

# **UNIVERSITY OF CAPE TOWN**

## **EDUCATIONAL IMPLICATIONS OF NONSTANDARD VARIETIES OF XHOSA**

**DISSERTATION SUBMITTED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE  
REQUIREMENTS OF THE MASTER OF ARTS DEGREE**

**BY**

**NOMPUCUKO EURICA SIGCAU**

**SUPERVISOR : ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR D.S. GXILISHE**

**DATE SUBMITTED : APRIL 1998**

The copyright of this thesis vests in the author. No quotation from it or information derived from it is to be published without full acknowledgement of the source. The thesis is to be used for private study or non-commercial research purposes only.

Published by the University of Cape Town (UCT) in terms of the non-exclusive license granted to UCT by the author.

# CONTENTS

<b>1 - INTRODUCTION.....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>1.0 MOTIVATION.....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>1.1 THE PROBLEM.....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>1.2 THE AIMS OF THE STUDY.....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>1.3 SIGNIFICANCE.....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>1.4 HISTORICAL AND THEORETICAL ISSUES.....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>1.5 ORGANISATION OF THE STUDY.....</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>1.6 METHOD OF RESEARCH.....</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>1.7 REVIEW OF PREVIOUS RESEARCH.....</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>1.8 DEFINITIONS OF TERMS.....</b>	<b>16</b>
1.8.1 STANDARD AND NON-STANDARD.....	16
1.8.2 "VARIETY" AND "DIALECT".....	21
1.8.3 SPEECH COMMUNITY.....	24
1.8.4 BORROWING.....	25
1.8.5 LANGUAGE PLANNING.....	27
<b>CHAPTER TWO - LANGUAGE VARIATION.....</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>2.0 INTRODUCTION.....</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>2.1 LANGUAGE AND VARIATION.....</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>2.2 DEFINITION OF LANGUAGE VARIATION.....</b>	<b>33</b>
<b>2.3 CAUSES OF LANGUAGE VARIATION.....</b>	<b>33</b>
<b>2.4 ASPECT OF STANDARDIZATION.....</b>	<b>35</b>
2.4.1 IMPACT OF STANDARDIZATION ON VARIATION.....	36
2.4.2 PROBLEMS ASSOCIATED WITH STANDARDIZATION.....	38

2.4.3	XHOSA LITERATURE AND THE NOTION OF STANDARDIZATION .....	39
2.4.4	SOCIAL ASPECT OF STANDARDIZATION .....	41
2.5	<b>XHOSA DIALECTS</b> .....	<b>42</b>
2.5.1	XHOSA AND ITS VARIANTS .....	43
2.5.1.1	<i>Mpondomise Variant</i> .....	43
2.5.1.1.a	Phonetic Difference .....	43
2.5.1.1.b	Morphological Differences .....	44
2.5.1.2	<i>The Hlubi Variety</i> .....	46
2.5.1.3	<i>Bhaca Variant</i> .....	47
2.5.1.4	<i>Phondo Variant</i> .....	48
2.5.2	PRONUNCIATION .....	49
2.5.3	STYLE .....	50
2.6	<b>SOME OBSERVATION REGARDING INFLUENCE OF DIALECTS ON EDUCATION</b> .....	<b>51</b>
2.7	<b>FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE VARIATION</b> .....	<b>52</b>
2.8	<b>ATTITUDES TOWARDS LANGUAGE VARIETIES</b> .....	<b>55</b>
2.9	<b>CONCLUSION</b> .....	<b>57</b>
	<b>CHAPTER THREE - NONSTANDARD SPEECH AT SCHOOL</b> .....	<b>53</b>
3.0	<b>INTRODUCTION</b> .....	<b>53</b>
3.1	<b>DIALECTS</b> .....	<b>54</b>
3.2	<b>THE ATTITUDE OF NONSTANDARD LANGUAGE SPEAKERS TOWARDS THEIR LANGUAGE</b> 57	
3.3	<b>CONTRIBUTING FACTORS TOWARDS USE OF NONSTANDARD LANGUAGE VARIETIES IN THE CLASSROOM</b> .....	<b>59</b>
3.3.1	MULTILINGUALISM .....	59
3.3.2	AVAILABILITY OF XHOSA BOOKS .....	61
3.3.3	HIGH VALUE ATTACHED TO ENGLISH LANGUAGE .....	62
3.4	<b>THE REACTION OF EDUCATORS</b> .....	<b>63</b>
3.5	<b>THE EFFECT OF THE USE OF NONSTANDARD LANGUAGE VARIETIES LANGUAGE ON CHILDREN'S EDUCATION</b> .....	<b>65</b>

<b>3.6</b>	<b>CONCLUSION</b> .....	<b>67</b>
<b>CHAPTER IV - PROBLEMS OF THE USE OF NONSTANDARD LANGUAGE</b> .....		<b>68</b>
<b>4.0</b>	<b>INTRODUCTION</b> .....	<b>68</b>
<b>4.1</b>	<b>AIMS OF THE QUESTIONNAIRES AND INTERVIEW</b> .....	<b>68</b>
<b>4.2</b>	<b>HYPOTHESIS</b> .....	<b>69</b>
<b>4.3</b>	<b>DATA COLLECTION</b> .....	<b>69</b>
<b>4.4</b>	<b>PROCEDURE</b> .....	<b>71</b>
<b>4.5</b>	<b>ANALYSING LEARNERS' QUESTIONNAIRE RESPONSES</b> .....	<b>73</b>
4.5.1	XHOSA LANGUAGE IN THE CLASSROOM.....	74
4.5.2	ATTITUDES TOWARDS XHOSA AS A LANGUAGE.....	85
4.5.3	XHOSA DIALECTS.....	87
4.5.4	USE OF XHOSA IN GENERAL.....	88
<b>4.6</b>	<b>EDUCATORS' RESULTS</b> .....	<b>90</b>
4.6.1	TEACHING OF LANGUAGE GENERALLY.....	91
4.6.2	EDUCATORS' ATTITUDES TOWARDS NONSTANDARD VARIANTS.....	94
4.6.3	XHOSA DIALECTS.....	95
4.6.4	LANGUAGE INTERFERENCE.....	99
4.6.5	PERSONAL INFORMATION.....	101
4.6.5.1	Age.....	101
4.6.5.2	Gender.....	102
4.6.5.3	Home Language.....	102
<b>4.7</b>	<b>SUBJECT ADVISOR</b> .....	<b>103</b>
<b>4.8</b>	<b>LECTURER : UNIVERSITY OF CAPE TOWN</b> .....	<b>106</b>
<b>4.9</b>	<b>LANGUAGE SPECIALIST</b> .....	<b>108</b>
4.9.1	RESISTANCE.....	109
4.9.2	INFLUENCE OF OTHER LANGUAGES.....	109
4.9.3	PRESTIGE ACCORDED TO SOME LANGUAGE VARIETIES.....	110
4.9.4	BACKGROUND OF SPEAKERS.....	111
<b>4.10</b>	<b>CONCLUSION</b> .....	<b>113</b>

<b>CHAPTER FIVE - SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS .....</b>	<b>114</b>
<b>5.1 SUMMARY.....</b>	<b>114</b>
<b>5.2 CONCLUSIONS.....</b>	<b>115</b>
5.2.1 LITERATURE SURVEY .....	115
5.2.2 SURVEY RESULTS .....	116
5.2.2.1 <i>Learners' Problems</i> .....	116
5.2.2.2 <b>EDUCATORS</b> .....	118
5.2.2.3 <b>THE NON-TEACHING PARTICIPANTS</b> .....	118
<b>5.3 RECOMMENDATIONS.....</b>	<b>119</b>
5.3.1 EDUCATIONAL IMPLICATIONS .....	119
5.3.2 LANGUAGE PLANNING .....	122
5.3.3 FUTURE RESEARCH .....	123
<b>BIBLIOGRAPHY .....</b>	<b>124</b>

# **1 - INTRODUCTION**

## **1.0 MOTIVATION**

Between 1982 and 1992 I was employed as a teacher of Xhosa as a school subject to mother-tongue speakers at Zimele Junior Secondary School in Umtata. Although I was teaching Xhosa to first language speakers, I encountered some problems, the main one being that students used non-standard varieties of Xhosa when writing their compositions. The tendency to use nonstandard varieties of language was more frequent during oral lessons. Because my school was in an urban area which is multilingual, pupils tended to mix Xhosa with English, Afrikaans, as well as with other African languages, such as Sotho, Zulu, Ndebele. These languages were not accommodated during Xhosa lessons although they were spoken outside the classroom. Unfortunately this led to a high failure rate of the subject due to language interference. Those who came from rural areas performed better than their urban counterparts. It became apparent that the study of the educational implications of use of nonstandard varieties of Xhosa together with the negative attitude which the students show towards the language would throw light on this problem.

## **1.1 THE PROBLEM**

The language that the child uses in the classroom situation is different from that one he or she uses outside the classroom. The problem that is encountered by the child is that he is faced with two different situations, that is a school with a formal

standardized language, and the society with an informal non standardized one. The nonstandard language which the child brings to school from the environment is absolutely not accommodated. Educators and examiners also do not accept other dialects e.g. Phondo, Hlubi, Bhaca, Bomvana to the degree that they accept standard Xhosa. For these reasons this study investigates the problem of the use of nonstandard varieties compared to the use of standard varieties in the field of education.

## **1.2 THE AIMS OF THE STUDY**

This study aims :

- (i) to find out if language interference and language change would cause the students to fail Xhosa. The response of schools to this situation will be investigated and an attempt will be made to understand the dichotomy that exists in spoken and written Xhosa.
- (ii) to look at the implications on nonstandard Xhosa of sociolinguistic factors such as attitudes, language policies, communicative influence of the mass media, and language use in multilingual societies.
- (iii) to examine the effects of 'dialects' of Xhosa on standard Xhosa.
- (vi) to investigate the causes of this apparent lack of learners' interest towards learning Xhosa.
- (iv) to assess the contribution of language planners towards remedying the situation.

### **1.3 SIGNIFICANCE**

The research findings and conclusions emerging from this study can inform other researchers about the implications of nonstandard varieties in the teaching and learning of Xhosa. It is hoped that through its findings, educators and administrators will take note of the implications of nonstandard varieties and revise the syllabi accordingly if appropriate.

### **1.4 HISTORICAL AND THEORETICAL ISSUES**

Central Statistics (1996) estimated 6 million 659 thousand Xhosa speakers in South Africa. These Xhosa speakers live all over South Africa including the Eastern Cape, in major urban areas for example, Cape Town, Johannesburg, Port Elizabeth and East London. Before the arrival of the missionaries, there was no standard Xhosa. Standard Xhosa came about because Xhosa spoken in the regions of the Rharhabe and Gcaleka groups happened to be the first dialect with which the Missionaries came into contact, and so it was the dialect that went into print (Makalima 1982:72). Otherwise standard Xhosa was once a geographically localized dialect spoken by Rharhabe and Gcaleka groups with the same status as Phondo, Xesibe, Hlubi, Mpondomise and Bhaca. The writing of Rharhabe and Gcaleka dialects developed them into a language. The term "language" (Pride and Holmes 1979:97) is superordinate to "dialect". The contrast between "language" and "dialect" is a question of prestige, a language having prestige which a dialect lacks (Hudson 1980:32).

In this case one can conclude that the successive missionary authorities have

bolstered the status of Rharabe and Gcaleka dialects which resulted in the stigmatization of other dialects such as Phondo, Xesibe, Mpondomise, Thembu and Bomvana. On the other hand Sanders (1993) states that people oppose the terms "dialect" and "language" implying that dialects are "corrupt" versions of language. As far as he is concerned this is a misconception. He mentions that standard languages are as much dialects as any other sets of shared speech habits.

I seem to share the same view with Sanders (1993) when he states that the view that dialects are corrupt versions is a misconception because it is my opinion that if the missionaries had first come into contact with the Phondo or Xesibe language speakers, the standard Xhosa would be based on Phondo or Xesibe dialects by now. This brings us to the fact that there is no criteria that was set for a Xhosa standard, but it was a matter of which group was first contacted by the missionaries. Rharabe and Gcaleka dialects happened to be prestigious because of the missionaries who fixed their residence there (Nyamende 1994:203). The consequence of this was that the language was written down and used in schools which resulted in the stigmatization of other dialects in the field of education. This argument is supported by Nomlomo (1993:2) when she states that in the field of education language varieties which do not conform to the standard Xhosa "are labelled as dialectal or as deviations from the norm and therefore are stigmatised". In this regard I certainly do not see any reason why dialects are not accepted at school, because these are the languages that pupils use in their home environment. Seemingly the school is divorced from the home environment and this is against one of the basic didactic principles which states that a teacher should start from the

known to the unknown. As far as Xhosa is concerned the language that the child brings from home to school is not accommodated in the classroom but rejected. Linguistic forms or dialects that do not conform to the norm of the standard Xhosa are often called nonstandard (Hudson 1980:34).

Besides the dialects that we have mentioned above such as Phondo, Xesibe, Mpondomise, Thembu and Bomvana which are regarded as deviations from the norm, there are other Xhosa varieties which are also regarded as nonstandard.

These are the varieties which come into existence because of code-switching and code-mixing. Both concepts are the products of cultural contact between the amaXhosa, Whites and other Africans. Thipa (1989) indicates that code-switching and code-mixing are mostly noticed in urban areas where multilingualism exists on a large scale.

Thipa (1989:181) also mentions that:

*There is a broad spectrum of linguistic variation of Xhosa. Speakers have alternatives at their disposal and make their choice from available alternatives. It is such alternatives which make language planning possible. It is against the background of such alternatives that language planning has to take place. The content and method of language teaching also has to reckon with these alternatives (Thipa 1989:181).*

Paulston (1987:14) shares the same view as Thipa (1989) when arguing that schools and schooling can facilitate existing social trends, but cannot be successful counters to social and economic forces.

Maake (1994:118) on the other hand feels that there should be free use of language without stigma to express ideas. Williams (1992:145) also mentions that:

*There is no reason why any variety of language is preferable or superior to another linguistic terms.*

William (1980:XIV) on the other hand argues that:

*To disparage any distinctive feature of a dialect, social or geographical is to disparage and thereby reject the values and accomplishments of the speakers who use those forms.*

The above statements seemingly argue against the stigmatization of other dialects because they do not conform to the rules of the standard language. I strongly agree with the above researchers because I feel that the stigmatization of nonstandard varieties of Xhosa may affect children's scholastic performance. Children who use their own individual versions of the standard language, i.e. their own accent, spelling and even lexical borrowing are penalised and it is unfair to punish children for a situation that is neither of their own making nor anything over which they have any control. This study investigates the implication of nonstandard varieties of Xhosa in the field of education.

Kruger (1982:42) makes a good argument as he states that the approach to language study is undergoing change. Besides grammatical or structural systems, attention is being paid to socio-cultural context and to the conversational situation. He goes on to state that:

*The practical knowledge of a language is not based solely on the knowledge concerning the structure of the language, but also on socio-cultural knowledge on insight into the situation between speaker and listener and on the language competence and proficiency in every dialogue between people in order to grasp the semantic content clearly and unambiguously (Kruger 1982:42).*

Kruger (1982) also points out that actual research should be undertaken into the communication situation between Black and White in the Republic of South Africa. He further argues that institutions such as Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC), Radio and TV, Department of Education and Training as well as Language Planners can play an important role in this regard.

Supporting Kruger (1982) this study suggests that standard Xhosa should allow at least some degree of variation, especially in spoken form. It is as a result of the influence of the above arguments that this study investigates the educational implications of the nonstandard varieties of Xhosa.

### **1.5 ORGANISATION OF THE STUDY**

This study will be made up of five chapters. Chapter one is introductory. I deal with the history of the standard and nonstandard varieties of Xhosa and some arguments based on stigmatization of certain languages. The aims of the study and the definition of some core terms are also included in this chapter.

Chapter two addresses the subject of non-standard language as a social issue. Consideration will be given to dialect, accent and style and also to attitudes towards

language varieties.

Chapter three looks at nonstandard speech at school, that is, general expectations, teachers' views of nonstandard varieties, teachers' attitudes towards nonstandard Xhosa speakers and the educational treatment of nonstandard language.

Chapter four deals with the research findings on the contributions made by the respondents.

Chapter five involves summary, conclusions and future directions.

## **1.6 METHOD OF RESEARCH**

Standard 10 students learning Xhosa as their first language were interviewed on matters relating to the teaching and learning of Xhosa. In order to establish means to solve the problem under scrutiny, Xhosa teachers, teacher-trainees, lecturers, subject advisors, education planners and other informed people in the teaching of Xhosa were approached for their views on matters involving the implications of nonstandard varieties of Xhosa in the field of education. Questionnaires were set whereby the respondents answered and expressed their views on matters pertaining to the use of nonstandard varieties of Xhosa instead of the use of standard language in the field of education. Documents from the Department of Education such as syllabus and mark lists as well as other relevant documents from the sociolinguistic section of the HRSC will be used as sources of information.

## **1.7 REVIEW OF PREVIOUS RESEARCH**

The study of African languages has concentrated on literature and theoretical linguistics. Little has been done on applied linguistics especially on sociolinguistics. Kruger (1982) for instance already researched language communication in Black-White contact in the Eastern Cape Industries with special reference to isiXhosa as the language medium. His study investigated the type of language communication used between Blacks and White labourers, on one hand, and between White monitors and Black labourers, on the other, in the Industries of the Eastern Cape, specifically in Port Elizabeth and its surroundings. This research project seems to be relevant in considering the dichotomy that exists in spoken and written Xhosa in the present study.

Makalima (1982) Masters thesis investigated into the educational implications of the development of Xhosa as a written medium from 1820 to 1950. His study is basically about the emergence of a standard Xhosa dialect. He also mentions that other dialects such as Phondo, Hlubi, Bhaca were not accepted by teachers and examiners, which is also the case in the present situation. The findings of Makalima will acquaint the present researcher with the role which was played by the missionaries in motivating Rharhabe and Gcaleka dialects to be written down which lead to the stigmatization of other dialects.

Thipa (1989) in his doctoral thesis investigated into differences between nonstandard rural and urban varieties. His study is essentially about the cause and result of language change. He points out that if language is part of culture, and if

culture is dynamic, language can equally be expected to be dynamic. If Thipa (1989) states that culture and language is subject to change, I see no reason why Xhosa syllabi should not also be dynamic and accommodate nonstandard varieties of Xhosa. Thipa's arguments will acquaint the present researcher with the effects of language change in Xhosa.

Msimang (1989) investigated into the phonological study of some aspects of Tekela Nguni dialects, found in Southern Africa. His study is basically concerned with the comparison of phonemes from a synchronic and diachronic angle. Six of such dialects had been identified inter alia: Swazi, which is found in Swaziland, KaNgwane and South-Eastern Transvaal, Bhaca found in Mount Frere and Umzimkhulu in the Transkei., Bhaca is one of the Xhosa dialects to be discussed in the present thesis. Therefore Msimang's study will be relevant in this study.

Nomlomo (1993) investigated into language variation in the Transkei, which has a predominantly a Xhosa speaking community. Her study examined language variation in the Transkeian Xhosa speech community and its influence on the education of the children of this geographical area. She also investigated into the impact of language variants spoken in Transkei on Children's education. Much emphasis was on the phonological differences between standard Xhosa and Xhosa dialects. Her study will be of use in the present research.

Swanepoel and Pieterse (1993) have a collection of articles which are about the future of African languages in South Africa. Swanepoel and Pieterse state that it is

not possible to turn the clock of creation back to zero, nor is it possible to reverse history to a point where the scramble for Africa never occurred (Swanepoel and Pieterse 1993). Therefore the existence of European languages side by side with indigenous African languages must be accepted as a fact. They highlight that any language policy must recognise the existing linguistic diversity in the country.

The information in this book will be relevant to the present study in respect of matters pertaining to language planning.

Maake (1994) states that the industrialised areas led to the inevitable mixing of people who spoke different African languages in churches, work places, social gatherings and other situations. A new generation of children was born which could identify with more than one language group. The information that is in this book will be relevant to this study in the consideration of language use in multilingual societies.

