

# CHAPTER ELEVEN

## Language Policy Considerations

As this service will focus on educational resource delivery amongst other functions, it is important to reflect briefly on language policy. This is particularly apparent when using broadcasting technologies as the range of languages possible for each radio or television programme is restricted by budget and airtime constraints.

### RELEVANT LANGUAGE POLICIES

There are several language policy processes developed for the country as a whole or specifically for education or broadcasting, from which this service could take guidance.

### THE SOUTH AFRICAN CONSTITUTION

The South African constitution – the supreme law in the country – has the following statements on language as part of its founding provisions:

- The official languages of the Republic are Sepedi, Sesotho, Setswana, siSwati, Tshivenda, Xitsonga, Afrikaans, English, isiNdebele, isiXhosa and isiZulu.
- 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;
- The national government and provincial governments may use any particular official languages for the purposes of government taking into account usage, practicality, expense, regional circumstances and the balance of needs and preferences of the population as a whole or in the province concerned; but the national government and each provincial government must use at least two official languages.<sup>1</sup>

The Bill of Rights enshrined in the constitution provides that ‘everyone has the right to use the language and to participate in the cultural life of their choice, but no one exercising these rights may do so in a manner inconsistent with any other provision of the Bill of Rights’.<sup>2</sup>

With regard to language issues in education the following is outlined:

Everyone has the right to receive education in the official languages of their choice in public education institutions where that education is reasonably practicable. In order to ensure the effective access to, and implementation of, this right, the state must consider all reasonable educational alternatives, including single medium institutions, taking into account -

- (a) equity;
- (b) practicability; and;

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<sup>1</sup> The Constitution of South Africa, Act 108 of 1996, Chapter One: Founding Provisions, p. 4.

<sup>2</sup> *ibid.* Chapter Two: Bill of Rights, p. 15

- (c) the need to redress the results of past racially discriminatory laws and practices.<sup>3</sup>

## EDUCATION POLICY

The founding provisions and rights pertaining to languages have been given concrete expression in language in education policy submitted by the Department of Education in July 1997. Three related policies are of relevance:

- Language in Education Policy in terms of Section 3(4)(m) of the National Education Policy Act, 1996 (Act 27 of 1996),
- The South African Schools Act; and
- Norms and Standards regarding Language Policy in terms of Section 6(1) of the South African Schools Act.

The main aims of the Ministry of Education's policy of language in education are:

- to promote full participation in society and the economy through equitable and meaningful access to education;
- to pursue the language policy most supportive of general conceptual growth amongst learners, and hence to establish additive multilingualism as an approach to language in education;
- to promote and develop all official languages;
- to support the teaching and learning of all other languages required by learners or used by communities in South Africa, including languages used for religious purposes, languages which are important for international trade and communication, and South African Sign Language, as well as Alternative and Augmentative Communication;
- to counter disadvantage resulting from different kinds of mismatches between home languages of learning and teaching; and
- to develop programs for the redress of previously disadvantaged languages.<sup>4</sup>

These aims should be used to guide the language policy of an educational technology network service. The policy also makes provision for the teaching languages as subjects in schools. As these differ for each grade, understanding these will also be useful to the service. The policy stipulates that in grade one and two, all learners shall take at least one language as a subject and from grade three onwards all learners shall take their languages of learning and teaching and at least one additional approved language<sup>5</sup> as subjects. Clear requirements for promotion through grades are also grade-specific and based on language requirements. For grades one to four, promotion is based on performance in mathematics and one language. In grades five to nine, at least one language must be passed, and, for grades ten to twelve, two languages must be passed with at least one at first language level and at least one of the two being an official language.

The South African Schools Act places the language issue in the hands of governing bodies. However in determining the language policy of the school, the governing body must take

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<sup>3</sup> *ibid.* Chapter Two: Bill of Rights, p. 14

<sup>4</sup> Department of Education (14 July 1997) Language in Education Policy.

<sup>5</sup> Approved languages indicates that valid or approved syllabuses at first or second language level have been approved and submitted by the Minister as national policy. (This includes all official languages as well as some additional languages approved for non-immigrant candidates - for example German First Language).

guidance from the Norms and Standards document which gives expression to the rights and duties of individuals, schools, and provincial departments in responding to these language policy provisions. Some of these are likely to be of relevance to planning a language policy for an educational broadcasting service. These are summarized as follows:

- Individual learners (or their parents on their behalf) must choose the language of teaching on application to a particular school;
- School Governing bodies must stipulate how the school will promote multi-lingualism by using more than one language of teaching and learning, and/or by offering additional languages fully-fledged subjects and/or by applying special immersion or language maintenance programmes or through other means approved by the provincial department.
- If less than 40 requests in grades one to six or less than 35 in grades seven to twelve are made for instruction in a language not already offered by a school, the provincial department will determine how to meet the needs of these learners. If the number of requests exceed these cut-off points, then it is considered reasonably practicable for the school to provide education in the language of teaching and learning requested.
- The provincial departments must keep a register of request by learners not accommodated by schools.
- Finally the document outlines further steps that can be taken by dissatisfied learners. These involve appeals to the MEC, approaching the Pan African Language Board, and referring disputes to the Arbitration Foundation of South Africa.<sup>6</sup>

