interview to follow up on the issues that needed clarification. Responses that were elicited from this interview strengthened the original ideas expressed in the questionnaires. The following sections explain the design and procedures of the study in detail.

POPULATION, INSTRUMENTS, AND PROCEDURES

The population targeted for this study was a group of first year University of Limpopo students who speak any one of the dialects in the Sotho cluster: Sepedi, Setswana, and Sesotho. These language varieties are grouped into a single linguistic category by the Pan South African Language Board (PANSALB) (2000). Beyond this grouping, Sotho language varieties share a similar television channel in the South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC 2) and phrases from these dialects were joined into one version of the national anthem: *Morena Boloka Sechaba sa heso* (God bless our nation). In terms of the Constitutional provisions, however, these three dialects are classified as

distinct languages. The Sotho group represents 24-30% of the total population, making it the second largest group of South Africa's indigenous peoples after the Nguni group. Historically, dialects of Sotho are believed to have been a common language based on the traditional dress and ancestry shared by these groups (see Thompson and Wilson, 1983). According to Thompson and Wilson (1983), the Sotho communities had one language that differed only in dialects and were concentrated between the Limpopo and Orange rivers (p.130), which is a large area of the former Transvaal and the former Orange Free State. The Center for Advanced Studies of African Society established that variants of Sotho are spoken in 6 countries in Southern Africa: Lesotho, South Africa, Botswana, Namibia, and Zambia. The emergence of the South African Sotho variants as distinctive languages is the result of the work of the missionaries who worked in different regions of the Sotho communities and then encoded them through different writing systems as distinct languages (Nakin, 2002). For example, Sepedi was reduced to writing by the Lutheran missionaries from Germany who worked in the northern side (once called Northern Sotho), Setswana was encoded by the London Missionaries who worked in the western side (once called Western Sotho) while the Catholic missionaries in the southern side were responsible for Sesotho (once called Southern Sotho). The population group that falls within the category described became the subject of interest in this study because the harmonization proposal (e.g., Alexander, 1989; Nhlapo, 1944) recommends unification of the orthographies of their dialects as they are anecdotally perceived to have a high degree of mutual comprehensibility. For this reason, this population provided a language cluster or group through which the harmonization proposal, involving attitudes and degrees of mutual comprehension, could ideally be tested.

The Sotho cluster language speakers are dispersed in three remote provinces of South Africa. The Sepedi speaking population is concentrated in the Limpopo province, the Setswana community is in the North West province and the Sesotho community is found mainly in the Free State province. Although the new socio-political dispensation allowed free movements and settlement in any part of the country, the geographical concentration of the three groups still reflects the Bantustan homeland policy (Group Areas Act) that created borders among these linguistic communities as Lebowa, Bophutatswana and Qwaqwa homelands, respectively, and then prohibited movements from one linguistic community to another. This geographical concentration and the remoteness of each of the provinces from one another were deemed convenient for a study of this nature that sought to draw a representative population of speakers who have had no prior interaction with speakers of the other sister dialects.

Students who had only two weeks of university entrance were preferred for this study as they represented a community of speakers who have had no prior contact with speakers of sister dialects. Most of them attended their secondary schools in the far remote areas such as Qwaqwa for Sesotho speakers, former Lebowa for Sepedi speakers, and Bophutatswana for Setswana mother tongue speakers. These remote places are stretched over a distance of approximately 300 miles, and they are separated by the province of Gauteng. As a consequence, the geographical dispersion limited face-to-face interaction among the freshman students speaking these sister dialects. Going to university as a freshman provided a first-time encounter among students as speakers of different Sotho varieties, other than the minimal exposure from national television.

The original site for a pilot study was a university located in each of the three provinces that historically enrolls speakers of these languages: University of North- West, Free State University and University of the North (re-named University of Limpopo). Each of these universities provided a representative sample of university students. After the pilot study was concluded, the University of Limpopo was selected as the research base for the project. It was found that there was an influx of students going to the new University of Limpopo due to the merger program in the South African higher education system. The University of North-West was merging with Potchefstroom University while the University of the North (Qwaqwa branch) merged with Free State University. The University of the North that became the University of Limpopo attracted many freshman students from North-West Province and Free State. This university is situated 20 miles east of the main city of Limpopo Province, Polokwane. It is a historically Black university that was previously dominated by Sepedi speakers. With the new political dispensation, the campus life has a blend of speakers from various language backgrounds. A research office and a discussion room were allocated for this research project on the campus.

Sampling Frame and Procedures

This study selected 60 freshman students from the University of Limpopo that hosted approximately 3,000 freshman students out of a total of approximately 11, 000 students. On the first day of classes, February 16, 2004, notices seeking research participants, with specific conditions set out in the advert, were distributed throughout campus. Most of these notices targeted the entrance gates, the library, and the student

representative offices to ensure that every first year student who speaks any of the Sotho language varieties would see the adverts. Two important conditions were that the students should be first year speakers of any of these dialects Sepedi, Setswana, and Sesotho, and that they should not be bi or tri-dialect speakers of these dialects (See Appendix A). In order to draw a sampling frame, a list of 300 students who responded to the advert was created in the office where the researcher and assistants were based.

A number of sampling procedures, mainly probability sampling techniques, were carried out to select 60 students that truly represented the population under investigation. The first sampling procedure was stratified random sampling, where the 300 potential participants were classified into three dialect strata: Sepedi, Setswana, and Sesotho that equally divided them into 3 groups of 100 each. This sampling procedure was necessary to ensure that the final sample equally represented the three dialects, which were the focus of the study. Then a systematic random sampling was carried out, taking every fifth from each of the three lists with 100 names of the students. This procedure allowed a selection of 20 participants from each stratum so that a total of 60 respondents were selected. To ensure that gender was equally represented in each of the 20 names, a purposive sampling was carried out to supplement the above procedures. Here, the researcher and assistants used the name criterion to verify the gender of each pre-selected participant. All the pre-selected participants were notified by telephone and individual appointments were set for completion of the questionnaires.

Four potential respondents from each stratum were dropped from the study due to a variety of reasons, such as an incomplete questionnaire, failure to arrive on schedule, or

request to quit for personal reasons. In the end, there were 48 participants left in the study, allowing each dialect to be represented by 16 participants.

For convenience of small room discussions in three varieties, the second sampling phase sought to gather 12 participants (4 from each dialect) out of the remaining 48 participants selected in the first phase of the study. These participants were selected to participate in the next phases of the experiment (intervention tasks). The completed questionnaires were scrutinized with special focus on the biographical data given in section III of the questionnaire. This section required the participants to list the languages/dialects they knew and were able to speak other than their own varieties. Using the dialect stratum through which the participants were grouped, systematic random sampling was used to arrive at four participants from the total of 16, taking every fourth (4, 8, 12 and 16). Like in the first sampling procedure, a purposive sampling was carried out to ensure that gender was equally represented. This resulted in 4 participants (2 males, 2 females) from each of the three dialects. Purposive sampling procedure was also deemed necessary at this stage to exclude native speakers who might have had the opportunity to speak or use one of the sister varieties other than their own (i.e., bi- or tri-variety speakers). It was also useful as a screening measure to select only the participants who were motivated and who showed interest in continuing in the subsequent phases of the study.

Pilot Test

A pilot test is described as a preliminary test of a questionnaire, interview or relevant procedure in order to identify problems associated with the design (Balnaves and

Caputi, 2001). Because the questionnaires used in the study were translated into the dialects spoken by the participants and because unusual concepts like 'harmonization' and 'mutual intelligibility' were used, it was necessary for the questionnaire or other procedures to be subjected to a preliminary test to assess the effectiveness of these instruments and procedures.

The researcher and two research assistants visited the three universities: Limpopo, North West, and Free State that represent communities speaking Sepedi, Setswana, and Sesotho, respectively. In each of the campuses three participants (Sepedi speaker, Setswana speaker and Sesotho speaker) were conveniently selected from the student population during registration week. The pilot mimicked the major steps in the actual data collection: pre-task questionnaire, focus group discussion, information gap activity, reading comprehension and post-task questionnaire. The delayed interview was not necessary at this stage because it was only going to be used in selected cases that needed further clarifications. The students were asked to give feedback and to point out difficulties encountered during their participation. This provided the researcher with an opportunity to analyze the items included and to carry out revisions before the actual instruments and procedures were administered. Problems with the wording of some of the questions were identified. For example, the concepts 'indigenous', 'intelligibility', 'harmonization', 'dialect vs language' were resolved through translation (i.e., translating back from Sotho language varieties to English and vice-versa) without which they would have biased the answers significantly. Reduction of errors and bias through this piloting has therefore enhanced both construct and internal validity of the study.

Pre-task Questionnaire

A pre-task questionnaire consisting of open ended, closed-ended, and biographical questions was administered to 48 students representing each of three dialects and their respective provinces: Limpopo (Sepedi), North West (Setswana) and Free State (Sesotho). A questionnaire was preferred to an interview because it would provide standardized answers that could be compared with answers provided in the post test questionnaire in a within-subject design like this one. Interviews would generate non-standardized responses that would be difficult to compare. Additionally, potential bias from interview effect was avoided. There were 34 questions out of which 21 were closed-ended while items 22 through 27 were open-ended. Items 28 through 34 were demographic questions including the participant's age, proficiency in other languages, gender, mother tongue, year of study, and declaration of their willingness to participate in the next round of the project (Appendix C). Demographic answers were important in making further sampling for participation in the second phase. The purpose of this questionnaire was to assess the students' attitudes, beliefs and perceptions about their own dialect variety and other sister dialect variants in the Sotho cluster. Both open ended and closed-ended questions were centered on issues within these four stands:

1) Attitudes toward clustering of languages (questions 1-4).

2) Attitudes toward using Sotho dialects as media of instruction beyond primary education (questions 5-8c and 23).

3) Views on mutual intelligibility; i.e., how far do they think they can understand their sister dialects (9-14c and 25).

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4) Perceptions of the harmonization proposal (15-21, and 22, 24, 26).

The closed-ended questions had a binominal scale of yes (positive) and no (negative) poles. Some of the open-ended were written as follow-ups to the closed-ended questions so that they could be post-coded in the analysis. The close–ended questions sought to elicit standardized responses that would be compared in pre-task and post test analyses. The open-ended questions were aimed at collecting data that would otherwise be missed with closed-ended questions and at giving participants liberty to explore their feelings in an unrestricted form.

Using the appointment system, each of the 48 participants had 30 minutes to complete the five-page questionnaire in the office reserved for administration of the questionnaires. Responses to both open-ended and closed-ended questions provided necessary input to assess the attitudes of the respondents and to provide an answer to the first question of the study: what are the preconceived attitudes of native speakers of Sotho language varieties toward sister varieties in the same cluster, use of Sotho languages in education, mutual intelligibility and the proposal for harmonization?

Focus Group Discussion

The second phase of the research involved a focus group discussion as a forum for data collection on degrees of mutual intelligibility among Sepedi, Setswana, and Sesotho participants. This stage exclusively involved 12 participants (4 from each dialect stratum) who participated in the pre-task questionnaire phase of the study. The participants were invited to attend a focus group discussion that was held in a large discussion room on the

campus. The discussion topic was disclosed in advance so that they could think through and become comfortable with the discussion. Topic participants were instructed to use their mother tongues throughout the interactions, and they were told that English was strictly prohibited. The topic covered these components: (i) causes of ethnic stereotypes, (ii) the danger of stereotypes and (iii) ways of resolving social problems caused by stereotypes. Instructions and roles were also given in advance so that the participants knew what was expected of them. Sepedi speakers were asked to address part one (i) of the question, Setswana speakers part two (ii) while the Sesotho speakers were requested to answer part three (iii) of the discussion topic (see Appendix D). After each group presented their part to the whole group, the presenters were asked for clarification by other group members (representing different language varieties) to support or disagree on the issues raised by each group. A video recorder was used to keep track of the interactions while the research assistant, who spoke all these varieties, moderated the discussions and encouraged each informants to provide as much information as possible. These discussions lasted for an hour. Data collected using this procedure was necessary to provide information on the second question of the study: can speakers of Sepedi, Setswana, and Sesotho communicate without major linguistic barriers when immersed in communicative activities on topics of mutual interest?

Information Gap Task

In order to investigate whether Sotho inter-dialect interactions could achieve a predetermined communication goal, an information gap activity was used to prompt goal-directed interactions among the speakers of the three dialect varieties. Through

negotiation, the participants were expected to fill in the gap through information they sought from the other groups and to resolve the problem presented. This activity marked the third phase of the data collection procedure and it was administered to the same 12 participants who had taken part in the focus group discussion. The aim of this activity was to provide further data on whether mutual understanding among speakers of the three dialects, if any, was sufficient to allow the speakers to negotiate, collaborate and reach a communicative goal. A hypothetical situation was created around an orange, which the students had to compete for as explained below:

The orange game

The researcher and the assistant brought an orange to the discussion room. The participants were divided into three groups based on the language varieties they speak. According to the instructions, each group needed the orange for different reasons. They were expected to express their intentions, convince each other, negotiate, and 'discover' that they could share the orange because each pair needed only one part of the orange. This activity allowed communication across language varieties as representatives of each variety had to negotiate with representatives from a different language variety. The Sepedi group was expected to find out that they needed the rind, the Setswana group needed the pips and Sesotho speakers had to find out that they only needed the juice. The contexts of the groups' needs were described as follows:

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(a) The orange rind

The Sepedi speaking group was given a context that one of their important leaders in the Limpopo province was dying of influenza and that, as advised by the traditional healer, the patient could only be saved if the only remaining orange in the country could be used to cure her. The image of the Rain Queen was portrayed in this discussion because she represented the regional tradition of having command over rain. The participants therefore had a moral responsibility to protect and save their traditional leader. This was relevant for Sepedi speakers since their province is negatively painted as 'witchcraft province', where there was also a popular belief that the orange rind could cure influenza. Here's the translated directive for Sepedi speakers:

> Your leader (Queen Modjadji) is dying of influenza and, as the traditional healer instructed, she needs an orange to have her life saved. But, there's only one orange left in the whole country. Setswana and Sesotho groups also need this orange. As representatives of the Queen, negotiate with your Setswana and Sesotho counterparts so that they allow you to get the orange. Make your case and convince them why you, not them, should get the orange (Appendix E)

(b) The orange pips

The Setswana speakers were told about the extinction faced by the orange trees species and a farmer from Mabopane area (one of the townships in the North West province) has discovered that if he could find an orange, he could save the species and help in multiplying the trees in the next couple of years. The issue of farming and citrus

fruits was relevant to Setswana speakers since it was topical at the time of this study. They were given the following background information that helped to reflect both the urgency and the seriousness of the case:

Oranges have become extinct in the North West province. One of the farmers from Mabopane promised you that he could help multiply the number of oranges when and only if he gets an orange. But, there's only one remaining orange in the whole country. Sepedi and Sesotho groups also need this orange. As representatives of your province, negotiate with your Sepedi and Sesotho counterparts so that they allow you to get the orange. Make your case and convince them why you, not them, should get the orange (Appendix E).

(c)The orange juice

The need for orange juice was assigned to the Sesotho group. They were given the context in which their city, Phutaditshaba was faced with drought. Phutaditshaba is the capital city of the former Qwaqwa homeland and it remains a uniting symbol for Sesotho speakers. The city was chosen so that it could bring sympathy, loyalty and an urgent cause for action. The problem presented to this group was that there was only one remaining water engineer who could die of thirst if he did not get that orange in a few hours. This task tallied with the newspaper reports about shortage of engineers in this area. This context was presented to the participants as follows:

Your city, Phutaditshaba, is faced with drought and there's only one water

engineer remaining for the whole city. But the engineer is very sick after he was

thirsty for more than 7 days. The doctors recommended that he get an orange so

that he can recover to continue with his water project to save the city. There is

only one orange remaining in the country that you should get. Sepedi and

Setswana groups need this orange. As representatives of your city, negotiate with

your Setswana and Sepedi counterparts so that they allow you to get the orange.

Make your case and convince them why you, not them, should get the orange (see

Appendix E).

The problem created in this game was two fold. First, it prompted rivalry over the

possession of the orange because the participants were given the impression that the

orange was the only one remaining in the country. Secondly, the purpose for which each

group needed the orange was not revealed to the other groups. The purposes that were

revealed in the midst of the discussion needed to be weighed and ranked in the order of

importance. As a result, the participants would have achieved their communicative goal if

they found out, after negotiations, (1) what exactly the other groups needed from the

orange and (2) if they could reach a solution in which they share the orange in terms of

the pips, rind and juice per group. As with the focus group discussion, the discussants

required that the participants strictly use their own languages, without switching to

English, as they negotiated for meaning, clarified their positions, interrogated other

groups and repaired potential communication breakdowns. The discussion lasted for 1

hour and it was video-recorded. Interactions video-recorded in this activity provided

answers to the third question of the study: can inter-variety interactions among the

Sepedi, Setswana, and Sesotho achieve a communicative goal?

Reading Comprehension Test

In order to test whether harmonization of written orthographies is feasible among

the Sotho language varieties, reading comprehension tasks were used. This is a very

important part of the study on the question of harmonization; it involved three samples of

readings from the three dialects and another one from a harmonized Sotho text. The

harmonized text included words and spelling systems used in all three varieties in order

to provide a feel for what harmonization might entail in practice. In order to avoid a

carry-over effect from one reading to another, all the texts were dealing with different

topics and they were not identified by dialect. Each of the 12 respondents read the

passages and, using their home language, answered 25 questions (5 from each passage)

that sought to test their overall comprehension of the readings. Since the harmonization

proposal would in practice involve unification of spellings, vocabulary and orthographies,

this part of the research was regarded as the hallmark in testing the practical nature of

harmonized Sotho. It proved instrumental in determining if mixed vocabulary and unified

orthography could be mutually understood. From questions that included a mixture of

true/false, short answer and multiple choice, the responses given were important in

addressing the fourth question of the study: can speakers of Sotho language cluster read

and understand written texts from varieties other than their own?

Post-task Questionnaire

Using both closed-ended and open-ended questions through a questionnaire scheduled at the end of the reading comprehension reading task, all the 12 discussants were individually asked to give feedback on the interactions with speakers of other related language varieties. This phase involved the same 12 participants. The questions were similar to the ones used in the pre-task attitudes questionnaire (open- and closed-ended questions with a focus on four strands: language clustering, use of Sotho languages in post primary education, mutual intelligibility and harmonization proposal). This post-task attitudinal questionnaire was meant to provide data that could be used to answer the fifth question of the study: does immersion in actual interaction with speakers who use Sepedi, Setswana, and Sesotho reinforce or change preconceived attitudes about the varieties?

Delayed Interview

One to two weeks after a review of the scenes from the camcorder was made, and responses on the questionnaires read, a follow up interview was arranged with some of the participants in order to clarify some of their paralinguistic expressions and to attain explanations of some of the issues they had raised in their responses to the open-ended questions. A short time between the data collection and delayed interviews was preferred since it guarded against a maturation period that could have developed over a much longer time. Notes were taken for use as a supplementary source to the data already collected. Only four follow-ups were actually carried out. The rest of the participants

were called by telephone to clarify some of the statements they made. This information was needed to supplement the qualitative data.

Personal Observations

Another method of data collection used in the study was personal observation. The researcher, who is proficient in all three dialects used in the interactions, observed all the discussions, taking notes and noting particularly cases of mutual understanding and misunderstanding. Words, phrases and expressions, such as idioms that affected the flow of communication from one group of speakers to another, were noted so that they could be followed up after the discussions.

DATA ANALYSIS

Both qualitative and quantitative data analysis procedures were carried out in the study.

(a) Qualitative Data

There were two qualitative measures used: content analysis for open–ended responses to the questionnaire and discourse analysis for focus group discussion and information gap activity.

Content analysis was used for the open-ended part of the questionnaire. The questionnaires were organized and grouped according to dialect strata and assigned identification numbers. A codebook was used to code each variable and to write a brief description under each variable. This analysis was divided into two phases. First, the

factual information employed a coding frame so that the responses to these questions could be coded into distinct categories and then treated later as nominal data. Second, all other open-ended answers were subjected to systematic content analysis in two ways (see Dornyei, 2003): (1) informant's responses were turned into distinct content elements, substantive statements or key points, and (2) categories obtained in phase two (focus group discussions and information gap task) were numerically coded and entered into a data file. Some of the key points in (1) are quoted verbatim for illustration.

The video-clips and interactions from the focus group discussion and information gap activity needed an analysis that focused on utterances exchanged among the three dialect groups. Grice's (1975) Cooperative Principle (CP) was adapted for analysis on the premise that mutual understanding does entail a high degree of cooperation. The maxim of relation, i.e., how relevant the speech of one interlocutor is to another one, proved a useful tool to measure cases of (a) understanding and (b) misunderstanding. Additional maxims of quantity, quality and manner helped in consolidation of the analysis of mutual intelligibility. Analyses for each of the speech types (interventions levels) are individually explained in (i) and (ii) below.

(i) Focus Group Discussion

Utterances exchanged among the three dialect groups were divided into two subfields: bi-dialect interaction and tri-dialect interaction. Bi-dialect interactions included all instances of communication between speakers of two different dialects. Tri-dialect interactions involved all instances where speakers from all three dialects exchanged utterances on a common theme (negotiation). CP principle was used in this case to show

cases of (a) mutual intelligibility and (b) unintelligibility. In analyzing the data,

appropriate vignettes from the video tapes were captured to support cases of (a) and (b).

(ii) Information Gap Task

Analysis of the data collected through the information gap was analyzed in the same

way as the focus group discussion as described above. Over and above this, judgment as

to whether the discussants reached the communicative goal was based on the participants'

ability to discover exactly what they wanted and to arrive at a conclusion of sharing the

orange by dividing it into the rind, the juice and pips. This conclusion was considered

important in making arguments for or against mutual intelligibility considering that three

dialects (encoded as distinct languages) were employed throughout the discussion.

Examples of such interactions are quoted verbatim in order to support the case developed

in the analysis.

In addition to adaptation of Grice's Cooperative Principle in analyzing the video-

recorded speech tokens, native speaker intuitive judgments were used to assess cases of

understanding and misunderstanding in the conversations. The researcher who personally

observed the interactions had a vantage point in making judgments based on his intuition

as a native speaker of Sepedi (with full proficiency in Setswana and Sesotho). The field

notes taken during the interactions were scrutinized and factored in the final assessment

of the interactions. Furthermore, two research assistants who were also proficient/native

speakers of these dialects were asked to playback the videocassettes and make personal

judgment on degrees of mutual understanding. Their observations were compared with

those of the researcher to ensure interrater reliability on the speech tokens evaluated.

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b. Quantitative Data

Quantitative data generated in this study involve YES/NO binominal scaled closed-ended responses, post-coded responses from follow-up questions and scores from the reading comprehension passage. The closed-ended responses were further divided into three categories: (a) pre-task responses from the whole group (48), (b) 12 participants' responses in both pre-and post-tasks, and (c) reading comprehension scores. Analyses for each of these data are presented below:

Descriptive and Inferential Statistics

The following data were subjected to measures of central tendency and measures of dispersion, using means, standard deviations and frequency counts. Inferential statistics were carried out in order to assess whether the finding could be generalized to the whole population, using probability/significance tests based on the alpha value of 0.05.

(i) Reading Comprehension

Responses from the reading comprehension passage were scored out of 40 points for each of the 12 participants. Due to extremes in the scores, median was preferred as the measure of central tendency. Frequency counts were used to account for distribution of the scores between and within the three groups, using percentages. A chi-square test was used to assess whether differences individual scores within each of the three language varieties were statistically significant. One-Way ANOVA was used to compare mean differences between the language varieties and to measure the significance level.

(ii) Pre-task Responses

The pre-task questionnaire responses from the large group of 48 participants were analyzed on a bi-nominal scale of Yes (positive) and No (negative). Scores for each of these scales were counted as frequencies among the dialects and the four themes on which the questions were based: language clustering, use in post-primary education, mutual intelligibility and harmonization. Totals of scores for each strand were calculated per dialect, using descriptive statistics (percentages). A chi-square and one-way ANOVA tests were used to determine degrees of difference within and between groups and themes, and whether such differences were statistically significant. It was necessary to show confidence level through this measure so that generalizations to the larger student population could be made (i.e., compared the frequency of YES answers across the groups).

c. Comparison of Pre-task and Post-task: The Experiment

Since the design of the study was mainly experimental in nature, it was necessary to compare the results of the pre- and post-task attitudes based on the responses of the participants who underwent the experimental process (intervention tasks). These participants were exposed to speakers of sister dialects through inter-dialect interactions and to orthographic representations of both their sister dialects and a sample of harmonized Sotho. This comparison sought to assess both qualitatively and quantitatively whether the exposure had an impact on the participants' initial attitudes (pre-task).

(i) Qualitative Data

Comparison of qualitative data generated from responses in both pre-and post-task stages involved pairing of the answers from each of the 12 participants. This procedure sought to assess whether what was said in the pre-task was similar to the reactions given in the post-task. Content analysis was used on each paired response to establish patterns of similarities and differences.

(ii) Quantitative Data

A matched t-test was used to compare scores for each individual participant in pre-task and post-task responses (from questionnaires). Due to the requirement for normal distribution of the data, Anderson-Darling Normality test preceded all matched t-test analyses. The means were compared using this test in order to assess whether there was a change and whether such change, if any, was statistically significant at the alpha value of 0.05. A test of significance was necessary in this analysis in order to show if the probability of the observed results occurred by chance (random selection process) or whether some mechanism was at work (i.e., the intervention tasks truly changed the attitudes of the speakers). Answers to this statistical test were expected to induce practical significance to the proposal for harmonization. Because statistically significant results do not necessarily entail that they are important, a strength of association test was conducted on the statistically significant cases to assess the importance of the differences in post-task and pre-task means.

CHAPTER 4: PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF QUANTITATIVE DATA

The aim of the study was to investigate the feasibility of harmonizing three Sotho languages varieties (Sepedi, Sesotho, and Setswana) through a common orthographic representation. Attitudes of the speakers and the degrees of mutual intelligibility in both spoken and written registers were used as variables to assess the extent to which harmonization is feasible. This chapter presents the analysis of the quantitative data and interpretation of the results.

PRE-TASK ATTITUDES

Forty-eight speakers of the Sotho language varieties were given a pre-task questionnaire that sought to elicit the speakers' preconceived attitudes toward the harmonization process. There were 29 closed-ended questions based on the following themes: (a) clustering of the languages on national TV, (b) attitudes toward Sotho language varieties as languages of instruction in post-primary school education, (c) degrees of mutual comprehensibility among the Sotho varieties, and (d) the proposal to harmonize three differentiated orthographic representations into a unified writing standard. The questionnaire also consisted of six open-ended questions that were designed to elicit input on these themes and to allow the respondents to express their feelings with depth, and offer clarifications, which could not be captured with closed-ended questions. This section reports on the findings observed from the closed-ended questions on each of the themes across the three language varieties.