Although some of the researchers have pursued studies in sociolinguistic field, little research has been done on nonstandard varieties. To me, research into language variation in black communities would reveal language varieties spoken in these communities. It is predicted that the educational implications of nonstandard varieties of Xhosa would shed light on the issue of language use in these communities. The main aim is to find out whether the use of nonstandard varieties would harm learners' education.

## 1.8 DEFINITIONS OF TERMS

### 1.8.1 *Standard and non-standard*

Edwards (1979:76) defining the term "standard" says:

*The standard is the speech variety of a language community, which is legitimized as the obligatory norm for social intercourse on the strength of the interests of dominant forces in that society.*

By this Edwards means that a language becomes equal to other developed languages as a medium of communication. The dominant forces in the case of the development of the Xhosa language were the Missionaries. They were the people who motivated Xhosa language to be written down. Xhosa language as spoken in the Rharhabe area became a standard variety. It is used in the classroom situation. It is the language normally employed in writing, and is rewarded in examinations. The majority of children on the other hand are not mother tongue speakers of this particular language. These children have to learn to handle a new language on entering school.

Hudson (1980:33) on the other hand defines "standard" as follows:

*standard language is a somewhat impressive term, which refers to some socio-linguistically accepted features or characteristics.*

According to Hudson standard language will have to pass through the process of selection, codification, elaboration of function and acceptance.

SELECTION: A particular variety is selected and developed into a standard language. This

*usually provides a prestigious status to the variety, and is used in institutions such as parliament, school, church and media.*

CODIFICATION: The linguistic features of such a variety must be written down in dictionaries, grammatical forms, handbooks of terminology and orthography.

ACCEPTANCE: The community has to accept the variety as its national language. Once this has happened, the standard language serves as a unifying force of the state (Hudson 1980:33).

Looking at the above characteristics of standard language Rharhabe and Gcaleka Xhosa dialects qualify to be a standard language. They are more prestigious than other Xhosa dialects. Their functions are embraced with reverence, language loyalty, that other dialects do not enjoy (Pride and Holmes 1979:103). Their grammatical forms are described in textbooks, grammars, dictionaries and manuals of phonetics. Standard Xhosa exists in two media: it has a spoken and written form. It is also the linguistic variety taught in schools, and the variety which native speakers of other languages learn as a second language.

Crystal (1992:366) seems to share the same view with Hudson as he defines standard language as:

*A prestige variety of languages used within a speech community, providing an institutionalised norm for such purposes as the media and language teaching.*

Fishman (1972:18) also mentions that standard language must be a codified form of language, which is accepted by and serving as a model to a larger speech community.

Montgomery (1986) is of the opinion that the establishment of a standard language has a clear advantage in terms of mutual intelligibility, but it also leads to a situation in which the standardized variety exerts pressure of a norm on the groups within varieties. For instance a child who learns standard language improves his or her chances for success in education, social mobility and employment whilst a child who does not, can be disadvantaged (Williams (1980:XII)).

Nonstandard languages differ from standard in their manner of acquisition and their specialised functional roles. Nonstandard languages are learned as first language at home, through intensive everyday contacts. Standard languages can only be acquired formally at school or in adult literacy classes (Mansour 1993:85). According to Pride and Holmes (1979:103) nonstandard language cannot perform functions that a standard one can perform in a society. It can only be used in that particular local tribe or village, whilst Corson (1994:273) argues that standard language is something agreed to as a medium all forms of communication.

The difference between standard and nonstandard varieties according to Sanders (1993:57) is not only a linguistic one, but also has to do with social status. He states

that a dialect that acts, as the standard language for a given speech community is one that has for purely accidental historical reasons become prestigious within the speech community. "As a social norm ...dialect is a language that is excluded from polite society (Sanders 1993:57). If we can relate Sanders' argument to a Xhosa context one may notice that before the arrival of missionaries in the Cape, Africans knew nothing about written texts. The literature that they knew was oral. In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries the Rharabe and Gcaleka dialects of Xhosa language became written through the motivation of missionaries (Andrzejewski 1985:544). This writing down of these Xhosa dialects gave them a status, which was different from that of other Xhosa dialects, that is a standardized variety. This indicates that the difference between standard and nonstandard Xhosa is not a linguistic one, but has to do with social status and that it has to incorporate linguistic aspect. This brings us to the question of who sets the standard, whose standard, what criteria is used for standardizing the language. These issues will be discussed in the following pages when dealing with standard language and nonstandard language at school.

Commenting about organisations that support standardization of African languages, Maake (1994:117) says:

*The two main institutions of control, the language Boards and the SABC, in their attempt to keep the languages 'pure' have set conservative standards which are not in keeping with the evolution of language in the new urban cultures. They served as instruments of control retarding the free development of expression, and constraining the content of the literature published and prescribed in schools.*

Maake goes on to mention that while those two institutions work in one direction, in most urban areas new "dialects", "codes" and "registers" had developed to such an extent that one would doubt any notion of "standard" version of any of the African languages (Maake 1994:117). I seem to agree with Maake because words like "isimokolo" (where liquor is sold), "ukujiya" (to tell lies), "ukurhayiza" (to make a mistake), "ukucisha" (to die) are linguistic terms which have found their way into urban Xhosa varieties. These are the varieties which children use when writing their compositions replacing the standard words like: ukwenza impazamo = ukurhayiza, ukufa = ukucisha, isimokolo = indlu ekuthengiswa kuyo utywala.

Romaine (1982) states that the frequency with which speakers use nonstandard linguistic features correlated with their socio- economic class. It has been found, for instance, that the frequency with which speakers use non-standard phonological features correlates with the type of social group in which speakers are involved (Thipa 1989). To give an example, nonstandard Xhosa varieties of speech in the Eastern Cape can be different from the one used in the Western Cape. People in Eastern Cape when referring to proposing love to someone use the word "ukuplita" whilst in the Western Cape the word "ukugqula" is used. If one talks about "inkromo" instead of "inkomo" he or she is associated with amaMpondo. Also if one speaks of "uba" instead of "ukuba" he is associated with amaHlubi. Also he/she can notice that most of these nonstandard words originate from other languages. For example "ukucisha" (to die) originates from Zulu, ioleyidi "old lady" from English and "isimokolo" from Afrikaans. This is not surprising because Thipa (1989) mentions that when two different cultures meet, borrowing has to be seen as some of cultural

behaviour, occurring in a specific cultural context. A child who uses the above nonstandard Xhosa words when writing a composition may be penalized and that would lead to examination and poor results.

To summarise, one can conclude that the term "standard" refers to a variety which has been accepted by the speech community as a supra-dialectal norm, and is possessed by mother tongue users. "Non-standard" refers to the variety that does not conform to the norm of the standard language. The standard language is a variety which is accepted in the classroom situation whilst the nonstandard is stigmatized educationally.

### **1.8.2 "Variety" and "dialect"**

The two terms "variety" and "dialect" are the terms that have been used in the definitions of standard and nonstandard varieties above in a way in which they seem to overlap. It is important for this study therefore to give a clear distinction of these terms and their relevance.

Williams (1980:XII) commenting on language varieties, states that speakers from the same place or the same social group usually display the distinct variety of a language called "dialect".

Crystal (1992:101) defines dialect as:

*A language variety in which the use of grammar and vocabulary identifies the regional and social background of the user.*

Cuddon (1979:185) defines dialect as: *a language or manner of speaking peculiar to an individual or class or region. Usually it belongs to a region.*

This means that a dialect differs from standard language.

Using Cuddon's assertions in the case of the Xhosa, it can be stated that Phondo, Xesibe, Hlubi, Bhaca and Mpondomise for example show great variation from standard Xhosa language. Sanders (1993:57) defines the term dialect as follows:

*In general the term 'dialect' refers to a 'shared' set of speech habits'. When speakers use the same lexical items, the same grammatical constructions and the same features of pronunciation, they are speaking the same dialect, and as a group they are in contrast to other groups of speakers who share different speech habits, who 'speak different dialects?.*

Taking the above definition into consideration one can conclude that "Phondo" is a dialect, and so is "Xesibe"and "Hlubi", Bhaca and also "rural varieties" and "urban varieties" are dialects.

Msimang (1989:4) argues that the term "dialect" is not worthwhile unless it relates to language. He states that when we speak of dialects, we normally have in mind dialects of a particular language. He uses the example of Xhosa language wherein we find all the lexical standard items from the Rharabe and Gcaleka dialects, but Xhosa in general also includes lexemes from Thembu, Bomvana, Xesibe and Mpondomise.

## " Variety"

Crystal (1992:409) defines "variety" as:

*any system of linguistic expression whose use is governed by situational variables such as regional, occupational, or social class factors.*

Looking at the above definitions of variety one can conclude that there is no clear distinction between "dialect" and "variety". But Thipa (1989:24) gives us another view about these terms as he says:

*a dialect may be a variety. But a variety, on the other hand, is not necessarily a dialect. For example, Bhaca, Hlubi, Mpondomise, Tembu, Ngqika Rharhabe and Bomvana are DIALECTS of Xhosa. However rural and urban are not dialects but varieties although they could also be loosely regarded as dialects.*

The present study will take Thipa's view when using the two terms "variety" and "dialect" in its text and will use "dialect" when referring to Xhosa dialects. But the terms overlap because, as Msimang (1989) has indicated above, if we speak of dialects we refer to a certain language and as such if we speak of varieties we also speak of varieties of a language.

To summarize one can mention that there are varieties of Xhosa which are nonstandard as well as Xhosa dialects which are also regarded as deviations from the norm. To make an example "ukuslayiza" (to run away), "ukusmaka" (to be need of), "urhayiza" (to make a mistake) are varieties of speech which deviate from the norm of standard Xhosa. Also Xhosa dialects such as Phondo, Bhaca, Xesibe and

Mpondomise are stigmatized in the field of education. The lexical items, grammatical constructions and the features of pronunciation of the above mentioned dialects are different from the lexemes and grammatical constructions of Xhosa. They are regarded as deviations from the norm which makes them nonstandard.

It can also be noticed that a dialect may be a variety, but a variety is not necessarily a dialect. Furthermore both terms "variety" and "dialect" are not worthwhile unless they are related to a standard language.

### **1.8.3 Speech community**

Fishman (1972:22) defining speech community says:

*a speech community is one, all of whose members share at least a single speech variety and the norms for its appropriate use.*

Lyons (1972:326) quoted by Hudson (1980:25) defines speech community as "all the people who use a given language or (dialect)".

Giglioli (1972:219) argues that speech varieties employed within speech community form a system, because they are related to a shared set of social norms.

This is the view shared by Montgomery (1986:134) when he mentions that in a speech community, all people share:

1. a language

2. common ways of using the language
3. common reactions and attitudes to the language
4. common social bonds.

The present researcher sees the term "speech community" as a misnomer as far as Xhosa language is concerned. The fact that the speech community shares at least a single speech variety and the norms for its appropriate use does not feature in Xhosa language. For example, the amaMpondo, amaXesibe, amaBhaca and the amaHlubi do not use the same variety as far as the spoken Xhosa is concerned, although one variety is used for written Xhosa. The above dialects do not share the same social set of norms as the speech community does. The definition that can be referred to Xhosa context is the one which is indicated by (Fishman 1972:25) when he argues that:

*a basic definitional property of speech communities is that they are not defined as communities of those who "speak the same language", but rather as communities set off by density of communication or by symbolic integration with respect to communicative competence regardless of the number of languages or varieties.*

As far as this definition is concerned Xhosa speakers are referred to as a speech community regardless of the variation that exists in Xhosa dialects.

#### **1.8.4 Borrowing**

Hudson (1980:58) sees the term "borrowing" as referring to an item which is taken

over lock, stock and barrel from one variety into another.

Crystal (1991:46) seems to agree with Hudson's definition as he defines "borrowing" as:

*The introduction of a word (or some other linguistic feature) from one language or dialect into another.*

He points out that such borrowing are usually referred to as loan words. Another term that is commonly used is "adoptive". To adopt according to the Concise Oxford Dictionary (1934:13) is:

*To take a (person) into a relationship he did not previously occupy, especially as one's child, take (idea etc) from someone else.*

Thipa (1989:39) argues that "to borrow" implies to possess an item momentarily. The item must then normally be returned to the sender. Thipa (1989) states that "borrowing" and "loan" words do not apply to language in which these terms are used. Words in language are borrowed permanently, without being returned back.

To sum up, one can mention that the term "borrowing" is a term which is popularly used in language and whose usage has come to be accepted, although its use is technical. Borrowed items in language are not returned back. For example Xhosa has borrowed a lot of words from Afrikaans and English languages. These words are not borrowed for a moment but are there permanently.

### **1.8.5 Language planning**

Fishman (1972:55) defines language planning as:

*the organised pursuit of solutions to language problems, typically at a national level.*

Fishman sees language planning as something which is concerned with the issues of nationalism, whilst Rubin (1993:4) views language planning as:

*deliberate language change....changes in the systems of a language code or speaking or both that are planned by organisations established for such purposes or given a mandate to fulfil such purposes.*

Herbert (1992:96) refers to language planning generally as he states that:

*generally language planning refers to efforts in a socio-political context to solve language problems, preferably on a long - term bases, by heeding the process of language change.*

Crystal (1992:220) defines language planning as:

*a deliberate, systematic, or theory based attempt to solve the communication problems of a community by studying its various languages or dialects, and developing an official language policy concerning their selection and use.*

Williams (1992:123) commenting on this issue of language planning seem to share the same view with Herbert (1992) and Crystal (1992) that language planning should

aim at solving problems which are due to language change. Williams (1992:123) states that the reasons for the lack of economic development in the non - western world accumulated from the absence of the cultural and social features which were evident from the 'modernised countries', and that if a systematic programme of social and cultural change was applied, then economic development would result. He argues that it is from this climate that language planning appeared as the practical side of the linguistic endeavour.

Considering the above view one can conclude that the objectives of the planners

Contact Olaf  
sho 021/6851479 or  
082/7160568 or  
to ir olaf@psipsy.uct.ac.za

the various social and cultural factors which are held

It is here that sociological theory becomes important, since the understanding of how and why language changes must, in the end be influenced by the theory that informs such an understanding (Williams (1992:123). It is with this understanding in mind that makes Swanepoel and Pieterse (1993:XII) highlight the view that:

*any language policy must recognise the existing linguistic diversity in the country. A number of speakers regard this diversity as one of cultural goods that should be accommodated in a language policy.*

From the above definitions and arguments it may be deduced that language planning is a theory which is based on the attempt to solve language problems arising from variation and language change. Language change sometimes is the result of contact between different cultures. For example, language changes in Xhosa community are the result of contact between Xhosa, foreign languages and

cultures. If culture changes as it indeed does, the language change becomes inevitable because language is an integral part of culture (Thipa 1989).

## **CHAPTER TWO - LANGUAGE VARIATION**

### **2.0 INTRODUCTION**

The task of descriptive sociology according to Fishman (1972:16) is to portray the general or normative patterns of language use within a speech community, so as to show the systematic nature of the alterations between one variety and another among individuals who share a repertoire of varieties. It is for this reason that this chapter attempts to clarify such varieties with special reference to Xhosa language. A concern of this chapter is language variation and the focus is on nonstandard varieties which differ from speaker to speaker, and from situation to situation on different occasions. The impact of these varieties on standard language will also be discussed.

### **2.1 LANGUAGE AND VARIATION**

Speakers do not use the same varieties for all purposes. They may shift from the use of language, in a dialect or style in a particular domain, to the use of another (Saville-Troike 1982:76). One can notice that within each community there is a variety of codes and ways of speaking available to its members. This includes all the varieties, dialects or styles used in a particular defined population (Gumperz 1977:114).

Each individual creates the systems for his verbal behaviour so that they shall resemble those of the group or groups with which from time to time he may wish to

be identified (Hudson 1980:27). These varieties according to Fishman (1972:23) can be specified by outsiders on the basis of phonological, lexical and grammatical differences that the varieties manifest. For example within the Xhosa community there is actually a great deal of variation in the way in which different people speak and use Xhosa. The amaMpondo, amaHlubi, amaXesibe and other Xhosa dialects are differentiated from each other by their language. The amaMpondo use the velar fricative ŋ when pronouncing **inkomo (an ox)** while the amaXhosa uses ŋ. The lexical difference is that there is an additional ɾ in isiMpondo which is not present in isiXhosa. The amaHlubi use the velar consonant ŋ when pronouncing **ubuhlanti** (a kraal) whilst the amaXhosa use bilibial implosive b.

Besides Xhosa dialects, there are other varieties which have developed within the Xhosa community such as Tsotsi-taal, isiShalambola and Fanakalo etc. These are the variants used as means of communication among multilingual communities and they are nonstandard.

Fishman (1972:16) mentions that speech varieties in a particular community can be differentiated between men and women, minors and adults, children and parents, and between leaders and followers. For example Xhosa women have a norm of using "hlonipha" language. To my knowledge ukhlonipha means not to use a word used by other people because such use would anger the ancestors. For example Madiba women when referring to ?irharha? (sour) use "Imhlababa".

When referring to ?imbiza? (pot), they say ?inteleko?. In this way they avoid using a word which would be pronounced the same way as their forefather's name. Also the youth have a tendency to use words like `ithayima' or `itopi' when referring to old people. This is a tendency which you will not find amongst old people as they usually speak their standard language especially in rural areas. Domains in which the standard language is used include formal situations like schools, churches, courts, governmental bureaucracy, and the press. In contrast to the formal situations, there are informal situations which comprise the home, playgrounds and the streets (Gumperz 1977:78). Because of different varieties which are used in different situations, speakers can communicate with each other in ways not understandable to outsiders (Gal 1979:130). Thus, systematic variation between speakers within the same context provides information about the aspects of the speaker's social identity that is social class, ethnic background and gender etc. Gal (1979:17) mentions that it is systematic changes in such choices that result in language shift and language change.

According to Labov (1963:75) a more complicated situation emerges when the social category and linguistic markers within that category are defined negatively, or even stigmatized by those who do not claim membership. Nonstandard Xhosa speakers are accorded low prestige in the eyes of those who do not use these forms (Nomlomo 1993:88). Argument involving this will be dealt with when dealing with the impact of standardization on variation in a later section.

## **2.2 DEFINITION OF LANGUAGE VARIATION**

Crystal (1992:409) sees variation as a system of linguistic expression whose use is governed by situational variables such as regional, occupational and social class factors. Reagan (1992:39) on the other hand refers to language variation as different ways of speaking and writing a particular language which may be different in phonology, syntax or lexicon of the language. These differences according to Nomlomo (1993:7) go hand in hand with differing degrees of access to material resources, knowledge and power. There are many factors which contribute to language variation. These factors are dealt with below.

## **2.3 CAUSES OF LANGUAGE VARIATION**

There are many aspects that can be mentioned as being the cause of language variation. Here I am going to mention a few. One can mention language change as the main aspect. Changes in language may be conscious when people realize that the changes are happening, and tend to encourage them. The consciousness according to Nomlomo (1993:37) is always towards a prestige language or away from a stigmatized one. The change can occur unconsciously when people concerned are not aware of the change. Such language change can be influenced by factors such as fashion, foreign influence and social needs (Atchinson 1991:9).

Trudgill (1975:14) sees language change as a phenomenon which is natural and inevitable. As we can see that in African societies people are always in a move in search of greener pastures, we can support Trudgill's argument that language

change is inevitable.

The other factor one can mention is language contact. No one who speaks a particular language can remain in close contact with all the other speakers of that language. Social and geographical barriers to communication as well as sheer distance mean that a change can start amongst speakers in a particular locality with which these speakers are in close contact. One can notice that South Africa is comprised of diverse multilingual communities. Monolingualism is rare in these communities (Lanham and Prinsloo 1978:29). Factors such as language contact, language shift, code-mixing and borrowing, language affect language change. It is indeed very often that distinct languages come into contact. The reason is the result of some historical processes such as immigration, emigration, invasion, conquest or trade (Downes 1984:30). To give an example, it has been mentioned in chapter one that Xhosa speakers migrate from rural areas to urban areas to work as well as to settle there. The urban areas to which Xhosa speakers migrate comprise of multilingual and multicultural communities. Such languages are African languages such as Sotho, Zulu, Tswana, Pedi, Ndebele and also English and Afrikaans. The phonology of these languages spoken in these communities is not the same as that of the Xhosa language. There are also extensive lexical and semantic dissimilarities between these languages and the Xhosa language. In such situations all sorts of compromises occur between various language speakers. For example "TSOTSI TAAL" and Fanakalo have been adopted by the youth as "Lingua-franca". Lingua-franca according to Heine (1970) refers to language which is being used as a means of communication among people of different languages. These types of speech are

found mostly in urban areas where there is an urgent requirement for communication across sharp ethnic and linguistic boundaries and the social conditions are right. According to Downes (1984) these are simplified but rule-governed varieties developed to facilitate the necessary communication.