## BROADCASTING POLICY

The White Paper on Broadcasting, released by the Department of Communications, is another useful source for guiding the language policy of the envisaged service. It is 'underpinned by constitutional principles of freedom of expression, equality, *equality of all languages*, multi-culturalism, choice and diversity within a framework of national unity'.<sup>7</sup> Besides this key principle of equality of language, the issue of language is raised for private broadcasting licensing conditions and when digital convergence and multimedia and focused on:

(the) policy calls for the imposition of specific broadcasting licence conditions on private broadcasters to make a contribution either through programming or funding of educational and information programmes, the production of South African programme material, *promotion of all languages* and the multi-cultural nature of our society.<sup>8</sup>

Chapter seven of the policy focuses on digital convergence and multimedia, where multi-channel delivery systems are proposed. It is suggested that such services could play a significant role in meeting the goal of 'diversity in programme content and services in all official languages'.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Condensed from *Norms and Standards Regarding Language Policy*, published in Terms of Section 6(1) of the South African Schools Act, 1996.

<sup>7</sup> White Paper on Broadcasting, (emphasis added)

[http://www.polity.org.za/govdocs/white\\_papers/broadcastingwp.html](http://www.polity.org.za/govdocs/white_papers/broadcastingwp.html)

<sup>8</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>9</sup> *ibid.*

## SOUTH AFRICA'S LANGUAGE CONTEXT

### LANGUAGE DIVERSITY IN THE SOUTH AFRICAN POPULATION

South Africa has a rich language culture, with eleven official languages and most South Africans being conversant in numerous languages. There are notably patterns in the distribution of these languages across the country. The following table summarizes the country's home language spread across the provinces:

	Eastern Cape	Free State	Gauteng	Kwazulu-Natal	Mpumalanga	Northern Cape	Northern Province	North West	Western Cape	South Africa
Afrikaans	9.6	14.5	16.7	1.6	8.3	69.3	2.2	7.5	59.2	14.4
English	3.7	1.3	13	15.8	2	2.4	0.4	1	20.3	8.6
IsiNdebele	0	0.2	1.6	0	12.5	0	1.5	1.3	0.1	1.5
IsiXhosa	83.8	9.4	7.5	1.6	1.3	6.3	0.2	5.4	19.1	17.9
IsiZulu	0.4	4.8	21.5	79.8	25.4	0.3	0.7	2.5	0.1	22.9
Sepedi	0	0.2	9.5	0	10.5	0	52.7	4	0	9.2
Sesotho	2.2	62.1	13.1	0.5	3.2	0.9	1.1	5.1	0.4	7.7
SiSwati	0	0.1	1.3	0.1	30	0	1.2	0.5	0	2.5
Setswana	0	6.5	7.9	0	2.7	19.9	1.4	67.2	0.1	8.2
Tshivenda	0	0.1	1.4	0	0.1	0	15.5	0.4	0	2.2
Xitsonga	0	0.5	5.3	0	3.5	0	22.6	4.7	0	4.4
Other	0.2	0.3	1.3	0.5	0.4	0.8	0.3	0.5	0.6	0.6
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

This table, drawn from the most recently conducted national census, is read as follows. Of people in the Eastern Cape, the first column shows that 9.6% have Afrikaans as their home language, while 83.8% speak isiXhosa as a home language. It excludes people who did not specify their home language in the census. The table gives a clear indication of which languages are prominent in specific provinces. For example, in Kwazulu Natal, almost 80% of the population have isiZulu as a home language, and in the Eastern Cape more than 80% speak isiXhosa as home language. This can be used to guide the language policies of broadcast services, as it already is for both regional radio stations and regional television split broadcasts or special services. The table does not, however, give any indication of the distribution of home languages across the country or between provinces. This information is presented below.

	Eastern Cape	Free State	Gauteng	Kwazulu-Natal	Mpumalanga	Northern Cape	Northern Province	North West	Western Cape	South Africa
Afrikaans	10.3	6.5	20.9	2.3	4	9.9	1.9	4.3	39.8	100
English	6.7	1	27.4	38.1	1.6	0.6	0.6	1	23	100
IsiNdebele	0.2	0.8	19.6	0.2	59	0	12.4	7.3	0.5	100