11 Official Languages Policy and the Clustering of the Sotho and Nguni Languages

The constitution of South Africa recognizes 11 languages as official: Sepedi, Setswana, Sesotho, isiZulu, isiXhosa, isiNdebele, siSwati, Xitsonga, Tshivenda, English and Afrikaans (RSA, 1996). For practical purposes, however, Pan South African Language Board (PANSALB) and the South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC) have a propensity for clustering Nguni languages (isiXhosa, isiZulu, isiNdebele and Siswati) and Sotho languages (Sepedi, Setswana, and Sesotho) into two broad categories as Nguni and Sotho, respectively. Using their mother tongues, the respondents in this study were asked if they believed that the 11 official languages policy could promote the use of indigenous African languages in public domains and if they approved of the Nguni and Sotho clusters. The questions collapsed into this theme involved the following:

1) Indigenous African languages can be promoted through the 11 official languages policy.

2) We need to retain the clustering of Sotho languages on Channel 2 of the South African Broadcasting Cooperation.

3) Sotho language varieties (Sepedi, Setswana, and Sesotho) should be grouped under one category for administrative and educational purposes.

4) Nguni language varieties (isiZulu, isiXhosa, isiNdebele, siSwati) should be grouped under one category for administrative and educational purposes.

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Sixteen respondents from each of the Sotho language varieties (Sepedi, Setswana,

and Sesotho) answered the above four questions on a binominal scale based on YES/NO

alternates (see Appendix C). The results of the survey are summarized in Table 2 below:

Table 2: Attitudes toward Language Clustering and 11 Official Languages

Language variety	Positive scores (YES)	%	Negative Scores (NO)	%
Sepedi	43	67.1	21	32.8
Setswana	46	71.8	18	28.1
Sesotho	42	65.6	22	34.3
TOTAL	**131**	**68.2**	**61**	**31.7**

Attitudes of Sepedi, Setswana, and Sesotho speakers toward the clustering of their

language varieties according to Sotho and Nguni channels on national television were

largely positive. There was a notable consistency of positive ratings across the three

language varieties. As shown in Table 2, Sepedi respondents gave 43 (or 67.1%) positive

responses, which are contrasted with 21 (or 32.8%) negative answers. Setswana

respondents had a total positive rating of 46 (or 71.8%) and a negative rating of 18 (or

28.1%). 42 (or 65.6% positive) responses and 22 (or 34.3%) negative responses were

observed among the Sesotho speaking respondents. Collectively, there is an intervariety

positive response rated at 131 (or 68.2 %) and a negative rating of 61 (or 31.7%). These

results allow the interpretation that the respondents across the language varieties favor

grouping their languages into one television channel as it is practiced in the SABC Channel 2.

While the findings showed a strong support for language clustering, it was necessary to assess differences between the language groups in order to show whether similar confidence level could be claimed across the groups. As a result, a chi-square test of probability, set at an alpha value of 0.05, was conducted to assess whether the differences between language varieties responses were statistically significant. The chi-square results showed that the differences (of 67%, 71.8%, and 65.6%) among the three Sotho language varieties were not statistically significant (χ^2=0.51, df=2, P>0.05). The null hypothesis, which predicted no significant differences among the Sotho groups, is supported while the alternative hypothesis, which predicted significant differences, is rejected. The inference drawn from this finding is that all three groups equally support the clustering practices in current multilingual policy and that their attitudes are about the same.

Attitudes toward Sotho Language Varieties as Media of Instruction in Post-primary Education

The next group of questions on the questionnaire sought to ascertain the attitude of the respondents toward Sotho varieties, including their own, as the media of learning and teaching in post-primary school education. The questions revolved around the following sub-themes (Appendix C):

1) Sotho language varieties as the media of instruction beyond

   primary school education

2) Suitability of the Sotho language varieties for scientific and technological subjects

3) Improving understanding of the subject matter

4) General interest in the language varieties or their harmonized form taught at universities

Because the harmonization proposal further implied use of the new harmonized orthographies for education purposes, attitudes of the speakers on these questions are integral to the feasibility of the harmonization proposal. Altogether, there were six questions on the questionnaire for each of the 48 respondents (16 per language variety) from the three Sotho varieties. From these questions, a total number of 96 (16 x 6)scores per group were anticipated. The results of the survey are presented in the following table:

Table 3: Attitudes toward Use of Sotho Language Varieties for Post-primary School

Language group	Positive scores (YES)	%	Negative Scores (NO)	%
Sepedi	56	58.3	40	41.7
Setswana	52	54.1	44	45.8
Sesotho	54	56.2	42	43.8
TOTAL	**162**	**56.2**	**126**	**43.8**

Attitudes toward use of Sotho language varieties or their harmonized form in post-primary school education showed to be positive. There were no major differences in

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the ratings per language variety. Table 3 shows that Sepedi respondents gave 56 (or 58.3%) positive responses and 41.7% negative answers. Setswana speakers provided 52 (or 54.1%) YES responses and 44 (or 45.8%) NO responses. Sesotho respondents gave 54 (or 56.2%) YES and 42 (or 43.8%) NO responses. For all three groups, 162 (or 6.2%) of the total scores were rated positively (YES) while 126 (or 43.8%) of the total scores were negative (NO).

In order to test whether there were real differences among the three groups and whether the positive rating of 56.2% was reflective of the intergroup attitudes, a chi-square test was carried out. The results of the test show that the differences among the groups were not statistically significant (χ^2=0.199, df=2, P>0.05). These results allow for acceptance of the null hypothesis, which predicted no significant differences among the three groups. The alternative hypothesis is consequently rejected. In this connection, it can be concluded that the positive responses obtained were not skewed by any particular group and that the attitudes of the speakers are about the same irrespective of their language background.

Mutual Intelligibility

The next group of questions sought to evaluate the students' belief about the degrees of mutual intelligibility among Sotho language varieties. These questions sought to assess whether students believed that they understood sister language varieties and whether they thought they would be understood in turn by speakers of sister varieties. It should be stressed that these respondents did not have prior conversations with any speakers of the sister dialects (language varieties). Their perceptions were solely based on

what they hear through national television. For example, televison Channel 2 from the SABC alternates the news-reading program in Sepedi, Setswana, and Sesotho.

On a binominal scale of YES or NO, all 48 participants responded to 12 statements on mutual comprehensibility (see Appendix C) as restated below:

1) Sotho languages have more similarities than they have differences.

2) I like watching the news or movies in other Sotho languages (other than my own).

3) I can understand when I listen to Sepedi (e.g., on TV).

4) I can understand when I listen to Setswana (e.g., on TV).

5) I can understand when I listen to Sesotho (e.g., on TV).

6) I believe Sepedi speakers can understand when I use my own language.

7) I believe Setswana speakers can understand when I use my own language.

8) I believe Sesotho speakers can understand when I use my own language.

9) Conversations among Sepedi, Setswana, and Sesotho speakers can go on without major difficulties in understanding words or phrases used by speakers.

10) I will be able to understand most of the written words/phrases used in Sepedi.

11) I will be able to understand most of the written words/phrases used in Setswana.

12) I will be able to understand most of the written words/phrases used in Sesotho.

The results of the survey are presented in Table 4 below:

Table 4: Attitudes toward Degrees of Mutual Intelligibility

Language variety	Positive scores (YES)	%	Negative Scores (NO)	%
Sepedi	155	79.4	37	19.3
Setswana	159	82.8	33	17.2
Sesotho	144	75	48	25
TOTAL	**458**	**79.5**	**118**	**20.5**

Results of the survey on degrees of mutual intelligibility showed the highest positive ratings among the four themes developed from the pre-task questionnaire with observable consistency across the three Sotho varieties. This finding was corroborated by the figures displayed in Table 4 above. First, the table shows that Sepedi speakers provided 155 (or 79.4%) positive responses and 37 (or 19.3%) negative responses. Secondly, Setswana speakers gave 159 (or 82.8%) of positive ratings and only 33 (or 17.2%) negative attitudes on mutual intelligibility. Sesotho speakers attained 144 (or 75%) positive responses while only 48 (or 25%) responses were rated negatively. In sum, all three language varieties combined amounted to 458 (or 79.5%) YES responses with only 118 (or 20.5%) NO answers. These results support the interpretation that the speakers in all the Sotho language varieties answered favorably on the mutual intelligibility questions.

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A chi-square test was carried out to assess whether the differences in attitudes observed between the three groups were statistically significant. The results showed that the difference in attitudes from the speakers of the three varieties' evaluation of mutual intelligibility was not statistically significant (χ^2=1.333, df=2, P>0.05). This allows the interpretation that the 79.5% positive rate on the mutual intelligibility questions is a real representation of all three language groups under study. The respondents therefore had homogenous preconceived notions that their language varieties would be mutually comprehensible - a chief determining factor for the feasibility of harmonizing Sotho language varieties.

Harmonization

The last group of questions on the questionnaire sought to assess the participants' beliefs and opinions on the possibility of uniting orthographies of the three Sotho language varieties: Sepedi, Setswana, and Sesotho. The questions are restated below under 1-7.

1) Sepedi, Setswana, and Sesotho are so close that they can be treated as a single language.

2) I think these languages can be unified in writing.

3) Sepedi, Setswana, and Sesotho should be grouped in one TV channel.

4) I will be happy to have Sepedi, Setswana, and Sesotho unified in writing as in the national anthem.

5) The Sotho version of the national anthem: *Morena boloka sechaba sa hesu* forms

part of my home language.

6) I will be able to understand the unified Sotho writing.

7) Harmonized Sotho language can be used as a standard written variety among

speakers of Sepedi, Setswana, and Sesotho.

A summary of the responses is presented in the following table of frequencies:

Table 5: Attitudes toward Harmonization

Language group	Positive scores (YES)	%	Negative Scores (NO)	%
Sepedi	82	73.2	30	26.8
Setswana	82	73.2	30	26.8
Sesotho	72	64.2	40	35.7
TOTAL	**236**	**70.2**	**100**	**29.8**

Attitudes toward harmonization of Sotho language varieties were consistently

positive across the three language varieties. This means that the respondents from all the

three language varieties favored the notion of uniting their language orthographies

through the process of harmonization. Table 5 above shows that Sepedi participants

provided 82 (or 73.2%) positive responses and only 30 (26.8%) negative responses.

Similar distribution of scores was obtained from Setswana speaking participants. Sesotho

participants gave 72 (or 64.2%) positive responses and 40 (or 35.7%) negative answers.

Therefore, the group shows a total of 236 (or 70.2%) positive responses while only 100

(or 29.8%) responses on the harmonization proposal were rated negatively. 70.2% of

positive responses on the harmonization proposal allow the interpretation that the

participants were largely in favor of the proposal.

While Sepedi and Setswana participants' responses had exactly the same patterns,

responses from Sesotho participants showed a slightly different frequency distribution. A

chi-square test was carried out to assess whether the 70.2% approval rate was

representative of the group. The results showed that the differences between the Sepedi

and Setswana participants' responses, on the one hand and those from the Sesotho

participants, on the other hand, were not statistically significant (χ^2=0.846, df=2,

P>0.05). These results allow acceptance of the null hypothesis, which predicted no

significant differences among the groups, and rejection of the alternative hypothesis with

its prediction for significant differences. Therefore, there is confidence that 70.2% is a

true representation of positive responses by the whole group of participants and that

harmonization of Sotho language varieties was equally favored across the three language

backgrounds.

Comparison of Attitudes across Themes

The results of the survey have shown that the respondents in all the language

varieties are generally positive toward (a) the 11 official languages policy and language

clustering as used on national television, (b) use of Sotho language varieties in post-

primary school education, (c) degrees of mutual intelligibility and (d) the proposal to

harmonize orthographies of Sotho language varieties. While the chi-square results

showed that there is no statistical difference in attitudes among the three language groups, it was necessary to assess whether there are significant mean differences *between* the four themes. Having met the assumptions of ANOVA test, the individual ratings across the four themes were entered into ANOVA table and analyzed. The results of the one-way ANOVA are presented in Table 6 below:

Table 6: Across Theme Comparison

Source of Variation	Df	Sum of squares	Mean squares	F. Ratio	F. Probability	Remark
Factor	2	110	55	0.02	0.978	Retained
Error	9	21869	2430			**P>0.05**
TOTAL	**11**	**21978**				

Note: Factor= means between themes

The results of one-way ANOVA show that there were no statistically significant differences across the four themes discussed above ($p>0.05$). As illustrated in Table 6, the results allow retention of the null hypothesis, which predicted no significant differences in the attitudes of the speakers of the three Sotho language varieties across the themes presented in the questionnaire. This finding supports the consistent results of the chi-square that the participants across the three Sotho language varieties formed a homogenous group with regard to their attitudes and that such homogeneity was consistent across the four themes.

EFFECTS OF INTERVENTION TASKS

The second phase of data analysis involved a comparison of the responses from 12 participants in both pre-task and post-task questionnaires. Between the pre-task and post-task questionnaires, 12 respondents (four from each language group) participated in an experiment that required inter-variety interactions and reading texts written in all the three Sotho language varieties and in a sample of Harmonized Sotho. A matched t- test was used to assess pre and post-task attitudes and an alpha value of 0.05 was set to measure the confidence level (statistical significance). The test was preceded by the Anderson-Darling Normality test for each theme in order to assess the normality curve of the data as required of the matched t-test. Because matched-t test, like other statistical measures, only shows whether differences are significant, a further strength of association test was carried out to determine the importance of mean differences, when applicable. Therefore, there was a three-layered analysis providing an account of data normality, significance of the mean differences, and importance of the mean differences in pre-task and post-task scores.

Because differences between responses from the Sepedi, Setswana, and Sesotho responses were not significant ($p>0.05$) in the preceding analyses as shown, the language variable was dropped in subsequent analysis on the assumption that the 12 participants selected for the experiment formed a homogenous group, not differentiated according to their vernacular dialects. Four themes: (a) language clustering, (b) use of Sotho language varieties in post-primary education, (c) mutual intelligibility and (d) harmonization were, however, retained in order to provide a systematic account of pre-task and post-task data

and to assess whether different aspects of the questionnaire would produce different or contradictory results before and after the intervention tasks (treatment).

The hypotheses developed for this analysis were three-pronged. The null hypothesis (H0) predicted that there would be no change in attitudes after the participants were involved in the intervention tasks. In order to predict direction of change, if any, two alternative hypotheses were developed. Alternative hypothesis one (H1) predicted more positive responses in the post-task, suggesting that the interventions impacted on the participants positively. The alternative hypothesis two (H2), on the converse, predicted low positive responses in the post-tasks, which would imply that the intervention tasks induced negative responses.

Language Clustering on National Television

Twelve participants provided data on four items that dealt with clustering of language varieties on national television. Analysis of data on this theme showed that there were more positive responses in the post-task questionnaire than they were in the pre-task questionnaire. This finding meant that the intervention tasks carried out during the experiment (i.e., focus group discussion, information gap task, and reading judgment test) had an impact on the attitudes of the participants toward the clustering of their language varieties on national television.

In order to assess the degree of attitudinal change, a matched-t test was carried out since the normality of data distribution was met. The results of the test showed that the differences in the pre-task and post-task means were statistically significant (t_{obs}= 2.12, df=11, p< 0.05). Consequently, the null hypothesis (H0), which predicted no change of

attitudes, is rejected while alternative hypothesis one (H1) is supported for predicting more positive responses in the post-task. Alternative hypothesis two (H2), which predicted for reverse change (i.e., less positive responses in the post-task than in the pre-task), is also rejected. The matched t-test results imply that the change in attitudes among the participants is positive and statistically significant.

Because the significance of the change in attitudes does not necessarily entail that the difference is important, a test of strength of association (eta^2) was carried out to assess the importance of change. The results of this test showed a strong association level of 0.992 (eta^2= 0.992) between the pre-task and the post-task, which supports the match-t test finding that the intervention tasks had an impact on the change of attitudes. These results allow the interpretation that the interactions among the speakers increased their positive view of the need to cluster their language varieties into one category (i.e., Sotho) such as occupying the same television channel as it is currently practiced. This change in attitudes after intervention task augurs well for the proposal to unite the languages varieties through the harmonization process.

Use of Sotho Language Varieties in Post-Primary School Education

The second group of questions (questions 5- 8c, see Appendix C) sought to assess the participants' beliefs, attitudes, and perception about the use of Sotho dialects and their harmonized form as the media of teaching and learning in post-primary school education and as school subjects at the university level. Analysis of data grouped under this theme showed that there was change of attitudes in the post-task. Unlike in the preceding theme,

however, the change showed that there were low positive responses in the post-task, suggesting that there was a negative influence of attitudes by the intervention tasks.

The above observation was assessed for significance through the matched t-test. The results of matched t-test showed that the differences in the pre-task and post-task means were not statistically significant (t_{obs}= 1.07, df=11, p>0.05). The null hypothesis, which predicted no change in attitudes, is supported whereas both alternative hypotheses (H1 and H2) are rejected for predicting negative and positive changes, respectively. It is however noteworthy that there has been a mean decrease instead of a gain in the post-task; it changed toward the negative direction even though such a change is not statistically significant. The results of the test allow the interpretation that the intervention task did not impact on the participants' attitudes toward the use of their languages in post-primary education.

There are two possible interpretations for the results explaining the effects of the intervention tasks in changing attitudes. First, attitudes toward use of African languages may be too deep to be changed in a short space of time allocated in the intervention tasks. This explanation may hold especially with the general observation in the literature (e.g., Thiba, 2000) that the attitudes toward the use of these languages as the media of instruction are low among teachers, students and parents. The findings reveal that changing attitudes toward the use of African languages as the media of instruction might be a challenge for future attempts and debates on the issue. The next possible explanation has to do with the intervention tasks themselves. Since there was no direct teaching of the content of discussion through these languages in the intervention tasks, the connection between medium of instruction and attitudes of the speakers was so remote to trigger any

changes in attitudes. In this way, the interventions failed to affect the attitudes regarding the use of Sotho language varieties as the media of instruction in post-primary school education. Both factors point out to a potential area for future studies.

Mutual Intelligibility

The degree of mutual intelligibility among the three Sotho dialects was the third theme of the closed-ended questionnaire. Questions 9-14c (see Appendix C) were designed to elicit perceptions of the respondents on the degree to which they thought they would understand their sister dialects and beliefs on the degree they thought they would be understood by speakers of their sister dialects. The questions included the ability to speak and to read texts written in sister dialects, inter-dialect communication, judgments on most of the vocabulary in the sister dialects, and general opinion on Sotho mutual intelligibility among Sotho language varieties. Analysis of the data elicited showed that there were more positive responses in the post-task than they were in the pre-task.

A matched t-test was applied to assess whether the differences observed in the means of the pre and post-tasks were statistically significant. The results of the test showed that the differences in the responses were statistically significant (t_{obs}= 3.58, df=11, p<0.05). Here, the null hypothesis (H0) is not supported for predicting no change in attitudes. Because there were more positive responses in the post-tasks than they were in the pre-task, the alternative hypothesis one (H1) is supported. On the converse, the alternative hypothesis two (H2), which predicted reverse or negative change, is rejected. Therefore, the results point out that there was significant change of attitudes and that such a change is a positive one.

A further test of strength of association (eta^2) was carried out to make inference about the importance of the change in attitudes. The test showed a strong association value of 0.992 (or 99%) of the changes. It therefore appears that the interactions (intervention tasks) increased the level of positive ratings of mutual intelligibility and that such an increase is both statistically significant and important. Discussions with speakers of sister language varieties in their own respective languages made the participants realize the extent to which they understood and were understood by the interlocutors from other Sotho language varieties.

Harmonization of Sotho Language Varieties

The last questions (questions 15-21 as in Appendix C) on the questionnaire tested the participants on their attitudes toward the possibility of uniting their dialects in writing (orthographic representations). The questions involved unification of the writing system, use of Harmonized Sotho as one language on national television, and use of written version of the national anthem as a model, among others (see Appendix C). Analysis of the responses elicited showed that there was a difference in the mean scores between the pre and post-task responses.

To assess whether the differences in pre and post-task means implied change in attitudes, a matched t-test was conducted for statistical significance. The results of the test showed that the differences in pre and post-task mean responses were statistically significant (t_{obs}= 3.14, df=11, p<0.05). This means that that the null hypothesis (H0) is rejected while the alternative hypothesis one (H1), which predicted for positive change in attitudes is supported because the direction of change favored the post-task responses.

The alternative hypothesis two (H2) is rejected for incorrect prediction on the direction of change. In this way, an interpretation can be made that the intervention tasks have impacted on the participants to the extent that they had to change their preconceived attitude.

A further test of strength of association (eta^2) was performed on all the scores. The results showed a moderate association level of 0.472 (or 47%) between the pre-task and post-task responses. This level support the matched t-test results that the intervention tasks had an impact on attitudes of the participants toward the harmonization proposal. The significant change in attitudes toward positive responses and the moderate association level between responses in pre-task and post-task questionnaire allow the interpretation that the intervention tasks enabled the speakers to realize the possibility of harmonizing their languages. The increase in positive responses after the intervention bodes well for the harmonization proposal as far as the speaker attitudes are concerned.

In brief, the results of the matched t- test and strength of association test show a pattern suggesting that the interactions among Sepedi, Setswana, and Sesotho participants have modified their perceptions about the clustering of their dialects as seen through national television, degrees of mutual intelligibility, and harmonization of the sister dialects. Whereas the results found from three of the themes showed positive direction of change, the results from the use of Harmonized Sotho in education theme did not show statistically significant change. As stated above, the difficulty of attitudes toward use of African languages as the media of instruction and inability of the interactions to trigger instruction-based scenarios may have contributed to the lack of change in attitudes. Since the findings of the matched t- test analysis, overall, reveal that the interactions among

three groups of Sotho language varieties accelerated the participants' positive rating of harmonization, it seems possible to conclude that the language harmonization among Sotho groups may be feasible as far as the attitudes are concerned.

READING COMPREHENSION ACROSS SOTHO VARIETIES

Since harmonization of Sotho language varieties, as proposed, would mainly involve unification of the orthographies, this study included reading judgment tests based on texts written in the three language varieties and one in the harmonized version. The test was intended to show the degree of mutual reading among the three groups of Sotho language varieties and to make predictions about challenges and prospects of the harmonization proposal. The passages were also used as a part of the intervention tasks so that the participants could have an idea of what harmonization might entail. As reported in the matched t- test findings above, the intervention tasks increased in the post-task questionnaire.

Twelve participants were given three passages written in each of the varieties: Sepedi, Sesotho, and Setswana, and the fourth one written in a combination of vocabulary items and orthographies from the three language varieties. The latter was developed from the text designed by Jacob Nhlapo in the 1950's. The aim of this experiment was to test whether speakers of one dialect could read and demonstrate understanding by correctly answering questions based on texts from sister language varieties. The medium of the questions was each of the participants' home languages (i.e., the three Sotho varieties).

Each of the respondents read all four texts and answered 20 questions (five from each of the three dialects and five from the harmonized text). The questions had mixed

question types: short one-word answers and true or false alternates (see Appendix F). With assistance from one native speaker from each of the varieties, an interrater reliability of 99% from three raters was reached. Each of the correct answers was given 2 scores (2 x 20=40) and then converted into percentages (frequency counts). A 60% pass rate was set for the reading comprehension. The reading scores within each language variety were tested for significance of differences, if any, through a chi-square analysis set an alpha value of 0.05. Although the sample was relatively small, it was necessary to assess mean differences between groups and between texts through one-way ANOVA whose assumptions were met. In this way, the analysis would show whether there was mutual comprehension among the participants and whether the performance on each text was similar or significantly different. The following subsections present the findings of the analyses:

Sepedi Reading Scores

There were four Sepedi respondents who participated in the reading judgment test. Their reading scores make up 144 points from the total possible scores. The distribution of the scores among the participants is represented in Table 7:

Table 7: Sepedi Reading Scores

Respondent	Reading Scores
1	36
2	34
3	40
4	34
Total= 4	144 (90%)

Results of the reading comprehension test showed that Sepedi participants passed the reading comprehension test and that individual pass scores were consistent. As shown in Table 7, respondents 2 and 4 got 34 points each while 1 and 3 got 36 and 40, respectively. The four scores shown in this figure make a total of 144 points, which is 90% out of a total of 160 that was expected of the group performance. These results allow the interpretation that the Sepedi speakers can read and comprehend texts written in their sister language varieties and in the harmonized text.

In order to test whether there were significant differences between individual cases and to assess whether the 90% pass rate was a true representative of the four participants, a chi-square test was conducted. The results of the chi-square test showed that the differences among the four participants were not statistically significant (χ^2=0.66, df=3, p>0.05). Thus, 90% pass rate is a true reflection of the Sepedi group performance.

Setswana Reading Scores

Four Setswana respondents participated in the comprehension test. They read four

passages and answered 5 questions on each passage. The results of the ratings showed

that the participants had a cumulative total of 128 scores out of a possible total of 160

(i.e., 40 points per participant). The following table summarizes the distribution pattern of

scores within this language variety:

Table 8: Setswana Reading Scores

Respondent	Reading Scores
1	38
2	36
3	16
4	38
Total= 4	128 (80%)

The result reading judgment test showed that Setswana speakers passed the test, but individual scores were not consistent. Table 8 shows that respondents number 1 and 4 obtained 38 points on the reading test each while respondents 2 and 3 got 36 and 16 points, respectively. Collectively, these scores make 128 group scores that translate into 80% of the expected grand total of 160 points. Therefore, it can be concluded that Setswana group got a pass rate of 80%, which is 20% above the set minimum pass rate of 60%.

A chi-square test was carried out to assess the level of individual differences in the Setswana group. The results showed that the differences within the Setswana group were statistically significant (χ^2=9.7375, df=3, p<0.05). The results allow the interpretation that the group differences are real, and that the 80% pass rate is not representative of the whole group. Even though 80% exceeded the pass rate, it cannot be concluded that the Setswana group passed the reading comprehension test. The Setswana group results remain inconclusive, therefore, at this stage of analysis.

Sesotho Reading Scores

As with the previous two groups, four Sesotho respondents participated in the reading comprehension test that involved 4 written texts with 5 questions each. The maximum scores for this group also totaled 160 (40 points per participant). Distribution of the scores obtained by Sesotho participants is summarized in Table 9 below:

Table 9: Sesotho Reading Scores

Respondents	Reading scores
1	36
2	34
3	34
4	32
Total= 4	**136 (85%)**

Sesotho participants passed the reading comprehension test with consistent

individual scores. As illustrated, Table 9 shows that respondents 2 and 3 got 34 (85%)

points each. It also shows that respondent 1 got 36 (90%) points while respondent 4 got

32 (80%) scores in the reading comprehension test. Added together, a group total of 136

points (85%) out of the possible score of 160 was obtained. This clearly exceeds the

minimum of 60% required for a pass with 25%.

Differences among the participants were noted and tested through a chi-square

test in order to determine individual differences in the performance. The results of the

showed that differences among the four Sesotho respondents were not statistically

significant ($\chi^2=0.23$, $df=3$, $p>0.05$). Because there are no significant individual

differences in the Sesotho group, a conclusion can be drawn that Sesotho is a

homogenous group, and that the 85% pass rate is a true representative of the group

performance.