It is apparent from the above discussions that in contact situations new language varieties are born. This is not surprising because Pütz (1994:111) sees language as a mediator of the possibility and reality of achieving understanding of and with others. He sees language being a protector from the horrors of isolated life.

#### **2.4 ASPECT OF STANDARDIZATION**

Once a language has been committed to writing and literacy it begins to spread, and the process of standardization comes into play (Hudson 1980:34). Standard language is defined by Garvin (1991:6) as the codified variety of a language that serves the multiple and complex communicative needs of a speech community that either has achieved modernization or has the desire of achieving it. Giles and Powesland (1975:16) see standard language as a language which is taught in schools and is regarded as in some sense false since it is not usually used by children as a medium for ordinary conversation. It is used only for written purposes and for formal occasions such as speeches and ritual performance (Giles and Powesland 1975:16).

Fishman (1970:10) points out that the formal acceptance of a standard variety of a language is usually advanced by such agencies as the government, the educational

system and the mass media.

One of the most important varieties of Xhosa is that language which is widely known as standard Xhosa. Standard Xhosa is the dialect used by most speakers who would consider themselves to be "educated". It is normally used in writing and on radio and television. Standard Xhosa is namely based on the dialects of Gcaleka and Rharabe ethnic groups (Lanham and Prinsloo 1978:33). Apart from these dialects, standard Xhosa is a variety accessible to speakers of various different dialects. It is the language shared by speakers of different regional and sociolectal varieties. In other words, the range of varieties covered by the umbrella of a standard may be big or small, but a standard always caters for speakers of different vernacular varieties, i.e. varieties spoken most naturally, with the least effort and monitoring. All varieties not qualifying as standard, are then by definition regarded as nonstandard (Van Wyk 1992:27).

#### ***2.4.1 Impact of Standardization on Variation***

The fact that standard enjoy higher status than nonstandard varieties has given rise to the myth in some societies that the standard language is inherently superior to nonstandard varieties and even that users of nonstandard varieties are, for that reason, also in some sense inferior. It is due to this attitude that the term sub-standard was previously used for nonstandard, implying an inferior status for anything but the standard (Van Wyk 1992:27).

Giles and Powesland (1975:12) argue that nonstandard dialect is not at all

"substandard" but merely a different variety of language, having its own complex and equally rich rule system. Arguments of this kind then suggest that a standard dialect has attained its prestige over other varieties on the basis of a cultural accident and that it is in fact no more sophisticated than nonstandard varieties of that language (Giles and Powesland 1975:12). They go on to mention that the social implications of the above statement should provide nonstandard dialect users with a more positive self image and identity and a feeling that their mode of communication is undeniably as pleasant and rich as the prestigious variety.

A school is used as a tool to guard against contamination of standard Xhosa. Teachers are the best people to influence standard language in schools because of the power that they have over the life chances of the children (Corson 1994:21). Corson also states that valuing nonstandard speech for teachers may be contrary to a professional lifetime of tacit prejudice. I agree with Corson because in Xhosa workshop that was held at I. D. Mkize Senior Secondary School in the Western Cape region on the 16 th July 1995, the subject advisor stressed the fact that teachers should not allow use of nonstandard language in class as the use would lead to language death.

Contrary to what the subject advisor was stressing, children's use of nonstandard language when writing compositions seem to be growing to a greater extent. A child would use **ukufrayisha** (to fry) instead of **ukuqhotsa**, **ukurobha** (to rob) instead of **ukumosha**, **ukujampa (to jump)** instead of **ukutsiba**. This use of nonstandard variety has a direct influence on the frequency of errors marked in students' written

work. The consequence of this is that nonstandard speakers become disadvantaged, inferior and even develop shame as Corson (1994:283) mentions. Looking at the above errors carefully one would notice that English linguistic forms have been taken over by Xhosa language. This is what Crystal (1991:36) calls lexical borrowing. To my knowledge there is no criteria that is set for borrowing to determine which words Xhosa speakers may borrow and not. The question that one would ask is, why do we accept words like **Juni** when there is a standard one which is **Isilimela**? Words like **i-presidanti** are used in the place of **umongameli** and **i-Profesa** instead of **injingalwazi** in the vocabulary of Xhosa. These are the issues which need to be clarified by the conservative language advisors when fighting against nonstandard Xhosa.

#### ***2.4.2 Problems Associated with Standardization***

David Corson (1994:273) uses the word "standard" in two broadly different but related senses. He sees standard language as a model of "excellence" and "correctness". By this he means that all people should use language in the same "correct" way whilst nonstandard varieties are regarded as incorrect.

Eastman (1994:14) has a problem in trying to find out what the correct form is. According to him what is "correct" for one person, is not going to be "correct" for someone else. He feels that there should be a great deal of tolerance about what is acceptable and what is appropriate from the perspective of language use (Eastman1994:14). The notion of correctness has created problems for speakers who do not always use a standard variety. They are regarded as people who lack

education (Corson 1994:278). Appel and Muyskey (1987:59) associate the nonstandard varieties with low economic educational achievement. Van Wyk (1992:27) supports this statement when he states that the nonstandard varieties are used for lower functions such as interaction by peer groups, families at home and by players and spectators on the playground. The use of these nonstandard varieties tends to hinder the progress of Xhosa pupils in the classroom situation. Because they are using these varieties in their homes they tend to use them also in school forgetting that they are in another situation. This means that there is a conflict between the language used at home and the language used in school. This study investigates the educational implications of nonstandard varieties of Xhosa.

#### ***2.4.3 Xhosa Literature and the Notion of Standardization***

Before the arrival of missionaries in the Cape, African societies were composed of primary oral cultures, that is cultures untouched by writing culture, with no knowledge whatsoever of writing or even of the possibility of writing (Finnegan 1997:16). African literature was composed of oral literature, a literature which was delivered from generation to generation by word of mouth (Okpewho 1984:42). Examples of this literature are riddles, folktales, proverbs, poetry and songs and idioms. Oral literature is entirely dependent on the performer and the audience. Without the two there is no literature. For example when a grandmother is telling a folktale, grandchildren become listeners or the audience. Sometimes she will sing and the audience do the same. Another example one would mention is that of a praise-singer. A praise-singer usually starts his poetry by saying Hoo. . . yi. . .na

Hoo. . . yi. . .na. By doing this he is inviting the audience to listen. In this case the audience is composed of specific community. The oral performance is educational because there is a message carried forward in each and every performance whether it's a folktale, a poem or a riddle. Informal schools became unpopular after the arrival of missionaries in the 18th centuries as they introduced written literature in African Societies (Nyamende 1994). They painted a bleak picture of Africans and their culture. One of them went on to say that:

*Inhabitants of Black lands are without reason, wit, skill and no experience of anything at all, they live like brute beasts without law or order (Wauther 1966:46).*

This statement made in the 16th century, is not true at all especially when we look at oral literature of African communities of those times.

For the missionaries communicative proficiency in the African languages was useful in so far as it would facilitate trade and the spreading of Christianity (Zotwana 1987:117). These missionaries got together, developed an orthography for the Gcaleka and Rharabe languages, wrote dictionaries and started developing school curricula in them. This is the usual model for standardizing a language. Because of time changes and modern technological changes, other aspects of continual language planning activity were necessary in order to keep the language up to date and useful. Because of these changes it became more useful for the amaXhosa to switch from using standard language to the use of other languages. Speech has a wider latitude than the written standard language that we use in order to

communicate in school. Emphasis on language purity with regard to usage, may be counterproductive.

#### **2.4.4 Social Aspect of Standardization**

Considering the aspect of standard language, Sanders (1992:57) states that the difference between standard and nonstandard dialect is not a linguistic one, but has to do with social status. According to him:

*dialect which acts as the standard language for a given speech community is one which has for purely accidental historical reasons, become prestigious within the speech community. As a social norm a dialect is a language that is excluded from polite society (Sanders 1992:57).*

The process of standardization has given standard dialect a status of being a high dialect, while nonstandard is regarded as a low speech. Commenting on standardization Devitt (1989:2) states that a completely uniform language is a set of abstract norms, but linguistic standardization is an actual historical process, a movement toward that uniformity which can never be completely realized. Devitt (1989:2) argues that:

*if standardization is the movement toward uniformity, but complete uniformity is always impossible, the standardization will always entail variation.*

He mentions that one would see standardization as a process, as a change, as a direction of movement rather than a synchronic state. Devitt (1989:7) goes on to

mention that when groups with different dialects come into close contact with one another, the dialects may influence each other and produce linguistic change. To support Devitt it has been noticed that Xhosa people who migrated to cities from rural areas experienced sufficient interaction with English speaking people, particularly in the work and educational domain to learn English. Because of the severe displacement of their "old-country's" rural ways as a result of rapid exposure to South African urban and industrial contexts, it quickly became impossible for them to maintain the original home language.

## **2.5 XHOSA DIALECTS**

Before we can begin to discuss the educational implications of linguistic diversity, it is necessary to define the term "dialect". Chambers and Trudgill (1980:5) refer to the term "dialect" as linguistic variety which is grammatically, lexically and phonologically different from other varieties. The choice of individual pronunciation features, lexical, grammatical and discursal styles and even languages themselves have variously been related to the signalling of ethnic and national identity, socio-economic status group members and even age group membership (Coupland 1988:98). Ryan (1979:147) points out that "the value of language as a chief symbol of group identity is one of the major forces for the preservation of nonstandard speech styles and dialects.

### **2.5.1 Xhosa and its Variants**

Xhosa dialects are distinguished from Xhosa proper on the basis that they are unlike the standard Xhosa. These dialects are referred to as nonstandard dialects. The term "dialect" according to Edwards (1979:76) does not carry any derogatory linguistic implications, but it does indicate that there is some dialect which is seen as standard. We can speak of Xhosa dialects because we have the Xhosa language in mind. In addition to the standard Xhosa that we have, there are a number of regional varieties which have many features that are different from standard Xhosa in terms of grammatical forms and vocabulary. They display some grammatical forms and some terms of vocabulary which are specific to the region where they are spoken. For example Mpondomise is a dialect chiefly spoken in the districts of Qumbu and Tsolo by the Mpondomise people who came to settle in these districts before 1872 (Mbadi: ?). The speech of these people differs from standard Xhosa as far as grammatical terms are concerned. The following examples clearly show these differences.

#### **2.5.1.1 Mpondomise Variant**

The Mpondomise speakers occupy the districts of Qumbu and Tsolo. Their language differs from the standard Xhosa morphologically, syntactically and grammatically.

##### **2.5.1.1.a Phonetic Difference**

One can notice that (sh) which is a voiceless radical prepalatal fricative cannot be found in Mpondomise although it is there in Xhosa. Mpondomise people use (tjh)

instead of (sh) e.g.

<b>Xhosa</b>	<b>Mpondomise</b>
ihashe	hatjhi (horse)
ixesha	xetjha (time)
isheleni	tjheleni (shilling) (Mbadi: ?)

#### **2.5.1.1.b Mophological Differences**

Possessive markers are elided in possessive qualificatives indicating communal ownership in Mpondomise e.g.

<b>Xhosa</b>	<b>Mpondomise</b>
udade [we] thu	udadethu
inkomo [y] ak [o] wethu	inkomakowethu (Mbadi: ?)

Elision is also found with verbal predicative. In the future tense of the indicative, formative are elided, partially or wholly, the result being vowel ? coalescence.

<b>Xhosa</b>	<b>Mpondomise</b>
? alusa	_ olusa
? andlula	? ondlula / ? endlula
? aphula	? ophula / ? ephula

and as a result we have verbs like (Mbadi: ?)

**Xhosa**

ukwalusa

ukwandlula

ukwaphula

**Mpondomise**

ukwelusa / ukolusa

ukwendlula / ukondlula

ukwephula / ukophula (Mbadi: ?)

In Xhosa, nouns of class 11 that employ no prefixes in other circumstances, normally employ them in other locative formation. Mpondomise does not employ these prefixes e.g.

**Xhosa**

usana

elusaneni

udonga

eludongeni

**Mpondomise**

esaneni

edongeni (Mbadi: ?)

There is a tendency of the Mpondomise to place all nouns in class 5.

**Xhosa**

usiba

ulwimi

**Mpondomise**

isiba

ilwimi (Mbadi: ?)

There is also confusion in Mpondomise over the differences between bu of class 14 and ku of class 15.

**Xhosa**

ubuso

ubusuku

**Mpondomise**

ukuso (face)

ukusuku (night) (Mbadi: ?)

**2.5.1.2 The Hlubi Variety**

It has been noticed by Nomlomo (1993:23) that Hlubi dialect differs from standard Xhosa by means of using a nasalized velar consonant [ng] in the place of nasalized alveolar consonant [nd] e.g.

**Xhosa**ndindihambandisila**Hlubi**ngingihambangisila(Nomlomo 1993:54).

The amaHlubi use the concord of class 5 (li) in the place of (lu) being used in standard Xhosa for class 11 e.g.

**Xhosa**Udonga ludilikileUsana lulambile**Hlubi**Idonga lidilikileIsana lilambile

Also the amaHlubi have a tendency use the concord ki instead of ku for standard Xhosa as they say:

**Xhosa**Yiza kumJonga kuthiJonga kuni**Hlubi**Yiza kim (come to me)Jonga kithi (look at us)Jonga kini (look at you) Nomlomo 1993:50**2.5.1.3 Bhaca Variant**

Msimang (1989:48) states that the amaBhaca (ethnic) occupy the districts of Mount Frere and Mount Aliff. The dialect of the amaBhaca also differs from standard Xhosa as they use the alveolar plosive [t'] instead of a fricative [z] e.g.

**Xhosa**umfziimbuzi**Bhaca**umfatti (a woman)imbutti (goat) (Nomlomo 1993:50).

The palatal consonant (c') found in Xhosa is replaced by the alveo ? palatal consonant (tj) e.g.

**Xhosa**

ilitye

utyani

**Bhaca**

ilitje (stone)

utjani (grass)

Other differences can be seen in the vocabulary whereby Bhaca uses its vocabulary apart from that of the standard Xhosa e.g.

**Xhosa**

utywala

ukubaleka

ukucula

**Bhaca**

ijiki? (African beer)-

ukugijima (to run)

ukuvuma (to sing) (Nomlomo 1993:53)

**2.5.1.4 Phondo Variant**

The Phondo speakers occupy the districts of Bizana, Flagstaff, Lusikisiki, Ngqeleni and Port St Johns. They are regarded as people who love their chiefs and always adhere to their culture. Like other dialects the amaMpondo dialect differs from the standard as in the following examples:

**Xhosa**

ishumi

igusha

kushushu

**Mpondo-**itshumi (ten)igutsha (sheep)kutshutshu (it's hot) (Nomlomo 1993:45)

Pahl (1983:259) states that Xhosa sound- /kr/becomes /k/ in Mpondo e.g.

**Xhosa**ukukrokraukukrazulakrakra**Mpondo**ukukoka (to suspect)ukukazula (to tear)kaka (to be sour)

Not all dialects of Xhosa have been indicated above, but one can see that the above dialects are representative of the differences between them and standard Xhosa. The above dialects show differences between one another and also diverge from the standard Xhosa.

### **2.5.2 Pronunciation**

Accent is referred to by Hughes and Trudgill (1979:2) as a "variety of pronunciation". According to Nicolas Coupland (1988:2) pronunciation includes rhythmic, intonational and other prosodic features as well as segmental phonology and phonetics. It is more restricted than dialect in so far as it denotes pronunciation variation only. Speakers sharing the same dialect may differ markedly in their pronunciation without employing different lexical or grammatical forms. For example two Xhosa speakers can have a different accent although saying the same thing. For example:

andithàngà	andithángá	(I did not say)
andimbonàngà	andimbonángá	(I did not see him)
andimthembàngà	andimthembángá	(I do not trust him)

The most important component with regard to accent relates to usage of which one extreme represents the standard pattern of pronunciation and the other represents the broadest local, regional or ethnic accent. In the above examples the first list represents standard Xhosa. One whose pronunciation is according to the second list represents nonstandard Xhosa and as such can be penalized in the classroom

situation in terms of oral composition. During oral lessons in school, it has been noticed that each individual has his own habitual accent. Some are able to modify their pronunciation so as to render it closer to the standard accent (Giles and Powesland 1975:174). According to Giles and Powland (1975:174) in school the children perceives the teacher's pronunciation pattern to be higher in accent prestige than their own idiolects, and they are motivated towards gaining the teachers' approval. They often modify their accent so as to make it sound more similar to that of the teacher. In general, standard patterns of pronunciation possess the highest prestige values, while the nonstandard varieties have lower prestige values. Giles and Powland (1975) has referred to the most prestigious speech form in a given cultural context as "acrolect" and the least prestigious form a "basilect".

### **2.5.3 Style**

Language varies according to where and to whom it is used and according to who is using it (Trudgill 1983:9). In addressing the context which affects the choice of variety one can notice that speech reflects group membership. For example in school, government offices and in formal speeches standard language is being used, whilst in informal settings such as home, playgrounds and shopping centres nonstandard language is used. Edwards (1979:77) uses the term "style" in the socio-linguistic context which refers to variations within a dialect which reflect the social context within which speech occurs. Edwards (1979:77) also mentions that most often, styles alter in terms of the formality or informality of the situation, which may govern the choice of the lexical items. For example a speaker of Xhosa might at one occasion say:

Zirhwayile kum ngoku (I am hungry).

In another setting, the same speaker might phrase the same thought as:

Ndikhatywe yinkawu (I am hungry) or

Umkhos'udlamahashe (I am hungry).

One can say: Lo mfo urhayizile kule ntetho (to make a mistake)

The other one would say the same thing and say:

Ulahlile (to make a mistake) or

Ubhudile (to make a mistake).

In the above examples one can notice that each and every speaker uses his or her own style of speech although saying the same thing. When one says "zirhwayile" he is talking "TSOTSI-TAAL" and as such this speech is regarded as nonstandard at school. When one says "Ndikhatywe yinkawu" and the other one says "Umkhos'udlamahashe" they are using Xhosa idioms which are synonyms and therefore are regarded as standard language. To sum up for the present study, it is sufficient to note that most, not all speakers have a variety of linguistic possibilities open to them.

## **2.6 SOME OBSERVATION REGARDING INFLUENCE OF DIALECTS ON EDUCATION**

Pride and Holmes (1972:103) refer to dialect as language that does not succeed, language that is underdeveloped. By this they mean that no one has taken the trouble to develop such a dialect into what is often referred to as "standard language". The language has not been employed in all the functions that a standard

language can perform in a society larger than that of local tribe or peasant village (Pride and Holmes 1972:103). It is apparent in dialects that the choice of individual pronunciation features such as lexical and grammatical have variously been related to the signalling ethnic and national identity, socio-economic status group members as Coupland (1988:98) indicates. Ryan (1979:147) on the other hand points out that the value of language as a chief symbol of group identity is one of the major forces for the preservation of nonstandard speech styles or dialects.

In the field of education dialects are regarded as a deviation from the norm of standard Xhosa and as such those who adhere to them are disadvantaged educationally. This means that standard Xhosa deprives its speakers of a valuable resource and capacity to enjoy their cultural diversity. But despite the ideology of standardization, variation and nonstandard usage continues. This proves the fact that standardization can never really go in isolation, because as society changes, there are things that influence language change (Eastman 1994:14). Among such things one can mention industrialization, urbanization, mass media, and language use in multilingual societies.