	Eastern Cape	Free State	Gauteng	Kwazulu-Natal	Mpumalanga	Northern Cape	Northern Province	North West	Western Cape	South Africa
IsiXhosa	73	3.4	7.6	1.8	0.5	0.7	0.1	2.5	10.4	100
IsiZulu	0.3	1.4	17	72.4	7.7	0	0.4	0.9	0	100
Sepedi	0.1	0.1	18.6	0	7.9	0	69.6	3.6	0	100
Sesotho	4.5	52.4	30.7	1.5	2.9	0.2	1.8	5.5	0.5	100
SiSwati	0.1	0.4	9.1	0.7	82.3	0	5.6	1.7	0.1	100
Setswana	0	5.2	17.4	0.1	2.3	5	2.1	67.8	0.1	100
Tshivenda	0.1	0.2	11.4	0.1	0.4	0	86.5	1.4	0	100
Xitsonga	0	0.8	21.8	0.1	5.6	0	62.8	8.9	0	100
Unspecified	5.3	3.3	42.5	16.9	4.6	2.8	5.8	7.9	10.9	100
Other	9.8	4.2	23.4	21.1	6.4	2	14.7	5.5	12.8	100
Total	15.5	6.5	18.1	20.7	6.9	2.1	12.1	8.3	9.7	100

The table is read as follows: among Afrikaans speakers, the first row shows that 10% live in Eastern Cape, and 21% in Gauteng. It shows, for example, that, amongst IsiXhosa speakers, 73% live in Eastern Cape. Sentech have developed detailed maps to reflect the geographical distribution of speakers of South African languages. These have been generated from 1996 population estimates per district. The maps for Afrikaans, English, Isindebele, IsiXhosa, Isizulu, North Ndebele, North Sotho, Sesotho, Setswana, Siswati, Tshivenda, Xitsonga have been included for reference in appendix fifteen of this report. These can be compared to the geographical reach of each of the regional radio stations and television broadcast coverage patterns to guide the broadcast component of the educational service. Obviously, once investment into producing materials in several languages has been made ways of distributing these resources (like via audiocassette or via satellite download - as would be possible following the model described in the next chapter) should be exploited.

## LANGUAGE DIVERSITY IN SOUTH AFRICAN SCHOOLS

The language policy framework clearly allows for fairly substantial local variation in each schools response to language issues. As such, an educational technology network service will benefit from examining the most current data on language distribution in South African schools. The following table summarizes which languages are used as the medium of instruction in each province. The data has been compiled from that collected for the 1996 School Register of Needs survey. Schools were asked to list the medium(s) of instruction offered at the school<sup>10</sup>.

<sup>10</sup> Data compiled from The Education Foundation *National Schools Building Programme - Education DataSet*. Query run on each language with NAME count on schools, and cross-tab query generated by province.

Medium of Instruction <sup>11</sup>	Eastern Cape	Free State	Gauteng	Kwazulu - Natal	Mpumalanga	Northern Cape	Northern Province	North West	Western Cape	Total	Percent <sup>12</sup>
<i>English only</i> <sup>13</sup>	698	658	1128	1886	694	61	1581	483	215	7404	27%
English <sup>14</sup>	4451	2622	2085	4851	1827	212	1957	2216	1013	21234	77%
<i>Afrikaans only</i>	234	130	230	24	59	304	53	79	859	1972	7%
Afrikaans	466	272	308	164	176	319	61	617	904	3287	12%
<i>IsiXhosa only</i>	1227	1	6	12			5		6	1257	5%
IsiXhosa	1352	13	47	15		3	6	2	7	1445	5%
<i>Sesotho only</i>	3	122	33		4	943				1105	4%
Sesotho	3	124	41		11	947		1		1127	4%
<i>IsiZulu only</i>	1	9	30	366	55		8			469	2%
IsiZulu	1	38	101	368	107		26			641	2%
<i>Tshivenda only</i>							480			480	2%
Tshivenda							480			480	2%
<i>Sesotho sa Loboa only</i>			7		7		205			219	1%
Sesotho sa Loboa			17		29		224			270	1%
<i>Xitsonga only</i>			5				365			370	1%
Xitsonga			6				371			377	1%
<i>Setswana only</i>		8	8		13	15	87	122		253	1%
Setswana		8	9		13	15	87	123		255	1%
<i>Sitswati only</i>					8		44			52	0%
Sitswati					8		45			53	0%
<i>IsiNdebele only</i>					7					7	0%
IsiNdebele					8					8	0%

The question posed in the School Survey of Needs on medium of instruction allowed schools to submit more than one language. This table does not give an indication of common combinations of languages used at South African schools and in which provinces. It does indicate that English is frequently used in combination with other languages, because, while 27% of schools in the country reflected English as their only medium of instruction, 77% reflected English as one medium of instruction. Not surprisingly, therefore, of all the language combinations reflected, English features most prominently. The following table reflects the number of schools that reported combinations of languages as the medium of instruction:<sup>15</sup>

<sup>11</sup> The term 'medium of instruction' was used in this 1996 survey, however subsequent documentation issued by the Department of Education refers to 'language of teaching and learning' to denote the same concept.

<sup>12</sup> This represents the percentage of the total number of schools in the survey (27 577).