In brief, the results of the frequency counts based on the 60% minimum comprehension rate per group show conclusive pass rates for Sepedi participants with 90% and Sesotho with 85% group rates. The chi-square test for individual differences within the groups showed that both groups do not have significant differences within the individual scores. The test results provide confidence that the Sepedi and Sesotho pass rates are representative of their respective group performance on the reading test. On the contrary, Setswana results do not give the same confidence observed in Sepedi and Sesotho groups. The Setswana group has showed a group performance of 80%, which exceeds the minimum 60% pass rate set. However, this group average is not representative of the entire group. One participant got 16 points out of possible 40 points, which translates into 40% pass rate—a failure to attain the minimum of 60% as an individual. A thorough investigation of this participant shows that he did not pass the questions from his own language variety (i.e., the Setswana text), as the one-way ANOVA results will reveal in the next section. Language does not seem to be a major contributing factor for the failure in this particular case. Because the findings based on frequency counts and chi-square do not provide conclusive answers on whether the reading levels across the group varieties are the same, there was a need for further statistical tests that provide a larger picture on textual performances. The one-way ANOVA test, as discussed below, provided powerful measures to assess between group performances.

Comparison of Reading Comprehension Scores

While the frequency test and chi-square analysis showed that all the groups have generally passed the reading comprehension tests, it was necessary to compare the group means in order to determine whether there were group differences on reading comprehension and, as a reliability measure, to assess whether the level of comprehension across the four texts groups was equal. As a result, two separate one-way ANOVAs were conducted: (a) comparison of mean differences for each language variety and (b) comparison of mean differences for each of the four texts.

With regard to the mean differences among the three dialect groups, scores on each of the texts were combined into a single category and added together for each language variety. Sepedi had a total of 144 scores with a mean score of 36; Setswana had a total of 128 scores and a mean of 32, while Sesotho got a total of 136 that converted into a mean of 34. The raw data were entered into the ANOVA table in order to determine whether differences between language varieties performance on the reading comprehension test were statistically significant. The results of the one-way ANOVA are presented in the table below:

Table 10: Performance per Language Variety

Source of Variation	Df	Sum of squares	Mean squares	F. Ratio	F. Probability	Remark
Factor	2	32	16	0.383	0.692414	**Retained**
Error	9	376	41.778			**P>0.05**
TOTAL	**11**	**408**				

Note: Factor=mean differences across three language groups

The results of the One-way ANOVA test show that the differences between the three groups were not statistically significant (P>0.05). This means that the null hypothesis, which predicted for no statistically significant differences between across Sotho language varieties, is supported. The results allow the interpretation that the reading comprehension ability of texts written in Sepedi, Setswana, and Sesotho among the groups is about the same, irrespective of the speakers' individual language varieties. In this connection, a claim for mutual comprehension can be made.

The second one-way ANOVA sought to assess differences in the degree of performance per each of the four texts: Sepedi, Setswana, Sesotho, and Harmonized Sotho and whether such differences were statistically significant. The results of the one-way ANOVA analysis are summarized in the following table:

Table 11: Reading Performance per Text

Source of Variation	Df	Sum of squares	Mean squares	F. Ratio	F. Probability	Remark
Factor	3	0.9167	0.3056	0.0669	0.977185	**Retained**
Error	44	201	4.5682			**P>0.05**
TOTAL	**47**	**201.9167**				

Note: Factor = Language of the texts collapsed across speakers

The results of ANOVA test showed that there were no significant differences between the texts means (P>0.05). Consequently, the null hypothesis, which predicted that there would be no major differences between the texts, is retained, while the alternative hypothesis is rejected. The results imply that the performance on each of the texts did not yield differences and that the participants performed equally on all four texts. This finding supports the one above that showed that different performance ratings per language variety are not significantly different.

Collectively, the results of the one-way ANOVAs show that there are no statistically significant differences on how each language group performed ($p> 0.05$) and that there are no statistically significant differences on the performance scores across the texts ($p>0.05$). This means that the groups performed equally on their comprehension test and that different texts did not produce statistically different results. The most interesting finding worth noting is that the participants not only performed similarly irrespective of dialect group, they also performed equally on the harmonized text. As a result, the conclusion drawn from here is that harmonization of Sotho dialects may not disadvantage

one group over another because there is already a high degree of mutual comprehension. Unification of the written forms, therefore, would not require major changes in the already existing orthographies.

To sum up the chapter, the results of the pre-task attitudes, matched t-test, and reading judgment test corroborate each other to show that harmonization of Sotho language varieties is feasible at least in two respects: (a) positive speaker attitudes and (b) mutual comprehension in written registers. Based on the improved attitudes observed in the post-task, it appears that harmonization of Sotho varieties may be a favorable linguistic path among Sotho speakers without serious risks for ethno-linguistic hostility. Such a path may require minimal adjustments to the current orthographies, which are mutually comprehensible across the three language varieties.

CHAPTER 5: PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF QUALITATIVE DATA

This study sought to investigate the feasibility of harmonizing Sotho language varieties by investigating practices and attitudes of speakers of these language varieties. In order to realize this objective, an in-depth analysis of language harmonization phenomena through multiple sources of data was undertaken. This chapter presents and analyzes qualitative data collected through the open-ended questionnaires and the interdialect interactions observed among the participants of the study.

CONTENT ANALYSIS: RESPONSES TO THE PRE-TASK QUESTIONNAIRE

The open-ended responses elicited in the pre-task questionnaire were subjected to content analysis. These open-ended questions covered items from 21 through 27 of the questionnaire and other additional questions that sought further information from the closed-ended questions. In terms of scope, the open-ended questionnaires were centered on three of the four themes as presented in the quantitative section: use of Sotho languages beyond primary school education, the degree of mutual intelligibility, and unification of Sotho dialects orthographies (harmonization). Whereas the questions were listed as questions 21 through 27 on the questionnaires, they were re-numbered as 1 through 6 for purpose of this analysis as follows (See Appendix C:)

1. There is a proposal to unify the written forms of Sepedi, Setswana, and Sesotho for educational purposes. To what extent do you agree or disagree with this

proposal? Give your answer and reasons for it below.

2. Can Sotho languages be used as the media of learning and teaching in higher levels of education? Please give your answer and reasons below:

3. Would it be easy for speakers of Sotho languages to read texts written in a Harmonized Sotho language? Support your answer.

4. Do you think communication among the Sotho language speakers is possible, without translators? Give your answer and reasons thereof:

5. Would you be interested in having your language unified with languages in the Sotho group? Give your answer and reasons below:

6. Are there any other issues on uniting writing systems of the Sotho languages? Please use the space below.

These questions elicited responses that further clarify the participants' feelings and attitudes on the harmonization question in addition to the restrictive closed-ended questions that gave them the Yes or No options. All the responses were classified broadly under these themes (a) harmonization, (b) mutual intelligibility, and (c) use of Harmonized Sotho as the medium of instruction in post-primary education. Each of these thematic concerns (arguments for and against) is presented below with elaborations quoted verbatim from the respondents.

Harmonization

Questions # 1, 5 and 6 specifically sought to assess the participant's views and beliefs on the possibility of uniting differentiated orthographies of Sepedi, Setswana, and

Sesotho dialects into one written form. Based on the quantitative responses calculated on Yes or No scale, the responses showed 70.2% positive rating and 29.8% negative rating. Qualitative analyses of the responses provide an additional measure to assess reasons for the responses made. These reasons were categorized as arguments for and arguments against harmonization, which are separately presented below.

Arguments for Harmonization

The majority of the responses (236 or 70.2%) as shown in the quantitative data analysis favored the need to harmonize Sotho language varieties: Sepedi, Setswana, and Sesotho into one written form with a common orthographic representation. The respondents provided arguments for harmonization, which were centered on the following themes: group unity, modeling the national anthem, reduction of the number of languages and costs associated with translation, and formation of a strong written language that would not face extinction in future, as the separate dialects are. These themes are discussed and illustrated under (i) through (iv) below.

i)   **The Need for Unity**

One of the recurrent themes that emerged in the open-ended questions among the participants who supported harmonization of Sotho language varieties was the need to establish group unity among the speakers of these three language varieties. The proposal for unifying Sotho dialects into a common written standard received overwhelming support partly due to the feeling that people speaking Sotho dialects were viewed as a single ethnic group by the participants. The participants further pointed out that there are

dialect stereotypes that emerged due to historical separation of these speech forms. Unification of the Sotho dialects was therefore perceived as an opportunity to overcome the current negative stereotypes that continue to divide people who speak mutually intelligible language varieties.

The respondents who supported the harmonization proposal based on group solidarity decried the fact that the Constitutional provision for Sotho dialects as distinct languages is faulty. They argued that enshrining the dialects of Sotho as distinct languages in the Constitution does not help to cement group cohesiveness that was impeded in the past. Although historical division of the varieties was cited as being problematic, the respondents did not make any link to the work of missionary linguists. Instead, they made reference to Bantustan homelands that were based on dialect differences during the Apartheid era. It is worth noting that ten years after the first democratic elections in 1994, the participants still shared very strong feelings about the need for unity through language, which once were the symbols of division and oppression among the indigenous people. A prototypical case for harmonization based on group solidarity is presented in extract # 1 below:

#1. Seo se ka thuša gore rena ba go somiša maleme a Sesotho ka moka re kopane goba selo se tee ka gore re na le go go tšeelana fase le gomono ge re kopane re bolela. Rena baswa kudu re na le gore ge motho a bolela leleme le lengwe la Sesotho re mmotše gore "ga ke kwešiše selo seo o se lekago go se bolela." Mohlala, Motswana o re "ke fihlile ntshe," mopedi a re "Ke fihlile gona."

[That would help us use Sotho languages being together because we regard each other as inferior or superior when we are engaged in conversations. We, the youth in particular, have a tendency of telling other speakers from the Sotho variety "I don't understand what you are trying to tell me". The Tswana speaker would say "I arrived there" and a Pedi speaker would say, "I arrived there].

This respondent reveals that there are socially ingrained stereotypes about the speakers' language varieties that undermine mutual respect and understanding within the Sotho language community. It appears from this speaker's assertion that misunderstanding among people who speak Sotho dialects has very little to do with the actual differences between the dialects themselves. Rather, the stereotypes that are attached to speakers of a particular dialect create an environment for misunderstandings. To a large extent, these stereotypes instigate some degree of hatred toward speakers of sister dialects. In order to illustrate the point, the speaker cites the words, *gona* and *ntshe*, which are both translated as "there" as markers of stereotypes even though they are mutually intelligible to speakers of various Sotho dialects. Furthermore, the speaker contends that the geographical location through which these Sotho groups were divided during the Apartheid government accounts for the deepened stereotypes. During the Bantustan homelands in the early 70's, these three groups were geographically separated from one another due to the Apartheid laws of separate development (Prah, 2001). The unification of the Sotho dialects would, according to this respondent, help to diffuse negative stereotypes among people who speak these closely related dialects.

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The need for establishing group unity is shared by a number of Sesotho speakers, who held the view that ethnic stereotypes are fermented based on the dialect one speaks. One of the Sesotho respondents said:

2. E ka ba ntho e ntle ha li ka kopangoa ho bontsha kutluono ea rona batho ba
   lipuo tsa sesotho.
   [It will be a great thing to unite them [Sotho dialects] to show our common
   understanding as speakers of Sotho language varieties.]

As stated in #2, unification of Sotho language varieties is necessary because there is common understanding across speakers of Sotho dialects. The Sesotho speakers consistently argued that knowledge of their dialect allows them full understanding of the other two dialects: Sepedi and Setswana. As students, the respondents felt that a common writing system could even help them in their study groups where they could collaborate in their studies. The idea of collaboration in study groups is forcefully argued in extract #3 below:

#3. E, ke a lumela hobane o tla fumana hore likolong tse phahameng hobane re
   qetella re iketsa lihlopha re re Basotho le Bapedi le Batswana empa re bua
   puo e tsoanang joale ho kopana ha lipuo ho ka etsa hore re kopane re be ntho
   e lengoe re khone le ho ithuta re thusana le ho sebetsa ha mmoho...nka
   thabela ha di ka kopangoa hobane ha se puo tse fapaneng haholo me ha ho no
   ba le phapang e kholo hjoalo ka puo tsa rona li arohane.

[Yes, I agree (to the harmonization proposal) because you'll find that at tertiary institutions we end up creating small groups as Sesotho, Sepedi and Setswana even though we speak the same language. Now, uniting the varieties will help us to unite as one, to collaborate in our studies and work together...I'll be happy if they are united because these language varieties are not drastically different, thus they won't have a big difference as our dialects are (now) separated.]

Extract # 2 and # 3 reiterate the argument advanced by the speaker in #1 above. These respondents see the harmonization process as an opportunity to unite the people who were ethno-linguistically divided and to help them as students collaborate in their studies instead of being segregated along dialect lines as seems to be the case at their present university. The university dialect segregation is as stated, "...uniting the varieties will help us to unite as one, to collaborate in our studies and work together..." (Extract # 2). The main problem articulated by these respondents is that there are negative attitudes toward each variety even though the dialect varieties are mutually intelligible. For the sake of unity, it was felt necessary to unite the orthographies of Sotho language varieties.

ii) Modeling the National Anthem

Ten respondents viewed language as the symbol of national identity of every nation state. Making reference to the national anthem sung in Harmonized Sotho and Harmonized Nguni already, these respondents argued that initial harmonization practice was already demonstrated. To this effect, harmonization would be feasible if the national

anthem model can be followed. A prototypical argument for the national anthem as the basis for harmonization is illustrated below:

4. Ke dumellana le yona ka gone pina ya setshaba e tlhakantswe ka maleme a

mararo ....

[I agree with this because the national anthem shows a combination of these three dialects...]

The quote in Extract #4 above justifies unification of the three Sotho language varieties as a necessity for nationalism that has already found its way in the national anthem. The South African national anthem has verses written and sung in 4 languages: English, unified Nguni, unified Sotho, and Afrikaans. The Sotho version reads as: *Morena boloka sechaba sa heso. O fedise dintwa le matshwenyego. O se boloke, o se boloke*, which translates: "God bless our nation, stop fights and sufferings. Bless it, bless it!" Because all the Sotho dialects are represented in the lyrics, the anthem creates grounds for an argument that there can be further harmonization practices that go beyond what has been done in the national anthem. It is in this context that this respondent connects the national anthem to the possibility of uniting orthographies for use in all spheres of language use so that the number of written languages is substantially reduced.

iii) Reduction of Languages and Costs

The South African Constitution recognizes 11 official languages for use in all spheres of the South African life, but the respondents in the study do not believe that

there are 11 languages in practice. They believe that the number of languages accorded in the Constitution is exaggerated and that it would not facilitate the use of indigenous African languages, which were previously segregated. Given this background, the respondents felt that there is a need for harmonization so that the number of languages could be scaled down to a manageable number, as argued in extract #5 below:

#5. Lipuo tsena ka botsona lia tsoana ha ho phaphang e kaalo, joale ho kopangoa ha tsona ke ho fokotsa lipuo tse ngata.

[These languages themselves do not have big differences, and then uniting them will reduce the multiple languages.]

This quote begins with an argument that Sotho language varieties are similar and that triplication of the same language is a redundant act. The respondents subscribed to the view that multilingualism as presently conceived in South Africa is exaggerated. Furthermore, the use of three instead of one language is costly in terms of language amenities including material production and teacher training. The unified Sotho, on the other hand, would reduce the costs associated with three languages and increase readership market where an all-inclusive Sotho text can be distributed across a wider spectrum of the Sotho communities. This view reiterates one of the chief arguments for harmonization articulated in the literature on the harmonization proposal (e.g., Nhlapo, 1944; Alexander, 1989).

iv) Language Preservation and Extinction

One of the arguments that ensued from the responses was that division of Sotho dialects renders them weak and vulnerable to infiltration of loan words from Afrikaans. Use of Afrikaans in Sotho language varieties is not seen as politically appropriate given the general negative evaluations of Afrikaans, which was historically associated with Apartheid. If the Sotho language varieties are united, they could loan from within their own sister dialects instead of outside of their language parameters. A prototypical case for the need to preserve pure Sotho with no influence from Afrikaans is illustrated in the following extract:

#6. Dipuo ka ofela tsa Sesotho di ka kopangoa ho dira puo elenngwe hobane puo ya Southern Sotho e nale maadingwa a puo ya Afrikaans. Mme ha re bapisa le puo ya Sepedi le Setswana puo tsena din ale mabitso a ka tlosang maadingwa a puo ya Afrikaans. Ha dipuo tsena di se di kopantswe di ka tlisa puo e hlwekileng e senang maadingwa a dipuo tse ding.

[All the Sesotho dialects can be united to form one language because Southern Sotho has loan words from Afrikaans. But when we compare with Sepedi and Setswana we find that these varieties have words/concepts that can substitute for the Afrikaans ones. When these dialects are unified they can bring a pure language without too many loan words from other languages.]

The argument advanced in the extract above is both a purist and a conservative one. Because of the subdivision and the lack of an appropriate environment where these

dialects are co-used, they become susceptible to external influence that threatens their survival. The fear of having these dialects that may not develop, but face extinction in the future makes a solid case for the need to harmonize them. Harmonization is therefore seen as an interventionist strategy to create a stronger language that may be developed and saved from extinction given that there are already signs of extinction seen in the Sotho language varieties.

Arguments against Harmonization

As stated above, there was a minority of the respondents who argued against harmonization of Sotho dialects. These formed 100 (or 29.8%) of the total responses in the sample. Their arguments against harmonization revolved around these themes: loss of identity and culture, differences between spoken and written registers, formation of a new language and risk for ethnic conflicts due to power struggle over the harmonized form. Presentation and illustration of these themes are made in (i) through (iv) below:

i) Loss of Identity and Culture

The issue of identity emerged as one of the key factors among the respondents who do not support the unification of the three Sotho dialect orthographies. The respondents felt that that they would lose their identities that have been formed around the present dialects. Loss of identities was considered possible especially if one of the dialects would emerge as the most powerful of them all. The powerful variety could then exert its influence on others; consequently, the less dominant sub-cultures may be forced

into extinction. A prototypical argument against harmonization based on language identity and loss of culture is presented in extract #7 below:

#7. Puo ya me ke e rata entse elejwalo. Ha eng ka kopana le tse ding ho ka ba kotsi. Nka se thabele hore puo ya aka e kopantswe le puo tse ding. ...dipuo tsena di fapane.

[I like my language the way it is. If it were combined with other languages, it would be dangerous. I will not be happy to have my language combined with others...these languages are different.]

Unlike the respondents who argued for harmonization based on mutual intelligibility among the three dialects, the respondent quoted in extract #7 above provides an opposite view. First, he does not think that the dialects are similar when stating "...these languages are different". The respondent would prefer that the language varieties be left the way they are because combining them would inadvertently make one predominant. This is an argument for retention of language identity as revealed in the sentence, "I like my language the way it is".

The question of culture and identity was also connected to children and future generations whose dialects would be subsumed under the harmonization process. The respondent in #8 put forth the negative impact of harmonization on children as follows:

#8. Bothata ke gore bana ba santheng ba gola batlile go amega that gone e tlabo ele serutwa se sengwe sa eleng gore ba tshwanetse go se ithuta. Gape setso le ngwao ya bona e tlile go latllhega.

[The problem is that the children will have difficulties because it would be new thing (writing) they need to learn. Again, their culture and identities will be lost.]

This respondent complains that children may have to learn a new writing system that is different from that of their parents. Due to the generational gap that might result from the new writing system, parents would not be able to help their kids with schoolwork because the general adult population would be illiterate in the new writing system. As inferred from the concern about children learning a new writing system altogether, the harmonization undertaking might have huge implications for parents and their kids who learn a writing system different from the conventional one. Not only will parents not participate in the education of their children under the new writing standard, as stated by the respondent in #8, these children will also lose rich cultures that are embedded in the dialect used by their parents.

A third factor related to the argument on retention of culture and identity is that unification of the Sotho dialects might decrease one's proficiency in the local variety. The respondents argued that it is important to intensify knowledge of one's own language variety instead of expanding toward knowledge of other varieties as implied in the process of harmonization. This view is presented in the light of the observation that knowledge of African languages is diminishing among a group of metropolitan children who attend English medium schools before they acquire their own languages.

Harmonization, according to these respondents does not address this problem; it rather exacerbates it. Extract # 9 below captures the idea that harmonization does not encourage acquisition of one's own variety as stated:

#9. Ke bona kopanyo ya maleme ese bohlokwa ka ge etlo hlola hlakahlakano magareng a merafe. Ge motho ele mopedi o swanetse go bolela polelelo ya gabo a be a ikgantshe ka yona. Le gone o swanetse go tseba dilo kamoka mabapi le leleme la gabo go feta maleme kamoka.

[I do not see unification of these languages as important because it will cause confusion among the ethnic groups. If someone speaks Sepedi, one should speak that tongue and be proud of it. Also, he/she should know all things about his/her language more than he /she does on other languages.]

The respondent in extract #9 emphasizes that unification of Sotho dialects is an unnecessary endeavor since it would bring about more confusion on acquisition of indigenous African languages. The confusion referred to in the first sentence of the extract is loss of proficiency in one's mother tongue as implied in the last sentence. Additionally, unification would signify lack of pride in the local variety among those who opt for the harmonized form. It is noteworthy that although harmonization proposal intends to strengthen African languages, which were weakened by differentiation of their written forms, the respondent holds an opposite view that harmonization will instead weaken these languages.

ii) Differences in Written and Spoken Registers

Differences between the written and spoken registers of Sepedi, Setswana, and Sesotho provided some respondents with enough ground to argue against the harmonization proposal. Whereas they agree in principle that spoken varieties of Sotho are mutually understandable, they worry that the writing systems among the three dialects have taken divergent paths, which would force all speakers to re-learn the new code of Harmonized Sotho. The respondent in extract # 10 states this problem as follows:

#10. Ho ka se be bobebe ho batho ba buang dipuo tsa sesotho ho bala sengolwa se ngodilweng ha puo ya Sesotho e kopantshweng.
[It will not be easy for people who speak Sotho language varieties to read written texts from Harmonized Sotho.]

The basis of the argument presented in extract #10 is that mutual understanding, as may be perceived from the spoken registers of the three dialects, should not necessarily be viewed as a marker of mutual intelligibility in writing. Re-learning a new orthography might be a daunting task and as this respondent predicts, the harmonized text may require a long process of re-learning to read. However, it is noteworthy that the reading comprehension test carried out in this study showed that the speakers could read each other's dialects and the harmonized text (eventhough this was only one example) without major problems. So this respondent's pereception cannot be confirmed.

iii) Formation of a New Language

Some of the respondents felt that the languages are different and attempts to unify them would be equivalent to forming a new language altogether. This reflects a pattern of thought that the proposal to harmonize mutually intelligible "languages" implies formation of a new language that will be derived from uniting the current ones. The response shows a deep misconception about the proposal whose tenet is to re-standardize the current orthographies without deliberate change of the spoken register. The fear of a new language or the 12th language in the Constitution is instructive to policy makers and proponents of harmonization who should address this view adequately. As seen with the mutual comprehension across the three Sotho varieties, it should be stated that harmonization of present orthographies does not create a new writing system or language, but that it reshapes what the speakers already use in writing.

iv)   Risk for Ethnic Conflicts

A small number of the respondents feared that the harmonization process might instigate ethnic conflicts as one group may have its variety advantaged or disadvantaged. Struggle over power and domination could result in certain groups feeling insecure. Linguistic insecurities expressed by these respondents are rooted in the view that selection of codes for the unified form might not be dialect neutral. This idea is captured in the following extract:

#11. Go ka nna le bothata go tlhakanya dipuo tse go bongwe ka ntlha ya mabaka a

semorafe le ka ntlha ya gore bangwe ba tla be ba lebeletse gore dipuo tsa bona di

tla nyelela fa bangwe mo tsamaisong ba ka dirisa se go godisa dipuo tsa bona.

[It will be problematic to unite these dialects into one because of ethnic reasons

and because of the fact that some will look at their dialects as being segregated

while others may use this to promote their own dialects.]

Extract #11 points out that harmonization may promote one dialect and make it

the dominant group in the harmonized form. On the other hand, other dialects may be

demoted and not fully represented in the harmonized form. For fear of being dominated

by speakers of sister dialects, the harmonization proposal is not a worthy project to be

undertaken, as far as this respondent is concerned. Whereas one of the goals of

harmonization is to avoid future conflicts rooted in the current language boundaries, the

view presented in this extract shows that counter-productive results might also unfold.

Reflecting on the arguments for and against harmonization as discussed above, it

is evident that harmonization is a very complex phenomenon that requires caution. The

main arguments in support of harmonization include the need for group unity, national

symbolism as reflected through the national anthem, reduction of a number of languages

for economic reasons, and saving these language varieties from extinction. Negative

aspects of harmonization, on the converse, are loss of identity and culture, creation of a

different language, and learning a new form of writing. Whereas the majority of the

respondents supported the harmonization proposal, it seems crucially important to

consider both pros and cons when policy-makers advance toward the harmonization process.

Harmonized Sotho as the Medium of Instruction

The participants were specifically asked to comment on the possibility of using Harmonized Sotho language as the medium of instruction beyond primary school education. This specific request is portrayed in question 2 from the list of questions as restated below:

Question 2: Can Sotho language varieties be used as the media of learning and teaching in higher levels of education? Please give your answer and reasons below.

Unlike the harmonization questions, this question sought to evaluate the responses' perception about the possibility of using the Harmonized Sotho language as the medium of instruction beyond primary school education. From a glance of the quantitative responses, this is the theme that got the lowest approval rate with 56.2% positive responses and 43.8% negative responses (see Table 8). The aim of this analysis was therefore to elicit reasons for approval or disapproval of the idea of using Harmonized Sotho for education. The reasons are categorized as arguments for and arguments against the use of Harmonized Sotho as the medium of instruction in post-primary education.

Arguments for Use of Harmonized Sotho in Post-primary School Education

Arguments for use of Harmonized Sotho in post-primary education are based on two factors: improvement in pass rate and reduction of misunderstanding and code switching that is so pervasive in the classrooms. Each of these factors is discussed separately below:

i) Improved Pass Rate

The respondents who argued for use of Harmonized Sotho as the medium of instruction in post-primary education indicated that the use of an African language as the medium of instruction could drastically improve the pass rate among students in post-primary school education. This argument is premised on the view that there is a high failure rate in the schools due to the use of English as the medium of instruction. Harmonized Sotho as the medium of instruction among Sotho speakers is seen as a part of the need for literacy development as succinctly articulated in extract #12 below:

#12. Go ka kgonagala ebile barutwana ba tla la tswelela kudu gobane bat la kwesisa leleme la gabo bona...o kgona go kwesisa ebile o ka se lahlegelwe ke ditsebiso.

[It is possible and students will perform better because they will understand their own language for instruction. .. one will understand and will not miss announcements.]