## **2.7 FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE VARIATION**

### **Industrialization and Urbanization**

South Africa has witnessed an industrial revolution which has transformed the lives of Black inhabitants. Conquered and colonised, black peasants and workers have

experienced changes at least as harsh and disruptive as those in early industrial Britain (Marks and Rathbone 1982:1). The discovery of diamonds in 1867 and the British annexation of the diamond fields and the discovery of gold on the Witwatersrand in the 1880s are the major factors for the migration of the amaXhosa to big towns to work in the gold mines (Marks and Rathbone 1982:1). Urban areas comprise a number of diverse multilingual communities. Due to language contact in these communities mixing languages occurs on a large scale (Lanham and Prinsloo 1978:29). Mixing takes place not only between languages belonging to the same group, such as the various Xhosa languages, but between different language families, for example the African languages, Afrikaans and English (Lanham and Prinsloo 1978:36). In urban areas the amaXhosa have to adapt to a lifestyle which is different from that of the rural areas from which they come. They must adjust to the linguistic diversity of the urban areas. They have to learn one or more languages or language varieties in order to communicate with their neighbours, their employers and their colleagues. Lanham and Prinsloo (1978:30) claim that urban Xhosa speakers draw very largely on foreign languages, noticeably English and to a lesser extent Afrikaans. This is not surprising because Thipa (1989) states that when two different cultures meet, and where one culture is dominant over the other, borrowing has to be seen as some form of cultural behaviour, occurring in a specific cultural context.

Xhosa speakers for instance have been assimilated in the dominant culture through the process of language shift. This includes the existence of vocabulary borrowed by Xhosa. Considering this relationship in the educational context, a child or a student

who has been influenced by English vocabulary when writing a composition may say:

Ngomgqibelo besinemetshi yenethiboli esikolweni sethu

(On Saturday we had a netball match at our school).

Iqela lethu liye lawina ngeepoyinti ezintathu.

(Our team won by three points).

The two sentences above are different from the standard language. A child who has not been influenced by English language would say:

NgoMgqibelo besinomdlalo womnyazi esikolweni sethu.

(On Saturday we had a netball match in our school).

Iqela lethu liye laphumelela ngamanqaku amathathu

(Our team won by three points).

As it has been stated in chapter one that in the educational context some of the nonstandard varieties are labelled as deviations from the norm and therefore are stigmatized, teachers may penalize the student who writes nonstandard language and that would lead to poor results. From what has been said, one can mention the fact that teachers regard Xhosa language as static being not subject to change. But contrary to the teachers' view, outside the classroom situation children use the language as they please. My question is, if teachers guard the correctness of Xhosa language at school whilst children are exposed to a number of languages outside classroom, is there not a conflict between the school and the environment? It is

apparent that there is a big conflict between school and home as far as Xhosa language is concerned in urban areas. This gap needs to be filled by means of observing language change which is regarded as something valuable by Aitchinson (1991:4). He points out that in a world where human beings grow old tadpoles change into frogs, and milk turns into cheese, it would be strange if language alone remain unaltered.

## **2.8 ATTITUDES TOWARDS LANGUAGE VARIETIES**

Sarnoff (1970:270) views attitude as a "disposition" to react favourably to a class of objects. This disposition according to Second and Backman (1964) is often taken to comprise three components: feelings (Affective element, thoughts, cognitive element) and predispositions to act (behavioural element). That is, one knows and believes something has some emotional reaction to it and, therefore, may be assumed to act on this basis. According to Ryan and Giles (1982:63) language attitudes influence language behaviour. These language attitudes can contribute to sound changes, define speech communities, reflect intergroup communication and help determine teachers' perceptions of students' ability (Ryan and Giles 1982:63). As such language varieties occupy distinctive or perceived social status. For instance speakers of non-prestige languages are less favoured than speakers of non-prestige languages (Appel and Muysken 1987:19). Social structure is an important determinant of how a language is regarded by members of the society (Ryan and Giles 1982:64). For example one language variety, usually the standard, is more often associated with lower classes (Fishman 1971:20). Fishman distinguishes

between a "high" and "low" language where the "high language corresponds" to status, high culture, and strong aspirations toward upward social mobility, while the "low" language is associated with solidarity, comradeship and intimacy by its members.

Referring the above general hypothesis of the above researchers to the context of Xhosa, Nomlomo (1993:90) mentions that it is assumed that the standardization process favoured one variety (Gcaleka) which seems to be more prestigious than other varieties. In the education context, it is assumed that the standard variety (Gcaleka) students have better life's chances than the students who are speakers of nonstandard varieties. Looking at the aspect of social structure, members of the Xhosa ethnic group in the educational context have a tendency of protecting a standard norm. This is shown by the way educators display negative attitudes towards the nonstandard variants. Nomlomo (1993:117) mentions that Xhosa educators maintain that speakers of the other nonstandard variants should not be allowed to use variants other than standard as the use of nonstandard variants lowers their performance in the Xhosa language. Educators are of the opinion that those who use nonstandard language should be penalized. This seemed to be one of the factors which contributes to high failure rate.

Nonstandard variants are treated as variants of low status which lack prestige, and seemingly are regarded as unacceptable derivation that should be eradicated. Contrary to the above argument, the minority languages are highly valued for social, subjective and affective reasons, especially by speakers from the younger

generation. Such languages include varieties such as "tsotsi-taal" "town-language" and "Shambola". The speakers of these languages feel a certain pride in minority culture. This form of language loyalty reflects the close relations between language and social identity of ethnolinguistic groups.

## **2.9 CONCLUSION**

In this chapter it is observed that continual language change is natural and inevitable and it is due to sociolinguistic factors. Language change is not wrong, but it may, in certain circumstances, be socially undesirable. As change in society leads to cultural change, this could lead to cultural diffusion or cultural adaptation. It is noticed in South Africa that many languages have emerged due to communicative competence. Many of these languages have never been written down and they have never been described and there are no grammars for them. This calls for sociolinguistics to work on and describe these languages. To describe the meanings of words, how sentences are formed and also to develop dictionaries and basic orthography for these languages.

Finally, it is noticed that through the use of sociolinguistic researchers' reports, step by step it is possible to come to an understanding of the social and psychological factors underlying language change. As the years pass, it is hoped that this knowledge will gradually increase.

## **CHAPTER THREE - NONSTANDARD SPEECH AT SCHOOL**

### **3.0 INTRODUCTION**

This chapter examines what the literature says regarding the ways in which the school, teachers and the state view the use of nonstandard speech. It addresses the issue of nonstandard Xhosa and perceptions of the relative values of different language varieties. The influence of multilingualism on Xhosa speakers will also be considered. The main issue of concern in this chapter is the impact of nonstandard varieties on learners' education.

School is regarded as the natural continuation and extension of home life in that the same sort of behaviour (including linguistic behaviour) is supported and encouraged in both (Edwards 1979:9). Contrary to the above statement, however, nonstandard Xhosa speakers often experience a sharp discontinuity between home and school. For example Xhosa dialects and other nonstandard varieties are regarded as a violation of the norm when used in the classroom situation. In her research, Nomlomo (1994:77) argues that the nonstandard variants may not be acceptable in education but they fulfil important psycho-social, religious, cultural and community needs. These large and important issues form the bases of what follows.

### **3.1 DIALECTS**

There are two varieties of language that each community has. One is appropriate for the school (formal) and other for the home (informal). Language that is used in school is standard. It is a dialect that has much more status and prestige than other dialects (Gxilishe 1996:3). It is the dialect which is usually considered as the correct form of language and therefore is used by political leaders, the upper socioeconomic class, the dialect used for literature and printed documents, the dialect taught in the schools, ( see Fromkin and Rodman 1993, Gxilishe 1996).

Putting the above statement into perspective, standard Xhosa is based on the Rharhabe and Gcaleka dialect which are quite close to Ngqika or Tembu variants. Nonstandard Xhosa varieties that are used in informal situations on the other hand are different in that they are a mixture of two or more languages used either simultaneously or interchangeably in informal situations (Calteaux 1996:48). These are the varieties that include Xhosa dialects such as Bomvana, Mpondomise, Mpondo, Hlubi, Xesibe, Cele, Bhaca and other varieties of language such as slang, Tsotsitaal, Isicamtho, jargon, registers, etc (Van Wyk 1992, Calteaux 1996, Gxilishe 1996). The above mentioned nonstandard varieties are used in informal situations such as socialising in a shebeen, amongst group of friends, interaction with peer groups, family groups on the playground, etc (Myers-Scotton 1992, Calteau 1996, Van Wyk 1992).

Nonstandard languages impact on the use of standard language in the classroom (Calteaux 1996:9). In school nonstandard language is neglected, and is often stigmatized in the classroom (Gxilishe 1996 :2). Educators tend to advocate language which is quite remote from the everyday life of the learners. When learners are at school, they are expected to write and imitate the standard speech of their educators, and when they are outside the school life, it is almost certain that they would use nonstandard varieties (Edwards 1979:148). The use of nonstandard language varieties causes problems in the classroom situation. A child who is not well attuned to the standard language may for example use nonstandard language and be penalised. This child's language at the same time may provoke negative attitudes in the educator, perhaps the child speaks the so called low prestige dialect like isiMpondo, isiXesibe or isiHlubi, in the case of Xhosa. According to Stubbs (1979:44) these attitudes may be transmitted to the child, even if the educator expresses no overt disapproval of the language.

It is important for us to realize that educators, like all other members of society, hold perceptions concerning the different language varieties. They are immune from the characteristics of prestige made about certain language variants, i.e. standard language (Edwards 1979:99). Many educators maintain the myth that there is only one "best" Xhosa for all purposes, and that this is the only language proper for the classroom, yet they themselves use many varieties of language throughout the day, depending on the context or purpose of communication. An interesting development is the indication that mixed nonstandard languages are in the process of ousting the use of the standard languages in formal domains (Calteaux 1996:50). Younger

generations see no need adhere to their standard languages and prefer to use English instead.

The presence of language diversity in the learners' environment leads to regular inter-linkages and intermixture at various levels between different groups (Pattanayak 1990:42). Such inter-linkages according to Pattanayak (1990:42) do not only bring different languages in contact but also produce a qualitative change in the learners' pattern of communication even at school. However, because of the increasing use of nonstandard language varieties and the diminishing role of the traditional standard languages, it is no longer a usual practice to hear learners communicating in their pure mother tongue (Kieswetter 1995:6). He states that they mix various languages for better communication.

Most Xhosa educators feel that the use of nonstandard varieties is the main cause of increasing failure rate of the learners, and that it should be prohibited at school. This attitude needs to be changed. Language educators need to know that it is important for them not to rely on teaching a set of grammatical forms according to a prescriptive, and very narrow syllabus. Educators must be aware that a language has more than one form and it is not always "pure". Learners, especially in urban areas need to be exposed to real conversation, and need to speak a language which does not necessarily follow the rules of the prescribed textbooks so that one can be competitive in the multilingual environment (Kieswetter 1995:8).

It is implied in the above argument that class language is language which excludes

much of the everyday language of the learners, because the nonstandard language that they speak outside the classroom is not allowed in class. The value of the importance of standard language at school implies that one who is competent enough in it will feel more at home in the classroom situation and will also perform better than the one who speaks the nonstandard form (Kaschula et al 1995:5). This means that the child's language directly determines his success or failure at school.

### **3.2 THE ATTITUDE OF NONSTANDARD LANGUAGE SPEAKERS TOWARDS THEIR LANGUAGE**

It has been mentioned in chapter two that we have Xhosa dialects like: isiHlubi, isiMpondo, isiBhaca and others which are regarded as nonstandard as far as the classroom situation is concerned. The other nonstandard language is that which is a mixture of Xhosa and many other languages. Seemingly nonstandard speakers attribute positive attitudes towards their dialects, although they are stigmatised at school.

With the dialects one can notice that everything that differentiates one group from another constitutes that group's identity. This view is supported by Giles et al (1979:147) as they mention that the speakers of nonstandard languages may retain their languages in order to reinforce their group identity. They mention that by use of language, rituals can be maintained by these groups. This can be supported, because a Hlubi speaker or a Phondo speaker can not make use of Gcaleka and Rharhabe languages in maintaining his rituals, but must use his or her mother-tongue. It is easy for some of the people to conduct religious practices in their own

languages. This is the reason why sometimes people resist getting rid of their own languages. Phondos are noted for their attachment to their dialect. They usually discriminate against those who do not belong to their ethnic group. For example the Gcalekas are discriminated against in Eastern Phondoland. They are referred to as "amaKoloni" (colonised). This term originates from the fact that the Gcalekas were the first ethnic group to be colonised during the period of British colonists.

The above argument shows that dialect speakers are proud of their languages and seemingly they would like them to be accorded due respect. In Kokstad the Phondos are making a move with regard to the standardization of their dialect. But Kaschula (1995:58) sees some problems with communities who decide that they should like their particular nonstandard dialect to be the medium of education in a local school. The main problem for him is that when students progress to higher educational institutions, they cannot meet the general language requirements. For me this lacks logic because standard Xhosa was also once an ordinary dialect like other dialects, but it has passed all the requirements of a standard language. Other Xhosa dialects need to be codified, selected, accepted and have elaboration of function just like standard Xhosa and be implemented in higher educational institutions.

Considering another type of nonstandard language which consists of a mixture of languages we can take for example tsotsi-taal. Tsotsi-taal is the language which is usually used by most of the learners outside the classroom environment. To these speakers it does not show only group identity, but group solidarity and a signal of differences (Giles et al 1979:147). Their language can indicate that these groups

come from different regions. The speakers are proud about their language because they see it being a means of communication between speakers from different languages.

The above discussion clearly shows that although nonstandard speakers may have limited access to opportunities which require the prestige variety, they may feel very comfortable in their native speech styles. The idea of this argument is to show how important the language would be for their speakers.

### **3.3 CONTRIBUTING FACTORS TOWARDS USE OF NONSTANDARD LANGUAGE VARIETIES IN THE CLASSROOM**

It has been mentioned above that use of nonstandard varieties in class is one of the factors which inhibits learning. The issue of factors that contribute towards use of nonstandard Xhosa in class, as well as crises that nonstandard varieties may cause in children's education, will be dealt with below.

#### **3.3.1 Multilingualism**

South Africa comprises a number of diverse multilingual communities. Monolingualism is rare in these communities. It is confined mostly to underdeveloped areas with homogeneous communities (Lanham and Prinsloo 1978:29). Due to language contact in these multilingual communities, mixing languages occurs on a

large scale. Mixing takes place not only between languages belonging to the same group, such as the various Xhosa dialects, but between different language families, for example, African languages such as Sotho, Zulu, Tswana, and also English and Afrikaans (Lanham and Prinsloo 1978:36). This sudden move from one language to another is particularly found among second and third generation immigrants, who often lose attachment to their ancestral language, faced with the pressure to communicate in the language of the host country (Crystal 1991:220).

A case in point is Xhosa in South Africa. Xhosa speakers migrate from rural areas to urban areas to work as well as to settle there. Urban areas into which Xhosa speakers migrate comprise multilingual and multicultural communities. Languages encountered are other African languages, English and Afrikaans. The phonology of these languages is not the same as that of the Xhosa language. There are also extensive lexical and semantic dissimilarities between these languages and Xhosa.

A learner who has been exposed to these languages may use them more than the Xhosa language which is taught at school. He would not normally have the opportunity to use his first language properly because of daily usage of the above mentioned languages. For instance it is not unusual to hear conversations taking place in two or more different languages.

One observes that learners use their linguistic abilities to manipulate their conversations according to the context or domain within which they are interacting (Kieswetter 1995:96). This fact has serious implications on the learning of African

languages because when learners practise such type of conversations in class, they are penalized and as a result they get low marks. This is shown by the fact that most of the Xhosa learners do not get good pass marks in their external examinations, but only average because of incompetence in the standard language. This will be discussed when dealing with research findings in chapter VI.

### **3.3.2 Availability of Xhosa Books**

Most high schools in the Western Cape Education Department experience a problem of insufficiency of Xhosa books especially novels, suitable for different levels of reading ability. When I assumed a teaching post at Isilimela Comprehensive in Langa, I found that the library there had few Xhosa books. I noticed that the books that were available were poetry books and few novels (not more than ten) in a school of about 1500 learners. I noticed that children hardly ever read for pleasure. All they read is the book that is prescribed as their class reader, and this is not always pleasurable reading. Teachers tend to concentrate on English and Afrikaans when purchasing library books. Even with the news papers it is rare to get Xhosa news papers like Imvo ZabaNtsundu, Ikhwezi, Indaba, etc. The availability of English books to learners may be one great cause of lexical borrowing and code - mixing noticed in children's vocabulary, especially oral presentation. One notices that English and Afrikaans are regarded as languages used to get a job (Lanham et al 1978:215). As such these languages are important in the future economic life of the pupils, who are therefore motivated to read them. English is seen as a language of intellectuals and achievers. A high value is attached to English, and larger switches are made in English whereby the operational language changes, i.e. phonological,

morphological and syntactic systems change to English (Kieswetter 1995:72). This causes some problems for the Xhosa teacher as English enters the child's vocabulary at an early stage. Learners feel that they can no longer express themselves freely in Xhosa, and therefore prefer the use of English over the traditional African language.

### **3.3.3 High Value Attached to English language**

English is a medium of instruction in some of the Western Cape Departmental schools. Learners are exposed to spoken English at school most of the time. The use of English has influenced the conversational patterns of African learners (Kieswetter 1995:72). Parents see no need for correcting their children when mixing Xhosa language with English. Instead a higher value is attached by parents to English than to Xhosa. One observes that in many homes English is spoken in preference to the mother tongue in order that children may improve their spoken English and be good in other subjects which are taught in English (Kieswetter 1995:75).

Zotwana (1987:161) traces this superior regard for English far back as he indicates that:

*Although Xhosa was taught as a subject in Black schools, mainly in the Cape, it did not have any official status. English became the language of education, commerce and politics (Zotwana 1987:161).*

Although Xhosa presently has been given a status which is equal to that of English

and Afrikaans it is generally envisaged that the language for communication at national level will be English (Mtuzze 1992:47). Therefore it is apparent that children can be encouraged to speak English so as to be competent in communication. Therefore learners and parents see no need to stick to Xhosa.

The main problem is that presently no school in South Africa has so far used an African language as a medium of instruction in secondary and higher education. Learners are receiving education in a language which is at best a second language, and in the worst case a foreign language (Rubangumya 1990:45). This prominence which is given to English by the state could be confusing to school going children. There is no encouragement to Xhosa learners to practise speaking standard Xhosa. Even if it was possible for schools to choose Xhosa as a medium of instruction, the resources are not available to train teachers to develop grammars and orthographies, produce and translate into the Xhosa language (Rubangumya 1990:45).

The idea here is that of developing the Xhosa language and bringing it on a par with languages like English and Afrikaans so that it can be recognised by parents and learners.

### **3.4 THE REACTION OF EDUCATORS**

Educators react rather positively to standard language and negatively to nonstandard ones. Educators hold rather firm views as to what is appropriate or correct and what is not. The richer and more correct the language, the more

impressed educators will be. Children with good Xhosa vocabulary clearly will impress the educators rather than those who have a poor vocabulary. Standard language is accepted as a form of cultural capital, whose possession elevates the academic status of the holder (Nomlomo 1993:104).

Educators have quite definite rules about what constitutes appropriate language behaviour in the classroom. They ask questions and expect certain kinds of answers while rejecting others (Barnes 1990:111). These rules are determined both by the nature of the social situation, by the subject-matter and the educator's approach to it. But the rules are virtually never made explicit, and are not clearly articulated even in the educator's mind (Barnes 1990:111). This is so because the educator is the product of the environment. The language that he speaks outside the classroom is informal just like that of the pupils. In the classroom he is guided by the rules of the syllabus which stipulates that standard language must be the only language to be used in the classroom. The child who is not well attuned to the educator's language rules, may have great difficulty in the classroom as Barnes points out. But the bright child, who is quick to assimilate the educator's language demands and has the competence to follow it also incurs a special danger i.e the empty verbalism behind which there is no real understanding (Barnes 1990:111).

The task of the educator is clear: the child must be instructed in the correct manner of speaking i.e (using standard forms) (Barnes 1990:112). The educator's duty is to replace nonstandard language with the standard language. It is here that we can begin to understand the difficulties which educators may impose upon children who

employ nonstandard language varieties.