<sup>13</sup> These schools only chose only English as the medium of instruction and reflected no other language in responding to the question.

<sup>14</sup> The schools reflected either that English was the only medium of instruction (as for the row above) or that English was one of the mediums of instruction (For example the school may have reflected English & isiZulu or English & Seswati & Afrikaans when responding to the question).

<sup>15</sup> Data compiled from The Education Foundation *National Schools Building Programme - Education DataSet*. Cross-tab query run on MEDIUM and PROVINCE fields with NAME count on schools, and cross-tab query generated by province. Where fewer than 100 schools nationally reported a unique language combination these were discarded

Common Language Combinations	Eastern Cape	Free State	Gauteng	Kwazulu - Natal	Mpumalanga	Northern Cape	Northern Province	North West	Western Cape	Total
IsiXhosa & English	3187	51	187	119	75	21		5	180	3827
IsiZulu & English	19	126	112	2613	371		6			3247
Sesotho & English	5	1395	137		89	3	174	14	1	1818
Setswana & English		120	70		31	39	3	1127		1395
Afrikaans & English	212	92	240	84	63	70	9	43	571	1385
Afrikaans & Setswana & English		6	25		2	13		505		553
Siswati & English					273			1		274
Afrikaans & IsiXhosa & English	219	1	10			1		6	37	274
Afrikaans & IsiZulu & English		3	24	139	60					226
Xitsonga & English			17		1		133	1	1	153
Afrikaans & Sesotho & English	1	126	4					18	1	150
IsiXhosa & Sesotho & English	107	11	2					1	1	122

While the above data demands considered and careful use of generalizations about levels of language comprehension and practical use in South African schools, it may have some relevance for understanding the languages used by at least some teachers in each school.<sup>16</sup>

## CURRENT APPROACHES TO LANGUAGE IN BROADCASTING

One approach to the language policy of a new educational broadcasting service that is nested across the different public broadcast channels is to take guidance from the SABC's current approaches to language.

### SABC IN GENERAL

Chapter one of the White Paper on Broadcasting published in June 1998 devoted a chapter to describing the (then) current situation in broadcasting. This is what it notes regarding language:

The [current broadcasting] services are not inclusive of all South African languages and culture. English is the dominant language of broadcast in South Africa. All three SABC television channels offer a diet of programming which, until very recently, was mainly in English. English and Afrikaans radio services maintain the most extensive network and the most developed broadcasting service in the country. Private broadcasters, with the exception of a few new entrants who offer very little programming in marginalized languages, all offer programmes in English.<sup>17</sup>

<sup>16</sup> Data presented was gathered on the basis of teachers submitting responses to official documentation. They may reflect what is perceived to be expected or correct policy and not actual language practice. Separating primary and secondary schools for such analysis may also yield distinctly different trends.

<sup>17</sup> Chapter One of the White Paper on Broadcasting, describing the current situation in South African broadcasting. [http://www.polity.org.za/govdocs/white\\_papers/broadcastingwp.html](http://www.polity.org.za/govdocs/white_papers/broadcastingwp.html).

It goes on to state that:

South Africa now has eleven official languages. Many people who speak these languages are clearly not adequately served by the broadcasting system. The situation is compounded by the fact that while services in English increase, a major part of the South African society does not use English as a language of communication and interaction in daily life.

This remains a fairly accurate reflection of South African broadcasting in 1999, although there have been some shifts in policy approaches and revamping of SABC's television channels. The SABC has documented a policy position on language, in which it articulates its vision and values. Of most relevance to language is a commitment to a shared value of 'sensitivity to the diverse nature of South Africa and the need for justice and healing'.<sup>18</sup> The SABC's policy is based on the principles of the South African constitution, the IBA act and relevant legislation, and the corporation's own vision and values. This policy document commits the SABC to the following:

- Endeavouring to provide programming in all official languages to all parts of the country in which those languages are spoken by significant numbers of people;
- Treating all languages fairly and equitably (such treatment will find expression in the allocation of resources and in the programming of broadcasts in each language);
- Providing distinct and separate national radio services of equal quality for people speaking each of the 11 official languages, as part of the broader portfolio of public broadcasting radio services; and
- Providing a portfolio of television services, which, in combination, provide equitable programming in all 11 official languages.<sup>19</sup>

This commitment is aspired to within the constraints of, amongst others, financial viability, as is evident in the policy statement that 'the SABC will provide equitable services in all eleven official languages to the best of its ability, within the framework of financial and affordable parameters'.<sup>20</sup>

We now reflect on some recent development regarding language that have transpired at the SABC within this policy framework. Language issues remain on the agenda of the SABC, emerging in various ways for both radio and television. For example, a recent SABC internal publication reports that, in response to the need for language diversity and supporting indigenous languages, 'the SABC is going ahead with plans to establish a radio station for the San People'.<sup>21</sup> This seems to be in stages of investigation and planning, with proposals to establish such a station in the Kimberly area under consideration. Another edition of the publication also has an article devoted to language. Simon Tebele, regional manager of SABC in the Northern province, has recently written an article in which he expresses support for mother tongue public broadcasting. He states that:

Radio and television broadcasting in this country has, over the years, entrenched this ideal of transmission of information through these indigenous languages. This has become not only a principle, but a right, even today.<sup>22</sup>

As a final illustration that language is living issue for consideration at the broadcaster, concern about inequitable use of official languages on television was cited by Enoch Sithole (chief executive of news) as one reasons for merging the radio and television news crews into

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<sup>18</sup> South African Broadcasting Corporation, *Language Policy of the SABC*. (no date of publication is indicated)

<sup>19</sup> *ibid.* p. 7.

<sup>20</sup> *ibid.* p. 11.

<sup>21</sup> Phalatse, M.R (1999) *SABC to Add a Twelfth Language* in SABC Intercom 9-22 September.

<sup>22</sup> Tebele, S (1999) *African Languages: A Cultural Heritage* in SABC Intercom 9-22 September.

a bi-media newsroom. It is noted that ‘one of the matters of immediate concern for Enoch is that four official languages - Tshivenda, Sindibele, Siswati and xiTsonga – are not fully used nationally’.<sup>23</sup> He is quoted as saying: ‘Whatever the (language) problems, we have to address them and see that we use those (official) languages on our TV news as well’.

Language is slightly less complicated for SABC radio, as it has regional stations established in all official languages. For television, language issues are more complex, difficult to manage, and relate to the branding and programming scheduling of each of the three television channels. Each channel has at times been characterized (at least in part) by their language options. As Group Chief Executive of the SABC, Sisulu described the three channels as follows in 1997:

- SABC 1 will be a broad-based infotainment ‘network’ targeting younger English speaking and Ngugi speaking audiences with a lively mix of popular programming
- SABC 2 will be out purest public service channel, offering a diverse mix of family-oriented, factual and entertainment programming and serving the needs of Afrikaans and Sesotho language speakers.
- Finally, SABC 3 will target urban adults with a cosmopolitan mix of English language programming, emphasizing drama and news.<sup>24</sup>

This same speech presents some evidence of a shift in approach to language (at least for television):

We remain committed to language diversity, but we will focus more on using this diversity to broaden our appeal to audiences. We will, therefore significantly reduce the amount of multilingual programming - that is several languages within the same programme - as this is demonstrably not truly valued by audiences.<sup>25</sup>

The following year the descriptions of channels no longer made direct reference to language but retained notable similarities. In 1998, Molefe Mogatle, in responding to the pending launch of e-TV as a new competitor, described the more focused three SABC television channels as follows:

- SABC 1 will be a truly commercial, entertainment-focused channel which will be positioned for head-on challenges against other competitors. ‘The drive for this channel is profit. Programmes which are not profitable will be eliminated from the SABC 1 schedule. For the youth and young South Africa, SABC 1 offers trend-setting, provocative and sometimes even controversial entertainment’.
- SABC 2 will be a truly PBS [Public broadcasting service] - focused channel which is positioned to carry programming which demonstrates the channels care about educational and social issues, introducing Africa to South Africa and bringing alive in South African hearts an understanding of the African Renaissance. ‘SABC 2 is the only channel which empowers and uplifts all South Africans’
- SABC 3 is the channel which offers unrivalled news and actuality programming with an excellent mix of entertainment. ‘This will be the

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<sup>23</sup> Phalatse, M.R (1999) *Sithole spells out immediate plans for bi-media newsroom*, in SABC Intercom 22 April -5 May.

<sup>24</sup> Sisulu, Z (1998) *The renewal Strategy that will make us the finest in Africa* in SABC Intercom 22 August 1997.

<sup>25</sup> *ibid.* p. 8.

channel of choice, offering entertaining and insightful television for the cosmopolitan viewer'.<sup>26</sup>

When one analyses the current SABC schedule, it is clear that the language preferences originally articulated have been retained in the television channels, as the cursory programming analysis presented below indicates. The following table reflects the number of minutes of programming that indicate a language (other than English) in one week's schedule:<sup>27</sup>

Language	SABC1	SABC2	SABC3
Afrikaans		410	
IsiZulu	135		
Sepedi		150	
Setswana		5	
Sotho		215	
South Sotho		30	
Xhosa	165		

From this, one can infer that SABC1 remains a Ngugi (Xhosa and Zulu) platform, while SABC2 has a wider spread of languages (Afrikaans, Sepedi, South, South Sotho, and Setswana), and SABC3 is seemingly entirely English. We now reflect on the SABC's educational broadcasting units' approaches to language on radio and television.