This respondent argues that the use of Harmonized Sotho as the medium of instruction among the Sotho speaking people would help students increase their performance scores and succeed in school. Secondly, the students would understand the course content and will not miss important announcements, which are often made in English. Both factors expressed in this extract lament the use of English as the medium of instruction among kids who do not have functional literacy in it. As indicated, English had always had a negative impact observed through lower pass rates, and misunderstanding of course contents. The argument for harmonization regards the Harmonized Sotho as an alternative medium of education that would substitute English among Sotho speaking communities.

Extract #13 reinforces the argument made in #12 on the use of Sotho language in education as presented:

#13. Ee, gone dipuo tsa seeng go ba bang ba rona di dithata go tlhaologanyega, mme tsa itsa bangwe go tlhaloganya dirutwa tsa bona se se dira bangwe go se nne le kgatlhego mo thutong.

[Yes, the foreign languages are difficult to understand {learn through}, therefore they cause misunderstanding for lessons among others and this makes others lose interest in education.]

This quote restates the plight of students who learn through English as the medium of instruction. Due to the lower proficiency in English, there are misunderstandings in the classrooms and there is a general lack of interest in education.

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This explains in part why there is a high attrition rate among African students who are taught in English.

ii) Minimizing Misunderstanding and Code Switching

Most of the students who argued for the use of African language as the medium of instruction in high schools and tertiary institutions based their arguments on two interrelated factors: misunderstandings and code switching. Because the students have lower proficiency level in English, they claim that their teachers were forced to code-switch in order to get their points across. One respondent put the case succinctly in extract #14.

#14. Di ka kgona go tsebosa le go diriswa gore morafe o mongwe le o mongwe o itse mosola wa puo ya gabo, mo o fitlhelang go le gantsi barutwa ba tlhoka go ka tlhalosetswa ka dipuo tsa gabo. Ke seo re sebetsing "Code-switching in English". Go le gantsi barutwa ba retetelwa ke go falola ka ntlha ya go se utlwiseseng serutwa English kgotsa Afrikaans.

[They can be used so that every ethnic group knows the use of their language as you find that students do not get clear explanation in their languages. That is why we use "Code-Switching in English". In many instances, students fail to understand when lessons are carried out through English or Afrikaans.]

This respondent argues that code-switching practices in the classroom environment are a compromise to curb communication breakdowns in classes that are

taught in English or in Afrikaans. This situation convinced this respondent that the use of Harmonized Sotho would resolve some of the classroom problems and reduce high attrition and failure rates. It is also added that the use of Harmonized Sotho will enable every ethnic group to have pride in their language when they see it having a functional role such as the medium of learning and teaching. Given that mother tongue education is difficult within the context of 11 official languages in South Africa, the respondents who argued for Harmonized Sotho see it creating an opportunity to have an African language used in education.

Arguments against Using Harmonized Sotho as the Medium of Instruction

A disapproval rate on the use of Harmonized Sotho as the medium of instruction was observed as 43.8% in the quantitative analysis (Table 8). The reasons enumerated in the open-ended questionnaire included (a) the view of English as an international language and (b) the lack of market value among African languages. Discussion of each reasoning is made in the following subsections (i) and (ii).

i) English as an International Language

When some of the respondents were asked about the possibility of using the Harmonized Sotho in tertiary institutions, they felt that English should be used instead because it is the international language. For these respondents, learning through English necessarily entails acquisition of English, which has value in the international world. Extract #15 below presents this argument:

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#15. Mo Afrika Borwa go na le molao wa dipuo tsa bosechaba jaanong go ra gore

fa dipuo tse di ka dirisiwa go ithuta kwa dikolong tse kgolwane ga go ne go nna le

nako ya seesemane, se eleng sona puo tota ya bosechaba.

[In South Africa there is a multilingual policy, now it means that if these

languages are used in tertiary education there will be no time for English, which is

an international language.]

Extract #15 argues that the multilingual policy that accorded 11 languages an

official status may not give the opportunity to learn English, which is regarded as both

the national and international language. According to this respondent, 11 official

languages should not mean using all those languages, except English. Attempts to use

any one of them other than English would reduce the amount of time needed to spend on

acquiring English. This argument is briefly restated as follows:

#16. Ga ke dumele ka ge leleme leo le somiswago bjalo ka medium of instruction

ele sejahlapi.

[I do not agree because the language that is used as the medium of instruction is

English.]

This respondent, like the one in extract #15, sees English as the only legitimate

medium of instruction; as a result, any language that seeks to replace English should be

opposed. The argument for English is not surprising from these respondents. It is

concomitant with findings of other studies on attitudes of the people toward using an

African language or English as the medium of instruction (e.g., Thiba, 2000, Verhoef; 1998). What the respondents believe is that one learns a language better when one learns through it. In this case, learning through English is the best possible way of acquiring it so that people can have access to upward social mobility.

ii) Market Value of Harmonized Sotho as Instructional Medium

The lack of market value for the Harmonized Sotho is seen as a barrier to the possibility of using it as the medium of instruction. This is even more complicated when this language has to substitute for English, which is already associated with upward social mobility. The Harmonized Sotho, on the other hand, would not be tied to economic success and job market, which concern most of the new graduate students. The argument on the lack of market value in Harmonized Sotho as the medium of instruction is presented in the following extract:

#17. Hobane mosebetsing puo e sebediswang ke English/ Afrikaans, ka hoo puo ya Sesotho ha e no thusa letho hobane tekong ya mosebetsi puo eo ha e sebetse. [Because the work environment requires the use of English/Afrikaans, the Sotho language (learning through) will not help anything, as it is not used in job interviews.]

In extract #17 above, the respondent argues that learning through a Sotho language is irrelevant because the economy is structured around Afrikaans and English, which can better serve as the media of instruction. To illustrate the importance of having

a medium that is connected to the job market, the respondent argues that even job interviews are carried out either in Afrikaans or English; the use of an indigenous African language may prove neither realistic nor beneficial in the short-term. While it is not impossible to learn English as a subject in preparation for the job market and to use an indigenous African language as a medium to enhance understanding and pass rate as stated above, it would require a lot of economic incentives to encourage people to use indigenous African languages. This is one of the strong challenges against the use of Harmonized Sotho as the medium of instruction.

Mutual Intelligibility

The 48 respondents were asked to indicate if they believed that there is any degree of mutual intelligibility among the three Sotho language varieties under study: Sepedi, Setswana, and Sesotho. According to the results observed from quantitative analysis, this theme received the most favorable rating with 79.5% positive responses and about 20.5% of the total responses with negative rating. The open-ended questions were developed to seek reasons for the respondents' belief or disbelief in mutual intelligibility. These questions involved questions 3 and 4, restated as (a) and (b) below:

a. Would it be easy for speakers of Sotho languages to read texts written in a Harmonized Sotho language? Support your answer.

b. Do you think communication among the Sotho language speakers is possible, without translators? Give your answer and reasons thereof:

There was virtually no disagreement among the respondents that the Sotho dialects are mutually comprehensible. The respondents who constituted the 20% disapproval rate did not give reasons why they thought the Sotho language varieties are not mutually intelligible. For this reason, only responses from those who are on the positive side of the questions were elicited and analyzed. A prototypical argument for mutual intelligibility is stated in extract # 18 below:

18. Ke a dumela. Phapano ya maleme a ga se ye kgolo le gona ke kwešiša gore phaphano ye e no tliša ke gore re dula mafelong a go fapana. Bjale re swanetše go laetša gore go dula mafelong a go fapafapana a go re gore a re sale bana ba mpa e tee. Ke kwešiša gore maleleme a a tšwa polelong e tee.
[I agree. Differences are so minor and I understand that these small differences are brought about by different localities we were placed. We have to illustrate that staying in different places does not mean that we are not the same (local proverb used: children of the same stomach). I understand that these varieties are from the same language.]

The respondent in extract # 18 argues that the three dialects are similar and that their degree of similarity is so close that inter-dialect communication could proceed smoothly. The respondent goes further to make a profound argument that the minor differences observed today have resulted from a long history of linguistic tribalization that was effected through the Bantustans homeland system during the Apartheid regime. Staying in different homelands, according to the respondent, should not necessarily be

viewed as a signal for differences. The three dialects were accorded three different homelands where the speakers of each variety were barred from intermingling with speakers from any of the sister dialects. The respondent repositions the argument in this perspective, which is to say that the homeland barriers have not diminished the high degree of similarities these dialects share. Maintenance of mutual intelligibilities for over a long period of time therefore provides a case for harmonization.

Summary of Content Analysis

The open ended-questions designed in the study sought the respondents' opinions, feelings and attitudes toward the proposal for harmonizing Sotho dialects into a common written language, using the Harmonized Sotho as the medium of instruction in post-primary school education, and degrees of mutual intelligibility among the dialects. The content analysis carried out showed a number of reasons thematized into binary opposition on harmonization and use of harmonized form in education. Because the results are overwhelmingly supportive of the mutual intelligibility category, such a binary opposition did not emerge.

Strong arguments for harmonization involved the need for unity, development of national consciousness as modeled by the national anthem, reduction of costs associated with many languages and saving these dialect varieties from extinction. On the other hand, a few respondents dissented from these views and opposed the harmonization proposal on account of the loss of identity and culture, risk for ethnic conflicts caused by unequal adoption of words from each dialect, differences between spoken and written registers, and formation of a new language. Whereas arguments against harmonization

are not very strong because they represent a minority view represented by 100 (or 29.8%), they are important factors to take into account for a smooth harmonization process.

On the use of the Harmonized Sotho in education, the majority still favors the proposal. Arguments for use of the Harmonized Sotho involved improvement in pass rate and minimizing classroom problems such as misunderstanding and code switching. On the other hand, use of Harmonized Sotho was not favored because it is not as international as English is and that it does not have market value for upward social mobility. Taken together, there is a great need for harmonization and use of the harmonized form as the medium of instruction. While there are dissenting views expressed by some of the respondents, such views tended to change after the respondents were immersed in inter-variety interactions and the reading judgment test.

FOCUS GROUP CONVERSATIONS: DISCOURSE ANALYSIS

Twelve respondents who were selected from the large pool of 48 respondents participated in a focus group discussion on the topic: ethnic stereotypes. The discussion lasted for an hour with each of the groups stressing their discussion points in their respective foci. In the order given to the respondents, the Sepedi group talked about causes of ethnic stereotypes that predominate in some parts of South Africa; the Setswana group focused their presentation on the dangers of ethnic stereotypes; and the Sesotho group focused on the possible solutions to ethnic stereotypes. In each of the presentations, there were questions, requests for clarification and rebuttal when it was

necessary (See group instructions in the Appendix) so that the discussions could be interactive.

The video episodes that were captured in the conversations were transcribed and categorized into bi-dialect interaction (when two speakers of different dialects interact) and tri-dialect interaction (when speakers of three dialects interact) segments, and then subjected to discourse analysis. Grice's rubric of conversational analysis referred to as the Cooperative Principle (CP) was used in analyzing utterances. As is well known in the field of Discourse Analysis and Pragmatics, the CP operates on four maxims that were fully explored in analyzing the data: *quantity* (be as informative as required), *quality* (be truthful), *manner* (avoid obscurity of expression) and *relation* (be relevant). These maxims were necessary analytic tools to deduce cases of mutual understanding and cases of misunderstanding in line with the research question: Can speakers communicate without major barriers in inter-dialect interactions? Prominence was particularly given to the maxim of *relation* in the analysis on the assumption that interlocutors can only be relevant to and stay on the discussion topic if they understand each other. In addition to the CP, the pragmatic notion of implicature under Speech Act Theory was adapted to assess the level of mutual intelligibility in the discourse segments. The utterances were subjected to three levels of meaning: *locutionary* (literal meaning), *illocutionary* (implied meaning) and *perlocutionary force* (the action or response based on the illocutionary meaning). In other words, the analysis not only focused on whether there is mutual intelligibility, but also on the depth of intelligibility usually attained by interlocutors who speak the same language. Both factors, CP and implicature, were necessary in making

interpretations on whether the Sotho language varieties satisfy a classification of distinctive languages or dialects of the same language.

The following subsections present prototypical cases of mutual intelligibility and misunderstandings through an analysis of bi-dialect interactions between speakers of (a) Sepedi and Sesotho, (b) Setswana and Sepedi, and (c) Sesotho and Setswana. This analysis is followed by a presentation of two cases of tri-dialect interactions, involving a series of utterances across the three Sotho varieties.

Bi-dialect Interaction 1: Mopedi and Mosotho

The discussion on ethnic stereotypes provided ample opportunities for bi-dialect interactions between Sepedi speakers and Sesotho speakers. For the purpose of this analysis, the Sepedi-speaking respondent is referred to as Mopedi, meaning speaker of Sepedi or Sepedi speaker. The Sesotho-speaking respondent, on the other hand, is referred to as Mosotho, which means a speaker of Sesotho. A prototypical case of bi-dialect interactions is illustrated in the following episode:

 # A. (Mopedi): Gape nka re lena batho ba Lesotho le swanetše le nyake tsebo pele ke ra ditaba ka moka gore le se ka no re felo mo go na le boloi…le swanetše gore le nyakišiše gore ka nnete felo mo bo tletse boloi ke ra gore go nale batho bao ba diago ka nnete naa ka gore ke kwešiša gore a se kamoka akere le gona ke gohle mo go na lego boloi as bo mo fela.

[You people of Lesotho (not necessarily referring to Lesotho as a country, but an area occupied by Sesotho speakers), need to find information first, I mean all

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sides of the story so that you do not generalize that there's witchcraft here....you should find out whether it is true that there is witchcraft, I mean, there are people who are really doing this because I understand that it is not everywhere (in the Province) where there is witchcraft].

#B. (Mosotho): Ena ho tsho bjalo le ha re batlisisa re ba tla ho tseba hore nnete ke hore ba loya batho ba Limpopo ha ba re fe tlhaloso ye eleng yona hobane honabjalo. Motlhala, ngwanesomane o itse ho nna ha ke mmotsa hore naa boloi bo tletse Limpopo...O re ha dio dintho tseo bjalo mo re tswang teng naa...ka fao ha a ntlhalosetsa, ene nna ke tlo qeta ka hore boloi bo teng ka hobane .....a ntlhalosetsa hore boloi bo hona kappa che o tla re honna: "Tloha wena mosotho wa ho ja pere o aparang kobo le motshehare. Bjalo a ke na tsebo, ke tla nka qeto ya hore boloi ke nnete ho a loyiwa Limpopo.

[It is like that even when we investigate, we need to know whether it is really true that the Limpopo people are bewitching...let them give us the real explanation because, now, for example, this brother/sister of mine said to me when I asked whether there's witchcraft in Limpopo....He asks me if we don't have these things from where we come from...therefore refusal to explain this to me brings me to a conclusion that there is witchcraft because...he did not explain to me whether or not there is witchcraft ...he'll say to me "Get lost you Mosotho who eats a horse and dress on blankets during the day." Now, I do not have knowledge (I sought for), I will conclude that it is true there is witchcraft in Limpopo].

The utterance in #A responds to an earlier charge in the conversations that one of

the chief stereotypes the Sesotho speakers have about Sepedi speakers is that there are

pervasive witchcraft practices in the Limpopo province. As residents of the Limpopo

province, Sepedi speaking respondents felt personally attacked and then took a defensive

position throughout the discussion as articulated in utterance # A. In this utterance,

Mopedi challenges the witchcraft charges labeled against her province. She then argues

that witchcraft practices are not necessarily found in every part of the province. While

there is an implied admission that witchcraft practices may be found in other parts of the

province, the respondent charges the Sesotho interlocutors to investigate before they draw

generalizations about witchcraft among the Sepedi-speaking population.

The response from Mosotho in utterance #B denotes a high degree of

understanding to the challenge made by #A. The speaker in #B claims that investigations

into witchcraft practices do not matter because students from the Limpopo province tend

to be defensive when confronted with questions that seek more information on the

practice. To illustrate the futility of investigations, Mosotho provides an example about a

brother (used generically to refer to any male especially within the same age group) who

was asked about the witchcraft practice prior to the conversation. Instead of giving an

honest answer, this brother asked the Mosotho speaker in #B if there were no similar

witchcraft practices in speaker #B's hometown. According to speaker #B, when such

dismissive responses are given in the process of investigations, the logical conclusion

would be that there is witchcraft in speaker #A's province as generalized. Moreover, the

speaker in utterance #B was told to get lost with another stereotype that people from her

own speech community (Sesotho speakers) eat horsemeat and put on blankets around

their bodies during the day light. Following the story presented by Mosotho in #B above, the brother who was asked prior to this conversation ridiculed her (Mosotho in #B) tradition of putting on blankets when they are not asleep, which was yet another stereotype. Topically, Mosotho understands the utterance by Mopedi irrespective of the different varieties of Sotho used in the dialogue.

Following Grice's Cooperative Principle (CP), the conversation between A and B adheres to the *maxim of relation.* Speaker in utterance #B made a relevant reply to the speaker in #A on the same topic of witchcraft and stereotyping. Although speaker #B diverged slightly from witchcraft as an example of stereotype, she displayed how she fully understood the topic transmitted to her in a different language variety when citing a relevant example of stereotypes that the Sepedi speakers have about her own speech community; i.e., eating a horse and dressing on blankets in a hot day light. Furthermore, the maxim of quantity in the response from #B is not flouted. The utterance in #B gave sufficient information as required by the context with the aim of rebutting the challenge on the need to do investigation on witchcraft practices in Limpopo. She supported her rebuttal with a relevant counter-charge that investigating among Sepedi speakers on the witchcraft question was not helpful. Such investigations only deepen stereotypes from one dialect to another since the speaker in #B was put off the conversation with a stereotypical labeling as a horse-eater and day blanket-dresser in the process of the investigations. The information was neither limited nor excessive as far as the topic of stereotyped was concerned. It could be stated that the maxim of quality is also adhered to in terms of the established truths. Adherence to both maxims of relation and quantity, provide confidence that the language/dialect used in utterance #A did not impede

understanding by the speaker in utterance #B. The degree of understanding is captured in the implicature observed in recorded extract below:

#A (Mopedi): …lena batho ba Lesotho le swanetše le nyake tsebo…

[You, the people of Lesotho should seek to find the truth]

B (Mosotho): …le ha re batlisisa re batla ho tseba hore nnete ba loya batho ba

Limpopo…

[Even if we need to investigate the truth, we still need to know (from you)

if the Limpopo people practice witchcraft]

The literal meaning (locutionary) of the utterance in #A is that the respondent in #B should seek out the truth. Speaker #B draws deep into the illocutionary meaning implying that he should not ask the speaker in #A in this particular conversation; instead, #B should find some time and go out into the community where #A comes from (Sepedi community in Limpopo province). Speaker #B who understands the illocutionary meaning of #A's utterance chooses to insist on getting answers from speaker #A before any involvement with the community because the speaker in #A is one of the community members herself. This dialogue demonstrates that Sesotho speakers not only understand words in their literal (locutionary) meanings, they are also able to get the implied meaning (illocutionary), make relevant interpretations, and act on the interpretations (perlocutionary force).

Because accurate interpretation of intended meaning requires a full understanding of the language through which the message is sent, the episode allows a linguistic

interpretation to be made that the focus group discussion showed that Sesotho speakers can understand Sepedi speakers in conversations without linguistic impediments. One of the research questions as to whether intervariety communication can go on without major linguistic barriers is partly answered with this exposition. In particular, it answers the sub-question that sought to find out if Sesotho speakers could understand Sepedi speech tokens in real life conversations.

Whereas the utterances in #A and # B show that Sesotho speakers understand Sepedi in the interactions, they do not necessarily show that the converse is true: Sepedi speakers understand utterances expressed in Sesotho. The following episode shows response of the Sepedi speaker toward a Sesotho speech token:

#C (Mopedi): O dirileng ge o tseba ka taba ye ya boloi?

[What did you do about the witchcraft information?]

#D (Mosotho): Ke a botsa. Tjhe ha ke re ke a ga gabotse nna ke tsebile ha ke tloha hae hore mo

Limpopo boloi bo teng ke bo bontshi.

[I asked. No, well, I knew about the pervasiveness of witchcraft in Limpopo since I was home]

#C (Mopedi): Ke bona bothata bona boo ka gore o tlogile ka gae ba go botša gore boloi. Limpopo ke bjo bontšhi. Jwale wena wa tseba ge o tloga gae gore Limpopo ke boloing ke bothata ba gona. Letšwa magaeng a bo lenba le tseba gore mo Limpopo dilo tše dimpe ke tše dintšhi goba boloi ke bo bontšhi.

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[I see that that is exactly the problem because you left home with knowledge that Limpopo has many witchcraft practices. Now that you left with this knowledge back home, this is the core of the problem. You left your homes with the knowledge that Limpopo has evil practices or that witchcraft is the order of the day]

This interaction begins with Sepedi speaker as in utterance #C asking what Sesotho speakers did when they heard about the information about witchcraft in the Limpopo province. This refers to the period of two weeks that the Sesotho respondents had spent in Limpopo. Sesotho speaker in #D responds directly to the question by saying that she asked for more information to verify the hearsay. However, this speaker expands her answer when claiming that she knew about witchcraft while she was still in her hometown. The new information on the topic has implications that one did not need to go to the Limpopo province to know that there is witchcraft there because it is a well-known fact. The response from the Sepedi speaker shows that the speaker in #C understands the shift of information from the given answer "I asked" to the new information. Speaker in #C challenges this new information about prior knowledge about witchcraft practice because it perpetuates the stereotypes. In other words, the speaker in #C has followed the shift in topic without difficulties. It is for this reason that the speaker in #C insists on the view that home developed stereotypes about witchcraft do cause stereotypes among Sesotho speakers and make them believe without further investigations even when they had arrived in the province. The Sepedi speaker's ability to shift the response to follow the new information provided in the discourse suggests that this speaker has a high

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command of the utterance in #D. This respondent has successfully explicated the illocutionary meaning that it was not necessary to do an investigation if the stereotypes are well known.

Subjecting utterance #C to the Gricean maxims indicates that the maxim of *relation* is not violated. Speaker in #C did not say something that is irrelevant to the topic introduced in utterance #D. Following the maxim of relation is demonstrated in the Sepedi speaker's ability to shift the topic to a much more relevant response in accordance with the change of focus in utterance #D. That is, the fact that the Sesotho speaker knew about witchcraft while she was home enabled the Sepedi speaker to counter this information spontaneously without being lost in the dialogue. By the same token, there is no evidence in the utterance that shows violation of the maxims of quantity, quality and manner. With this wide ranging response to the utterance expressed in Sesotho, the Sepedi speaker's linguistic repertoires are advanced to follow an argument (maxim of relations) and draw appropriate inferences from Sesotho utterances. Therefore, Sepedi speakers understand the Sesotho speakers in conversations.

The discussion of utterances A, B, C and D shows that the speaker who produced utterance # A (Sepedi) is fully understood by the speaker who produced utterance #B (Sesotho). Likewise, utterance # D demonstrates that the speaker (Sepedi) has a high command of the dialect used in # C (Sesotho). The discussion has also shown that the speakers observe an important Gricean maxim of relation, which is given prominence in marking degrees of mutual understanding. In both cases, Sesotho and Sepedi speakers have shown that they not only take the literary meaning of the speech, they read the illocutionary meanings and drew accurate inferences from the implicatures. These

interactions allow a conclusion to be drawn that Sepedi and Sesotho are mutually

intelligible and that their speakers can communicate without major linguistic barriers.

Bi-dialect Interaction 2: Motswana and Mopedi

The second sub-question on mutual intelligibility sought to investigate whether

Setswana and Sepedi speakers mutually understand each other without major linguistic

barriers. In order to illustrate the extent to which these dialect groups understand each

other, two episodes represented in utterances E and F, on the one hand, and G and H, on

the other hand are used for illustrations. The first pair of interactions (#E and #F) shows

the Setswana speaker's (Motswana) level of understanding Sepedi:

E (Mopedi): Bothata bjo bongwe ke gore go se ete ga batho go se etele dinaga tše

dingwe ka mo ntle. O tle o kgone go bona le go kwešiša gore boloi bo mo a ga bo

gona, bjalo ka ge ba re **lesogana le le sa etego le nyala kgaetšedi.**

[Another problem is that people do not visit, they do not visit other communities

outside theirs. So you can see and understand whether or not there is witchcraft

because they say (quoting a proverb): "The young man who doesn't visit marries

his sister"].

F (Motswana): E, fela hjaka ga se fela mona ke beneng gore ke tswe kwa

Bokone-Bophorima, fa Lehurutse Sefahlane ke tle fa, wa bona gore ke tsela e telle

jang, ke bone gore ka ditsela tse dingwe ja ka o re batho ga ba ete, ka ditsela tse

dingwe nka kgona gore ke tsebe bophelo ba Limpopo, ke se ke ka itsa ba ko

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Bokone-Bophirima feela. Fela ka ge ke ntse ke ipuetse gore ke batla gore a ke

nnete boloi bo mo Limpopo bo a phela.

[Yes, as I come from North-West at Lehurutse Sefahlane and came here, do you

see how long the road is? I realized that as you say people do not visit, I visited so

that I know about life in Limpopo and not confine my knowledge to North-West.

But my issue is that I have already said that I needed to know (now that I am here)

whether witchcraft exists in Limpopo].

The Sepedi respondent in utterance # E points out that lack of traveling

experience is the major cause of ethnic stereotypes. The speaker argues that the

stereotype about witchcraft in his home province Limpopo is exacerbated by the lack of

traveling experience on the part of the Setswana-speaking respondents. A Sepedi proverb,

"the young man who does not travel ends up marrying his sister" is cited to augment the

point of committing errors of judgment. The Setswana speaker in utterance # F responds

to this charge by telling the Sepedi speaker that she has traveled way over hundreds of

miles from North-West, her home province, to come to Limpopo. Therefore, the idea of

traveling experience expressed by the Sepedi interlocutor does not hold.

In terms of the Gricean CP, these interactions reveal a great deal of cooperation

that requires a high degree of proficiency in the language varieties used. First, the maxim

of *relation* is observed through the Setswana speaker in utterance #F. Without directly

saying that the implication of Sepedi speaker in utterance #E is invalid, the Setswana

speaker says that she is from a distant province and asks the Sepedi speaker in a question

form to imagine the distance she traveled to the Limpopo province. This answer is not

only relevant to counter the charge of the lack of traveling experience as the main cause for Setswana speakers to be stereotyped about the witchcraft practices in the Limpopo province, it also shows a high degree of understanding of the utterance expressed in #E. Likewise, it is true that the Setswana speaker comes from the Northwest province, and she gave sufficient information needed for the speaker in #E to get the idea that he was wrong in making the assumption about lacking travel experience. The maxims of quality and quantity were therefore observed. Even though the Sepedi speaker used a proverb to explain his point, it did not hinder understanding by the Setswana speaker (observation of the maxim of manner). In fact, the Setswana speaker shows that she understood the illocutionary meaning embedded in the proverb about the young man who marries a sister when she responds that she was then in a different province (Limpopo) from her own (North West). The Setswana speaker's ability to observe the maxims of *relation, quality, quantity* and *manner*, and to make correct interpretation of the *illocutionary meaning* embedded in proverbs provide enough evidence that the Setswana speaker in utterance #F understands Sepedi speech represented in utterance #E.