Because schools do not provide any room for nonstandard varieties, the school becomes to nonstandard speakers, a place where neither their language nor their culture exists, a place where their social identity is questioned and undermined (Apple and Muysken 1990:61). In the field of education nonstandard speakers are devalued by educators. Nonstandard speech becomes an indicator of disadvantage, inferiority, and even shame (Corson 1994:279).

To save nonstandard speakers from this situation Kaschula et al (1995:32) indicate that educators need to be tolerant of other people and their languages. They argue that it can be difficult to improve communicative competence if educators are intolerant.

### ***3.5 THE EFFECT OF THE USE OF NONSTANDARD LANGUAGE VARIETIES LANGUAGE ON CHILDREN'S EDUCATION***

Most Xhosa learners use a number of language varieties which differ from the standard, and are regarded as incorrect. These language varieties do not conform to the norms of the standard language (Nomlomo 1993:4). The norms of the standard language are always disadvantageous to speakers of nonstandard varieties. This is echoed by Corson (1994:291) as he states that the primary cause of educational failure for nonstandard users is not language differences but institutional ethnicity. This evidence suggests that the unjust use of authority in the maintenance of

standard stereotypes at school can be assumed as a chief factor in high rate of failures in Xhosa. This is so because nonstandard users perceive their own varieties as things of lesser worth. They often condemn themselves to silence in the classroom for fear of offending the standard norm.

Nomlomo (1993:86) states that Xhosa standardization took place at the expense of the nonstandard. The speakers of standard Xhosa seem to be favoured by educators. The language of these speakers is regarded as more attractive, more intelligent and more desirable than the language of nonstandard Xhosa speakers. The negative attitude of the educators towards nonstandard language speakers may hinder learners' progress (Trudgill et al 1984:24). According to them speakers of nonstandard variants may begin to develop a low self-esteem, negative sentiments about schooling and a limited cultural horizon. They state that a division is created sometimes within the class among learners because of the attitude implanted by the educator. At the same time they state that the speakers of the standard variant perceive the speakers of nonstandard as having a mentality which is different from and inferior to their own.

Sometimes most of the learners leave the school, because they could not stand the pressure of the standard language which is exerted on them. This is echoed by Nomlomo (1993:89) who states that the enforcement of standard languages in schools may cause a serious setback to the children. William (1970:237) also mentions that the struggle with language maintenance has a damaging effect on learners' confidence, as for many of them walking away is the only solution. In the

above argument it can be noticed that stigmatisation of nonstandard varieties in the field of education has serious effects on children's lives.

### **3. 6 CONCLUSION**

The most useful service which linguistics can perform today is to clear away the "verbal deprivation" and provide a more adequate notion of the relations between standard and nonstandard varieties. Children are effective narrators, reasoners and debaters and they tend to lose their argument if their language is scrutinised.

It is clear in the above argument that nonstandard use of language is not accepted in the field of education. Those who make use of the nonstandard varieties are disadvantaged academically. It is the duty of the language planners therefore to change the attitude of educators towards the use of nonstandard variants. If language planners are concerned with the ways of solving language problems, they should look forward to the revision of the orthography. As language changes there is need to make the existing spelling system accommodate new sounds found in borrowed words.

It is also noticed that in South Africa many languages have emerged as a means of communication between different communities. Many of these languages have never been written down and they have never been described, and there are no grammars for them. This calls for linguists to work on and describe the meanings of the words, how sentences are formed and also develop dictionaries and basic orthographies for these languages. Additional recommendations on how to deal with nonstandard language at school will be discussed in chapter V.

## **CHAPTER IV - PROBLEMS OF THE USE OF NONSTANDARD LANGUAGE**

### **4.0 INTRODUCTION**

It was claimed in the previous chapter that learners as well as educators encounter some problems in so far as the use of nonstandard varieties in class is concerned. Learners tend to write the way they speak, and their speech is not accepted. Educators on the other hand fight against the use of nonstandard varieties, but instead of decreasing, the use of these varieties is increasing. This chapter investigates such problems in the broad educational field. The research procedures employed in the collection of data, as well as results will be presented. The subjects involved included STD 10 learners, educators, a Xhosa subject adviser, a Xhosa lecturer at UCT as well as a Xhosa language specialist. Questionnaires and semi-structured interviews were used in the collection of data.

### **4.1 AIMS OF THE QUESTIONNAIRES AND INTERVIEWS**

As has been indicated in chapter 1. subsection 6, the aims of this research are:

- to investigate the problems that learners encounter in the classroom because they use nonstandard Xhosa.
- to describe the influence of the nonstandard varieties on the use of standard Xhosa at school.

- to find out if the negative attitude shown by learners towards Xhosa as a school subject can be perceived as a major influence on students' scholastic performance.
- to find out if language interference and language change lead learners to perform poorly in Xhosa, or have an impact on the learning of Xhosa.

## **4.2 HYPOTHESIS**

It has been hypothesised in this study that learners perform poorly in Xhosa because they are not proficient in the use of standard language. Most Xhosa learners use a number of language varieties which differ from the standard and that is regarded as incorrect. As a sub-examiner for standard 10 Xhosa Paper One, I noticed that learners tended to write nonstandard language. They simply forgot that they were writing examinations, and that standard language was expected, and so were penalised. Most of the learners lose marks because of the use of nonstandard varieties.

## **4.3 DATA COLLECTION**

The method used for data collection was questionnaires and interviews. These methods were chosen by the researcher because of the advantages described below, although there were problems with the questionnaires in terms of high costs. The advantages and disadvantages of questionnaires are discussed by Tshangana (1997:58). She mentions the disadvantage of high cost and possible low return. But

at the same time she sees an advantage, the fact that more information can be gathered when using questionnaires than by other methods. However she agrees that there seems to be a degree of co-operation in structured interviews which is lacking in surveys based on questionnaires. She adds that, with interviews, there are a lot of follow up questions and expansion by the subjects. A lot of information can be gathered which was not planned for the questions because of the physical presence of the respondents. Furthermore Tshangana (1997:59) mentions that structured interviews and questionnaires may be combined in order that both methods' advantage can be exploited.

It is for the above mentioned reasons that the present researcher has chosen these two methods when gathering information.

The data were collected in eight high schools falling under the Western Cape Education Department. These schools are:

1. Zwelethemba High School in Worster
2. Imizamo yethu High School in George
3. Khaya Mandi High School in Stellenbosch
4. Desmond Tutu High School in Paarl
5. Luhlaza High School in Khayelitsha .
6. Oscar Mpetha High School in Nyanga East
7. Fezeka High School in Gugulethu

## 8. Isilimela Comprehensive School in Langa.

I chose the Western Cape Province because it is characterised by a migrant labour system and because multilingualism seems to exist on a large scale. The sample is widespread throughout the whole of Western Cape Province so as to make a realistic and representative assessment sample on which analysis can be based. All of these offer Xhosa first language as a subject.

### 4.4 PROCEDURE

Each school was allocated 30 questionnaires for its matriculants to respond to. Thus 240 STD 10 learners were respondents in this research. 30 Xhosa first language educators were also given questionnaires to respond to the issues concerning language use at school.

This research was conducted during the time students were preparing for their examinations. Because of that I was unable to meet the learners personally. I approached STD 10 Xhosa educators in the above mentioned schools to give the learners questionnaires so that they could answer them in their spare time. The questionnaires were written in English so as to accommodate even those learners who were not competent in standard Xhosa. A covering letter to the educator, where the aims of the study were stipulated was included in the questionnaires.

The questionnaires included the following:

1. Xhosa language in the classroom
2. Attitudes towards Xhosa as a language
3. Xhosa dialects
4. Use of Xhosa in general

The questionnaires were collected by the subject teacher the following day, and the researcher collected them from these various schools on the third day.

The educators were also given questionnaires to respond to the issues concerning teaching of Xhosa. (see appendix 1b) The criteria for choosing the educators was that an educator should be teaching STD 9 and 10 Xhosa First Language regardless of gender. These educators were given questionnaires at a Xhosa Std 9 and 10 meeting which was held at Claremont Teachers' Centre in Cape Town. Educators were given questionnaires to respond to in their own spare time, and they were to be collected the following week at a meeting. The interviews with the subject adviser were conducted at her own convenience at the place where she stays during supper time, whilst the interview with the lecturer was done during his free period at his office. The interview was conducted whilst the subject advisor was in a relaxed mood. An interview with the Xhosa language specialist was conducted during lunch time at 100 Plein Street in the offices of Parliament. There were leading questions to the discussion. The interview took place over a period of about an hour. The discussions with the colleagues were done during break time.

#### 4.5 ANALYSING LEARNERS' QUESTIONNAIRE RESPONSES

As it has been hypothesised that other languages seem to have an influence on the Xhosa speakers, resulting in different varieties in use in each of these areas, I grouped the areas according to the most common languages spoken in them. For instance I was told by the educators that at Worcester and Paarl the dominant languages are Afrikaans and Sotho. I grouped these areas together as Area 1. At Stellenbosch and George speakers are predominantly Afrikaans speakers. I grouped these areas as Area 2 in the list. Khayelitsha and Nyanga East seemed to have things common, in that most of the inhabitants of these areas are migrant labours from Transkei which is predominantly a Xhosa speaking area therefore multilingualism is not evident on a large scale. I assumed that grouping of these areas together would show that there is a difference between learners who originate in rural areas and those who grow up in urban areas. These places were grouped as Area 3. In contrast with Khayelitsha and Nyanga East, the older established areas, Langa and Gugulethu Xhosa speakers seem to be multilingual. Their speech shows the influence of English, Afrikaans and also Sotho. Tsotsi-taal is also used on a large scale in these areas.

When giving learners' responses I have grouped the schools as follows so that they are easy to read: Area 1. Zwelethemba High School in Worcester

Area 2. Desmond Tutu High School in Paarl

Area 3. Imizamoyethu High School in George

Area 4. Khaya Mandi High School in Stellenbosch

Area 5. Luhlaza high school in Khayelitsha

Area 6. Oscar Mpetha High School in Nyanga East.

Area 7. Fezeka High School in Gugulethu

Area 8. Isilimela Comprehensive School in Langa

To give the true reflection of the responses the researcher calculated the percentage of the respondent's answers in each and every question asked in section one. These percentages are put in a table and a discussion follows after each table.

#### ***4.5.1 Xhosa Language in The Classroom***

Learners were given statements where they were asked to indicate if they agree with the statements or not. The responses to each statement are presented in the form of percentage followed by explanations of the percentage's significance.

#### **TABLE 1**

The table shows that educators do not allow learners to mix Xhosa language with other languages in class.

<b>Area</b>	<b>Not Allowed %</b>	<b>Allowed %</b>
1	72	28
2	78	22
3	92	8
4	95	5

The percentages above indicate that over 50% of the learners in all areas hold the view that educators do not allow learners to mix Xhosa with other languages in the classroom, although they mix Xhosa with other languages outside the classroom situation. But seemingly areas 1 and 2 educators are not so strict as compared to areas 3 and 4. A colleague from Worcester told me that teachers resort to the use of nonstandard language because their students lack Xhosa vocabulary. She said that when educators do not allow learners to use of nonstandard varieties, learners do not participate very well.

Those educators who advocate a language and attitude which is quite remote from the everyday lives of the learners are fighting a battle which they will never win. In South Africa language contact takes place between speakers of different languages almost in every situation. One can expect all sorts of compromises between languages particularly in the Western Cape where reciprocal influencing occurs on a large scale (Lanham and Prinsloo 1978:110).

What I have experienced in my classes is that during oral lessons learners tend to switch from Xhosa to other languages. If I do not allow them to switch, they tend to condemn themselves to silence in the classroom for fear of offending the standard norm.

The above argument suggests that educators need to change their attitudes and accept nonstandard varieties in class if they want progress.

**TABLE 2**

Outside the class learners do mix Xhosa with other languages.

<b>AREA</b>	<b>TRUE %</b>	<b>FALSE %</b>
1	100	0
2	98	2
3	100	0
4	100	0

In all areas above, learners showed that it is true that they mix Xhosa with other languages outside the classroom situation. This response to statements 1 and 2 show clearly that there are no restrictions in language use outside the classroom whereas there are inside it. When learners are at school they are expected to write standard language which is in conflict with the language of the street. A learner now

faces two different situations: the school with the formal language, and home with the informal one. In order to resolve the conflict between school and home, the Bullock Report (1975) recommends that the educator should start where the child is, and accept the language he brings to school (Edwards 1976:149). The goal is a gradual extension of the learner's communicative powers to meet new demands and situations.

**TABLE 3**

A Table showing that sometimes learners lack Xhosa vocabulary which is why they mix Xhosa with other languages.

<b>AREA</b>	<b>TRUE %</b>	<b>FALSE %</b>
1	100	0
2	96	4
3	62	38
4	60	40

The above results show that learners lack Xhosa vocabulary. They also show that the learners from Area 1 and 2 have a greater problem than in other areas as regard Xhosa vocabulary. It have been mentioned above that dwellers of these areas are predominantly Afrikaans speakers. Xhosa speakers therefore have to learn Afrikaans in order to communicate with their neighbours, employers and their colleagues. This

means that Xhosa speakers was assimilated in the dominant culture through language shift which makes it too difficult for them to maintain and gain Xhosa vocabulary. This is not surprising because Thipa (1989) mentions that when two different cultures meet, and where one culture is dominant over the other, borrowing and language shift have to be seen as some form of cultural behaviour, occurring in a specific cultural context.

As we can see in the above table that over 50% of the learners in all the areas lack Xhosa vocabulary, one can conclude that generally, Xhosa learners have a problem of the lack of Xhosa vocabulary. It was mentioned in the previous chapters that Xhosa speakers migrated from rural areas to urban areas in search of jobs and good sanitary services. So they had to adapt to a life style which is different from that of rural areas. They have to learn more languages in order to communicate with other cultures. Lanham and Prinsloo (1978:29) claim that urban Xhosa speakers draw very largely on foreign languages, notably English and to a lesser extent Afrikaans. The respondents in this research are the products of the above mentioned situation and therefore it is difficult for them to acquire Xhosa vocabulary. Their language cannot be expected to be "pure". They have to resort to other languages so as to be able to communicate. This language shift from the Xhosa language to other languages is seen by the present researcher as a skill which needs to be appreciated by the educators because it involves an art of using words properly from different languages and that a clear message is passed to another speaker.

**TABLE 4**

A table showing that students who come from rural areas use standard Xhosa more than others from urban areas.

<b>AREA</b>	<b>TRUE %</b>	<b>FALSE %</b>
1	96	4
2	100	0
3	96	4
4	98	2

As shown in the above table, in almost all areas learners are of the opinion that those coming from rural areas use standard Xhosa more than those from urban areas. The advantage of the learners coming from rural areas is that in those areas pure Xhosa is used on daily basis. Learners know, unconsciously, a vast number of facts about their language. Much of this knowledge involves the ability to understand complex grammatical relationships within sentences (Stubbs 1979:37). This knowledge makes learners from rural areas more competent in standard Xhosa than those from urban areas where multilingualism is the order of the day.

**TABLE 5**

A table showing that teachers are not fair by not allowing learners to speak as they

wish in class.

<b>AREA</b>	<b>AGREE %</b>	<b>DISAGREE %</b>
1	60	40
2	40	60
3	70	30
4	40	60

From the above results one notices that there is some contradiction as to whether educators should correct the use of nonstandard varieties in classroom or not. Some learners are of the opinion that educators are not fair in not allowing learners to speak as they wish in class. Others are of the opinion that they are fair. Learners can be obliged to accept the correction of use of nonstandard language in class because of the pressure that is being exerted upon them by the Department of Education, that they should be competent in standard language whether they like it or not. This is because learners are expected to pass Xhosa with 40% whilst the percentage pass for other subjects is 33%. This situation makes the learners try various ways of using standard language which is the key to pass matric results. This is echoed by the fact that my students told me that I should give them idioms that are used in rural areas so that they can memorise them. When I asked them the reason, they told me that during examinations they become incompetent because they only know the language presently used in urban areas. They requested me to tell Xhosa examiners not to set questions using difficult Xhosa words which they do not understand.

This shows clearly that the frustration of the students towards their academic achievements needs urgent consideration by the Western Cape Department of Education.

**TABLE 6**

Table showing that nonstandard Xhosa variants are treated as variants of low status in the field of education.

<b>AREA</b>	<b>TRUE %</b>	<b>FALSE %</b>
1	70	30
2	60	40
3	80	20
4	70	30

In the above table over 50% of the learners in all areas are of the opinion that nonstandard Xhosa variants are treated as variants of low status at school. This is supported by Nomlomo (1993:97) who states that when she was conducting research the students who were nonstandard variety speakers were ashamed to use their variants publicly, because of stigma attached to them. I, too, found that Xhosa variants are accorded a low status by educators. In a meeting held at St Francis Adult Education Centre on the 25 November 1997, when educators were discussing a standard 10 First Paper Memorandum educators seemed to have a negative attitude towards the use of nonstandard varieties. When asked if we should be fair to

those students who use nonstandard varieties when writing, they stated that they are there to promote standard Xhosa, not to lower it. But what surprised me was that the examiner of the paper we were discussing used words like " Olimpiki", "projekthi", "iiofisi" "zeEmbassy" and "Garethi" in the questions. To me the argument for maintaining standard Xhosa is theoretical but not practical. Appel and Muyskey (1987:59) also mention that nonstandard varieties are associated with low economic status and lack of educational achievement. Nyamende (1994:212 ) on the other hand mentions that standard Xhosa is generally associated with positive intellect, wisdom, uprightness and a good cultural upbringing whilst nonstandard had been used to illustrate narrow-mindedness, ignorance and backwardness. Attitudes like these show that there is no respect for anyone speaking nonstandard language. The promotion of standard language and the stigmatization of nonstandard language frustrates the learners because it affects their education.

**TABLE 7**

Table showing that inability to communicate in standard Xhosa contributes towards poor examination Xhosa matric results.

<b>AREA</b>	<b>TRUE %</b>	<b>FALSE %</b>
1	100	0
2	60	40
3	70	30
4	60	40

The above percentages show that, in all areas, over 50% learners feel that the above statement is true. This is supported by the fact that in 1996 not even one learner got an A symbol in Xhosa in any school in the Western Cape. This is amazing if one considers that Xhosa is the majority of learners' first language. Instead they got good symbols in English. One can expect such results when considering some of the factors that have been mentioned above such as language contact, lack of Xhosa vocabulary and code-mixing, which make it more difficult for Xhosa learners to communicate in standard Xhosa. It is apparent therefore that this incompetence can contribute to poor examination results as learners tend to forget that they are supposed to write standard language in classroom instead of writing as they speak. This can be found in most cases in their compositions where marks are deducted for grammatical mistakes, and the non use of standard language. The other factor which prevents them from performing well in Xhosa is their attitude towards the language. This was suggested by a Xhosa subject advisor who told me in an interview that a negative attitude towards the study of Xhosa is the major problem which militates against achievement of good results in high schools, hence the rarity of distinctions in passes in external examinations.

#### **TABLE 8**

Table showing that teachers prefer students who speak standard Xhosa to those who do not;

<b>AREA</b>	<b>AGREE %</b>	<b>DISAGREE %</b>
1	30	70
2	50	50
3	90	10
4	70	30

In the above table it is noticed that in areas one and two teachers do not care much about the standard language, whilst in areas three and four teachers do care. This contrast is echoed by Gxilishe (1996:1) as he mentions that the acceptance of nonstandard varieties in our language is still a matter of controversy for most of the teachers. Educators in areas one and two have already accepted that the use of nonstandard varieties in their areas is a fact of life. For the progress of their students they have changed their attitudes, because they know that learners in their areas lack Xhosa vocabulary. This was echoed by one of the subject advisors as she calls them "amarhanuga" (new comers). This means that they are the people who are not original dwellers of these places, but they are there because of employment. Xhosa people went to those regions to work in grape farms hence their language is dominated by Afrikaans.