## EDUCATIONAL RADIO

Currently, SABC Educational Radio makes educational materials available on ten regional radio stations. As such, they aim to make all radio programmes available in all official languages other than English.<sup>28</sup> Although this seems very equitable, when one considers the signal distribution of each of the regional language stations one realizes that the language distribution is restricted to specific geographical areas for each station. Based on Sentech maps of signal distribution for each radio station (included in appendix fifteen), the table below summarizes coverage of SABC's regional radio stations.

Language	Station	Coverage
Afrikaans	Radio Sonder Grense	All provinces with numerous gaps particularly in parts of the Northern Cape and western areas of North West
English	SA FM	As above
Isindebele	Ikwezi FM	Most of eastern part of Mpumalanga. Some AM

<sup>26</sup> Kojoana, L. (1998) *Television Division enters fight for viewers* in SABC Intercom 15-28 October.

<sup>27</sup> Data compiled from Mail&Guardian *Friday - The Guide*, television schedule, 8-14 October 1999. The length of programmes that reflected languages other English were summed to give a total in minutes for a weekly period. Multilingual programmes were excluded. Some programmes may not have had their languages reflected and as such, would not be reflected here.

<sup>28</sup> The reasons for excluding SA FM in the educational radio programme, is the nature of the station. Fakir Hassen reports that this channel has substantial educational broadcasting already which has a strong following and, as such, nationally commissioned programmes are not flighted on the station. The educational radio unit increasingly sees its role as working with station managers to ensure that educational radio programmes are flighted on all stations and integrated into the daily schedule - rather than producing programme nationally and using the regional stations for distribution. Appendix ten contains a detailed situational analysis of educational broadcasting in South Africa.

Language	Station	Coverage
		coverage in western parts of North West and Gauteng using Ga-rankuwa and Welgedacht existing AM coverage.
Isiswati	Lingwalagwala FM	Parts of Gauteng, Most of Mpulamalanga and spill-over coverage to parts of Northern province and North West bordering Gauteng
Isizulu	Ukhozi FM	Most of Kwazulu Natal and Gauteng, with spill-over into bordering areas of Free State and Mpumalanga
Sepedi	Thobela FM	Most of Northern Province and Gauteng, with spill-over coverage into bordering areas of Mpumalanga and North West.
Sesotho	Lesedi	Most of the central and eastern Free State, Gauteng and small isolated areas in Mpumalanga and Eastern Cape
Setswana	Motsweding	Most of North West and Gauteng, some parts of Northern Province, Free State and Northern Cape adjacent to North West.
Tshivenda	Phala Phala FM	Northern and central parts of the Northern Province and part of Gauteng.
Xhosa	Umhlobo Wenene	Most of the Eastern Cape, isolated parts of the Western Cape, North West, Gauteng, Free State and Northern Cape
Xitsonga	Monghana Lonene FM	Central and eastern parts of Northern Province, north eastern areas of Mpumalanga, parts of Gauteng with spill-over coverage into north east of North West.

Clearly, there is not currently equitable distribution of all official languages throughout the South Africa. Nevertheless, radio is in a good position to produce programmes in all eleven official languages and there are radio stations through which such resources can be distributed. Compared to video production, it is relatively cheap to translate and re-version radio programmes into different languages. Once programmes exist in a range of languages, copies of these can be distributed to sites falling outside of the station's reach via audiocassette distribution or satellite transmission. As such, the service should aim to make available audio programmes in all official languages wherever possible. Obviously, this will be determined by a case-by-case analysis of each programme and its target audience. For foundation and intermediate phase education, however, we would recommend strong consideration of producing radio programmes in all official languages. For programmes targeting further and higher education providers or learners, fewer languages could be considered.

At the same time as the existence of regional language-based radio stations has advantages for overcoming language difficulties, their rigid language policies also present some constraints for educational broadcasting. Many radio stations presently have a language policy that is fairly inflexible on the issue of broadcasting in languages other than the language of the station. Some station managers say that it is audiences who are unwilling to

hear languages other than the African language used on the station.<sup>29</sup> The issue of language use was explored in relation to the possibility of launching a school-based educational broadcasting service. We report some of the responses here as they are relevant to educational broadcasting generally. Most of the respondents, but not all, felt that this would be something fairly difficult to bring about, but that it was impossible to broadcast for schools unless English and other languages could be used for some of the time. The following quotations, from interviews with station managers of the radio stations, demonstrate some of these language complexities:

We could do English networks or hard content, such as geography, but the target audiences first need to be defined. (Ikwekwezi FM)

Most of our programmes currently take place in English. (Motsweding FM)

If we bring English into our radio station, it will be subject-related; if we have to teach maths in English we will be losing a lot of listeners because most are not educated. In the old era we had School Radio and tried to teach the children Afrikaans, English and biology, but I don't remember anyone writing in – there was no interaction. I don't think it will be right to teach them English on this radio station. Our children... once you give them English, they have a tendency of saying they did not hear well. It is important that they learn English, but I'm not sure if the station can play a role. (Ligwalagwala FM)