The next set of interactions was intended to show the degree to which the Sepedi speaker in utterance #H understands the Setswana speaker in utterance #G.

G (Motswana): Go reng batho ba nale tlhaologanyo ya gore Limpopo go tletse boloi. Ee, nna ga ke gane gore boloi bo gona ko gohle. Le ko Lehurutse bo bontshi ko ke tswang. Ha o ka mpotsa ka bona nka ho hlalosetsa. Nna ke kopa fela hore le ntlhalosetseng gore ho reng Basotho ba na le hlaologanyo ya gore mo Bopedi go na le boloi, le Batswana ba nale hlaologanyo ya gore mo Bopedi ho na le boloi.

[Why do people have the understanding that Limpopo is full of witchcraft practices? I do not deny that there is witchcraft everywhere. There is too much of these practices even in my hometown, Lehurutse. If you ask me about it, I will explain. I am only asking for explanations why both Sesotho and Setswana speaking communities have a common view that the Sepedi predominant area has a lot of witchcraft.]

H (Mopedi): Le gotše ba le botša ka wona mokgwa woo. Ke di stereotype ke moka ge le fihla mokhi a le kgone go lebelela mathoko a rena a lokileng. Ge le fihla mo, le lebelela fela tše dimpe. E re ke go hlalošetše

[You grew up being told it is so. It is stereotypical; when you arrive here, you do not look at our good sides. When you arrive here you are only looking for bad things [to confirm your stereotypes].

The Setswana utterance in #G begins his input to the conversation about witchcraft in Limpopo by asking a question why the idea of witchcraft is so dominant in the Limpopo province. This speaker gives a general view of witchcraft when pointing out that his own home town does have witchcraft practices (the belief in). However, the practices in the Limpopo province call for attention because they are so well known countrywide. This is the context in which Motswana above seeks some explanations from the people of Limpopo themselves. The response from the Sepedi speaker in #H is rather dismissive. This speaker points out that the reason these groups got to know about Limpopo witchcraft practices while they were still in their home provinces only shows the depth of the stereotype. This kind of stereotype is dangerous, according to Sepedi speaker in #H, because visitors from other provinces tend to overlook all other positive

aspects of the Limpopo province. In other words, the speaker in #H feels that there is a need to correct these stereotypes instead of explaining why the stereotype is popular.

Following the maxim of *relation*, the Sepedi utterance in #G has observed this maxim notwithstanding the fact that it is not a satisfying response to the question. The speaker in utterance #G needed to know about the popularity of witchcraft practices in Limpopo, and the respondent in #H argues that such popularity was instilled much earlier in the lives of Setswana speakers who think that there are witchcraft practices when there are none in practice. It appears a bit irrelevant in content, but the response was not irrelevant to the question posed in #G. Further, the Sepedi speaker articulates what he believes to be true: Setswana speakers were stereotyped while they were young in their home province. Added to the observation that Setswana speakers entered the conversation with background information that Limpopo has witchcraft practices, there is a truth-value in #H because Setswana speakers had only two weeks in the province to have knowledge about witchcraft practices believed to be predominant in the Limpopo province. Likewise, the information given in #H is as required to satisfy the question asked in #G. Both maxims of quality and quantity were, therefore, observed in this utterance. This Sepedi speaker's ability to read the illocutionary meaning that suggested there is something particular about the witchcraft popularity in the province proves that #H has a high command of the utterances in #G at both literal and implied meanings.

Taken together, the first set of interactions represented in utterances #E and #F have showed that the speaker in #F understands the utterance in #E through a close observation of the maxims of *relation, quality, quantity,* and *manner* as well as making appropriate inferences of the illocutionary meaning embedded even in localized speech forms like

proverbs. In the same token, the second set of interactions showed that the speaker in #H understands the utterance in #G, and correctly inferred the illocutionary meaning that suggested that witchcraft is very special in Limpopo as opposed to other areas where Setswana and Sesotho speakers come from. As a result, the speaker in #H relevantly answered with sufficient information that satisfied the question posed in #G. Overall, these two sets of interactions allow an interpretation to be made that Setswana and Sepedi speakers mutually understand each other when engaged in bi-dialect interactions.

Bi-dialect Interaction 3: Motswana and Mosotho

The third research sub-question with regard to inter-dialect communication was to find out whether or not bi-dialect interaction between Setswana speakers and Sesotho speakers could proceed without major language barriers. The first part of this analysis focused on the extent to which Setswana speakers understand the utterances made by Sesotho speakers. This set of interactions is presented in utterances # I and # J below:

I (Mosotho): Janong nna ke kopa ho botsa hore ha ele hore ke mosadi wa Motswana wo utlwang le yena ha ka **ho roba pelo** o tla kgotlella o utlwane le mosadi wo mongwe wa Motswana hape o ntse o le Motswana jwalo. Jwanong why ha ele hore ke mosadi was Mosotho o sa kgotlellane le Mosotho o mong hape?

[As for me, I need to question that if it is a Motswana woman who gets hurt you will get another Motswana woman because you are Motswana. Then, why do not

you do the same (tolerating) if you are married to a Mosotho woman (in other words why are not you treating the two ethnic groups equally?)

J (Motswana): Tle ke go arabe. Ke bo stereotype. O ka se ke wa bolella monna wa Mosotho ka hore ke monna wa Mosotho ke morafe o mobe. Ke se se bakang bo stereotype, ga se kotsi ke se se sebediswang jwalo.

[Let me answer you. This is stereotype. You will not ask that to a Mosotho man because a Mosotho man is a bad ethnic grouping (that is, you will not think the Sesotho speaking men are as bad as you now think of Setswana speaking men). This is what causes stereotype; it is not accidental, it is how things work out].

The speaker in utterance #I attempts to find out why women of different ethnic groups would be treated differently if they were married to one man at different times. The context of this question is that a Motswana male respondent had said that if he were married to a Setswana-speaking woman, and they got into marital problems that eventually breaking the marriage, he would likely marry another Setswana-speaking woman. On the contrary, if he were married to a Sesotho-speaking woman, and they got into exactly the same problems, he would not marry another Sesotho speaking woman. The question from utterance # I concerned the unequal treatment of marital problems based on the woman's language background. The response from the Setswana speaker who happened to be a woman respondent in #J provides an answer that shows how deep both groups live with stereotypes. This respondent acknowledges that their deep belief systems about themselves and other ethnic groups do cause stereotypes that have permeated their societies.

With regard to the CP, there is an observation of all the four maxims in the utterance: *Relation*, *quality*, *quantity* and *manner*. First, the respondent in #J begins with a relevant answer to the question posed in utterance # I. The speaker in utterance #J relevantly states with confidence: "Let me answer you. It is stereotype" when asked by the speaker in #I on the question of why two women of different language backgrounds would be treated differently in exactly the same condition. In order to explain the stereotype as an ethno-dialectally induced phenomenon, this speaker tells the respondent in utterance# I that she (#J) would not complain about Sesotho-speaking men or think of them as being unfair when they do not marry a Setswana-speaking woman after the failed marriage with the Setswana-speaking woman. This satisfies the maxim of *relation*. The maxims of *quality*, *quantity* and *manner* have also been observed. For example, it is true that a bad experience with one encounter from one ethnic group might breed stereotypes that force one to withdraw completely from the ethnic group as opposed to one's own ethnic group where there might be more attempts. The response by the speaker in #J is succinct, correct and devoid of obscure expressions.

In addition to the observation of the four maxims under CP, the speaker in #J showed an ability to explicate implicatures in utterance #I. The speaker in utterance # J made appropriate inferences of this illocutionary meaning that Sesotho men are biased and then responded directly to it instead of the locutionary one that was not intended by the speaker in utterance #I. Therefore, the speaker in utterance #J's ability to read the intention of the utterance in #I allows the interpretation that Setswana speaker in utterance #J understands both the locutionary and illocutionary meanings of the Sesotho speaker in utterance #I. Observably, the idiomatic expression "ho robja pelo", meaning

'to break the heart' did not hinder the interpretation arrived at by the respondent in utterance #J. It was interpreted accurately within the context of the marriage breakup.

The second set of interactions were analyzed to show whether the Sesotho speakers, apart from being understood by the Setswana speakers as shown in utterances #I and #J above, have a high degree of intelligibility to make appropriate judgments about utterances produced by Setswana speakers. Utterances #K and #L below exemplify a prototypical interaction pattern:

#K (**Motswana**): Ne ke kopa ho hlalohanya gore mantatale ke eng.

[I was asking to understand what "mantatale" is.]

#L (**Mosotho**): Mantatale ke ngatha tsa pere ngwaneso

[Manatale are the horse hoofs, my sibling (used as a term of endearment).

The speaker in utterance #K asks a question that needs clarification on an unfamiliar concept "mantatale" (horse hoof) used previously by the speaker in utterance #L. This question is presented in an indirect way that the hearer who does not have a full understanding may not interpret it as a question. The indirect question formulated as a request made in utterance #K ("I was asking to understand…"), was given due attention by the speaker in utterance #L. The speaker in #L uses a term of endearment "my sibling", and explains that the concept, *mantatale*, means the horse hooves.

In terms of the maxim of *relation*, a number of factors need explaining. First, the utterance in #L is relevant to the expression made in utterance #K because it gave an explanation of the concept, *mantatale*, as expected by the speaker in utterance #K.

Secondly, the speaker in utterance #L relevantly interpreted the statement of request as an honest need for further clarification usually by someone who is less knowledgeable. To this end, she deemed it fit to use the word of endearment, "my sibling" in order to establish rapport. These factors involved in the response indicate that the maxim of *relation* is observed in this utterance. Similarly, the answer in #L was straight to the point, devoid of obscure expressions, and accurate on the definition of *mantatale*. Beyond observation of all the CP maxims in utterance #L, the speaker in utterance #L demonstrates high command of direct and indirect forms of questioning from the dialect used in utterance # K. The illocutionary meaning of the statement "what is mantatale" was correctly inferred and responded to in a succinct way. To do this, one would need a high command of understanding in the dialect of the expression used to draw correct inferences and to provide accurate answers.

The interactions between Setswana and Sesotho speakers showed that the speaker in utterance #I was understood by the speaker in utterance # J irrespective of the idiomatic expression used by the speaker in #I. The speaker in #J observed all the CP maxims and demonstrated the ability to make inferences of illocutionary meanings embedded in utterance #I. Similarly, the second set of interactions showed that the speaker in utterance # L understood the contents and implications of the utterance in #K. The speakers' ability to provide relevant answers that are devoid of obscurity and their ability to infer implicatures to arrive at the illocutionary meanings denote that the Setswana speaker in utterance # J understands the Sesotho utterance in #I in the same way that the Sesotho speaker in utterance #L understands the Setswana utterance in #K.

This allows the interpretation that Setswana and Sesotho are mutually intelligible dialects.

In brief, the discussion on bi-dialect interactions between Sepedi, Setswana, and Sesotho speakers showed that there is a high degree of mutual intelligibility that cuts across dialect differences. Observation of the CP maxims: *relations*, *quality*, *quantity*, and *manner* as well as accurate inferences of the implicatures: *locutionary*, *illocutionary* and *perlocutionary* force, as discussed, provide sufficient evidence that there were no linguistic barriers in conversations carried out in three different language varieties.

Tri-dialect Interaction: Conversational Repairs

While the questions on mutual intelligibility were answered in interactions # A through #L above, the analysis went further to draw cases of tri-dialect interactions to assess degrees of mutual intelligibility when three speakers of different dialects are involved in a dialogue. The analysis showed that there were conversational repairs and a smooth flow of the topics from one speaker to another. The following tri-dialect interaction demonstrates the strategy used to repair the conversation at the brink of breakdown:

#A **(Motswana)**: O ka re ba e tsea hore re nyefola Bapedi. Ha re nyegole re batla ho hlalohanya.

[It looks like they think we are ridiculing Sepedi speakers. We do not ridicule; we need to understand.

#B **(Mopedi)**: Ee, lebaka la gore lena le **jese pudi leotša** ke gore ga le nyakišiše.

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Ke gore ditaba tša lena le dikwa go tšwa mothong o motee.

[Yes, it is because you generalize (literal meaning of the proverb: to let goats eat millets) without investigating.

#C (Mosotho): **Ho jesa pudi leotsa** ke eng?

[What does letting goats eat millets mean?]

#B (Mopedi): Ke stereotype go fetetša ka Sepedi.

[It means stereotype when translated in Sepedi]

In this interaction, there is a flow of ideas from one speaker to another. The Setswana speaker starts with an apologetic statement that they were not ridiculing Sepedi speakers about witchcraft. Their goal was rather to understand the depth of witchcraft in the Limpopo province. Secondly, the Sepedi speaker understood the apology and explained using a proverb that they (Sepedi group) felt personally attacked. The use of the proverb that translates "to make goats eat millets" brought in the third group of speakers into the discussion: Sesotho speakers. The Sesotho speaker sought clarification on the use of this proverb; otherwise she would miss the gist of the argument. The Sepedi speaker again was prompted to explain that the proverb simply meant the act of generalizing. In brief, the three speakers understand each other on the main focus of the discussion: the generalization that there is a lot of witchcraft in Limpopo. This satisfies the maxim of *relation, quantity,* and *quality.* Violation of the maxim of *manner* through the use of obscure expression by the Sepedi speaker nearly resulted in a communication breakdown. It is, however, noteworthy that the speakers were able to repair their conversations when such expressions were used. The speakers were able to use neutral

expressions to explain dialect-specific phrases as seen in #L on the concept *mantatale* in order to bring the conversation back to a mutually intelligible level. The flow of the topic across three dialects and the speakers' ability to repair their conversations show that the speakers in this interaction communicate in ways that are similar to speakers of the same language. In conclusion, there were no linguistic barriers observed in the tri-dialect interactions; instead, a strategy of repairs was used to ensure the smooth flow of the conversation, as is usually the case among native speakers of one language.

Tri-dialect Interaction: Mutual Intelligibility

Another example of tri-dialect interaction that showed a smooth flow of the topic across the three dialect utterances was analyzed further to demonstrate the degree of mutual comprehension when the speakers are using their respective dialects in the same communicative event.

#A (Mopedi): Ke kgopela go botšiša ka ye ya boloi, ntho ye ya boloi le tsebile ka yona ge le tloga gae goba le tsebile ka yona ge le fihla mo.
[I request to ask about the witchcraft one, did you know about this witchcraft issue when you were still at your homes, or did you get to know about it once you arrived here?]
#B (Mosotho): Ha ke tswa hae ne ke sa tsebe selo ka Limpopo, ne ke sa tsebe letho ne ke tseba hore ho nale Province entsha e bitswa Northern Province ebitswang Limpopo eseng e tshentshilwe lebitso, ha ele tsa boli be teng ke ne ke sa di tsebe. Ke utlwile ha ke fihla mona.

[When I came home I did not know anything about Limpopo (the province believed to have witchcraft practices). What I knew was that there is a new name attached to the Northern Province called Limpopo. I virtually knew nothing about witchcraft.]

#A (Mopedi): O dirile eng ge o tseba ka taba ye ya boloi?

[Upon understanding that there is witchcraft, what did you do?]

B (Mosotho): Ke a botsa. Tjhe ha ke re gabotse nna ke tsebile ha ke tloha hae hore mo Limpopo boloi bo teng ke bo bontshi?

[I asked. No actually; I knew that there is a lot of witchcraft practice in Limpopo when I left home.]

A (Mopedi): Ke bona bothata bona bo ka gore o tlogile ka gae ba go botsa gore boloi Limpopo ke bo bontshi. Jwale wena was tseba ge o tloga gae hore Limpopo ke boloing ke bothata ba gona. Le tswa ka magaeng a bolena le tseba gore mo Limpopo dilo tse dimpe ke tse dintshi goba boloi ke bo bontshi le tse dingwe.

[That is the problem because you left home already with the information that there is a lot of witchcraft in Limpopo. Leaving home with this knowledge is the root cause of the problem. You left your hometowns knowing that here in Limpopo there are so many bad things or that there is too much witchcraft and other negative things.]

#C (Motswana): Ee, re tlogile re ntse re itse gore boloi bo teng. Re tlohile re ntse re itse ne re batla go netefatsa hore a naa ke nnete boloi bo teng ko Limpopo ke mo re tlileng gompieno.

[Yes, we left home with full knowledge that there is witchcraft. We came with the knowledge; we just want to confirm if there is witchcraft in Limpopo; that is why we are here today.]

This interaction shows a discussion that was initiated by the Sepedi-speaking respondent. This respondent asked a question if the belief that the Limpopo province had witchcraft practices developed while the other discussants were in their hometowns or if it emerged in the two weeks following their arrival in Limpopo. The Sesotho respondent first stated that she did not know anything while she was at home, but later said that she had prior knowledge about witchcraft in Limpopo. The Sepedi respondent then used this latter point to make a case that prior knowledge had played a role in cultivating the stereotype among the respondents from the sister dialects. The Setswana-speaking respondent, on the other hand, said that he had prior knowledge about witchcraft in Limpopo; he only needed to confirm what he already knew before coming to Limpopo.

The conversations in the above tri-dialect interactions proceeded smoothly from speakers of one dialect to another. All the CP maxims were observed in the interactions: relation, quality, quantity and manner so that the speakers remained focused on the same topic of witchcraft and the source of stereotypes about the Limpopo province. Therefore, in addition to the bi-dialect interactions discussed above, tri-dialect interactions showed high levels of mutual understanding across the three dialect groups.

ORANGE GAME: INFORMATION GAP TASK

The same participants who were engaged in the focus group discussion were given an information gap task in order to evaluate whether the three Sotho groups could reach a communicative goal and resolve problems while using their respective dialects. The chief focus of this activity was not to assess mutual intelligibility, per se; it sought to evaluate the degree of intelligibility with regard to the speakers' ability to resolve conflicts and cooperate in real-life situations. The three groups were presented with different problems that required that they compete for the orange, which was imagined to be the only one remaining in the country. In this hypothetical context, the Sepedi group had to find a solution that they needed only the rind for the sick Queen, the Setswana needed the pips for the farmer, and the Sesotho group needed the juice from the orange for the sick water engineer. They had to discover what exactly they needed from the orange and how they could get it without making their counterparts lose anything.

The conversation took approximately one hour and had interactions that in the end brought a win-win situation for all the groups, which relates to the idea of unity and harmonization. The following extracts illustrate the speaker's problem-solving skills while communicating with speakers who do not speak the same variety.

(Sesotho): Puo ya hae ha ke e utlwisisse ka hore wena ha re utlwisise wena le Batswana ba bang ba re le batla namune kaofela, rapolase wa lona kappa yena... o itse le tle le yona kaofela la kgutla la re ditholana fela. Laborarao jwalo le re le batla namune kaofela. Hantle hantle le re le batlang?

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[Your talk is not understandable because you and other Setswana speakers say you need the whole orange. Did your farmer tell you to bring the whole orange or just the pips? You said that you need just the pips later one. Thirdly, you tell us that you need the whole orange. What do you really need?]

In this extract, the Sesotho-speaking participant analyzed the demands made by Setswana speakers in their quest to get the orange. This respondent is able to show that the Setswana speakers moved in three positions. First, they claimed that they needed the whole orange. Next, they said that they needed just the pips, and then reverted to the original demand. The Sesotho respondent finds this change of positions confusing and harder to resolve. Importantly, the Sesotho respondent is able to synthesize main issues presented by Setswana group and show that the solution to the problem is unlikely to be reached as long as the Setswana speakers keep changing positions.

The Setswana respondent complicates the problem further by making a demand to bring together all the key individuals for whom the cases were made: the traditional healer (for the sick Queen), the doctor (for the sick water engineer) and the farmer as presented in the following extract:

#A (Motswana): Kitso ya rona ya gore namune gore re jwale re batla ditholwana ga re itse se rapolase a se batlang, janong se se siameng ke gore Queen Modjadjai a ka fodiswa ke namune a tle mo. Motho war eng rra Badiki a ka fodiswa ke namune a tle mo.

[Our knowledge about growing oranges through pips is limited, as we do not know exactly what the farmer wants. Then whoever said Queen Modjadji would be healed by an orange should come here. The person who said the technician would be healed by an orange should also come here.]

As illustrated in this extract, the respondent says that they do not know if the farmer just needed the pips. Consequently, the respondents would like to have the traditional healer who prescribed the orange healing remedy for Queen Modjadji to come along and the doctor who claimed that the water technician could be cured by an orange should also come over so that they could both be interrogated. This demand, however, makes it impractical to bring the imagined people to the discussion table. In this regard, a Sepedi speaker intervenes with a proposal that proved worthwhile in the end. The proposal is represented in the extract below:

#B (Mopedi): Le a tseba gore ke nagana gore re dire eng. Akere ka moka re nyaka namune, re ka e ngatha mo gare rena (Bapedi) ra tšea seripa se sengwe, Basotho ba tšea seripa se sengwe lena la tsea dithapo (Batswana) la di bjala, kgoši a nesa pula, rra tegnieki a ntšha meetsi dinamune tša mela—ge a lwala a ja dinamune.

[You know what I think we should do. Because we all need the orange, we can cut it in the middle so that we (Sepedi speakers) take one piece, the Sesotho speaking group takes another piece, and you (Setswana-speaking group) take the

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pips to grow them, the queen will bring about rain, the technician will bring about

water for the orange trees to grow---when he's sick, he could eat oranges].

The Sepedi respondent proposed that they cut the orange into two pieces. Sepedi

group would take one piece, the Sesotho group take another part while Setswana group

would take the pips. The farmer would plant the pips; the rain Queen Modjadji could be

healed to assume her spiritual obligations of bringing rain, and then the technician would

have even have more water on the ground. He would eat the orange when he is sick and

pump more water for the people affected by drought.

The last response brought the discussion to a close: the Sepedi takes one part of

the orange with the rind, the Sesotho group takes away one part that has some juice while

both groups give away the pips to the Setswana group. This proved satisfactory for each

group that initially wanted to have the whole orange. The participants realized that they

needed each other much more than they had thought in the beginning of the conversation.

Based on the shift from wanting the whole orange to sharing in ways that complement

one another, the goal of this conversation was reached. This allows an interpretation that

speakers of these dialects not only have mutual understanding as the focus group

discussions have demonstrated, they also have the ability to reach a communicative goal.

Because reaching a communicative goal requires a high degree of mutual understanding,

it is further concluded that the harmonized form of Sotho could allow speakers of these

three dialects to perform other social functions that require high-level negotiations.

PERSONAL REFLECTIONS: NON-PARTICIPANT OBSERVER

There were a number of observations made by the researcher and his two research assistants who have proficiency in the three Sotho language varieties. In both the focus group discussions and information gap activity, we observed that three stereotypes were explored in the discussions. The first was the witchcraft practices believed by Setswana and Sesotho to be predominant in the Limpopo province. This dominated the discussions, as it was a topic that all the respondents were interested in and had many issues to say about it. Even though Sepedi speakers vehemently opposed the view that their province was full of witchcraft practices, they were understood to have contradicted themselves when making a case for the orange to save Queen Modjadji who is believed to posses deitic powers to bring about rain. The Sepedi respondents were pressured to defend their province by making counter-charges about their own stereotypes against Setswana and Sesotho speakers. Setswana discussants were charged with their inability to travel far away from their homes. This stereotype has historical connection with their proximity to Johannesburg. These other groups travel as far as 500 miles for work in Johannesburg while most Setswana speakers hardly travel 150 miles to go to Johannesburg. On the other hand, Sesotho speakers were portrayed as horse-eaters and day blanket-dressers (i.e., traditional Sesotho speakers have a tendency to put on blankets instead of sweaters). This resonated with the reference to the concept *mantatale* when referring to a horse's hoof. In addition, the lively discussion that drew interest from all the respondents was later reinforced by the arguments made about the orange in the information gap activity.

The second observation made in the discussions was the participants' ability to use conversational repairs when dialect-specific words or phrases were used. For

example, *mantatale* (horse hoof), *go jesa pudi leotsa* (to generalize - stereotype), *lesogana le sa eteng le nyala kgaetsedi* (the young man who does not travel marries his sister) were all cases of dialect-specific usages used in the conversations. The participants were able to repair conversations with requests for clarification and explanations in common phrases used across the dialects. Because the respondents used the same languages without assistance of another language, it can be concluded that indeed these language varieties have only slight differences as found in any dialects of the same language. Using native speaker intuition, there was no case in the conversations that had communication breakdown. In this connection, the respondents displayed the highest degree of mutual intelligibility that changed some of the negative attitudes toward harmonization, as discussed in the next section.

MATCHED QUESTIONNAIRE RESPONSES

In order to provide a comprehensive account of the attitudinal change answers after the 12 respondents went through the inter-dialect interactions, the answers prior to the experiment carried out in the study were compared with the answers given in the post-task questionnaire. The comparison was primarily meant to draw qualitative inferences as to whether the inter-dialect interactions had any impact on the respondents' attitudes. This comparison was based on the open-ended questions of the questionnaire, which are repeated below in (a) through (f) (See Appendix C):

a. There is a proposal to unify the written forms of Sepedi, Setswana and Sesotho for educational purposes. To what extent do you agree or disagree with

this proposal? Give your answer and reasons for it below:

c. Can Sotho languages be used as the media of learning and teaching in higher levels of education? Please give your answer and reasons below:

d. Would it be easy for speakers of Sotho languages to read texts written in a Harmonized Sotho language? Support your answer.

e. Do you think communication among the Sotho language speakers is possible, without translators? Give your answer and reasons thereof:

f. Would you be interested in having your language unified with languages in the Sotho group? Give your answer and reasons below:

Respondent # 1

Respondent #1 gave negative answers on almost all the questions listed above (a-f) in the pre-task questionnaire. The main reason for objecting to the harmonization proposal was that the process of harmonizing the Sotho language varieties would destabilize the already existing traditions. This means that there was a fear that the people whose varieties would become unified in writing would lose their identities that are already based around the present language forms. Contrary to this objection in her post-task responses, the same respondent agreed that communication among Sotho language varieties could go on without major difficulties in understanding. The idea of using Sotho language varieties as languages of instruction was still viewed in a negative light in the post-task. The respondent believed that the use of Harmonized Sotho in education might prove difficult for speakers of non-Sotho language varieties. Obviously, the respondent misunderstood the question of using the Sotho language for education; she was convinced

that the use of the Sotho language would necessarily be imposed on speakers of other African languages. This goes beyond the scope of language of instruction as suggested: Harmonized Sotho among speakers of Sepedi, Setswana, and Sesotho. It is, however, noteworthy that the respondent shifted away from total opposition to harmonization in the pre-task to acceptance in the post-task even if the issue of the language of instruction was still contestable.