Generally, Xhosa standardization took place at the expense of the nonstandard varieties. There seems to be evidence of favouritism as far as speakers of standard Xhosa are concerned . The language of these speakers is regarded as more attractive, more desirable than the language of nonstandard Xhosa speakers by the

educators (Nomlomo 1993:117).

Looking at the results in this section one can conclude that there are serious problems facing educators and learners concerning the Xhosa language. The purpose of this study is to identify such problems and solve them.

#### **4.5.2 Attitudes Towards Xhosa as a Language**

This section deals with the attitudes of learners towards their mother tongue which is Xhosa. I have tried to look at the general view of the learners in this section, hence the results are not going to be tabulated in tables as in section A. An overall feeling will be given of all the students regardless of the area where they stay. The reason is that when I looked at the scores, I found that responses are almost the same across all areas. However, where there is a need I will make a reference to specific areas.

Before coming to the results, it is important to note that language attitudes influence language behaviour. These language attitudes can contribute to sound changes, define speech communities, reflect intergroup communication and help determine teacher's perceptions of student's abilities (Ryan & Giles 1982:63). Also it can be noticed that social structure is an important determinant of how a language is regarded by members of society (Ryan and Giles 1982:64). For example, one language variety, usually the standard, is more often associated with high socioeconomic status group, while other nonstandard varieties are usually associated with a lower classes (Fishman 1971:20). Here the results on the perceptions of students about their language will be tabulated.

When I looked at the scores regarding learners' perceptions of their language, I noticed that there seemed to be a negative attitude towards majoring in Xhosa. When the learners were asked if they wish to proceed with Xhosa at University level, 60% of the learners indicated that they did not want to proceed with Xhosa to University. They cited that there are no job opportunities for those who specialise in Xhosa, therefore knowledge of Xhosa would take them nowhere. They pointed out that Xhosa can never be an asset to the business sector. The only field that one can take is teaching. Under the present government the abundance of teachers lead to retrenchment of many of them. Students seeing these teachers losing their jobs in this way, concluded that there was no future in the teaching profession. It is also very difficult for students who have recently finished their training to get jobs. They indicated that the one other job for Xhosa students is in broadcasting with radio Xhosa but the job needs a lot of training which involves too much finance which they cannot afford. They indicated that recently there are other jobs coming up like translation, but it is felt that this job needs one who is perfect in another language.

When asked if they like Xhosa lessons more than other lessons at school, 75% indicated that they like Xhosa, but it is difficult because standard Xhosa is used at school. They indicated that standard Xhosa seems to be more prestigious than other varieties. They indicated that students who know standard variety have better chances than students who are speakers of nonstandard varieties. They indicated that this makes them to feel less competent. Learners mentioned that nonstandard variants are treated as variants of low status which lack prestige.

Looking at the above discussion one can notice that learners are so disappointed with the attempt at eradication of the language they speak, and by the acceptance of the standard language. All these factors contribute to the negative attitude shown by students towards Xhosa as a subject. The negative attitude of the learners towards their mother tongue needs to be changed. Motivation is found by Dugmore (1991) to be an important variable in affecting the decisions of learners to continue with Xhosa after secondary school.

#### **4.5.3 Xhosa Dialects**

Most children enter school with an already well-developed potential for language, yet as pupils attend school, many of them quickly find that they are unable to meet the language demands that school makes upon them in a way that is regarded as adequate (Thornton 1974:14). This is so also with Xhosa dialects. Learners belong to different home languages. Of the learners surveyed, 13% of them claim that they are Phondos, 10% amaBhaca, 23% abaThembu, 4% abeSuthu, 17% amaHlubi, 8% amaBomvana, 25% amaGcaleka. One would bear in mind that Ndlambe, Ngqika and Thembu variants are of the same status and that they were promoted as standard language by the missionaries (Nyamende 1994:203). These are the dialects that are used in school, whilst others are rejected. Nomlomo (1993:105) mentioned that students who use dialects other than standard Xhosa are disadvantaged academically and socially, because their speech forms are stigmatised. In this research the case is different because the students in question did not even know their mother tongue. They belong to Hlubi, Bhaca, Mpondo etc, but they are unable

to speak their languages. These languages are not used even in their homes. The reason is that they are born in townships where multilingualism is being practised, so they speak a mixture of languages. When asked if they were affected by the use of language other than their variety, 33% indicated that they did not know. When asked if they prefer to be taught in their own language variety e.g isiMpondo, isiHlubi etc 60% disagreed whilst 40 % indicated that they did not know. These groups do not classify themselves as speakers of the above mentioned dialects because they did not experience use of their mother tongue from birth. This shows lack of identity and a state of confusion because when it comes to performing tribal customs they will claim that they belong to the amaHlubi, abeSuthu etc although they look down upon their language. For example, when they come from initiation schools one will see them in different attire identifying themselves according to their ethnic groups, but they cannot claim their language as a means of identification. In rural areas the case is different; these dialects are in use in all environments except school and church. In the study conducted by Nomlomo (1993) this is evident: she indicates that amaBomvana, amaMpondo, use standard Xhosa in class whereas outside the classroom situation they use their group's dialects. This shows that dominant groups can adopt other groups as far as language is concerned, which results in the death of language.

#### ***4.5.4 Use of Xhosa in General***

In urban areas people who use standard Xhosa are being undermined. They are seen as people who are behind times. Many students avoid using pure Xhosa,

fearing embarrassment and humiliation. According to Hudson (1980:27) each individual creates systems for his or her verbal behaviour so that they resemble those of the group or groups with which from time to time he may wish to be identified. Because of the use of different varieties in different situations, speakers can communicate with each other in ways not understandable to outsiders (Gal 1979:130).

When learners were asked how often they mix languages, 80% said that they always mix Xhosa with other languages. Learners do not feel anything wrong with mixing languages. Instead, they give those who practise mixing a prestigious status. Given this view, one can assume that a child who uses mixes of languages would use such a mixture more than the Xhosa language which is required at school. He would not normally have an opportunity to use his first language properly because of daily usage of the above mentioned mixed language. It seems that learners in natural settings often succeed in acquiring language, while the same learners in class fail to make any notable progress when confronted with a standard language variety.

When learners were asked if they are punished by their parents for using a mixture of languages, 100% stated that they are never punished by their parents compared to their educators who condemn those who use nonstandard varieties, stating these varieties are against the norms of the standard language. When asked if they are motivated to speak standard language at home 100% of the learners indicated that they are never motivated by their parents to speak standard Xhosa at home. Given

the school's view of its function, and the teacher's view of his role, what this means is a head-on clash between the pupil's experience of language for living and the school's attitude to language for learning (Thornton 1974:11). The clash between the language habits of the home community and school community's attitudes towards language can have disastrous effects upon language activity in the classroom (Thornton 1974:11).

It may be concluded from above argument that nonstandard use of language is not accepted in the field of education whereas it is accepted at home. Those students who make use of nonstandard varieties are disadvantaged academically. It is the duty of language planners and subject advisors to change the attitude of educators about the use of nonstandard variants. Some of the suggestions as to how to do so will be discussed in the chapter which follows.

#### **4.6 EDUCATORS' RESULTS**

The researcher has decided not to divide educators according to areas, because their training is the same, their syllabus is the same in that they are experiencing the same problems because they are teaching in multilingual areas under the same Department. Therefore the overall percentages of the educators' results will be discussed below. 30 educators were the respondents of this research. Gender was not a factor in selecting respondents.

The questionnaires covered the following areas:

- (a) Teaching of Xhosa generally
- (b) Educators attitudes towards nonstandard variants
- (c) Xhosa dialects
- (d) Language interference
- (e) Personal information

#### ***4.6.1 Teaching of Language Generally***

When educators were asked the average pass rate of their learners, 67% indicated that it was average, whilst 33% indicated that it was good. The relatively low symbols among most of those who pass could be questionable considering the fact that Xhosa language is their first language, unlike English and Afrikaans which are their second languages. This pass rate gives us an indication that learners are having serious problems concerning their own language. Records in the Department of Education show that from 1990 up to 1996 there was not even a single student who got a distinction in Xhosa, but they did get distinctions in other subjects. This is an indication that learners are not competent enough in the standard dialect of their first language. It suggests that students' negative attitudes towards the study of Xhosa prevail.

When the educators were asked the reason why most of their students get average

grades but not good ones or distinctions, 90% of the teachers indicated that they get average grades because of language interference. The fact that most of the learners do not get good passes is not surprising in multilingual areas like the Western Cape where people are in constant contact with speakers of other languages. For instance it is not unusual to hear conversations taking place in two or more different languages. Apparently because English is used as a medium of instruction at school, learners seem to speak English mostly, hence Xhosa learners feel more comfortable when mixing English with their language. This is the reason why Kieswetter (1995:6) feels that educators in urban areas can no longer rely on teaching a set of grammatical forms according to a prescriptive and very narrow syllabus, but they should be aware that language has more than one form and it is not always "pure". Educators should be aware that if culture changes as it does indeed, language change becomes inevitable because language is an integral part of culture (Thipa 1989:85).

The stigma attributed to nonstandard varieties and the importance and decisive function given to standard language is the main problem which faces Xhosa learners at school (Newsun 1990:37). If it was not for the stigmatization of nonstandard varieties learners would be getting good marks. As a way to resolve the problem of stigmatization of nonstandard languages Thipa (1989:164) suggests that in the marking of essays or letters, there could be a scale whereby the use of nonstandard varieties is accommodated and not as heavily penalized as it seems to be at present.

When educators were asked if when marking compositions, they experienced some errors resulting from learners mixing Xhosa with other languages, 57% indicated that they did, whilst 43% indicated that they sometimes experienced such problems. Not a single educator indicated that he/she did not. This is not surprising when one considers that these educators are teaching in a multilingual areas and language contact occurs on a high scale. When asked their feeling when encountering such errors, 43% indicated that they became excessively disappointed whilst 57% indicated that they became disappointed and no one appreciated students' use of words and structures from other languages. Such attitudes in education are identified by Pütz (1994:116) who mentions that language contact problematizes the basic organisational qualities of a language. Seemingly the Xhosa language experiences problems because of the use of other languages. The results show that educators do not appreciate the fact that learners are code-switching. However Kieswetter (1995:6) indicates that code-switching is an impressive tool which multilingual speakers have to use interact with speakers of different languages. Through language contact, transfer of elements from other languages into Xhosa will be common and this needs to be accepted as a fact of life by educators.

When the educators were asked why they were disappointed when learners use nonstandard language in class, 57% indicated that they were disappointed because such usage can spoil Xhosa language, 40% indicated that its use can contribute to language death, whilst 3% indicated that its use can fail students. These results

show that educators are not concerned about the failure rate of learners, but are concerned about the language itself.

#### **4.6.2 Educators' Attitudes Towards Nonstandard Variants**

It was shown by Nomlomo (1993:97) in her study that teachers do have negative attitudes towards the use of nonstandard varieties in class. This perception seems to be supported by Calteaux (1996:153) who indicates that teachers are of the opinion that the problem of the use of nonstandard varieties in class could be alleviated, if the teachers could be allowed to penalize the learners. The present researcher hopes to show that such negative attitudes also exist in the Western Cape schools.

When educators were asked if they display negative attitudes towards the use of nonstandard variants, 33% indicated that they agree that educators are against the use of nonstandard varieties in class, 37% disagreed whilst 22% did not know. These results show that there is controversy amongst educators regarding the acceptance of nonstandard varieties in class. This controversy is cited by Calteaux (1996:63) who mentions that there is a great concern among teachers that nonstandard varieties are "killing" the Xhosa language. At the same time there is also an understanding that nonstandard varieties are essential to the enrichment of the standard language. Gxilishe (1996:1) says he is of the opinion that there is a controversy with regard to the language use in class as he states that:

*there are two arguments for the use of dialect in the classroom. On one hand, it may be useful as a bridge to standard language. On the other, initial use of the home variety has been shown, to the satisfaction of many, to be beneficial in promoting the child's self-image and sense of belonging.*

What Gxilishe is saying is supported by the findings of my study as it can be noticed that the percentage of the teachers that agree with the use of nonstandard varieties exceeds the percentage of those who do not. This serves as an indication that gradually there seems to be change as far as the acceptance of variants in class is concerned. I see this as a step forward. The suggestions that educators should change their attitudes towards the acceptance of nonstandard varieties is one of the recommendations of this study.

#### **4.6.3 Xhosa Dialects**

The different Xhosa dialects referred to in my study are regional dialects. To give an example: speakers of isiBhaca come from Mount Frere, and speakers isiMpondo come from Eastern Pondoland. Where we come from is an important part of our personal identity. Of course people can change, the way they speak during their lifetime, especially if they move around the country but some trace of our language dialects will stay with us.

The questionnaire reminded educators about Xhosa dialects because it was assumed that, since they are in a multilingual area they forget about dialects. All the

Xhosa dialects were listed in the questionnaire. Educators were also reminded that the standard Xhosa is based on the isiGcaleka and isiRharhabe dialects.

The reaction of the educators to the nonstandard variety was indicated by circling the appropriate answer.

The results are presented below:

	<b>ALWAYS</b>	<b>SOMETIMES</b>	<b>NEVER</b>
1. Do teachers allow learners to speak other dialects other than isiGcaleka	10%	47%	43%
2. Would the use of other dialects other than isiGcaleka or isiRharhabe lower the standard of Xhosa	40%	50%	10%
3. Other speakers tend to shift from their dialects to isiGcaleka or isiRharhabe dialects which are associated with high academic achievement	47%	33%	20%
4. The use of other Xhosa dialects other than isiGcaleka or isiRharhabe which is standard can widen the vocabulary of Xhosa	47%	40%	13%

5. Educators do not allow learners to use other dialects in class other than isiGcaleka or isiRharhabe because they do not conform to the norms of the standard one.	40%	40%	20%
--	-----	-----	-----

The results above show that educators do not promote the use of nonstandard varieties in class. Most of the teachers do not allow learners to speak other dialects in class other than isiGcaleka. It is also shown that educators have the perception that the use of other dialects other than isiGcaleka or isiRharhabe would lower the standard of Xhosa.

It is shown in the table above that speakers of other dialects tend to shift from their dialects to isiRharhabe and isiGcaleka which are associated with high academic achievement. But despite that, most of the educators feel that the use of other Xhosa dialects other than isiGcaleka or isiRharhabe can broaden the vocabulary of Xhosa.

The attitude of the educators reminded me of what Dr Zotwana pointed out in a private discussion, namely that people will always protect their language from being impurified but there is no way that the language would not change. The fact that educators agree that the use of dialects other than isiGcaleka or isiRharhabe can broaden the vocabulary of Xhosa, shows that educators agree with the change of language but they are protecting it from impurities. But seemingly teachers are

confused because they feel that the standard of Xhosa should be maintained. Dr Zotwana pointed out that the notion of standard is necessary and plays an important role, namely, a unifying function. This means that the use of nonstandard varieties in class would not affect the standard language but would broaden its vocabulary.

The shift of the speakers of regional dialects of Xhosa to the standard dialect is argued in the above discussion. These results reflect what Nyamende (1994:203) has claimed that:

*The Mpondo, Bhaca and Hlubi variants as well as the Mpondomise, Xesibe, Cele and Ntlangwini variants could have been regarded as independent languages of the Nguni cluster, but, perhaps due to the missionary influence which now carried the Ngqika, Ndlambe and Thembu variants, the converted speakers of the aforementioned variants were then subjected to the use of standard Xhosa at the mission stations and seminary schools (Nyamende 1994:203).*

As was mentioned in chapter one there was no criteria for the standardization of Xhosa language. The isiGcaleka and isiRharhabe dialects were standardised by accident. If it was not for the fact that the first missionaries came to settle among the Xhosa and that they had to learn the Ngqika dialect, maybe standard Xhosa might not have been based on the Ngqika dialect. Maybe standard Xhosa would have been based on Xesibe, Mpondo or Bhaca dialect by now.

These arguments do not promote the standardization of other dialects per se, but serve to indicate that the standardization of some Xhosa dialects has led to the stigmatization of other dialects of the same cluster.

#### **4.6.4 Language Interference**

In this section of the questionnaire, the respondents were asked to tick True or False in the given column. When giving the results I will not put them in a table as I have done previously, but will show the percentages and then make comments thereafter.

As has been mentioned above, language interference is one of the factors which contributes to the use of nonstandard varieties and this study aims to verify if that is the case in the Western Cape. The following responses were obtained.

- ? 100% of the educators agreed with the statement that urban areas comprise a number of diverse multilingual communities.
  
- ? 100% of the respondents agreed that mixing of languages occurs on a large scale due to language contact in these communities.
  
- ? 87% of the educators agreed that students growing up in urban areas fail Xhosa due to language interference, whilst 13% disagreed.
  
- ? 70% of the educators agreed with the statement that educators' negative

attitude towards nonstandard language varieties usually frustrate and demotivate those who speak nonstandard varieties, whilst 30% disagreed.

? 87% of the educators agreed with the statement that because of language contact Xhosa is also subject to change, whilst 13% disagreed.

These percentages serve as proof of what has been indicated above, namely that urban areas comprise of multilingual communities and that multilingualism's potential in the class has not, however been fully exploited although it is widely recognised as a natural phenomenon (Gxilishe 1996:2). Also, it was stated above that learners who come from rural areas are more competent in standard Xhosa than those who grew up in urban areas where multilingualism is practised. In rural areas learners are exposed to standard language even outside the classroom situation. A teacher seeing that the learner is more competent in standard language would be impressed and always congratulate him/her. On the other hand, the educator would show negative attitude to those who speak nonstandard varieties. The fact that standard languages enjoy higher status than nonstandard varieties has given rise to the myth among some educators that the standard language is inherently superior to nonstandard varieties and even that the users of nonstandard varieties are inferior (Van Wyk 1992:27). One can imagine the frustration that could be felt by nonstandard users because of educators' negative attitude. Educators simply forget that standardization can never go on in isolation, because the way society changes influences the changes in language use (Fishman 1972). Fishman seemingly is

concerned with developing ways for people to solve language problems especially in emerging nations. He sees language planning to be the way to solve language problems.

#### **4.6.5 Personal Information**

I decided to get the personal information of the educators who responded to the questionnaire so that the captured information could be classified. In doing so I required the following information from the subjects:

Gender, age, Home language, Teaching experience and standards taught.

##### **4.6.5.1 Age**

What I discovered is that 96% of the educators were over 25 years of age. This percentage is an indication that most of the educators are the products of the period when language boards were making decisions about African languages without consulting the educators, learners and parents. Presently this consultation is playing an important role in language used in schools. In the opinion of Zotwana and Tshangana in private discussion, teachers and parents are the people who must decide on language policy in schools. At tertiary level, students should be drawn into the consultation process. The language boards dictated what should be taught at school. They said that standard language should be the major factor to be maintained at school and that educators were used as a tool to guard standard use. This is the reason why most of the teachers are still of the opinion that standard

Xhosa should be protected from nonstandard variants.

#### 4.6.5.2 Gender

With regard to gender, 87% of the educators who were given questionnaires were females whilst 13% were males. This percentage is not surprising because women are regarded as people who can manage languages whilst men are to manage sciences. The explanation for this may be found in patriarchal societal norms which look favourably on women majoring in "non-scientific" subjects (Dugmore 1999:174).

#### 4.6.5.3 Home Language

Of the educators researched one educator indicated that she was a Hlubi whilst the rest were Xhosas. Therefore there was only one educator who had experienced the shift from her mother tongue to the standard Xhosa. It may be expected therefore that teachers would be against the use of Xhosa dialects in class because they did not feel the pinch of losing their mother tongue and adopting another language. Also, I assume that if this research was conducted in Transkei, the ratio would not be like this. When we were marking the STD 7 Xhosa Paper 1 in 1993, there were Xhosa teachers from Mount Frere, Lusikisiki, Matatiele and other areas who would sometimes speak their dialects.

This indicates that the question of use of Xhosa dialects in the Western Cape is not a major problem, but a major one is the use of a mixture of languages. This was clear in the learners' results because respondents from other dialects were very few compared to speakers of Ngqika, Rharhabe, Gcaleka and Tembu varieties.