If the schools give biology in English and we do it in Tshivenda, we aren't doing anything. It can benefit the target audience by giving them the subject in the language which the schools are using – but this contradicts the station policy and it becomes a problem. As time goes on this kind of arrangement must be accommodated. It is important for kids to learn English as well. This is why a big exodus of children from townships to town – they want children to be taught proper English. We would be interested in broadcasting quality programmes on English language teaching. (Phalaphala FM)

In education we must be flexible – how will you define osmosis in Northern Sotho?. It is important to support kids to learn English. Communication and learning is what it is about. (Thobela FM)

## SABC EDUCATIONAL TELEVISION

As mentioned above, language issues take on a different level of complexity when considering television broadcasting. SABC television upholds a commitment to producing in a diverse range of South African languages, but is severely constrained by the financial implications of following through on this for all programming. Making alterations to a sound track of video material to accommodate a wider range of languages is costly and varies depending on video material. The following estimated costs were generated by the SABC during the planning stages of the SABC's school-based service:

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<sup>29</sup> These issues and observations pertaining to language use on radio stations have been collected during research conducted for a situational analysis of educational radio in South Africa, the full report of which has been appended as appendix ten of this report.

<b>Alteration to Sound Track</b>	<b>Initial Cost (per minute of footage)</b>
Add sub-titles	R 200
Redo voice-over	R 200
Redo voice-over, music and effects	R 300
Full-lip dubbing (documentary)	R 235
Full-lip dubbing (drama)	R 600
Semi-lip dubbing (plus music)	R 735

Clearly there are no repeat costs associated with altering a video sound track, as once the initial investment has been made the video can be broadcast more than once. On this financial basis, the language policy of a service – particularly for the television components – is going to be, at least in part, a pragmatic and financial decision.

Realizing the complexities of language issues in education and concerned about the impact and perceptions of language on the effectiveness of its educational programmes, the SABC's Educational Television unit commissioned research into a language and education broadcasting project.<sup>30</sup> The focus of this research was basically twofold:

- To understand audiences perceptions to use of different languages on educational television programming; and
- To understand the educational impact programmes in different languages have on the intended audiences.

The research focused on learners in grades one, five, and nine, and used existing educational television series with individual learners. The project confirmed common perceptions. While learners view English as a language of aspiration (they want to learn it and see it as valuable), their comprehension of the educational messages in television programmes is significantly better when a programme uses their home language than when the broadcast is in English.<sup>31</sup>

## RECOMMENDATIONS AND IMPLICATIONS FOR THE EDUCATIONAL TECHNOLOGY NETWORK SERVICE

With regard to the service's approach to language, we recommend *developing a set of guiding principles that are strongly based on the existing language policy commitments for the country, education and broadcasting areas*. The spirit of such a language policy is aptly captured in the relevant policy outlined above. Developing a formal policy position will in fact be a relatively easy task - far more complex will be the way in which the service responds and implements this in-principle commitment. It is to this aspect that we now turn our attention.

While the existing constraints of the public broadcaster for radio and television regarding language are important considerations - *the service remains driven by educational objectives and should therefore be guided first and foremost by the educational purpose of the resource produced to determine the language approach*. We therefore recommend a case-by-case analysis of language use depending on the planned broadcasting intervention. To demonstrate

<sup>30</sup> Paul Musker and Associates (December 1998) *Language and Education Broadcasting Project* for SABC Educational Television.

<sup>31</sup> This is the synthesis of the research findings offered by Nicola Galombic - Head of Educational Television. The research report should be consulted to consider the detail and nuance of its conclusions.

our rationale for a case-by-case approach we describe a few hypothetical examples of educational broadcasting initiatives:

*Example One: Educative Television Drama Series*

A high quality television drama is commissioned intended to shift attitudes of the general South African public. We already have good examples of successful interventions of this type with *Yizo Yizo* (focused on the culture of learning and teaching in schools) and *Soul City* (focusing on different health related issues like HIV/Aids and women abuse). For a drama to succeed the characters need to be believable. In part, the languages used must accurately reflect the languages used by the community it reflects or creates. As both of these, examples are set in urban township areas a mix of several languages used in urban townships is used. English subtitles accompany the African language dialogue. As television drama is expensive to produce, it is not financially viable to consider re-versioning dramas into several languages. The television programme is produced in a mix of the most widely spoken languages, and reflects the language mix of some of South Africa's urban areas. The accompanying radio programmes use a more diverse range of languages and are flighted on selected radio stations (this was the case for *Soul City* where radio dramas and produced inline with the themes focused on in the television series). Other support material (for example print) can be produced in several languages and distributed in the appropriate geographical regions.<sup>32</sup>

*Example 2: Matriculation revision and support materials using a range of media*

Currently there is a wealth of matriculation support materials available in South Africa. This takes various forms:

- printed booklets (revision and study guides, text books and past examination papers),
- television programmes (Take Five curriculum inserts and SABC Education's matric revision campaigns, Learning Channel subject revision)
- radio programmes (SABC Educational radio programmes flighted on ten regional stations on curriculum support, radio phone-ins for matriculants on public and commercial stations);
- web-based materials (Learning channel web and CD-Rom materials, Cyberschool Africa).