Respondent # 2

Unlike respondent #1, # 2 agreed that Sotho language varieties could be used as media of instruction in post-primary education level in the pre-task questionnaire. Secondly, this respondent agreed that the readability of the Harmonized Sotho would not be problematic to speakers of this language group. While this respondent felt that there is a high degree of mutual intelligibility, he was skeptical about the harmonization process when stating:

#1 Go ya ka nna polelo ye nngwe le ye nngwe e ikemetse ka bo yona ebile motho yo mongwe le yo mongwe o nale ditokelo tsa go somisa polelo ya gabo e le tee e se ya kopantshwa le polelo ye nngwe.

[According to me, every language is self-standing and every individual has the right to use his/her language without combining it with any other.]

The view expressed in this extract advocates for separation of the dialects instead of their unification. Maintenance of one's local speech form is regarded as a right that

should not be impinged upon through the unification process. After the intervention tasks, however, this respondent changed his views on harmonization as follows:

#2 Kopano ya maleme a Sesotho e bohlokwa ka ge dipolelo tse di swana. A go bohlokwa gore re be le dipolelo tse tharo go laetsa molaetsa o tee.

[Unification of the Sotho language varieties is important because these varieties are similar. It is not necessary to have three languages in sending one message.]

The argument for harmonization in the post-task questionnaire is premised on the high degree of similarities that this respondent noticed while involved in inter-dialect interactions. The issue of language rights was then subsumed by the realization that these dialects are very close during the interactions. The focus group discussions, information gap activity, and reading activities had influenced respondent #2's attitude toward harmonization of the Sotho language varieties.

Respondent #3

On the pretask questionnaire, this respondent did not agree with the proposal to harmonize the Sotho language varieties and the possibility of using this Harmonized Sotho as the language of learning and teaching beyond primary school education. However, she agreed that it would be possible for speakers of these varieties to read texts written in united Sotho and that communication among Sotho language speakers is possible because these languages are similar. Despite the perceived degrees of mutual intelligibility, harmonization and the use of Sotho languages varieties as the languages of

instruction was found objectionable. In the post-task questionnaire, this respondent changed her disapproval of harmonization and the use of united Sotho in post-primary education. Harmonization was seen as an opportunity for learning each other's variety, without necessarily losing one's own. This view is expressed in the following extract:

#3 Ke bona ele bohlokwa gore motho a ithute leleme la gabo a le tsebe a be a le kwesise gore a tle a kgone go ikgantsha ka lona ge a nale diboledi tse dingwe. Efela ka nako e nngwe motho o swanetse go ithuta gaope le maleme a mangwe gore a tle a kgone go kwesissa batho ba bangwe.

[I see it necessary that one should learn his/her own language so that he/she can be proud of it whenever he/she is with speakers of other languages. But at some stage, it is important that one needs to learn other languages so that one can understand others].

This extract shows that harmonization could be a catalyst in enabling people of diverse language backgrounds to learn each other's dialect while maintaining their own dialect variety. In this way, speakers would be proud of retaining their own way of expression instead of using a foreign language. For the purpose of this study, it is noted that the focus group discussions, the information gap activity, and the reading exercises created a positive impact on this respondent toward the need for harmonization of Sotho language varieties.

Respondent #4

This respondent made two crucial points in the pre-task. First, using Harmonized Sotho as the language of teaching and learning would be problematic because there are other groups in South Africa, which do not speak any of the Sotho language varieties. Second, the respondent saw harmonization as a necessity in improving levels of understanding among speakers whose languages share one channel on national television. Comparison of the post-task views showed that the respondent still held the same view that harmonization would enhance the level of understanding and reduce the need for translations among languages that are otherwise similar.

Respondent #5

Respondent #5 provided a pessimistic view of the harmonization of the Sotho varieties and doubted if there were any mutual intelligibility between these varieties. As far as this speaker is concerned, harmonization is dependent on the degrees of proficiency among the speakers of one language toward another. This view is captured in the following extract:

#4 Ga ke na karabo e e totobetseng, eya kgotsa nyaa, go tla ya le gore dibui di tlhaologanya dipuo tse jang.

[I do not have a right answer whether it is a yes or a no. It depends on one's level of proficiency in each of the dialects.]

In this extract, the speaker warned of over-generalized assumption about mutual intelligibility. The respondent argues that the levels of proficiency would need to be taken into account when harmonizing Sotho language varieties. However, there is a remarkable change of attitude observed in the post-task response. The respondent argued that she would be happy if her language were harmonized with other Sotho language varieties because there is a high degree of mutual intelligibility. Instead, she preferred English because it has international value. The fact that the respondent changed her view and recognized that the Sotho language varieties are mutually intelligible to the extent that they need to be unified in writing bears testimony to the view that the interactions had a positive impact on the respondents.

Respondent #6

In the pretask questionnaire, respondent # 6 opposed the view that Harmonized Sotho could be used as the language of instruction in post-primary education and that these Sotho varieties are mutually intelligible. The problem with harmonization, according to this respondent, is that it creates a 12th language when there are already 11 as quoted in the following extract:

Nyaa, ga go ya simama gone se se raya gore go dirisiwa puo enngwe ye e seng gore ga e a letlelelwa ke molao wa Afrika. Go tlabo go diriwa puo ya bosomepedi, mme go letleletswe dipuo di le somelebongwe.

[No. it is not right because this means that a new language not approved by the Constitution of South Africa. This means that a 12th language will be created when the constitution recognizes only 11.]

Harmonization of the Sotho language variety is understood by this respondent to mean a creation of another language in addition to the three existing varieties. This adds to the already stated view that the harmonization concept is misunderstood. But in the post-task questionnaire, this respondent changed this view and saw the need for harmonization as long as it would not imply creating a new language.

Respondent #7

Respondent #7 agreed to the harmonization proposal and the use of such a harmonized form as the medium of instruction in post-primary education. Believing that indeed the three language varieties are mutually comprehensible, this respondent states a reason for harmonization as follows:

Ke a dumela gore Mopedi, Mosotho le Motswana ba kgone go buisa sentle ebile ba kgone go tlhaloganya sentle.

[I agree that Sepedi, Sesotho and Setswana speakers can communicate with each other and understand each other very well.]

This respondent gave a consistent answer both in the pre-task and post-task questionnaires.The inter-dialect communication reinforced the respondent's preconceived

attitude on mutual intelligibility and the feasibility of uniting Sotho language varieties into a common written form.

Respondent #8

The responses given by Respondent # 8 depict a pattern already observed with other respondents in the pre-task answers. Like the preceding respondents, Respondent #8 agreed that the Sotho language varieties are mutually intelligible, but he is opposed to the harmonization proposal on the basis that the already formed identities would be threatened. This view is encapsulated in the extract below:

Ke a ganetsa- puo enngwe le e nngwe e tshwanetse go ikemela gore batho ba tle ba tlhaologanye segabona.

[I do not agree. Every language should stand on its own so that people do not lose their culture/customs.]

The respondent in the above extract feels that harmonization would result in the loss of cultures, customs and identities. The interactions, however, seem to have changed his views in the post-task. The respondent took a position that there is no problem with harmonization so long as the combined words and phrases still remain understandable to all members of the harmonized form. Since this view emerged after the interactions, it can be concluded that the treatment carried out in the experiment affected this respondent's preconceived attitude toward harmonization.

Respondent # 9 provided affirmative answers to all the questions covering the harmonization proposal, use of Harmonized Sotho in post-primary education level, and mutual intelligibility of both oral and written registers. In giving a reason for harmonization, the respondent stated:

Nka thabela ha di ka kopangoa hobane ntho eo etla etsa re tlohele ho ikarohanya re be ntho e lengoe joalo ka puo tsa rona.

[I will be happy if they get harmonized because this will make us stop dividing ourselves and become one just like our language varieties are.]

Respondent # 9 articulated one of the key reasons for harmonizing indigenous African languages with a high degree of mutual intelligibility. Harmonization is perceived as being of national importance in uniting the ethno-dialectly divided people of South Africa. While the same opinion was expressed on harmonization in the post-task, the respondent changed her view on the use of Harmonized Sotho as the medium of instruction in post-primary education. The reason for the change of views was that the respondent felt that there are other groups that do not necessarily speak Sotho language varieties. This reasoning demonstrates the fear that the Harmonized Sotho would be imposed on all speakers outside of the Sotho language communities.

Respondent #10

Respondent #10 gave negative answers in the pre-task. He argued that Sotho language varieties are different and that they should be left in their current form. In the post-task questionnaire, he conceded to the view that the varieties are mutually intelligible. While there is no objection to mutual intelligibility, the respondent still felt that there is no need for harmonization of Sotho language varieties because such a process might cause conflicts. Such conflicts could be sparked by the lack of equal representation of words, phrases, and other language matters across the three varieties.

Respondent #11

Pre-task answers for Respondent #11 were negative to the harmonization proposal and to the use of the harmonized form as the language of learning and teaching. This respondent believed that English should instead be used because it is an international language. Sotho language varieties, on the other hand, do not have the same international status as English does. On the contrary, the post-task responses showed a more positive attitude toward harmonization and a general change of opinions as reflected in the following extract:

Di ka kopangoa hobane dipuo tsohle tsa Sesotho ha di na phapang haholo le hore di ka sebediswa e le puo e le nngwe dithutong tsa university.

[They can be harmonized because all the Sotho language varieties do not have big differences and then they can be used as one language in the university curriculum.]

The extract shows a completely changed view toward Sotho language varieties when the respondent expressed the view that the Sotho varieties are not different and that the unified form could be used in the university curricula. The case for Respondent #11 shows that the interactions during the intervention stage of the study made this speaker realize that the varieties are closer than previously thought. Importantly, the respondent expressed the view that the harmonized form might be a resource for use at university levels.

Respondent #12

Respondent #12 was very negative to all the questions asked in the pre-task. She feared that people speaking other language varieties would lose their cultural identities and that group conflicts might erupt because these language varieties are different from one another. The post-task response was different in two ways. First, the respondent agreed that there is a high degree of mutual intelligibility among speakers of Sepedi, Setswana, and Sesotho. In this connection, it was possible to unite these varieties in writing. Secondly, the respondent felt strongly that a Harmonized Sotho can be used as the medium of instruction in post-primary school education in order to resolve problems of illiteracy, high failure rate, and attrition, which are attributed to the use of English as the medium of instruction among African children. Given the changed attitude toward harmonization and use of Harmonized Sotho in education, it can be inferred that the interactions had a positive impression on this respondent.

Analysis of the open-ended answers in the pre-task and post-task of the 12 respondents shows an interesting pattern. Most of those who had preconceived negative responses changed their views to supporting: (a) harmonization proposal, (b) use of Harmonized Sotho in post-primary education and (c) high degrees of mutual intelligibility in both spoken and written registers. This analysis supports the quantitative analyses that showed that there was a change of attitudes in a positive direction in the post-task. This allows the interpretation that the interactions carried out during the experiment did have an impact on the respondents' views on the harmonization question.

Taken together, the results presented in this chapter showed that there are arguments for and against harmonization of Sotho languages, which highlight the complexities involved in the harmonization phenomena. On the basis of conversational interactions, there is sufficient evidence that speakers of Sotho language varieties communicate in mutually intelligible ways that enabled them to negotiate for meaning, repair conversations, and reach communicative goals. Conclusions drawn from the analysis are enumerated in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 6: SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The aim of this study was to investigate the feasibility of harmonizing Sotho language varieties by assessing attitudes of university students who speak these language varieties and immersing them in inter-dialect interactions. Speaker attitudes and linguistic practices, as measures of harmonization, were tested through triangulated methods that yielded comprehensive results on the harmonization question. The purpose of this chapter is to provide a synopsis of the study, involving a chapter-by-chapter summary, description of major findings from chapter 4, conclusions from the findings, implications for language planners and policy makers, and suggestions for further research that replicate and expand on the methodologies developed in the study.

SUMMARY OF THE STUDY

Chapter One presented the problem as the lack of progress with regard to the use of indigenous African languages in official domains of the South African society in a period of 10 years since the first democratic elections in 1994. The reason for the unchanging status of indigenous African languages, apart from negative attitudes toward African languages as documented elsewhere (e.g., Verhoef, 1999, Thiba, 2000), was identified as misrepresentation of the status of these languages as stipulated in the Constitution (SA, 1996), where dialects of the same language (referred to as community speech forms, (Makoni, 1999) were accorded official status as distinct languages. In so doing, the Constitutional provisions have inadvertently entrenched the linguistic differentiation of indigenous African languages that was sanctioned through the work of the missionary

linguists and later on formalized by the Bantustan homeland policies of separate development during the Apartheid regime. Given this background, Chapter One provided a rationale for harmonization of mutually intelligible languages despite many years of deliberate and systematic divisions that were wrought in the South African political life. It outlined the purpose of the study and set out the following specific goals:

- To assess the preconceived attitudes of native speakers of Sotho language varieties toward other varieties in the same language cluster (i.e., Sepedi, Setswana, and Sesotho).

- To investigate the extent to which communication without major linguistic barriers (mutual intelligibility) is achievable when speakers of the Sotho language varieties are involved in interactions in which all their vernaculars are used (inter-variety communication).

- To assess whether Sotho inter-variety communication can accomplish a set communicative goal.

- To explore the extent to which reading and understanding of written texts from varieties of Sotho other than the informants' own can be achieved.

- To examine the degree to which preconceived attitudes are changed or reinforced after the speakers were immersed in the inter-variety interactions.

The proposal to harmonize Sotho language varieties (Sepedi, Setswana, and Sesotho), on the one hand, and Nguni language varieties (isiZulu, isiXhosa, Siswati, isiNdebele), on the other hand, was first made by Jacob Nhlapo who lamented what he called "the trouble of the babel of tongues" (Nhlapo, 1944, p.10). Nhlapo was concerned

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that the speakers of mutually intelligible were re-tribalized into enclaves that countered national unity among Black South Africans. One of the reasons he gave was that unified African languages would have economic benefits and reduce the costs of duplicating materials that could be written in the same orthography. Furthermore, Nhlapo believed that readership would be enlarged by the unification process, which was necessary for literacy development and educational advancement in the Black communities. The proposal was ignored by the then Apartheid regime because it suggested a program that was against the division philosophy that was embraced by the architects of Apartheid.

After more than 40 years of silence on the harmonization proposal, Alexander (1989) revived the proposal that caused controversy as South African linguists and policy makers were embarking on a plan for language policy in the post-Apartheid South Africa. Alexander's advocacy for unification of Sotho and Nguni was not recognized in favor of the 11 official languages policy. The proposal however remained topical and gained momentum after it increasingly became evident that the 11 official languages policy had not been successful in promoting indigenous African languages (IALS). Because harmonization is seen by some linguists as the alternative path to the use of indigenous African languages (e.g., Alexander, 2001; Prah, 2002a, b; Webb, 2002), it was necessary to investigate its feasibility with regard to speaker attitudes and inter-dialect interactions.

The study was contextualized within a history of language struggle, characterized by domination by exogenous languages (Dutch, English and Afrikaans) and ethno-linguistic differentiation of the indigenous African languages. First, such a history involved the Dutchification period from 1652-1874 when the Dutch settlers invaded the Cape region and enforced the Dutch language on the local Khoisan people. The period

around 1820 and 1840 involved the missionary development of orthographies in order to translate the Bible into these languages for evangelical purposes. Given that the missionary linguists represented different denominations, they worked in isolation without central coordination. This process culminated in nine indigenous African languages, written in different orthographies, which often reflected the missionaries' own native languages.

The second period was described as the Anglicization period when the English invaded South Africa in 1875. Like the Dutch settlers, the English promoted English and enforced it for all official business. This was followed by the Afrikanerization period that came with the proclamation of Apartheid laws when the Nationalist Party took power in 1948. During this period, the nine missionary 'disinvented languages' (Makoni, 2003), were entrenched through the Bantustan homeland system that sought to divide the people according to the nine missionary created languages. This implied that every language had its own homeland. The next dramatic period was the student revolution in the streets of South Western Townships (SOWETO) of Johannesburg, which is referred to as the 1976 Soweto Student Uprising. Unprecedented in its nature, the students fought against the use of Afrikaans as the medium of instruction in primary schools. Finally, the history of language struggle was ended with a discussion on the democratization period that accorded 11 languages an official status (Afrikaans and English included). This description showed that the nine indigenous languages differentiated over time were appropriated in the current Constitution.

Chapter Two provided a synopsis of language planning issues that pertain to the harmonization and standardization of indigenous African languages. First, the theoretical

framework for language harmonization as a component of language planning was outlined within the parameters of status, corpus, and acquisition planning (see Cooper, 1989). The second part of the chapter was a review of the literature that dealt with attitudes toward indigenous African languages, which is a topic closely related to the harmonization of African languages. The next section reviewed the literature on mutual intelligibility and the harmonization project carried out by the Centre for Advanced Studies in African Society (CASAS).

It was concluded in Chapter Two that the present study is empirically significant in expanding the body of knowledge that exists on language harmonization in South Africa. Although there are volumes of literature showing higher degrees of linguistic similarities (linguistic intelligibility) (e.g., Nakin, 2002; Matubatuba, 2002), no similar studies known to date carried out experiments on mutual intelligibility involving actual speech interactions among the speakers of these languages (i.e., intelligibility through interactions that involved actual speakers). Similarly, it was pointed out that although research is replete with findings that speakers of African languages prefer using English to their own languages, there are few, if any, studies that have focused on attitudes of speakers of one African language toward a sister African language, especially using research instruments designed in these languages. On these two accounts (discourse intelligibility and attitudes within), the chapter concluded that this present study of language harmonization, with its focus on inter-variety interactions and inter-variety attitudes is the first of its kind to fill in the existing body of knowledge on mutual intelligibility, attitudes within sister African languages, and harmonization of Sotho language varieties of South Africa.

Chapter Three presented the methods of the study and the rationale for their relevance to the study of practices and attitudes among native speakers of languages that were proposed to undergo the process of harmonization. First, it was emphasized that due to the complexity of assessing mutual intelligibility and testing the feasibility of harmonizing Sotho language varieties, a multilayered design was preferred. As a result, methods of study, data collection procedures, and analysis techniques were triangulated. There were six phases of the design: pilot test, pre-task questionnaires, intervention tasks (focus group discussion, information gap activity, reading comprehension texts), and post-task questionnaires in a within-subject experimental design (i.e., the same participants were used in the pre-task and the post-task questionnaires). In order to analyze both qualitative and quantitative data, frequency counts for the pre-task surveys, inferential chi-squares, matched t- test, one-way ANOVAs, content analysis, discourse analysis and native speaker intuition were used to provide a comprehensive view of the harmonization phenomenon.

Chapter Four presented and analyzed data in several stages: preconceived attitudes, effect of intervention tasks through matched t- test, and reading judgment test. The first part of data analysis showed that the 48 participants representing three varieties: Sepedi, Setswana, and Sesotho had positive attitudes on all the four themes outlined in the questionnaires. First, responses on the clustering of Sotho language varieties on TV showed a positive rating and that the differences between the three groups were not statistically significant. Secondly, attitudes toward the use of Harmonized Sotho as the medium of instruction in post primary education yielded the positive ratings in all the three language varieties. Differences between the language varieties were not statistically

significant. The third theme, mutual intelligibility, had the highest rating with no statistically significant differences between the three language groups. Finally, the harmonization theme was rated positively with no statistically significant differences between the groups. The results are conclusive that pre-task attitudes of the 48 participants were positive, and that there were no statistically significant differences between the three Sotho language groups. The findings were corroborated by the one-way ANOVA analysis that sought to assess group differences on all the four themes combined. The results showed that there were no statistically differences between the language groups and between the themes. These results allowed the interpretation that Sepedi, Setswana, and Sesotho participants involved in the study constituted a homogenous group with regard to their positive attitudes toward harmonization.

The second part of data presentation and analysis involved the use of matched t-tests that compared the attitudes of selected participants (N=12) in the pre-task and post-task questionnaires. In order to meet the prerequisite for this parametric test, Anderson-Darling Normality test was carried out, and it confirmed that the data were normally distributed. The matched t-test results showed that the mean differences in three of the four themes were statistically significant with post-task positive scores modified toward more positive responses. These three themes are: (a) the clustering of languages, (b) mutual intelligibility, and (c) the harmonization. On the converse, the results on the use of Harmonized Sotho as the medium of instruction in post primary education showed that there were no statistically significant improvements after the intervention. It is however noteworthy that the attitudes, which were positive already in the pre-task, did not change toward a negative direction. Because the positive responses generally increased after the

intervention tasks, it seems possible to project that harmonization of Sotho language varieties may not trigger negative attitudes that could hamper the unification process.

The next research question sought to determine whether the speakers of one language variety could read and understand texts written in sister language varieties and the harmonized form. A pass rate of 60% was set to measure the degree of mutual comprehension of the texts. Through frequency counts and chi-square analysis, the study sought to uncover if the speakers would pass the test and assess whether such a pass is representative of the whole group.

First, Sepedi participants got 90% pass rate on the reading comprehension test and different individual scores within the group were not statistically significant. This finding allowed the interpretation that Sepedi speakers formed a homogenous group with regard to their comprehension of the four texts used in the study. Contrary to the Sepedi findings, the Setswana participants got a total group pass rate of 80% on all the texts combined. The differences of individual scores within the group were statistically significant. A close scrutiny of individual performance showed that one Setswana participant got the lowest score (40%), which affected the whole group. A third group, Sesotho participants, performed with a high score of 85%. Individual scores showed that the differences within the Sesotho group were not statistically significant. The results supported the null hypothesis and the interpretation that Sesotho participants comprehended the texts in the same way.

Two separate one-way ANOVAs were carried out on the test scores in order to assess differences between language groups and across the four texts (three written in each of the Sotho language varieties and one written in Harmonized Sotho). The first

ANOVA test results showed that the differences between the Sepedi, Setswana, and Sesotho mean scores were not statistically significant. This finding showed that there was mutual reading between the language groups (i.e., they understood each text equally irrespective of the language the text was written in and the speakers' own language varieties). The second one-way ANOVA sought to test differences in performance per individual text: Sepedi, Setswana, Sesotho and Harmonized Sotho text. The results of the one-way ANOVA showed that there were no statistically significant differences on the texts. The results of both ANOVA tests showed that the participants' reading judgments were equal irrespective of speakers' language variety and language of the text. As a result of this finding, it may be concluded that Sepedi, Setswana, and Sesotho are not different not only in spoken interactions, but also in the written texts and comprehension levels of the readers. With mutual understandings of the existing texts in the three Sotho language varieties, it would seem that the process unifying the present orthographies might not require drastic changes in the new harmonized form. Therefore, the overall picture points out that harmonization of Sotho orthographies will be feasible.

Chapter Five presented the results of qualitative analyses, which corroborated the quantitative analyses in Chapter Four. Using a content analysis procedure, the responses were divided into arguments for and arguments against harmonization. With regard to arguments against harmonization, the responses cited the risk of ethnic conflict that may be fueled by the new orthographic form among the ethnic groups. Secondly, the respondents believed that harmonization might entail a formation of a new language, which would be an unnecessary creation of a 12th language. The idea of a 12th language

shows that it is difficult for the respondents to conceptualize harmonization in practice. To some respondents, harmonization remains a misconstrued concept.

The third dissenting view against harmonization was premised on the conception that spoken and written registers are different; as a result, mutual understanding in spoken speech would not necessarily entail mutual understanding of the written language. However, later in the reading comprehension tasks, as reported above, there was mutual reading intelligibility among the various texts written in the three dialects. Another commonly held view against harmonization is the fear of losing cultures and identities. The loss of cultures and identities became one of the chief arguments against Alexander's renewed proposal for harmonization in the early 1990s, and it was debated in various contexts (Webb, 2002). Webb (2002) refuted the claim on identities and cultures when stating that the speech communities do not necessarily lose any culture or identity; rather, they gain one because harmonization is additive, not subtractive as commonly misconceived.

Several positive arguments for harmonization as a useful language planning exercise in the post-Apartheid dispensation were presented. The first argument for harmonization was based on the view that indigenous African languages are facing extinction as a result of being marginalized in the official domains. Harmonization was seen as an intervention measure to save the endangered African languages. Secondly, the respondents held a view that harmonization would be cost-effective as it would reduce the number of languages that are currently enshrined in the constitution. Furthermore, the respondents made reference to the usefulness of harmonization by citing the national anthem as a leading model in this direction. The final most argued point is development

of national unity among the ethno-linguistically divided people, which is needed in the framework of nation-building and national unity that are central in the post-Apartheid South Africa. When Harmonized Sotho is developed, the ethnic differences could be reduced, as the people would have a common tool of cultural expression.

The next theme that showed another division of opinions was the use of Harmonized Sotho as the medium of instruction, especially in the post-primary school education. One main argument against using Harmonized Sotho as the medium of instruction was that Harmonized Sotho would not have the market value to ensure social mobility among speakers who used it in school. This view led to a second related argument that it is best to use English for purposes of education because it is an international language. On the other hand, the arguments for using Harmonized Sotho were equally presented. The first one was that the harmonized form would minimize the existing classroom problem where students do not understand the subject matter presented to them in English as evidenced by a high rate of code-switching. The second argument related to this was that using a language form familiar to students would improve the pass rate, which is staggeringly low. The use of Harmonized Sotho was therefore seen as an intervention measure to redress the educational problems affecting speakers of indigenous African languages.

Chapter Five also presented an analysis of the actual utterances elicited from the focus group and the information gap interactions. Using the Cooperative Principle, analysis of bi-dialect and tri-dialect conversational segments showed that the discussants observed the conversational maxims of *relation*, *quality*, *quantity* and *manner* in ways that allow claims for mutual intelligibility to be made. Additionally, it was shown that

the interlocutors were able to explicate some of the implicatures during the focus group discussions. Deeper understanding of each other's variety was shown when the discussants were able to act on the illocutionary meanings implied in the utterances. The participants' ability to differentiate locutionary from illocutionary meanings and react relevantly to the implied meaning (perlocutionary force) demonstrated without doubt that the language differences had no impact on mutual intelligibility.

In addition, the information gap activity, which involved an orange game, was carried out to assess not only that the speakers mutually understood each other in the interaction, but also that they were able to reach a communicative goal. The results of this analysis showed that the discussants remained focused on the topic and cooperated to bring about a satisfactory solution for every group. The results were achieved due to observations of the conversational maxims and the discussants' ability to explicate illocutionary meanings, which could have led to misunderstandings if the interlocutors had only a limited comprehension of the language in question. These findings were supported by personal observations from native-speakers involving the researcher and two research assistants who have proficiency in all the three language varieties. Taken together, a coherent view was presented that Sepedi, Setswana, and Sesotho are mutually intelligible in terms of speaker interactions. Unlike in the previous studies where morpho-syntactic, lexical and phonological analyses were used to assess mutual intelligibility, discourse patterns were used in this study to show mutual intelligibility regarding speaker interactions. This finding bodes well for the harmonization proposal and restates the view that Sotho language varieties are variants of the same language befitting the category of dialects, not distinctive languages.