#### **4.7 SUBJECT ADVISOR**

The present researcher felt that subject advisors should be contacted to make some contributions to the study, because they are the people who are deeply involved in the decision making in terms of language teaching. I conducted interview with one subject advisor. The questions asked involved:

1. Her experience with the use of nonstandard varieties in class.
2. Her suggestion to the teachers about the issue of nonstandard varieties.
3. The effect caused by the use of nonstandard varieties in children's education.
4. Things to be done by the Department in order to solve the problem of learners' poor performance in Xhosa because of the use of nonstandard varieties in class.

I started my interview by giving the background, aims, and the purpose of the study. During the interview, I noted down some points from her contribution. I started by asking the subject advisor whether she experiences any difficulties because of the use of nonstandard varieties in class. She said that it is a major problem which is

causing learners to lose marks, especially in composition writing. She mentioned the fact that learners especially in urban areas, use such varieties because they lack Xhosa vocabulary. When asked what should be done by teachers to overcome such problems, she mentioned that educators should help learners in building children's vocabulary and encourage them to speak standard language. When asked if she insists that the standard language be the instrument to measure performance of learners, she indicated that the standard language should be the unifying factor, but new words should be adopted into the Xhosa language.

She indicated that teachers should create the modern vocabulary and even idioms should adapt to the modern society.

When asked the cause of the use of nonstandard varieties she said that there are many but amongst them she mentioned influence of other languages, urbanisation, attitudes of Blacks towards their own languages. When asked to expand on the question of attitudes, she indicated that the languages that are regarded as important by learners are English and Afrikaans. This was so because of the apartheid regime which insisted that English should be a medium of instruction and that Afrikaans was required by employers especially in the Western Cape. She indicated that gone are those days when interviews were conducted in those two languages: one can be interviewed in his or her own language. She felt that teachers should remove from the learners the perception that there are no job opportunities for one who has specialised in African languages, because these days one can work

at home without being employed. She indicated that the Labour Relations' Act indicates that all companies in South Africa should use a language which is accessible to every employee.

When asked about the effect of nonstandard varieties towards education of learners, she indicated that they affect them negatively. She said that an educator marking examination scripts in Xhosa does not consider nonstandard language acceptable, and a learner would be penalized because of its use. She mentioned that she understands educators' attitude because the rules and regulations that the standard language should be maintained were passed by the language boards in the past. At that time the use of the nonstandard varieties was not as it is now. She said " We as subject advisors are trying to go with times, but teachers are still behind times".

When asked if there are any special areas she could mention where use of nonstandard varieties seems to be a big problem, she indicated that it is worse in schools like Kaya Mnandi and Desmond Tutu where there is a strong Afrikaans influence.

When asked about the contribution of the Department towards solving the problems of language use in class, with special reference to Xhosa, she indicated that the Department does nothing about African languages. Instead they show a negative attitude towards them. She mentioned that the sad part of it is that in the curriculum 2005, African languages are forced to be on a par with English and Afrikaans

although these languages are suffering from a disadvantaged historical background. She stated that with the new approaches to learning, English and Afrikaans fit very well, but with the African languages, subject advisors are still fighting for change of structure, marks allocation and negative attitudes towards such languages.

The subject advisor's argument indicates that there should be change in the structure of syllabi. Both standard and nonstandard varieties need to be taken into account in pursuing children's education.

#### **4.8 LECTURER : UNIVERSITY OF CAPE TOWN**

I held a conversation with a lecturer at UCT. The interview was just a general discussion about standard and nonstandard language without prepared questions.

The discussion involved the following:

1. His origin, i.e. place of birth and mother-tongue.
2. His attitude towards standard and nonstandard language.
3. His opinion about the question of language change.
4. His experience as a lecturer with regard to the use of nonstandard language in class.

I asked his view about use of nonstandard varieties especially in class. He prefaced his response by telling me that by birth he is a Hlubi. In their area, Matatiele, they

speaking the Hlubi language. To them Xhosa is regarded as a school language just like English. When they are at school they speak Xhosa and when they are at home they speak Hlubi. He told me that he was shocked when he went to Umtata to work there, that the people there speak the language of the school even outside the school setting.

When asked about his attitude towards the standard language, he told me that he is not worried about the death of his language because there is nobody who can stand before change. He stressed the fact that even the Xhosa language has changed now because of new technology. He stated that new technology has emerged especially in urban areas where multilingualism is being practised. He mentioned that theoretically, one can be anti-change, but practically one cannot.

When asked about his experience as a lecturer with regard to the use of nonstandard varieties in class, he told me that for him as a person he has no problem with its use. He stated that standard Xhosa in his opinion should absorb some of the expressions and vocabulary from the nonstandard varieties. He indicated that it would be beneficial to the standard Xhosa language as a whole, if teachers change their attitudes and accept nonstandard varieties because useful regional expressions can enrich formal written Xhosa. This is the idea which is being pursued by this study.

What the lecturer at UCT is saying echoes what the subject advisor was saying that

change in the Xhosa language is something that should be taken into account by language planners.

#### **4.9 LANGUAGE SPECIALIST**

To investigate other aspects of use of Xhosa, I contacted Dr Zotwana, a language specialist, and asked him to contribute on issues of language use. I prepared some questions which would lead the discussion. The questions included the following:

1. His experience as a lecturer at UCT
2. Causes of the use of nonstandard varieties.
3. The impact of nonstandard varieties on the children's education.
3. Things to be done to remedy the use of nonstandard language.
4. The Way forward to the stakeholders and the Department as a whole.

Doctor Zotwana contributed a lot towards use of nonstandard varieties, not only at school but generally. When asked if he experienced any problems where the students use nonstandard language in class when he was a lecturer, he indicated that he had. When asked what he thought was the result of such use of varieties, he indicated that there are many reasons. Amongst them he mentioned the following:

1. Resistance
2. Influence of other languages

3. Prestige that is accorded to some varieties

5. Background

#### **4.9.1 Resistance**

He mentioned that some of the speakers of nonstandard varieties would purposely resist the use of standard language, sometimes deliberately because they are speakers of other dialects. He stated that Phondos are always against the standard language. They have accorded a stigma to standard language users. They state that those who gave prestige to standard language did so because they wanted to look down upon the Phondo culture. Dr Zotwana stated that presently there is a move in Kokstad to turn away from standard Xhosa and to standardise isiMpondo. He mentioned that this is political. He stated that this started as far back as 1978 when Phondos complained that at school they are taught to praise Xhosa chiefs not Mpondo chiefs, because praise poems are written in Xhosa.

He stated that a workshop was organised about this, but no outcome has yet been reported. Basically Phondos want standardization of their language.

#### **4.9.2 Influence of Other Languages**

When asked if he experienced any problems with the use of nonstandard varieties during the period he was at UCT. Dr Zotwana indicated that at Universities, the Departments of African Languages usually offer courses in different languages, such as Sesotho, Zulu, SeTswana, Xhosa and others. As such he experienced a great

deal of influence of other languages on the Xhosa language because of language contact. When asked if the nonstandard varieties had an impact on the education of the learners, he mentioned that it affects the education of students negatively, because of the rules that are imposed on nonstandard use at school. He gave me an example of a case whereby he was moderating the papers of STD 10 compositions in Pretoria. 50% was taken off in the case for learners who deviated from the topic. He related a story whereby one of the learners did not know the standard language and therefore gave a misinterpretation of a topic: The topic was, **Umdlalo Weqakamba**, which means a cricket game. However, in his dialect, "Iqakamba" is a policeman. Since the student deviated from the topic, he lost 50%.

He mentioned that learners are not credited according to the message and content but according to their use of the instrument, namely standard Xhosa. This anecdote shows that use of nonstandard varieties can have a serious impact on the learners' success.

#### ***4.9.3 Prestige Accorded to Some Language Varieties***

Dr Zotwana mentioned that speakers of nonstandard users sometimes use these varieties because of the prestige accorded to them. He made an example with "Tsotsitaal". He mentioned that speakers of this language are seen by youth as better people. They see them as better people who are knowledgeable because they can communicate in different languages with different people. One can notice that Tsotsitaal is a mixture of Afrikaans, English and certain African languages. This is a

language which is seen by (Lanham and Prinsloo 1978:51) as an argot developed in black townships. He indicates that Tsotsi-taal is used in the social setting of black South Africans. Apparently, however, speakers of Tsotsi-taal would use it also in their homes. One observes the prestige that is accorded to this language by its speakers, and be certain that the language would be used frequently.

#### **4.9.4 Background of speakers**

Dr Zotwana indicated that there are people who want to speak freely without any restrictions due to their background. For instance, people who possess Xhosa dialects do not care much about standard Xhosa. They would just say what ever they want to say in their mother tongue. These people are mostly those who did not go to school, and therefore were not much influenced by standard Xhosa. He also mentioned that people will always protect their language from impurities. But he believes that there is no way that the language would not change.

When asked if there is any remedy for the use of nonstandard varieties, he indicated that he has a problem with the word "remedy" because he believes language is not static, it will always change as time goes on. He gave me an example of an English term "severance package." They did not know the Xhosa word when they were doing translation, but he noticed that in the township people used the term "Umgodlo". He indicated that in Johannesburg, East London and other areas they would not call "severance package" "Umgodlo" but used another word. He stated

that this word could be incorporated into standard Xhosa because there is no existing standard word which can be used. This was an indication that new words develop in language therefore nonstandard varieties will always be there, and there is no way that one can prevent the use.

When asked about the way forward for the stakeholders and the Department as a whole, regarding the issue of the use of nonstandard varieties, he stated that there is no way that language would not change. He mentioned that standard language is necessary but it has its own place. He stated that standardization is a unifying factor. The value of the standard language can never be brought down by the use of nonstandard varieties. He indicated that the stakeholders and the government should reconcile the standard and nonstandard languages. He stated that we must recognise the contribution of the nonstandard varieties in the growth of our language, giving an example like "umjojo", which is nonstandard, but is used in standard Xhosa. He suggested that the Government stakeholders should promote language awareness programmes. He believed that language awareness programmes would lead to awareness of language change, which would lead to the development of nonstandard varieties. He also suggested that at Universities and tertiary level, learners should be involved in the planning of language. This would help learners to be aware of the importance of their language, change attitudes and be aware about career options. He said that nowadays the syllabus should be designed so that Xhosa is taught as a science. He gave examples of areas where this science can be applied such as speech therapists, language scientists, sound

engineers, language policy makers, and fields of foreign relations and economy. Lastly, he indicated that these days the job marketability of a person who specializes in African languages is high. He stated that now African languages are official, those going for an interview, could demand to be interviewed in Xhosa.

#### **4.10 CONCLUSION**

It is apparent that Xhosa teachers and learners face many problems as far as language use in the classroom is concerned. The major problem, which has compounded other problems, is the nonacceptability of nonstandard varieties in class. This leads to:

- (a) negative attitudes towards speakers of nonstandard varieties
- (b) the inferiority complex of nonstandard users in class
- (c) poor matric results
- (d) negative attitudes towards Xhosa as a subject

As a solution to these problems, a Xhosa subject advisor, a lecturer at UCT and a language specialist seem to voice one common notion "accept nonstandard varieties in class". This is echoed by Mashamaite (1992:52) who states that nonstandard and standard forms should be encouraged in the educational process. Recommendations based on what has been described above will be presented in the following chapter.

## **CHAPTER FIVE - SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **5.1 SUMMARY**

This study has explored various ways of understanding the issues with regard to the educational implications of using nonstandard varieties of Xhosa. Furthermore it has argued for the importance of nonstandard varieties within the learning situation. The study has discussed concepts and notions of nonstandard varieties, mainly focusing on Xhosa. The study has also looked at the attitudes towards language varieties. The main focus was the use of nonstandard speech at school. The problems regarding the use of nonstandard languages were surveyed.

The main aspect which became evident in this study is that South Africa embraces a number of diverse multilingual communities. It thus becomes crucial that educational policies be altered to accommodate the reality. The planning of our curriculum needs to be carried out in such a way that it caters for learners from different cultural backgrounds. That can be done by means of encouraging multilingualism in our schools.

## 5.2 CONCLUSIONS

### 5.2.1 *Literature survey*

Literature survey demonstrates that standardization of Xhosa by Missionaries has led to the stigmatization of other dialects and as a result at school, Xhosa dialects other than Gcaleka, Ngqika and Rharhabe do not seem to be accepted. In the field of education these dialects are regarded as a deviation from the norm of standard Xhosa and as such those who adhere to them are disadvantaged educationally.

Industrialised areas led to the inevitable mixing of people who spoke different languages in work places, churches, social gatherings and other situations. A new generation of children was born which could identify with more than one language group. In most urban areas new "dialects" "codes" and "registers" have developed to such an extent that one would doubt any notion of standard of an African language. For that reason language variation has become common phenomenon in South Africa.

Nonstandard languages have become evident in school. Nonstandard varieties impact on learners' education directly because they lose marks during examination if they use nonstandard varieties. Teachers guard the correctness of standard language at school whilst children are exposed to a number of languages outside the classroom. It seems that the use of nonstandard varieties is increasing instead of

decreasing.

Language diversity is suggested in this study to be a tool which can be used by educators to gain knowledge. Multilingual education is seen as being essential for the development of both linguistic resources and cultural understanding. This requires that language planners devise means of dealing with the problems created by the use of nonstandard varieties at school. The objectives of planners should be to influence directly the various social and cultural factors which are in turn held to influence language change.

### **5.2.2 Survey Results**

In order to find out if language interference, language change, implications on nonstandard Xhosa of sociolinguistic factors, and lack of students' interest towards Xhosa would have impact on childrens' scholastic performance, a survey was conducted amongst learners, educators and a subject advisor, a lecturer at UCT and a language specialist.

#### **5.2.2.1 Learners' Problems**

This study revealed that there are serious problems affecting the learning and teaching of Xhosa in the Western Cape Schools. The problems facing learners at

school are the following:

- ⊕ Learners who come from rural areas are more competent in standard Xhosa than those who grew up in urban areas where multilingualism is practised. This creates problems for the learners who grew up in urban areas because they seem to be looked down at by educators at school and as such they lose confidence in themselves.
  
- ⊕ Inability to communicate in standard Xhosa which contributes to poor results: The educators demand that learners know standard Xhosa. When they are unable to meet these expectations, they perform poorly.
  
- ⊕ Most learners do not want to proceed with Xhosa to University level. Among those who have proceeded, few of them continue with Xhosa up to third year level. Learners as well as parents maintain that studying Xhosa does not pay economically. They state that the language for communication internationally is English and therefore they give Xhosa no value, preferring their children to be fluent in English. This indicates that learners do not learn English because they like it, but because they have no choice.

Lack of proficiency in standard Xhosa poses the greatest problem as it is through standard language that the child performs well or poorly. According to Oliver-Shaw (1994:46) incompetence in the standard language does not hamper academic

success only, but also affects pupils' social adjustment to a strange environment, as well as their self-confidence and overall self-image.

#### **5.2.2.2 EDUCATORS**

Educators are the best people to guard against the use of nonstandard varieties in schools by insisting on the use of standard language in school. They are of the opinion that the problem of the use of nonstandard varieties in class could be reduced if they penalize learners, and as such they do. At the same time some educators seem to show a positive attitude towards the use of nonstandard varieties. They argue that they may be useful as a bridge to standard language and be used as a tool to promote learners' self-image and sense of belonging (Gxilishe 1996:1).

There are negative attitudes shown by educators towards the speakers of nonstandard varieties. These speakers receive lower ratings than speakers of standard varieties and they become discouraged. It is necessary for the educators to change their attitudes because stigmatization of the home language of children can leave them with irredeemable psychological scars (Lodge 1993:5).

#### **5.2.2.3 THE NON-TEACHING PARTICIPANTS**

The lecturer at UCT, subject advisor, and language specialist are all of the opinion that nonstandard varieties affect learners' education negatively. They indicated that

educators marking Xhosa examination scripts do not consider nonstandard language acceptable, and a learner would be penalized because of its use. They promote the notion of the use of both standard and nonstandard varieties in the classroom. In their opinion use of nonstandard language could not lower the status of the standard language, but would broaden its vocabulary. For them standard Xhosa should absorb some of the expressions and vocabulary from the nonstandard varieties. They stated that a standard language should be used as a unifying factor. They seem to share the same view that the value of the standard Xhosa can never be brought down by the use of nonstandard language. They indicate that the stakeholders and the government should reconcile the standard and the nonstandard.

### **5.3 RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### ***5.3.1 Educational Implications***

Given a view that there are problems facing learning and teaching of Xhosa in the Western Cape schools, this study recommends that:

- the vocabulary of Xhosa should be improved by writers by means of new dictionaries which give new words which are used in modern technology. New words have emerged because of new technology. There are no new Xhosa dictionaries incorporating these words. For this reason learners resort to the

use of other languages and sometimes mix Xhosa with these languages.

- ⊗ Multilingual education must be implemented in schools. This can be done by the Department of Education by means of organising a language awareness programme appropriate to equip educators with the knowledge of multilingual practices in schools.
  
- ⊗ Educators should be equipped to meet most of the language needs of their pupils. It is necessary for the educators to recognise the potential equality of all languages. The educator should be pleased to experience many language varieties rather than becoming irritated. Language contact can expand the vocabulary of the languages concerned. In the case of Xhosa, for example, there are words like "imizwa," "ukuthakazela" , "inkinge" etc, which are adopted from isiZulu. These words contribute to the expansion of the Xhosa vocabulary.
  
- ⊗ An educator should recognise multilingualism as an asset in pursuing language teaching by means of thinking ways of creatively exploiting the different languages available in a given classroom. The educator can see how other languages are as systematic and clear as his/ her own. Linguistic and cultural differences should
  
- ⊗ not be seen as deviations from a standard norm, but could be seen as an asset to gain knowledge.

- ④ Educators need to understand that linguistic diversity has serious social functions and is not a devaluing of a given language. Therefore language diversity should be seen as a linguistic resource which educators can use to pursue multilingual speakers' education.
- ④ Both standard and nonstandard varieties should be accepted at school in pursuing language teaching to avoid the practice of stigmatizing nonstandard varieties which are different from the norms of the standard language.
- ④ The curriculum must be designed in such a way that it caters for learners from different backgrounds so that a learner can get a chance to participate in language discussions even if he or she is not fluent in the standard language.
- ④ Modern economic system requires a language variety that can be used for communication among people with different mother tongues. In the interest of our children, we must move away from traditional attachment to the standard norms and look forward towards better education and social change. One needs to consider that our learners have different life experiences which need to be catered for at school. To ignore learners' differences is to deny their experiences both linguistically and socially. Multilingual education is essential for the development of both linguistic resources and cultural understanding.

The ultimate aim here is to make more people to be more tolerant of linguistic diversity. An essential point is that we must recognize the fact that linguistic varieties are in use and that structures constitute a dynamic situation, not a static one. A result of the dynamic nature of speech communities is that change within varieties is always going on. It is important to note that change is socially motivated, that is, even if it is done at an unconscious level, speakers are changing the way they speak to align themselves to the way some other group speaks.

### ***5.3.2 Language Planning***

Since this study recommends that both standard and non-standard varieties should be used to support effective learning and teaching at school, language planning must be considered. Planners of Xhosa need to pay particular attention to the changes that naturally occur in language.

They need to know that language cannot be studied with reference to its formal properties only, but that it must also be studied with reference to its relationship to the lives, thoughts and culture of the people who speak it (Kaschula et al 1993:15).

This implies that there is a need for nonstandard varieties to be accommodated in our education system, as recognition of such varieties will improve the socio-cultural relations between school and society. The development of a language occurs only if sufficient conditions are created by planners for its uninhibited use by its speakers. Therefore Xhosa language planners must plan language in such a way that it can cope with the modern technological era which learners are part of. Planners should

participate in a process in the formulation of a new language policy for the new South Africa. The curriculum needs to cater for learners from different language backgrounds.

The power of language has to be acknowledged and used constructively to provide pupils from different linguistic backgrounds with access to an education which not only broadens their horizons but also affirms their cultural roots (Oliver-Shaw 1994:46).

Language can be studied not only with reference to its formal properties, but also with regard to its relationship to lives, thoughts and culture of the people who speak it (Kaschula et al 1993:15). One task of the language planners should be to devise an orthography for nonstandard language and to coin new words.