With the exception of some of the radio programmes flighted on regional stations, all of these materials use the languages in which most students are assessed. As such, materials are predominantly produced in English. As learners are expected to respond to their Matriculation examination in English (depending of course on provincial department's language policies - but all at least include English) and materials produced to support them in their preparation are therefore also in English.

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<sup>32</sup> Again using *Soul City* to illustrate, booklets were produced in at least three languages and distributed via identified support networks like clinics and schools or in newspapers. Production of additional booklets in more languages was limited by finances.

*Example 3: Materials produced to support language development in specific language areas.*

As indicated in the description of the language in education policy, learners can choose to focus on different language areas in their general education and training band. This refers learners at schools and Adult Basic Education and Training levels. For this example, clearly the materials produced need to be developed in the language being studied. Audio or video stories designed to relate to an easy reader for ABET mother tongue courses must be in that language. Similarly, materials for supporting SeSotho courses should predominantly be in Sesotho. Obviously the level of the target audience becomes a key consideration for language choices. Where learners are in foundation or ABET phases of the General Education and Training band of the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) the educational importance of producing materials in the home-languages of the learners is well recognized. As such, an educational service must strive to produce resources in as wide a range of languages as financially possible and recognize that failure to do so results in complete exclusion for large numbers of many learners.

*Example 4: Materials targeting teachers*

When producing materials targeting South African teachers (Educator Express on television, policy documents, departmental circulars, teacher education providers) basic English comprehension is usually assumed. We agree that this is probably appropriate in most cases (particularly for senior phase teachers). We would, however, recommend taking guidance from the relevant provincial departments of education in this regard, as levels of English competence vary for different groups of educators (according to geographical location, previous qualifications and experiences). Appropriate English language levels are therefore important, and some support materials or explanations in additional languages may be important (again multiple language production would be more likely for radio and print production as translation and re-versioning is less expensive).

*Example 5: E-mail communication and administration software*

National and provincial department officials will distribute e-mail communication and government circulars via the communications infrastructure in the official language(s) used by their respective departments. Obviously personal and administrative communication between teaching and learning sites cannot be policed, and would be determined by the users themselves. The administrative tools outlined for use at schools have a database structure, which would mean that the relative design costs of adapting the user interface to accommodate a range of official languages is negligible. The service could make a version available in English as a starting point – giving users an option to have additional language platforms developed as the software is refined, tested, and developed. As with the example above, the language choices made for software applications should be based on an understanding of target audience and purpose.

These examples not only illustrate the importance of adopting a case-by-case approach to language use, but highlight another of recommended principles. If broadcasts are viewed as a component of a mixed media educational intervention, different combinations of languages

can be used for different combinations of technologies, to increase language diversity and educational impact of an intervention.

Finally, we realize that compiling educational video and audio material for an educational service is – at least in initial phases – going to be guided by what is already available, thus making the languages of these existing resources the default language. This reality must influence the languages that are used for production of materials in the future. If there are large amounts of good quality materials available in certain language groups, new productions should seek to support other languages.

These principles exist in tension to one another and should not be seen as an ideal to which the service should strive, but rather representing a series of compromises which will have to be balanced together on a case-by-case basis. In summary, we recommend that:

- Language choices should be guided by the language policy commitments of the South African constitution, and related language policies in education (nationally and provincially) and broadcasting.
- Language choices should be made primarily on the educational objectives of the intervention.
- The target audience must be well understood in terms of levels of language competence for languages being considered.
- References, language, and images in the service must reflect the reality faced by most of the targeted educators and learners, and encourage use of resources to which they are likely to have access.
- References, language, and images in the service must reflect the reality faced by most South African communities, while incorporating the diversity of South African culture.

In order to implement this we offer the following practical guidelines:

- Consider the language for each technology to be used in an intervention in relation to the whole intervention, rather than focusing on the language of each technology individually.
- Seek to use less expensive technologies (like radio and print) as ways of widening the language platform of any intervention.
- When commissioning new resource production, seek to compensate for language biases resulting from the languages used in the available or acquired resources.
- Ensure that, where investment is made in creating resources in a range of languages, these are available, on request, via a range of technologies to South Africans in all geographical regions.<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> For example, if a radio programme is produced in Sepedi and broadcast on Thobela FM. audio copies of this programme should be available on audiocassette or for download via the Internet or Satellite for individuals requesting this programme either by people who have missed the broadcast or those who are situated in geographic regions outside Thobela FM's reach. Similarly, if printed materials are produced in range of languages to support a television series and distributed via newspapers, additional booklets should be available on request or downloadable via the Internet.