The last section of Chapter Five compared and contrasted qualitative responses of the speakers who participated in the interactions to assess whether there were changes of attitudes in the post-task responses. The qualitative responses based on open-ended questionnaire showed a general shift of negative responses toward more positive responses. That is, the intervention tasks, interactions and reading tasks, have increased the participants' view that harmonization is a feasible project given their own experiences during the intervention tasks. This increase in positive responses provides sufficient confidence that Harmonized Sotho might turn out to be a favorable linguistic path in language planning.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The main conclusion of the study is that harmonization of Sotho language varieties is feasible given the (1) positive attitudes of the student population, (2) their mutually intelligible interactions and (3) mutual understanding of each other's written texts. These three factors provided evidence that Sepedi, Setswana, and Sesotho fit the description of dialects of the same language, rather than three independent languages as enshrined in the Constitution. The results also allow conclusions to be drawn that the linguistic intelligibility observed elsewhere (e.g., Mwisa, 2002; Matubatuba, 2002; Makalela, 2005) is reciprocated with actual spoken repertoires and language attitudes, which all showed a strong support for the harmonization process. In accordance with the purpose of the study, the following specific findings can be outlined:

a. Pre-task attitudes of the participants were largely positive toward clustering of the languages on national TV, use of Harmonized Sotho as the medium of instruction in post-primary education, mutual intelligibility and harmonization. As both the chi-square and one- way ANOVA analyses demonstrated, Sepedi, Setswana, and Sesotho formed a homogenous speech community as far as their attitudes are concerned.

b. There is no communication barrier when Sepedi, Setswana, and Sesotho speakers are immersed in conversations as shown with the bi-dialect and tri-dialect interactions. The results showed that speakers do not only observe the conversational maxims of *relation*, *quality*, *quantity* and *manner* as would be the case in normal dialogues among native speakers, they are also able to explicate the illocutionary meanings, and react appropriately. In brief, communicative practices showed that Sepedi, Setswana, and Sesotho are mutually intelligible.

c. Sepedi, Setswana, and Sesotho speakers not only have a deeper understanding of each other's variety, they are also able to reach communicative goals. The orange game showed that they could negotiate, repair conversations and resolve complex situations using their own speech varieties.

d. Speakers of Sotho language varieties can read and understand texts written in sister language varieties and in the harmonized text. The one-way ANOVA tests demonstrated that reading comprehension in the speakers' own language varieties was equivalent to reading comprehension in the sister language varieties. The high degree of mutual comprehension suggested that unification

of the orthographies might turn out not to be a complex task, requiring radical changes to the already existing orthographies.

e. The intervention tasks, which immersed the speakers in actual speech interactions, changed the preconceived attitudes toward more positive ratings. This finding is indicative of the feasibility of the harmonization process as it would not trigger negative evaluations.

Based on the findings, this study can be concluded with Matubatuba's telling observation that:

Because of the level of mutual intelligibility of these languages, I strongly believe that we might not even need dictionaries as a matter of urgency while doing projects such as skill development to the illiterate masses and medium of instruction through the special lingua franca (Matubatuba, 2002, p. 255).

Matubatuba's (2002) view is supported by the conclusions drawn from this study in two respects. First, speakers of Sepedi, Setswana, and Sesotho communicated with each other without a need for mediators or some reference book. Secondly, all the three dialects (special lingua franca) were used as the media of communication as would be the case among speakers of the same language. It is, therefore, noteworthy that the differences between these varieties were exaggerated, and that their unification can proceed without major linguistic and attitudinal problems, if any. Harmonization of the Sotho dialects as concluded from this study remains the task of language planners and

policy makers who should declare the dialects a single language and develop a single orthographic representation that would be used in all official domains. Matubatuba's belief for lesser work due to many commonalities in the varieties does hold.

The conclusion that the Sotho dialects are mutually intelligible and that their harmonization can be a feasible project among South African language planners has direct Language Planning and Policy (LPP) implications. These are described below:

(a) Since the current Constitutional provisions (SA, 1996) accorded Sepedi, Setswana, and Sesotho separate identities and labels in its declaration of 11 official languages, there is a need for revision of these Constitutional provisions. In the new language policy, Sotho should be stipulated as a language covering all its dialects (Sepedi, Setswana, and Sesotho). This first decision stage falls squarely within the LPP procedure of status planning.

(b) Redefining the status of the Sotho language will reduce the number of indigenous African languages accorded official status from nine to seven. With similar harmonization practices in the Nguni languages, the actual languages proscribed in the constitution will be reduced to 4 indigenous languages. These languages may include Harmonized Sotho (Sepedi, Setswana, and Sesotho) and Harmonized Nguni (isiZulu, isiXhosa, isiNdebele, Siswati), which will become South Africa's two major national languages as advocated for in the Nhlapo-Alexander proposal for harmonization. Tshivenda and Xitsonga, which are national minorities, should be listed as such but with a high regional status in the Limpopo Province where they dominate.

(c) Deliberate political mandate should be created to support Harmonized Sotho within the broad scope of multilingualism. For example, users of Harmonized Sotho could be required to learn one of the Nguni languages or their harmonized form and vice-versa. Similarly, speakers of Nguni or Sotho should be required to learn any of the national minority languages by the time they complete their high school. In this way, development of stronger languages through the harmonization process would not eradicate the minority languages, especially in the Limpopo province where Xitsonga and Tshivenda are predominantly spoken.

(d) Language planners should begin with corpus planning activities involving development of a common dictionary and orthography suitable for the Harmonized Sotho.

(e) Finally, the policy makers should be tasked with marketization of these languages as goods and commodities so that they are tied to economic mobility in all domains of South African life (education, media, politics, etc).

It is noteworthy that the conclusions drawn from this study on Sotho harmonization have far reaching implications in changing the linguistic landscape of South Africa with specific reference to the practices and use of indigenous African languages. As Alexander (2001), Prah (2002a, b) and Smitherman (2000) point out, it is the political will upon which the future of indigenous African languages rests. Smitherman applauded the recognition of indigenous African languages for the first time in the Constitution as the first major step in decolonizing the minds, but warned that "it has to be made real (2000, p.331). Unification of orthographies of mutually intelligible languages, as the findings of

this study show, could be another step forward in changing the linguistic landscape of South Africa.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY

There are far-reaching implications for further studies on the harmonization process in South Africa. The following research options are recommended:

(1) The results of the present study apply only to the selected language group, Sotho, and it is not known yet whether languages in the Nguni group (isiZulu, isiXhosa, isiNdebele and Siswati) would display similar degrees of mutual intelligibility when their speakers are immersed in interactions and readings of each other's text. Research on mutual intelligibility among the Nguni speaking population is necessary because this group went through the same disintegration and dialect differentiation as the Sotho group. Jokweni (2002) articulates this view succinctly when stating:

> Thinking about the disintegration or opting out Siswati from isiZulu and more recently, isiNdebele from isiZulu, one cannot help imagining how much linguistic unity would have been achieved had the disintegration question not taken place (p. 178).

Jokweni's observation, like many others, is a speculation of linguistic unity among the Nguni language varieties. Empirical studies in this area are urgently needed in the

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future to assess whether the degree of unity that can be claimed and whether harmonization is feasible through replication of the research design developed in this study.

(2) Given the small nature of the samples used in the study, much larger samples replicating the methodologies applied in the study would be useful to augment the harmonization question in South Africa.

(3) The present study used students as informants due to their likely influential role in the future language roles and politics of their country. The findings have opened up more possibilities for studies with other population groups like parents, politicians, and policy-makers themselves.

(4) The mixed feelings shown in the qualitative responses (e.g., national unity versus loss of culture and identity) need closer scrutiny in much larger studies. These feelings show that there is a need for open discussions and clarifications on how national unity and cultural identity are not mutually exclusive with regard to development and functionality of mutually intelligible language varieties.

The aim of this study was to investigate the feasibility of harmonizing the orthographies of Sepedi, Setswana, and Sesotho, which were differentiated by missionary linguists in the 19th century. Different from other studies, the current study focused on actual language practices as represented in speech through focus group discussions and in writing through the reading comprehension task. Further, it involved the attitudes of speakers whose languages were proposed for the harmonization process. The main finding of the study is that these varieties of Sotho are mutually intelligible (in speech

and writing) to the extent that their harmonization could proceed without linguistic and attitudinal barriers. The favorable attitudes toward this project as evidenced by the participants' responses offered confidence that the student population, which will represent the adult community in the near future, approves of the merger of the Sotho orthographies. While some attitudinal problems were highlighted such as the fear of loss of culture and identity, arguments for national unity and development of the harmonization adventure sampled through the national anthem may prove strong as South Africa evolves into a leading Renaissance African state. It would seem that anything less than harmonization in future language planning would be a betrayal of the re-making of the African identities that were disinvented in the past through divide and rule policies. Apart from the economic reasons of reducing the number of languages and translation costs, and use of the harmonized form for education purposes, harmonization has political gains of uniting the people, who had a long history of ethno-linguistic divisions during the Apartheid era, through a common cultural means of expression. All things being equal, however, it is incumbent on the political will to make this linguistic renaissance a reality.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: INVITATION ADVERT

Participation in Sotho Research Project

Students who speak Sepedi, Setswana, and Sesotho are invited to participate in a research project as participants. The project involves filling of questionnaires written in any of the three languages. A small number of the participants will be selected to participate in the second phase of the project—focus group discussion, orange game, and reading comprehension. You must:-

- Be a native speaker of one of the three Sotho varieties

- Be a first year student on campus

-Be from NorthWest Province if you speak Setswana

-Be from Free State Province if you speak Sesotho

-Be from Limpopo Province if you speak Sepedi

If interested, come and enlist your name in office 7008, 6th floor New K-block.

Thank you

APPENDIX B: CONSENT FORM

This is a consent form regarding your participation in my research project entitled: **"Language harmonization in South Africa: Practices and attitudes of university students"**. The purpose of the study is to investigate the feasibility of harmonizing languages in the Sotho cluster (Sepedi, Setswana and Sesotho) into one written standard. The study focuses on the attitudes, beliefs and perceptions of the native speakers of the three language varieties and assesses the degree to which these varieties are mutually comprehensible. There are two phases of the study. The first one involves filling in a questionnaire and the second phase includes verbal interactions with speakers of other languages in the Sotho group, responding to reading passages, filling in a post-test questionnaire and participating in a final interview. You may be selected to participate in the second phase of the project. If you are selected, you will be asked to travel to Johannesburg (Wits University campus) to meet and interact with speakers from other Sotho language varieties. This will take place over a weekend (leaving your campus on Friday evening and returning on Sunday morning) for an estimated total of 36 hours. With funding from Compton Peace Fellowship, your transportation, 2-day hotel accommodation (single room) and meals for the entire duration will be paid for. Avis Rental car will be used for transportation, with travel insurance included for your return trip. All your verbal interactions during the focus group discussions and information gap activities will be video-recorded.

The estimated time requested for your participation in the first phase of the study is 30 minutes. Your participation is voluntary. You can withdraw from participation at any

point if you wish to do so and there will be no penalty resulting from your discontinuation. You are also free to respond to only parts of the research instruments that you wish.

Your personal information will be protected to the maximum extent allowable by law. All the videotaped data will be locked in a personal computer and the tapes will be destroyed after three months when necessary transcriptions are complete. The data you provide for the study will be treated with strict confidentiality and no identifying information will be used in the writing up of the dissertation. Please ask at any stage while you are filling in the questionnaire or participating in activities of the second phase. Your participation will not involve any additional costs to you or your health care insurer. If you have any questions or concerns regarding your rights as a study participant, or are dissatisfied at any time with any aspect of this study, you may contact Professor Peter Vasilenko, Chair of the University Committee on Research involving Human Subjects (UCRIHS), Michigan State University, by phone at (517) 355 2128 or fax (517) 432-4503, email ucrihs@msu.edu or mail: 202 Olds Hall, East Lansing, MI, 48824, USA.

Yours Sincerely,

Leketi Makalela

My contact information is:

Private Bag x 1106

Sovenga, 0727

Email: makalela@msu.edu

Cell: 0829608508

I voluntarily agree to participate in the study.

Signature…………………………..Date…………../…………../……………..

I also agree to have my verbal interactions video-recorded.

Signature……...…………..Date………../…………../………………

APPENDIX C: PRE-TEST QUESTIONNAIRE (English version)

Part I:

Please say whether you agree or disagree with these statements. There are no wrong or

right answers. Please be as truthful as possible. Put an **X** after **YES** if you agree or after

NO if you disagree with the statements 1-34:

 Example: English is an indigenous African language

> YES [.......] NO [...**X**....]

A. The multilingual policy

1. South Africa's multilingual policy that recognizes 11 official languages can promote

the use of indigenous African languages in public spheres.

> YES [.........] NO [.........]

2. I agree with the number of languages as outlined in the constitution (Sepedi,

 Setswana, Sesotho, IsiZulu, isiXhosa, isiNdebele, siSwati, Xitsonga, Tshivenda,

 English and Afrikaans).

> YES [.........] NO [.........]

3. Sotho language varieties (Sepedi, Setswana and Sesotho) should be grouped under one

 category for administrative and educational purposes.

> YES [........] NO [........]

4. Nguni language varieties (isiZulu, isiXhosa, isiNdebele, siSwati) should be grouped

under one category for administrative and educational purposes.

> YES [..........] NO [.........]

B. Use and attitudes toward Sotho languages

5. Sotho language varieties can be used as the media of instruction beyond primary school education.

    YES [......] NO [.......]

6. Sotho languages can be used for scientific and technological subjects

    YES [.......] NO [........]

7. Learning in my home language can improve my understanding the subject matter.

    YES [.........] NO [.........]

8. a. I am interested in learning Sepedi as a course at the university.

    YES [.........] NO [.........]

    Give reason for your answer:

....

....

  b. I am interested in learning Setswana as a course at the university.

    YES [..........] NO [.........]

Give reason for your answer:

....

....

  c. I am interested in learning Sesotho as a course at the university.

    YES [.........] NO [.........]

Give reason for your answer:

....

....

C. Mutual comprehensibility

9. Sotho languages have more similarities than they have differences

   YES [........] NO [.........]

10. I like watching the news or movies in other Sotho languages (other than my

    own).

    YES [.......] NO [.........]

11. a. I can understand when I listen to Sepedi (e.g., on TV)

    YES [........] NO [.........]

   b. I can understand when I listen to Setswana (e.g., on TV).

    YES [.........] NO [..........]

   c. I can understand when I listen to Sesotho (e.g., on TV).

    YES [..........] NO [..........]

12. a. I believe Sepedi speakers can understand when I use my own language.

    YES [.........] NO [..........]

   b. I believe Setswana speakers can understand when I use my own language.

    YES [........] NO [...........]

   c. I believe Sesotho speakers can understand when I use my own language.

    YES [........] NO [........]

13. Conversations among Sepedi, Setswana and Sesotho speakers can go on without

    major difficulties in understanding words or phrases used by speakers from all the

    languages.

    YES [.......] NO [........]

14. a. I will be able to understand most of the written words/ phrases used in Sepedi.

YES [........] NO [......]

b. I will be able to understand most of the written words/ phrases used in Setswana.

YES [.......] NO [.......]

c. I will be able to understand most of the written words/ phrases used in Sesotho.

YES [........] NO [.........]

D. Harmonization

15. Sepedi, Setswana and Sesotho very close that they can be treated as a single language.

YES [.......] NO [.........]

16. I think these languages can be unified in writing.

YES [.......] NO [........]

17. Sepedi, Setswana and Sesotho should be grouped in one TV channel.

YES [.........] NO [.........]

18. I will be happy to have Sepedi, Setswana and Sesotho unified in writing as in the national anthem.

YES [.........] NO [.........]

19. The Sotho version of the national anthem: *Morena boloka sechaba sa hesu* forms part of my home language.

YES [.........] NO [.........]

20. I will be able to understand the unified Sotho writing.

YES [.........] NO [.........]

21. Harmonized Sotho language can be used as a standard written variety among speakers of Sepedi, Setswana and Sesotho.

YES [.........] NO [.........]

Part II

21. There is a proposal to unify the written forms of Sepedi, Setswana and Sesotho for educational purposes. To what extent do you agree or disagree with this proposal? Give your answer and reasons for it below:

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

22. Can Sotho languages be used as the media of learning and teaching in higher levels of education? Please give your answer and reasons below:

_____

_____

_____

_____

____

23. Would it be easy for speakers of Sotho languages to read texts written in a harmonized Sotho language? Support your answer.

_____

_____

24. Do you think communication among the Sotho language speakers is possible, without translators? Give your answer and reasons thereof:

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

25. Would you be interested in having your language unified with languages in the Sotho group? Give your answer and reasons below:

_____

_____

_____

_____

26. Any other issues on uniting writing systems of the Sotho languages? Please use the space below (You can use the back side of the questionnaire if you need more space:

_____

_____

_____

_____

Part III

27. Age.......................years old

28. Gender: Male................... Female...........

29. Home language/s................./.......................

30. Other languages you that know:

........................,......................................,......................................

31. Years at university------------------(e.g., 2nd, 3rd)

33. I have been in contact with other Sotho language speakers

    YES [........] NO [.........]

34. Would you be willing to participate in the second phase of the study

    YES [..........] NO [..........]

Thank you for your participation!

APPENDIX D: POST-TEST QUESTIONNAIRE

Part I:

Please say whether you agree or disagree with these statements. There are no wrong or right answers. Please be as truthful as possible. Put X after YES if you agree or after NO if you disagree with the statements 1-32:

Example: English is an indigenous African language

YES ……. NO…**X**…..

A. Multilingual policy and language clustering

1. Indigenous African languages can be promoted through 11 official languages policy.

YES [……] NO [……]

2. We need to retain the policy of 11 official languages.

YES […….] NO […….]

3. Sotho language varieties (Sepedi, Setswana and Sesotho) should be grouped under one category for administrative and educational purposes.

YES [……..] NO [………]

4. Nguni language varieties (isiZulu, isiXhosa, isiNdebele, siSwati) should be grouped under one category for administrative and educational purposes.

YES [……….] NO […………

B. Use Sotho languages and their harmonized form as media of instruction

5. Sotho language varieties can be used as the media of instruction beyond primary school education.

YES [.......] NO [.......]

6. Sotho languages can be used for scientific and technological subjects

YES [......] NO [........]

7. Learning in my home language can improve my understanding the subject matter.

YES [......] NO [.......]

8. a. I am interested in learning Sepedi as a course at the university.

YES [.........] NO [.........]

Give reason for your answer:

....

....

b. I am interested in learning Setswana as a course at the university.

YES [.........] NO [.........]

Give reason for your answer:

....

....

c. I am interested in learning Sesotho as a course at the university.

YES [.........] NO [.........]

Give reason for your answer:

....

....

C. Mutual comprehensibility

9. Sotho languages have more similarities than they have differences

YES [.......] NO [........]

10. I like watching the news or movies in other Sotho languages (other than my

own).

YES [.......] NO [........]

11. a. I can understand when I listen to Sepedi

YES [.......] NO [........]

b. I can understand when I listen to Setswana

YES [........] NO [.........]

c. I can understand when I listen to Sesotho

YES [.........] NO [.........]

12. a. I believe Sepedi speakers can understand when I use my own language.

YES [.......] NO [......]

b. Setswana speakers can understand when I use my own language.

YES [.......] NO [......]

c. Sesotho speakers can understand when I use my own language.

YES [........] NO [......]

13. Conversations among Sepedi, Setswana and Sesotho speakers can go on without

major difficulties in understanding words or phrases used by speakers from all the

languages.

YES [.......] NO [.......]

14. a. I can understand most of the written words/ phrases used in Sepedi.

YES [........] NO [.........]

b. I can understand most of the written words/ phrases used in Setswana.

YES [.......] NO [.........]

c. I can understand most of the written words/ phrases used in Sesotho.

YES [......] NO [.........]

D. Harmonization

15. Sepedi, Setswana and Sesotho very close that they can be treated as a single language.

YES [........] NO [.........]

16. I think these languages can be unified in writing.

YES [........] NO [.......]

17. Sepedi, Setswana and Sesotho should be grouped in one TV channel.

YES [.......] NO [.........]

18. I will be happy to have Sepedi, Setswana and Sesotho unified in writing as in the

national anthem.

YES [.........] NO [.........]

19. The Sotho version of the national anthem: *Morena boloka sechaba sa hesu* forms part

of my home language.

YES [.........] NO [.........]

20. I will be able to understand the unified Sotho writing

YES [.........] NO [.........]

21. Harmonized Sotho language can be used as a standard written variety among speakers

of Sepedi, Setswana and Sesotho.

YES [.........] NO [.........]

Part II:

22. There is a proposal to unify the written forms of Sepedi, Setswana and Sesotho

for educational purposes. To what extent do you agree or disagree with this

proposal? Give your answer and reasons for it below:

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

23. Can Sotho languages be used as the media of learning and teaching in higher

levels of education? Please give your answer and reasons below:

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

24. Would it be easy for speakers of Sotho languages to read texts written in a

harmonized Sotho language? Support your answer.

_____

_____

_____

_____

25. Do you think communication among the Sotho language speakers is possible, without translators? Give your answer and reasons thereof:

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

26. Would you be interested in having your language unified with languages in the Sotho group? Give your answer and reasons below:

_____

_____

_____

_____

27. Any other issues on uniting Sotho languages? Please use the space below (You can use the back side of the questionnaire if you need more space:

_____

_____

_____

_____

Part III

28. Age.......................years old

29. Gender: Male................... Female...........

30. Home language/s................./.......................

31. Other languages you that you know:

……………,…………………………..,……………………………

32. Years at university------------------(e.g., 2nd, 3rd)

Thank you for your participation!

APPENDIX E: FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION (English translation)

1. Using your mother tongue, present your opinions about the (a) causes of ethnic stereotypes, (b) dangers of the stereotypes and (c) possible ways of resolving stereotypes in South Africa. Part (a) will be answered by Sepedi participants, (b) by Setswana and (c) by Sesotho mother tongue speakers.

2. You are expected to listen carefully when speakers from language varieties other than your own speak so that you can ask for clarification, agree and/or disagree with points raised.

3. Everyone should use his/her mother tongue for all communications on this subject.

APPENDIX F: INFORMATION GAP TASK (English translations)

a. Instructions for Sepedi participants

Your leader is dying of influenza and, as the traditional healer instructed, he needs this only remaining orange in the country to save his life. Negotiate with your Setswana and Sesotho counterparts so that they allow you to get the orange. Make your case and convince them why you, not them, should get the orange.

b. Instructions for Setswana participants:

Oranges have become extinct in the North West province. One of the farmers from Mabopane promised you that he can help multiply the number of oranges when and only if he could get the only remaining orange in the country. Negotiate with your Sepedi and Sesotho counterparts so that they allow you to get the orange. Make your case and convince them why you, not them, should get the orange.

c. Instructions for Sesotho Speakers

Your city, Phutaditshaba, is faced with drought and there's only one water engineer remaining for the whole city. But the engineer is very sick after he was thirsty for more than 7 days. The doctors recommmended that he gets an orange so that he can recover to continue with his water project to save the city. There is only one orange remaining in the country that you should get. Negotiate with your Setswana and Sepedi counterparts so

that they allow you to get the orange. Make your case and convince them why you, not them, should get the orange.

APPENDIX G: READING COMPREHENSION

Read each of the passages below and answer questions 1-6 under each. Encircle TRUE if you agree with the statements and FALSE if you do not.

Passage 1

Ke ngola tjena ke diphateng, ha ke na le motho ya ntlhokomelang. Pelo ya ka e dutla madi ka moo ke sa kgoneng le ho hlalosa, empa ha ke battle ho o tshwenya ka dillo tsa ka, hobane ke a tseba hore le wenn o na le mathata a hao. Hoja me a ne a sa ntse a phela, a ka be a na le nna ditsietsing tsena tseo ke leng hara tsona, a ntshedisa, moradi eo wa Phokeng.

Mohlomomg o tla ipotsa hore aubuti Molemi o kae ha ke le mathatheng a tjena. Tsa hae di ngata, ke tla o bolella tsona. Nka be ke o letsetsa, empa mohala ha e sale o kgaolwa ka kgwedi ya Phato, lemong seo re tswang ho sona (*Mangolo a nnake*, N.P Maake, 1999).

Questions (English translations)

1. Write the equivalent of "mohlomong" in your mother
   tongue...........................

2. The writer is sick

   TRUE.........FALSE..............

3. Why did the writer not call?...

4. What does mathatheng mean?...

5. The writer complains about another person.

TRUE ....FALSE................

6. Are there words you misunderstood? If yes, name them in the space below:

....

....

Passage 2

Mosong wa letsatsi le le latelang, Senatla o tsositswe ke Simone a kokota. Fa a bula

lebati a kopana le monko o o monate wa lengola, melodi ya dinonyane le medumo ya

diphologolo ka go farologana. Pelo ya gagwe ya be ya boela kwa Mafika.

Simone o ne a tla a phutheletse Senatla dijo tsa gagwe tse a lesetseng a di tsholetswe

go lalela. A tlhalosetsa tsala ya gagwe fa mmaagwe a letse a sa mo letla go tla go itisa le

bona. Senatla le ena a mmolelela thankga e a lesetseng a e duba ka Thabo.

Questions (English translations)

1. How did Simone wake Senatla up?...................................

2. When did the event take place?...................................

3. There were melodies of birds when Senatla got up.

TRUE.......FALSE..............

4. What is the word for "sun" in your mother tongue?

5. Senatla had troubles with Thabo

TRUE.........FALSE..............

7. Are there words you misunderstood? If yes, name them in the space below:

....

....

Passage 3

Taba ye e ile ya bonwa ke dikgalabje le di kgekolo tse di bego di setse di palelwa, di

sepela ka a mararo. Ba ile ba thoma go makala, baswa ba thoma go ba tlaba, ba ba ba

makatsa gore na mekgwa ye mebjalo ba e nyantse kae. Ka nnete taba ye ebe ele e kgolo

mo motseng wa Maune.

<u>Questions</u> (English translations)

1. What is the equivalent of the word "Taba" in your mother tongue?

2. What are the two classes of citizens who had to see through this trouble?

3. There is a conflict between the youth and the elderly.

   TRUE...........FALSE...............

4. What is the word for "at the country"?

5. The elderly had three feet

   TRUE..........FALSE

6. Are there words you misunderstood? If yes, name them in the space below:

....

....

Passage 4

I rile bugulugulu ga bo gu li mutlhanka ya bitswang Androcles, ya neng a etswi hampi thata ki mung wa gagwe, mmi a ikayelela gu ngwega. A tswa mo tlung ya mung wa gagwe a nanya, mmi a ipata mo murung o kgakala le mutsi wa Carthage oo ba agileng gu ona. Androcles a kgarakgats'heha murung nako e telle, mmi murago a fihla lihaheng le ligulu, ya ri ka hubani a fentswe ki mukgathala li tlala, a kena hu lona, a robala mmi a tluha a thulamela thata.