### **5.3.3 Future Research**

Future research should identify and classify the nonstandard languages that have emerged in the Xhosa communities. This can help in broadening the Xhosa vocabulary because new words can be identified. The other field that can be pursued is the aspect of gender and power in relation to the use of nonstandard varieties. It has been noted that social norms do not seem to conflict with girls learning a language whereas they do for boys, but seemingly with the use of nonstandard language this is not the case. Perhaps research could be conducted on the acquisition of nonstandard varieties in both sex groups.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Aitchison, J. (1991) Language Change: Progress or Decay ?  
Great Britain, Fontana.
- Andrzejewski, B. W. (1991) Literatures in African languages :  
Theoretical issues and sample surveys  
New York, Cambridge University Press.
- Appel, R and Muysken, P. (1987) Dialect and language variation,  
London, Edward Arnold
- Barnes D. (1973) Language in the classroom.,  
Betchely, Open University Press.
- Bell, R. T. (1976) Sociolinguistics - goals, approaches and  
problems,  
London, B. T. Batsford.
- Calteaux, K. C. (1996) Standard and non-standard  
African language varieties in the urban  
South Africa :  
Main Report for the STANON Research

Programme.

Pretoria, HSRC Publishers.

- (1996). Central Statistics in the central government body in the Republic of South Africa
- Corson, D. J. (1994) Minority social groups and non- standard discourse: Towards a just language policy  
The Canadian Modern Language Review/La Revue canadienne des langues vivantes, 50, 271-295.
- Coupland, N. (1988) Dialect in use: Sociolinguistic variation in Cardiff English  
Cardiff, University of Wales Press.
- Crystal, D. (1992) An encyclopedic dictionary of language & languages,  
Great Britain, Hartnolls.
- Cuddon, J. A. (1979) A dictionary of literary terms.

New York, Penguin.

- Devitt A. J. (1989) Standardizing written English.  
New York, Cambridge University Press.
- Downes, W. (1984) Language and society.  
London, Fontana Paperbacks
- Dugmore, C. P. (1991) "The status of Xhosa and communicative  
competence in the Cape Education  
Department Schools"  
Masters Thesis, University of Cape Town.
- Eastman, C. M. (1992) Language planning in South Africa.  
South African Journal of African  
Language  
Volume 12, Supplement 1-10.
- Edwards, A. D. (1976) Language in culture and class: The  
sociology of language and Education.  
London, Heinemann.

- Edwards, J.R. (1979) Language and disadvantage : Studies in language and disability and remediation.  
London, Edward Arnold
- Fardon, R. and Furniss, G (1994) African languages, development and the state.  
Great Britain, T.J. 111 - 121
- Finnegan, R. H. (1997) Oral literature in Africa.  
Nairobi, Oxford University Press.
- Fishman, J. A. (1971) Advances in the sociology of language.  
The Hague: Mouton
- Fishman, J. A. (1972) Language in sociocultural change.  
Stanford University Press
- Fowler, H. W. et al (1934) The concise Oxford dictionary of current English.  
New York: Oxford University Press.

- Fronkin, V. & Rodman, R (1988) An introduction to language.  
U.S.A:  
Holt, Rinehart & Winston.
- Gal, S. (1979) Language shift: Social determinants of linguistic change in bilingual Austria.  
New York, Academic.
- Garvin, P. L. (1972) "On the linguistic method : Selected papers"  
The Hague, Mouton.
- Giglioli, P.P. (1972) Language and social context.  
Harmondsworth, Penguin.
- Giles, H. and P. Powesland (1975) Speech style and social evaluation.  
England: University of Bristol Press.
- Giles, H. et al (1979) Attitudes towards language variation: Social applied contexts.  
London, Edward Arnold.
- Gumperz, J.J. (1971) Language in social groups.  
USA: Stanford University Press.

- Gxilishe, S. (1996) The dilemma of dialect in the classroom.  
Peringuam Volume 12 No 1.
- Heine, B. (1970) Status and use of African lingua francas.  
München, Weltforum Verlag
- Herbert, R. K. (1992) R. K. (1992) Language and society in Africa.  
Witwatersrand University Press.
- Hudson, R. A. (1980) Sociolinguistics.  
New York, Cambridge University Press.
- Kieswetter, A. (1995) "Code-switching amongst African High  
school pupils, Occasional papers in African  
Linguistics"  
Pretoria, University of the Witwatersrand.
- Kaschula R. H. and Christine A. (1995) Communicating across cultures in South  
Africa,  
Pretoria, Witwatersrand University Press.

- Kruger, W. J. (1982) "Language communication at Black-White contact points in the Eastern Cape industries with special reference to isiXhosa as language medium?".  
South African Journal of Africa Languages. Supplement (3) 42-48.
- Labov, W. (1963) The social motivation of a sound change  
Sociolinguistic patterns.  
Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Press.
- Lanham, L. W. & Prinsloo, K. P.(1978) Language and communication studies in South Africa.  
London, Oxford University Press.
- Lodge, R. A. (1993) From dialect to standard.  
London, Routledge
- Maake N.P (1994) Dismantling the tower of babel in search of a new language policy for post-apartheid South Africa in : Fardon, R and Furniss, G (eds).  
Great Britain, TJ.

- Makalima, R. G. S. (1981) "Assessment of the educational implications of The development of Xhosa as a written medium From 1820 - 1950. A historical didactical analysis" Thesis (M.Ed).  
Alice, University of Fort Hare.
- Mansour, G. (1993) Multilingualism and nation building.  
Philadelphia: Multilingual Matters.
- Mashamaite, K. J. (1992) Standard and non-standard: Towards finding a suitable teaching strategy.  
South African Journal of African languages.  
Volume 12, Supplement 1, 50 - 51.
- Marks, S. and Rathbone, R. (1987) Industrialisation and social change in South Africa. African class formation, culture, and consciousness, 1870 - 1930
- Mbadi, L. M. (195-?) "Some phonological and morphological differences between Xhosa and Mpondomise"  
Honours Degree. UCT. Cape Town.

- Montgomery, M. (1986) An introduction to language and society.  
London: Meüthen.
- Myers- Scotton, C. (1992) Sociolinguistics: An overview. South African  
Journal of African languages. Supplement.
- Msimang C. T. (1989) "Some phonological aspects of the Tekela Nguni  
Dialects"  
Doctoral Dissertation.  
Pretoria. University of South Africa.
- Mtuze, P. T. (1992) Language practitioner in a multilingual  
South Africa.  
South African Journal of African  
Languages, Volume 13, No 2.
- Newsum, H. E. (1990) Class, Language and Education. Class struggle in  
in African situation.  
Trenton, N. J. Africa World.
- Nomlomo, V. S. (1993) "Language variation in the Transkeian Xhosa  
speech community and its impact on children's  
education?."

Masters Thesis, Cape Town: University of Cape  
Town.

- Nyamende, A. (1994) Regional variation in Xhosa.  
Spil plus (26) pp 202 -217
- Okpewho, I. (1992) African oral literature: Backgrounds, character  
and continuity.  
Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- Olver-Shaw, A. (1994) "Model C Schools: Multilingual  
education"  
CruX, 28 (3): 41-46.
- Paulston, C.B. (1987) International Handbook of bilingualism and  
bilingual Education  
New York, Greenwood.
- Pattanayak, D.P. (1990) Multilingual matters  
Philadelphia, Multilingual Matters.

- Pride, J. B. and Holmes J. (1972) Multilingual Matters  
Clevedon , Philadelphia.
- Reagan, T.G. (1994) Multiculturalism and total quality education.  
Thousand Oaks, Calif, Corwin.
- Romaine, S (1982) Sociolinguistics variation in speech  
communities.  
London, Edward Arnold.
- Rubagumya, C. M. (1990) Language in education in Africa:  
A Tanzanian Perspective.  
Philadelphia, Multilingual Matters.
- Rubin, J. (1984) Can Language be planned : Sociolinguistic  
Theory and Practice for developing Nations.  
Honolulu, University of Hawaii Press.
- Sanders, C. (1993) French Today : Language in its Social Context.  
New York: Cambridge University Press.

- Sarnoff, I. (1970) Social attitudes and the resolution of motivational conflict. New Bury House, Jahoda, M. and Warren, N.
- Saville - Troike, M. (1982) The ethnography of communication, Oxford: Basil Blackwell.
- Second, P. and Backman (1964) Social psychology. New York, McGrawhill.
- Stubbs, M. (1979) Observing classroom language. Milton Keynes, Open University Press.
- Swanepoel, P. H. and Pieterse, H. J. (1993) Perspectives on language planning for South Africa. Pretoria, University of South Africa.
- Swartz, J. (1993) Designing the language for teachers in multicultural secondary schools in South Africa. Perlinguam. Vol 9 Part Pages 30-41.

- Thipa, H. M. (1989) ?The difference between rural and urban Xhosa varieties: A sociolinguistic study? P. H. D. Thesis. Natal, University of Natal.
- Thornton, G. (1974) Language experience and school. London, Edward Arnold.
- Trudgill, P. (1975) Accent, dialect and the school. London, Edward Arnold.
- Trudgill, P. (1975) English accents and dialects: An Introduction to Social and Regional Varieties of British English.
- Trudgill, P. (1980) Dialectology. {S.L.} Cambridge University Press.
- Trudgill, P. (1983) On dialect. Social and Geographical Perspectives. Oxford, B. Blackwell.

- Trudgill, P. (1984) Applied sociolinguistics.  
London, Academic.
- Tshangana, P.P. (1997) ?Considering Learners? needs in Xhosa  
?Survival? Courses : A literature review and  
syllabus design?.  
Bellville, University of Western Cape.
- Pütz, M. (1994) Language contact and Language conflict.  
Philadelphia: John Benjamin Publishing  
Company.
- Van Wyk, E. B. (1992) The concept "Standard Language".  
South African Journal of African Language,  
Supplement 1, 25-32.
- Williams, J. M. (1980) Standards and dialects in English.  
Massachusetts, Winthrop.
- Williams, C. H. (1992) Linguist minorities society and territory.  
England, Multilingual Matters..

Zotwana, S. Z. (1989) ?The problem of non-standard varieties in language teaching and learning.? Proceedings SAALA Conference. Potchefstroom: (ed) Johan Vander Valt. 263 - 277.

APPENDIX I

NOMUCUKO SIGCAU  
MASTER'S CANDIDATE  
UNIVERSITY OF CAPE TOWN

.....  
October 22, 1996  
18 Duminy Court  
Rosebank  
7700

Dear Language Teacher

I am Nomupcuko Sigcau, a Master's Candidate in the Department of African Languages and Literatures at the University of Cape Town.

My study aims to find out if language interference and language change would cause students to fail Xhosa, or would impact the learning of Xhosa.

I am collecting information from pupils of different schools in the Western Cape Region in order to establish how language affects the results.

The findings of this study might help both students and teachers in the use of the language in the classroom and shed some light in the implications of this usage.

Completed questionnaires may be submitted to the Xhosa teacher at your school where I will collect them.

The questionnaire consists of 4 sections. In the first section pupils are required to classify a statement as being true or false and circle the relevant symbol of T or F.

In the second section they will be required to fill YES, NO or DON'T KNOW in the spaces provided.

In the third question statements are given whereby the pupils are required to indicate the degree to which they either agree or disagree.

The fourth section is a multiple choice questions where pupils must choose a relevant answer by ticking the box next to the statement.

Completed questionnaires will be collected by me from each school on the 30th October.

The time given to this questionnaire will be greatly appreciated.

Thank you very much for your co-operation

Yours sincerely  
N.E.Sigcau

QUESTIONNAIRES FOR LEARNERS

Before considering the questions that follow below I would like to mention that Xhosa as a language is subdivided into two language varieties i.e standard and nonstandard.

Standard Xhosa is based on isiRharabe and isiGcaleka whilst Nonstandard is based on the rest. i.e.

AmaMpondo  
AmaXesibe  
AmaCele  
Amantlangwini  
Tsotsi-taal

AmaBomvana  
AmaMpondomise  
AmaHlubi  
AmaBhaca  
Slang etc.

SECTION

A: XHOSA LANGUAGE IN THE CLASSROOM

Please respond to the following statements by ticking True or False in the given column.

1. Educators do not allow learners to mix Xhosa language with other languages in class.  T  F
2. Outside the class learners sometimes do mix Xhosa with other languages.  T  F
3. Sometimes learners lack Xhosa vocabulary that is why they mix Xhosa with other languages.  T  F
4. Learners who come from rural areas use standard Xhosa than others from urban areas.  T  F
5. Educators are not fair by not allowing learners to speak as they wish in class.  T  F
6. Nonstandard Xhosa variants are treated as variants of low status in the field of education.
7. Inability to communicate in standard Xhosa contributes towards poor Xhosa matric results.  T  F
8. Educators prefer learners who speak standard Xhosa than those who do not.  T  F

SECTION B. ATTITUDES TOWARDS XHOSA AS A LANGUAGE

Please tick the appropriate response.

	Yes	No	do'nt know
1. Do you like studying Xhosa?	1	2	3
2. Do you like Xhosa lessons more than other lessons at school?	1	2	3
3. Do you wish to proceed with Xhosa to University level?	1	2	3
4. Are there plenty of job opportunities for those who specialise in Xhosa?	1	2	3
5. Xhosa is your mother tongue therefore it is easy for you.	1	2	3

SECTION C. XHOSA DIALECTS

Below are some statements about Xhosa dialects. Please indicate the degree to which you agree or disagree with them. Indicate by circling the appropriate number.

	AGREE	DISAGREE	DON',TKNOW
1. Nonstandard Xhosa is not allowed during Xhosa lessons.	1	2	3
2. Learners who speak nonstandard varieties are disadvantaged.	1	2	3
3. It is unfair to prevent learners from using nonstandard Xhosa.	1	2	3
4. Learners are affected by the use of language other than their variety.	1	2	3
5. Pupils prefer to be taught Xhosa in their own language variety e.g. isiMpondo, isiHlubi etc.	1	2	3

SECTION D. USE OF XHOSA IN GENERAL

Below are statements, questions on the use of Xhosa in general. Indicate your response by circling the appropriate number.

	Always	Sometimes	Never
1. How often do you mix languages?	1	2	3
2. Are you ever punished by your parents at home when you speak a mixture of languages?	1	2	3
3. Do your parents motivate you to speak standard Xhosa?	1	2	3
3. Are you ever criticized by teachers at school when you use nonstandard language?	1	2	3
4. Learners who speak standard Xhosa are praised by educators	1	2	3

SECTION E: ETHNIC GROUPS

Below is a list of ethnic groups, I would like to find out from you into which ethnic group do you belong. Please indicate by making a tick in the box next to each group.

AbaThembu	<input type="checkbox"/>	AmaBomvana	<input type="checkbox"/>
AmaMpondo	<input type="checkbox"/>	AmaMpondomise	<input type="checkbox"/>
AmaXesibe	<input type="checkbox"/>	AmaGcaleka	<input type="checkbox"/>
AmaRharhabe	<input type="checkbox"/>	AmaHlubi	<input type="checkbox"/>
AmaCele	<input type="checkbox"/>	AmaBhaca	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other specify	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>

Your responses are critical to ensure that the diverse range of views are represented.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME AND COOPERATION

APPENDIX 11

NOMPUCUKO SIGCAU

MASTER'S CANDIDATE  
UNIVERSITY OF CAPE TOWN

.....  
October 22, 1996  
18 Duminy Court  
Rosebank  
7700

Dear Language Teacher

I am Nompucuko Sigcau currently studying a Masters' degree in the Department of African Languages and Literatures. As part of my Masters' dissertation I am researching the USE OF XHOSA LANGUAGE IN THE CLASSROOM.

Xhosa varieties used in urban classrooms are an issue of concern to many Xhosa first language teachers. Some of these teachers argue that the use of these varieties violates the language. On the other hand some are of the opinion that it is unfair to penalise students who use their varieties because this situation is neither of their own making.

Findings of this study might help both learners and educators in the usage of the language in the classroom and shed some light in the implications of this usage.

Your contribution would be appreciated as it would enable me to study the problem and hopefully contribute towards improvement in the use of language in the classroom.

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR CO-OPERATION

## QUESTIONNAIRE FOR LANGUAGE EDUCATORS

### SECTION A: TEACHING OF XHOSA

Answers are provided in each and every question. Please indicate by circling the appropriate number.

1. What is the average rate pass of your students?

Poor	1
Average	2
Good	3

2. If the average pass rate is not good what may be the reason?

Bad performance	1
Xhosa is difficult for them.	2
Language inteference.	3

3. When marking compositions don't you experience some errors whereby students mix Xhosa with other languages?

Not at all	1
Always	2
Sometimes	3

4. How do you feel when you experience these errors?

Disappointed	1
Very disappointed	2
Appreciative	3

5. If you feel disappointed what do you think is the reason?

Use could fail them	1
Spoil Xhosa language	2
Use could contribute to language death.	3

SECTION B: ATTITUDES TOWARDS NONSTANDARD VARIANTS

Below are some statements about teacher's attitude towards nonstandard variants. Please indicate the degree to which you agree or disagree with them. Indicate by circling the appropriate number.

	Agree	Disagree	Don't know
1. Educators display negative attitudes towards nonstandard variants.	1	2	3
2. Those learners who use nonstandard variants should be penalized because the use contribute to high failure rate.	1	2	3
3. Nonstandard variants are treated by educators as variants of low status.	1	2	3
4. Nonstandard variants are highly valued by their speakers.	1	2	3
5. Standard language is the only language which is appreciated at school	1	2	3

SECTION C. XHOSA DIALECTS

Xhosa language is characterized by a number of dialects:-

IsiGcaleka	IsiRharhabe
IsiBomvana	IsiMpondomise
IsiMpondo	IsiHlubi
IsiXesibe	IsiNtlangwini
IsiCele	IsiBhaca

Standard Xhosa is based on isiGcaleka and isiRharhabe dialects whilst nonstandard is based to the rest.

By circling the appropriate number, please indicate how teachers do react to nonstandard variety speakers.

	Always	Sometimes	Never
1. Do educators allow learners to speak other dialects other than isiGcaleka or isiRharhabe.	1	2	3
2. Would use of other dialects other than isiGcaleka or isiRharhabe lower the standard of Xhosa.	1	2	3
3. Other dialect speakers tend to shift from their dialects to isiGcaleka or isiRharhabe dialects which are associated with high academic achievement.	1	2	3
4. The use of other Xhosa dialects other than isiGcaleka or isiRharhabe which is standard can widen the vocabulary of Xhosa.	1	2	3
5. Educators do not allow learners to use other dialects in class other than isiGcaleka or isiRharhabe because they do not conform to the norms of the standardized one.	1	2	3

SECTION D: LANGUAGE ENTEFREERENCE

Please respond to the following statements by ticking True or False in the given column.

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| 1. Urban areas comprise of a number of diverse multilingual communities.   | _____<br><input type="checkbox"/> T <input type="checkbox"/> F <input type="checkbox"/><br>_____ |
| 2. Due to language contact in these communities mixing languages occur in a large scale.   | _____<br><input type="checkbox"/> T <input type="checkbox"/> F <input type="checkbox"/><br>_____ |
| 3. Leaners who grow up in urban areas fail Xhosa due to language inteference while those who come from rural areas are somewhat advantaged in this regard. | _____<br><input type="checkbox"/> T <input type="checkbox"/> F <input type="checkbox"/><br>_____ |
| 4. Educators' negative attitude towards nonstandard language varieties usually frustrate and demotivate these who speak nonstandard.                       | _____<br><input type="checkbox"/> T <input type="checkbox"/> F <input type="checkbox"/><br>_____ |
| 5. Because of language contact Xhosa is also subject to change.  | _____<br><input type="checkbox"/> T <input type="checkbox"/> F <input type="checkbox"/><br>_____ |

SECTION E : PERSONAL INFORMATION

The following information is required to classify the data that is captured. It will be kept completely confidential.

- Age.....Gender..... Home Language.....
- Teaching experience.....
- Standards taught.....
- Qualifications.....
- Majors.....
- Year completed.....
- Name..... Telephone No.....  
 (You can remain anonymous if you wish)

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR TIME AND COOPERATION