Androcles a tsuswa burokong ba gagwe ki hu puruma ha sibatana; mmi a mathela munyako wa lihaha, a kopana li tau e tuna i emi tsileng ya gagwe. A libella huri u tla gagautlhwa ki tau eu, mmi a ts'huha ha sibata sena si mu atamela ka bunolo si sa itshupi ha si li buhali

Questions (English translations):

7. The word bugulugulu means ....in your mother tongue.

8. Adrocles was asleep

   TRUE......FALSE..........

9. He saw an animal running into a mountain hideout.

   TRUE...........FALSE..............

10. The name of the animal is...............

11. The lion was dangerous

    TRUE......FALSE.........

12. Are there words you misunderstood? If yes, name them in the space below:

....

....

APPENDIX H: ORIGINAL QUESTIONNAIRES

A. SEPEDI QUESTIONNAIRE

SEŠOMIŠWA SA DINYAKIŠIŠO

I. Latlakala la dipotšišo tša pele ga molekwana

Seripa sa pele:

Kgetha ge e ba o a dumela goba o ganetša seo se ngwadilwego ka mo fase.Ga go karabo

e nepagetšego goba e fošagetšego.Bolela nnete ka mo o ka kgonago.Bontšha karabo ya

gago ka leswao la **X** morago ga ge o dumela goba o ganetša seo se ngwadilwego

mafokong 1-34:

Mohlala: English ke leleme leo le šomišwago kudu mo Afrika

       Ee[........] Aowa [...**X**....]

    A. Sengwalwa sa maleme a semolao le kgobokanyo ya wona.

1. Molaotheo wa Afrika-Borwa wo o amogelago tšhomišo ya maleme a lesome-tee o ka

hlatloša tšhomišo ya maleme a seAfrika mo mafapeng kamoka a setšhaba

       Ee [.........] Aowa [.........]

2. Ke dumela gore molaotheo o be le maleme a lesome-tee (Sepedi,Setswana, Sesotho,

IsiZulu, isiXhosa, isiNdebele, siSwati, Xitsonga, Tshivenda, English and Afrikaans).

       Ee [.........] Aowa [.........]

3. Maleme kamoka a Sesotho (Sepedi, Setswana and Sesotho)a swanetše go šomišwa

bjalo ka polelo e tee mo mabakeng a thuto.

Ee [........] Aowa [........]

4. Maleme a Nguni ka moka (isiZulu, isiXhosa, isiNdebele, siSwati)a swanetše go

šomišwa bjalo ka polelo e tee mo mabakeng a thuto.

Ee [..........] Aowa [.........]

B.Tšhomišo le maikutlo malebana le maleme a dithutong

5. Maleme kamoka a Sesotho a ka šomišwa bjalo ka maleme a tshedimošo(media of

instruction) ka godimo ga dithuto tša primary

Ee [......] Aowa [.......]

6. Maleme a sesotho a ka šomišwa go thuto tša mahlale le sethekgenolotši

Ee [.......] Aowa [........]

7. Go ithuta ka leleme la segagešo go ka kaonafatša kwešišo ya ka dithutong .

Ee [.........] Aowa [.........]

8. a. Ke na le kgahlego ya go ithuta Sepedi bjalo ka thuto kgetho unibesithing.

Ee [.........] Aowa [.........]

Efa lebaka go karabo ya gago:

....

....

b. Ke na le kgahlego ya go ithuta Setswana bjalo ka thuto kgetho unibesithi.

Ee [..........] Aowa [.........]

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Efa lebaka go karabo ya gago:

....

....

c. Ke na le kgahlego ya go ithuta Sesotho(Southern Sotho) unibesithi.

Ee [..........] Aowa [..........]

Efa lebaka go karabo ya gago:

....

....

C. Kwešišano ya maleme

9.Maleme ka moka(Sepedi,Setswana le Sesotho) a na le go swana kudu go feta phapano

ya o na .

Ee [.........] Aowa [.........]

10.Ke rata go lebelela ditaba goba di-movie tša maleme a mangwe a Sesotho (Setswana

le Sesotho).

Ee [........] Aowa [.........]

11. a.Ke kgona go kwešiša Sepedi ge ke se theeleditše (mohlala, TV)

Ee [.........]Aowa [.........]

b.Ke kgona go kwešiša Setswana ge ke se theeleditše (mohlala, TV).

Ee [.........] Aowa [..........]

c. Ke kgona go kwešiša Sesotho ge ke se theeleditše(mohlala., TV).

Ee [..........] Aowa [..........]

12. a. Ke a dumela gore baboledi ba Sepedi ba a kwešiša ge ke bolela polelo ya ka.

Ee [.........] Aowa [..........]

b. Ke a dumela gore baboledi ba Setswana ba a kwešiša ge ke bolela polelo ya ka .

Ee [.......] Aowa [..........]

c. Ke a dumela gore baboledi ba Sesotho ba a kwešiša ge ke bolela polelo ya ka.

Ee [.......] Aowa [.......]

13. Poledišano magareng ga Bapedi,Batswana,Basotho e ka tšwela pele ntle le ditšhitišo

goba kwešišano magareng ga baboledi ba dipolelo tšeo.

Ee [......] Aowa [.......]

14. a. Nka kgona go kwešiša polelo yeo e ngwadilwego ka Sepedi.

Ee [........] Aowa [......]

b. Nka kgona go kwešiša polelo yeo e ngwadilwego ka Setswana.

Ee [.......] Aowa[.......]

c. Nka kgona   go kwešiša polelo yeo e ngwadilwego ka Sesotho.

Ee [........] Aowa [.........]

D. Kopantšho ya maleme

5. Sepedi, Setswana le Sesotho ga di na phapano e kgolo,di ka šomišwa bjalo ka leleme le

tee.

Ee [........]Aowa [.........]

16. Ke dumela gore dipolelo tše di ka kopantšhwa tša be tša ngwalwa bjalo ka leleme le

le tee.

Ee [.......] Aowa [........]

17. Sepedi, Setswana and Sesotho di swanetše di tšwelepele go ba kanaleng e tee ya

thelebišene.

Ee [.........]Aowa [.........]

18. Nka thaba ge Sepedi,Setswana le Sesotho di ka kgomantšhwa ka go ngwalwa go

swana le ka moo di kopantšwego ka gona mo košeng ya setšhaba(National

anthem).

Ee [.........] Aowa [.........]

19. Temana ya go emela maleme a Sesotho(Sepedi,Setswana,Sesotho)mo košeng ya

setšhaba: *Morena boloka sechaba sa heso*"e bopa seripa sa leleme la segagešo.

Ee [.........] Aowa[.........]

20. Nka kgona go kwešiša sengwalwa sa Sesotho sa go hlangwa ka maleme a Sesotho ao

a kgomantšwego(unified Sotho languages).

Ee [.........] Aowa [.........]

21. Mongwalo wa Sesotho se hlakanego o ka šomišwa bjalo ka mongwalo wo o ka

šomišwago ke baboledi ba Sepedi,Setswana le Sesotho mo dikolong le

dingwalong(literature).

Ee[.........] Aowa [.........]

Karolo ya Bobedi

22. Go na le tšhišinyo ya go kopantšha mengwalo ya Sepedi,Setswana le Sesotho go ba

polelo e tee.Naa o a dumela goba o ganana le tšhišinyo e?E fa karabo le mabaka ka mo

fase :

_____

_____

_____

_____

23. Go ka kgonagala gore sesotho se kopantšwego se šomišwe bjalo ka leleme la

tshedimošo(medium of instruction) go ithuta le go ruta maemong a godimo a thuto?:Efa

karabo le mabaka a gona ka mo fase:

_____

_____

_____

_____

24. Go ka ba bonolo go diboledi tša maleme ao a Sesotho go bala dipuka tšeo di

ngwadilwego ka Sesotho seo se kopantšwego(harmonized sotho). Fahlela karabo ya

gago.

_____

_____

_____

_____

25. Naa o a dumela gore poledišano magareng ga diboledi tša Sepedi,Setswana,Sesotho

e a kgonega go sena ditoloki ? :Fahlela karabo ya gago

_____

_____

_____

_____

26. O ka rata go bona polelo ya gago e kopantšwe le maleme a mangwe a Sesotho:

_____

_____

_____

_____

27. Bolela se sengwe mabapi le kopanyo ya maleme a Sesotho.Šomiša sekgoba sa ka fase(O ka šomiša letlakala la ka morago ge o sa nyaka sekgoba)go fahlela:

_____

_____

_____

_____

Karolo ya boraro

28. Mengwaga.....................

29. Bong: Monna.................Mosadi..........

30. Leleme la geno................./......................

31. Maleme a mangwe a o a tsebago:

...................,...............................,............................

32. Mengwaga ya gago ya go ithuta----------------(mohlala., 2nd, 3rd)

33. Ke bile le dikgokaganyo le diboledi tše dingwe tša maleme a sesotho

Ee [.......] Aowa [........]

34. O ka rata go tšea karolo legatong labobedi

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Ee [.........] Aowa [.........]

Ke leboga ge le tšere karolo!

B. SETSWANA QUESTIONNAIRE

TLHATLHOBO YA NTLHA YA DIPOTSO

<u>Karolo I</u>

Ka kopo bua fa o dumelana kgotsa o ganetsana le metlhala e fa tlase. Ga go karabo e

siameng kgotsa e sa siamang. Leka go araba ka bonnete ka mo o ka kgonang. Baya

letshwao la **X** gaufi le Eya fa o dumelana kgotsa gaufi le Nyaa ga o ganetsana le metlhala

1-34

Sekao: Sekgoa ke puo e theilweng mo Afrika.

Eya[....] Nyaa[..**X** .]

A. Molao wa bontsi ba dipuo.

1. Molaotheo wa Africa Borwa, o amogetseng maleme a 11 a semmuso, o ka tlhabolola

tiriso ya maleme a theilweng mo Afrika Borwa go di dirisiwa mo phatlhalatseng.

Eya [....] Nyaa[....]

2. Ke dumela gore molaotheo o nne le dipuo tse 11 tsa semmuso. Re bua ka Sepedi,

Setswana, Sesotho, Isizulu, IsiXhosa, IsiNdebele, siSwati, Xitsonga, Tshivenda, English,

le Afrikaans.

Eya [....] Nyaa[....]

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3. Dipuo tsotlhe tsa Sesotho (Sepedi, Setswana, Sesotho) di tshwanelwa ke go ka dirisiwa jaaka puo e le nngwe mo mabakeng a metheo ya tsamaiso le a dithuto.

Eya [....] Nyaa[....]

4.Dipuo tsotlhe tsa SeNguni(isiZulu, isiXhosa,isiNdebele,siSwati) di tshwanelwa ke go jaaka puo e le nngwe mo mabakeng a metheo ya tsamaiso le a dithuto

Eya [....] Nyaa[....]

B. Tiriso le maitsholo kgatlhanong le dipuo tsa Sesotho.

5. Dipuo tsotlhe tsa Sesotho(Sepedi, Setswana, Sesotho) , di ka kgona go dirisiwa jaaka puo ya go ruta mo dikolong tse di kwa godimo tsa primary.

Eya [....] Nyaa[....]

6. Dipuo tsotlhe tsa Sesotho(Sepedi, Setswana, Sesotho) di ka dirisiwa mo dirutwaneng tsa Saince le tsa Theknoloji.

Eya [....] Nyaa[....]

7. Go ithuta ka puo ya gaetsho go ka tokafatsa kutlwisiso ya me mo serutwaneng se serileng.

Eya [....] Nyaa[....]

8.a.Ke eletsa go ithuta Sepedi jaaka serutwa kwa Univesiting.

Eya [....] Nyaa[....]

Fana ka mabaka

....

....

b. Ke eletsa go ithuta Setswana jaaka serutwa kwa Univesiting

Eya [....] Nyaa[....]

Fana ka mabaka.

....

....

c. Ke eletsa go ithuta Sesotho jaaka serutwa kwa Univesiting

Eya [....] Nyaa[....]

Fana ka mabaka.

....

....

C. Kamano e ikgethileng.

9. Dipuo tsotlhe tsa Sesotho (Sepedi, Setswana, Sesotho) di na le mo d itshwana gona go

le gontsi go na le mo difapanang gona.

Eya [....] Nyaa[....]

10. Ke itumella go lebelela dikgang kgotsa motsameko wa baesekopo ka dipuo tse

dinngwe tsa Sesotho (Sepedi,Sesotho).

Eya [....] Nyaa[....]

11.a. Nka utlwisisa fa nka reeditse Sepedi.

Eya [....] Nyaa[....]

b. Ke ya utlwisisa fa ke reeditse Setswana.

Eya [....] Nyaa[....]

c. Ke ya utlwisisa fa ke reeditse Sesotho.

Eya [....] Nyaa[....]

12.a.Ke dumela fa Mopedi a ka nkutlwisisa fa ke bua puo ya gaetsho.

Eya [....] Nyaa[....]

b.Ke dumela fa Motswana a ka nkutlwisisa fa ke bua puo ya gaetsho.

Eya [....] Nyaa[....]

c.Ke dumela fa Mosotho a ka nkutlwisisa fa ke bua puo ya gaetsho.

Eya [....] Nyaa[....]

13.Puisano magareng ga dibui tsa Setswana, Sesotho, Sepedi e ka kgona go tswella kwa ntle ga mathata a magolwane.

Eya[....] Nyaa[....]

14.a.Nka kgona go tlhaloganya bontsi ba mafoko/metlhala e e kwadilweng ka Sepedi.

Eya [....] Nyaa[....]

b. Nka kgona go tlhaloganya bontsi ba mafoko/metlhala e e a kwadilweng ka Setswana.

Eya [....] Nyaa[....]

c. Nka kgona go tlhaloganya bontsi ba mafoko/ metlhala e e kwadilweng ka Sesotho.

Eya[....] Nyaa[....]

D. Kopano.

15.Sepedi, Setswana, Sesotho di bapile mo ebileng di ka dirisiwa jaaka puo e le nngwe.

Eya [....] Nyaa[....]

16.Ke akanya gore dipuo tse di ka kopanngwa ka mokwalo,tsa dirisiwa jaaka puo e le nngwe

Eya [....] Nyaa[....]

17. Sepedi, Setswana, Sesotho di tshwanelwa ke go dirisiwa mo tšhaneleng ele ngwe ya Thelevišhini.

Eya [....] Nyaa[....]

18. Nka itumela fa Sepedi,Setswana,Sesotho di ka kopanngwa go kwala pina ya bosetšhaba.

Eya[....] Nyaa[....]

19. Temana ya dipuo tsotlhe Sesotho (Sepedi,Setswana,Sesotho) mo pineng ya bosetshaba:Morena boloka sechaba sa hesu ke karolo nngwe ya gaetsho.

Eya[....] Nyaa[....]

20.Nka kgona go tlhaloganya mokwalo o kopaneng wa dipuo dipuo tsotlhe tsa Sesotho.

Eya[....] Nyaa[....]

21.Go kopanngwa ga dipuo tsotlhe tsa Sesotho (Sepedi,Setswana,Sesotho) go ka dirisiwa jaaka mokwalo o utlwisisiwang ke dibui magareng ga dipuo tse(Sesotho,Sepedi,Setswana).

Eya [....] Nyaa[....]

Karolo II

22. Go na letshitshinyo ya gore Sepedi,Sesotho le Setswana di kopangwe go dira puo e le nngwe go ka dirisiwa mo mabakeng a dithuto. A o dumelana le yona kgotsa o ganetsana le yona tsitsinyo ee? Fana ka mabaka ka fa tlase.

_____

_____

_____

23.A dipuo tsotlhe tsa Sesotho(Sepedi,Setswana,Sesotho) di ka dirisiwa jaaka dipuo tsa

go ithuta le go tsibosa le go dirisiwa mo dikolong tse dikgolwane tsa dithuto? Fana ka

karabo le mabaka ka fa tlase

_____

_____

_____

_____

24.A go ka nna bonolo gore dibui tsa dipuo tsotlhe tsa Sesotho

(Sepedi,Setswana,Sesotho) go ka buisa temana ee kwadilweng ka go tlhakangwa ga puo

tsa Sesotho? Fana ka karabo le mabaka.

_____

_____

_____

_____

25.A o nagana gore puisano magareng ga dibui tsa Sesotho e ka kgonagala kwa ntle ga

toloki? Fa karabo le mabaka ka fa tlase.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

26. A o ka kgatlhega gore puo ya gago e ka kopangwa le dipuo tse dingwe tsa

Sesotho?Fana ka karabo le mabaka ka fa tlase.

_____

._____

_____

_____

_____

27. A go na le bothata mo kopanong e ya dipuo tsa Sesotho? Dirisa karolo e e

tlogetsweng ka fa tlase.(kgotsa o ka dirisa karolo e e kwa morago ya bukana e e go araba

dipotso fa o tlhoka go ka kwala go le gontsi.

_____

_____

_____

_____

Karolo III

28.Dingwaga tsa gago....................

29.Bong:Bonna............ Botshadi..............

30.Dipuo/puo tsa gaeno...

31.Dipuo tse dingwe tseo o diitseng:

....

32.Dingwaga tsagago mo Univesiting.................(sekao,2nd ,3rd)

33.Ke ntse ke kopana le dibui tse dingwe tsa dipuo tsa Sesotho.

Eya[....] Nyaa[....]

34. A o ka eletsa go tsaya karolo gape mo nakong e tlang ya thuto e.

Eya[....] Nyaa[....]

Re lebogela tirisano mmoho ya hao!

C. SESOTHO QUESTIONNAIRE

TOKOMANE YA DIPATLISISO (I)

KAROLO YA I:

Bolela hore o ya dumela kapa tjhe.Ha ho karabo e nepahetseng kapa e fosahetseng.Ka

kopo hle tshepahala.Beha letshwao la **X** ka pela E ha o dumela kapa TJHE ha o sa

dumele, ho tloha potsong ya 1-34.

Mohlala: English ke puo ya MaAfrika

E[.......] TJHE [...**X**....]

A. Molao wa maleme a mangata

1. Molao wa Afrika Borwa wa dipuo tse fapafapaneng,o amohetseng dipuo tse leshome

le motso o le mong o ka phahamisa tshebediso ya dipuo tsa batho ba batsho.

E [.........] TJHE [.........]

2. Ke dumellana le palo ya dipuo tse molaong tse hlahellang molaotheong wa naha
(Setswana, Sesotho,Sepedi,IsiZulu,IsiXhosa,IsiNdebele, siSwati,Xitsonga,Tshivenda,
English and Afrikaans).

E [.........] TJHE [.........]

3. Dipuo tsa Sesotho tse fapafapaneng (Sepedi,Setswana,Sesotho) di lokela ho etswa puo
e le nngwe molemong wa thuto.

E[........] TJHE [........]

4. Dipuo tsa Senguni (IsiZulu,Isixhosa,IsiNdebele,IsiSwati) di lokela ho etswa puo e le
nngwe bakeng sa thuto .

E [..........] TJHE [.........]

B. Tshebediso le mekgwa kgahlanong le puo tsa Sesotho.

5. Dipuo tsa Sesotho tse fapafapaneng di ka sebediswa ho feta thutong ya dikolo tsa
primary.

E [......] TJHE [.......]

6. Dipuo tsa Sesotho di ka sebediswa thutong tsa mahlale(science and technology)

E [.......] TJHE [........]

7. Ho ithuta ka puo ya heso ho ka nthusa ho utlwisisa dithuto tsa ka.

E [.........] TJHE [.........]

8. a. Nka thabela ho ithuta Sepedi jwalo ka enngwe ya dithuto university.

E [.........] TJHE [.........]

Fana ka lebaka ho tshehetsa karabo ya hao:

....

....

b. Nka thabela ho ithuta Setswana jwalo ka enngwe ya dithuto university.

E [..........] TJHE [.........]

Fana ka lebaka ho tshehetsa karabo ya hao:

....

....

c. Nka thabela ho ithuta Sesotho jwalo ka enngwe ya dithuto university.

E [.........] TJHE [.........]

Fana ka lebaka ho tshehetsa karabo ya hao:

....

....

C. Kutlwisiso ya dipuo tse ding.

9. Kamano pakeng tsa puo tsa Sesotho e feta phapang pakeng tsa tsona.

E [.......] TJHE [........

10. Ke rata ho shebella ditaba le dipale tsa puo tse ding tsa Sesotho.

E [......] TJHE [........]

11. a. Ke a utlwisisa ha ke mametse Sepedi.

E [.......] TJHE[........]

b. Ke a utlwisisa ha ke mametse Setswana .

E [........] TJHE[.........]

c.Ke a utlwisisa ha ke mametse Sesotho.

E [.........] TJHE [.........]

12. a. Ke dumela hore batho ba buang Sepedi ba ka utlwisisa ha ke sebedisa puo ya ka.

E [........] TJHE [.........]

b. Ke dumela hore batho ba buang Setswana ba ka utlwisisa ha ke sebedisa puo ya ka.

E [.......] TJHE [..........]

c. Ke dumela hore batho ba buang Sesotho ba ka utlwisisa ha ke bua puo ya ka.

E [.......] TJHE [.......]

13. Moqoqo pakeng tsa batho ba buang Sepedi, Setswana le Sesotho o ka tswela pele ntle

ho mathata a kutlwisiso mahareng a batho ba buang dipuo tseo.

E [......] TJHE [.......]

14. a. Nka kgona ho utlwisisa boholo ba dipolelo tse ngodilweng ka Sepedi.

E [........] TJHE [......]

b. Nka kgona ho utlwisisa boholo ba dipolelo tse ngodilweng ka

Setswana.

E [.......] TJHE [.......]

c. Nka kgona ho utlwisisa boholo ba dipolelo tse ngodilweng ka Sesotho.

E[.......] TJHE [.......]

D. Kopantsho ya dipuo.

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15. Sepedi,Setswana le Sesotho di na le kamano e kgolo mme di lokelwa ho kopantshwa hoba puo e le nngwe.

E [.......] TJHE [.........]

16. Ke nahana hore puo tsena(Sepedi.Setswana le Sesotho) di ka ngolwa di kopantswe mmoho.

E [.......] TJHE [........]

17. Sepedi,Setswana le Sesotho di ka tswela pele ho ba kanaleng(channel) e le nngwe ya TV.

E [.........] TJHE [.........]

18. Nka thabela ha Sepedi,Setswana leSesotho di ka kopantshwa ha ho ngolwa pina ya setjhaba.

E [.........] TJHE [.........]

19. Seratswana se emetseng puo tsa Sesotho ho pina ya setjhaba: *Morena boloka setjhaba sa heso* .ke karolo ya puo ya heso.

E [.........] TJHE [.........

20. Ke tla utlwisisa puo ya sesotho e ngotsweng e kopantswe.

E [.........] TJHE [.........]

21. Puo ya Sesotho e kopantsweng e ka sebediswa boemong ba ho ngola hara batho ba buang Sepedi,Setswana le Sesotho.

E [.........]TJHE [.........]

KAROLO YA BOBEDI

22. Ho na le tlhahiso ya hore dipuo tsa Sesotho di kopantshwe e be puo e le nngwe.Hobaneng o

dumellana le taba e kapa hobaneng o hanana le yona ?Fana ka karabo le lebaka le e tshehetsang .

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

23. Na puo ya Sesotho e kopantsweng e ka sebediswa dibakeng tsa thuto e

phahameng(medium of instruction)?Fana ka karabo le lebaka le e tshehetsang.

_____

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_____

24. Na ho tlaba bobebe ho batho ba buang dipuo tsa Sesotho ho bala sengolwa se

ngodilweng ka puo ya Sesotho e kopantsweng?Tshehetsa karabo ya hao ka

lebaka.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

25. Na o nahana hore batho ba buang dipuo tsa Sesotho ba kgona ho bua mmoho ho

se toloko?Fana ka karabo le lebaka.

_____

_____

_____

_____

26. Na o ka thabela hore puo ya hao e kopantshwe le puo tse ding tsa Sesotho?Fana

ka karabo le lebaka.

_____

_____

_____

_____

27. Maikutlo a hao ke afe mabapi le taba e ya ho kopantshwa ha dipuo tsa Sesotho.

_____

_____

_____

_____

KAROLO YA BORARO

28. Dilemo tsa hao…………………..

29. Bong: Motona .... Motshehadi...........

30. Puo ya/ tsa lapeng:.................../......................

31. Puo tse ding tseo o di tsebang:

.......................,............................,............................

32. Selemo sa bokae university-----------------(mohlala, 2nd, 3rd)

33. Nkile ka qoqa le batho ba buang dipuo tse ding tsa Sesotho.

E[.......] TJHE[........]

34. Na o ka thabela ho nka karolo mokgahlelong wa bobedi wa thuto e?

E [.........] TJHE [.........]

Re lebohela tshebedisano mmoho ya hao!

APPENDIX I: MATCHED T-TEST TABLES

1. *Language Clustering on National Television*

Pairs	Pre-task	Post-task	D	D²
1	4	3	-1	1
2	2	3	1	1
3	2	1	-1	1
4	2	3	1	1
5	2	2	0	0
6	3	4	1	1
7	1	2	1	1
8	2	2	0	0
9	2	4	2	4
10	4	4	0	0
11	2	4	2	4
12	2	2	0	0
TOTALS	$\sum 28$ ($x'=2.3$)	$\sum 34$ ($x'=2.83$)	$\sum D$ 8	$\sum D^2$ 14

$T_{obs} = 2.12$, df=11, P< 0.05

2. Use of Sotho Language Varieties in Post-primary Education

Pairs	Pre-task	Post-task	D	D^2
1	5	5	0	
2	3	1	-2	4
3	6	5	-1	1
4	3	6	3	9
5	2	3	1	1
6	5	5	0	
7	2	3	1	1
8	4	4	0	
9	5	1	-4	16
10	1	0	-1	1
11	1	1	0	
12	5	1	-4	16
TOTALS	42 (x^1=3.5)	35 (x^2=2.9)	D= 5	ED^2= 49

T_{obs}= 1.07, df=11, P>0.05

3. Matched t- test on Mutual Intelligibility

Pairs	Pre-task	Post-task	D	D^2
1	11	12	1	1
2	11	12	1	1
3	8	12	4	16
4	10	12	2	4
5	10	12	2	4
6	11	11	0	
7	6	12	6	36
8	10	8	-2	4
9	8	11	3	9
10	7	9	2	4
11	9	12	3	9
12	7	12	5	25
TOTALS	108 (x^1=9)	135 (x^2=11.25)	D= 29	ED^2= 113

T_{obs}= 3. 58, df=11, P<0.05

4. Matched t- test for Harmonization

Pairs	Pre-task	Post-task	D	D^2
1	6	7	1	1
2	4	6	2	4
3	2	7	5	25
4	5	5	0	0
5	7	6	-1	1
6	6	7	1	1
7	3	5	2	4
8	6	7	1	1
9	2	5	3	9
10	5	5	0	0
11	6	7	1	1
12	4	6	2	4
TOTALS	56 (x^1=4.6)	71 (x^2=5.9)	D=17	ED^2= 51

T_{obs}= 3.14, df=11, P<0.05

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